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.