

Annotation Assignment

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Fall 2022: ENGL 231-01 Touchstones 2A: American Literature

Overview

For this assignment, you will practice your critical reading skills by annotating one piece of writing from our course.

Assignment Skills & Goals

- Strengthen your active reading skills
- Practice contextual analysis
- Start working on initial research skills
- Reflect on the relationship between reading for emotion, content, and analysis

Assignment Tasks

1. Choose a text from our assigned readings by Emily Dickinson or Walt Whitman. Note: I'll ask you to be thoughtful about how you limit your text. Some of Dickinson's work is especially short, while Whitman is wordier than I am. Before solidifying your choice, consider how the work's length will affect your capacity to annotate it.
2. Open your text in Hypothesis.
3. Add comments to the text using various types of annotations:
 - Reflect on or track your initial responses while reading. These are often "half-formed" or offhand thoughts — those that ask questions, make short remarks or quips, anticipate where the text might go, or situate the text in your personal experience (e.g., "This line reminds me of the feeling of endless summers when I was a kid," "love this image!" or "Walt, what?")
 - Interpret the text, or try to explain what you think the writer means in that moment, whether that's talking through a phrase or idea to make sure you understand it or translating a term (from another language or into more accessible wording).
 - Analyze the text, or moving beyond the superficial or first-glance understanding of the writer's language to consider what value, metaphorical meaning, or broader concepts the writer might be getting at. (We might think of this in other words as a sort of Interpretation Plus.)
 - Contextualize the text, or situate the writer's language or your interpretation of it within its historical, theoretical, social, or the author's biographical context.

Some Recommendations

- **Read the text multiple times.** You'll find alternative and extended meanings the more you engage with the work. If you work on the assignment over several sessions, I recommend rereading the piece each time to refresh your memory & see what stands out. You can also note in your annotations how your ideas changed or developed or what you noticed on the second read that escaped your attention the first time around.
- **Take notes.** This is the goal of the project, of course, but not all of us will feel able to read on the screen for extended periods or feel savvy enough with Hypothesis to take notes there while reading. If you work better on the page than the screen, it's perfectly fine to jot your notes down there & then transfer them to Hypothesis later on. Do what is most comfortable for & most conducive to your own critical reading practices.
- **Talk with others about the piece!** The more we let a work digest & marinate (and other food-related metaphors, surely), the more thoughtful our ideas and questions about it are. One of the best things we can do as a writer & thinker is to talk with the people in our lives about our work. Sometimes verbalizing it helps us think differently, and other times our friends & family might ask questions or lead us in directions we hadn't considered. (And if that's the case, just be sure to add an acknowledgement to them in your annotation!)
- Check out the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) (or "OWL") for a guide on how to cite your supplemental research. Since we're working in a form that is not a conventional essay, I've asked that you include Works Cited entries for the information you include from other sources, rather than in-text citations. You can include these right in the individual annotation where they're discussed.
- Refer to the guides offered by the team at Hypothesis for how best to use their tool. That might include this guide on ["Adding Links, Images, and Videos"](#) to your annotations or this refresher ["Quick Start Guide for Students."](#)

Details

Submission

Please submit your work on Canvas with the URL of the page you annotated and a note about your Hypothesis username.



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Grading

A	B	C	D
<p>Thoroughly & engagingly annotates one of our course readings</p> <p>Incorporates all four types of annotations (listed in prompt)</p> <p>Makes comments on both specific language or moments in the text and the text as a whole</p> <p>Has at least 4 substantial (i.e., meaningful & fully-explained) annotations, in addition to more minor annotations</p> <p>Draws at least 3 intertextual connections using supplemental research about the text, writer, or context</p> <p>Accurately cites supplemental resources using MLA's 9th edition guidelines to creating Works Cited entries</p>	<p>Successfully annotates one of our course readings</p> <p>Incorporates multiple types of annotations (listed in prompt)</p> <p>Makes comments on both specific language or moments in the text and the text as a whole</p> <p>Has at least 3 annotations with fully-formed ideas or analyses about the text, in addition to more minor annotations</p> <p>Draws at least 2 intertextual connections using supplemental research about the text, writer, or context</p> <p>Accurately cites supplemental resources using MLA's 9th edition guidelines to creating Works Cited entries</p>	<p>Annotates one of our course readings</p> <p>Uses only two types of annotations (listed in prompt)</p> <p>Makes comments mostly on the text as a whole, without much attention to specific language or moments (or vice versa)</p> <p>Has at least 2 annotations with fully-formed ideas about the text, in addition to more minor annotations</p> <p>Integrates at least 1 piece of supplemental research in analyzing the text</p> <p>Accurately cites supplemental resources using MLA's 9th edition guidelines to creating Works Cited entries</p>	<p>Gives limited annotations one of our course readings</p> <p>Uses only one type of annotation (listed in prompt)</p> <p>Makes general or nonspecific comments about the text as a whole or fails to clearly explain moments in the text</p> <p>Annotations are minor, rather than fully-formed ideas</p> <p>Does not incorporate supplemental research</p>