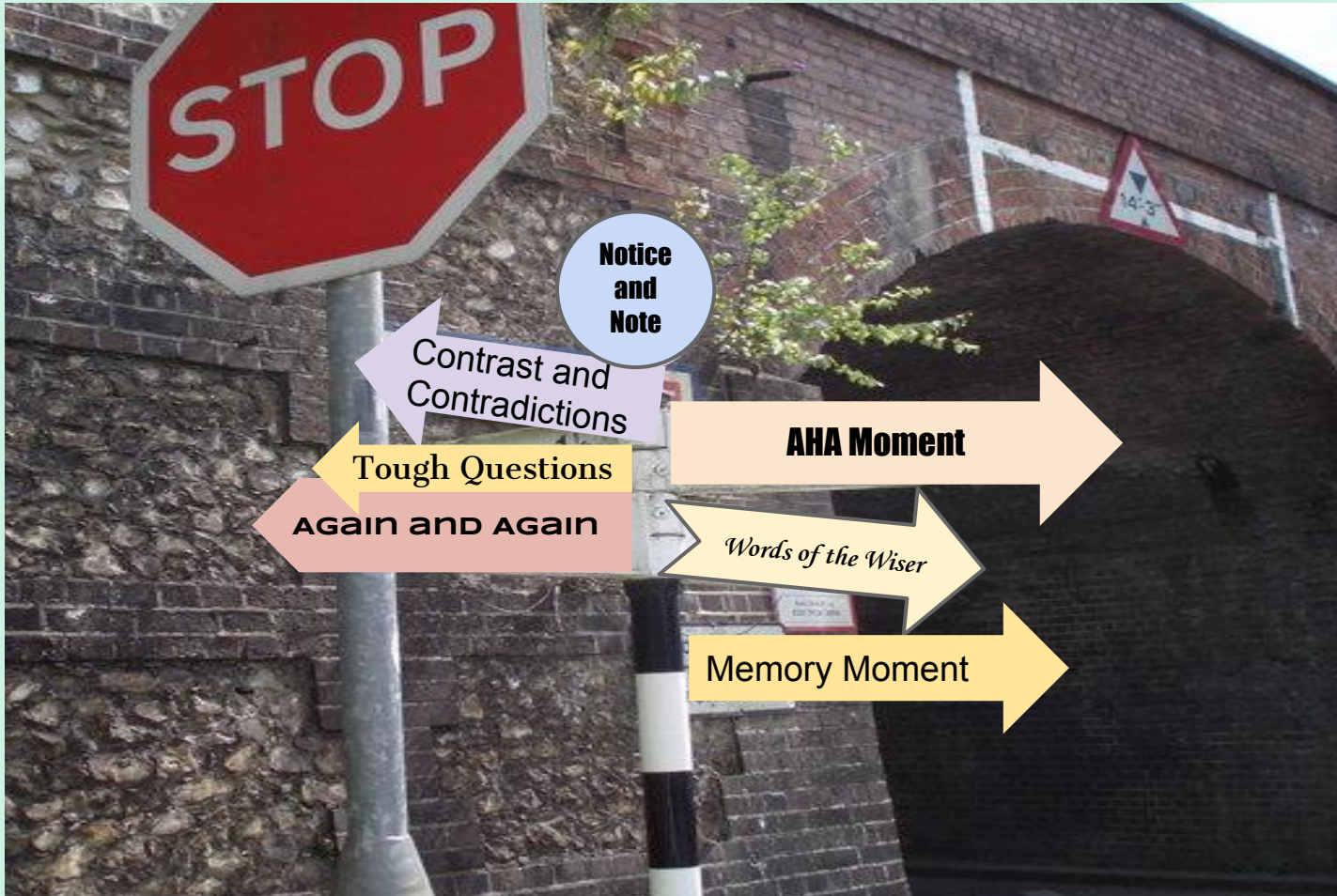


Notice and Note

Signposts for Fiction



When you **NOTICE** any of these signpost moments in a fiction story, poem, drama, or novel:

- **STOP**
- **ASK**
- **NOTE**

Did you Know?

Most fiction (short stories, novels, plays, movies, t.v. shows, and even poems) writers use the same tools to write. These tools are signals that help readers understand the text.

Since so many writers use similar tools, knowing what the most common ones are can guide readers beyond **comprehension** and into **analysis**.

