

Critical Reading: Reading to Discuss; Reading to Write

Choice of text

Not a replacement for lecture

Must be interpretable

Must be interesting enough for a layered reading:
from summary to critical reading.

Preparing a Reading: Encouraging Active, Critical Reading

1. Prepare reading guides or discussion questions.

Glossing a reading: You can provide extra support, definitions, etc. You can also set different purposes for reading, section by section

Discussion questions can mirror the reading process—from setting purposes, scanning for structure, to critical or close reading.

2. Require annotation and use annotation in discussion

Consider the following types of annotations:

Question marks

Exclamation points—important conclusions

Circle key concepts and underline definitions

Prob—next to key problem addressed in the text

Line in margin for key evidence

POV for author's point of view

ASSUMP for author's assumption

CONCL or IMPLIC—for key conclusions or implications

Require margin notes

Discussion points with the author

Draw arrows for key connections/relationships or contradictions in ideas.

Maps or diagrams of key ideas from the reading

Paragraph or section one sentence summaries

Demonstrate Layered Reading:

1st reading: paraphrase (Check on basic understanding)

2nd reading is the summary read (Check on connections to class)

--Most important question, problem, issue

--Most significant information or data

--Most basic conclusion

--Most basic concepts, theories or ideas

3rd reading: Critical read (Check on critical thinking)

--Most fundamental assumptions

--Point of view

--Alternative explanations, theories, data

--Connections and relationships among ideas

Reading to Write Notes:

Once students can do layered reading, they are ready to write thesis statements and outlines.