

STAY FOCUSED:

READING STRATEGIES



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K-W-L METHOD

- This stands for what you **K**now, what you **W**ant to know, and what you **L**earned.
- What you **K**now:
 - Write what you know, what you think you know, and what you sort of know. Make an outline, list, or a concept map.
 - This is a form of recalling, which connects new and old information in your brain.
- What you **W**ant to know:
 - List your questions, starting with ones from class.
 - Add questions about things you find interesting.
 - Leave space for answers to your questions!
- What have you **L**earned?
 - After you've finished reading, write a summary of what you just learned.
 - Do this after lecture, and after each chapter.
 - If you can't describe what you just read, heard, or took notes on, you didn't learn anything!

SURVEYING THE BOOK AND CHAPTER

1. As you survey, take notes that you can reference before you begin reading.
2. Read the title, and write it in your notes.
 - a. What do you anticipate learning?
3. Write the names of the authors and the date the book was published.
4. Skim the index and glossary in the back of the book.
 - a. Check the bibliography to see when their references were published to make sure it's current research.
5. Read the table of contents, and take note of how information is divided.
6. Organize the main ideas in the chapters as you read. Introductions, summaries, and headings can help.
7. Stop and reflect on your initial notes. Have you learned enough?

IN-DEPTH READING STRATEGY

1. Approach reading with a positive attitude.
2. Create a **Distributed Reading Schedule**
 - a. Break the reading up into pieces within the chapter, taking breaks between finishing each piece and reviewing what you learned.
 - b. You can organize by sections, pages, paragraphs, etc.
3. Read when you are the most alert.
 - a. Are you an early bird or a night owl?
4. Read where you can concentrate.

- a. Pick a location that's comfortable, has good lighting, a good temperature, and no distractions.
5. Review past readings.
6. Preview before reading! The previous section, *Surveying the Book and Chapter*, details how.
 - a. Look for special formatting, like **bold**, *italics*, and **color**.
 - b. Look for visual elements.
 - c. Keep an eye out for chapter summaries.
8. Do a quick read—aka skim!
9. Identify the purpose of what you're reading.
10. Break sentences into chunks.
 - a. EX: ~when you~ read in~ smaller chunks~ you can~ read faster.~
 - b. ~When you read in smaller chunks~ you can read faster.~
11. Concentrate on reading faster!
 - a. If you will it, your brain will find a way.
12. Pause after paragraphs to recall what you've just learned.
13. As you read, see if you can answer any questions from earlier sections, or draw connections.
14. Avoid simply **highlighting** or underlining in your book.
 - a. Taking notes keeps you engaged with the reading.
 - b. Students also tend to over-highlight when reading the first time through.
15. End with a summary of information you just read.

SET READING GOALS

1. What do you want to learn from this assignment or reading?
2. What grade do you want to make in this class?
3. What kind of material will help you achieve that grade? Is what you want to learn correlated to making the grade, or do you need to know more about terms, facts, main ideas, etc.
4. How much time do you need to complete this assignment? Can you do it all at once or does it need divided into smaller portions?
5. What strategies will you use to finish the assignment?
 - Example: In the next ____ minutes, I will [read, study, write, etc.] pages ____ to learn ____ by using _____ strategies.
6. After you finish reading, evaluate how you did. Did you accomplish your goal or do you need to do more?

MASTER VOCABULARY

- Look for unfamiliar vocabulary when you're surveying the chapter. Learn these words before you begin reading.
- Set aside a page in your notes specifically for vocabulary.
- List the new words and write their definitions in your own words.
- Never memorize definitions you don't understand!
- Don't be afraid to include examples to further explain the term.
- Common ways to learn new terms include:

- Read the definition multiple times.
- Categorize similar words together and learn them as a group.
- Use flashcards. Keep these until the end of the semester so you can review them for finals.
- Review the terms right before bed and when you wake up.

QUESTION-SKIM-ANSWER-EXPLAIN

- Start with K-W-L and set goals.
- Write questions and leave space for answers.
- Skim one section at a time, looking for answers to your questions. Don't forget to use your own words!
- If you still have unanswered questions, check the index. Still no luck? Try online or the library.
- After your questions are answered, are there still things you don't understand? Go back and read those sections in depth.
- Last, write the L of K-W-L and see what's you've learned.

SQ4R

Survey—Question—Read—Recite—Record—Review

1. **Survey** the book. Read the table of contents, and introductions.
2. **Question:** Turn the chapter titles, headings, and subheadings into questions.
 - a. Ex: Chapter Title—Water Molecules
 - b. Potential Questions: What are water molecules? What are the primary components of water molecules?
3. **Read** the chapter to answer those questions as you go.
4. **Recall** the new information mentally.
 - a. Ex: I know water molecules are x, y, and z. I remember x and y, but what was z?
 - b. Reread until you can fill in the blanks for that section.
5. **Record:** Take down notes based on your recall from that section.
6. **Review!** Make sure to continuously engage with the material to keep it fresh in your mind.

STRATEGIES COMPILED FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

Downing, Skip. *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013. Print.

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Pauk, Walter. *Essential Study Strategies*. H & H Pub. Co.: Clearwater, 2000. Print.

Sherfield, Robert M., Rhonda J. Montgomery, and Patricia G. Moody. *Cornerstone: Building on your Best*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005. Print.