

Preview the Material

Previewing familiarizes you with the text before you read it; it helps you assess the difficulty of the material and will focus your attention on what is important. Previewing is a quick and simple process.

1. *Read the title and subtitle*
 - a. The title indicates the topic of the material
 - b. The subtitle suggests the approach to the topic.
2. *Read the introduction or first paragraph*
 - a. The introduction or the first paragraph often provides an overview of the content and organization of a reading
3. *Read section headings*
 - a. Section headings identify important topics and ideas.
 - b. If there are no headings, read the first sentence of each paragraph, which is often the topic sentence.
4. *Read the first sentence under each major heading*
 - a. The first sentence often states the central point of that section.
 - b. If the first sentence seems introductory, read the last sentence, which often states or restates the central point.
5. *Note highlighted words and phrases*
 - a. Words or phrases that are numbered or that appear with underlining, in italics, in boldface, or in color are likely important.
6. *Note illustrations*
 - a. Graphs, charts, photographs, and tables often reinforce important points.
 - b. Read the captions of photographs and the legends of graphs, charts, and tables.
7. *Read the last paragraph or summary*
 - a. This provides a condensed view of the article or chapter and often outlines the key points.
8. *Read any end-of-reading material*
 - a. Check for lists of references, study questions, discussion questions, chapter outlines, or vocabulary lists.

Reading for Comprehension and Retention

After you have previewed the text, use the following guidelines to better understand paragraphs and longer texts.

1. *Reading paragraphs*
 - a. Find the topic of the paragraph, which is often indicated in the first sentence of the paragraph.
 - b. Determine the main idea about that topic.
 - c. Locate supporting details which explain and support the main idea.
2. *Reading articles, essays, and chapters*
 - a. Read the title and subtitle.
 - i. In some essays, the title announces the topic of the essay and may reveal the author's viewpoint.
 - ii. If you know what you are looking for as you read, you will find that reading is easier, goes faster, and requires less rereading.

- b. Read the introduction.
 - c. Find the author's central point.
 - d. Identify the support for the central point.
 - e. Read the conclusion.
3. *Rereading for Comprehension*
- a. Distinguish main ideas from supporting details.
 - b. Learn key terms.
 - c. Find the connections between ideas.
 - d. Add your own comments.