

# College Reading Strategies

Reading college-level texts can be a challenge, so it is important to use a clear, multi-step approach. This 3-step process can help you make the most of your reading time.

## Pre-Reading

Build the big picture and identify your purpose.

- **Get to know the text.** Skim the table of contents, chapter introduction/summary, subheadings, visuals, key terms, abstracts and/or related lecture notes.
- **Divide the chapter into manageable sections.** If your focus starts to wander, take a break. Decide if how the text is divided needs to be revised.
- **Define a purpose for reading.** State why this information is significant. Turn subheadings into questions. For example, the subheading "Establishing Controls" is in a chapter about conducting scientific experiments. You can turn that subheading into "Why is it important to establish controls in an experiment?" or "What are some of the methods/considerations for establishing controls?"

## During Reading

Think about the text. Be active to stay focused.

- **Paraphrase the text** or take notes while reading.
- **Answer** any embedded questions to check comprehension.
- **Use a symbol** system to track your thinking.
- **Record your own thoughts** and main points about the text in the margins or notes.

### Examples of Symbols



Murky Concept



Important



Key Terms  
(Underline or Highlight)



Mastered Concept



Process or Cycle

## Post-Reading

Check Comprehension.

- **Answer** subheading, book, and/or homework questions.
- **Outline big ideas** and supporting evidence or reasoning in your own words.
- **Make a concept map** to focus on relationships and connections.
- **Write** clear explanations for each step while solving example problems.
- **Combine and connect** your reading notes and lecture notes.