

Bridget - Presentation

Bridget Scanlon:

My name is Bridget. I'm a Level 2 student studying for a degree in Sociology. As reading is part of the student study I would like to ask students and an academic how do you go about Active Reading and have you any tips for Active Reading?

Lucy could you give us some ideas of your ideas about Active Reading and tips?

Lucy Beech:

My tip is to make a glossary of the key words and terms that you come across. They're usually put in bold but it's really useful especially when you come to it in an exam to have them all there so you can remember. Because some of them they're really impossible to remember otherwise and it's really good to have your own personal dictionary of things that are going to be important to you.

Bridget Scanlon:

Very good. Thank you.

Ami what have you found useful for Active Reading and have you got any tips that you could share with students?

Ami Harty:

When I read through one of the OU text books I tend to read it at least once, usually twice through. The first time is scan reading and then the second time going through using coloured highlighter pens. And identifying possible quotes may be with one colour and then using another colour for things like definitions or anything else that I think is relevant in that text.

Bridget Scanlon:

Thank you very much, that's very useful.

Sara I'd be very interested to hear how you go about Active Reading and have you any tips for Active Reading?

Sara Hook:

For me what I tend to do is I will read either part of a chapter, a whole chapter through once. I can speed read so I tend to read it quite quickly. What I then would go back and do is do some highlighting, just like I scan through it. But kind of for me the main technique that I use is I will read it and then I will convey it to my partner. So what I'll do is I'll essentially be trying to explain all the terms and theories that I've learnt to someone that has no knowledge. And for me I find that's a really good of making sure I've understood what I've read.

Bridget Scanlon:

Very good advice, thank you very much.

Sara Hook:

You're welcome.

Bridget Scanlon:

Harleyjack. I'm doing a small survey on how students go about Active Reading. And I'd be very interested to hear from you one specific point about what's the best tip you can give.

Harleyjack:

Well one thing I like to do is actually look at the chapter aims at the beginning before I start reading. So, for example, one of the things may be about inequality and policy. So when I'm actually going through the texts then some core points about inequality and policy stand out which really helped to keep in mind what I should be getting out of the chapter.

Bridget Scanlon:

That's a good idea, thank you very much.

Cathy what are your ideas for Active Reading and have you any tips that students could use for Active Reading?

Cathy:

Well first for me I usually like is highlighting main ideas with different colours. Leaving personal notes on the edge of the book. And out of that I develop a mind map.

Bridget Scanlon:

Very good.

Cathy:

And I love my maps and I want to show you why. Because a mind map is just like the real map, you know, there is the road, the river, the bridge. You don't see the little flowers and the little grass but you know which way you want to go.

Bridget Scanlon:

That's very good.

Cathy:

Now with a mind map it's the same thing. Yeah. So you get your grasp of main ideas. You describe it with a few words and you don't just see the main ideas that are highlighted but you also see the links between them.

So it helps you to move away from the textbook and crystallise the main points in the text.

Bridget Scanlon:

Thank you very much. That's very useful.

Dave, you've heard what students have had to say. Can you give us a summary of ideas what students could do and how to go about Active Reading?

Dave Middleton:

Yes. I listened to what the students had to say and I have to say I'm very impressed. I don't think they've got any problems about a degree then at all to be honest. I think all the things that they said are good strategies. I think every student will have their own strategy but in general terms I think, you know, it's doing something like making mind maps is a really good way of doing it. Looking at the key concepts and the key theories. Thinking about the objectives of the chapter, look at chapter headings. Use a highlighter, don't go mad with a highlighter. Use a highlighter to mark the pieces that you want to do.

Read in small chunks. I think this is my biggest tip. Read in small chunks at a time, turn the book over, write it out in your own words. May be a paragraph when you're first starting, may be even a sentence actually. A paragraph then may be a whole page and then you'll find you'll be doing chapter sections. And try and get it down to a couple of sentences. And it really seems hard when you first start to do that but for academics we do that all the time because we have to summarise other people's works very succinctly. And we all learnt to do that as students.

I don't think our students have too much of a problem. And I'm sure they'll all going to be very good at this especially after watching your video which is fantastic.

Bridget Scanlon:

Thank you very much. That was very useful and helpful and will guide us on our way.