

STRATEGY #3: Using Self-Monitoring

While self-talk can be helpful, self-monitoring is most productive when combined with an active reading strategy to help reinforce or test comprehension. You should be sure to pick the strategies that are most appropriate to the reading situation, not just the easiest. Here are some directions you can follow.

1. Stop after every section of the assigned reading in a textbook--often a textbook will separate major ideas with boldfaced headings--and summarize what you read. Write down the main idea--stated or implied--and key supporting ideas. If this is done with ease, you might not need to continue. If you struggle to complete this, move to the strategies in number 2.

2. If you have difficulty with the summary, do one or more of the following, and then write the summary of the reading selection.

- Re-read the section again, paying attention to the development of one or more main ideas.

(Sometimes identifying the supporting examples and evidence first will help you identify the main idea.)

- Look up unfamiliar vocabulary before or during re-reading.
- Stop and picture examples or explanations.
- Outline difficult paragraphs or do a concept map or a process diagram.
- Do some internet research on ideas or concepts with which the author seems to assume a familiarity.
- Connect the reading to ideas presented in class.
- Work with a classmate. Two heads may be better than one.

If one or more of these strategies has improved your understanding, you should be ready to write the summary or outline.

3. Share your results in groups, either in class, or on a course website, wiki, or blog