

Overview of the Reading Process

In terms of both reading and writing, students should be aware that these are multi-step processes, not single one-time acts. Instruction and practice in the different steps of the process can greatly improve a student's writing or reading skill. Breaking a daunting task into manageable steps that can be worked on individually can make improvement in reading or writing a much less overwhelming endeavor.

- I.** First, it is important to set the proper stage for reading. This means that students should make sure they have the proper setting: appropriate light and level of sound, suitable seating and writing area, and the necessary tools available to them (writing utensil, paper, dictionary). Students should also ready themselves for the task: resolve any distractions, and prepare oneself physically for the task (considerations of physical comfort, nutrition, and energy level) .
- II.** Second, once students have a proper setting and a text ready, they should preview the text: look at the title and author, note the length and structure of the text, scan headings or words in bold, and note any pictures, graphs, tables or other supplementary material. Students should also simultaneously further their own personal preparation in response to what they have noted in previewing the text (asking if they have prior knowledge of the topic of the text, adjusting their place and/or time for reading based upon topic or length or complexity of the text, etc).
- III.** Third, as students read, their reading should be active: students should ask questions, make comments, take brief notes on the text, and periodically pause and review what they have just read. This need not be a long and time consuming process—it can sometimes take as little as a few seconds—but students should always pause and think as they read.
- IV.** Fourth and finally, after students have finished reading a text, they should review the entire piece in their minds, forming both a summary (can be short and unwritten or long, written, and more formal) and a response (can be as simple as whether a student liked or disliked the text or whether he/she agreed or disagreed with the author's points).