



# Teaching Annotation Using "Marry Me," a Short Film

**With optional Virtual  
Break-Out Activity**

The background is an abstract composition. It features a large, irregular white shape in the center, surrounded by a light pink background. In the top-left corner, there are three thick, black, diagonal brushstrokes. In the top-right corner, there is a cluster of black dots of varying sizes. In the bottom-left corner, there is another cluster of black dots. In the bottom-right corner, there are two thick, black, curved brushstrokes.

**The following slide sums up what to do:**

# USING SHORT FILM

To teach annotating:

✓SHOW THEM THE  
HELPFUL VIDEO:  
(FIRST LINK)

✓LECTURE ON  
ANNOTATING

✓POINT OUT ITEMS  
STUDENTS SHOULD  
LOOK FOR

✓BRIEFLY  
INTRODUCE SHORT  
FILM.

✓ASK STUDENTS  
TO THINK OF IT AS  
A TEXT.

✓DISCUSS SOME  
THINGS THEY  
SHOULD  
ANNOTATE.

✓LET THEM LEAD.

✓HAVE  
PREPARED  
QUESTIONS  
THAT  
ANNOTATIONS  
COULD ANSWER  
SUCH AS

✓MAIN IDEA  
✓MESSAGE  
✓SUPPORTING  
DETAILS (EVIDENCE)  
✓TITLE  
✓CHARACTER  
NAMES  
✓AUDIENCE,  
PURPOSE, TONE

HELPFUL VIDEOS:

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/  
W5MZ4NWCiWC](https://youtu.be/W5MZ4NWCiWC)

[https://youtu.be/XF  
dbZHMBxfg](https://youtu.be/XFdbZHMBxfg)

First link: "How To Annotate Text"  
Second link: The Short Film, "Marry Me"

✓SHOW THEM THE  
HELPFUL VIDEO: (FIRST  
LINK)

✓LECTURE ON  
ANNOTATING

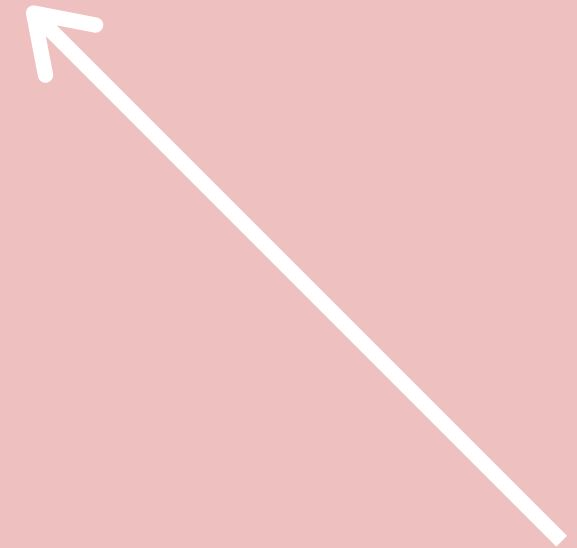
✓POINT OUT ITEMS  
STUDENTS SHOULD  
LOOK FOR

**The following slides are the helpful  
Youtube video from School Habits  
and a presentation/lecture I made based  
off the video.**

