
Before Reading

Gather Basic Information about Author and Text
- Title
- Author(s)
- Biography of author(s)
- Year published
- Historical context
- Type of source: journal, primary source, book-length study?
- Intended audience: scholars, students?

How might the publication date and historical context help you understand the text?

Preview Text
- Thumb through pages, noting bold headings, graphics, etc. Any predictions?

Read abstract, or intro and summary. Look at charts and graphs. Previewing will help you see the direction the text will take you.

After Reading

Ask Questions
Make note of unclear points to clarify in recitation or office hours.

Solidify Your Learning
Either individually or with a partner, consider drawing a concept map, timeline or map. List key people or major events. Write a summary of main ideas.

During Reading

Understand the Argument
Does the reading advance an argument, often referred to as a thesis? If so, what is the author’s thesis or point of view?
- What is author’s objective?
- What major points does she make?

Analyze the Thesis
What kind of evidence supports the thesis? Do you find it convincing? Why or why not?

Learn Vocabulary
As you encounter unknown terms, write them down and then be sure to find their definitions during reading.

Reread the sentence where the word is located to help you remember its meaning. Try using it in an original sentence.

For further reading
Click Here!

Like This Handout?
Here’s More!

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 United States License. You may reproduce it for non-commercial use if you use the entire handout and attribute the source: The Learning Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Adapted by work from Russell Bither-Terry, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science, UNC-CH