INTRODUCTION
The adoption of Common Core requires teachers to make grade level texts accessible to ELL students. Understanding a grade level text well enough to engage in evidence-based dialogue may be overwhelming to an ELL student who is reading well below grade level. One way to help struggling students meet this challenge is to use strategies that support interactive annotation in the classroom. Interactive annotation is a writing-to-learn strategy readers employ to make connections with complex texts. Interactive annotation shifts the focus from teacher lead instruction to student centered coaching. The use of these close reading strategies ensures that each student has something to contribute to small group or class discussions. It also provides a foundation for students to create their own questions about the text. The use of these strategies will help build the confidence of each of your students that will lead to improvement in student comprehension and class discussions.

STRATEGIES
Teaching Students How to Analyze Complex Texts

STICKY STRATEGIES
• Color coded identification of text evidence
• FOSO
  • A fact/opinion/subjective/objective graphic organizer used to determine bias in writing.

TWO COLUMN NOTES
• A note taking strategy that allows students to find main ideas and supporting details.

TOP DOWN WEB
• A visual graphic organizer that helps students break down information and see relationships between ideas

4 Cs (Count, Color, Circle, Code)
• The use of reading symbols and color coded highlighting to identify key elements directly on the text.

DESCRIPTION
It is critical to explain to the students the purpose of each strategy and how it will help them understand the text. You want students to internalize these strategies to help them build a strong foundation for reading comprehension that they will use for years to come.

Sticky Strategies
This is the use of color sticky notes to identify different elements in a text.
• Teacher determines color and purpose
• Use as exit tickets to check for understanding
• Useful as conversation starters for group discussion.
• Can be used in any grade and any content
• Can be used for homework too

4 Cs: Count, Color, Circle and Code is a comprehensive strategy that works well for not contained in a text book.

Students number each paragraph
• Highlight key elements identified by teacher
• Circle key words and important ideas
• Make notes in the margin using specific symbols.
• Students are encouraged to make their own notations and symbols as they read

Top Down Webs is a strategy that is useful for helping students organize what they have learned as well as to make connections.
• Use color, shape and size to demonstrate relationships between ideas or items.
• The web outline shared prior to the initial reading of a selection.
• The web does not have to be completed in one lesson.
• The top down web in the picture was created by 5th grade student using Microsoft words SmartArt tools in a Word document.

These strategies are flexible and can be modified to support the objectives of the lesson. However, the expectation is that each activity is followed up with group discussion. The student should use the information collected to support their dialogue.

APPLICATION
These strategies are versatile and may be used across various types of texts and content areas. They can be adapted to include videos and primary resources. These strategies can be differentiated to meet the needs of your students by including sentence frames, partially completed outlines, and examples.

Suggestions for use in the classroom:
Colored Sticky Notes: character traits in a story, fact and opinion in a magazine article, inference with evidence in a novel

FOSO: TV news, newspaper or magazine articles, editorials, letter to the editor

Two Column Notes: section of a text book, newspaper article on presidential debate, division strategies, introduction of new vocabulary

Top Down Webs: types of pollution, causes of American Revolution, characters in a book

4 Cs: test taking strategies, content related articles, short stories, excerpts from books, speeches

Relevant resources
Acknowledgements
