**Textbook Reading Workshop**

**Slide 1**

Hi! Welcome to the “Textbook Reading” workshop. My name is Lynn Burke, and I am a Learning Specialist in the office of Learning Support Services on the second floor of Falvey library. This workshop will focus on strategies for reading textbooks in an efficient, thorough way and will help improve comprehension. Many students say that they don’t actually read their texts, instead relying on lecture notes and Powerpoints. However, it’s always a good idea to at least use the text as a reference, and the strategies that I’m going to talk about will work whether you are reading or just skimming the chapter. Before settling down to read a textbook, think about WHERE and WHEN you are doing the reading. Be sure that you are reading at a time of day that works for you AND in a place that is conducive to learning and concentrating. Also, if you tend to lose concentration easily, be sure to break long readings into more manageable segments.

**Slide2**

The most productive way to read a chapter in a textbook is by using a 3 step process. The first step in this process is to PREVIEW the chapter or section that you will be reading. This can be done quickly (3-5 minutes?).

* Start at the beginning of the chapter or section that you are planning on reading and read/skim all titles, headings, end-of-section questions, bolded vocabulary, end of chapter summaries and/or quizzes. Look at charts, diagrams, and pictures. When you actually start reading the material, you will recognize and remember some of the information that you saw in the preview step.

**Slide 3**

The second step in the process is the actual reading of the material. Some things to remember:

* Each time you come to a new heading or section, turn the title of it into a question before beginning to read that section. Then you will subconsciously be looking for the answer to the question while reading.
  + Example: A section entitled “Genotype and Phenotype” should be immediately changed to “What is the difference between genotype and phenotype?” as you read it.
* Summarize or rephrase each paragraph (for difficult material) or page to check comprehension. You can also quickly jot down a one sentence summary at the bottom of the page or on a post-it.
* Reread and/or read aloud difficult or complicated sentences, especially if you are an auditory learner. This helps with comprehension.
* Don’t forget to adjust your reading rate according to what you are reading. If it is familiar information, you should increase your rate. If the material is difficult or unfamiliar, then you will have to slow down.
* Keep highlighting to a minimum! You want to only highlight key points or terms so that when you have to study for a test, you are not rereading most of the page.
* If you find that you are losing concentration, read for short periods of time (20-30 minutes) and then take a VERY SHORT break. Stretch, get a drink of water or a snack, get some fresh air, and then come right back to the reading. Don’t do anything that is going to totally distract you from getting back to your work.
* Be an Active Reader! This means have a pencil in your hand and interact with the text as you are reading. Interacting with the text is necessary in order for your brain to fully process and store information.

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* Mark up the text by using parentheses, asterisks, underlining, circles, arrows, numbering, brackets…anything and everything that will make it efficient and helpful when you have to go back and study for a test. You DO NOT want to have to reread the material and you shouldn’t have to if you’ve interact with the text the first time you read it. If you prefer not to write in the textbook, invest in post-its and use them for summarizing, flagging important information, and jotting down anything you need to remember.

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* Here is an example of marking up the text. Take a minute to read the selection and see how it is marked. It is important that the two definitions of the word “prejudice” are noted, the term “socialization” is highlighted, as is the last sentence of the paragraph. I added the question “Why?” …this will lead to trying to find the answer to this question while reading further.

**Slide 6**

The third and final step in the reading process is one that is usually overlooked. It is the REVIEW step. This step should take the same amount of time as the Preview step (3-5 min.).

* Just go back and skim over the notes that you took, the headings, the bolded vocabulary, and any review/quiz questions at the end of the chapter. It is best if you can do this step immediately after reading. If you can’t fit it in immediately, try to do it sometime before the end of the day. This step can also be applied to note taking in class…try to review your notes as soon as possible. This step helps to transfer the information from your short term memory to your long term memory!

**Slide 7**

Reading dense/difficult material can be very frustrating whether it is in a textbook or just a reading for a Philosophy class. But there are some steps you can take to make it a bit easier.

* Start with a small amount of material and read in short increments.
* Use the same 3 step process that we reviewed in previous slides.
* Push yourself to read to the end, even if you feel like you are not comprehending at all. Sometimes by the end, it all becomes clear.
* Note your confusion with question marks and notations…hopefully it will be cleared up in class discussions or when speaking with the professor or classmates.
* Look up unfamiliar words.
* Don’t panic! Your brain will continue to process the information. Read it again, and it may make perfect sense to you the second time around!