The practice of **stopping** to **think** and **jotting down** notes as somebody reads.
Text Annotation

Marking up text:

- Handwritten **codes**
- **Symbols**
- Words in the **margins**
- **Highlighting** tools
- **Post-it** notes
Select Short, Worthy Texts

Because close readings can be time-consuming, it is often best to select shorter pieces of text for instruction.
Lesson Design

Design the lesson so students *re-read* the texts several times.
Independence

Ask students to read *independently* with a pencil to note their confusions.
Text-Dependent Questions

- Ask *text-dependent questions* (strategic questions).

- Ask your students to *develop* text-dependent questions themselves.
Let’s explore what step by step instruction can be used to teach students how to apply the **text annotation strategy**.
Text Annotation: Step One

**Breaking down** the text into parts (chunking, splitting)

- drawing lines
- numbering the paragraphs
Vocabulary Development

If needed, especially if you are working with English learners, include vocabulary development activities.
Text Annotation: Step Two

Writing in the margins *what each part is about*
Text Annotation: Step Three

*Identifying* and *circling* the *key concepts* in each part.
Text Annotation: Step Four

- If needed, students find the *definitions* of the *key words* (concepts)

- **Reflective Questions:**
  Why are you using these words?
  Why are they important for this text?
Creating *charts*, *webs*, etc. reflecting *connections* (or *disconnections*) between the *key concepts* within one part and between different parts.
Text Annotation: Step Six

**Text reconstruction** according to the **student’s understanding** of the text (a **chart**, a **table**, or some other **graphic organizer** representing **the whole picture** of the content of the text).
Text Annotation: Step Seven

- Creating a **one-sentence statement** of the story’s theme (supported by details)
- Writing **a paragraph / an essay**
- Writing a **source summary** (author, claim, evidence, evaluation), **objective summary of the text**, etc.
“College readiness” definitely means students can annotate.
Annotated Text
Read the text Strategies for Close Reading and complete the assignment after the text.

**Working with Expository Text**

When students enter middle and secondary school, their interaction with such expository materials as textbooks, essays, lab reports, and newspaper articles dramatically increases. Expository texts have a different structure from their narrative counterparts. According to Jim Burke (2000),

A narrative text includes such elements as a theme, plot, conflict(s), resolution, characters, and a setting. Expository texts, on the other hand, explain something by definition, sequence, categorization, comparison, contrast, enumeration, process, problem-solution, description, or cause-effect. (p. 142)

For students to successfully comprehend the multitude of expository pieces they encounter, they must understand how to navigate these texts.

**Getting Ready to Read**

Before students set out to read their history textbook or a science article, they need time to prepare for the task. Teachers should begin by discussing the subject of the text with students. When readers have sufficient background knowledge about the subject matter, they are better able to maintain their focus and interest (Santa, Havens, & Maycumber, 1996). Teachers also need to point out how a text is organized. For example, textbook chapters are usually divided into multiple sections with different subheadings. When students hone in on these divisions, they come to understand the topic's main ideas. An essay will have a different structure because it is generally organized around a thesis with supporting paragraphs. Students need to become familiar with transitional words and phrases—such as however, moreover, and therefore—to recognize how they affect meaning by signaling contrasts, additions, or conclusions.

Students should prepare their notes on an expository text before they even begin to read.

1. Unfortunately, many teachers give students summaries of the reading rather than show them how to synthesize meaning on their own. According to researchers Darwin and Fleischman (2005), this practice “may actually circumnavigate students' need to improve their literacy skills, thus avoiding the problem rather than addressing it” (p. 85). In preparing their own skeletal version of prereading notes, students are armed with a purpose when they begin to read: filling in the blanks.

Determining the structure of their notes helps engage students and improves both comprehension and retention. When tackling textbook material, students can copy the headings and subheadings from the book directly into their notebooks, leaving space to add relevant information. As they read, they fill in details under each heading, such as the people and places involved, dates, and definitions. When students read an article or primary source that does not include headings and subheadings, they can create skeleton notes using the familiar questions of who, when, where, why, what, and how.

