



SIFT ANNOTATIONS

Using SIFT

Using the acronym SIFT should help you begin the process of literary analysis. Below are questions to help focus your reading. Annotating is a preliminary interaction with the text. Annotations should become the basis for deeper classroom discussions and written responses.

Symbols

As you read, look for symbolism in the text and its title. Annotations should identify objects, characters, story elements, etc. that might be representative of larger issues.

Questions to consider:

- Do characters represent larger issues at stake in society? For what purpose? Identify.
 - **Examples:** loneliness/isolation, inability to let go of the past, role of family, etc.
- Do characters represent types of people? For what purpose? Explain.
 - **Examples:** the common man, the overachiever, the loner, etc.
- Do objects represent abstract concepts? For what purpose? Examine.
 - **Examples:** evil, oppression, bliss, passage of time, etc.
- What does the title reveal about the text or the author's perception?

Images

Examine how the author employs language in regards to sensory experience.

Questions to consider:

- To what senses does the author primarily appeal?
 - What emotional reaction results?
- What patterns do you recognize in regards to sensory language?
 - Are certain words or types of sentences repeated?
 - Are objects or characters associated with specific senses or sensory experiences?

Figures of Speech

Identify any devices (simile, metaphor, personification, pun, etc.) employed. Discuss their purpose.

Questions to consider:

- What is the purpose of this device? How does it impact the text?
- Does the author depend on a particular type of device? If so, explain why.
 - Are specific characters defined by specific devices? Explain.

Tone and Theme

Examine word choice to determine a narrator's tone towards characters and content. Determine how all of the categories above contribute to an author's theme.

Questions to consider:

- What emotion is conveyed about the events in the text? Why?
- What insight is offered about the human experience? Be careful of stating clichés.