

# CRITICAL READING

## What is Critical Reading?

**CRITICAL READING** is an involved version of reading that uses specific processes, models, questions, and theories to help a reader **COMPREHEND** the text on a more complex level. It is the opposite of "skimming" and helps a reader get at the **DEEPER STRUCTURE** of the reading to break down the content into a true logical understanding.

Anyone can be a critical reader; they just have to know how.

## Become the Audience

Authors design texts for **SPECIFIC** audiences. Recognizing who that audience is and getting into the appropriate mental state is important for understanding the author's **PURPOSE**. Research the author ahead of time and **ANTICIPATE** who their audience will be.

## Prepare to Read with an Open mind

Critical readers seek **KNOWLEDGE**; not someone to agree with whatever they already believe. Your task as an enlightened critical reader is to read what is on the page, giving the writer a fair chance to **DEVELOP** their ideas. This allows you to reflect thoughtfully and **OBJECTIVELY** on the text.

## Consider the Title

This may seem obvious, but the title may provide **CLUES** to the writer's attitude, goals, personal viewpoint, or approach.

## Read Slowly

Skimming only gets you the bare minimum of information. By slowing down, you make more **CONNECTIONS** within the text. It makes it easier to **LEARN** material and **REMEMBER** it.

## Reference New Words or Terms

If there is a word in the text that you are not clear about in its **CONTEXT**, look it up. Every word is important for understanding the meaning behind the text. Especially when it comes to English, many words have multiple definitions that can make things difficult if you don't know the **DEFINITION** that the author is using. Don't have a **DICTIONARY**? The internet and all Smart Phones can have **DICTIONARY APPS** available for free.

## Take Notes

Jot down notes in your textbook. If you plan on reselling your textbook, invest in sticky note tabs. By having your personal notes next to the text, it helps you **RECALL** connections you've made and understand the material in your own way. You can use these notes to make quick **REFERENCE** to the main ideas, thesis, and author's main evidence of a theory. When you read and write at the same time it helps you remember more effectively.

## Keep a Reading Journal

It can be helpful to regularly **RECORD** your responses, thoughts, and opinions about a text **BEYOND** your notes. By having a place like a journal to record these, it helps separate your feelings from the text, allowing for a better **UNDERSTANDING** of the author, yourself, and the text all at the same time.

Always remember: Many times in a text, the author intends to support a specific point for an argument. The body of the text usually is used to support the claim. By critically thinking and reading, you will be able to judge how sound the author's argument is and uncover lapses in the text that may overthrow the author's support. In the end, you're the one with the power to decide whether the author's point was effective.

