

Reading Guide for Social Sciences: Journal articles, book-length studies, primary sources.



The Learning Center
at UNC-CH



Before Reading

Gather Basic Information about Author and Text

Title
Author(s)
Biography of author(s)
Year published
Historical context
Type of source: journal, primary source, book-length study?
Intended audience: scholars, students?

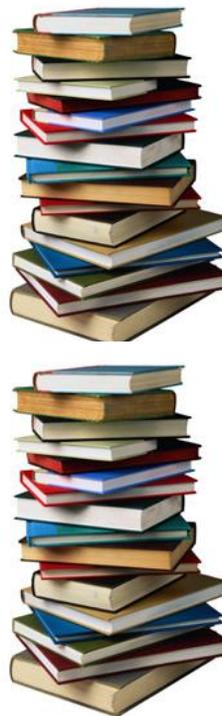
How might the publication date and historical context help you understand the text?

Preview Text

Thumb through pages, noting bold headings, graphics, etc. **Any predictions?**

Read abstract, or intro and

summary. Look at charts and graphs. Previewing will help you see the direction the text will take you.



During Reading

Understand the Argument

Does the reading advance an argument, often referred to as a **thesis**? If so, what is the author's thesis or point of view?

What is author's **objective**?

What **major points** does she make?

Analyze the Thesis

What kind of **evidence supports the thesis**? Do you find it convincing? Why or why not?

Learn Vocabulary

As you encounter unknown terms, write them down and then be sure to find their definitions during reading.

Reread the sentence where the word is located to help you remember its meaning. Try using it in an original sentence.

After Reading

Ask Questions

Make note of unclear points to clarify in recitation or office hours.

Solidify Your Learning

Either individually or with a partner, consider drawing a concept map, timeline or map. List key people or major events. Write a summary of main ideas.

For further reading
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