Graduate School
Reading Strategies

Dr. Wally Barnes
The Graduate School
Academic Support Services
**Phase 1**  
Read or preview material to be covered in class... before class

**Phase 2**  
Go to class!  
Listen actively, take notes, and participate in class.

**Phase 3**  
Review and process class notes as soon after class as possible.

**Phase 4**  
Use intense study sessions.

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Adapted from Saundra Y. McGuire, Center for Academic Success, Louisiana State University
What Are the Challenges of Reading in Graduate School?

- Volume
- Primary Sources
- Complexity
- Jargon
How Can You Deal with the Volume of Reading?

- Do NOT read every word on every page
- Study Groups
- Convert PDFs to digital recording
- Use best practices
  - Concentration strategies
  - Time Management strategies
  - Research-based reading strategies (PARR)
Concentration

• Eliminate external distractors – Find a quiet place to read
• Reduce internal distractors – Focus on your reading
• Read for short periods and take breaks
• BEWARE: Don’t lie down on your bed to read
Time Management

• Choose a time when you are most productive
• Set aside enough time for the assignment
• Make a good plan
• Write short term goals
PARR for Textbooks

Preview

Actively Read

Review
Preview – Purpose for Reading

• Read introduction and conclusion first
• Scan bold print items – section headings, new vocabulary
• Review charts and graphs
• Read questions if included
• Estimate you reading time
Skimming

- Read the title
  - What do I already know?
  - What do I want to get out of this?
- Read the first and last paragraphs
  - What is the author’s thesis or argument?
- Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph
  - What is the main idea?
  - Look for unfamiliar terminology or concepts
- Look for signposts
  - The **most** significant contribution is...
  - For the purpose of this experiment, the **definition** is...
Reading – Active Participant

• Question the author as you read
• Read with a pen/pencil in your hand
• Keep highlighting to a minimum; it delays learning, unless...
  • Paraphrase important ideas or vocabulary in the margins
• If you lose focus; stop, regroup, and begin reading again
Review - Remembering

- Thoughtfully answer questions you read when previewing
- Write short summaries of the major concepts and ideas in the chapter
- Reflect on your learning
- Write some questions to discuss in class
- Review your highlighting and margin notes
Research Articles

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Methods/Observations/Procedure
- Results
- Conclusion/Discussion
- References
Research Articles

Do **Not** read first page to last page.

1. Start with the **Abstract**.
2. Read the **Introduction**
3. **Skim** the **Conclusion**
4. Read the **Methods** section, highlight, and critique.
5. Read the **Results** section. Don’t get bogged down in the details.
6. Read the **Conclusion** section more carefully.
7. Re-Read the **article**, looking for important information.
Read Before Class

• You make the most of class time.

• You understand what you do and do not understand.

• You can participate in class discussions.

• You can show off because you will be more informed about your professor’s discussion points.

• You can participate in group work.

• You will show respect for peers, professor, and yourself.
Comments, Concerns, Questions?