**Reading**

Active reading requires readers to be present and attentive, which means doing more than just moving their eyes across words. Students should read with a pencil in hand. (Highlighters
are too distracting and difficult to write with.) Most students don't know where to begin, however, and they end up underlining entire pages and paragraphs regardless of the importance of the passages. Here are some practices that can help students wield that pencil more effectively.

**Coding.** One of the most efficient ways to comprehend expository text is to mark it with codes. Coding is more than just underlining—students mark places they find confusing, surprising, or important. Designating passages with specific symbols—such as question marks, exclamation points, and asterisks—helps students quickly identify significant pieces of text. Students should also circle transitions and words that they don't understand.

**Highlighting repeated words.** Students should underline important words that appear repeatedly. For instance, in an article about the United States' trade embargo with Cuba, a student might underline such words and proper nouns as *communism, Fidel Castro, embargo, trade,* and *economy.*

2.

**Summarizing.** After reading a paragraph or section of text, students should stop and write in the margin a short summary of what they have read. If they have been coding text and underlining repeated words, this should be easy. The synopsis need only be a few words: *Castro throws dissenters in jail; he takes all the money from tourism.* This routine helps students solidify their understanding of the main ideas. Readers should also be on the lookout for a thesis and mark it accordingly. If the thesis is implied rather than explicitly stated, students can write their own thesis on the basis of the information provided to have “an idea against which you can test other ideas” (Penfield, 2005, p. 3). For example, if the article on Castro and Cuba does not contain an explicit thesis, readers might propose their own, such as "Until Castro's rule ends, Cubans will remain isolated from the rest of the world."

**Interpreting**
After reading, students should organize the pertinent facts and information from their reading in their predesigned outline. Because discussing ideas with other readers develops understanding, teachers should facilitate formal or informal discussions among students using questions that they have posed about the text. For example, after reading an article about AIDS and its effects on an African village, student questions might include, “Who is helping to educate the villagers of Swaziland about the perils of AIDS?” or “Why can't the country afford more medicine and other aid for its people?” Students can debate whether or not the author's evidence sounds accurate, question the author's slant, or back up their opinions about what they've read with evidence from the text or other sources. Discussion helps students draw new conclusions about what they've read and reinforces the practice of using evidence to support opinions in writing.

PARTNER B

**Working with Narrative Text**
Narrative texts are often lumped together as “fiction.” Although the narrative form includes fiction, it also includes such varied genres as biographies, autobiographies, autobiographical fiction, personal essays, anecdotes, and jokes.
Narrative is not so much a genre as a method of organization. We conventionally think of narrative as a “story pyramid” in three main parts: exposition, action, and resolution. These puzzle pieces of the narrative are among what Cris Tovani (2000) calls “surface structures.” They help students understand literal meanings. Unfortunately, many students believe that if they understand what happens in a story, their comprehension is in tiptop shape. Effective literacy instruction teaches students not only to engage with the surface structures of narrative—what happens in the story—but also to bring their comprehension full circle by persevering in uncovering what Tovani calls the narrative's “deep structures.”

Tovani describes deep structures as semantic, schematic, and pragmatic cues. Semantic cues enable readers to make conceptual associations with word meanings in text, particularly in longer text. Schematic cues enable readers to associate what they read with prior knowledge and experience. Pragmatic cues enable readers to determine what is most important in the text and to create shared and increasingly abstract interpretations of those details. In contrast to surface structures, which have more to do with facilitating literal comprehension, these deep structures represent higher-order thinking, which is necessary for developing critical reading skills.

