

# STRATEGY 5

## Marking the Text

"Marking the Text" is an active reading strategy that asks students to think critically about their

key terms, and underlining information relevant to one's reading purpose. With pencil in hand, students focus on what is being said in the text leading to increases in comprehension and

book is support. Help your students learn by modeling how

practice. When introducing the strategy, have students first

information while reading a text for the first time.

beginning, they will need to be shown how to mark the text. As

Since marking the text is a fundamental skill, it ought to be

discussed whenever students are asked to read. If non-consumables are used, students are called to read. When students are

non-consumables are harder to mark. Sometimes it is valuable

to photocopy sections of a textbook or novel, especially those

passages that students must understand for tests, papers, or

another assessment. Sticky notes work as a nice solution for directly marking on the text. Whether working with consumables or non-consumables, it is necessary to find ways

for students to actively mark the texts they read.

Students need to focus on the texts they read, and they need

to assist in summary writing; to connect sections of the text; to investigate claims or evidence; or to engage in other types of analysis. Numbering paragraphs is also essential for class

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# Marking the Text

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The following provides basic strategies teachers can introduce marking the text as a critical reading strategy.

## Introducing

Marking the text is an important skill for students to learn. It is important for readers to learn this skill. You will want to

ideas on the handout available to students in some other way

- Explicitly teach how to identify and number paragraphs. Try to have fun with this activity. You might ask students to call out their number with this activity. *Marking the text* is an

you can have students check each other's numbers to ensure they are numbering each paragraph accurately.

Explicitly teach students how to identify essential information

- identify claims, evidence, and other relevant information.
- Model for students how to mark the text using a document camera or overhead projector. Mark a section of the text and

ideas on the handout available to students in some other way

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clear. Ask questions as you model this skill. Students should

ideas on the handout available to students in some other way

- Select specific paragraphs or sections of text for students to analyze and evaluate in order to reduce the amount of text they have to read at one time.

ideas on the handout available to students in some other way

purpose.

- Engage students in various cognitive exercises. Ask questions

such as, "What are the main ideas?" "What are the main points?"

and "Why would readers want to use this strategy?" Other

useful questions include "How should we, for instance, mark

or chart this text?" and "How could you use this strategy in English or Biology?"

- Create opportunities for students to learn this strategy in small groups. Students can mark texts together or they can discuss how and why they marked a particular section of a text

ideas on the handout available to students in some other way

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**Numbering**

Use numbers to identify paragraphs and sections. Start with the number one and continue numbering sequentially until you reach the end of the text or reading assignment. Write the number near the

so that you have room to write in the margin.

5

As with page numbers, paragraph numbers will act as a reference so you can easily refer to specific sections of the text.

**2. Circle key terms,**

You might circle...

and key concepts.

**Circle Essential Words**

- names of people
- terms

**THIRDSIDE, OF RECORD**

thing, or idea	
• descriptions of a person,	•
place, thing, or idea	

# Marking the Text: Science

This strategy has three distinct parts:

1. Number the paragraphs.

① Before you read, take a moment and number the paragraphs in the section you are planning to read. Start with the number one and continue sequentially on each paragraph. Write the number in the margin and circle the number, write it small enough so that you have room to write in the margin.

② As with page numbers, paragraph numbers will act as a reference

2. Circle key terms, cited authors, and other essential words

You might circle...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>key concepts</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and/or experiments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_____</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>properties</li> <li>elements</li> <li>formulas</li> <li>units of measure</li> <li>variables</li> <li>values</li> <li>percentages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_____</li> <li>_____</li> <li>_____</li> </ul>

3. Underline the author's claims and other information relevant to the reading purpose.

While reading informational texts (i.e. textbooks, reference books, articles, or journals), read carefully to identify information that is relevant to the reading task. Relevant information might include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data</li> <li>Definitions</li> <li>Descriptions</li> <li>Evidence</li> <li>Examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hypotheses</li> <li>"If-Then" statements</li> <li>Main Ideas</li> <li>Methods</li> <li>Processes</li> </ul>

Here are some strategies to help students identify essential information in the reading:

1. Number the paragraphs.

① When reading a word problem that is only one paragraph, 1 and count by fives (1, 5, 10).

