LEARNING CENTER ENGLISH TUTORING LAB HANDOUT
HOW TO PREVIEW (SURVEY) YOUR TEXTBOOK

Buy your required textbooks immediately after attending class, if you have not already bought them. If there have been any changes from the bookstore listing, you will learn of them in class.

Get acquainted with your texts. Spend some time looking them over from front cover to back. You will have some time those first days at school before assignment sheets are passed out.

Directions:

- Note title, author(s), publisher and copyright date. When a book was published is important in our information-exploding world.
- Study the TABLE OF CONTENTS, tracing the movement or organization of the material. Where does the author begin? What does he cover? How extensively? Where does he stop?
- Read the PREFACE (or Forward) and/or INTRODUCTION. Here you will discover the author's position, his emphasis and his intentions. What does he expect to do in this book?
- Skim through the first chapter noting arrangement of the material. Are there headings and subheadings to guide you? Are passages generally long or short? The longer passages will demand persistence. Note pictures and other graphic aids. Is the print easily readable?
- Sample a few paragraphs. Where are the topic sentences (main idea sentences)? Are the supporting sentences heavily modified with phrases and dependent clauses? Do details overwhelm you? Or can they readily be related to a main idea?
- Notice the level of writing and its style. Are the sentences long and complicated by modifiers? Is it easy for you to understand? Difficult?
Impossible? Make arrangements to get help right away if you find the text difficult.

- What other aids will help you get through the chapter? New vocabulary in color or bold print or in the margins? Key ideas italicized in margins? Questions in the margins alongside each paragraph?
- Note if there is a summary or conclusion.
- Note also if there are chapter-end questions which can be a helpful check in determining whether or not you gained what the author wanted you to in your reading of the chapter.
- Is there a glossary? bottom of the page? at the end of the chapter? in the appendix?
- What's in the appendix, if there is one?
- Where is the bibliography?

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