**Getting Ready to Read**

Before reading a narrative piece, students should pause long enough to get a feel for the subject matter and use peripheral information within the text—such as the title—to unlock meaning and provide a purpose for the reading. Ask students to write a minimum of three specific questions about the title (Connecticut Teachers, 2004). *Specific* is not “What does that mean?” or “Why did the author choose that title?” Here's a student's question set about the title for *The Alchemist*, by Paulo Coelho.

1. What does an alchemist do?
2. Does the word have anything to do with chemistry?
3. If the word refers to a person, is the person the main character?

Students can then make inferences or predictions about the answers. The student in question made the following inferences:

1. The alchemist is probably a scientist. I think so because I know that the suffix - *ist* means it's the person's career.
2. I think it has to do with chemistry because the word *alchemist* has “chem” in it.
3. I am almost positive that it is the main character. Why else would the whole book be called *The Alchemist*?

The student used evidence about what he already knew to create meaningful inferences and to set a purpose for reading. Before he even began, this student had already uncovered some of the book's major themes and events.

In a full-length narrative, such as a novel or an autobiography, students should also note details from the book's summary, which usually appears either on the inside panel or on the back cover.
Readers will often establish much about a story this way—such as the plot, the setting, a character's motivation for solving a given problem or embarking on a given quest, and major themes.

**Reading**

All readers have a voice in their heads as they read. The voice either interacts with the text or distracts from it. Some readers simply recite the words in their heads—this is the recitation voice. Others are thinking about something else as they read—this is the distraction voice. Neither of these voices promotes thinking. That's the job of the conversation voice. In this case, readers engage in conversation with the author and actively search for meaning (Tovani, 2000). Nowhere is this conversation voice more important than in narrative text, where the author's meaning is often concealed in the actions and words of his or her characters.

In *Strategies That Work*, Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (2000) recommend a wide variety of strategies to stimulate thought as students read narrative text in the elementary grades, including inferring themes, questioning and correcting, connecting, and sensing. **Inferring themes.** Compelling storytellers often seek to convey universal truths to their readers. Students should use the inferences that they made about a story's themes to search for those themes in the characters' actions and words. For example, the student who was preparing to read *The Alchemist* was able to infer from the back of the book and the introduction that the main character was searching for his destiny. As the student reads, he or she should mark every passage in the book that alludes in some way to a quest for the meaning of life.

A student might misinterpret a theme as he or she reads. For example, on discovering that alchemy is the art of changing base metals into gold, a student might infer that the protagonist's destiny is to find gold, when in reality, his destiny is deeper and more meaningful than acquiring material wealth. Students should pause after every chapter or section to reassess their inferences and determine whether new themes have surfaced, which they can then search for in subsequent parts of the text.

**Questioning and correcting.** Good readers become confused as they read just as poorer readers do, but good readers ask questions and seek answers to resolve their confusion. The Great Books Foundation (2003) offers guidelines to help students frame meaningful questions. Students should place a question mark by parts of the text in which any of the following things happens: The character does something that might have meaningful consequences; the character demonstrates quirks or oddities in dialogue, thought, or action; or the tone or mood suddenly changes.

**Connecting.** Struggling readers might have a good amount of relevant background knowledge, but they often move through a text without using this information to help make sense of a difficult passage or concept. We teach students to make three kinds of connections: personal, global, and literary (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997).

We ask the student, “What does this specific passage remind you of in your life?” Making personal connections can reveal how characters' lives are significantly similar to or different from the reader's life.
We ask students, “How does this specific passage reflect what is going on in the world?” A reader might use relevant history or science lessons, articles about current events, or news reports to make sense of some similar event in a story. 

Literary connections demonstrate our understanding of how the concepts in a narrative relate to other literature. We ask the student, “What in this passage reminds you of other literature you’ve read?” The fact that multiple authors explore similar conflicts and themes shows that the world affects us in curiously similar ways. Literary connections help reveal the universal truths that storytellers try to convey.

For example, many of our students have related world events to the following passage in *The Alchemist*: “When you possess great treasures within you and try to tell others about them, seldom are you believed” (p. 134). Students point out individuals or minorities with unpopular but justified convictions who persistently struggle to make their plights known.

Sensing. Most educators refer to this strategy as visualizing because it involves creating a mental image of a narrative text. When readers can successfully see a plot unfolding before their eyes, they usually feel confident that they can understand what they are reading (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). If they are unable to create these mental pictures, they know they need to repair their understanding. Older readers should be aware of a storyteller’s ability to engage all the reader’s senses and to put the reader inside the story by making the reader not only see what the characters are seeing, but also feel what they’re feeling. We ask our students to indicate places in the text where the storyteller uses vivid imagery to appeal to the reader’s senses of sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing. This is also a powerful lesson in how the storyteller uses figurative language, tone, and mood to convey an important message.

**Interpreting**

Using these strategies, readers can make observations about the narrative, but they have yet to interpret and draw conclusions from what they’ve learned. Although writing analytical essays about literature is one way to interpret, it is not the only way, and it should never be the first thing readers do after reading a narrative.

We help readers draw substantive conclusions by teaching them to annotate and discuss. 

**Rereading and annotating.** As students read a narrative text, they should mark it. As with expository text, students can use an asterisk to signal themes or important messages and a question mark to indicate questions or confusion. In addition, they can use the letter X to indicate personal, global, or literary connections and can highlight sensory images by underlining those passages (Connecticut Teachers, 2004).

**Discussing.** Initial conversations about literature should focus on themes. There are no right or wrong interpretations, but we do ask students to “observe, prove, and conclude,” a three-part approach to discussion adapted from the Junior Great Books program. A teacher or student might pose an interpretive question to the class or simply ask another student to share an observation. The person responding should share a provocative opinion, back the opinion up with facts from the text, and draw a conclusion about the author’s message on the
basis of the evidence. When we ask students to prove their assertions about literature, we hold them to a higher standard of thought and prepare them to write about what they've read. Teaching our readers to be strategic and methodical in their approach to text avoids the common pitfall of simply placing text on the students' desks and telling them “to read.” We need to show our students how to read.

Eight sentences have been removed from the text Strategies for Close Reading. Choose from the sentences A-I the ones which fit each gap (1-8). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8.

A. By sacrificing a little content for additional instruction, we can create a generation of readers who will be able to apply their critical thinking skills to any piece of text they encounter, who know how to “look” as they read
B. Personal connections usually reflect a reader's own experiences or emotions.
C. Readers need time to turn their observations into assertions and determine which of their assertions are supported by facts from the story.
D. When they have finished reading a chapter, a section, or the entire piece, students return to their marks, recall their thoughts, and write short notes about what they can infer. Rereading makes students reexamine passages that they believed were crucial to their understanding.
E. These notes can take many forms, such as a standard outline or notes showing the main idea and supporting details.
F. Readers can get important information from the author's biography and from introductions, prologues, and epilogues as well.
G. One of the most efficient ways to comprehend expository text is to mark it with codes.
H. This practice provides students with a purpose, helps them zero in on details that add up to main ideas, improves their recollection of important facts, and helps them draw conclusions on the basis of textual evidence.
I. Readers who make global connections apply the knowledge that they have developed through observing world events to understanding larger concepts in a story.
## Description of PBL Elements

At its core, the project is focused on teaching students **important knowledge and skills**, derived from **standards** and **key concepts** at the heart of academic subjects.

