Active Reading to Learn from your Textbook

	Before Reading
Preview the Chapter: Identify the important information and get ready to learn	**Identify what you will learn in the chapter and prepare to learn it.** Ask yourself: • What are the main topics presented in the text? What is important? • What assessment task (multiple choice test, essay, etc.) will I have to complete with this information? • What information in the text is familiar? What is unfamiliar? T.H.I.E.V.V.E.S. is an acronym for text features you should preview: Title Headings Introduction Every first sentence of sections or paragraphs [2] Visuals – Diagrams, tables, images (read the captions too!) Vocabulary - often bolded End questions or Review questions Summary
Preview the Chapter: Break up the reading	**Make a plan to break up the reading into smaller parts.** • You don't need to read the entire chapter in one sitting. • Before you start, you should set goals and stopping points for yourself Ask yourself: • What are the main topics presented in this chapter? • Often a chapter will have three – six main topics that are divided into smaller subtopics. • The main topics are often presented with headings and the subtopics presented nearby with subheadings • Is there a logical place to stop reading so I can divide the chapter into meaningful chunks?
Build Prior Knowledge: Prime the pump of your mental engine	**Prior knowledge increases reading comprehension** • It is useful to build up a little familiarity with vocabulary and content before reading about unfamiliar topics. • After identifying some of the main topics, you'll read about in the chapter seek out some basic information about these topics from other sources. o Watch YouTube videos about the topics o Look up unfamiliar terms in an online dictionary o Do a quick web search on the topic *Don't spend much time on this. It is only meant to prep you for close reading.
Create Questions: Make headings and subheadings into questions	**Effective reading is an active search for answers.** Ask yourself questions about the important topics presented in the chapter and read to seek the answers to your questions. • Write down questions in your notebook before you read—leave space to take notes on the answers later. • Turn headings and subheadings into questions o Possible question starters: ▪ Who is_____ and why is he/she important? ▪ What is _____ and why is it important? ▪ How does _____ affect _____? ▪ How does _____ relate to _____? ▪ How does _____occur? ▪ What are the parts and functions of ____?

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	During Reading
Jump Around: If you noticed a summary, review page, list of objectives, or concept map during your preview—start there!	**Gather key points to identify the big ideas and understand the content.** Your textbook is not a mystery novel—you won't ruin it by reading the end first! **Read these first:** • Chapter Learning Objectives • Chapter Summary • Chapter review questions • Vocabulary List The list of objectives and summary features will help you identify which information is most important before you start reading in more detail.
Read for Answers: Read to search for answers to your questions.	**Read with your pre-reading question for that section in your mind.** Seek to find answers to your question as you read. Stop for a moment after every paragraph or so to assess what you just learned. Ask yourself: • Did I learn anything in that paragraph that can help me answer my question? • What was important about that paragraph? • What do I expect to learn about next?

Annotate:
Use your pencil, and flags to take clear and helpful notes as you read.
	Read with your tools at hand – Pencil, flags/tabs, notebook
	• Underline Definitions
	• Box keywords and important names
	• Mark an "Ex." next to helpful examples
	• Mark a star next to the main ideas
	• Write notations in the margins
	   o Note ideas or points that you want to remember later
	   o Rewrite or summarize information in your own words

Read Visuals:
As you read the text, stop periodically to attend to the diagrams, graphs, tables, maps, and pictures
	Pay attention to visuals—They are not there to make the book pretty!
	   o Much of the content presented in a textbook is easier to understand in a chart, diagram, graphic, or image.
	   o Don't just look at the visuals presented in each section but *read* them.
	      ▪ Talk your way through a diagram, chart, or graphic so that complex processes or structures make sense to you. Use the key vocabulary as you explain the diagram to yourself.
	      ▪ While you view the visuals, mentally review the content you have read and tie the ideas to the image to make the content easier to recall later.
	   o Attend to references to visuals in the running text, *(i.e., Figure 3.12, Map 9.1)*

Pause & Reflect:
Read a little, then pause to think, review, and take clear, detailed, notes about what you read
	Stop after every section to self-assess, review, and take notes.
	   o Write the section title (Your question) and the page numbers
	   o Write a detailed answer to your pre-reading question for that sub-section – using key terms and concepts.
	   o Go back over the section to add an annotation that you might have missed.
	   o Draw diagrams, flowcharts, or webs to connect information and help it make sense.

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	After Reading
Make Concept Cards: **instead of Flashcards:** Make clear and informative cards that connect key information. Start them early and study them regularly to review	**Practice your recall of important information while understanding how terms relate to each other and how they apply to the overall topic.** o A flashcard is a simple term and definition refresher, but a concept card includes key terms, definitions, and examples for a cluster of ideas— o Review them regularly to save time and increase retention. o Make sure to read and understand the entire section surrounding a term before you make the card for it.

Summarize:
 Check your comprehension of the content and keep a record of what you read.
	Highlight the big ideas and recall the key points.
	 o A quick, one-paragraph summary of each section/sub-section is an effective way to:
	    o monitor your comprehension of what you just read
	    o Keep a detailed log of your reading to refer back to when it is time to complete your assignment.
	    o Put content into your own words to help you process it and remember it.

Make Connections:
 Connect vocabulary terms, section headings, big ideas, important names, and concepts to each other and to relatable examples.
	Understanding connections between content details and your own prior knowledge builds comprehension and increases retention.
	
	 o Look back into the section you just read and categorize information.
	    o Connect the concepts presented in that section to the title of the chapter.
	    o Put vocabulary terms, scholars' names, dates, theories, etc. together in a way that makes them more meaningful.
	    o Adapt the examples in the book or come up with your own examples that make the concepts meaningful to you.

Clarify:
 Assess what you still don't understand in the reading and find a way to build that understanding.
	Look outside of the book to answer additional questions or clarify any misunderstanding.
	
	 o After you read:
	    o Ask your professor to clarify specific information before, during, or after class
	    o Look up terms, references, or concepts that weren't fully explained in the book.
	    o Ask a classmate for his/her take on the content.

Combine Notes:
 Gather a holistic picture of the content by relating your class notes to your reading notes.
	Identify everything you need to know about a topic by connecting your class notes to your textbook.
	
	 o After class, compare your lecture notes with the textbook and your reading notes.
	    o Focus on one topic at a time.
	    o Pay extra attention to points that were covered both in class and in the book—those are probably most important!
	    o Add material covered by your professor to your summaries or concept cards

Explain It:
 Teach the material or explain it aloud in your own words
	Explaining material in your own words requires complete understanding.
	 You'll know you have mastered a new concept once you are able to fully explain it without referring to the book or your notes.
	 o Use your notes, concept cards, visuals, or concept map as a guide and explain each idea aloud.
	    o You can teach the material to a friend, classmate, family member, a dog, a goldfish, or your favorite stuffed animal.
	 o Monitor your ability to explain.
	    o If you get stuck, make a note of what part you were unable to recall (this is the part you'll need to review before trying again).