

Active Reading Strategies

Active readers don't just read—they interact with what they read. Active readers focus their attention on what they are reading and use strategies, such as the following, that help them make meaning.

- **Preview** - Previewing a text helps acquaint students with a text's organization and key features. It gives students an overall sense of what lies ahead in their reading and helps to activate a student's background knowledge.
- **Highlight/Take Notes** - The most common way to mark a text is by highlighting with a marker or pen. Highlighting helps you mark important words, phrases, and sentences. Your highlighting and marking will also help you later, when you are studying for a test or rereading for a discussion or assignment. If you can't mark in a book, write on sticky notes and attach them to the page.
- **Ask Questions** - Active readers ask lots of questions. Questions that occur to you—such as “What does this mean? Why is the writer talking about this?”—can help you think more critically about a text. Asking questions also helps a reader stay focused because he/she looks for the answers to his/her questions as the reading progresses.
- **Summarize** - A lot is happening when you read. You're taking in information and responding to it at the same time. Keep track of what you've learned by making notes that clarify or summarize the main ideas and details. For example, jot down a sequence of events or list important details.
- **React and Connect** - Listen to your own thoughts, feelings, and reactions as you read. Think about how the writing makes you feel and what it reminds you of in your own life. Compare and contrast the author's ideas or a character's experiences to your own.
- **Visualize** - Visualize the people, places, and actions an author describes. Visualizing helps you “see” and remember the author's most important ideas. Get into the habit of making quick sketches in your notebook, on sticky notes, or in the margins of your books. Use sensory details to help you visualize.
- **Predict** - Active readers constantly ask themselves: “How will things turn out? What will happen next? Write your predictions as you make your way through a text and check for the accuracy of your predictions.

