



on #10

TEXTBOOK READING I

In the next two lessons you will learn ways to read so you can learn more as you study. Reading well so you understand main points may be **the** most important skill for success in school. Good reading is also important for success in nearly every other activity.

Let's begin by looking at the special challenges you face when reading text books. First, you must understand the main points made by authors. Sometimes main points are very clear but often authors do not state main points clearly. So it is difficult to find main points. Second, you must relate these main points to details. Main points usually state an important idea or belief. The details present the evidence or support which convince readers that the main point is believable. Third, you must relate main points to each other. Some main points are more important than others. Your job is to decide which are the most important ideas. Finally, you must make sure everything the author says makes sense to you and remember it.

Q: What can I do to make text reading easier?

You should use PAT, the systematic approach.

The first step is to prepare to read. Here are three ways you can prepare.

Reflection - Reflection is thinking about what you have read before in the text. Say to yourself the main points and supporting details. Say to yourself the terms, dates and facts you read. Say to yourself what the main point was and how this main point relates to the main ideas of your book and class. If you can't remember what you read before, open the book and review it carefully.

Read Introductions and Summaries - A good way to begin a text is to read the introduction and summary **first**. This will help you identify main ideas as they are presented. Remember that the introduction and summary have only the most important points in them. So you must know much more than the information in these parts of the book.

Q: Where are introductions and summaries?

You will usually find introductions at the beginning of chapters and often at the start of sections of chapters. Summaries are usually at the end of chapters and at the end of sections of chapters. Books often have review questions or problems in chapters and these are good to read also. Sometimes introductions or summaries have titles but often they do not. You will have to look at your book to see. If you are not sure, then ask your teacher.

Survey Topic Markers - Most books have words in different type at the beginning of sections of a chapter. We call these topic markers because they tell you the topic that you will read about. It's like a preview of a movie. Before you read a section or chapter, you should look at and read all the topic markers. As you read them ask yourself:

1. What do I already know about this?
2. What do I need to learn?
3. How can I keep this interesting?

Q: What are the purposes of reading preparation?

The purposes for reading preparation are the same for all preparation; to drive out distractions and to build on knowledge you already have. When reading you want to **predict** what you will read and need to know. This will help you learn more, learn it faster and be more interested.

Often students are amazed at how much they can learn with a brief survey of a chapter. After you have finished using your three preparation skills you should "feel" ready to read. To check to see if you are ready to read, answer the questions below:

1. What will the author's main point be?
2. What do I know about this now?
3. How does this fit with what I read before?

If the answer to any of these questions is, "I don't know?" then, you may not be well prepared. Remember that you are predicting. A prediction is a guess and you could be wrong. As you actually read, you will want to test your predictions. When you are wrong you want to change. It is ok to be wrong; in fact, if you find you were wrong it is one sign you are reading well.

Homework

Get a text book and for one chapter do each of the preparation skills. First, reflect, then read introductions and summaries and finally survey topic markers. For that chapter, answer the questions below. Do this without actively reading to see how much you can learn from preparation only.

Here are the questions (you can use Form 10.1 if you wish).

1. What do you think the main points will be?
2. What do you think the author wants you to know?
3. What do you already know about this?
4. How can you make this interesting?

Finally, try this with several text books from different subjects.



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Form 10.1
Preparation For Reading

Write your answers to the questions below after you have prepared but before you actively read.

1. What will the main points be?
2. What do you think the author wants you to learn?
3. What do you already know or think about this?
4. How can you make this reading interesting?