

Course Preparation

College Reading Strategies



Reading is a substantial part of college learning. There are several powerful strategies that can help you get the most out of your reading assignments. Use these strategies to improve your reading.

Concentration

State the purpose	State the reason for your reading.
Define the task	How much reading will you do in a sitting?
Break it down	Turn off electronic devices; find a quiet space; get rid of intruding thoughts by writing them down on paper.
Take a break	If your brain begins to wander, take a short break and then come back.

Comprehension and Retention (SQ4R Method)

Survey	Skim the chapter for an overview: read summary, objectives, and review questions; identify how text/paragraphs are designed and organized.
Assess	Check your knowledge: what do I know and what do I need to learn? Anticipate possible test questions from headings and review sections.
Read	Attend lecture, then read text for more depth and comprehension; create pictures in your head about what you're reading.
Review/Recording	Add to the professor's and your lecture notes. Write summary statements to gather thoughts. Look for patterns, i.e., 'chunk' information.
Recite	Present your knowledge: talk out loud, share with others, explain the information in your own words. Create concept maps and/or timelines.
Respond	Demonstrate your knowledge. Teach others or show what you know through tests, quizzes or projects.

Vocabulary

Attempt	Guess word meanings from previous knowledge and context clues.
Research	Look up words you don't know.

Speed & Fluency

Check your eyes	Make sure your vision does not hinder your reading.
Don't read out loud	You read material two to three times faster silently than aloud, where the meaning is derived from phrases without reading each word individually.
Avoid rereading	Rereading is usually unnecessary because ideas and concepts are elaborated more fully later in the text.
Develop a wide eye-span	Written material is less meaningful if read word by word. Read by phrases or thought units.