Understanding the 3 Stages of Reading

Do you find reading to be difficult, boring or impossible? Have you ever finished reading a textbook or article and then realized that you couldn’t remember what you had read? Reading is manageable once you master the 3 stages of reading. What follows are a list of strategies you can implement in each of the three stages (the before, during and after stages) to become a more efficient reader.

Pre-Reading Strategies
1) Predict. From the title and the pictures, what’s the article or book about?
2) Skim. Read just the first few paragraphs and read over the headings.
3) Identify what prior knowledge you have on the topic.
4) Learn important vocabulary words. Look in the margins, or look for boldfaced words then find the definitions for understanding.

During Reading Strategies
1) Re-read. If a paragraph or section is especially hard to comprehend, re-read the paragraph.
2) Question. Stop every paragraph or every few paragraphs and ask yourself important question, such as what was the author’s main point.
3) Construct mental pictures. Your brain loves making a picture out of what it’s just learned.
4) Identify unknown vocabulary words that might have been missed.
5) Summarize what you have read so far. Stop every few sections and say to yourself, “This is what I have read to this point.” This breaks the text into parts and strengthens your knowledge.

After Reading Strategies
1) Discuss with classmates or others what information you gained during reading. Not all people get the same information, so this can be important in pulling together an actual picture of what has been read.
2) Revisit key points in the text.
3) Answer questions at the end of the article. If there aren’t any questions, create your own.
4) Return to your original predictions before you read. Were they correct? If not, why not?
5) Use graphic organizers to help collect thoughts and make sense of information.

What Celebrities are Reading

- Fieldwork, by Mischa Berlinksi - Stephen Spielberg
- Silver Linings Playbook, by Matthew Quick - Jim Carrey
- The Beautiful & the Damned, by F. Scott Fitzgerald – Kanye West
- People’s History of the United States, Howard Zinn – Matt Damon
- The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho – Will Smith
- Man’s Search for Meaning, by Viktor Frankl – Drew Barrymore
- Still Alice, by Lisa Genova - Ryan Gosling

“No matter how busy you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance.” - Emerson

Reading courses offered through Saddleback College:

- **ENGLISH 332**
  Improve comprehensive reading skills for ESL students (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 340**
  Prepare for college level reading by improving vocabulary, reading comprehension, study skills, and writing. (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 345**
  Build fundamental reading skills for college and life. (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 170**
  Focus on critical reading, logic, and argumentation. Transferable (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 180**
  Improve reading speed, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, & critical analysis. Transferable (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 190**
  Focus on reading, memory, note-taking, test-taking, & listening skills. Transferable (3 units)

- **ENGLISH 221-222**
  Reading improvement in the areas of human anatomy and physiology. (1 unit)
"Ice-pick-sharp... Spectacularly sneaky... Impressively cagey... Gone Girl is Ms. Flynn’s dazzling breakthrough. It is wily, mercurial, subtly layered and populated by characters so well imagined that they’re hard to part with — even if, as in Amy’s case, they are already departed. And if you have any doubts about whether Ms. Flynn measures up to Patricia Highsmith’s level of discreet malice, go back and look at the small details. Whatever you raged past on a first reading will look at completely different the second time around.” —Janet Maslin, New York Times

On a warm summer morning in North Carthage, Missouri, it is Nick and Amy Dunne’s fifth wedding anniversary. Presents are being wrapped and reservations are being made when Nick’s clever and beautiful wife disappears from their rented McMansion on the Mississippi River. Husband-of-the-Year Nick isn’t doing himself any favors with cringe-worthy daydreams about the slope and shape of his wife’s head, but passages from Amy’s diary reveal the alpha-girl perfectionist could have put anyone dangerously on edge. Under mounting pressure from the police and the media—as well as Amy’s fiercely doting parents—the town golden boy parades an endless series of lies, decepts, and inappropriate behavior. Nick is oddly evasive, and he’s definitely bitter—but is he really a killer?

As the cops close in, every couple in town is soon wondering how well they know the one that they love. With his twin sister, Margo, at his side, Nick stands by his innocence. Trouble is, if Nick didn’t do it, where is that beautiful wife? And what was in that silvery gift box hidden in the back of her bedroom closet? With her razor-sharp writing and trademark psychological insight, Gillian Flynn delivers a fast-paced, devilishly dark, and ingeniously plotted thriller that confirms her status as one of the best writers.

Skills learned through the reading process that are most desired by employers:

- Communications Skills (listening, reading, verbal, written)
- Analytical and Research Skills
- Self-Motivation Skills
- Organizational Skills
- Problem Solving Skills
- Monitoring Skills

Resources you’ll find in the Saddleback Reading Lab:

*Support staff and professors trained to assist you in all facets of reading and learning including study skills, note-taking, test taking, time management, etc.

*Computer software that will enhance your reading fluency, speed, comprehension & vocabulary.

*Textual materials such as dictionaries, vocabulary study guides, test prep workbooks, a student library, plus a myriad of other sources.

What students are saying about the Reading courses at Saddleback College:

“I enjoyed the class discussions. I normally do not read on a regular basis so I am surprised that I was able to finish reading two books in a semester. This class inspired me to start my summer reading.”

“I enjoyed learning about the different types of skills and attitudes one must obtain in order to become a critical thinker. This helped me acknowledge what skills I have and what I still need to work on so that I can become a critical thinker.”

“I enjoyed that the teacher connected the lessons with real-world application. It made the class useful and more engaging.”

“I enjoyed that we constantly worked to improve and were able to see the results of our efforts each week.”

“I enjoyed the class because the material was well-organized, straightforward, and the instructor delivered the pedagogy in a refreshing, upbeat manner.”

“I really enjoyed this class. It gives you the opportunity to use your brain in a way that I found beneficial. I would definitely recommend it to other students.”

“The ability to span the golden nuggets of information through reading is a valuable skill every college student should learn.”

“I personally enjoyed the group activities. This allowed for critical thinking within groups. I was able to hear others opinions on interesting topics, which in turn opened my eyes to new ideas.”

“I mostly enjoyed the reading that I did during this class. I liked the novel that I read. As English language is my second language, I enjoyed the vocabulary words that I learned through the class. I benefited a lot from the reading techniques and the organization of the essays.”

“I learned a lot of things, not only about reading, I also learned a lot that related to writing, thinking & studying.”