

Marking Text & Taking Notes while Reading



The Learning Center
at UNC-CH



Making Choices

There are many options for marking text and taking notes while reading. Choices you make will depend on your background with a subject, your learning style, your purpose, and your time.

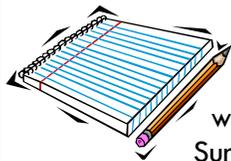
Traditional Methods

Mark Directly on the Text

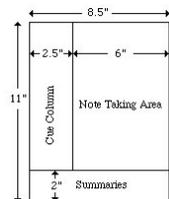
Underline, circle, or highlight key words and phrases. Annotate margins with symbols, abbreviations, or summaries.



Use a Separate Document or Medium



Write or type important points or passages. Generate bulleted lists. Create structured outlines with numerals and letters. Summarize sections in your own words.



Cornell Style:

Take notes on the right two-thirds of the page. List key words in the left column. Summarize the entire page in the space at the bottom.

Make Flashcards

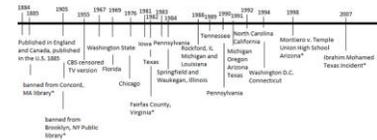
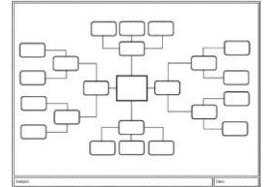
Transfer information to index cards or electronic flashcards for easy drilling.



Non-Traditional Methods

Create a Graphic Organizer

Organize information visually. Differentiate main ideas from support in an appropriate format: concept map, table, flow chart, hierarchy, timeline, or Venn diagram.



Dictate

Record important points or passages as audio files.



Generate Your Own Q&A

Formulate questions from headings and key words before you begin. Then seek answers as you read.



Tips

1. **Preview** the assignment before you begin.
2. **Finish** reading each section or page before marking on it and taking notes.
3. **Include** your own thoughts, opinions, and questions.
4. **Be selective.** Don't transcribe large sections of text. Use highlighters sparingly.
5. **Stop frequently.** Use the ends of sections as cues to summarize.
6. **Seek connections.** Look for contrast and overlap with other materials.
7. **Talk** with your professor about the role of the assignment.



For further reading
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