# How to Mark a Book (1940) By Mortimer J. Adler, Ph.D. (1902–2001)

As you read, answer the following questions.

1. What is the thesis statement?
2. According to Dr. Adler, how many ways can a person own books? How are they different?
3. According to Dr. Adler, how many kinds of books owners are there? How are they different?
4. Does he advocate marking all books indiscriminately? Which paragraph has the answer?
5. What are three reasons that Dr. Adler give to support his notion that marking up a book is indispensable to reading?
6. Does Dr. Adler think that all books must be treated the same? Why or why not? What solution does he offer for people who refuse to mark a valuable book?
7. Why does Dr. Adler say that you must “write” while reading?
8. According to Dr. Adler, what are the 7 things that you MUST do while reading?
9. What is his opinion on speed reading?
10. What solutions does Dr. Adler offer to what he calls “a die-hard anti-book-marker”?
11. What does it mean to have a “false reverence”?
12. Dr. Adler says, “The soul of a book ‘can’ be separate from its book.” What does he mean by this? How does he explain this idea?
13. What does he mean by “that is exactly what reading a book should be: a conversation between you and the author.”?
14. According to Dr. Adler, “marking a book is literally an expression of differences, or agreements of opinion with the author.” What does he mean by that?
15. Do you agree with the statement that “a few friends are better than a thousand acquaintances”? What does Dr. Adler mean by that?
16. Dr. Adler, an admirer of classics, uses many classical techniques to make his point including parallel structure. Find a few passages that exemplify this technique.

Questions about Logic

1. Does this article convince you? Why or why not?
2. Are there claims in the article that are weak or unsupported? What are they?
3. Has the author left out an argument on purpose?

Questions about Ethos

1. What does the author’s style and language tell you about him?
2. Is this author knowledgeable? Smart? Successful?
3. Do you trust this author? Why or why not?

Questions about Pathos

1. Do you think the author is trying to manipulate your emotion? How?
2. Do your emotions conflict with your logical interpretation of the arguments?
3. Does the author use humor? How does this affect your acceptance of his or her ideas?