

Providence Extension Program | Core C American Literature
Scarlet Letter Annotation Guide

Since you will be using this text for the next 2 RR assignments as well as a longer Literary Analysis paper, it is important that you take good notes. Annotation directly in the book as you read is the best way to do this. Underline, make notes, highlight certain characters or themes or symbols that stand out to you.

In addition, keep track of certain elements that will be important for your writing assignments, as well as your understanding of the novel as a whole. Use the blank pages at the front and back of your text for this purpose, that way you never lose track of those notes.

The following information should be tracked as you read:

Characters—make note of page numbers where information about each character appears. This will make it easy to refer back to those pages when you are looking for textual evidence to support a thesis about that character.

Hester Prynne

Roger Chillingworth

Pearl

Arthur Dimmesdale

Symbols—these are important clues the author leaves to point to what is important in the message of the text. Making note of where they are found as you read will make it easier on you when you are asked to write about them. Underline them and identify them in the text itself, and then list them with page numbers in the blank pages of our text.

Scarlet Letter

Scaffold

Sunlight

Prison/Jail

Nature

Color

Themes—these are overall messages that the author reinforces in his writing. Identify them as you read, and list them with page numbers so you can find them easily later.

Sin

Identity

Judgment

Hypocrisy

Revenge

Literary Elements—this is another tool for an author to get his point across. Note them in the text—you WILL need to find them again (see reverse for definitions of these terms)

Tone

Foreshadowing

Suspense

Mood

Imagery

Characterization

Read well!

Tone: a writer's attitude toward a subject, character, or audience; conveyed through word choice and details. *Tone words:* sympathetic/unsympathetic, critical, compassionate, indifferent, supportive, likeminded, hostile, disapproving, respectful, dismissive, etc.

Mood: the atmosphere or predominant emotion in a literary work. *Mood words:* suspenseful, cheerful, comic, depressing, gloomy, dark, light, menacing, light-hearted, optimistic, pessimistic, ominous, foreboding, playful, humorous, dismal, cheerful, thrilling, threatening, etc.

Foreshadowing: the use of hints or clues to suggest future action

Imagery: words or phrases a writer uses that appeal to the senses

Suspense: a quality that makes the reader uncertain or tense

Characterization: the process where an author introduces and describes a character; often how s/he changes over the course of the novel