**First, teach students what annotating is:**

**<https://youtu.be/w5Mz4nwcIWc>**

**"How to annotate text while reading"  
By SchoolHabits**



**Let students watch the video and take notes.**

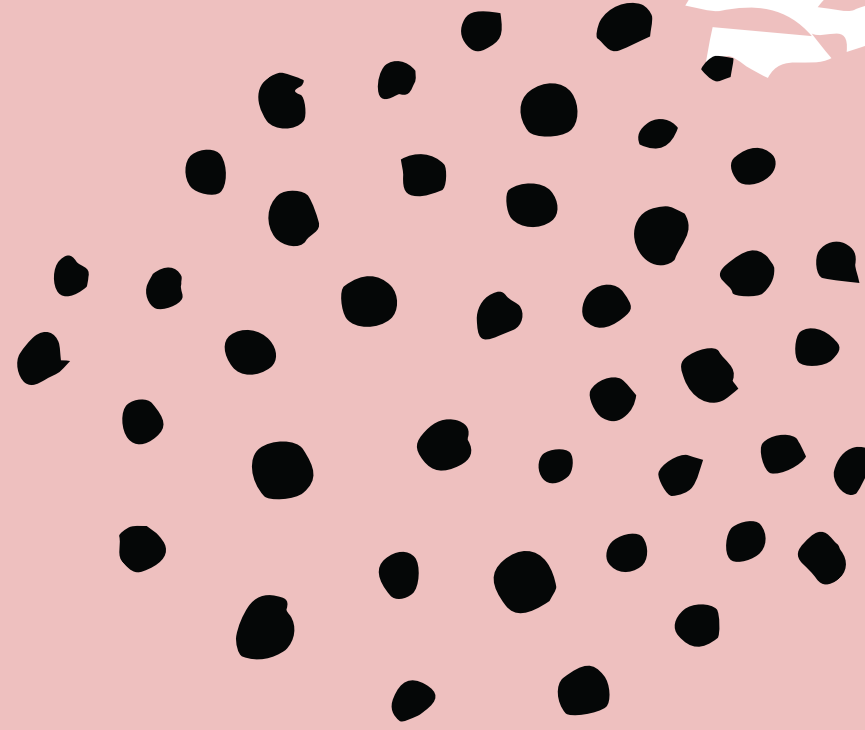
**Reaffirm concepts learned by using the presentation slides below  
reminding them of things they should look for to annotate:**

# Annotations Lecture Created from the Video:

**To Annotate means to “Take Notes”  
while reading a text.**

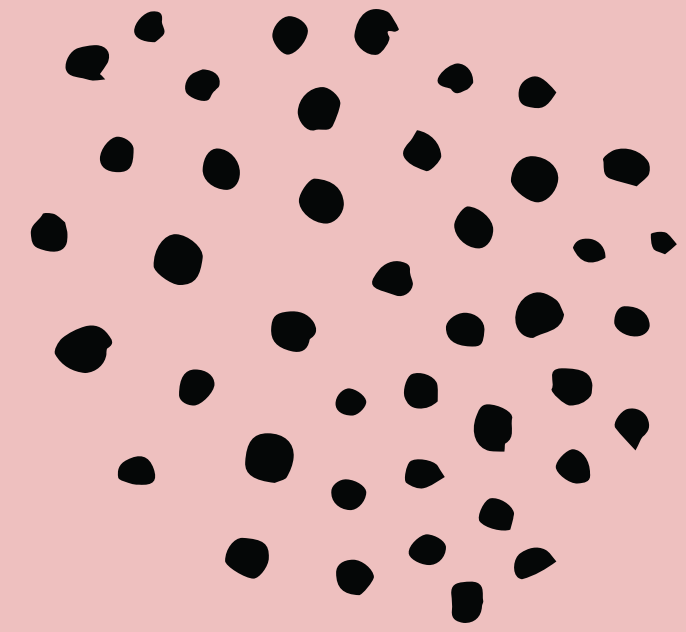
**Annotation helps you achieve a deeper  
understanding of the material.**





## **FOUR REASONS YOU SHOULD ANNOTATE**

- 1. It keeps you awake and engaged (Avoid Fake Reading Syndrome).**
- 2. It helps you process what you're reading as you're reading it.**
- 3. It slows down your reading (decreasing pace increases your understanding).**
- 4. It acts as your personal bookmark when you go back into the text (Helps you find important information faster than having to scan the entire text again).**



How Do You  
Annotate?





1. Read the text first, then go back to begin annotating.
2. Number your paragraphs.
3. Circle words you don't know. Look them up and write them down in your margins.
4. You can put questions marks (?) in places where you are confused. This allows you to go back and evaluate it again or look up any additional information to help you.
5. You can put stars over ideas or facts, quotes, names, dates, etc. that you find important. But still pull these details out to the margins.
6. If you aren't able to write directly in your book, you can use sticky notes parallel to the paragraphs in your book. You can also use a separate sheet of paper and label it by paragraphs.