## Who Answers These Four Questions?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- what knowledge and skills will be studied?</td>
<td>- what materials and procedures will be used?</td>
<td>- what will students produce to demonstrate their learning?</td>
<td>- how will the learning be assessed?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## The Names of PBL Elements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Curricular Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To define contradictions</td>
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<tr>
<td>· To define the goals of the activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>· To discern and prioritize tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>· To identify the means of achieving the goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To find resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To model the final product(s) (envision the product)</td>
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<tr>
<td>· To plan the results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To organize and work as a team (outlines, people in charge, dates)</td>
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<tr>
<td>· To stay focused on the immediate tasks (ongoing reflection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Activity itself (doing assignments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To produce and present a product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To analyze the results of the activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To compare the results with the initial goals (to reflect on the activity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· To set new goals/tasks, etc.</td>
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## Activity Approach

Students are engaged in an extended, **rigorous process of asking questions**, **using resources**, **developing answers**, and **creating project products**.

## Activity for Participants: Essential Components of PBL, Answer Key
This element can take on many forms, depending on the goal of the project. PBL may connect to the real world because it addresses real-world issues that are relevant to learners' lives or communities. A project may be connected to real professions, practices, and audiences. Communicating with the world outside the classroom, via the Internet or collaboration might also make real world connections with community members and mentors.

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<th>Authentic and Relevant Tasks</th>
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Project work is focused by an **open-ended question** that students understand and find intriguing, which captures their task or frames their exploration.

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<th>Driving Question</th>
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The project includes processes for students to **give and receive feedback** on the quality of their work, leading them to make revisions or conduct further inquiry.

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<th>Critique and Revision</th>
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Students present their work to **other people**, beyond their classmates and teacher.

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<tr>
<th>Public Audience</th>
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Strategic Questioning

- **Text-Dependent** Questions
- A strategy that **scaffolds** students’ understanding.
- Can literary lift students up to a **challenging text** (when done well)
Three Categories of Strategic Questions: 1

- Questions about **what the text says**, both **explicitly** and **implicitly**.
- Help students meet the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards **for Reading 1-3**.
- **Fiction** - Qs about **setting**, **plot**, **character**, and **theme**
- **Expository Text** - Qs about **events**, **central** and **supporting** ideas, and **individuals**.
1. Question Starters (What the text says, …)

- What **conclusions** can you draw about…?
- What can you **infer** about…?
- **Why** do you think that…?
- How could you **explain** …?
1. **Question Starters** (What the text says, …)

- What *reasons* might explain …?
- What does … *mean*?
- What is the *significance* of …?
- What *evidence* can you draw from the text to *support* your answer?
Three Categories of Strategic Questions: 2

- Questions about the **author’s craft**.
- College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for **Reading 4-6**.
- For both **Fiction** and **Expository Texts**: Qs about:
  - Word Choice
  - Language
  - Structure
  - Syntax
  - Grammar
  - Point of View/Perspective
2. Question Starters (Author’s Craft)

- How would you define …?
- In your *own words*, what is …?
- Why did the author choose …?
- *Why* does the author say …?
- Where is an example of …?
2. **Question Starters** (Author’s Craft)

- How would this text be **different if** ...?
- How is (this section, paragraph) **related to** ...?
- **Why** did the author **organize** ... ?
- What is the **author’s attitude** toward ...? How do you know?
- What **evidence** do you have?
Three Categories of Strategic Questions: 3

- **Evaluation** and **Analysis** Questions
- Anchor Standards for **Reading 7-9**
- For both **Fiction** and **Expository Texts**: Qs that ask readers:
  - to **integrate information** from various forms of texts
  - to **compare** texts to **other texts**
  - to **evaluate** texts against a **variety of criteria**
3. Question Starters (Evaluation and Analysis)

- How is ... *like* ...?
- How is ... *different* from ...?
- What *patterns* can you find in ...?
- How would you describe the *organization* of ...?
- What is the *author’s argument*? What *evidence* is used to support that argument?
3. Question Starters (Evaluation and Analysis)

- Which **details** does this author use to convince ...?
- What, specifically, **caused you to believe** ...?
- What, specifically, **caused you to disagree** ...?
- What, specifically, makes this a **good example** of ...?
- What, specifically, **strengthens/weakens** ...?
Complex Text + Strategic Questions = Higher Order Comprehension