

Topics that Matter to Parents: Study Skills

Help Your Child READ, REMEMBER, and UNDERSTAND Difficult Textbooks

As students move through the grades they are required to increasingly read fairly dense subject matter text books. The strategy that we typically use to read fiction--start at the beginning and go the end--is not as effective when reading a science or history text. Although the student will need to have good decoding accuracy and rate, plus excellent comprehension skills, there is one more strategy that could very helpful when reading content area textbooks: it is called the **Multipass Strategy** (Schumaker, Deshler, Alley, Warner, & Denton, 1982). Multipass is a reading strategy developed by researchers at University of Kansas to help upper grade (grades 4-12) students read complicated subject area textbooks. I have used a variety of different reading strategies to help students read complex content area textbooks. By far the best strategy is Multipass: It is easy to use, doesn't require any special materials, and best of all it works with students from grades 4- 12.

How Multipass Works

The student doesn't just sit down and start reading the textbook. Instead the student makes **three "passes"** through the textbook chapter. Each "**pass**" requires the student to complete specific actions to derive and note key information from the chapter. Each pass is labeled using an acronym as a memory aid. Plus, you can use the acronyms in a short story to help students remember them in the correct order (see short story below).

Short Story to Help Remember Multipass Acronyms:

TI goes into a **SHOP**. His friend, **CQ**, sees him and says, "**WHAS'UP?**" They both decide to buy the video **RAM**bo.

⇒ **First Pass** The student spends about **3-5 minutes** to get an overview of chapter.

Memory aid: **TI-SHOP**. Story part: **TI** goes into a **SHOP**.

T: Title. Read the **Title** and then look in the **Table** of contents and check out what chapter comes before and after this chapter. Make a prediction about three things that you will learn from this chapter.

I: Introduction. Read the **Introductory** paragraph--not the whole page--just the first paragraph or so.

S: Summary. Read the end of the chapter--look for key words such as **Summary**, in conclusion, etc to determine the summary paragraph.

H: Headings. Read the **Major Headings** in the entire chapter. Notice how the chapter is organized. Do not read the subheadings--just the big ones.

O: Outline. Using the major headings and their page numbers create an **Outline**. Be quick. Don't try to write too much. Just what the heading says and page number where it is found, plus, leave two or three spaces between each heading.

P: Pictures. Find and look at the pictures, illustrations, charts, graphs, etc. Don't worry about reading the captions. Just look at the pictures. The next pass will give you a chance to look at the captions.

⇒ **Second Pass** The student spends about **10-20 minutes** to get specific information from the chapter.

Memory aid: **CQ-WHAS'UP**. Story part: His friend, **CQ**, sees him and says, "**WHAS'UP?**"

C: Captions. Read the captions for the pictures, illustrations, charts, graphs, etc. Think about why the pictures are in the text. What do they help to explain?

Q: Questions. Read the **Questions** at the end of the chapter. If there are questions at the beginning of or mixed throughout the chapter, then read those questions, too. If you can answer at least 10% of the questions already, then you are on track! If not, do the first pass again.

W: Words. Use your outline sheet to write a vocabulary word under each heading area. For each word write a synonym or use it in a sentence to help you remember the word. Important words are often put **boldface** or underlined or *italicized* in the text. Some text books have a list of key words at the beginning of the chapter. If you have this type of list, see if you can find the word in the text and put it in under the correct heading in your outline. Make sure you know what each word means. Read each vocabulary word three times.

H: Headings. Read each **Heading** and do the following: **Ask, Scan, Use, Paraphrase**. Start with the major headings (the ones on your outline sheet) and read the first heading. **Ask** yourself a question about what you think will be answered in that section (like the game show jeopardy, you make a question). **Scan** the information in that section for the answer. When you find the answer, **Use** your own words to **paraphrase** the answer.

⇒ **Third Pass** The student spends about **10-20 minutes** answering questions from the chapter.

Memory aid: **RAM**. Story part: They both decide to buy the video **RAM**bo.

R: Read. Read the study questions in the chapter.

A: Answer. Answer each question.

M: Mark. If you answer the question, make a ✓ mark by it. If you do not know the answer, use your outline and look at the headings to determine which section the answer is most likely found. Find that part in the chapter and look for the answer. If you do not find the answer, look for another heading that might help you. If you still have difficulties, make an X by the question and ask for help.

Memory Aid Cards

Multipass Study Skill
#1 of 3
TI SHOP

Title
Introduction
Summary
Headings
Outline
Pictures

AWHometest.com

Multipass Study Skill
#2 of 3
CQ-WHAS'UP

Captions
Questions
Words
Headings
Ask
Scan
Use
Paraphrase

AWHometest.com

Multipass Study Skill
#3 of 3
RAM

Read
Answer
Mark

AWHometest.com

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