

## Reading and Annotating for

# Claim

**Make sense of the most challenging informational texts.**

*Every text is arguing something. Read to find the topic and claim about the topic, and you can unlock the most challenging texts.*

<b>Beginning</b>	<p><b>Read the Beginning to Identify the Topic &amp; Opening Claim</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start with the title, blurb, and the first paragraph(s) — carefully read and annotate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the speaker and genre; note any obvious bias</li> <li>Jot the topic in the margin after 1-2 paragraphs</li> <li>Jot the opening claim</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Middle</b>	<p><b>Read the Middle for Sub-Claims &amp; Shifts</b></p> <p>Annotate words/lines that develop the initial claim and/or establish additional claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annotate arguments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underline sentences that make a “how” or a “why” claim (esp. at beginning of paragraphs)</li> <li>Circle key words that signal arguments and author’s perspective (e.g., “similarly,” “in other words,” “surprisingly,” rhetorical questions, charged diction, “I” statements)</li> <li>Jot a claim note next to key claims, sub-sections and charts/graphs</li> </ul> </li> <li>Annotate shifts in thinking/transition words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circle words that show a shift in thinking (e.g., “however,” “although,” “despite this,” “in fact”)</li> <li>Circle phrases that signal the author is addressing counterarguments (e.g., “critics say,” “some might argue,” “while many people believe”)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>End</b>	<p><b>Generate an End Note that Captures the Claim</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review your annotations: How do all of my notes connect to reveal the author’s claim about the topic?</li> <li>Write a final end note: What is the claim about the topic that this text makes (the central idea)?</li> <li>Check your end note for precision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does it articulate the author’s perspective on the topic?</li> <li>Does it synthesize all of the key sub-claims you annotated?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>When You Struggle, Level Up</b>	
<b>If the paragraph or sentence is challenging</b>	<p><b>Anytime you Struggle with a Paragraph or Sentence, Level Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slow down and reread—increase your annotations to every 2-3 lines</li> <li>Paraphrase the most difficult lines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify subjects &amp; verbs (particularly when there are unclear pronouns and/or multiple subjects)</li> <li>Chunk a sentence into smaller parts and try to paraphrase each</li> <li>Unpack challenging vocabulary—use context clues to define terms or for connotation</li> <li>Review the surrounding text for phrases that provide additional context</li> </ul> </li> <li>Skip ahead and come back later <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn the future content and use it to come back and understand</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>If a larger section looks challenging</b>	<p><b>Scan to the End [difficult texts only]</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shorter text: read the final paragraph &amp; opening/closing sentences of each paragraph to ID key claims</li> <li>Longer text: read the final section, subheadings, and the end of each section to identify key claims</li> </ul> <p><b>Gut Check your Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask yourself: does this text assume I know something I don’t? If so, look it up.</li> </ul>