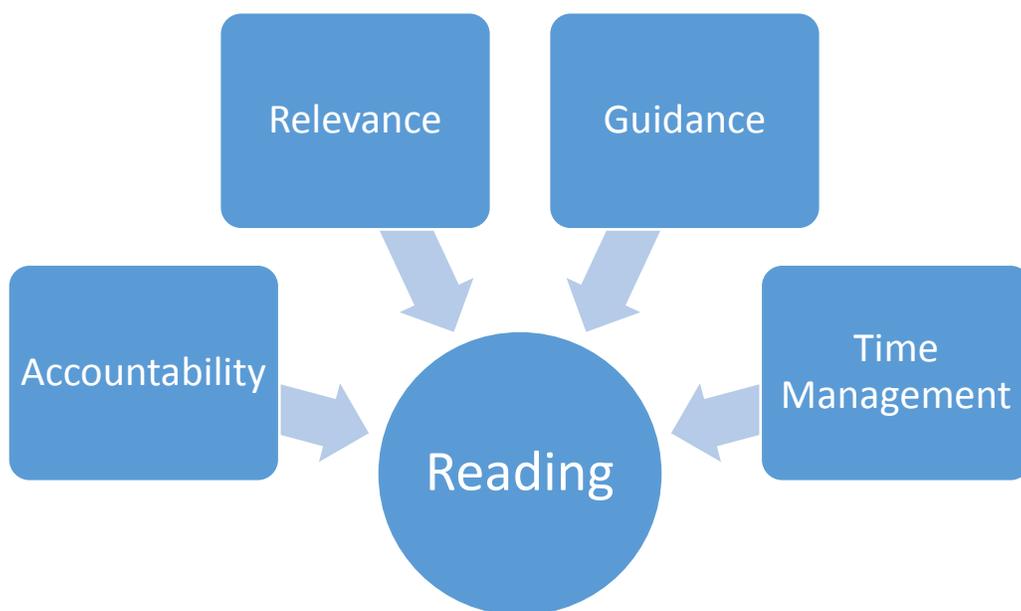


Getting Students to Read

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According to research, there are four factors that contribute to fostering reading compliance among students: Accountability, Relevance, Guidance, and Time Management. Below are suggestions for how instructors might encourage student reading compliance.



Accountability: Students are more likely to read if they are accountable for doing so.

- **Quizzes and exams** have been found to strongly motivate student behavior – especially with reading (e.g. Connor-Greene, 2000; Clump, Bauer & Bradley, 2004; Hoeft, 2012; Sappington, Kinsey, Munsayac, 2002). Expected quizzes can also help with punctuality and attendance if administered early in the class period (Ryan, 2006). Weekly **online quizzes** on the reading have also been found to increase course performance (Johnson, Kiviniemi, 2009).
- In a series of studies by Mary Hoeft (2012), students believed that quizzes, **supplementary assignments**, and frequent reminders would help with reading compliance. After testing these methods, quizzes and **graded journals** led to the highest compliance, and quizzes led to best comprehension.
- David Carkenord (1994) reported high rates of reading compliance paired with favorable feedback by **asking students to summarize & critique readings** on a notecard. Students



were motivated to complete a notecard for each reading because each one contributed to extra credit and the notecards were allowed to be referenced during exams.

- **Mandatory, announced methods** have been found to lead to better compliance than optional, unannounced methods (Hatteberg & Steffy, 2013).
- **Online discussions** can be effective if moderated in a way that requires students to put substantial effort into their posts.
- **Do activities in class that require reading** (see Hobson, 2004). This can include discussions, jigsaws, and other ways of having students apply the concepts from their reading.
- **"Cold-calling"** random students to provide answers in class isn't the most popular among students, but some faculty who do this find increased class preparation.

Relevance: Students are more likely to read if the reading directly and explicitly relates to the lecture.

- **Make the connection between the reading and the course explicit.** The way faculty members integrate the reading into the course affects students' motivation and opinions about the reading (Brost & Bradley, 2006; see Hobson, 2004).
- **Do you need a textbook? Maybe not** if lecture and course structure replicate the textbook in a more meaningful form, or perhaps there is no textbook that aligns with your course design. Textbook alternatives include developing a course reading packet and/or compiling a list of accessible articles.
- When possible, **give students options** with their reading assignments (and other coursework) to allow students to use their intrinsic motivation to work hard.
- **Consider other modes of class preparation** such as assigning a video to watch.

Guidance: Students are more likely to read when they are taught how they should read.

- **Review & model reading strategies** in class (see Hobson, 2004). This process can include explaining the organization of the texts and methods for annotating reading.
- **Preview the reading** either verbally in class or written in a document (see Hobson, 2004). A written guide is ideal especially for international students. The instructor can anticipate roadblocks and address them before the students read their assignments.
- **Reading worksheets** can help students focus on the most important topics and questions related to their reading. Tracey Ryan (2006) found that the use of these reading worksheets **paired with extensive instructor feedback** led to the best learning outcomes compared to reading worksheets with minimal feedback and quizzes. Extensive feedback does create an issue with the amount of instructor time dedicated to those assignments.



- **Use UCI Resources** – The Center for Excellence in Writing and the Disability Services Center have trained professionals to help students that have difficulty reading for a wide variety of reasons (e.g. poor English skills, comprehension issues, visual impairments).

Time Management: Students are more likely to read when instructors inform them how much time should be spent reading.

- **Set clear expectations** for class preparation. Try to estimate the amount of time necessary to prepare for class.
- **A smaller amount of reading** leads to more completion of reading (see Hobson, 2004). This also goes for the number of books on reserve (Marshall, 1974). This doesn't imply that a course should be weakened; instead it suggests more focus and concision.
- If you model your reading strategies, **discuss reading speed**. There may be some sections of your texts/articles that you would skim over and some sections that require a closer reading.
- Frequent reminders about reading don't necessarily help with compliance (Hoeft, 2012). More structured support with time management is beneficial for students.

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