

ANALYTICAL READING STRATEGIES

See reverse for checklists with more detail on **how** to use these strategies!

Strategy	When	How	Why
Skimming	Prior to reading a complex text.	Read intro/conclusion, review headings and structure looking for the main claims and reasons for those claims.	To help situate the reading and its arguments and make reading easier.
Re-Reading	When you encounter difficult passages.	Slow down, re-read the text, and pause until you can summarize for yourself in 1-2 sentences.	To ensure understanding of difficult points before moving on.
Integration	When encountering a central idea, or when an idea reminds you of something else.	Identify central ideas, think about what else you know or have read on those ideas and consider similarities and differences.	Promotes deeper understanding.
Annotation	When a passage puzzles you, excites you, or is worth remembering.	Take notes on the text using your preferred strategy (see reverse)	Note-taking engages you in the text, and helps you to remember ideas.
Argument Mapping	When presented with an argument, particularly an important one.	Develop anything from a full map of the argument to a recounting in your head of the structure of the argument, based on the importance of the reading and the argument	To help you identify the logical structure underlying the written structure.

Skimming

1. Ask Yourself: How Should I Read This? (Why am I reading it? What kind of text is it?)
2. Read the introduction and conclusion, looking for the thesis.
3. Scan the text for section headings, bolded terms, big ideas.
4. Read the first few sentences of each section.
5. State, for yourself, your working summary (thesis and main reasons).

Integration

1. Start with an inventory of the central claims and concepts.
2. Where have you seen similar ideas and concepts in other texts we have read?
3. Where have seen them in other things you have read and/or seen?
4. Where have seen them in your own life?
5. How are the uses of the concepts or claims similar?
6. How are the uses of the concepts or claims different?

Re-Reading

1. Slow down - find the last place you understood the reading.
2. Read the passage again slowly (perhaps out loud).
3. Identify any terms you don't understand and look them up.
4. Identify any claims that were established earlier in the essay and review them.
5. Repeat until you can provide a 1-2 sentence summary of the passage to yourself.

Annotation

1. The Cornell Method: on a separate sheet of paper, make two columns, leaving some space at the bottom. In the right hand column, write down key ideas from the reading (your notes). In the left hand column, identify key words for those ideas (your cues). At the bottom, summarize the reading.
2. Jeff's Method: I use a modified Cornell Method, where I use the left hand column for questions and objections. The right hand column contains the thoughts of the author, and the left contains a record of my thinking.
3. Marginalia Method: Come up with a system of symbols to indicate different responses to the text, e.g., one for a key idea, one for an idea you didn't understand, one for a question, etc. Mark up your text, adding longer thoughts where you have space, or on a separate sheet of paper.
4. Two tips though: do NOT simply highlight the text. This is passive, rather than active, note-taking. Second, no matter your method, write a short summary of the reading. It will help you arrange your thoughts around the key ideas.