

Middle Georgia State University Student Success Centers

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Effective Textbook Study Strategy

Research proves that college students who use a systematic approach to reading and study are more successful in courses than those who study in a haphazard manner. How can you adapt this study strategy to meet your needs?

The first step to success in studying, like life, is knowing where you're going.

SURVEY

Get ready to be successful. Become familiar with the organization and general content of the assignment. Decide how difficult the material is for you. Read the title, introductory paragraphs, boldface headings, italics, illustrations, last paragraphs, summary, and end-of-chapter questions. Spend about 5-10 minutes preparing.

If you don't read to find out specific information, you probably won't.

QUESTION

Set purpose(s) for your reading. Decide what you want to know when you have finished the reading assignment. Use the questions at the end of the assignment as a guide, turn section/boldface heading into questions, or set up an outline of major headings.

Specific reasons for reading make you an active, thinking reader.

READ

Read to fulfill your purpose. Read actively to answer the questions you have set out. Read with variable speed depending on the difficulty level of the material and your purpose. You may need to read portions of the text more than one time.

Your assignment isn't finished until you can answer all your questions.

RECITE

Test yourself. After you have finished reading each section, check to make sure you can answer the questions you set out for yourself. If you cannot, reread to find the answer. Make notes to use for review sessions.

Without periodic review you will probably forget 80% of what you read.

REVIEW

Periodically review the material you need to remember. When you have completed the entire assignment, make certain you can recall all the information you need. Continue to review the information on a regular schedule. Reciting (self-testing) helps make certain you understand the material as you read it; periodic review helps you commit that information to your long term memory.

Put this strategy into practice with the worksheet on the reverse side.

Practice: Effective Textbook Strategy

You've been given an assignment to read a chapter in your textbook. Write answers/notes in your notebook.

<p>Survey Get ready to be successful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review organization /general content • Decide difficulty of material • Read titles, introductory paragraphs, boldface headings, italics, illustrations, last paragraph, summary, and end of chapter questions. 	<p>What is the chapter about?</p> <p>How is the chapter organized?</p> <p>What do I know about this subject?</p> <p>How difficult will this reading be for me?</p> <p>What are the major topics in the chapter?</p>
<p>Question Set purpose(s) for your reading. Read to answer questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use end-of-chapter questions • Rephrase sections headings • Outline major headings 	<p>Turn section heading in a question or read paragraph/section to Identify first question.</p>
<p>Read Read to fulfill your purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read actively to answer your questions • Read with variable speed 	<p>Read material following heading to answer question.</p>
<p>Recite Rest yourself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer specific questions • Connect specific answers with chapter's larger main ideas and concepts 	<p>Briefly answer the question in your own words. Make notes.</p>
<p>Continue to question, read, and recite until assignment is complete.</p>	
<p>Review Go over the material periodically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review first time within 24 hours • Schedule regular review sessions throughout the semester • Always connect new information with material from previous study 	<p>Review all the material in this chapter that you have to know and then combine this new information with what you've learned from previous chapters and lectures.</p>