

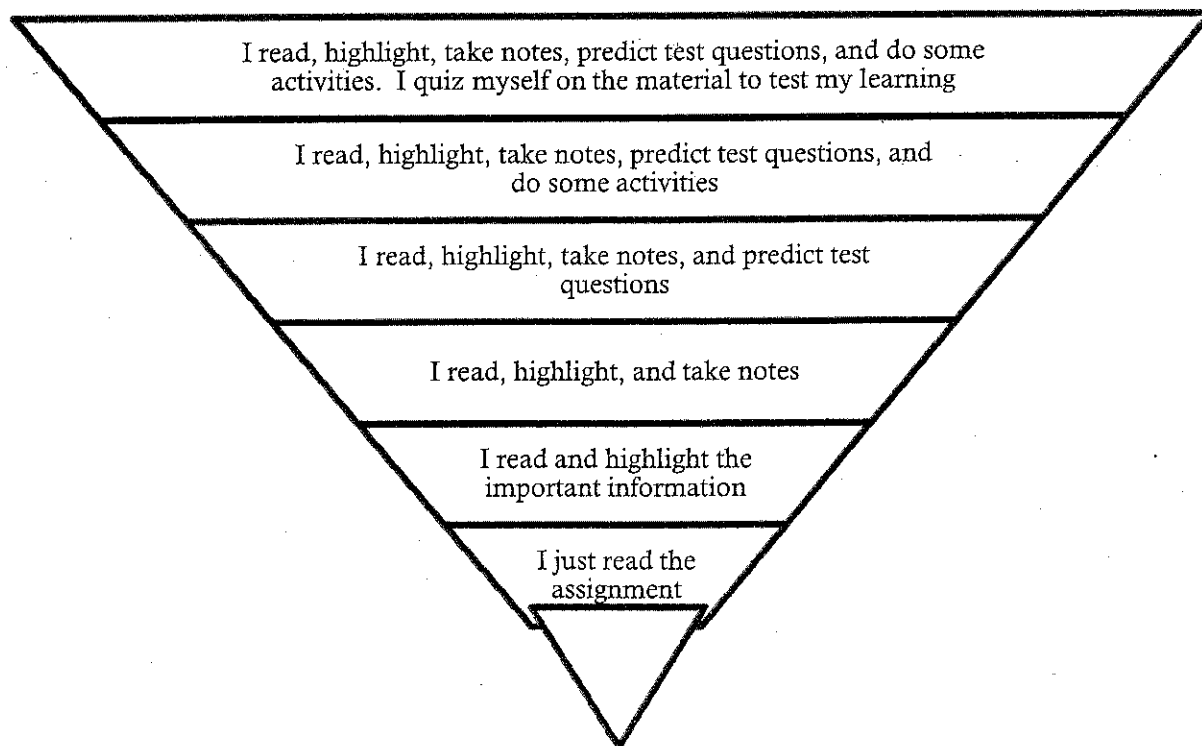
## Increase your level of interaction with reading assignments

College courses require a lot of reading. So much information must be taught and learned during the course of one semester that there usually is no way for the instructor to cover everything during class lectures. Thus, students must show responsibility for their own learning by completing supplemental reading assignments. However, it is easy to slip

into a *completion* state of mind when approaching these assignments – you speed through the reading as quickly as possible so you can say that you completed it. If this is the means by which you approach reading, your knowledge and understanding of the material will not be enhanced by the assignment.

### The Reading Hierarchy

Look at the hierarchy below. Which portion describes your current level of interaction with reading assignments? Note how many levels are above where you currently stand and how much more you could be doing to obtain the maximum benefit from reading assignments. Reference the handouts on the specific strategies that you need to utilize in order to move up the hierarchy.



## Make the Most of Your College Textbook

Reading a college textbook takes skill. It is not enough to simply read the text; you must interact with it in order to learn the information. Reading textbooks is such hard work because they contain many abstract concepts in word-dense pages that make up very long chapters. Skimming or passive reading is not an option when reading a textbook. You must prepare for the reading by previewing the chapter and dividing the

chapter into sections of reasonable length. As you are reading, you should use some type of reading/study system to help you engage the material. In addition, monitoring your comprehension is key to ensuring that you are understanding and learning the material. Finally, after you are finished with a section of reading, you must review the material to ensure that it made it into long-term memory.

### Preview the Chapter before You Read

Spending two to five minutes previewing a chapter will actually save time while reading and increase your comprehension. Read the section title, the introduction, headings, and the summary. In addition, look at all charts, diagrams, and pictures. Do not forget to read the captions.

### Read the Chapter Prior to Lecture

Reading the chapter before your instructor lectures on the material helps you build a base of knowledge. Humans learn by scaffolding (or building) on the knowledge that they already have learned. Thus, you will learn more from the lecture if you have that base of knowledge gained from the textbook.

### Divide the Chapter into Readable Chunks

Reading a fifty-page chapter in one sitting is not a good idea. By breaking that fifty-page chapter into five chunks of ten pages each, you will increase your comprehension and understanding of the material. In addition, it will also decrease the amount of time that you spend reading the chapter because it is easier to stay on task and focused.

### Use a Reading/Study System

Effective study systems include P2R, SQ3R, and S-RUN-R. These reading/study systems help you to engage the text so that you do not slip into passive reading.

These reading/study systems are outlined in further detail later in this handout.

### Monitor your Comprehension

At the end of each paragraph or page, pause and check your comprehension of the material. Ask yourself if you understand everything that you just read. Think about how the information relates to what you already know (your prior knowledge base). If you do not understand something, re-read that section again.

### Prompt your Memory

Use the headings of your textbook to prompt your memory. Read the heading and then recite out loud everything that you remember about that topic. Another useful tool is to write questions about the material in the margins of the textbook. As you are reviewing, answer these questions. If you are unsure of the answer, read the respective section of the text again.