

**4<sup>th</sup> Prep English I Summer Reading Guide**  
**Ms. Nadell**  
**2021-2022 Academic Year**

**Summer Reading Assignment:** Read and annotate *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. This is the only assignment that must be completed by the start of classes. This should be completed before the first full day of school.

**Annotation Guide:**

Please note that this is a general guide that can be adapted to suit your own needs or the specific text that you are reading. You should start with the suggestions on this guide, then you can adapt your annotation style as you see fit.

**Annotating a text:** Annotation refers to marking up your text by physically writing on it, using sticky notes or other markers, and/or taking notes as you read. Annotation is a key skill to learn as you develop into a sophisticated critical reader, writer, and thinker; it is also an important skill that will help you succeed in high school. The purpose of annotation is to keep a record of your thoughts and questions as you read. This is especially useful to you as you complete your summer reading, as you will read the novel outside of class and will need to retain your knowledge of the text into the first quarter of the academic year. The following is a suggested annotation guide for each method listed above.

**1. Marking up the text: This is the recommended method for annotating.** If you use this method, you will physically write in and on your book as you read. Differentiate your annotations as follows:

- Underline key lines and/or passages. An alternative annotation would be to place a star in the margin next to key lines/passages. The purpose of underlining or marking key passages with a star is to help you remember where to find the most significant portions of the text. Passages may be significant because they highlight key plot events, point out important qualities of the main characters, or emphasize central themes or motifs of the work, which are essential to analyzing the text's meaning. In addition to underlining or marking with a star, it is best to record your thoughts in the margins or in a separate journal so you can remember what you thought was important about the passages. To reiterate, make sure that you go beyond simply highlighting or underlining; you want to be able to remember WHY you marked these lines when you go back into the text to write your essay or participate in class discussions and activities.
- Write a question mark in the margin next to passages or lines that you find confusing or that you have questions about. It is best to write out your question in the margins or in a separate journal so that you can remember what confused you about the passage.
- Circle unknown words; look up the new words as you read so that you can both better understand the text and build your vocabulary. Write the definition in your book or in a separate journal. Even if you are slightly unsure of a word's meaning, it's a good idea to look up the word to clarify the meaning.
- Develop a system of annotations specifically related to your text to help you keep track of specific issues/characters/themes as you read. For example, if the protagonist is named Joe, you might write a "J" next to the passages in the text that describe his character or tell us something important about his character. See more specific suggestions for these types of annotations below, in the annotation guidelines for *The Book Thief*.

**2. Sticky note annotation:** If you prefer not to write on your text or you are using a borrowed copy of a text, you may wish to use a set of sticky notes to annotate your text. For example, you might use the Post-It brand flags (usually four or five different colors). You can decide what color to assign to each detail you want to annotate. You can also write very small, short notes on these skinny sticky note flags, or you may use bigger sticky notes that have more room for your writing. See the more detailed instructions for annotations above.

- Place a blue sticky note next to key passages.
- Place an orange sticky note and write a question mark on the notes when you come across a passage that is confusing or about which you have questions. You could also write more detailed versions of your questions in a separate journal. Again, it's very important that you record your thoughts and ideas, so you can remember why you are noting these lines or passages.
- Place a yellow sticky note near unknown or unfamiliar words. Write the definition on the sticky note or in a separate journal.
- Use the remaining colors to annotate other details about the text (characters, themes, etc.). You might want to assign a different color to each theme or character, or you may want to use the same color but write a short annotation

### **Annotation Guidelines for *The Book Thief*.**

When we return to class, we will focus on a few key features of *The Book Thief*. Be sure to consider these as you read, while you annotate, and after you complete the novel:

1. Major plot points- Mark the elements of the exposition, the introduction of the conflict, important moments of rising action, the climax, and the events of the resolution. Create an annotation symbol to mark these events and label them.
2. Books – pay close attention to the role of books in this novel as they are quite symbolic. Create an annotation symbol to mark the occurrence of books and jot your thoughts about each particular book and its significance in the margin or on a sticky note.
3. The characterization of Death – The narrator of the novel is Death, which significantly influences the story. Create an annotation symbol to note the passages where Death's character is revealed both through indirect and direct characterization. Note in the margin or on a sticky note what is learned.
4. Courage – We see many courageous acts in this novel. Create an annotation symbol to mark the occurrence of courage and note your thoughts about each event in the margin or on a sticky note.
5. Colors – Color is an important element of the novel. Create an annotation symbol to mark descriptions of color and note your thoughts about the connection between the color and the events of the novel in the margin or on a sticky note.