

# ***Writing about Reading***



## **How can you use writing to help you read more effectively?**

When you're doing research, it can be helpful to do informal and formal writing to help you think through the material you're working with. This handout will give you some strategies for using writing to improve your research and reading.

### Writing as you read helps you

- Process the information you are reading
- Identify questions
- Identify key terms, theories, evidence
- Make connections to other sources
- Prepare you for your writing projects

## **What are some useful approaches to writing as you read?**

### Annotate the text

When you use a source in your paper, you need to engage that source's arguments and evidence. Annotating as you read allows you to begin engaging the sources you will use in your own writing. It's useful to have questions to ask and information to look for before you start annotating. For example, you might try to get a sense of a writer's argument and the evidence he or she uses to support that argument. You should also be mindful of how the source you are reading can help you advance the argument you want to make in your essay. Mark keywords and theories that you may want to draw on. Underline and take notes about phrases that you might like to quote.

### Create an annotated bibliography

Annotated bibliographies can help you keep track of the sources you read. They allow you to summarize and explain the relevance of those sources so that you don't have to flip back through them to remember the basic points about what you read.

# Writing about Reading

## Download citation management software

The University allows students to download EndNote for free, and Reference Librarians offer training on how to use this software. EndNote and other citation management software allow you to store electronic copies of readings, annotations of those readings, and bibliographies.

## Consult response papers and online class discussions

The response paper or discussion board post is a common assignment at UofL. Return to these responses and posts when you write your essays. And even if you are not required to do these kinds of assignments, you may consider writing your own brief response to a text after you've finished reading it. It can be useful to record your impressions of a text after you've finished reading it because it's easy to forget those impressions as you move along in your research.

## Use double entry journals

You may choose to quote a writer to lend authority to or to illustrate a claim you are making. As you mark those phrases and passages that you want to quote, you may consider using a Double Entry journal to record your interpretations of what you marked. Often, these interpretations can be used in your essay, and they help you be mindful of what arguments you want to make about the texts you are using in your writing.

Double-Entry Journal	
Quotation-A phrase or sentence I especially like.	My thoughts about the quotation.