

AS YOU READ



Before we begin, just be aware that all readings are not created equal. Some will be easier than others. Make sure you read accordingly and don't be hard on yourself if one text requires more time than another. You will probably read a textbook with lots of writing and tiny words slower than a novella.

Identify What is Important

- Just as with lectures, you will read a bunch of words
- It is your job to identify which of those words are important and worth remembering
- Here are a couple ways to do this:

1. Pay attention to bolded or dark-print **HEADINGS**

- These headings organize a chapter's main points (the important information)
- Try turning these **HEADINGS** into questions
- This forces you to read actively by looking for specific information

RABBITS ARE AWESOME PETS

- Okay, let's turn that into a question

WHY ARE RABBITS AWESOME PETS?

- Now as you read, you are actively looking for any information that will answer your question
- Not only does this help you take away the important stuff, it also increases focus and motivation (making it easier to read!)
- Compiling questions also helps with studying for those pesky tests and exams as you are already creating a study guide

2. Pay attention to *italicized*, CAPITALIZED, **bolded** words, and •bullet points
 - Words in italics, capitals, or bolded font are generally key terms or definitions
 - These are a great source of multiple choice and short answer questions
 - If information is listed in bullet points, this is a good indication it is important as the author(s) has taken the time to provide the main points of a topic on their own

3. First and Last Sentences
 - Just as with chapter previews and summaries, the first and last sentences of paragraphs act as an introduction and conclusion to the main points of that paragraph
 - The first sentence tells you what to expect
 - The last sentence tells you what to take away

Take Notes as You Read

- If you are able to, WRITE your notes!
- Writing forces you to think about the information you are recording, which increases your ability to remember it (active learning)
- Highlighting is passive (we are not participating in our learning)
- You can still highlight if you like the colours or it helps with organization, but make sure you're writing notes as well
- And put those notes into your own words
- During lecture, you gain your instructor's words. While reading, you gain the author's
- We remember our words better than the words of another
- This stimulates learning, because if you can put information into your own words, it shows you understand the material by making it more meaningful to you
- Just as with taking notes during lecture, taking notes as you read will improve your test scores
- Try pretending your readings are lectures. It is your job to record what is important

- And take note of information that doesn't fully make sense to you
- Put a star beside it, underline, draw enormous arrows
- This way, you won't forget to fill in any blanks you have once you've finished reading

Look at the Pictures

- We think in pictures. Pictures come naturally to us
- And, we can learn the same piece of information several different ways
- One such way, is through pictures. Yay!
- So... make note of any visual aids your readings provide
- Charts, graphs, diagrams, concept maps, cartoons, etc.
- They give you a visual representation of the information you are trying to learn, which could increase your understanding and retention of the material

Cuseo, Joseph B, Aaron Thompson, Michele Campagna, Viki Sox Fecas. *Thriving in College and Beyond: Research-Based Strategies for Academic Success and personal Development*. Dubuque: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2016.

Ellis, Dave. *Becoming a Master Student*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.