Critical Reading II

Reading and Reporting Techniques
Reporting Techniques

To be a good reader, you must read actively:

- You must constantly respond to the material you are reading
- You must put the author’s ideas into your own words
Reporting Techniques

- Reporting techniques help you lock information into your long-term memory.
Reporting Techniques

1. Tell-Backs
2. Overt Comprehension
Reporting Techniques: Tellbacks

- Stop after a passage of reading and retell what you’ve just read in your own words
- Give as much detail as possible
- Do your tellbacks aloud
- Use the structure of your book to guide your tellbacks
Reporting Techniques: Tellbacks

- The more difficult the material, the more often you should do tellbacks.

- When you first start reading, vary how often you do tellbacks, until you get a feel for how often you need to do them.
Reporting Techniques: Overt Comprehension

- Use Overt Comprehension when you’re distracted or when the material is very difficult to understand.
- Overt Comprehension is a running summary of the main ideas, spoken aloud as you read.
- Use your own words as much as possible.
Reporting Techniques: Overt Comprehension

- When you are first learning overt comprehension, you may find it necessary to summarize briefly after reading each paragraph, rather than as you read.
- With practice the goal is to speak without breaking your reading (unless the main idea is so complex that it warrants your stopping).
- Keeping the structure in mind will be helpful.
Reading Techniques: Chapter Survey

- Surveying the chapter before you read it will help you to understand the function and structure of the chapter.
- Understanding the way that the chapter is organized will improve your comprehension of the material and will help you to retain the information longer.
Reading Techniques: Chapter Survey

- Note the function of the chapter:
- Read the introduction (or the first few paragraphs)
- Glance through the chapter, looking over any charts, graphs, bold headings, etc.
- Read the conclusion (or the last few paragraphs).
- Define, Group and Label the chapter’s sections.
Reading Techniques: Chapter Survey

- Do a chapter survey before you begin any new chapter
- Doing a survey before you start to read will help you to determine what is most important in the chapter, what is worth reading, and what your strategy for reading should be.
If the material is very difficult or dense, you should preview the chapter section by section.
Reading Techniques: Section Survey

- Read the first paragraph of the section
- Read the first sentence of all subsequent paragraphs in the section
- Read the last paragraph of the section
- Tell yourself what you think the section is about
- Go back and read the section
- Repeat the procedure on the next section
Reading Techniques: Chapter / Section Survey

- You can use these methods to preview an entire chapter, a journal article, newspaper article, etc.
- You can significantly improve your comprehension of difficult material
- You can get the main ideas out of a chapter when you don’t have time to read the whole thing
Taking Notes

- Do a chapter survey (even if you’re only reading one section of the chapter)
- Do a first-sentence survey (if the material is complex)
- Read with tellbacks or overt comprehension
- Take notes AFTER you read!
Taking Notes

- Take notes in your own words
- Take notes either in the margin of the book or on a separate piece of paper
- List any details you need to remember under each main idea
Determining the Structure of Textbooks

- Textbooks are descriptive: they bring together a large amount of information about a particular field in an organized manner.
- Knowing the structure of your textbook can help you in taking notes.
Descriptive Structures: Hierarchy

- Some textbooks require that you master core material and continues to build on this material after it.
- This structure is commonly used in math, science, and language textbooks.
Descriptive Structures: Hierarchy
Descriptive Structures: Grid

- This structure is commonly used to describe or compare classes of objects or processes.
- Common in comparison textbooks
- Are useful for organizing a collection of articles on one subject
### Descriptive Structures: Grid

**Example: Comparative Religions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deity</th>
<th>Salvation</th>
<th>Scriptures</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Descriptive Structures: Grid

#### Example: Diagnostic Procedures Manual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Red cell count</th>
<th>White cell count</th>
<th>Blood sugar</th>
<th>Body temp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anemia</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Structures: Chronology

- A sequential structure which can usually be drawn as a grid in which one dimension marks the passage of time.
- This structure is typical in history texts and biographies, as well as for historical series such as case law.
# Descriptive Structures: Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary War</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expansion</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Civil War</td>
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<td>Reconstruction</td>
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<td>Industrialization</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Descriptive Structures: Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insanity test</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary insanity</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Diminished capacity test</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical testimony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge’s role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jury’s role</td>
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</table>
Descriptive Structures: Static/Dynamic

- These textbooks offer a description of parts or components, followed by a discussion of how the whole system operates.
- Begin by reading the dynamic sections, referring back to the static as necessary.
- This structure is typically found in anatomy/physiology, computer science, economics, and ecology books, as well as in many manuals.
Descriptive Structures: Static/Dynamic

Anatomy/Physiology (of the eye)

Anatomy

Static:
- Cornea
- Lens
- Retina
- Rods/Cones
- Optic nerve
- Crystallins
- Crystallins

Physiology

Dynamic:
- Depth Perception
- Motion Perception
- Seeing in color
Descriptive Structures: Static/Dynamic

Word Processing Manual

Items
Static:
- The directory
- The screen
- The keyboard
- The “Help” menu
- The thesaurus
- The file
- Printer Fonts

Procedures
Dynamic:
- Locating text
- Formatting text
- Printing files
- Changing typefaces
- Saving files
- Splitting the screen