



"Reading with Your Pen" Palette for Annotating Texts

1	Write a question or make a statement about something you read in the margin. Draw a line to the relevant part of the text.
2	Circle a word you don't know. Look up the word's definition using a dictionary or www.dictionary.com . Write the definition or synonym of the word in the margin.
3	Draw an (arrow→) to illustrate the link between two parts of the text. Write your explanation near the arrow or in the margin.
4	Circle an idea in the text that you find enlightening (an idea that you found interesting or that taught you something). Find a way to "thank" the author for that idea in the margin.
5	<u>Underline something you disagree with</u> and write a note in the margin to explain why. Be constructive.
6	Draw a 😊 next to something that made you laugh or smile and explain why in the margin.
7	Draw a 📣 (horn) next to a passage that made you hear a sound in your mind. Next to it, describe the sound and the feelings created in your mind.
8	Underline a sentence you found totally confusing. Draw a big ? (question mark) next to the sentence and in the margin, write about why you found it confusing.
9	Write an E near part of the text where an event is described. In the margin write down what you think are the cause and the effect of this event.
10	Is there a word in the text that is hard to pronounce? If so, ask how that word is pronounced and make note of the pronunciation next to the word using a phonetic (FO-NEH-TIC) spelling.
11	Draw a box around a sentence that you think is the main idea, thesis, or organizing concept of the text you're reading.
12	Write a specific comment about how you find an idea in the text interesting or useful. You may also reflect on what it made you think about.
13	Remix/rewrite/translate/paraphrase part of the text into your own words. Write your own version of the text in the margin.
14	Draw a ★ (star) next to a word, concept, or idea from the text that you learned about in another class. Write what you remember about that word or concept in the margin.
15	Write down a comment that builds on what you just read. For example, you might make a connection between the reading and your life, imagine you're in a conversation with the author, or predict what might happen next.
16	Draw a 🔑 (key) next to something that you think is a "key" idea. Explain in the margin why you think the idea is important.
17	Underline a sentence you found surprising. Draw a big ! (exclamation mark) next to the sentence that caught your attention in the margin.
18	Draw a 🪝 (hook) next to a part that "hooked" your attention. In the margin write why the passage hooked you.
19	In the margin, draw a simple picture or cartoon to help you understand something in the text. Draw an arrow connecting your picture and the text.
20	Write and answer the 5Ws and 1H (who, what, when, where, why, how) in the margin of the text.
21	Draw an ✂️ (ax) next to a part of the text that you think is unnecessary and should have been cut. Explain why you felt that part of the text wasn't necessary for the reader.

Scarlet A Minus

DISCovering Authors, 2003

[In the following excerpt from his study of *The Scarlet Letter*, Carpenter analyzes three different critical approaches to the novel—the traditional, the romantic, and the transcendental—and the concept of sin inherent in each interpretation.]

From the first *The Scarlet Letter* has been considered a classic. It has appealed not only to the critics but to the reading public as well....

But in modern times *The Scarlet Letter* has come to seem less than perfect. Other novels, like [Leo Tolstoy's] *Anna Karenina*, have treated the same problem with a richer humanity and a greater realism. If the book remains a classic, it is of a minor order. Indeed, it now seems not quite perfect even of its own kind. Its logic is ambiguous, and its conclusion moralistic. The ambiguity is interesting, of course, and the moralizing slight, but the imperfection persists.

In one sense the very imperfection of *The Scarlet Letter* makes it classic: its ambiguity illustrates a fundamental confusion in modern thought. To the question "Was the action symbolized by the scarlet letter wholly sinful?" it suggests a variety of answers: "Yes," reply the traditional moralists; "Hester Prynne broke the Commandments." But the romantic enthusiasts answer: "No; Hester merely acted according to the deepest of human instincts." And the transcendental idealists reply: "In part; Hester truly sinned against the morality which her lover believed in, but did not sin against her own morality, because she believed in a 'higher law.' To her own self, Hester Prynne remained true."...

The traditional answer remains clear, but the romantic and the idealistic have usually been confused. Perhaps the imperfection of the novel arises from Hawthorne's own confusion between his heroine's transcendental morality and mere immorality. Explicitly, he condemned Hester Prynne as immoral; but implicitly, he glorified her as courageously idealistic. And this confusion between romantic immorality and transcendental idealism has been typical of the genteel tradition in America.

According to the traditional moralists, Hester Prynne was truly a sinful woman. Although she sinned less than her hypocritical lover and her vengeful husband, she nevertheless sinned; and, from her sin, death and tragedy resulted. At the end of the novel, Hawthorne himself positively affirmed this interpretation: -

Earlier in life, Hester had vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetic, but had long since recognized the impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin.

And so the traditional critics have been well justified. *The Scarlet Letter* explicitly approves the tragic punishment of Hester's sin and explicitly declares the impossibility of salvation for the sinner.

But for the traditionalists there are many kinds and degrees of sin, and *The Scarlet Letter*, like Dante's *Inferno*, describes more than one. According to the orthodox, Hester Prynne belongs with the romantic

What are qualities seen today?

Whom in the public?

How are these characters not humane?

What makes it appealing?

Isn't this why we still talk about it now?

I don't agree

What is the realism?

The most important!

Right vs. wrong morally - who is to decide?

He didn't condemn her, The Puritans he was mocking

But did her sin start it? or will it disappear?

What's worse? Revenge? Lies?

↳ But what about Hawthorne's satirical view?