

Learning Skills, Room 120

Reading Difficult Material

Read It Again

- Very important if reading technical information or new information.
- Read it again before going to sleep. Your mind may continue to work on sorting concepts.

Look for Key Words

- Mentally cross out all the descriptive words and read the sentence in its “bare” form.
- Key words are usually nouns and verbs.
- Highlight, underline, or jot down key words.
- Make a “Terms to Know” list as you read.

Do a Mini-Review

- At the end of each paragraph, recite (in your own words) what you have read.
- Write a summary in the margin of the text or on paper

Read Aloud

- Imagine that you are the author, and that you are reading it to someone else.
- Read with great expression and inflection, emphasizing key concepts.

Explain Aloud

- Pretend that you understand it and explain it aloud (often we know more than we think).
- Explaining something often helps us to work logically through a problem.

Find Alternative Sources

- Go to the library.
- Search online: databases, websites, etc.
- Look for an overview of the subject to provide context and key vocabulary.

Get on Your Feet

- Changing positions fights off fatigue.
- Try pacing as you read aloud or recite.

Get Help

- If you still do not understand the material, find someone who does (instructor, tutor, classmate).
- AND make an appointment with an Education Counsellor at Student Affairs.

PSQ3R Method for Reading

Purpose, Survey, Question, Read, Record, Review

PURPOSE

- What is the reason you are reading the chapter, book, or article?
- What are you looking for: theme, main idea, important facts, evidence, arguments, or examples?
- When your purpose is clear, you can read far more effectively and efficiently.

SURVEY

- Glance over the main features of the chapter or article. Note: author, title, headings, first paragraph, last paragraph, and any charts or illustrations.
- Skimming should give you an idea about the subject.
- This survey should only take a few minutes but is extremely important.

QUESTION

- Make up questions before you read, based on your survey.
- Turn headings into questions to trigger curiosity.

READ

- Read to find the answers to your questions.
- Look for ideas, information, evidence, and arguments that will meet your purpose.

RECORD

- Answers to questions should be brief.
- Write them down (on a separate page so that you can re-use the question page.)
- Use key words, abbreviations, and symbols.

REVIEW

- Survey your reduced notes and see them as a whole.
- Re-write or reorganize the information later to consolidate learning.
- Keep these notes separate and review them often.