Critical Reading Strategies

What does it mean to read critically? What is ACTIVE reading?

We all know how to read, so why do some people follow along, maintain better recall, and understand the material better than others?

The following strategies provide some structure and techniques to develop ACTIVE reading.

Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review (SQ3R)

Survey
Question
Read
Recite
Review

• Survey/Prediction
  o Preview what you’re going to be reading!
  o Pay attention to the title, author, publication date
  o Skim the headings, subheading, charts, graphs

• Questions
  o While surveying the text, what questions do you have?
  o Are there specific questions your professor wants you to answer?
  o Good questions to always think about:
    ▪ Why is the author writing?
    ▪ What is the author’s argument?
    ▪ What are the main takeaways?

• Read!
  o Read first (introduction) and last (summary/conclusion) paragraphs FIRST
    ▪ Think about your questions!
  o Highlight, underline, and/or annotate
    ▪ Main ideas
    ▪ Key facts and details
  o What stands out?
  o How does the material relate to other material and/or relate to class?
  o What is the main idea of each paragraph?
  o At the end of reading, WRITE A 3-5 SENTENCE SUMMARY. Can you summarize what you just finished reading?

• Recite
  o Speak back to yourself or a peer the main idea of the reading, key facts and details, and the author’s argument and/or conclusions

• Review
  o Review your reading notes to answer the initial questions you had
Different Styles of Reading

Literature/Humanities
- People, characters, political figures
- Who, what, where, when, why, how
- Context, background, history
- Conflict, issue, resolution

Research/Articles
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion/Implications
- Conclusion
- References