



MUSCLE READING



Reading a textbook is very different from reading for leisure. Reading to learn unfamiliar material (and to remember it!) usually requires a systematic and **“Active” Approach – ex. Muscle Reading**

Approach reading in 3 phases...similar to your approach to working out – **Stretching, Exercising, and Recovery**



BEFORE YOU READ

1. *PREVIEW*

- ❖ Survey the entire assignment as a “warm up” for your mind
- ❖ Look for summary statements, headings, subheadings, charts, and photos
- ❖ Find familiar concepts and look for ideas that spark your interest

2. *OUTLINE*

- ❖ Create a brief outline of the reading passages in the margin of your book or use a separate piece of paper
- ❖ Use the text’s headings/subheadings in order to construct your outline

3. *QUESTION*

- ❖ Determine what you want to learn from the reading assignment
- ❖ Turn chapter headings/subheadings into questions you can answer later



WHILE YOU READ

1. *READ*

- ❖ Stay focused but avoid marathon reading sessions
- ❖ Form mental pictures of the concepts presented
- ❖ Reading takes energy – stay engaged by maintaining good posture

2. *UNDERLINE*

- ❖ Be “physical” with your book by underlining/highlighting important passages to increase neural pathways in your memory
- ❖ Complete this activity after you have finished reading the chapter/section
- ❖ Underline/highlight sparingly (~ 10% of material)

3. *ANSWER*

- ❖ Answer the questions you created before you started reading
- ❖ Add notes to your original outline and/or summarize on paper the main ideas in your own words



AFTER YOU READ

1. **RECITE**

- ❖ Talk to yourself (or someone else) about what you read – this helps to pull all the pieces together (synthesis)
- ❖ Use your outline and the underlined/highlighted concepts as starting points

2. **REVIEW**

- ❖ Review your material within 24 hours to allow the information to move from short-term to long-term memory
- ❖ A 15-minute review is fine!
- ❖ Complete the review before bedtime to maximize retention

3. **REVIEW AGAIN**

- ❖ Review again weekly for easier recall
- ❖ Put key ideas and/or complicated items on a study sheet or note cards
- ❖ Utilize these study aids frequently – anytime/anywhere when extra time



WHEN READING IS TOUGH

A FEW TIPS TO TRY

- ❖ Read it again
- ❖ Look for essential words
- ❖ Read with a dictionary handy
- ❖ Read it out loud
- ❖ Talk to your instructor
- ❖ Take a break
- ❖ Skip around the reading assignment
- ❖ Form a study group or get tutoring
- ❖ Use another textbook
- ❖ Don't give up!



GIVE IT A TRY

Apply muscle reading tips to a textbook you are currently using in one of your classes. Go through each step described above and experiment. It may just make your educational journey a more enjoyable one!



For more study skills tips, visit the [Connect to Success Office](#)
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