Let them Read Books: Strategies for Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension and Endurance

Faculty Handbook

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Sabbatical Project – Fall 2025

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“Reading is an active, imaginative act; it takes work.”

Khaled Hosseini

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Introduction, Purpose, and Goals

Introduction

"Students just don't want to read." Unfortunately, this sentiment is a common complaint shared among many college professors. Some attribute this disinterest in reading to Generation Z's, or the TikTok Generation's, presumed, short attention span. Specifically, Generation Z (Gen Z) students were born between 1995 to 2009 (Camfield and Bayers 1). Many of them attended high school during the pandemic, when the completion of smaller, shorter assignments was necessary due to the physical and emotional distance between student and teacher. These digital natives often expect similarly truncated reading and writing assignments when they transition to higher education.

Concerningly, some Gen Z students may not have the reading comprehension skills necessary to traverse longer readings on their own. A *Chronicle of Higher Education* article entitled "Is Reading Over for Gen Z Students?" suggests that students ". . . don't necessarily see the value in reading, [if they are assigned] a 20-page academic article, and they may choose not to do it. They may choose to load it up into ChatGPT and get a summary" (Stripling). Today's students want efficiency and expediency, while their professors' expectations remain unchanged: do the reading.

Although there are scores of books and articles about teaching literacy dating from John Dewey's 1916 classic: *Democracy and Education*, the research about higher education reading endurance for post-

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pandemic, Generation Z is slowly emerging. Many higher education faculty need help supporting younger students' reading comprehension and endurance.

Purpose

To help support and advance students' reading comprehension and endurance skills at Montgomery College, my fall 2025 sabbatical project is the development of this handbook for faculty. The handbook will be emailed to all full and part-time faculty in January 2026, and several professional development workshops will be provided on-campus in spring 2026 based on the findings of this research.

The handbook includes a literature review for reading comprehension and endurance focused on Gen Z. Further, the handbook also incorporates 26 specific, reading comprehension and endurance strategies faculty can easily adapt in their on-campus classrooms or online. The strategies are drawn from relevant research on reading comprehension and endurance. Three specific goals for the handbook are described below.

Goal 1

The primary goal and objective of the Reading Comprehension and Endurance Handbook for Faculty is to stimulate and enrich students' reading comprehension and endurance across the campus by providing faculty with a significant collection of diverse reading strategies. This project supports Lone Star College's Strategic Plan, which explains that student success at LSC should: "Foster equitable student success outcomes by promoting excellence in student-centered teaching, learning and support

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services" ("LSC Strategic Plan: 2020-2025"). For many faculty, teaching reading strategies is already an important part of their curriculum. This handbook may encourage even experienced faculty to incorporate a few, new reading strategies in the classroom, further advancing students' reading comprehension and endurance skills on-campus.

Goal 2

A secondary goal and objective of the handbook is to empower faculty, who do not normally teach reading strategies, to incorporate one, or more, of the reading strategies into their current course content. Every academic discipline requires reading of some kind, and these strategies can be adapted and molded to any professor's field of study. Further, reading comprehension professional development can greatly benefit faculty, as suggested in the Aspen Institute's report entitled: "Building a Faculty Culture of Student Success." The report describes a professional development activity focused on reading comprehension: "Faculty members across all disciplines were encouraged and trained to teach students a set of specific reading strategies alongside the content curriculum in courses" ("Building a Faculty Culture of Student Success"). Similar to the activity described, this handbook serves as a collaborative, professional development resource for faculty.

Goal 3

The final goal and objective of the Reading Comprehension and Endurance Handbook is to underscore the merits of reading comprehension and endurance in higher education. In particular, the following literature review highlights: Gen Z's reading activities, literacy rates in the United States, the

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multifaceted benefits of reading, and, most significantly, how students can benefit from receiving supplementary reading instruction in the college classroom.

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Literature Review

Gen Z Readers

In December 2024, Australia became the first continent in the world to ban social media for children under sixteen years old. The list of banned applications includes: "Tiktok, X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and Threads" (Livingstone). Reasons for banning social media include the potential threats of: cyberbullying, harmful content, and online predators ("Social Media Ban"). *The Anxious Generation*, by Jonathan Haidt, is one of the books credited with influencing Australia's decision to ban social media for children. Throughout his text, he argues that children under sixteen do not benefit from access to social media. Chief among his many, many concerns is: "attention fragmentation" (Haidt 140). Social media affects a child's ". . . ability to stay on a task, which is a feature of maturity, and a sign of good executive function" (Haidt 140). Specifically, he explains "The members of Gen Z are test subjects for a new, radical way of growing-up, far from the real-world interactions of small communities in which humans evolved. Call it the Great Rewiring of Childhood" (6-7). This rewiring, or attention fragmentation, affects: ". . . sustained engagement with complex ideas" (Kelly). In particular, there is a concern that ". . . we will consume less complex cultural content" and ". . . our capacity to create such content may diminish" (Kelly).

Predictably, this attention fragmentation adversely impacts children's reading skills. Weigel and Gardner explain that when they read, children ". . . hop from point to point, distracted from the original task," often exhibiting a ". . . grasshopper mind" (38). In short, from childhood to young adulthood,

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Gen Z's attention fragmentation affects the way this generation interacts with text and the world around them. Optimistically, the Australian social media ban may influence other continents and countries follow suit and protect those under sixteen from the "Great Rewiring of Childhood" as well. Regardless, considerable damage has already been done. Literacy rates are in a steep decline as explained below.

Literacy in the United States

If it not a coincidence that there has been a "significant decrease in adult literacy and numeracy skills since 2017" (U.S. Department of Education). Alarmingly, a report from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) explains "The average U.S. literacy score fell 13 points from 271 in 2017 to 258 in 2023" (U.S. Department of Education). By comparison, "Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden were top European Union performers in reading competency;" "Japan was a top performer" in reading competency as well (U.S. Department of Education). The United States's literacy scores also rank below the scores for other notable countries, such as: Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Switzerland, Australia, Chinese Taipai, and Macau China (U.S. Department of Education). In sum, the United States's literacy scores are not competitive with our contemporaries around the world, or commensurate with our acclaimed status as the country with the highest "Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the world for countries of 10 million citizens, or more" (Ventura).

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Reading for Pleasure

One of the many consequences for the "Great Rewiring of Childhood," label coined by Haidt may be a decreased interest in reading for pleasure. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), "In 2020, only 17 percent of 13-year-olds surveyed said they read for fun almost every day. That figure was 27 percent in 2012 and 35 percent when data collection began in 1984" (qtd. in Schaeffer). Even more ominously, a more recent, 2025 study discovered "Daily reading for pleasure in the United States has declined by more than 40% over the last 20 years" (Bone). As noted by one of the researchers, "This is not just a small dip — it's a sustained, steady decline of about 3% per year" (qtd. in Bone). The scholars pinpoint the following reasons for the decline in reading for pleasure: "the rise of digital media, growing economic pressures, shrinking leisure time, and uneven access to books and libraries" (qtd. in Bone). There are specific benefits to reading for pleasure and reading, in general, as explained in the following pages.

Reading for Success

Predictably, individuals who regularly read for pleasure often have more advanced reading skills. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) explains "The ability to read well and the inclination to read for pleasure are intimately connected" ("Federal Data"). In particular, a study by Van Burgen et al. observes "good literacy skills boost literacy enjoyment and book reading" (3). Bali

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Rai goes a step further, linking reading to success "Reading for pleasure is the single biggest factor in success later in life, outside of an education. Study after study has shown that those children who read for pleasure are the ones who are most likely to fulfil their ambitions" (qtd. in Van Bergen et al.). Ricardson and Eccles echo the link between reading and success in their research noting ". . . measures of reading proficiency and literacy abilities have been shown to predict high school completion, degrees earned, adult income and occupational status" (1). In brief, reading well positively impacts educational and professional success. Beyond the individual benefits, reading has a profound impact on society as well.

Reading for Society

"We truly can improve the world one reader at a time" asserts Hollowell (7). Reading well affects not only the reader, but everyone in that reader's sphere of influence. Hollowell explains "Improved reading growth affects a student's individual life, but it also impacts their family and community for generations to come" (Hallowell 7). Further, in Wolf's bestselling book: *Reader, Come Home: The Reading Brain in a Digital World*, she highlights the connectedness of reading ". . . reading is always about connection: connecting what we know to what we read, what we read to what we feel, what we feel to what we think, and how we think to how we live our lives in a connected world" (163). Reading connects to the world around us and helps us extend our understanding of ourselves and others. In her most famous book *Proust and the Squid*, Wolf contends that through reading ". . . we are no longer limited by the confines of our own thinking" and ". . . our original boundaries are challenged, teased,

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and gradually placed somewhere new. An expanding sense of 'other' changes who we are, and most importantly, what we imagine we can be" (8). Essentially, personal change is possible through reading.

Some researchers suggest that reading literary fiction, specifically, increases readers' empathy for others, ". . . if they are emotionally connected, or transported, by the work" (Bal and Veltkamp 8). Also, reading fiction can ". . . provide us with the opportunity to take in other peoples' perspectives in a safe, distanced way. In that way, fiction serves as a playground for exercising empathic skills" (Schmidt). In sum, being transported to another time, place, or context by literary fiction can increase our understanding of others and ourselves.

