

## HIGHLIGHT/ANNOTATE

Highlighting and annotating is a critical skill to any historian or even any critical reader. Students should begin by working in pairs. (Pairs often are much more productive than small groups; please do try to pair students at first.) In pairs, one student should read a paragraph out loud, while the other one listens carefully. After the paragraph is read, the student who did not read should choose a small section for highlighting. The section should be a main idea or an example SO critical that the author would die without it. (Students have a tendency to highlight all interesting examples, so emphasize that examples should *very rarely* be highlighted.) After the highlighted section is chosen, the pair should think of a three to five word title for the paragraph. Remind students: less is more when it comes to annotation! A good title avoids “a”, “the”, “to”, etc. and includes abbreviations. Example: if the paragraph was about Sub-Saharan Africa’s current crisis with the AIDS epidemic, students should write: “Sub-S. Afr.-AIDS” or even just “AIDS” (depending on the nature of the whole article) as the title. It helps students to first model this process with a student at the front of the class, then—this is important!—force students to go step-by-step together as a class through the second paragraph, and only then let them loose to finish the article, essay, short story, or text.