



HOW TO READ & STUDY THE SCIENCES

In science courses, your textbook can be your most valuable tool. Lectures will provide a synopsis of the text, but it is crucial to master this written information.

Science is cumulative. Concepts build upon each other and firm understanding of the basic concepts is essential.

READING SCIENCE TEXTBOOKS

- Read slowly and with the goal of understanding what is being discussed.
- Read the main headings and subheadings.
- Study diagrams and pictures and take note of labeled parts.
- After you read a detailed paragraph or study a diagram, stop and take your eyes off the text. Try to recall what you have just read/studied. If you cannot recall all or most of it, go back and read/study it again.
- Read the caption under any illustrations.
- Read and answer questions at the end of the section/ chapter.

LEARNING SCIENTIFIC VOCABULARY, SYMBOLS, & FORMULAS

- **First read for understanding.**
Do not worry about memory at this point.
- **Memorize prototype examples.** Focus on a prototype or a typical example of the concept. Use the prototype to make a visual image associated with the concept.
- **Memorize facts in sets.** Start by learning the first concept and the facts that relate to it. Leave it, then do the same for the second concept, and so on.
- **Take a break when you are stumped.** Give your brain some time to re-group, and then go back to what you were working on.
- **Make the most of lab time.** Know in advance what procedure you will be doing and come prepared. Also, use this as a time to increase your knowledge by interacting with other students.

TIPS FOR TAKING SCIENCE EXAMS

- Know the formulas. Make sure you memorize them and if needed, write them down on your exam as soon as you have the opportunity. This will allow you to refer to them during the exam.
- Try to anticipate test questions as you read and study the material.
- Draw a picture. If you get stuck during the exam, try drawing a detailed picture to help you work through the answer.
- Check your work as you go. Make sure you followed the directions and used the correct formulas.