**Active Reading**

Successful students, and successful readers approach reading with a strategy to help them get the most out of the reading. These students actively looking for the main idea, the themes, for words they don’t understand, and the purpose (why the piece was written) of what they are reading. The opposite of active reading, is passive reading. Passive reader only read because they are told to, they skip over things they don’t understand, and have difficulty explaining. In this course, we are going to be practicing active reading. You will find that active reading is more enjoyable, lets you understand more of what you’ve read, and will lead to better test scores.

The first part of active reading is to read through the selection one time, and allow yourself to enjoy it. It is okay to not understand everything the first time through. Make a note next to any word that you are not sure you know what it means, or if you think you know, but it doesn’t sound right in the context of the sentence. When you finish, stop for a few minutes and think about what you just read. What is your first impression? Did you enjoy it? Why or why not? Think of the most memorable part of the reading, did something surprise you? Did you find yourself liking or disliking someone, or something that happened?

Take a few minutes to write down these notes. You will be asked to share them later in a class discussion. Now, walk away and go do something else, such as walk around the block, or do some chores or errands. Allow yourself to absorb what you read without overly thinking about it, or worrying about what you did not understand.

When you come back, look at your notes, and look for the words that you marked because you were not sure what they meant. Go through and look these words up in the dictionary. In the course, many words will be defined for you if you roll-over them, but not every word will be defined.