Guide to Finding Significant Text

Significant text ideas:

- Conflict building (internal/external)
- Setting or character development and shifts
- Style/Voice (significant literary devices the author uses and masters; e.g., metaphor, symbolism, dialect, irony, mood, creating **tone**, verse, suspense, point of view, humor, figurative language, juxtaposition, etc.)
- Example of great writing (sentence structure, word choice (diction), organizational patterns, vivid imagery etc.)
- Realistic or powerful dialogue
- Interesting format and its impact
- Genre characteristics and the impact on the story
- Powerful writing and what it impacts (character, setting, conflict, climax, resolution)
- Theme/Universal **Themes**— power, change, order vs. chaos, structure, relationships, systems, conflict
- Depth and Complexity Prompts (nonfiction)—change over time, patterns, trends, big ideas, ethics, rules, multiple perspectives, across discipline, parallel events, converging events, paradoxes.

Add commentary to explain choices. Do not repeat ideas for significant text. For example, do not find three examples of imagery.

EXPLAIN WHY this is significant—to the story, to the craft, to the theme, to the tone, etc.

EXAMPLES OF SIGNIFICANT TEXT IDEAS:

Ishmael Beah *A Long Way Gone*—**building tone**

Beah sets the tone for the autobiography in his **prologue**. He describes a conversation with his high school friends where they question him about his life in Sierrra Leone. Beah **captures the disconnect between the Western world** with the brutal realities of war-torn regions when the friends ask about if he saw "people running around with guns and shooting each other?" and after he responds affirmatively, the out-of-touch friends reply with a callous "[c]ool" (1). The reader realizes that the story that follows deserves much more than that response. This is an incredibly **chilling and revealing opening and sets the tone**.

The Curse of the Blue Tattoo, L.A. Meyer, **diction/genre** Kevin Z.

The author uses **diction** to fit the genre of **historical fiction**—"privy" "Bid you good day".

The Time Traveler's Wife, A. Nifenegger **structure/point of view**-- Rebecca C.
The story is told through two **points of view**—Henry and Claire. This adds to the story because the reader feels she gets the full experience, seeing all aspects of the story from two perspectives. (add t.e.)
Another interesting aspect of **format** is that there is no structure—the events are random, mimicking the time jumps of the sci fi genre. (add t.e.)

Gary Paulsen *Hatchet*—**writer's craft/sentence structure**
        Paulsen really gets into the mind of Brian, the protagonist, and his fear in this section. The reader can feel **the anxiety and realization of fear and loneliness by Paulsen's use of short, choppy, fragmented sentences**, **mirroring panic** in Brian's mind. "Gone, he thought finally, it was all gone. All silly and gone. No bows, no spears, or fish or berries…" (114). This is an extreme low point for Brian and the reader feels his desperation.

Atsushi Ōkubo *Soul Eaters*—**humor and genre**
        "What's with you!!? Your symmetry's all mixed up!! Where did you come from!? Mixed-up Island!? You disgust me!! Except for that part on your forehead!!" (Okubo 123)
I chose this passage because, Kid went berserk after seeing the horrible creature which I thought at first was Kid getting all serious, but now I take that back since Ohkubo made the protagonist have the idea of a witty joke when his friends are in danger, which I did find funny too. The setting is in a fantasy world with a serious mood, so this **insertion of humor** is an unexpected and welcome touch from the author.

Lord of the Flies--**theme**
        Golding uses the characters in the novel *Lord of the Flies* to **conclude that if not countered by the ways of society, the true evil nature of man will reveal itself**. Jack and Roger are among the first to realize that they are free of society, and in turn, they turn evil. Roger is contemplating whether or not to pull a lever that would allow a boulder to roll down the hill and, most likely, kill them. Roger is deciding if he should let them live or if he should release the boulder, and take their lives. In the end, Roger, bearing none of society's morals or beliefs anymore, "leaned all his weight on the lever" (180), releasing the boulder and

killing Piggy. Because no one punishes Roger, he continues being a horrible, violent human being and becomes the tribe's torturer. Through losing his connection to society over the course of the novel, and as a result, becoming more and more evil, Roger illustrates **how society can contain a person's evil inner nature.**

The Old Man and and the Sea--**characterization**

   Even when it seems he has no effort left, Santiago promises himself, "I'll try it again." (93). This is Santiago's **real inner determination coming through**. He has encountered so many obstacles during the past few days, yet he will not let them defeat his dream of killing the fish. There is no outside force promising a splendid reward if he succeeds, only those that threaten to ridicule him if he is destroyed. Santiago is working solely on his own desire to fulfill his dream and prove to himself that, although his struggles may cost him his life, he can accomplish even the seemingly impossible.

John Boyne's story, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*—*irony to build character*

   The book contains a plethora of **ironic events that also accentuate Bruno's childishness and naivety**. A profound example of this is exhibited when Bruno thinks to himself that "he did like stripes and he felt increasingly fed up that he had to wear trousers and shirts and ties and shoes that were too tight for him when Shmuel and his friends got to wear striped pajamas all day long" (155). Bruno has no clue that the people in the —striped pajamas‖ are being cruelly treated and murdered, and is jealous of what he thinks is freedom.