**Marking the Text**

“Marking the Text” is an active reading strategy that asks a reader to think critically about their reading. It helps determine the essential information in a passage, isolating it visually form the rest of the surrounding text. While reading the text, one should: analyze and evaluate ideas expressed by the author. You may might also circle, underline, or box essential information relevant to the reading purpose. When a person reads with pencil in hand, they are able to focus on **what is being said in the text** which leads to increased comprehension and retention of textual material. “Marking the Text” can be used with any textbook reading, articles, primary or secondary source materials, and even notes.

It is a fundamental skill that should be used whenever reading copies of article, newspapers, source documents, worksheets with passages, and/or when reading/reviewing notes. EVERY TEXT, every time!!!

**How Should I Mark the Text?**

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1. **NUMBER THE PARAGRAPHS:** This allows us to chuck lengthier text and refer quickly to specific areas within the text to answer questions on assessments and during classroom discussions.
2. **Underline the main idea and label it M.I.:** Finding the main idea and/or determining the author’s purpose for reading the passage is essential to understanding other information that is relevant to the within the text. This helps you locate related ideas and figure which words, terms, or phrases are considered essential. Examples of things you should underline: author’s claims, evidence, descriptions, cause-and-effect relationships, comparisons and contrasts, facts about a person, place, thing, or idea, etc…
3. **Circle Vocabulary/key terms or phrases and make notes about its meaning:**

Some people prefer to do a “clean read” first in order to build familiarity with the structure, words, and ideas in the text. When circling vocabulary words, key terms or phrases such as figurative language, be sure to select only the information that is relevant to the author’s purpose for reading the given passage. These might be key concepts, content-based or lesson-based vocabulary, names of people/places/dates, formulas, repeated words, and/or literary devises such as figurative language, allusion, imagery, etc…

**Why Should I Mark the Text?**

Doing so helps the reader understand complex ideas on a page and is a way to stay engaged and focused while reading. Have you ever read a page of text, got to the end of the page, and realized that you ZONED OUT the entire time and don’t remember anything you just read? Well, if you “Mark the Text”, it helps isolate essential information that can be referenced (or found) easily during a writing task or class discussion.

**I use my marks to:**

* help write summaries and short answer responses
* connect sections of the text to other parts of the passage
* investigate claims or evidence
* interact with my notes, understand them better, and use for studying
* assist with essay writing

**Key Questions to Consider:**

Ultimately, these critical, close and careful reading strategies are meant to help you become a better reader and increase your level of college readiness so you can do well now and also prepare for life after the University of Wakulla High School. Marking the text is not just “busy work”, but it is a strategy that good readers turn into a habit to help construct meaning from text.

Ask yourself these questions to help you reflect on the use of **Marking the Text**:

* What claim is the author making?
  + What are some key terms related to the claim?
* What is the topic addressed in the article?
* What is the main idea of each paragraph? What is the main idea of the passage?
* Which words in the text relate to the main ideas?
  + Are there any definitions, synonyms, antonyms, or other clues –including implied- that help determine the meaning of unknown words, terms, or phrases?
* Is there information from this paragraph that relates or connects to another paragraph in this passage?