

EFFECTIVE STUDY READING

BEFORE READING:

- **GET A QUICK OVERVIEW** (5 - 10 minutes): Getting a quick overview will help you read faster, understand better and remember more because you'll know what's important and how details fit into the big picture.
- **CHECK THE TABLE OF CONTENTS:** if headings and subheadings are listed, note how many major ideas are in the chapter and what they are. **Make a map** or graphic outline of these ideas.
- **READ THE SUMMARY:** these main ideas are what the author considers important in the chapter.
- **READ THE INTRODUCTION:** It may present an overview of the main ideas, background information, and/or links to previous chapters.
- **READ HEADINGS, WORDS IN BOLD PRINT:** These are cues to important ideas.
- **LOOK AT GRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIONS,** anything that catches your eye: If it catches your eye, the author may be indicating that it is important.
- None of the above cues? Then **READ THE FIRST SENTENCE OF EVERY 2 OR 3 PARAGRAPHS** and note transition words to get a sense of the content and how it's organized.

READING:

- **READ ACTIVELY AND SELECTIVELY** (in 5 minute chunks)
Make sure you read with maximum concentration by breaking the reading down into manageable sections (possibly from one heading to the next), anticipating the ideas, and checking to see what you learned afterward.
- **PREDICT WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN EACH SECTION:** what question will reading this section answer? Turn headings into questions, ask what you need to know, or ask a standard question in your field. Questions or predictions will help you concentrate better and focus on the important ideas.
- **READ TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION(S):** search for ideas that will answer your question(s). Use the questions to sort out ideas and evaluate their importance. Avoid highlighting or underlining as you read; you can't know what's important until you've read the whole section.
- **IN YOUR OWN WORDS, RECITE WHAT YOU LEARNED IN THE SECTION":** do this this orally or in writing, but without looking at the text unless you need to check yourself on a point. Highlight or underline **ONLY** the important ideas. Or take **BRIEF** notes in a way that will make reviewing easy, e.g. on your map or on a loose leaf page with questions in the left margin and answers on the right. Use key words that will help you remember.

POST-READING:

- **REVIEW TO CONSOLIDATE AND INTEGRATE IDEAS** (5-10 minutes).
You can greatly increase your retention and reduce later study time by doing a **quick immediate review** of all the important ideas you've learned from your reading.
- **TALK YOUR WAY THROUGH THE IDEAS** using map headings, questions in the margin of your notes, or the Table of Contents. Recall key ideas.
- **MAKE A DIAGRAM, FLOWCHART OR MIND-MAP OF KEY TERMS AND IDEAS** on one sheet of paper.
- **TEST YOURSELF ON THE IDEAS YOU HAVE READ** to confirm how much you understand and remember.