

[MUSIC PLAYING]

**SANTI BUSCEMI:** One of the things that I like to start out with at the beginning of a semester, in terms of helping students comprehend what they're reading and use what they're reading in their own writing, is to do something simple, like underline topic sentences, and underline the major supportive details that a writer has put into his or her paragraph or into his or her essay. But we go beyond that. And I think that you need to have them do annotations in the margins.

**MIKE ROSE:** I cannot read without a pen in my hand. So everything I read-- and this includes magazines. Everything I read, I mark up. I circle things. I draw little pointy arrows at particularly important ideas.

And I fill the margins with my own writing. I comment on what people say. I make connections to other things I've read. I mark and comment on things I might be able to use my own writing. I argue. I disagree. I get angry. All of this comes out on the page. So for me, reading is a very visceral, active, engaging process.

**SANTI BUSCEMI:** I encourage my students to respond to what writer is saying, to challenge what the writer is saying, to disagree with the writer. I love when they disagree with professional writers.

Because that means they're thinking. It means that they're aware. It means that they're committed to their reading.

And I guess the big word there is "committed." If they are committed to their reading, they're committed to language. If they're committed to language, they will grow as writers.

**TOM FOX:** The most discouraging thing is when you see students underline every single thing. Then you know that that process of selection, of sifting through the information, deciding what's important and what's not, is not being done. But that's an important act, is deciding what is significant.

And it has-- the students have to do it believing in their powers to discriminate among different kinds of information, and saying, this is most important. This is what I have to concentrate on. So that's an obvious and common thing, although students often don't do it unless you say, yes, I want to see that text marked up.

By the way, they should be doing it with their own text, too, with their own writing. They should be also able to discriminate, in the process of writing, between what is significant and what it is not significant in their own writing and in their classmates' writing. So I don't discriminate between the texts I hand out and their own text.