



## Annotation and Pre-Reading Checklist in Preparation for Literature Studies

### Pre-Reading Preparation Checklist:

1. Read text summaries, reviews and critiques from literary experts prior to reading your novel.
  - Blooms online database
  - Goodreads.com
  - Readability.com.au
  - ABC TV's 'The Book Club'
  - Major newspapers
2. Read chapter summaries prior to reading each chapter (if available).
  - LitCharts
  - Shmoop

### During Reading Annotation Checklist:

1. Add names of characters as they appear in your text to the front of your book
2. Add a list of themes to the front of your book so that you can refer to this whilst reading
3. Look for literary devices and consider their effects/usage in the text. E.g.
  - Metaphor/Simile
  - Personification
  - Motifs
  - Point-of-view (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> person)
  - Imagery
  - Foreshadowing
4. Look for key quotes.
  - Highlight and label the quote as 'kq'
  - Add these to your quote lists whilst you are reading
5. Look for key scenes and chapters
  - Label these with plastic sticky labels/coloured tabs
6. Translate and define any new/complex vocabulary

### Top Tips:

Use a **bright highlighter** such as **orange** or **pink** (yellow will fade)  
Write in **pen** not pencil as it too will fade  
Use different coloured highlighters for different themes or characters  
Use different coloured tabs for different themes or characters

### After Reading – Write about what you read:

Keep a 'reading journal' and write 3-4 observations and/or questions every day about what you have just read in your novel. Here are some sentence starters to guide you. This is also a good way to practice embedding quotations.

- *I like the way the writer ...*
- *What does the writer mean when they say ...*
- *This passage was interesting because ...*
- *I understood more about ...*

### Here's an example:

Shakespeare's dark comedy 'Measure for Measure' alluringly combines sex, death, religion, justice, judgement, lies, deceit and "mortality and mercy in Vienna" (1.1:46) in which "some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall" (2.1: 41). What Shakespeare achieves in this play, more so than any of his other more well-known and popular plays, is that he not only entertains his audience through the medium of comedy, he encourages them to ponder existential, ethical and moral dilemmas without being consciously aware. As Angelo asserts early on in the play, "what dost thou, or what art thou" (2.2:205) with his profound response being "thou art blood" in his memorable opening soliloquy in Act 2, Scene iv. Perhaps this is externalised more than in other "problem plays" or tragedies like 'Othello' and 'Macbeth'.