Remarkably, the ability to read directly impacts world poverty rates as well. According to a Global Education Monitoring Report produced by UNESCO, "if all the world's children could be taught how to read, 171 million people would be lifted out of poverty without any further intervention" ("World Poverty"). The report further explains "Education provides skills that boost employment opportunities and incomes while helping to protect people from socio-economic vulnerabilities" ("World Poverty"). Along with the remarkable benefits to society, a further benefit of reading is improved critical thinking.

Reading for Critical Thinking

Some refer to the twenty-first century as the age of misinformation. Many attribute this misinformation to the boundless influence of social media. Misinformation has negatively affected ". . . our ability to improve public health, address climate change, maintain a stable democracy, and more"

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("Misinformation"). Maryanne Wolf, expert in cognitive neurosciences, worries that we rely too much on external knowledge at the expense of not building internal knowledge (*Reader Come Home*). Wolf continues, relying on external knowledge without applying critical thinking skills leads us to "become increasingly susceptible human beings who are more and more easily led by sometimes dubious, sometimes even false information that we mistake for knowledge" (*Reader Come Home).*

In other words, critical thinking skills are needed to combat the misinformation all around us. Specifically, critical thinking skills are defined as: "The art of making clear, reasoned judgements based on interpreting, understanding, applying and synthesizing evidence gathered from observation, reading and experimentation" (Burns). In terms of an educational context, Freire explains "Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education" (93-93). Essentially, critical thinking does not exist in a vacuum. Students must be exposed to ideas, information, and lines of reasoning worth questioning via texts and dialogue. Good readers learn how to separate fact from fiction and misinformation from information. They think critically about a text's: audience, purpose, evidence, language, and scholarly sources cited, as suggested in the "Evaluation" strategy from the Owl at Purdue Writing Lab, which is included in Part II. of this handbook.

Reading for Life

As instructors and academics, we are in a unique position to help our students become highly skilled readers for life while they are active on our campuses, or in our online classrooms. As

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aforementioned, there are significant emotional, financial, societal, and intellectual benefits to reading. Providing students with a few, critical reading strategies now can impact their academic and professional success for decades to come.

While the thought of teaching reading strategies may sound intimidating, Tovani explains "Teachers don't have to be reading specialists to teach comprehension strategies. They simply have to be aware of their own processes as readers. They can notice their own thinking as they read, determine what they do to make meaning, and pass these techniques on to their students" (*I Read It* 109). In other words, sharing the reading strategies you use on a daily basis could be surprisingly helpful to your students.

Further, although there are several sophisticated, multi-step strategies available in his handbook, choosing a few single-step strategies that work for your students and your course may suffice. Meagher underscores the idea of incorporating just a few strategies at a time ". . . reading actively with a few strategies will increase understanding of the material and retention of the material" (12). For example, while the PLAN strategy in Part II. of the handbook has four stages, some faculty may choose to introduce their students to stage one only: "Scan the text and make a "predictive map" of the text's contents" (Caverly et al.). After creating a predictive map, the instructor may choose transition back to their content focused lecture. To be clear, reading strategies do not have to dominate classroom time. Strategies can be presented quickly and efficiently in accordance with the length and complexity of the text assigned.

Notably, reading strategies are appropriate for online courses as well. The handbook includes a few strategies which are specific to asynchronous, online classes. Specifically, in online classes,

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Gamberg suggests modeling metacognitive reading strategies, such as: predicting, questioning, summarizing, re-reading, making connections, and reflecting (qtd. in Graff 174). When metacognitive strategies are successfully, and repeatedly, modeled by the instructor, students will optimally ". . . move toward choosing to employ successful reading strategies beyond when there are explicit assignments or requests to do so" (qtd. in Graff 176). In other words, students may intentionally, or unintentionally, transfer the metacognitive strategies learned in one course to their other courses.

Further, as evidenced in the subsequent pages in this handbook, there are a multitude of reading strategies available that can be applied across the curriculum. Markedly, the 26 strategies included in this handbook are not an exhaustive list, but many have similarities. Specifically, time on task is important. The more students interact with a text, whether predicting content, taking notes, questioning, or summarizing, the more successful they will be as academic readers. Several of the strategies in this handbook reinforce similar concepts, but in a different format. One format may be more appropriate for a particular reading than another format. Faculty are encouraged to adapt and tweak the strategies as needed for their classroom situation. Lastly, a Lesson Plan for Reading Critically is also included at the end of the handbook. This Lesson Plan can be adjusted to accommodate most short, expository texts assigned across the disciplines.

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Reading Strategies

The reading strategies below are organized into three categories: pre-reading; during reading; and post-reading. Optimally, faculty will vary the reading strategies applied in alignment with the course's description, assigned readings, and student learning outcomes.

I. Pre-Reading Strategies

a. Measuring Student Awareness of Reading Strategies

Interestingly, Mokhatri and Shorey suggest that instructors measure students' initial awareness of reading strategies prior to teaching reading strategies. Their Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) is below. The advocate for the use of SORS at the beginning of the semester, noting the results will: ". . . raise learner awareness of reading strategies, and provide practical suggestions for improved practices in reading instruction" (2). Further, they explain that ". . . students' metacognitive awareness of reading processes" can positively impact their ability to ". . . excel academically" (Mokhatri and Shorey 2). While the SORS was developed for English Second Language (ESL) students, SORS will work well with native English speakers as well.

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Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)			
	Statement	Never = 1	Always = 5
1)	I have a purpose in mind when I read.	1	2	3	4	5
2)	I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
3)	I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
4)	I take an overall view of the text to see what it is about before reading it.	1	2	3	4	5
5)	When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
6)	I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
7)	I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
8)	I review the text first by noting its characteristics like length.	1	2	3	4	5
9)	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	1	2	3	4	5
10)	I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.	1	2	3	4	5
11)	I adjust my reading speed according to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
12)	When reading, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	1	2	3	4	5
13)	I use reference materials (e.g., a dictionary) to help me understand definitions.	1	2	3	4	5
14)	When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
15)	I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.	1	2	3	4	5
16)	I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
17)	I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
18)	I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
19)	I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
20)	I use typographical features like bold face and italics to identify key information.	1	2	3	4	5

21)	I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the text.	1 2 3 4 5
22)	I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in the text.	1 2 3 4 5
23)	I check my understanding when I come across new information.	1 2 3 4 5
24)	I try to guess what the content of the text is about when I read.	1 2 3 4 5
25)	When text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.	1 2 3 4 5
26)	I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.	1 2 3 4 5
27)	I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.	1 2 3 4 5
28)	When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.	1 2 3 4 5
29)	When reading, I translate from English into my native language.	1 2 3 4 5 or Not Applicable - Native English Speaker
30)	When reading, I think about information in both English and my native language.	1 2 3 4 5 or Not Applicable - Native English Speaker

Work Cited

Mokhatri, Kouider, and Ravi Sheorey. "Measuring ESL Students' Awareness of Reading Strategies." *Journal of Developmental Education*, vol. 25, no. 3, Mar. 2002, p. 2. *EBSCOhost*, research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=9707abbb-86ac-34a3-b37d-afe50ad34f7b, pp. 2.

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b. Asking Questions

In *Bridging the Gap: College Reading* by Brenda Smith, the author suggests that students ask questions before reading, specifically: "What do I already know, what do I need to know, and how do I go about finding it out?" (73). Increased time spent interacting with a text enhances comprehension of the written material.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Asking Questions
• **What is the topic of the material?**   o What does the title suggest? What do the subheadings, italics, and summaries suggest?

• **What do I already know?**
  o What do I already know about this topic or a related topic?
  o Is this new topic a small part of a larger idea or issue that I have thought about before?

• **What is my purpose for reading?**   o What will I need to know when I finish?

• **How is the material organized?**
  o What is the general outline or framework of the material?
  o Is the author listing reasons, explaining a process, or comparing a trend?

• **What is my plan of attack?**
  o What parts of the text seem most important?
  o Do I need to read everything with equal care?
  o Can I skim some parts?
  o Can I skip some sections completely?

Work Cited

Smith, Brenda D. *Bridging the Gap: College Reading*. Sixth edition. Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, Inc., 2000, pp. 73.

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c. Learning Common Prefixes, Root Words, and Suffixes

Gamel acknowledges ". . . students with wide vocabularies gain more meaning from college-level texts" (114). She suggests ". . . teaching students strategies that will enable them to decode unknown or unfamiliar words on their own as they read" (114). While teaching common prefixes, root words, and suffixes can seem tedious, she suggests giving students a printed or electronic list of "the thirty most commonly used prefixes, the fifteen most commonly used roots, and the ten most commonly used suffixes" (114). In all probability, students will be familiar with a majority of the prefixes, root words, and suffixes from their prior education. Students can be required to learn the newer phrases on the lists on their own. They instructor should explain how knowing the prefixes, root words, and suffixes ". . . will help them navigate unknown words, especially with some of the content-related vocabulary they will encounter" (Gamel 114). One example of the 30-15-10 list is below.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

The following charts were developed by Kelly Gallagher in her work: *To Teach Stuff You Have to Know Stuff.*

30 Common Prefixes			
	Prefix	**Meaning**	**Example**
1)	a, ab, abs	away, from	absent, abstinence
2)	ad, a, ac, af, ag, an, ar, at, as	to, toward	adhere, annex, accede, adapt
3)	bi, bis	two	bicycle, biped, bisect
4)	circum	around	circumference

5)	com, con	together, with	combination, connect
6)	de	opposite, from, away	detract, defer, demerit
7)	dis, dif, di	apart, not	disperse, different
8)	epi	upon, on top of	epicenter
9)	equi	equal	equality, equitable
10)	ex, e	out, from, forth	eject, exhale, exit
11)	hyper	over, above	hyperactive, hypersensitive
12)	hypo	under, beneath	hypodermic
13)	in, en	in, into, not	inject, endure, incorrect
14)	inter	between, among	intercede
15)	mal, male	bad, ill	malpractice, malevolent
16)	mis	wrong	mistake, misunderstand
17)	mono	alone, single, one	monotone, monopoly
18)	non	not	nonsense
19)	ob	in front of, against	obstacle
20)	omni	everywhere, all	omnipresent
21)	preter	past, beyond	preternatural
22)	pro	forward	proceed, promote
23)	re	again, back	recall, recede
24)	retro	backward, behind, back	retroactive
25)	se	apart	secede
26)	sub	under	subway
27)	super	greater, beyond	supernatural, superstition
28)	trans	across, beyond	transcend, transcontinental

29)	un, uni	one	unilateral, unity
30)	un (pronounced uhn)	not	unhappy, unethical

15 Common Roots			
	Root	**Meaning**	**Example**
1)	bas	low	basement
2)	cap, capt	take, seize	capture, capable
3)	cred	believe	credible
4)	dict	speak	predict, dictionary
5)	duc, duct	lead	induce, conduct
6)	fac, fact	make, do	artifact, facsimile
7)	graph	write	autograph, graphic
8)	log	word, study of	dialogue, biology
9)	mort	die, death	mortal, mortician
10)	scrib, script	write	transcribe, subscription
11)	spec, spect	see	specimen, aspect
12)	tact	touch	contact, tactile
13)	ten	hold	tenacious, retentive
14)	therm	heat	thermostat, thermometer
15)	ver	true	verify

10 Common Suffixes			
	Suffix	**Meaning**	**Example**
1)	able, ible	able to (adj.)	usable

2)	er, or	one who does (n.)	competitor
3)	fy	to make (v.)	dignify
4)	ism	the practice of (n.)	rationalism, Catholicism
5)	ist	one who is occupied with (n.)	feminist, environmentalist
6)	less	without, lacking (adj.)	meaningless
7)	logue, log	a particular kind of speaking or writing (n.)	prologue, dialogue
8)	ness	the quality of (n.)	aggressiveness
9)	ship	the art or skill of (n.)	sportsmanship
10)	tude	the state of (n.)	gratitude

Works Cited

Gallagher, Kelly. *To Read Stuff You Have to Know Stuff*. Pearson Canada, 2025. http://www.pearsoncanadaschool.com/con17tent/dam/websites/pearson-canada-school/assets/documents/gallagher-to-read-st18uff-you-have-to-know-stuff-final.pdf.

Gamel, Amelia Leighton. *Help! My College Students Can't Read: Teaching Vital Reading Strategies in the Content Areas*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2015, pp. 166.

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d. Previewing

McGuire and McGuire explain students should preview a text as follows: "For maximally engaged reading, you must give yourself a preview of what you are about to read. Look at section headings, boldface print, italicized words, and any charts or graphs in the portion of the reading you have chosen. If you are reading a novel, then read the first line of every paragraph" (46). As shown in the chart below, students will take notes as they preview the text.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Preview the Text	
Section Headings	*Notes*
Boldface Print	*Notes*
Italicized words	*Notes*

Charts or graphs	*Notes*
First line of every paragraph	*Notes*

Work Cited

McGuire, Yancy and Stephanie McGuire. *Teach Students How to Learn*. Stylus Publishing, 2015, pp. 46.

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e. Activate Schemata

Smith suggests that students activate schemata before they begin reading a text. She describes a schema as ". . . a computer chip in your brain that holds all you know on a subject. Each time you learn something new, you pull out the computer chip on that subject, add the new information, and return the chip to storage. The depth of the schema or the amount of information on the chip varies according to previous experience" (76). She argues that it is ". . . easier to understand a passage if you already know something about the topic" (Smith 76). Students may surprise themselves as they activate schemata on topics they, initially, think they have very little knowledge about.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Activate Schemata

Ask and Take Notes: What do I <u>already know</u> about this topic?

1) Notes: _____

_____

2) Notes: _____

_____

3) Notes: _____

_____

Work Cited

Smith, Brenda D. *Bridging the Gap: College Reading*. Sixth edition. Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, Inc., 2000, pp. 76.

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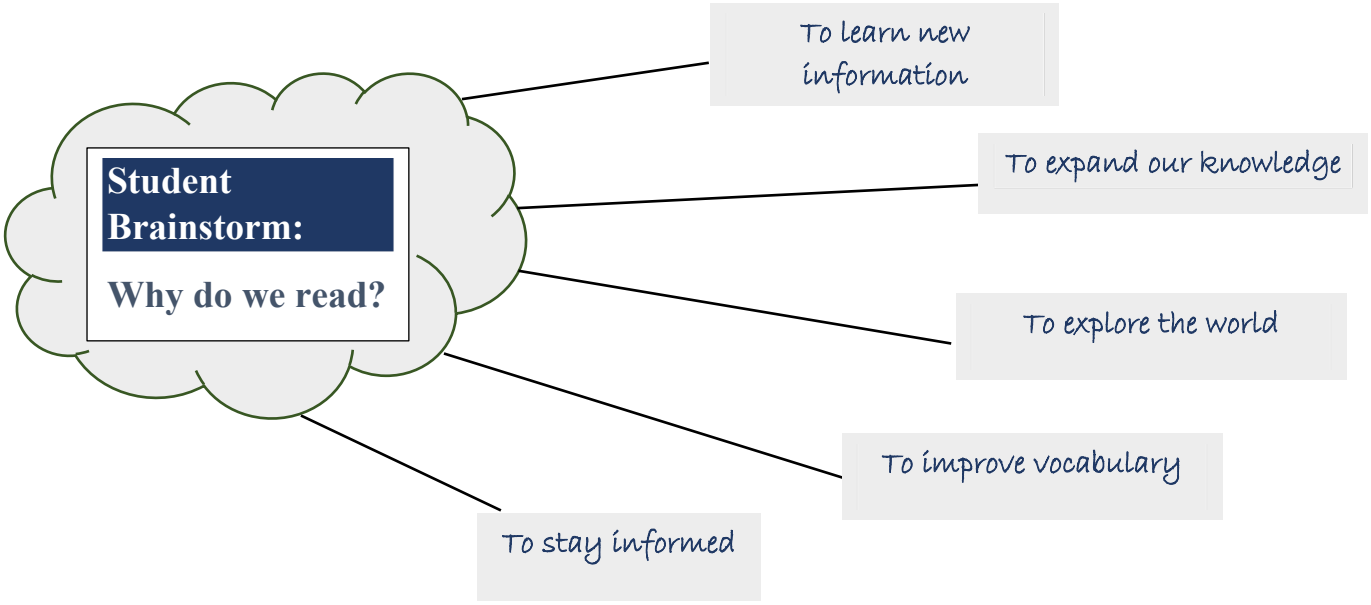
f. Setting Authentic Purposes

Greenleaf et al. acknowledge that some students ". . . deny the value of reading entirely" (77). Certain students wonder: "Why should I read when I can get the information some other way?" (Greenleaf et al. 77). The authors suggest that instructors ask their students to brainstorm, list, and compare authentic reasons to read. They noted that highlighting ". . . the students' own words was instrumental in answering students' . . . frequent complaint of 'Why are we learning this?'" (Greenleaf et al. 78). Specifically, "The list reminds students of their individual reasons for being in this class – the short and long-term goals" (Greenleaf et al. 78). The examples below, such as: "to learn new information," are just a start. Students may be able to develop dozens of reasons for reading as they brainstorm together.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive



Work Cited

Greenleaf, Cynthia, et al. *Reading for Understanding: How Reading Apprenticeship Improves Disciplinary Learning in Secondary and College Classrooms*. Third edition. Jossey Bass West-Ed, 2023, pp. 78.

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g. Know-Want-Learn (KWL) Strategy

One pre-reading strategy suggested by Bustami et al. is the Know-Want-Learn (KWL) approach. In one study, when instructors implemented the KWL strategy in the classroom, ". . . students improved their reading comprehension skills" (35). The researchers further suggest that ". . . the strategy itself has an effect to trigger the students to be autonomous learners" (Bustami et al. 35). The last step of the KWL strategy requires students to reflect on what they have learned once reading is complete.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Know - Pre-Reading	Want - Pre-Reading	Learn - Post-Reading
What do you already know about the topic?	**What do you want to know about the topic?**	**After reading the text, what new information did you learn about the topic?**
1) 2) 3) 4) 5)	1) 2) 3) 4) 5)	1) 2) 3) 4) 5)

Work Cited

Bustami, Usman, et al. "Teaching Reading Through Know-What-Learned (KWL) Strategy: The Effects and Benefits." *Englisia*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 2019, pp. 35–42. EBSCOhost, https://doi-org.lscsproxy2.lonestar.edu/10.22373/ej.v6i1.3607, pp. 35.

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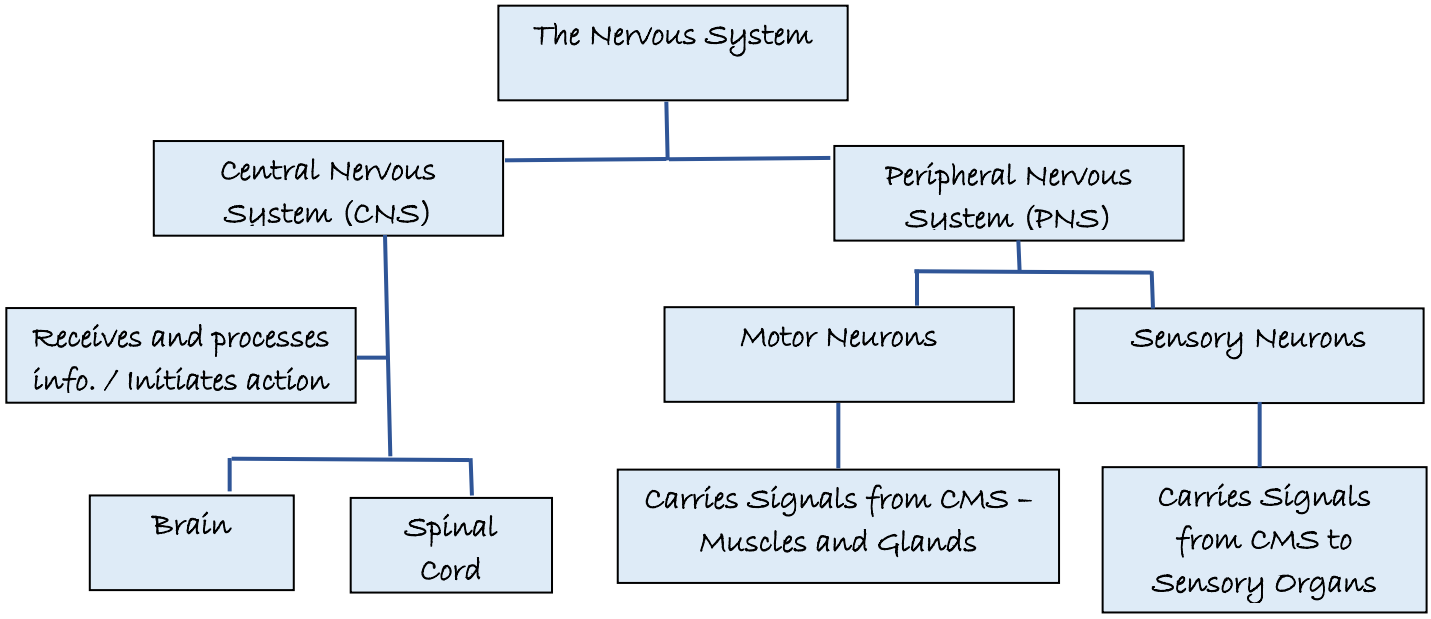
II. During Reading Strategies

a. Science Concept Maps

The book, *College Success Strategies,* by Sherrie Nist-Olejnik and Jody Holschuh addresses reading comprehension in the disciplines. One reading strategy the authors suggest for science courses is the creation of concept maps. The authors indicate, "As you read a chapter [in a science book], fill in your concept map with the important scientific processes" (Nist-Olejnik and Holschuh 199). The partial example provided below is for a human nervous system. This concept map could be adapted for other scientific processes as well.

Suggested text: Expository or instructional scientific texts



Work Cited

Nist-Olejnik, Sherrie, and Jodi Holschuh. *College Success Strategies*. Third edition, Pearson Longman, 2009, pp. 199.

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b. Partial Notes – Online Classes

Flower Darby and James Lang recommend providing online students with partial notes for readings and/or lecture materials. They refer to research from Cornelius and Owen-DeSchryver, who suggest ". . . students who were given partial notes prior to a lecture performed better on the final exam than did students who received full notes" (qtd. in Darby and Lang 169). Giving them partial notes "Helps them build accurate connections without simply handing them an already completed network and without leaving them to devise the organizational principles of the material on their own (which, as novice learners, they will have trouble doing" (Darby and Lang 169). The authors suggest several ways students can submit their completed notes to the Learning Management System below.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Partial Notes

1) In the Learning Management System (LMS), instructors should post a partially complete .PDF file of lecture notes, or notes from the weekly reading. Encourage (or require) students to print the file and fill in the gaps with hand-written notes. The first time they complete this activity in your online class, point students to the research on how writing notes by hand leads to better retention of

material than typing notes on a keyboard. Explain that although they may be surprised to have to print a document, you would like them to try it to see if handwriting notes proves helpful to their learning. When the notes are complete, ask students to take a picture of their completed notes and upload them to a drop box in the LMS.

1) The instructor could have students copy and paste the partial outline into a Google Doc, or MS Word, complete the outline there, and upload the completed outline to the LMS.
2) Alternatively, instead of printing the .PDF file with partial notes, students could hand write the notes into a spiral notebook, fill in the additional points, and submit a photo of their outline as an image or .JPG.

Work Cited

Darby, Flower and James M. Lang. S*mall Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classes*. First edition, Jossey-Bass, 2019. EBSCOhost, research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=704148a7-2f39-304a-9a60-fe2e94e2ee3b, pp. 169-170.

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c. Evaluation

The globally renowned Purdue Owl suggests students "evaluate the material in the source as you read through it" ("Evaluation During Reading"). The strategy below asks students to consider the audience, purpose, evidence, language, and scholarly sources cited.

Suggested text: Scholarly articles or research materials

Evaluation
Read the Preface
✓ What does the author want to accomplish? Browse through the **table of contents and the index**. This will give you an overview of the source. Is your topic covered in enough depth to be helpful? If you do not find your topic discussed, try searching for some synonyms in the index.
✓ Check for a **list of references or other citations** that look as if they will lead you to related material that would be reliable sources.
✓ Determine the **intended audience**. Are you the intended audience? Consider the tone, style, level of information, and assumptions the author makes about the reader. Are they appropriate for your needs?
✓ Try to determine if the content of the source is **fact, opinion, or propaganda**. If you think the source is offering facts, are the sources for those facts clearly indicated?
✓ Do you think there is enough **evidence** offered? Is the coverage comprehensive? (As you learn more and more about your topic, you will notice that this gets easier as you become more of an expert.)
✓ Is the **language** objective or emotional?

✓ Are there broad generalizations that **overstate or oversimplify** the matter?
✓ Does the author use a good mix of **primary and secondary sources** for information?
✓ If the source is opinion, does the author offer **sound reasons** for adopting that stance? (Consider again those questions about the author. Is this person reputable?)
Check for Accuracy
✓ How **timely** is the source? Is the source twenty years out of date? Some information becomes dated when new research is available, but other older sources of information can be quite sound fifty or a hundred years later.
✓ Do some **cross-checking**. Can you find some of the same information given elsewhere? How **credible** is the author? If the document is anonymous, what do you know about the organization?
✓ Are there vague or sweeping generalizations that are not backed up with **evidence**?
✓ Are arguments very one-sided with no acknowledgement of **other viewpoints**?

Work Cited

"Evaluation During Reading." Owl at Purdue. Purdue University College of Liberal Arts. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/conducting_research/evaluating_sources_of_information/evaluation_during_reading.html.

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d. Coding

Cris Tovani's book*: I Read It, But I Don't Get It,* warns that not all reading comprehension strategies will connect with every student. She explains "Comprehension is messy. There is no clear-cut path that the brain takes when making sense" (*I Read it* 108). One of the strategies she suggests is coding a text starting with the reader's own background knowledge as shown in the scheme below.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Coding	
Background Knowledge	1) **Mark at least five places in the text with the code BK** (Background Knowledge). In other words, mark the information that is prior knowledge, or already known to you.
Connection to Background Knowledge	2) In the margins next to the text marked with BKs, **describe your connection to that background knowledge**. Explain the connection in a few words. *For example, I am familiar with this information because I have encountered it previously in . . .*
Questions	3) **Mark at least five places in the text with a question mark**. In the margin next to the words that cause you to wonder, write the question you have. You may begin your question with the words: "I wonder. . ."
Confusion and Resolution	4) **Highlight any parts in the text that cause you confusion**. Then, try to resolve your confusion by applying a reading strategy, such as: re-reading, analyzing, making connections to background knowledge, seeking out information/experts, and/or summarizing the text.
Summary	5) **Summarize** the text in a paragraph, or two.
Response	6) Lastly, **write a one-to-two-page response** to the text.

Work Cited

Tovani, Cris. *I Read It, but I Don't Get It: Comprehension Strategies for Adolescent Readers*. Stenhouse Publishers, 2000, pp. 136.

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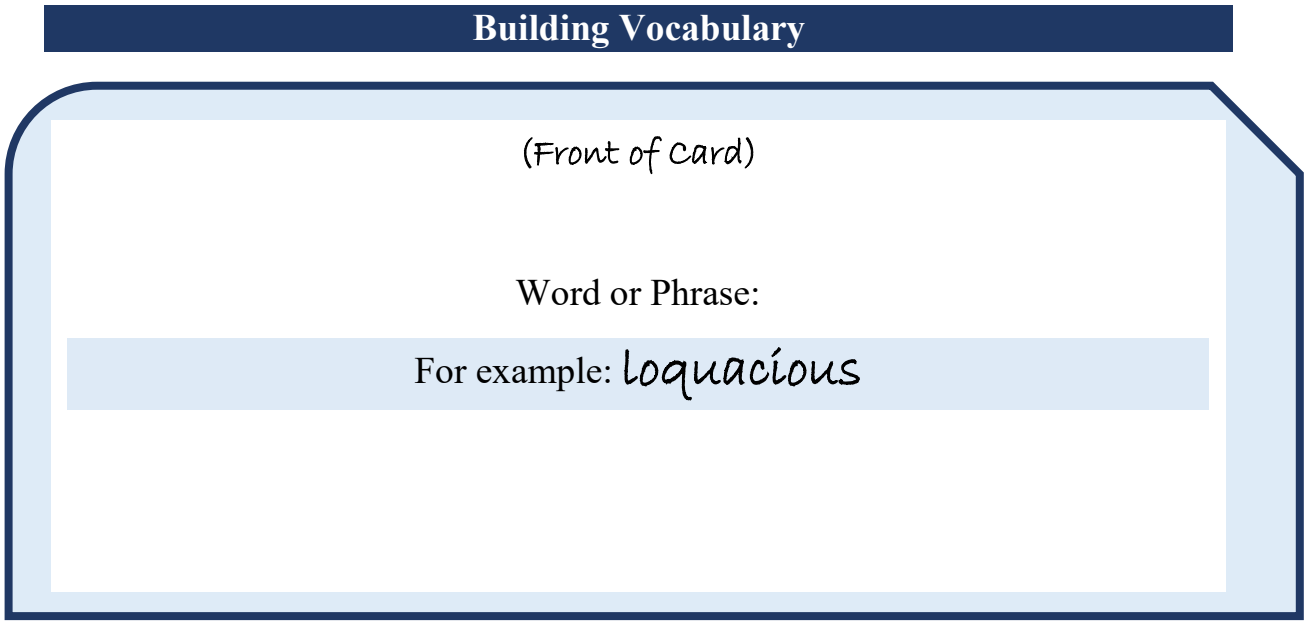
e. Building Vocabulary

In *Teaching Underprepared Students*, author, Kathleen Gabriel suggests "Vocabulary deficiencies can impede a student's ability to take in information" (111). She continues ". . . many underprepared students listen to lectures or read texts with inadequate or limited vocabulary" (Gabriel 111). She suggests students create vocabulary cards. Gabriel acknowledges that creating the cards takes time, but ". . . the process can have a tremendous impact on improving students' vocabulary skills" (Gabriel 111). Once completed, the vocabulary cards serve as flash cards as well.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive



(Back of Card)

1) Chapter or page number where word appears in text:

2) The word's part of speech:

3) The word's pronunciation guide from an online dictionary:

4) The word's definition:

5) An illustration of the word:

Work Cited

Gabriel, Kathleen F. *Teaching Underprepared Students*. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2008, pp. 112-113.

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f. Metacognitive Think Aloud – Online Classes

In *Breakthroughs in College Reading*, Julia Gamberg describes a Metacognitive Think Aloud assignment she applies in asynchronous, online classes (qtd. in Graff pp. 178). The assignment is placed in a small-group discussion board in her learning management system. Gamberg suggests "Reading in community can lead to improved meaning-making" (qtd. in Graff pp. 178). She emphasizes the power of peer response and peer feedback in the strategy below.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Metacognitive Think Aloud

1) First, each student will record a video of themselves as they read a five minute, or so, text aloud and verbally address two-to-three metacognitive strategies they are using to help understand and analyze the text. Metacognitive strategies include, but are not limited to: predicting, questioning, summarizing, re-reading, making connections, and reflecting.

Note from the author: Shy students can be off camera, if they record a screencast of the text itself as they read and discuss the metacognitive strategies applied while reading.

Also, students can use their phones, or a more sophisticated video camera, to record themselves performing the Metacognitive Think Aloud strategy.

2) Next, students will then post their videos on a small-group discussion board. The size of the groups will vary depending on the professor's preferences.

3) Further, each student will be asked to respond to another student's video and discuss the metacognitive strategies they observed their peer using in their think aloud video.

If the peer is simply reading the text, but not applying metacognitive reading strategies, the student should point out those omissions and suggest metacognitive reading strategies that the student could apply to the text.

4) Lastly, the professor should respond to the small-group responses as well, encouraging the expansion of dialogue, but still letting the students take the lead as they practice their skills.

Work Cited

Graff, Nelson, et al. *Breakthroughs in College Reading: The Promises and Tensions of Disciplinary Reading Apprenticeships*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2024, pp. 178.

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g. Reading Guides

In *Teaching at Its Best by* Zakrajsek and Nilson, they encourage faculty to ". . . give a purpose for the readings we assign" (264). They explain that purposes should: ". . . seek answers to questions, and the best questions are faculty's own study questions" (Zakrajsek and Nilson 264). If instructors develop their own questions, they define the purpose for the reading and "direct students' attention to what we deem important" in the readings (Zakrajsek and Nilson 264). Using reading guides developed by the instructor encourages the close application and synthesis of the reading material.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Reading Guides

Some general, reading guide questions are provided by Zakrajsek and Nilson below. Notably, when the reading guide questions are tailored to the specific reading assignment, they will be more successful.

1. What is the author's position or claim?

2. What are the main arguments given in support of this position or claim?

3 What evidence or data does the author furnish to support their position or claim? Give examples.

4 Evaluate the author's case, identifying:

a. Any questionable evidence or data

b. Missing information

c. Flaws in logic or analysis.

Work Cited

Zakrajsek, Todd, and Linda Burzotta Nilson. *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*. Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Imprint, 2023, pp. 264.

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h. Predict, Locate, Add, and Note (PLAN)

Caverly et al. suggest that students use the Predict, Locate, Add, and Note (PLAN) strategy to ". . . monitor their understanding" and ". . . and apply information after they have completed the reading" (190). The PLAN strategy requires students to analyze text in three stages: before, during and after reading. Caverly et al. explain that the PLAN strategy works best with expository texts, such as textbook chapters (199).

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

PLAN Strategy	
P	**Plan (Pre-Reading)** **Scan the text and make a "predictive map" of the text's contents:** • Bolded, italicized, or defined terms • Key people, places, or time periods • Charts, graphs, or any other visual representation of data • Headings, subheadings, or organizational titles • Examples • Summaries or study questions Using this information, draw a map of what you expect the chapter, article, or essay to discuss. Connect the ideas using lines or arrows and remember to designate main ideas and smaller ideas.

L	**Locate (Pre-Reading and Reading)** • After drawing your map, determine which information you already know, and which information you will have to find when you read the textbook more thoroughly. • Note missing information with a question mark and note completed information with a checkmark. You can fill in information you already know during this step or wait to compare with the textbook.
A	**Add (Post-Reading)** • After reading the text, close your book and try to answer the questions remaining in your prediction map. • Try to include as much information as possible for each topic, but also try to determine which ideas were the most prominent or important in your reading.
N	**Note (Post-Reading)** • After filling in your missing information, continue to develop and prepare the information. In other words, determine how you will use the information: will you have a multiple choice or essay exam, an assigned chapter summary, or a group presentation? • Different assignments will require you to use the information differently, and Step 4 allows you to organize your notes into a summary paragraph, or to practice recreating your map from memory to prepare for a multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank exam. • You may also decide that your predictive map was inaccurate; during step four you can reorganize the relationships between ideas and definitions to reflect more accurately what you read in the textbook.

Work Cited

Caverly, David, et al. "Plan: A Study-Reading Strategy for Informational Text." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, vol. 39, no. 3, 1995, pp. 190–99. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40015675.

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III. Post-Reading Strategies

a. Double-Strategy, Double-Entry Diary

Cris Tovani's Double-Strategy, Double-Entry Diary shown below requires students to ". . . slow down as they read and begin to track their thinking" (*Do I Really* 12). She considers the diary an "access tool" to organize their thinking without highlighting or sticky notes (Tovani, *Do I Really* 12). Identifying significant quotes, words, or phrases helps students think critically about the text and reflect on their own learning.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Double-Strategy, Double Entry Diary	
Direct "Quote" or Significant Word/Phrase from Work	Questions, Connections, and Visualizing Information
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
4)	4)

Work Cited

Tovani, Cris. *Do I Really Have to Teach Reading?* Stenhouse Publishers, 2004, pp. 133.

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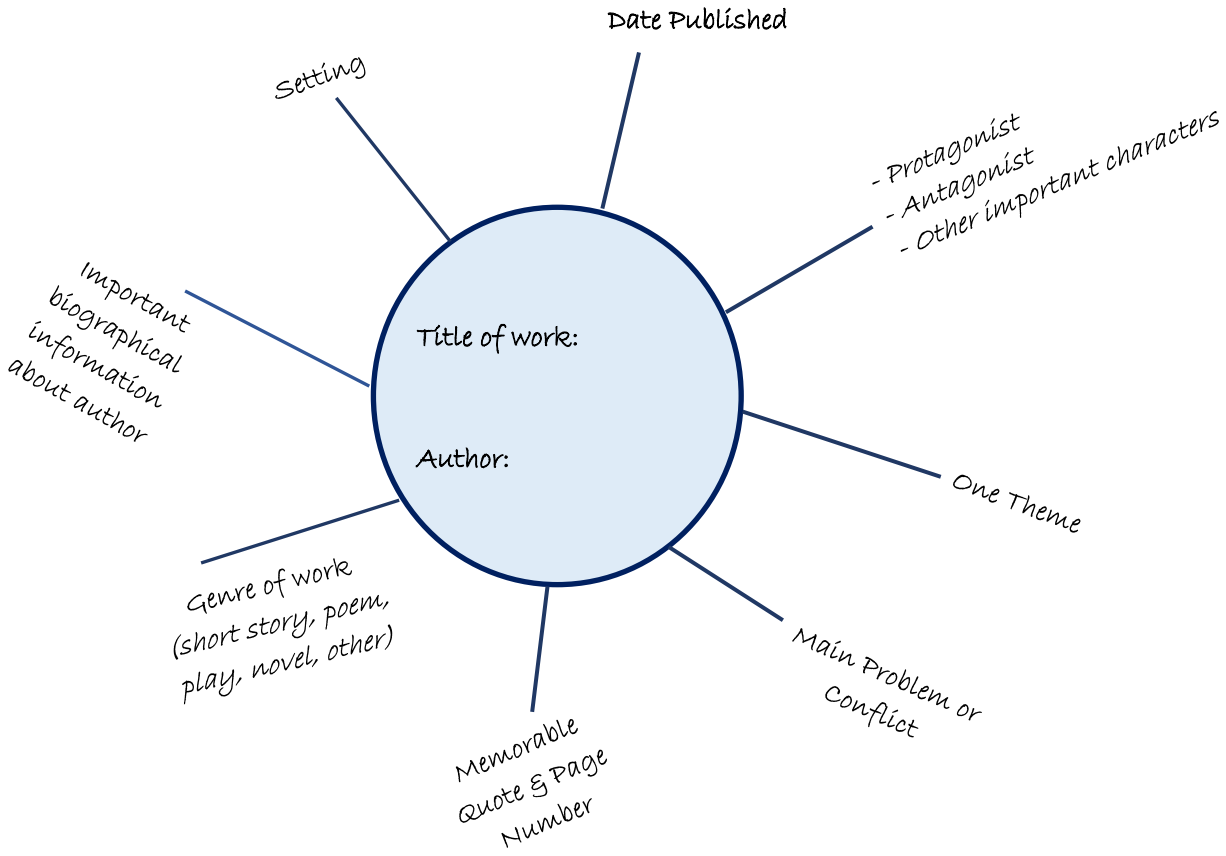
b. Literary Analysis Graphic Organizer

Ciascai touts the ability of graphic organizers to strengthen learning processes for visual learners. She explains they can ". . . increase learning comprehension and critical thinking" (9). Further, graphic organizers can help students process the details from longer, literary readings more efficiently (Ciascai 9). The literary analysis graphic organizer shown below was not developed by Ciascai, but various versions of similar organizers are readily available online.

Suggested text: Narrative fiction, drama, and poetry



Work Cited

Ciascai, Liliana. "Using Graphic Organizers in Intercultural Education." *Acta Didactica Napocensia*, vol. 2, no. 1, Jan. 2009, pp. 9–18. EBSCOhost, research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=1f4d2328-dfc5-3cd3-acba-9358ce3f56ad.

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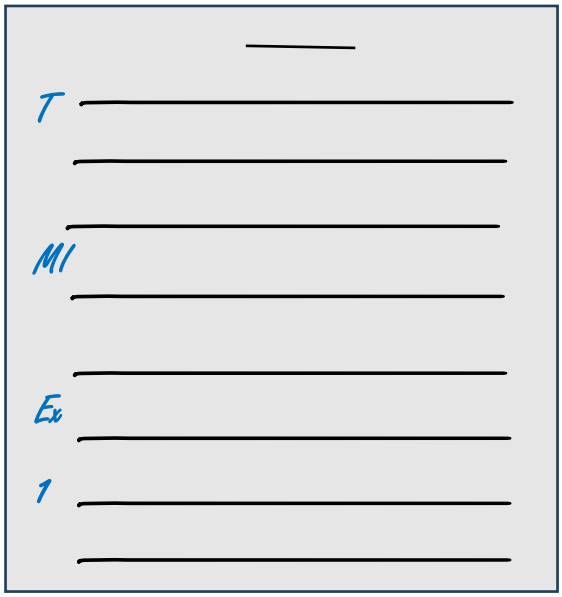
c. Margin Notes

Meagher suggests students add margin notes after reading and annotating a text. He explains "Your margin notes should be very brief and should summarize key points and indicate the location of key ideas. In addition to summary comments in the margins, some common symbols that you might use include the following" (Meagher 13). In particular, marking a main idea and major points could help students process challenging information from the text.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Margin Notes

Common Symbol	Meaning
T	Thesis
MI	Main Idea
S	Summary
Ex	Example
Def	Definition
1, 2, 3	Major points 1, 2, and 3
?	Unclear Points



Work Cited

Meagher, Don. *Handbook for Critical Reading*. Hardcourt Brace and Company, 1997, pp. 13.

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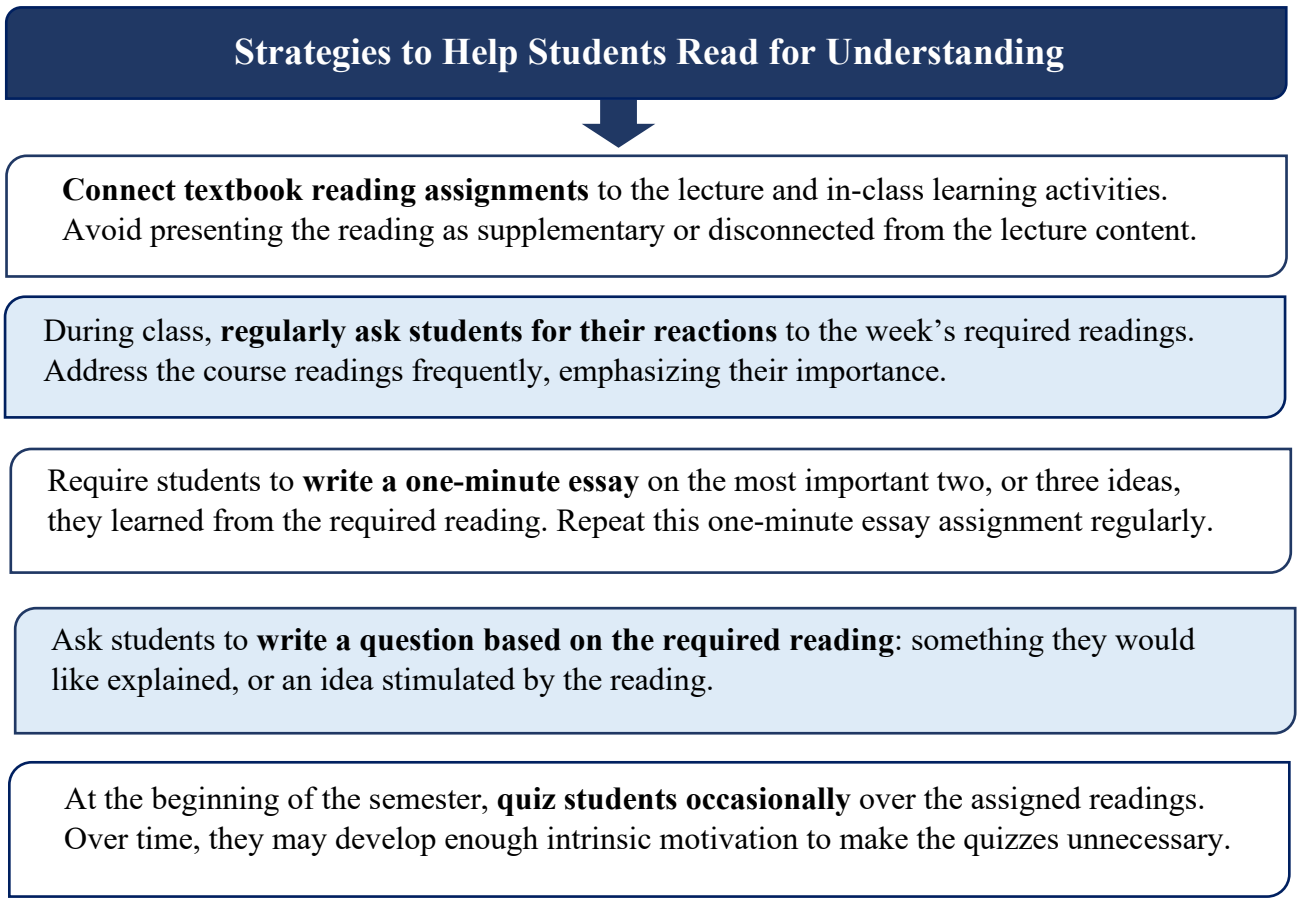
d. Reading for Understanding

In *McKeachie's Teaching Tips*, Wilbert J. McKeachie et al. highlight the value of reading for understanding. They write "We need to teach students how to read – to read with understanding, how to think about the purpose of the author, about relationships to earlier learning, and about how they will use what they've read" (32). Specifically, McKeachie's one minute essay assignment can be particularly helpful when an instructor is pressed for time in the classroom.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive



Work Cited

McKeachie. Wilbert J., et al. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2014, pp. 32-3.

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e. Take Ten Minutes

Amelia Leighton Gamel's worryingly titled book, *Help My College Student Can't Read,* suggests that instructors embed a 10-minute reading strategy into each class meeting. She notes "Even relatively strong readers now need strategies to be able to identity and clean the most relevant information from texts in the shortest amount of time and to be able to understand, to retain, and to use information" (Gamel xiv). The strategies below can be applied separately, or combined.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Take Ten Minutes	
Strategy 1 - 10 Minutes	When handing out articles/texts, ask student to write a **prediction** at the top of the page indicating what the text will be about based on the title; the first, few sentences of paragraph 1; headings; and/or any graphics. Predicting content will access prior knowledge.
Strategy 2 - 10 Minutes	Also, ask students to write the **purpose** for reading the article or text. In other words, the reason for the reading or what they think the author wants them to know. If students know what they are looking for, their brains will help them find it.
Strategy 3 - 10 Minutes	Ask the students to write their **questions** in the margins as they read. At the end of class, use the last 10 minutes for students to share their questions aloud. Others might be able to provide answers. This will encourage students to be aware of their questions, to clarify them, and to search for answers as they read.
Strategy 4 - 10 Minutes	Ask students to write **connections** to the text in the margins as they read. At the end of class, ask students to share their connections aloud, or in writing, and discuss how their connections helped them construct meaning within the text.

Strategy 5 - 10 Minutes	Ask students to cross out any unnecessary information they read. This will create the potential for more focused reading by helping them to **determine what is important** and by keeping extraneous material from muddying the waters as they think through the text.
Strategy 6 - 10 Minutes	Each time you assign a chapter, show your students (using the doc cam and text) what you would pay attention to in the text and what you might **read, scan, or skip**.
Strategy 7 - 10 Minutes	Instructors should choose an important paragraph (or even just four or five sentences) to **read aloud** and then **jot down** a couple of bullet points of things they find important in the passage and why. This action will serve as a model for students and help them discern the most salient parts of a text.

Work Cited

Gamel, Amelia Leighton. *Help! My College Students Can't Read: Teaching Vital Reading Strategies in the Content Areas*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2015, pp. 166.

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f. Highlight and Revisit

In the sardonically titled book: *Do I Really Have to Teach Reading* by Cris Tovani, she notes "The only reason to teach kids how to be strategic readers is to help them become more thoughtful about their reading. Meaning arrives because we are purposefully engaged in thinking while we read" (*Do I Really 9*). Her highlight and revisit strategy below encourages students to find quotes, understand why those quotes are relevant, and reflect on insights gained from those quotes.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Highlight and Revisit		
Quote Highlighted (record words from text)	**Reason for Highlighting**	**New or Deeper Thinking**
Quote:	Reason:	Insight:
Quote:	Reason:	Insight:
Quote:	Reason:	Insight:
Quote:	Reason:	Insight:

Work Cited

Tovani, Cris. *Do I Really Have to Teach Reading?* Stenhouse Publishers, 2004, pp. 134.

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g. Freytag's Pyramid

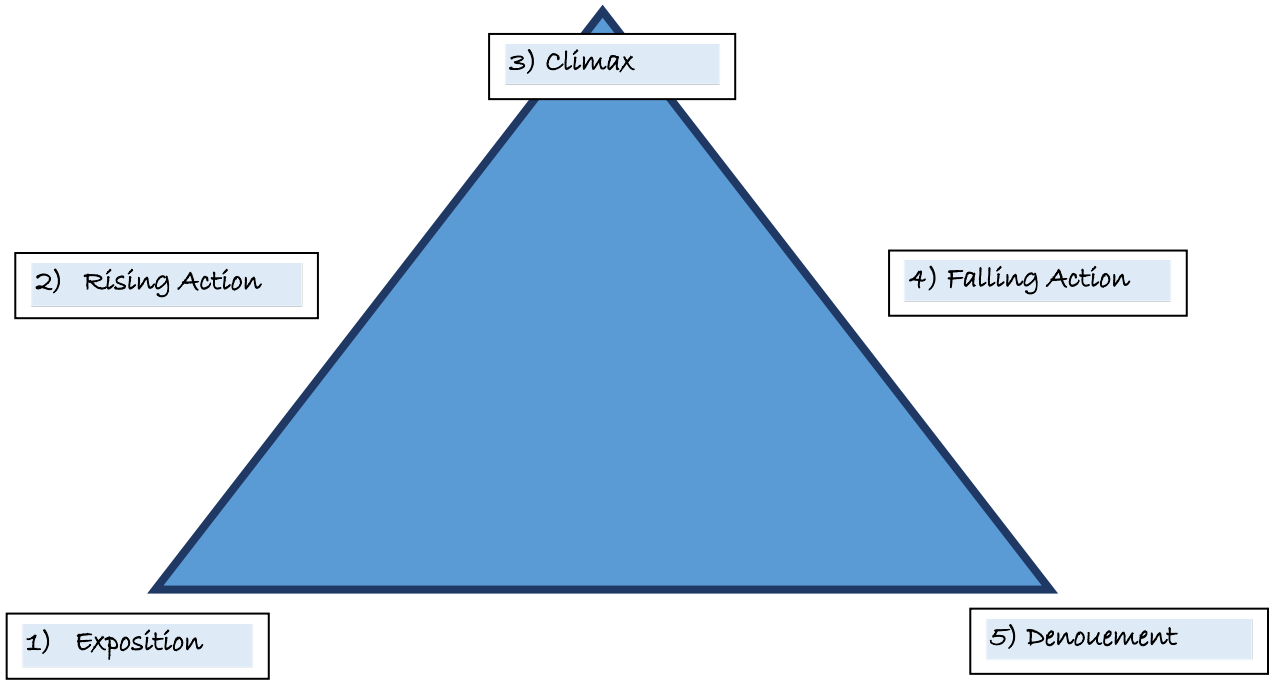
Cigerci and Yildirim suggest that Freytag's Pyramid, is ". . . an effective tool for plotting the conflict in a story from the beginning to the end" (5701). Gustav Freytag, a German playwright and novelist, developed the framework in 1853 in his work: *The Technique of Drama*. The pyramid can be applied post-reading to most works of fiction. Students will describe aspects of the plot as shown below.

Suggested text: Narrative fiction, drama, and poetry

Freytag's Pyramid

In a 1-2 sentence description, plot out the parts of the work which fit each stage in the plot. The descriptions of each stage are provided below.

1) **Exposition:** This stage introduces the characters, setting, and background information necessary for the story to make sense. It sets the stage for the story's conflict and gives the audience an understanding of what is at stake.
2) **Rising Action:** This stage is where the story's conflict is introduced and begins to build. The protagonist faces obstacles and challenges that make the audience invested in the outcome.
3) **Climax:** This stage is the turning point of the story. It is the most dramatic moment where the protagonist faces their greatest challenge. The climax is the moment where the outcome of the story is decided.
4) **Falling Action:** This stage is where the story begins to wind down. Loose ends are tied up, and the protagonist begins to deal with the consequences of the climax.
5) **Resolution/Denouement:** This stage is the final stage of the story. The conflict is resolved, and the story reaches its conclusion. The resolution provides closure and helps the audience understand the story's meaning.



Works Cited

Cigerci, Fatih Mehmet, and Mesut Yildirim. "From Freytag pyramid story structure to digital storytelling: Adventures of pre-service teachers as story writers and digital story tellers." *Education and Information Technologies*, vol. 29, no. 5, Apr. 2024, pp. 5697+. *Gale OneFile: Computer Science*, dx.doi.org.lscsproxy2.lonestar.edu/10.1007/s10639-023-12042-7, pp. 5701.

Freytag, Gustav. *The Techniques of Drama*. S.C. Griggs & Company, 1863.

h. Summarizing Long Texts

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In *The Art of Critical Reading*, Mather and McCarthy provide a strategy for summarizing long texts. They note "Summarizing will force students to identify important point of the reading and reduce the amount of material that will need to be reviewed for class discussion or an exam" (170). This strategy is particularly useful when students feel overwhelmed tackling detailed textbook chapters.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Summarizing Long Texts

To summarize, begin by identifying the main idea or thesis of the text. What is the most important point the author is trying to make?

- **Main idea or thesis**: _____

Next, identify the main supporting ideas found in the article. Begin by answering as many of the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions that apply to the text.

- Who? _____
- What? _____
- Where? _____
- When? _____
- Why? _____
- How? _____

Next, identify three to four main ideas with, at least, two details for each important point.

Main idea 1: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Main idea 2: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Main idea 3: _____

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Repeat the main ideas and details as needed, in accordance with the length and complexity of the text.

Work Cited

Mather, Peter and Rita McCarthy. *The Art of Critical Reading*: Brushing Up on Your Reading, Thinking, and Study Skills. McGrawHill, 2005, pp. 170.

i. Processing Multiple Science Texts

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One reading strategy for the sciences advanced by Tracey Linderholm et al. is reading three sources at once concerning the same scientific subject. Linderholm et al. explain "Studies show that readers engage in higher order thinking skills when required to evaluate multiple sources" (335). When evaluating three sources at once, a reader must:

> (a) Keep track of the source of information
>
> (b) Critically evaluate the information from each source
>
> (c) Process in a "nonlinear" fashion to integrate ideas across texts
>
> (d) Make decisions about the relevance or even the accuracy of information
>
> (qtd. in Linderholm et al. 335).

Suggested text: Expository or instructional scientific texts

Processing Multiple Science Texts

In their study**,** Linderholm et al. suggest applying a three-pronged reading strategy as described below.

1) **Think Aloud** – After reading the three, science texts closely on their own, students should think aloud as they read. In other words, while they are reading the texts aloud, they should verbally address what is coming to mind as they read and what questions they have about each text. They should speak freely and without pause, as if they were in a room by themselves. If class time is

limited, students could video, or audio tape their Think Aloud activity to submit to the instructor at a later date.

2) **Explain in Writing** – In a short, essay response, students should discuss ideas from each of the three texts. They should address how the texts compare and contrast in their presentation of the information. Also, students should identify any common themes among the three readings.

3) **Comprehension Test** – The instructor should check for understanding by developing a brief comprehension test with specific questions derived from the three texts. The questions should include unique facts covered in each of the three texts and shared themes among the science texts. The comprehension test will close the loop on the reading strategy and assess its effectiveness.

Work Cited

Linderholm, Tracy, et al. "Multiple Science Text Processing: Building Comprehension Skills for College Student Readers." *Reading Psychology*, vol. 35, no. 4, May 2014, pp. 332–56. EBSCOhost, https://doi-org.lscsproxy2.lonestar.edu/10.1080/02702711.2012.726696, pp. 338-340.

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j. Concept Maps – Online Courses

In the book, *Small Teaching Online*, Flower Darby and James Lang advocate for the use of concept maps in online classes. They suggest instructors ask students to create a concept map to organize the content for a course reading or research assignment (171). Concept Maps ". . . present a fast and easy method to help students visualize the organization of key ideas in your course" (Darby and Lang 170). The authors note that the concept maps can be low-tech or high tech. They suggest the following mediums to create concept maps in online courses.

Suggested text: Narrative, expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

Concept Maps

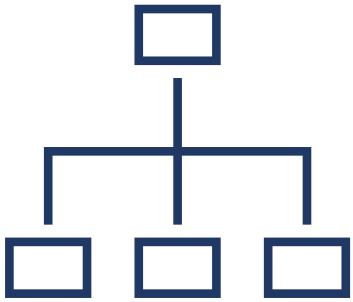
1) Students can create their map with free, concept mapping software, such as: Bubbl.us, Nulab.com, or Clickup.com and submit a link to the concept map, or upload a .PDF of their concept map to the course's Learning Management System (LMS).

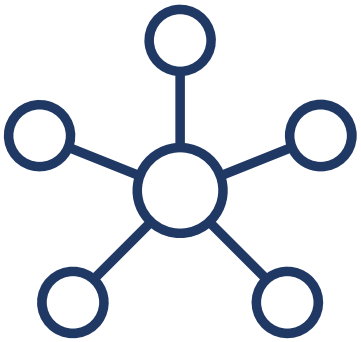
2) Students could hand-write their concept map on paper and submit a photo of it to the LMS.

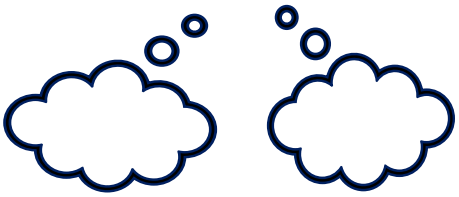
3) Students could use colorful Post-it Notes to create a concept map on a whiteboard or poster board and then submit a .JPG picture of that artifact to the LMS.

4) Lastly, Darby and Lang suggest students choose what format they want to create their map. Allowing students to choose their preferred medium builds agency and encourages creativity.

Examples of Concept Maps:







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k. MURDER Strategy

Dansereau et al. "Developed a study strategy program that integrates effective elaboration strategies with cooperative learning processes" (qtd. in Stevens 5). The MURDER Strategy can ". . . improve students' understanding and recall of information presented in expository text" (qtd. in Stevens 5). Uniquely, the strategy begins with assessing one's frame of mind before reading. The strategy also encourages students to consider how they could explain the information to another student.

Suggested text: Expository, argumentative, persuasive, instructional, and/or descriptive

MURDER Strategy

M - Mood

- Set a positive mood by selecting an appropriate time, environment, and frame of mind when starting reading.

U – Understand

- Take note of any information you do not understand in a particular text and go back over it when you are finished.
- Keep a focus on one chapter or a manageable group of exercises.

R – Recall

- After studying the text, stop and recall what you have learned.
- Try summarizing the material aloud and write down the information in your own words.

D - Digest

- Go back to what you did not understand and reconsider the information.
- Contact external expert sources (e.g., books, the Internet, or an instructor) if more clarification is needed.

E - Expand

- Expand your knowledge. Ask three kinds of questions concerning the studied material:
    - If I could speak to the author, what questions would I ask or what criticism would I offer?
    - How could I apply this material to what I am interested in?
    - How could I make this information interesting and understandable to other students?

R - Review

- Go over the material you have covered.
- Review what strategies helped you understand and/or retain information in the past and apply these to your current studies.

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Sample Lesson Plan – Reading Critically

The sample lesson plan below is customized for an English Composition and Rhetoric I course, but the strategies could be adapted to any course which assigns expository texts.

> *Note: The lesson plan below includes aspects of three, different reading strategies presented in this handbook. Mixing and matching reading strategies can be helpful as you adjust strategies to your chosen text and the student learning outcomes for your course.*

Sample Lesson Plan – Reading Critically		
Course/Students:	Composition and Rhetoric I – Credit English Students	
Topic:	Rhetorical analysis of the modes of persuasion: pathos, ethos, and logos	
Student Learning Objectives:	SLO # 4: Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts	
Total class Time Required:	**30 minutes**	
Materials:	- Four-page, hard copy abstract of Part II. of Aristotle's text: "Rhetoric." Full text available at: https://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.mb.txt - Pen / pencil and highlighter	
Introduction of lesson:	**5 minutes**	- Define rhetoric, introduce Aristotle, and preview the modes of persuasion. - Show video demonstrating the modes of persuasion in ads: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuFmFkj3Ofw (3 min. 42 seconds)
Activity 1: Pre-Reading:	**5 minutes**	- Pre-Reading activity: **Asking Questions**

		- Ask students to preview the text by: - Contemplating the title of the text: "Rhetoric" - Noting the year published and the translator's name - Reading only the first sentences from the first, three paragraphs from "Rhetoric." - Next, project the Asking Questions table on the white board. - Ask students to respond in writing to the first, three sections of the Asking Questions table on the back of their hard copies of "Rhetoric." The first, three sections are listed below: 1) What is the topic of the material? 2) What do I already know about the topic? 3) What is my purpose for reading? Stated another way: why does persuasion matter in writing? - In whole class discussion, ask a few students to share what they already know about the modes of persuasion and the purpose for reading the text.
Activity 2: During Reading:	**10 minutes**	During Reading activity: **Coding** - Ask students to silently read the excerpt on their own while simultaneously Coding the text using strategies # 1 and 4. - When they encounter any information that they are already familiar with, ask them to write BK (# 1 - Background Knowledge) next to those sentences. - When they encounter any information that is confusing or unclear, ask them to highlight that text (# 4 – Confusing). - In whole class discussion, spend a few minutes asking students what information they highlighted as

		confusing. As a group, resolve any questions students may have about the text's content.
Activity 3: Post-Reading:	**5 minutes**	Post-Reading activity: **Reading for Understanding** - Ask students to **write a one-minute essay** on the back of the hard copy of the reading. They should identify and discuss the three, most important ideas they learned from the "Rhetoric" excerpt, as described in the Reading for Understanding strategy. - The one-minute essay should be five-to-six sentences in length, at minimum. - Once complete, ask several students to volunteer to read their one minute-essays.
Class Discussion - Check for Understanding:	**5 minutes**	- As the lesson concludes, re-state the main ideas from Aristotle's text and explain how the knowledge of the three appeals will be crucial to successfully navigating the essays assigned in-class. - Lastly, ask students if the reading strategies applied helped them have a better understanding of the text, and if so, which ones. Consider applying those strategies again, with future reading assignments.

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Acknowledgements

The blessing of time to focus on a singular, scholarly project has been invaluable. Many thanks to the Montgomery College leadership for their support of my sabbatical semester. In particular, I would like to thank: Dr. Roy Turner, Dean of Liberal Arts; Dr. Brandy Harvey, Vice President of Instruction; and Dr. De'Reese Reid-Hart, Montgomery College President. A very special note of appreciation goes to Dr. Simone Andrade, who kindly stepped in to chair the ESOL, Languages, and Speech departments. Finally, many thanks to Dr. Lori Hughes, Professor of English who generously shared scores of professional development resources concerning reading comprehension and Generation Z.

Moreover, I applaud the continued commitment of the LSC administration; the LSC Board; and, most significantly, Chancellor, Mario Castillo, in support of faculty sabbatical leave. Sabbatical semesters are a true reflection of Lone Star College's commitment to its employees' professional development and personal growth. Sabbatical projects impact the college's ability to continue to innovate and transform teaching and learning for 97,000+ Lone Star College students each semester.

On a personal note, the added time spent with my family during this fall 2025 semester was a gift beyond measure that I could never repay Lone Star College. I lovingly dedicate this handbook to my parents: Richard G. Myers and Constance K. Myers, two, tried-and-true Cornhuskers, who fell in love over Runzas and crinkle cut fries in Lincoln, Nebraska. The rest was . . . family history.