7. You can write short summaries after each section.

8. You can use a color-coding system so you can personalize your notes.

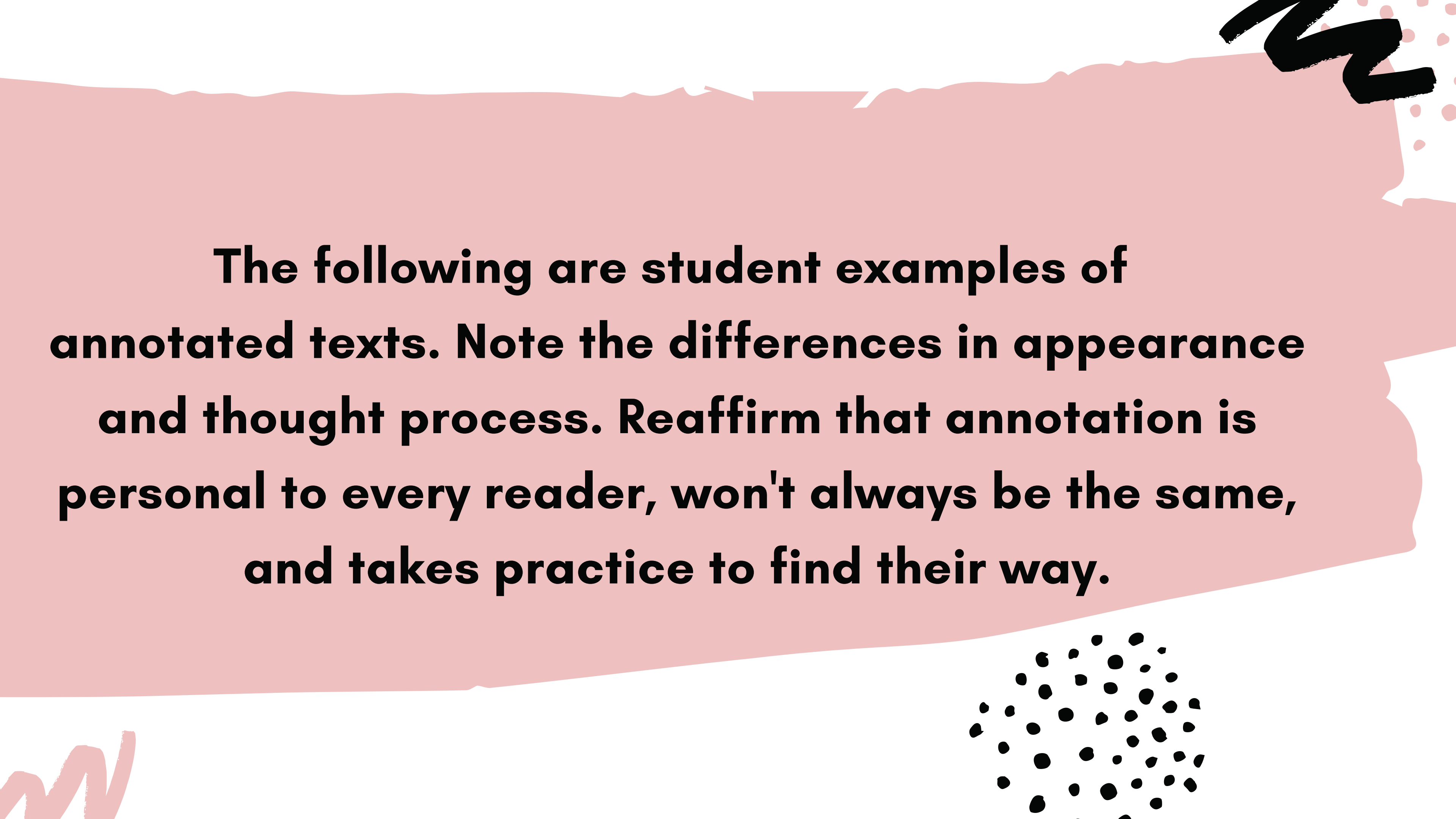
For example, you can use different colors for different types of notes.

