**Active Reading Strategies**: 

Below are a few strategies for improving your comprehension and memory when reading. Relying on one strategy can limit your success. Experiment with different strategies to identify the ones that work best for you.

- **Read and then re-read in stages allowing one full day in between re-reads.** As you are re-reading, use different strategies on different days to gradually improve your comprehension. See the example below.

- **First, read chapter titles, subtitles, italicized terms, boldface type, and summary sections.** Before reading the questions at the end of the chapter, write your own questions. Change all the titles, subtitles, sections and paragraph headings into questions. For example, the section heading “The Systematic Circulation and Control of Blood Flow” might become “What is the Systematic Circulation and Control of Blood Flow?” Stop here.

- **The next day, try to answer the questions by reading in greater detail.** Put down your highlighter. Make marginal notes or comments instead. Every time you feel the urge to highlight something, write instead; summarize the text, ask questions, or write a comment. You can also write down key words to help you recall where important points are discussed. Above all, strive to enter into a dialogue with the author.

- **If you are easily distracted, read in consecutive brief intervals (5-10 minutes each).** Take breaks as necessary, but keep track of the total number of intervals you have completed to ensure you reach your goal. Keep reading until you have reached at least 60 full minutes of reading.

- **Mapping:** On a separate sheet of paper, make outlines, flow charts, or diagrams that help you to map and to understand ideas visually. (See example at the end of this report).

- **Form a reading group and make each person responsible for presenting the main ideas of a chapter.** Set a time limit for each presentation to make sure the group stays on track. Practice articulating your ideas alone before presenting to the group.

- **Write your own exam questions including answers based on the reading.**

You can improve the effectiveness of these strategies by practicing other learning strategies in conjunction with active reading. For example, if you are studying circulatory functions, Google™ short videos on the arterial system, lymphatic system, or capillaries. Consider the material in context. How might this knowledge be applied in a clinical setting? Write your answer in one sentence. Post pictures, graphs, and charts of one of the circulatory systems in your home or office where you will see them frequently. Finally, consider purchasing the electronic version of your textbook.

For more strategies, Google™ “Active Reading Strategies” and research the most effective practices for you.

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1 Portions of the information provided here have been adapted from the following sources:
Rutgers School of Nursing, Center for Academic Success Updated Fall 2014