

PRESP Method of Reading Science and Math Textbooks

(to become an active and effective reader)

The aggressive reader reads with pencil and paper to ask questions, to organize information, and to work problems.

PRESP

Preview

Read

Examples

Summarize

Problems

The PRESP Method of Reading

Preview the Chapter.

Read the introduction of the chapter

Look over the major section headings and glance at the figures

Skim questions, key words and summaries at the end of the chapter

Skim the homework problems

Create a context for remembering information

Ask questions to generate interest and sense of what is important

Plan your study session; break the chapter into two or three chunks, A, B, and C

Read Chunk A.

Identify major laws, definitions, and theorems; make notes in the margin

Use scratch paper to jot down definitions, laws, and equations.

For major equations or laws, consider special cases; e.g. $-x = 0$ or $x = \infty$

Examples. Work most example problems.

Cover the solution and practice your problem-solving strategy

But use your scratch paper notes

Check your solution method with the textbook

Be sure you can do each example before going on

Summarize.

Start a hierarchical summary sheet; include major laws, definitions and theorems; also include anything important from your scratch paper.

Problems. Work the homework problems associated with Chunk A.

Use your summary sheet first before searching the book

Use your problem-solving strategy; reread sections of the book as necessary

Look for new definitions and details; add these to your summary sheet

If you get stuck on a problem, go on; limit your time on each problem

**Breaks & Rewards
are Important**

Repeat for each chunk; mini-preview, read, problems, summarize, and problems.

Make a new one-page hierarchical summary of the chapter. Review regularly.

How to Mark the Book

Do *not* highlight or underline main points while you read. Most students make too many marks. Wait until you've finished a paragraph, section, or chunk, then mark.

Mark the text and the margin to outline the **structure** of the chapter. For each main concept, law or equation, indicate where it comes from: evidence, examples, steps, proofs, connections to other points, definitions, and your own