



Reading Tips

Tons to read?

Not seeing the meaning?

Not remembering a single word you read?

Reading critically is essential to the academic success of a student. Reading with intentionality helps you to remember more information and to remember it longer, research has shown. So what can you do to help build your reading skills?

Too much to read and not enough time?

- Pre-read. Take a look at the chapter introduction, the headers, topics, subtopics, photos and descriptions, and even the summary.
- Take notice of the way the text is laid out. Are there short paragraphs? Long, unbroken paragraphs? Why might the author have chosen this? What point is he/she trying to get across?
- Consider the author. Is he/she known to you? Does he/she have a reputation? Credentials?
- Scan to get the big picture of your reading assignment.
- Focus on new information to you and begin reading there.

Not seeing the meaning?

- Put into words some questions you would like the reading to answer for you. Think of it as a conversation you are having with the book. Stop now and then and ask questions, talk back, connect thoughts and ideas.
- Make your reading thought-intensive. Use your pencil or pen and mark up the margins with comments, thoughts, ideas, exclamation points, question marks, stars! These cause you to engage with the text – and they later serve as triggers for your memory!
- Ask yourself questions like ‘What does this mean?’ These will be great questions for discussion in class or after class with fellow students or the instructor – even with friends and family. Talk about it.
- Look for repetitions, reoccurring words and phrases, common themes of characterization. The language usage is chosen for a reason. What might this be?
- Review the text and put it into perspective. Take into account the time period it was written in – the history, the culture, and the circumstances.
- Use the compare/contrast method. How does it compare to other readings assigned during the semester? Is there a continued theme or is this in contrast to previous themes? How does it compare or contrast to the main concept of this course?

Not remembering a single word you read?

- Try the Outline/Summarize/Analyze method.
 - Outlining helps you to see the framework. (See Note Taking section for ideas.)
 - Summarizing. Read your notes out loud and then put them in your own words.

- Analyzing. Evaluate the reading. Test its logic, impact, and credibility by asking good questions like ‘What is the writer stressing?’, ‘Is the writer using facts or opinions?’, and so on.
- Try the **SQ3R** method.
 - **S**urvey. (Pre-read)
 - **Q**uestion. Before you begin reading, formulate your own questions you want the text to answer. You can use titles and subtitles to help you with this.
 - **R**ead. Read for answers. Read for meaning. Write down key words and ideas you think are important.
 - **R**ecite. Read your questions and notes out loud to yourself. Put them into your own words. Look up answers to questions you did not find the answer to.
 - **R**evise. Read over your notes as often as possible. Carry them with you for those “in between” moments you can use to review. The more you review them, the more information you retain.

Additional Resources:

Crash Course Reading: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAIUkjsZ5xQ>

Active Reading: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLopqJeE4_w

Read, Understand, Remember: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10auVRva1Jk>

