

Tutors as Readers

Before students can write or speak about a text, they need to read and understand the text. Sometimes before you can help a student with a paper or speech, you need to help them read first. If a student makes a comment about a text that is underdeveloped or confusing, your first instinct is probably to ask the student to clarify what they mean and talk it through. If the student is struggling, though, don't tell them to reread and move on--instead, whenever possible, reread the text with the student to model reading for understanding, interpretation, and analysis.

You might read an article out loud line by line, asking the students to paraphrase each sentence as you go. You might ask students to look at both what an author argues, and how they make that argument. You might look up words together, mark important passages, and maybe even explain contextual information or cultural references they don't know. Help the student with the reading first, and the rest of your session will be more productive!

Reading Survey

This reading inventory, based on research from G. Travis Adams, is designed to help identify your reading behaviors, attitudes, and strategies, in order to help you more effectively help students who may have different behaviors, attitudes or strategies than yours.

I believe I am a (good/fair/poor) reader.

I enjoy reading (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| ☐ fiction | ☐ poetry | ☐ websites | ☐ facebook |
| ☐ textbooks | ☐ essays | ☐ non-fiction | ☐ novels |
| ☐ newspapers | ☐ magazines | ☐ encyclopedias | ☐ journal articles |
| ☐ biographies | ☐ scientific reports | ☐ comic books | ☐ short stories |
| ☐ nothing | ☐ other: | | |

I struggle or avoid reading (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| ☐ fiction | ☐ poetry | ☐ websites | ☐ facebook |
| ☐ textbooks | ☐ essays | ☐ non-fiction | ☐ novels |
| ☐ newspapers | ☐ magazines | ☐ encyclopedias | ☐ journal articles |
| ☐ biographies | ☐ scientific reports | ☐ comic books | ☐ short stories |
| ☐ nothing | ☐ other: | | |

Before I read, I (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| ☐ identify my purpose | ☐ skim | ☐ plan reading time | ☐ look at headings |
| ☐ go to my reading spot | ☐ read the ending | ☐ ask questions about the text | ☐ think about the genre |
| ☐ think about the purpose | ☐ think about the audience | ☐ other: | |

***While I read, I (check all that apply):**

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| ☐ listen to music | ☐ use a highlighter | ☐ check email | ☐ text |
| ☐ ignore graphs/figures | ☐ read aloud | ☐ underline | ☐ skip passages |
| ☐ take notes | ☐ use a dictionary | ☐ skim | ☐ use sticky notes |
| ☐ watch tv | ☐ ask questions | ☐ take breaks | ☐ annotate |
| ☐ re-read passages | ☐ write in the margins | ☐ use symbols/ shorthand | ☐ write down questions |
| ☐ put ideas in my own words | ☐ draw pictures/ diagrams | ☐ talk about it with peers | ☐ other: |

After I read, I (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| ☐ write notes | ☐ forget about it | ☐ review notes | ☐ talk about it |
| ☐ remember it easily | ☐ write a summary | ☐ identify keywords | ☐ identify main ideas |
| ☐ write an outline | ☐ think about inferences | ☐ consult other texts | ☐ consult the professor |
| ☐ consider authorial choices | ☐ consider what was left out | ☐ put ideas in my words | ☐ other: |

On average, it takes me (10/15/20/30/45/60/90/120/180/I have no idea) minutes to read a typical book chapter/article (25 pages).

***I believe good readers (check all that apply):**

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| ☐ read quickly | ☐ easily identify a main point | ☐ take notes | ☐ skim |
| ☐ are interested in what they read | ☐ relate to what they read | ☐ take breaks | ☐ use visual elements |
| ☐ ask questions | ☐ annotate | ☐ read purposefully | ☐ read multiple times |
| ☐ skip difficult passages | ☐ make connections between texts | ☐ look up words | ☐ understand the rhetorical context |
| ☐ talk about what they've read | ☐ Other: | | |

What jumps out at you, or what have you learned, from your reading survey?

How might your reading survey help you work with students you tutor? What assumptions do you carry about students with reading practices that differ from yours?

How would you help a student understand and interpret this text?

To Autumn

John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozy hours by hours.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river willows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.