Tutor Program Tip - Reading College Texts

What do we know about College Texts?
They are “Idea-dense”
Include many ideas, facts, and terms
Are written at a higher reading level
And have less time to digest the information

Did you know that reading involves both physical and mental preparation?

The goal of reading:
- Comprehension
- Understanding
- Assimilation
- Remembering the material

To reach these goals you need to be an “active reader”

Active reading involves thinking about the material as you read it each time you:
Preview text
Go to class
Then highlight and/or underline when reading through the second time
Take notes to indicate important information
Use the study aids provided by text to check your understanding of the material
Turn headings into questions and answer them!

Reading Strategy P2R
(Preview, Read, Review)

Preview: (approximately 5-10 minutes)

Determine what you intend to read
- Break up large reading into smaller segments

Try to read for 20-30 minutes at a time
- Take short breaks, no more than 5-10 minutes
- Trying to read for long periods of time makes you lose your focus

Preview the chapter and focus on:
- Heading
• Introduction
• Section and paragraph headings
• Bold print
• Pictures, tables, graphs
• Chapter summaries
• Questions at the end of the section/chapter

Ask yourself:
• What aspects of the reading look familiar?
• What will be difficult to grasp?

Read Actively:
• Question what you are reading while you are reading
• What are the important points?
• What are the supporting details?

This is where you mark your text
• If you come across an idea you do not understand, make a notation in the margin so you can discuss it in class

What are some important features to highlighting, underlining, or note taking?
• Do this only after you have read a paragraph
• Avoid over-highlighting, wait until your 2nd read through
• Highlight or underline from left to right so that you read the sentence or key phrase again (another way for you to review the material)
• Mark enough of a sentence so that a “read through” or review a month later will still make sense!

Review: When you have completed your reading don’t just close the book!
• Try to summarize the main points in your own words
• Make a list of terms and definitions
• Make a review sheet for each section chapter, or major concept that can be used for exam preparation
• Make flash cards for difficult concepts or processes
• Draw out each step of a process into a Mind or Concept Map to help visualize what is happening
• Use the headings as questions and try to answer them as if they were test questions
• If there are sample questions at the end of the text, try to answer them!
• If there is a study guide, use it!
• If there is a CD that goes with the book, or a web page address, look at them and test yourself on the information.
Reading Strategy: SQ3R

(Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review)

- The steps are performed on each of the “headed” sections rather than at the end of a main section, pages or chapter
- This process is very effective for more complex material, but is time consuming
- Because these steps are performed more frequently, SQ3R provides a great deal of interaction and repetition with content.

Similar to the P2R strategy, for individual steps, see above:

Reading Strategy PRESPT

(Preview, Read Examples, Summarize, Problems)

This strategy is best used with math, or math-based science texts

- Have pencil and paper ready to organize information and work problems
- Break the reading into small chunks
- Work for 20-30 minutes at a time

Preview the section/chapter:

Read the introduction and focus on:

- The major section headings
- Figures
- Examples
- Questions
- Key Terms
- Summaries at the end of each section
- What do the homework problems look like?

Read Actively, focusing on these major topics:

- Laws
- Definitions
- Theorems
- Equations
- Processes

Write topics on flash cards or create a review sheet for each major area
**Work example problems:**
- Copy the problem and solve it!
- Check your answer and solution method with the text
- Do you understand each step?
- Can you work backwards to check the answer?

**Summarize:**
Look at the review sheets you started and explain each of the following in your own words:
- Major law
- Rule
- Theorem
- Equation
- Definition
- Process

**Do the assigned homework problem associated with the reading:**
- Use your review sheet
- If you get stuck, re-read the associated section and example problem
- Ask your professor in class, or go to their office hours for clarification