

# RULES OF NOTICE

(based on the work of Peter Rabinowitz in *Before Reading*)

## GENERAL RULES OF NOTICE

Remember to notice and interpret the meaning of the following:

**Titles**

**Beginnings**

**Climaxes/Key Details**

**Extended Descriptions**

**Changes, e.g., in Direction, Setting, Point of View**

**Repetition**

**Surprises and Ruptures**

**Endings**

## RULES OF NOTICE FOR CHARACTER

**Titles:** Pay attention to titles! Does this title tell us who to pay attention to or something we should know about a character or what will happen to her?

**Names and Nicknames:** The names and particularly the nicknames of characters are almost always important and reveal something about the characters.

**Introductions:** Pay attention when characters are introduced!

**Problems:** Pay attention to any problem the character might have or a challenge they are facing.

**Actions:** Typical activities as well as actions they take and decisions they make reveal character.

**Physical Description:** Physical features and how they are described.

**Clothing:** What they wear, styles.

**Way they talk/language they use:**

Dialects, tone, correctness, language used.

**Typical setting or surroundings:**

Where do they hang out, how do they decorate their room, where do they feel comfortable or uncomfortable?

**Friends or people they hang with:**

What company do they choose to keep?

**What others say about them:** What do people who know the character say about him?

**Tastes/likes/dislikes:** What particular tastes, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, soapbox opinions or antipathies does the character express?

**Character thoughts:** What do we learn about the character from her private thoughts, fears, desires?

**Character changes:** Changes in a character are always important! If a character changes it is for a reason and the author wants us to figure out what the reason is. This will probably have something to do with the author's generalization or theme of the story.