

## GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TEXTBOOK

Suggestion: When buying textbooks, buy new if you can afford it but if you must economize, buy UNMARKED textbooks. The previous owner might not have marked the book correctly so you do not want to be influenced by incorrect notations.

The purpose of marking and making notes in your textbook is to reduce the amount of information you have to study. You can also reduce your overall reading time by reading the material thoroughly once, selecting the important information, and then focusing your attention on that information in your notes.

Develop your own marking/highlighting and note-taking systems. Here are some suggestions you may find helpful for marking your textbook.

1. After reading a paragraph, find its topic sentence or main idea and highlight or underline it.
2. Now that you know the paragraph's main idea or point, you need to look for important supporting details. Mark only the key words or phrases (not entire sentences) that support the main idea.
3. Many times specialized words are an important part of reading material. These words are often printed in bold, italic, or colored print in textbooks. As you mark your text, circle these important terms and highlight the definition.
4. Use numerals when you want to clearly and easily refer to/enumerate the steps, parts, reasons, advantages, etc. of material in the text.
5. If several sentences together seem very important to you, then you can bracket them and mark them as "important" to avoid too much highlighting.

As you read and mark your reading materials, you may want to make notes in the margin. Make these notes brief. Make marginal notes to indicate something of importance, an example, the number of parts/steps, an important term. For long pieces of reading, notes of this kind in the margin can serve as a way to find information in the text. NOTE: many test books have extra wide margins for this very purpose.

Now that you have made notes in your text, you can use your highlighting and marginal notes to study. Reread only the information you have highlighted and marked. Try to make sentences that fit together with the marked information. Finally try to recite and write the important information you have marked from memory.