Annotating Literature

Taking notes on the following items while reading a piece of literature can enhance your thinking and analytical skills while also giving you a deeper understanding of the text.

1. **Title**
   Ponder the title before reading and predict what the text may be about.

2. **Read**
   Highlight, underline, and/or circle words you do not know.

3. **W’s**
   Address the who, what, where, when, and why.

4. **Attitude**
   Observe both the speaker’s and the author’s attitude (tone).

5. **Shifts**
   Mark the changes in the speaker and/or character(s), and pay particular attention to the conclusion.

6. **Title**
   Once you finish the passage/text, examine the title again, but this time on an interpretive level. *(Does the meaning change?)*

7. **Conflicts**
   Highlight and mark for yourself any conflicts that occur with the main character *(protagonist)*. Note your ideas about these conflicts in the text *(who/what is involved, attempts to resolve conflicts, etc.)*.

8. **Theme**
   What is the human experience, motivation, and/or condition suggested by the text? What is the overall meaning?

9. **Author’s Craft**
   Highlight literary devices/elements and explain how it impacts the author’s meaning. *(Examples: Simile, metaphor, alliteration, personification, irony, tone, and mood)*

10. **Ask Questions**
    Create open-ended questions and try to answer them to gain a deeper understanding of text.