

CLOSE READING SIGNPOSTS TO NOTE AND NOTICE*

CONTRASTS & CONTRADICTIONS

When a character does something that contrasts with what you'd expect or contradicts his earlier acts or statements, **STOP** and ask, "Why is the character doing that?" The answer will help you make predictions and draw inferences about the plot and conflict.

WORDS OF THE WISER

When a character (probably older and wiser) takes the main character aside and offers serious advice, **STOP** and ask, "What's the life lesson and how might it affect the character?" This lesson is probably the theme of the story.

AHA MOMENT

When a character realizes, understands, or finally figures out something, **STOP** and ask yourself, "How might this change things?" If it is about a problem, it tells you something

about the conflict; if it is a life lesson, it tells you something about the theme.

AGAIN & AGAIN

When you notice a word, phrase, or situation mentioned over and over, **STOP** and ask yourself, "Why does this keep happening again and again?" The answer will tell you

about the theme and conflict, or will foreshadow what might happen later in the story.

MEMORY MOMENT

When the author interrupts the action to tell you about a memory, **STOP** and ask yourself,

"Why might this memory be important?" The answer will tell

you about the theme and

conflict, or will foreshadow what might happen later in the story.

TOUGH QUESTIONS

When a character asks himself a very difficult question, **STOP** and ask yourself, "What does this question make me wonder about?" The answer will

tell you about the conflict,

and help you think about what might happen later in the story.

* Adapted from

Notice and Note

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Strategies for Close Reading

by Kylene Beers and

Robert E. Probst