Red=Vocabulary; Blue=Questions; Green=important dates, etc.

9. Caution: You can use a highlighter, but you must **STILL ANNOTATE**. The annotations are what will make your notes stand out. If you are only highlighting, then everything will be yellow, and nothing will stand out.

10. Personalize it.





**The following are student examples of annotated texts. Note the differences in appearance and thought process. Reaffirm that annotation is personal to every reader, won't always be the same, and takes practice to find their way.**



# SAMPLE STORY:

Graciela is the main character. An event causing great and often sudden damage or distress; a disaster. Graciela's Home By Graciela Flores. Suffer a mental and physical decline, especially because of a broken heart.

My name is Graciela, and this is my calamity—I pine for the life I had before coming here. I miss the open skies of Mexico. Instead, when I look out our windows I get to admire black tightrope wires that connect to tall wooden posts, tangoing with tree branches and covered with blackbirds. Even after three years here, it's something I'll never get used to—the feeling of a prison.

Graciela's father. This is why I hardly ever look outside my window anymore. But today, the motor of Papi's truck screeches, and then click, click, clicks. He's trying to get it started so he can leave to work, but it won't budge. This is the second time this week. Maybe it doesn't like to wake up. The truck frequently doesn't want to work. Same as me. Because waking up reminds me that I'm here. In America. And there's nothing I can do about it.

After three years here, my hope is giving out. Same as the truck. It never did this back in Mexico. The truck I mean. Even it knows better. Texas isn't home. I climb down from the top bunk and press my forehead against the cool window. My tired eyes blink at the new sun. Papi rests his head on the steering wheel. The truck looks glum under the shade of the driveway's canopy. He tries to bring it to life again. Its rusty body shudders and stops.

I know exactly what he's doing in that truck. He's gently pumping the gas a few times, begging it to start. "Ándale, mi niña." He'll say in Spanish. This means, "Come on, my little girl."

He straightens and does the sign of the cross and lowers his head to pray. Papi's old truck needs a lot of sweet-talking and a lot of prayer. If that truck doesn't start, he won't get to work.

Sometimes I wish it wouldn't start. Because if there is no truck, there is no work, there is no

A tightly stretched rope or wire high above the ground.

The amount of time she's been in Mexico.

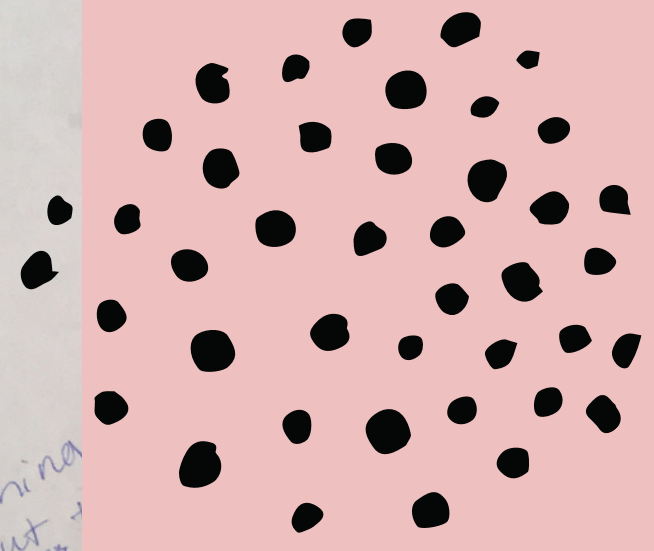
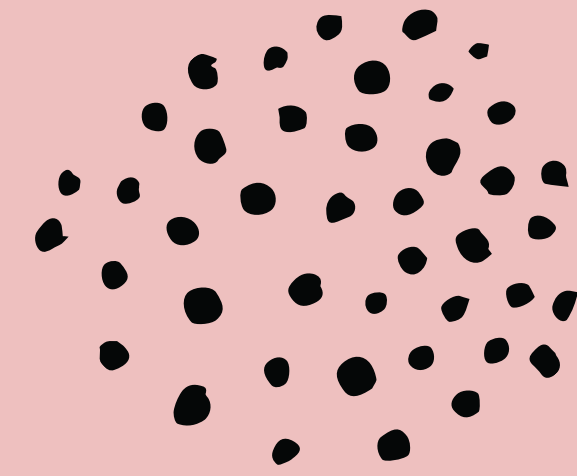
She really misses Mexico and this is the way she feels about it.

