

REFERENCE INFORMATION FOR TUTORS: TEXTBOOK SURVEY & READING FOR INFORMATION

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Tutors very often need a variety of reference information that they can pass on to tutees. Tutees have particular difficulty with understanding how to use their textbooks and learning how to read their texts for information. To enable tutors to assist their tutees in these two areas, the following survey and guide are provided.

TEXTBOOK SURVEY

1. The title of the textbook is:

2. The author or authors of the textbook is/are:

3. The textbook was published in (list latest date):

4. The publisher of the textbook is:

5. Number of pages in the textbook:

6. The textbook is divided into how many of the following?
_____ sections _____ units _____ chapters
7. The textbook has:
_____ Preface _____ Answer Key

_____ Table of Contents _____ Introduction

_____ Index _____ Bibliography

8. List other resources that this textbook has that were not mentioned in #7 above.

9. Examine Chapter One. Check the features that it has.

_____ Introduction _____ Chapter Overview

_____ Chapter Sections _____ Vocabulary Definitions

_____ Illustrations _____ Pictures/Photos

_____ Charts/Graphs _____ Side Notes/Information

_____ Activities _____ Exercises/Questions

10. List other resources that this chapter has that were not mentioned in 9 above

11. Read the first six paragraphs in Chapter One. Based upon these six paragraphs, where would you say the author(s) is placing the main idea in the paragraphs?

_____ first sentence _____ last sentence

_____ middle sentences _____ first & last sentence

12. Test your above theory by reading the next six paragraphs. Now where do you believe the author(s) are placing the main idea in the paragraphs?

_____ first sentence _____ last sentence

_____ middle sentences _____ first & last sentence

A GUIDE TO READING FOR INFORMATION

Survey the chapter

Turn the pages and see how long the chapter is. Are there any interesting pictures, charts, and/or diagrams? If so, read and examine them.

Look for questions to answer

Are there any questions at the end of the chapter, or did your instructor provide questions? If there are questions, how many are there? What types of questions are there? If there are not any questions, how can you make your own? (Turning headings into questions is the easiest way. For example, the heading from a General Psychology book of “Conditions That Generate Emotion” could be turned into: “What are two conditions that generate emotion?”)

Skim the chapter

Basically, skimming is reading the first sentence of each paragraph in order to get a very quick overview of a chapter. Some variations include reading just the headings or reading the first and last sentence of each paragraph. Skimming a normal 25- to 30-page chapter should take only 15-20 minutes. Remember the goal is not to learn everything; the goal is to get a general idea of what is in the chapter.

Read the chapter

Read with a purpose in mind. The best purpose is to answer questions, either the book’s or your own. Be sure to highlight information as you read. Be selective; everything you highlight you will have to reread when you review.

Consolidate your reading information

Consolidation is another way of saying review your work. Review highlighted

information at least once a week so that it stays fresh. This will help you listen to class lectures, pass tests, and understand new material in the textbook. One of the best ways to review is to make 3x5 cards for names, dates, people, and facts. Then you can carry the cards with you and review them often. The best way to review them is to quiz yourself out loud.