

HOW TO

Read a Textbook

Preparation

- One of the most important things a student can do when preparing to read a textbook is to set aside an appropriate amount of time for the task, and then break it into manageable chunks so as to not become overwhelmed.
- A good rule of thumb is that it can take up to about five minutes per required page, as college textbooks can be content heavy.
- If a student is assigned 40 (forty) pages for reading, it is recommended that they are broken into smaller chunks, such as 10 - 20 per sitting. This will keep the student focused and attentive while reading.
- If possible, the student should have a highlighter or pen readily available so that they can mark any content that they want to refer back to when taking notes.

Action

- Before starting on page one, a student should read through your assigned pages to see what the topics are going to be or begin to think about how to focus on those specific topics.
- The key is to read actively. The student should only take notes once they have finished a paragraph or section, as this will keep them focused on the arguments or material.
- Once the student reaches the end of the paragraph or section they can go ahead and take notes.
- Similarly, the student should be asking themselves questions throughout the reading to see if they are able to answer that question after having finished the reading.

Review

- After the student finishes their assigned reading it is important to reflect upon the material to ensure that the information can easily be recalled.
- Often the reading will have a direct connection to the material that will be covered in a lecture or discussion after the due date, so it is important for the student to directly connect the information from the readings to that of the lectures or discussions.

Things to Remember

- Do not skip required readings unless the instructor has explicitly stated that it is okay to do so.
- Textbooks can often be an incredibly useful resource that goes hand in hand with that of the material covered in a lecture or discussion.
- If a student is going to utilize notes from a textbook for any sort of writing assignment, it is important to ensure that the information is properly cited and quoted if necessary.