Type of sound that the truck makes.

I think she is describing herself with the truck. She feels morose.

Looking or feeling dejected.





Calamity { An event causing great & often sudden damage or distress / a disaster.

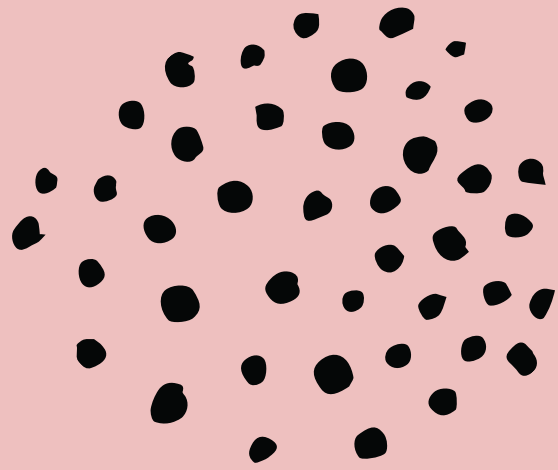
SAMPLE STORY:  
Graciela's Home  
By Graciela Flores

My name is Graciela and this is my calamity? I pine for the life I had before coming? Where?  
here. I miss the open skies of Mexico. Instead, when I look out our windows I get to admire misses  
black tightrope wires that connect to tall wooden posts, tangoing? with tree branches and covered - Graciela doesn't want to be where she is at  
with blackbirds. Even after three years here, it's something I'll never get used to - the feeling of Misses Mexico  
a prison.

This is why I hardly ever look outside my window anymore. But today, the motor of  
Papi's truck screeches, and then click, click, clicks. He's trying to get it started so he can leave to  
work, but it won't budge? This is the second time this week. Maybe it doesn't like to wake up. Truck not working  
Same as me. Because waking up reminds me that I'm here. In America. And there's nothing I  
can do about it.

After three years here, my hope is giving out. Same as the truck. It never did this back in  
Mexico. The truck I mean. Even it knows better. Texas isn't home. I climb down from the top  
bunk and press my forehead against the cool window. My tired eyes blink at the new sun. Fixing truck  
Papí rests his head on the steering wheel. The truck looks glum? under the shade of the  
driveway's canopy. He tries to bring it to life again. Its rusty body shudders and stops.  
I know exactly what he's doing in that truck. He's gently pumping the gas a few times,  
begging it to start. "Ándale, mi niña." He'll say in Spanish. This means, "Come on, my little  
girl."  
He straightens and does the sign of the cross and lowers his head to pray. Papí's old truck  
needs a lot of sweet-talking and a lot of prayer. If that truck doesn't start, he won't get to work.  
Sometimes I wish it wouldn't start, Because if there is no truck, there is no work, there is no  
Nothing w/out e.g.





family - an event that causes sudden damage or distress a disaster  
bunk - a bed two or more arranged one atop another.  
SAMPLE STORY:  
glum-looking sad/de-titled and  
Graciela's Home  
By Graciela Flores

*she moved from Mexico*  
My name is Graciela, and this is my calamity—I pine for the life I had before coming here. I miss the open skies of Mexico. *tells us where she came from.* Instead, when I look out our windows I get to admire black tighrope wires that connect to tall wooden posts, *have a feeling she doesn't like America.* tangoing with tree branches and covered with blackbirds. Even after three years here, it's something I'll never get used to – the feeling of a prison. *yeah she definitely doesn't like it she says she is in a prison.*