2. Circle key terms, cited authors, and or numbers.

You might circle...

- action words
- sum, add, more than
- multiply
- simplify
- divide
- difference, subtract

3. Underline verbal models.<sup>1</sup>

You might also underline

- Definitions
- Explanations

4. Box the question.

In a word problem or multiple choice question,

draw a box around the question.

# Marking the Text Fiction

This Strategy has three distinct marks:

### 1. Number

and circle the number, write it small enough so that you have room to

write in the margin

As with page numbers, small numbers will act as a

reference so you can easily refer to specific sections of the text

people, places, and things.

<p>Concrete nouns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concrete nouns</li> <li>• Names of characters</li> <li>• Names of places</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Word choice</li> <li>• Diction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
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### 3. Underline

while reading fictional texts (i.e. novels, short stories, or poems), read carefully to identify information that is relevant to the reading task.

language, or other

information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptions</li> </ul>	
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Note: If you are not marking with one symbol, you should not be marking a second symbol.

Remember, the goal is to identify information that is relevant to the reading task.

## Marking the Text: New Claims (A)

This Strategy has three distinct marks:

1. Number 4s
2. Circle key terms,
3. Underline key terms,
4. Before you read, take a moment and consider if the word or phrase is...

One and the same numbering sequence may be used to mark the

the paragraph intention and circle the number, write it small

2. Circle key terms,

In order to identify a key term, consider if the word or phrase is...

4. 1-4

OR INTRODUCTION

used to explain or represent an idea

a term or concept or idea relevant to close reading

purpose

OR INTRODUCTION

consider the following statements:

OR INTRODUCTION

A claim may appear anywhere in the text (beginning, middle,

OR INTRODUCTION

A claim may not appear at all in the text.

- Often an author will make several claims throughout his or her argument.

An author may also begin her claim letter and end it with his or her position.



# Marking Argument

## Numbering Paragraphs and Circling Key Terms

the reading purpose for the excerpt. Without a reading purpose, young readers—especially those



### Don't Compromise the Safety of Biotech Drugs

By Bryan A. Liang

1 The comparison is worth keeping in mind as the debate heats up over "follow-on" biologics. Biologics are today's most advanced medicines, fully tested biotechnology protein

In this passage,  
Bryan Liang

and circle 2 His spending on them reflects the importance of these drugs

reader circled  
these terms

most advanced medicines. Indeed, the San Diego Institute of Medicine

portion

Liang, and co-director of San Diego Center for Patient Safety at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. LIAO SER VIA WASHINGTON POST, 04.09.08 10:07PM

MARKING THE TEXT

Marking the Text

Numbering Paragraphs, Circling



U.S. District

Reading

Purpose:

public policy, to revisit recently enacted federal mandates requiring the

are not repeated,

they are key terms

Number the

to revisit recently enacted federal mandates requiring the

because they directly relate

harm and committing in a growing economy

U.S. DISTRICT



# Marking the Text

Direct students that active reading becomes increasingly important as texts become more complex.

## Understanding

comprehension of challenging texts.

JUSTICE

Ask students to share their markings with the entire class.

Share one or two paragraphs or you can have them place their texts under a document camera and have them discuss their markings. This activity builds confidence and validates the work happening in the classroom.

Call on volunteers to lead a *marking the text* exercise. Using

part of the students in the class watch and mark their texts

Call on students that have been marked and write comments in the margin, explaining to the students what they are

overlooked or misunderstood.

As students master this skill they will need less guidance.

Provide a reading purpose, but do not provide specific directions on how to mark the text. Eventually, students will need to learn how to effectively mark the text based on a given prompt provided by the teacher. Once students

**Extending**

- "Marking the Text" is not limited to one discipline or one type of text. This skill is transferable to all academic classes.

- Photocopy sections of a novel, short story, textbook, or other

to teach students the value of active reading during testing.

mark the text. The question will provide a reading purpose for each passage that the students are asked to read.

Use the lines below to record successful strategies that you or your colleagues have developed and implemented.

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**References:**

Marking the text is a strategy used by the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies at