

What Do Good Readers Do?

You read for many different reasons. You read for entertainment, for information, and to learn. Sometimes reading is fun, but sometimes it's hard work. Reading is an active process. Think of it as a conversation between you—your thoughts, questions, and experiences—and the words on the page.

Below are the four stages in the reading process, with some suggested activities for each stage. You can decide which activities would be most helpful for each reading task you undertake.

1. Before Reading

The first step is to get to know the selection you are going to read. Look it over and use some of the following strategies to get an idea of what it is like.

- Make predictions based on the title, the name of the author, and any other words or illustrations on the cover.
- Read any headings, subheadings, and captions.
- Ask questions about the topic.
- Examine any maps, photographs, graphs, charts, tables, illustrations, and pictures.
- Skim the table of contents and select the chapters or sections you find most interesting or useful.
- Recall what you already know about the subject or content.



2. Reading

Now that you know something about the selection, dive in and read through it. As you read, think about your own responses to the material using some of these strategies.

- Just read and enjoy.
- Keep a Reading Response Journal.
- Think about or take notes on what you've read.
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand or don't agree with.
- List words you don't know and look them up in a dictionary.
- Discuss your responses to the selection with other readers.
- Make connections to what you know already or have read elsewhere.
- Pay attention to any pictures or images that you think of as you read.



3. Rereading

This is your chance to get more out of what you have read: to clarify your understanding of it and to gather information for class assignments. At this stage, you might

- Read the selection aloud, either to yourself or to others.
- Review the selection again to fill in gaps in your notes.
- Create webs, charts, graphs, and other diagrams to organize information.
- Discuss questions about the selection with a partner.

4. After Reading

This is the time for you to reflect on what you've read, to show your understanding of it, and to use the information in a creative way. You might

- Make a follow-up entry in your Response Journal.
- Prepare a Reader's Theatre presentation of part or all of the selection.
- Have a debate on the main topic of the selection.
- Write an essay or prepare an oral presentation about the selection, or use information from the selection in an essay or report.
- Answer any questions or do any activities included within the selection.
- Discuss the selection with another reader.
- Review any notes you made while reading and revise them where necessary.