Actively Read your Textbook

When just reading isn’t enough.
It’s after the first day of classes and you sit down to begin reading the first chapter of your textbook...

...well how do you do it?
Location, Location

- Comfort…in moderation
- No distractions
- Posture counts
- Columbia University Libraries
  - http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/locations.html
Read Smart

- Read before the lecture
- First – get a 2-5 minute preview
  - Chapter introductions
  - Headings & Titles
  - Conclusion or Summary
- Then read in detail
- Break it up – don’t read non-stop
- Build on prior knowledge
- Monitor comprehension
Use a Strategy

- **P2R** (easy to average material)
  - Preview (2-5 minutes)
  - Read Actively
    - Do something after reading each section, i.e. take notes, write recall questions, or summary statements
  - Review
    - Recite, respond to end-of-chapter questions, self-test

- **SQ4R** (challenging material)
  - Survey
  - Question
  - Read
  - Record
  - Recite
  - Review

- **S-RUN-R** (challenging material)
  - Survey
  - Read
  - Underline
  - Note Take
  - Review
Marking your Textbook

- Mark Meaningful Phrases
- Avoid under/over marking
- Avoid complex marking systems
- Highlight rather than underline (proceed with caution!)
- Avoid Heavily Marked Used Textbooks
  - Promotes passive reading
- Carefully monitor your text marking
Sample 1: Marking Too Little

The largest and most magnificent of all the pyramids was built under King Khufu. Constructed at Giza around 2450 B.C.E., this famous Great Pyramid covers thirteen acres, measures 756 feet at each side of its base, and stands 481 feet high. Its four sides are almost precisely oriented to the four points of the compass. The interior included a grand gallery to the burial chamber, which was built of granite with a lidless sarcophagus for the pharaoh’s body. The Great Pyramid still stands as a visible symbol of the power of the Egyptian kings and the spiritual conviction that underlay Egyptian society. No pyramid built later ever matched its size or splendor.

Sample 2: Marking Too Selectively

The largest and most magnificent of all the pyramids was built under King Khufu. Constructed at Giza around 2450 B.C.E., this famous Great Pyramid covers thirteen acres, measures 756 feet at each side of its base, and stands 481 feet high. Its four sides are almost precisely oriented to the four points of the compass. The interior included a grand gallery to the burial chamber, which was built of granite with a lidless sarcophagus for the pharaoh’s body. The Great Pyramid still stands as a visible symbol of the power of the Egyptian kings and the spiritual conviction that underlay Egyptian society. No pyramid built later ever matched its size or splendor.

Sample 3: Marking Meaningful Phrases

The largest and most magnificent of all the pyramids was built under King Khufu. Constructed at Giza around 2450 B.C.E., this famous Great Pyramid covers thirteen acres, measures 756 feet at each side of its base, and stands 481 feet high. Its four sides are almost precisely oriented to the four points of the compass. The interior included a grand gallery to the burial chamber, which was built of granite with a lidless sarcophagus for the pharaoh’s body. The Great Pyramid still stands as a visible symbol of the power of the Egyptian kings and the spiritual conviction that underlay Egyptian society. No pyramid built later ever matched its size or splendor.

Source: Dianna L. Van Blerkom, Orientation to College Learning, 4th ed., pp.189
Be an Active Reader

• Stand up! Speak up!
• Use your margins
• Take notes
• Look up definitions after reading
• Use end-of-chapter problems to test your understanding, then create your own questions
Helpful Resources

- **Orientation to College Learning**, *Dianna L. Van Blerkom*
- Tutoring for GS Students at the ARC: [http://gs.columbia.edu/tutoring](http://gs.columbia.edu/tutoring)