

# Academic Excellence

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**Yeshiva University/Wilf Campus  
Office of Academic Support**

## Improving Reading In College



Are you overwhelmed by the amount of required reading? Don't despair. You can improve your reading by following these strategies:

- **Read the preface and introduction.** The author's objective is usually stated in the preface.
- **Skim the table of contents.** Specific topics are listed in the table of contents.
- **Take notes.** Jot down notes or questions in the margin of the book that you can review later on.
- **Think about the material that you are reading.** What prior knowledge do you have on the subject? What is the author's purpose in writing this text?
- **Break reading assignments down into manageable segments.** Set a goal to read a certain amount and then transition to another task. Repeat this cycle until your reading is complete.
- **Stay on top of your reading.** Don't let reading assignments pile up. Stick to an assignment schedule.

*"To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting"*

Edmund Burke

## 5 Tips to Increase Reading Speed

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- 1) **Improving Reading.**
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1. Limit word-by-word reading. Reading every word will slow you down.
2. Avoid vocalization (reading aloud). Read with your eyes.
3. Avoid rereading. For many, re-reading is habitual and often unnecessary.
4. Read by phrases or units. Comprehension lies in chunking phrases to form ideas.
5. Follow the lines of the text with your finger, pen, pencil, or index card. Instead of moving across the page, use the marker to move down the page.

## The PARROT System for Textbook Studying

The PARROT Method is designed to help you become a more efficient reader.

**Preview.** Orient yourself to the text by surveying it and looking at topic headings. Skim the sections to help you activate prior knowledge. Preview the illustrations, major headings, charts and anything else that stands out in the text. If there is a chapter summary, read it at this time.

**Attend.** Once you have previewed, your mind is ready to attend to the task. Read for the purpose of learning what you need to know.

**Read.** Do not attempt to read a textbook as you would a novel and expect to be entertained. Instead, break the reading down into sections and stop after each segment to review.

**Review.** Check your comprehension by summarizing each section after reading it.

**Organize.** After summarizing, decide how to organize the information that you learned in a format that works best for you. Use index cards, outlines, concept maps, highlighters, or margin notes to assist with the organization of information. The method that you chose depends on the purpose of your studying. Bear in mind that studying for an exam and preparing a homework assignment require different levels of recall.

**Test.** Refer to the materials that you used to organize your information in order to test your knowledge. The more you use these materials to test yourself, the more familiar you will become with the material and the easier it will be to remember.

Based upon *University Experience* by Barbara McLay

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**T**he Office of Academic Support is designed to help students improve study skills. Visit the OAS and meet with a learning specialist who will customize a study plan to address your individual needs.