



Reading for Success

College level reading is about more than basic comprehension. You are expected to read, remember and apply what you read to the larger learning outcomes of the class. This means you will need to respond to, analyze, interpret, think critically about and reflect upon texts.

There are a variety of Reading/Study Systems that provide guidelines on successful college-level reading. What's consistent in all of them is that they encourage an active approach to reading, which simply means that you are strategic in your engagement with texts before, during and after reading.

BEFORE

Find a space where you are comfortable and can focus, free of distractions. Familiarize yourself with the text before reading. Establish a goal for your reading session. Ask yourself some basic questions:

- Why has this text been assigned?
- If it is a supplemental reading you have chosen on your own, why did you choose it?
- How do you think this text connects to what you are studying in the course?
- What do you already know about the subject of this text, its particular focus and its context?
- Who wrote it and what, if anything, do you know about the author?
- What is your goal in reading this text?
- What do you hope to understand when you have finished reading it? You might look at the title and any headings or subheadings and rephrase them in question form to help you answer this question.
- Schedule breaks if you will need them.

DURING

Read with intent. Try to identify key information and find a way to record information so that you can review it later. Actively engaging with the text in this way helps plant the information in your long-term memory and creates materials you can study at exam time.

- Identify the topic of the text and what particular aspect of the topic the author is addressing.
- Locate and mark the main idea(s) in the text. What is the author attempting to convey to readers?
- Mark and annotate the text so that you can return to key passages or recall questions you may have.
- Try to answer the questions you posed before reading about what you hoped to learn.
- Make and note connections between the text you're reading and other texts you've read for the class or ideas you're covering in the class.
- Mark any material that you have trouble comprehending so you can ask for clarification.

AFTER

Reflect on what you've just read and your own reactions to it. Consider the point or points the text is making, its implications and applications, and connections to other texts or course material. Vocalize and examine your response to the text.

- What was the central point of the text?
- How did the author make that point?
- In what way does the text enhance your knowledge of the topic, issue or subject?
- In what ways should having read the text help you achieve the learning objectives of the course?
- What do you think about the text? Why do you think what you think?
- Talk to others about the text. Tell them what you found interesting or important. Ask them what they think.

Employing these strategies will increase retention and aid in critical thinking. What's important is that you're not just reading words on a page, but actively engaging with what you read. Think before, during and after reading. And be self-conscious about it as you refine your strategic approach and find what works best for you. What is working? What is not working? How can you change things up to become a more engaged and, thus, *better* reader?

Refer to Reading Strategies: The SQ3R Method or Reading Strategies: The KWL Method handouts to get specific information on how to apply a Reading Comprehension technique.

Last Updated: 06/04/2019



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/). You may reproduce it for non-commercial use if you use the entire handout and attribute The Academic Success Center, Texas A&M University.

Downloaded 06/05/2020 [http://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-\(1\)/Reading-for-Success](http://asc.tamu.edu/Study-Learning-Handouts-(1)/Reading-for-Success)