

Reading Comprehension Strategies for Informational Text

Before Reading – Survey the Material

1. Take note of the chapter title, bold faced headings, charts, maps, pictures, and graphs. Skim the review questions located at the end of the chapter. These questions often target many of the most important facts.

Chapter Title: _____

What topic is introduced in the introductory material? _____

List the subordinate headings:

Charts: _____

Maps: _____

Pictures: _____

Graphs: _____

Formulate Questions

1. Based on the title and headings, etc., what might this text discuss? What clues lead you to make this prediction? Skimming the material will raise questions in your mind. What do you already know about this topic? What questions do you have that might be answered with a more careful reading of the text?

During Reading

1. First, read the whole text to get an overview of its content. If you are reading a lengthy text, you may want to read one or two sections at a time.
2. Next, read the text a second time looking carefully for the main idea and supporting examples.
 - a. Underline important concepts and circle any new vocabulary words.
 - b. As you read, consider what you need to know from the paragraph.
 - c. Take notes and write any questions in the margins. This is how a text is annotated. As you read, ideas may come to your mind. Write them down in the margins. The ideas may be important for making critical connections between what you already know about the topic through experience and the new material being introduced in the text. You can later return to your questions and notes, paying particular attention to certain sections. You might also take notes using an outline such as the following:

Main Idea: _____

Supporting Examples: Watch for information that answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *how*, and *why*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Define New Vocabulary Words and Concepts:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

2. If you are having difficulty with a paragraph, try these strategies:
 - a. Read the paragraphs that come both before and after it to gain context clues.
 - b. Identify the topic sentence. Remember, the topic sentence may appear in the first or last sentence of a paragraph, or it may be implied.
 - c. If the main point is not explicitly stated, consider how all of the above information is related. Making critical connections helps the reader to understand inferred information.
 - d. Look for transitional sentences, phrases, or words that might indicate a shift in the text's meaning, such as *next*, *before*, *then*, *consequently*, *in contrast*, *moreover*, *in addition*, *but*, *however*.

After Reading – Recite and Review

1. Talk aloud or write about the material using your own words to review. Try to answer the questions that you formulated from the pre-reading and subsequent readings.
2. Think about the relationships among your ideas. How do they compare and contrast? How could you classify or group ideas?
3. Consider how the text relates to ideas you have discussed in class.
4. Determine the most important ideas from the text.
5. Review your notes and reread the text's introduction and conclusion.

