PREVIEWING YOUR TEXT

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.

1. Note title, author(s), publisher and copyright date. When a book was published is important in our information-exploding world.

2. Study the Table Of Contents, tracing the movement or organization of the material. Where does the author begin? What does the author cover? How extensively? Where does the author stop?

3. Read the PREFACE (or FORWARD) and/or INTRODUCTION. Here you will discover the author’s position, emphasis, and intentions. What does the author expect to do in this book?

4. 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?

5. 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 the main idea?


7. What other aids will help you get through the chapter? Are the new vocabulary words in color or bold print? Are they in the margins? Are the key ideas italicized in the margins? Are there questions in the margin alongside each paragraph?

8. Note if there is a summary or conclusion.

9. Note if there are chapter-end questions that can be a helpful check in determining whether or not you gained what the author wanted you to get from your reading of the chapter.

10. Is there a glossary? Is it at the bottom of the page? Is it at the end of the chapter? Is there an appendix? Is there an index?