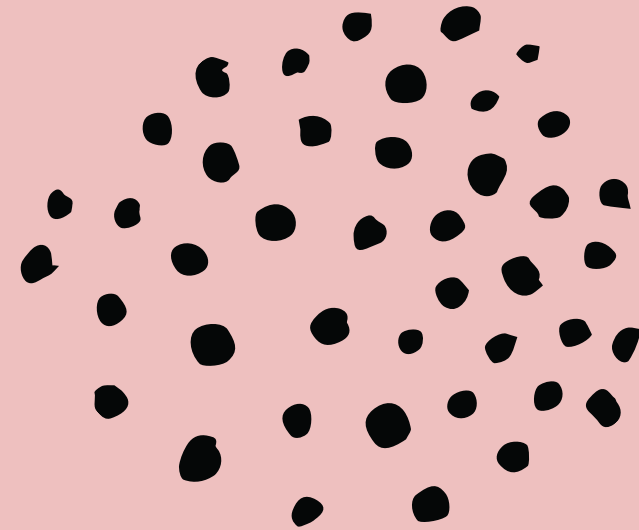
*her dad's truck isn't working so she looks*  
This is why I hardly ever look outside my window anymore. But today, the motor of Papi's truck screeches, and then *she doesn't look outside cause she doesn't like it* click, click, clicks. He's trying to get it started so he can leave to work, but it won't budge. This is the second time this week. Maybe it doesn't like to wake up. *move she really doesn't like where she lives now she misses Mexico.* Same as me. Because waking up reminds me that I'm here. In America. And there's nothing I can do about it. *Have a feeling she wants to move back to Mexico, but she can't.*

*that the dad is trying everything for the truck to start even talking to her and praying.*  
After three years here, my hope is giving out. Same as the truck. It never did this back in Mexico. The truck I mean. Even it knows better. Texas isn't home. I climb down from the top bunk and press my forehead against the cool window. My tired eyes blink at the new sun. *she's going to Mexico.*

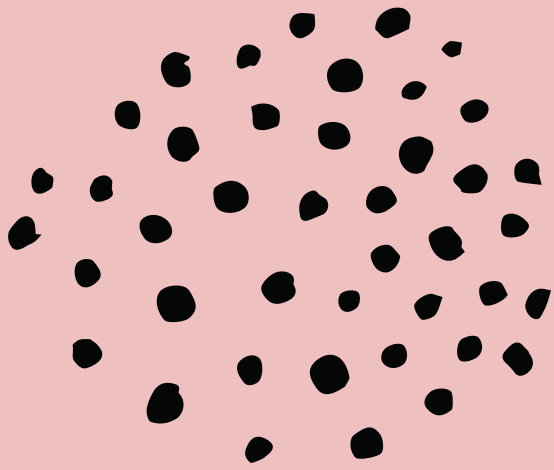
Papi rests his head on the steering wheel. The truck looks glum under the shade of the driveway's canopy. He tries to bring it to life again. Its rusty body shudders and stops. I know exactly what he's doing in that truck. He's gently pumping the gas a few times, begging it to start. "Ándale, mi niña." He'll say in Spanish. This means, "Come on, my little girl."

He straightens and does the sign of the cross and lowers his head to pray. Papi's old truck needs a lot of sweet-talking and a lot of prayer. If that truck doesn't start, he won't get to work. Sometimes I wish it wouldn't start. Because if there is no truck, there is no work, there is no start but that's the truck.

*a lot of sweet talking and a lot of prayers Graciela wishes that the truck start but that's the truck.*







## Four Skinny Trees

repetition in this section

isolated  
don't fit in  
misunderstood

They are the only ones who understand me. I am the only one who understands them. Four skinny trees with skinny necks and pointy elbows like mine. Four who do not belong here but are here. Four raggedy excuses planted by the city. From our room we can hear them, but Nenny just sleeps and doesn't appreciate these things. )? Why is Nenny mentioned here?