SIGNPOSTS



Reading fiction is similar to taking a trip through another place. You might *recognize* some things about the new land, but others can be confusing.

Like when reading a map, knowing what signs to look for will make you more "at home" in the literature.

How the Signposts were Identified:

Dr. Kyleen Beers and Dr. Bob Probst analyzed many of the books most commonly read by young people both in and outside of school, and found some common moments in them.

After a lot of very scholarly research and testing, they decided that students could think more deeply and write more analytically about literature with the help of six of these common tools.

They call them signposts, like the signs along the road that help you navigate a journey.

Signposts you Might Notice

- Contrast and Contradictions
- Aha Moment
- Tough Questions
- Words of the Wiser
- Again and Again
- Memory Moment

Since these are general, common devices, not every story will have all of them. They are listed, and are taught, in order from most common to least.



Contrast and Contradictions

NOTICE:

When a character does something that contrasts with what you'd expect, or contradicts his/her earlier acts or statements,



Ask:

Why is the character doing that?

NOTE: Write and/or discuss your questions and possible answers to them.

The answers might help you make an *prediction* or draw an *inference* about the **character, plot or conflict.**





Contrast and Contradictions

How do the character's words or actions differ from what you would expect, or contradict things you know about him?

What can you predict about what might happen later in the story?



Ask Yourself:

Why is the character doing that?



This might give you insight into the **character** and/or **foreshadow** the later plot events.



The *AHA* Moment

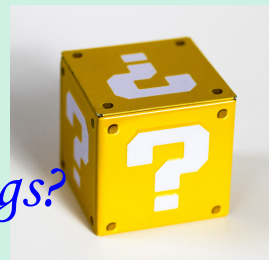
NOTICE:

When a character realizes, understands, or finally figures out something,



Ask:

How might this change things?



NOTE: Write and/or discuss your questions and possible answers to them.

If the character has realized what a problem is, you have **identified** the **conflict** of the story.

If the character has understood a life lesson, you have **identified** the **theme**.



AHA Moment

What is the moment when the characters realize what is going to happen?

Have they learned a life lesson? If so, what?



Ask Yourself:



How might this change things?

This can help you identify **conflict** and/or **theme**.



Tough Questions



NOTICE:

When a character asks himself/herself a very difficult question,



Ask:

What does this question make me wonder about?

NOTE: Write and/or discuss your questions and possible answers to them.

The answers might help you *identify* and *analyze* the **conflict** or even the **theme** of the story, or to *understand* a **character's** motives.



Words of the Wiser



NOTICE:

When a character (probably older and wiser) takes the main character aside and offers serious advice,



Ask:

What's the life lesson and how might it affect the character?

NOTE: Write and/or discuss your questions and possible answers to them.

Whatever the lesson is, it will help you *determine* the **theme** of the story.



Words of the Wiser

What advice or knowledge does the older, wiser character share with the protagonist?



Ask Yourself:

What's the life lesson and how might it affect the character?

The answer is likely a **theme** of the story.



Again and Again



NOTICE:

When a word, phrase, image or situation is mentioned over and over,



Ask:

Why does this keep happening again and again?

NOTE: Write and/or discuss your questions and possible answers to them.

This **repetition** is an author's way of telling you that something about this word, phrase, or situation is important. It might **foreshadow** something that is coming. Use it to *predict* what is coming up.

Again and Again

Is there a word, phrase, image or situation that keeps showing up?

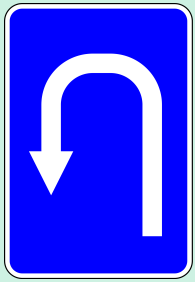


Sometimes, a repeated image becomes a symbol that is important to a theme of the story.

Ask Yourself:

Why does this keep happening again and again?

This repetition could be a clue that the phrase or word or situation is important. It can help you predict future plot events.



Memory Moment



NOTICE:

When the author chooses to interrupt the action to tell you about a memory,

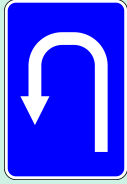


Ask:

Why might this memory be important?

NOTE: Write your questions and possible answers to them.

The answer will help you *determine* **theme**, **conflict**, or even **foreshadow** future events.



Memory Moment

What do we learn about the character's past?



Ask:

Why might this memory be important?

The answers might help you *identify* some **foreshadowing**. It also can help you *analyze* a character's actions.