

Study Reading Basics

Reading for homework is different than reading for fun. Reading for fun means you decide what to take away; homework means the teacher decides what you need to learn. College reading requires concentration, time, and commitment. Here are a few handy tips to make study reading easier for you.

1. Be aware of your body when you are reading. Don't try to study when:

- you are hungry or thirsty,
- you are tired,
- you have to go to the bathroom,
- you are too uncomfortable (clothes are too tight, the chair is uncomfortable, etc.),
- the room is too noisy or too quiet,
- you are too comfortable.

2. Do not force yourself to read for several hours straight. Take breaks to avoid "brain cramps." However, make sure the breaks have a definite ending time.

3. Everyone has good and bad reading times.

- Try reading textbooks at different times during the day, for example
 - when you first wake up,
 - at lunch time,
 - before going to bed at night.

Then try to plan your reading for the time when you are most alert.

- If you are in a "bad time" but you have to read, try to sit and relax for about five minutes before you begin. This will help to clear your mind so you can focus.
- If, as you read, your attention begins to wander, *stop*. Take a break for a few minutes and then start again.

4. Be aware that some reading difficulties are due to medical situations. If you find that you have headaches, eye pain, or blurriness when you read, check with a doctor.

5. Take notes while you read to help with memorization and comprehension. Notes can also be helpful for class discussions and essay work.

6. Don't try to plow through passages you do not understand. Stop and re-read as you go. Check essential vocabulary.

7. When in doubt, use the dictionary. The dictionary can be your best friend when you are not sure what a word means.