"Four" repeated 3x

The trees are  
• skinny  
• don't belong where they are  
• raggedy excuses put there by someone

fierce  
angry  
determined

★ Their strength is secret. They send ferocious roots beneath the ground. They grow up and they grow down and grab the earth between their hairy toes and bite the sky with violent teeth and never quit their anger. This is how they keep. ★

Very visual!  
First and last sentence are simple and direct.  
Strong adjectives and verbs.

simile

Let one forget his reason for being, they'd all droop like tulips in a glass, each with their arms around the other. Keep, keep, keep, trees say when I sleep. They teach. — Pow!

each keeps the others strong  
repetition & rhyme

Here's the "so what"  
I can picture that wall!

★ When I am too sad and too skinny to keep keeping, when I am a tiny thing against so many bricks, then it is I look at trees. When there is nothing left to look at on this street. Four who grew to despise concrete. Four who reach and do not forget to reach. Four whose only reason is to be and be.

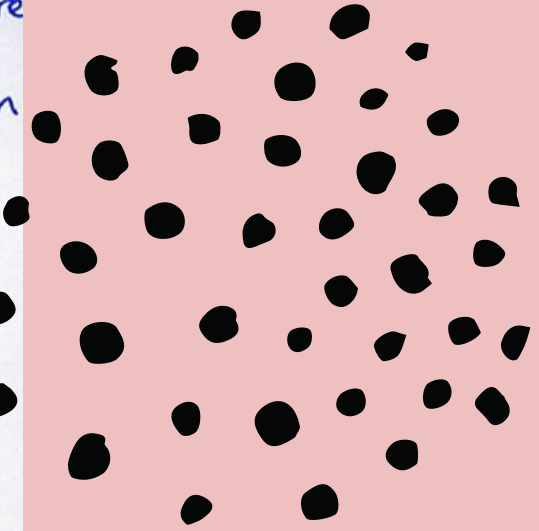
"Four" repeated 3x

The trees  
• grow to despise concrete  
• reach  
• know their reason

Excerpt taken from *The House on Mango Street* (1983)

concrete = barriers, limits, all the things that box us in

The trees are a symbol to the author.

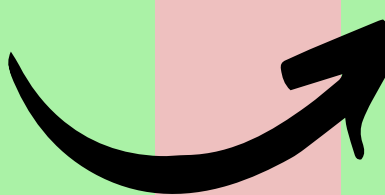


# Now the fun part! Using "Marry Me"

(it's only about six minutes long)

- ✓BRIEFLY  
INTRODUCE SHORT  
FILM.
- ✓ASK STUDENTS  
TO THINK OF IT AS  
A TEXT.
- ✓DISCUSS SOME  
THINGS THEY  
SHOULD  
ANNOTATE.
- ✓LET THEM LEAD.

✓HAVE  
PREPARED POST  
QUESTIONS  
THAT  
ANNOTATIONS  
COULD ANSWER  
SUCH AS:



- ✓MAIN IDEA
- ✓MESSAGE
- ✓SUPPORTING  
DETAILS  
(EVIDENCE)
- ✓TITLE
- ✓CHARACTER  
NAMES
- ✓AUDIENCE,  
PURPOSE, TONE

**The Short Film, "Marry Me"**  
**<https://youtu.be/XFdbZHMBxfg>**



# **Something else you try for a virtual breakout activity:**

**Pair students up.**

**Decide which student in group will "Step out" while the video is being shown.**

**Have the remaining students watch the short film and annotate.**

**When the other students return in about six minutes, put the pairs in their virtual breakout rooms.**

**The student who stayed to annotate will now summarize the short film for their partner who has not seen the film. Give them five or so minutes.**

**Bring students back together to the general session.**

**Unmute only the students who "stepped out."**

**Quiz/Kahoot them on the short film they never saw.**

**How well did the partner who stayed annotate?**

**See how important annotation is?**

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