

STEPS IN PREREADING

Prereading involves finding out what you are going to read about and making up questions that you want to answer while you read an assignment.

Textbook

- Find out what the subject of the assignment is
 - leaf through the pages of the assignment and find out what clues the visual aids (maps, graphs, pictures) give you. Read the captions.
 - look in the table of contents to put this assignment in context with the entire course. What has gone before? What will come after?
- Study the questions at the end of the chapter or section to see what the author thinks is important in the assignment.
- Look carefully at the bold face type in the assigned pages. From this, **make up logical questions** that you can answer when you read.

Novel or Play (full length)

- Read a plot summary (synopsis)
 - Masterplots
 - Masterpieces of World Literature
 - Oxford Companions
 - Front matter of most study guides
 - Barron's Educational Notes
 - Monarch Notes
 - Cliff Notes
- Find a book in the library that contains critical commentaries about the book or the author. Look for something like *Twentieth Century Views Series*.
- Look through *Book Review Digest* for the year the book was first published. (Use only as a last resort or if you need critical commentaries by critics - especially good for contemporary plays and novels.)
- Use the study guide notes to preread each chapter or scene in the book.
- **Make questions** to answer as you read each chapter or scene.

Short Stories or Poetry

- Read the entire story or poem through once to determine the plot or characters. Pose questions about the dramatic actions and anything else you may need to know.

Nonfiction Material

- Look up subject in encyclopedia
- Read the first and last sentences in each paragraph
- Make up questions to answer