

HOW TO READ PROFITABLY

These guidelines will help you get the most from your reading assignments

Why do you think this particular selection was chosen? What is its place in the overall structure of the topic?

What is the author's argument? Summarize it succinctly, in no more than 100 words, or a formula, or a metaphor.

Against whom is the author arguing, and why?

How does the author build his/her argument?

What are the basic premises?

Does the argument build logically? Can you outline it?

What kinds of evidence does the author use?

When the author writes about "family," what does s/he mean?

Does the author consider social or political change and, if so, what does s/he mean by it?

Which individuals or groups does the author focus on? Why?

Identify one passage which you feel is particularly provocative or illuminating. Be prepared to justify and comment upon it.

Identify one passage which is obscure or difficult to understand, and indicate what it is that seems problematic.

Make a comparison, either specific or general, between the selection you are reading at the time and one other selection of the same topic.

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