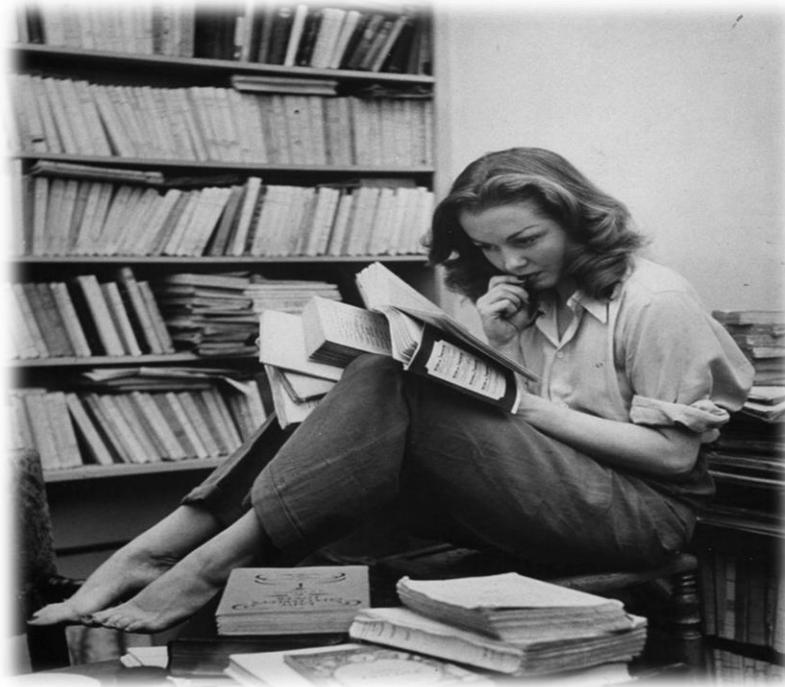


# ENGL 100: Reading Strategies



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**Successful readers** employ a variety of strategies to understand, remember, and synthesize what they've read. These strategies are designed to give you opportunities to experiment with and reflect on different ways to engage challenging, college-level reading material. You will find that it is often necessary to employ more than one strategy at a time when reading college-level texts.

**Instructions:** We'll review these strategies during our first week of class. It will then be your responsibility to employ your favorite strategies when reading assignments. **Annotations, notes, and journal entries will often be due in this class after an assigned reading.** It would be helpful to try multiple strategies before settling on your favorite(s). You may employ more than one strategy at a time. (Personally, I always annotate academic texts and usually follow them with separate pages of notes.)

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### **Strategy #1: Read with a Purpose**

When we **read with a purpose**, we figure out *why* we are reading a text and focus on reading from that perspective. When you figure out your purpose for reading a text in any class, try to move beyond “because it was assigned to me,” and think, instead, about *why* the instructor assigned it. That is, think about how it connects to class themes or what you have already read in the class, the assignments you will complete based on that text, and the other readings you will complete in the class. This helps us begin reading the text with some ideas and expectations about the text, but we must remember that these predictions can change as we read through the text.

#### **As you read:**

Ask yourself, "Why do you think this reading has been assigned? How do you think this text might relate to you and to the class overall?"

### **Strategy #2: Annotating and Underlining** **(AKA: "Talking to the Text")**

By **annotating and underling** a text, we work to pick out the key ideas in a written work, and this helps us to be more interactive readers by reacting in writing to a text. By annotating and underlining, we not only help ourselves process the information, but we also help ourselves retain the information. Annotating also make it easier to review a text later and to find important quotations when writing about a text.

#### **As you read:**

**Underline** text that stands out to you and **note** in the margins any questions or comments in response to the text.

### **Strategy #3: Annotating the Main Idea of Each Paragraph (AKA: "Talking to the Text")**

By **annotating the main idea of each paragraph**, we can really start to understand how writers organize their ideas and break their ideas into manageable chunks (or paragraphs) for their readers. Recording the main idea of each paragraph will not only help us gain a more thorough understanding of the text, but it will also help us see how we might organize our ideas as writers.

#### **As you read:**

In the margin next to each paragraph, write down the **main idea** of that paragraph. (If you're not sure, just take a stab at it).

### **Strategy #4: Taking Notes**

When we **take notes**, we write down important information about a text on a separate piece of paper (or in your journal). Taking notes can help us begin to react to a text in writing, a common assignment in college-level classes.

#### **As you read:**

Note on a separate piece of paper any important information from the chapter. Consider using the author's own organizing structure (sub-headings, main ideas of paragraphs) to organize your notes. Also include page and paragraph numbers in your notes so you can find the information in the text later on.

### **Strategy #5: Making Connections**

When we **make connections** between a text we are reading and other texts we have read, we start to see ideas from multiple perspectives. Making connections helps us understand that one text does not provide all the information necessary to understand a topic, and by reading more than one text on a given topic and making connections among those texts, we learn to synthesize information to create our own opinion on a topic instead of passively accepting what we have read.

#### **As you read:**

Note how this text relates to one or two other texts we've read this semester. What specific quotes or sections **connect** to other readings? How?

### **Strategy #6: Double-Entry Journal**

When we use a **double-entry journal**, we are interacting with the text by extracting important direct quotes from the text and writing them down in one column in our journal. In another other column, we are responding to that quote by asking questions or drawing conclusions, disagreeing or agreeing, analyzing and interpreting, or making personal connections to the text.

#### **As you read:**

Ask yourself, "What stands out in the text?" "What do I find myself passionately agreeing with or disagreeing with?" "What do certain ideas remind you of in your own life?" Note those passages, quote them directly, and then reflect on them.