Annotating

0:00	**Owl:** Welcome to Annotating, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab.
0:21	Hold on there!
Displayed on screen	**Student:** What's the matter?
0:25	**Owl:** You can radically improve your understanding of what you read if you write while you read.
0:30	This is called annotating a text.
0:33	To annotate literally means to add notes to a text as you read, either in the margins or in a separate notepad or document.
0:42	This technique is at the core of active reading.
0:46	By reading carefully and pausing to reflect upon, mark up, and add notes to a text as you read, you can greatly improve your understanding of it.
Displayed on screen	**Student:** Really? But won't that take a lot of time?
0:58	**Owl:** It might seem that way.
0:59	But, in fact, annotating can save you a lot of time!
1:03	For instance, annotating while you read can help you avoid having to re-read passages again and again in order to get the meaning.
1:12	By actively engaging with the text the first time, you can improve your odds of understanding it without having to read it again.
1:20	Also, by pausing to reflect as you read, annotating a text helps you figure out if you're understanding what you're reading so that you can re-read or seek additional information to improve your understanding.
1:33	This is called "monitoring comprehension."
1:36	In the long term, this technique will help prevent you from wasting time by reading without understanding.
1:43	Finally, by annotating a text, you can increase your odds of remembering what you've read.
1:49	You also leave behind a set of notes that can help you find key information the next time you need to refer to that text, say when you need to study for an exam or when you want to cite it for a paper you're writing.
2:02	In short, annotating while you read will help you get the most from the time you spend reading.
2:07	So, while you may be able to read faster by reading without annotating, you can actually save time and improve your comprehension by reading carefully and pausing to reflect upon and mark-up the text as you read.

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE.

	Student: Wow, that sounds great! So how do I annotate?
2:24	**Owl:** Good question!
2:26	The first step is to pick up a pen or pencil so that you can annotate as you read.
2:31	You might also want to have a highlighter handy to mark important passages or words.
2:37	Now, let's talk about a system for how to annotate.
2:41	The simplest way to annotate is to mark key words, phrases, or passages by highlighting, underlining, bracketing, or placing symbols next to them.
3:02	In addition to this, you should also write notes in the margins.
3:06	These notes are sometimes called "marginalia."
3:10	There are four reasons for adding notes in the margins.
3:14	The first reason is to identify key ideas and help you remember them.
3:19	One way to do this is by writing key words in the margins next to where you found them in the text.
3:25	Another way to do this is by paraphrasing what you read, which means putting it into your own words and writing it down in the margin.
3:33	A second reason for adding notes in the margins is to comment on what you are reading.
3:39	For instance, maybe you want to register your agreement or disagreement with an idea in the text.
3:44	Or maybe you want to leave a note to remind you to look up something related.
3:50	A third reason for writing notes in the margins is to record questions you have about what you are reading.
3:56	These questions generally fall into two different categories.
4:00	Questions intended to clarify meaning, —
4:02	This has to do with monitoring and improving your understanding of what you have read.
4:07	If you're not sure about something you've read, jot down some questions about it in the margins.
4:12	You might start these questions by asking who, what, why, when, where, or how.
4:21	For example, you might ask, "What is the difference between anabolism and catabolism?"
4:27	Or you might express your question as a statement like, "I don't understand what this means."
4:33	— and questions intended to evaluate what you have read.

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE.

4:37	For example, you might ask, "Do I agree with what this is in light of what Smith says?"
4:43	or
4:43	"I don't find this evidence convincing. Is there more data to support this claim?"
4:49	Finally, a fourth reason for writing notes in the margins is to answer any guide questions you may have left for yourself while previewing a text.
4:57	For instance, you may have previously written the question "What are the three conditions for intrinsic motivation?" next to a passage about this subject.
5:07	After reading the passage with this question in mind, you can now jot down your answer to the question: "Autonomy, Mastery, and Relatedness."
5:18	By recording your answers to guide questions in the margins, you can improve your comprehension and memory of what you have read.
5:25	You also leave behind valuable notes for the next time you need to consult the text.
Displayed on screen	**Student:** Ok. That all sounds great. But what if you can't mark up a text because it's not yours, for instance, if you're renting a textbook?
5:35	**Owl:** In that case, you can record your notes in a separate notepad or document.
5:40	Even if you can mark up a text, you might want to keep up a separate notepad or document anyway.
5:46	The more you write while you read, the better you will understand what you are reading.
Displayed on screen	**Student:** But what if I'm reading an electronic text such as an ebook, PDF, word file, or audiobook?
5:53	**Owl:** Most eReaders and word processors come with built-in annotation tools that allow you to underline, highlight, and even leave notes on the text.
6:03	Audiobooks sometimes allow you to leave voice recorded notes.
6:07	If not, you can always pick up a notepad and jot down notes as you listen.
6:13	I hope you can see why annotating a text while you read is so important.
6:18	To recap, annotating a text helps you:
6:22	avoid having to re-read as often,
6:25	monitor and improve your comprehension,
6:28	and remember what you've read.
6:33	Thanks for listening to this instructional video on Annotating!
6:38	Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills.

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE.