



PRR: Preview, read, review

Reading assignments can feel tedious or unhelpful at times. With this handout, you can take a strategic approach to your reading so you get the most out of it.

PREVIEW

Before you tackle the reading, get a general framework of main ideas to better comprehend and retain details you'll encounter later. Spend about 10 minutes familiarizing yourself with the text as a whole.

- Scan for title, table of contents, introduction or preface, index, and glossary, and any end of chapter questions. How does this topic relate to other things you've learned?
- When you preview individual chapters, take note of the introduction, subheadings, first sentence of each section, diagrams, charts, figures, and the conclusion.
- Make some concrete projections. Ask yourself, what's the main idea? How is the text organized?

READ

Being an active reader helps you understand the material, combats boredom, and increases retention.

- Set realistic goals for how long, and how many pages, you'll be able to read.
- Don't try to read the entire chapter non-stop. Instead, divide it into small sections, such as a half-page, or a column, and read them individually.
- Ask yourself a question before each paragraph or section, and then try to answer it as you read. Choose questions that reflect the level of difficulty in that course.
- Take short breaks when you find your mind wandering.

REVIEW

Research shows that we forget about 40-50% of what we read within about 15 minutes unless we take measures to recall it immediately.

- Recall mentally or recite orally the highlights of what you've read.
- Summarize what you've read. If the material is difficult, consider doing this for every page to ensure you're engaging with the content. Then, write questions over the material and answer them in your own words. These questions can be the same as those you asked before each section.
- Write notes and lingering questions in your margins. Both will help you decide what you need to remember or look up. See if you can recast the material as a story or narrative; then imagine yourself retelling or explaining it to a friend.

(More tips on back)

THE PRR METHOD WORKS IN ALL OF YOUR COURSES

Quantitative courses:

- Apply your understanding by doing practice problems
- Reflect on what content needs more attention and synthesis
- Connect today's topic to other content covered

Online or flipped courses:

- Preview the days' material using slides, textbook, and syllabus as a guide
- Read to stay up with the lectures pacing
- Review your notes and fill in any gaps