

# Collaborative Annotation

This structure provides students with an opportunity to read a text independently and build upon peer thinking to deepen their understanding and summarize the text. It can be used with any short text: fiction, poetry, drama, photographs, informational text, charts, newspaper articles, infographic, primary source, etc.

## PROCEDURE

1. Place students in groups of three or four and give each group a large sheet of chart paper with a copy of the text placed in the center.
2. Tell students they are going to read the text and annotate their thinking as they read and re-read the text. Each member of the group will be annotating on this large chart. They should ask questions, indicate parts that are confusing, interesting, surprising or important. They can make connections to other texts or personal experiences. Everything is written—no talking. (If there is a particular standard you want students to annotate for, e.g. figurative language, make sure this is stated in the directions.)
3. Explain that as they annotate, they need to also read the annotations of their group members and build upon their thinking (annotations) by answering their questions if they can, by agreeing with a statement made, disagreeing with a statement and explaining why, or asking another question.
4. Remind students to write so that others can read their thinking and to continue the collaboration until you tell them to stop.
5. Circulate through the room and monitor the progress. If groups seem to have trouble getting started you can pose a question (in writing on the chart) to help them. In the same manner, you can add to their annotations to adjust their line of thinking or lead them deeper. Your annotations should cause students to delve deeper into the text.
6. Call time and have students finish their last annotation. Next, give each group time to discuss the text and write a one to two sentence summary of the text at the bottom of the chart.
7. Direct groups to another chart and give them time to read the annotations and summary of another group. Ask them to add to that group's chart. Students can write on the chart or use sticky notes. This step can be repeated so students see all charts or they can just view one chart.
8. Lead students in a whole class debrief of the process and what they learned about the text. Answer questions that were not answered in the process and clarify any misunderstandings so students have a clear summary of the text.
9. Exit Slip: What are three things you learned about \_\_\_(text)\_\_\_\_\_?

## Advantages

\*Students interact with the text as well as peers.

\*All students have equal opportunity (and expectation) to participate in a discussion (written and verbal) on the reading.

\*The collaborative nature provokes thinking that may not have surfaced if the text was strictly read independently.

\*Students are able to read (hear) classmates' views before offering their own, giving them the chance to adjust their comments and reflect on their ideas before expressing them to others.

NEPF Connections

### Instructional Standards

S1.4  
S2.1, S2.2, S2.3, S2.4  
S3.1, S 3.2, S3.3, 3.4  
S4.2, S4.3  
S5.3

Consider having students use different colored markers or initial next to their annotations in order to generate evidence of learning.

