Textbook Reading Skills

4 tips that will help you with reading assignments

• Previewing
• Scanning
• Skimming
• SQ3R Method
Previewing

- Become familiar with new textbooks
- Understand how the chapters are set up
- Know what to expect
- Should be done with all textbooks at the beginning of the semester
Previewing your own textbook

*Directions*: Preview your textbook. Answer these questions.

1. Title:
2. Author(s):
3. Date of publication:
4. Number of pages:
5. Check the features. Does your textbook contain:
   - [ ] a table of contents?
   - [ ] an index?
   - [ ] a glossary?
   - [ ] a bibliography?
   - [ ] end-of-chapter questions?
   - [ ] illustrations?
   - [ ] charts and graphs?
   - [ ] anything else helpful to the reader?

*Evaluate*: Do this with all of your textbooks, and compare the differences. Discuss what features you like and do not like.
Scanning

- Use when locating specific information
- Learn to not read every word
- Improve reading speed, which is very important for ESL/EFL students needing to read in English.
  - Some students might spend 3-4 times longer on their reading assignments if they do not learn how to improve their reading speed.

You already know how to use this skill
- Dictionaries
- Telephone books/ directories
- Indexes
- Internet searches
Skimming

- Combines both *previewing* and *scanning*
- Focus on topic sentences and main ideas of the text
- Obtain an overview of the form and content of the text, and an understanding of the outline
- Determines important parts that need to be read more thoroughly.
Usually the first paragraph will be read at average speed all the way through. It often contains an introduction or overview of what will be talked about.

Sometimes, however, the second paragraph contains the introduction or overview. In the first paragraph the author might just be “warming up” or saying something clever to attract attention.

Reading a third paragraph completely might be unnecessary but

the main idea is usually contained in the opening sentence

Besides the first sentence the reader should get some but not all the detail from the rest of the paragraph

names

dates

hence sometimes the main idea is in the middle or at the end of the paragraph.

Some paragraphs merely repeat ideas

Occasionally the main idea can’t be found in the opening sentence. The whole paragraph must then be read.

Then leave out a lot of the next paragraph
to make up time

Remember to keep up a very fast rate

800 w.p.m.

Don’t be afraid to leave out half or more of each paragraph

Don’t get interested and start to read everything

Lowered comprehension is expected

50%

not too low

Skimming practice makes it easier

gain confidence

Perhaps you won’t get anything at all from a few paragraphs

don’t worry

Skimming has many uses

reports

ewspapers

supplementary reading
Tomiko is happy to be a student in New York. She is studying English at Columbia University. She plans to finish her English courses in June. Then she will work on her master’s degree at New York University.

Tomiko likes the many beautiful buildings in New York. She also likes the people in New York.

Best of all, Tomiko love the theaters in New York. Tomiko is far from her home in Japan, but she is not sad or lonely because she has many things to do. She is very happy and busy in New York.
**SQ3R Reading Method**

- **S- Survey.**
  Preview. Find the purpose of what you’re going to study.

- **Q- Question.**
  Find out what you need to learn. Ask what, why, how, when, who, where. Write these questions in your notes.

- **R- Read.**
  Read the introduction, conclusion, and summary first. Locate and highlight key points, **bold** and *italicized* words. Take note of charts, pictures, and graphics. Read to answer the questions.

- **R- Recall.**
  Pause every 15-20 minutes to recall and summarize what you have read, and write it down.

- **R- Review.**
  Did you answer your questions, understand the material, and accomplish your goal? Reread difficult parts if needed.

**Recalling and reviewing new material several times is the best way to remember and understand new information!**