



# Mark Your Books

## WHY?

It's important because ...

You **COMPREHEND** better:

- You decide what's important, how ideas are related...a process which teaches you to read analytically.
- You test your understanding by putting ideas into your own words.
- You concentrate better because you read actively rather than passively.

You create an effective **REVIEW** tool:

- Use markings to trigger recall; before a test, glance at your notes to see how much you can remember.

## WARNING

Don't use underlining as an escape tactic to delay the inevitable work of learning. If you can't concentrate, take a break ... then come back ready to attend.

## WHEN?

Annotate your book **AFTER** you have read part of it. Only after reading can you decide what's important. Mark after reading a few paragraphs if the material is dense with detail you must know, or after a section or a chapter, as you judge best.

## HOW?

**ACTIVELY** — use your margins to summarize key ideas in a few words, outline a passage, write comments to yourself. Make connections with lectures, other readings ... get involved.

**ECONOMICALLY** — underline as little as possible. Make your markings concise indexes to content. Underline key phrases (subjects, verbs, etc.), and occasionally whole sentences, if needed. As a guide, ask yourself, "What will this page look like a month from now, when I'm reviewing it for a test?"

**CONSISTENTLY** — be sure that you locate all significant ideas, details, etc. Enumerating them helps you to remember. Use various marks — brackets, circles, etc., — consistently (for instance, you may choose to circle all new terms).

## FOR EXAMPLE :

*Rome's cultural legacy*  
(5)

1. *preserve G.K. cult.*  
2. *professions*

3. *Latin*

4. *thought (shaped by language)*

5. *eg. of Roman peace*

The Romans have left us a great deal. It is broadly true that in the arts, in literature, in philology they were imitators of the Greeks rather than originators. They did preserve much of what the Greeks had done. In law, in engineering, both civil and military, and in architecture what they did was never wholly lost to their European successors. Their language remained for over a thousand years after the fall of the empire the medium for all formal culture in the European west; above all it remained the lingua franca for the Roman Catholic Church. Until only yesterday Latin was an inescapable part of all higher education in the European west. It is today embedded in all western tongues, even in German, and most certainly in English, as the carrier of most of our cultural ideas. We think as we do, in part at least, because of the way Caesar, Cicero, and thousands of forgotten Romans thought. And, heirs as we are of four hundred years of nationalistic and religious wars, we can never quite get the example of the Roman Peace out of our minds.

*Really need to learn Latin?!*

**Callouts:**

- All significant ideas are noted.
- Economical marking enables quick review.
- Different marks for different purposes.
- Margins used for summaries, outlines, comments.

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