Characteristics of Successful Readers

What differentiates successful from unsuccessful readers? Successful readers read actively, read for meaning, and have a clear purpose for their reading. Successful readers.....

Successful readers **read actively**: To be an active reader, you must search for what you need to understand; that is key concepts, principles, and the details that support them.

Successful readers **read for meaning**: Since the goal is to find meaning in the material, successful readers use inquiry and critical reading to search for key ideas, make connections to previous knowledge, evaluate the worth of the ideas, and apply to new situations.

Successful readers **know what they need to know**: Reading becomes more meaningful when you have previously outlined what your professor is asking you to understand. Readers can look for and highlight information that is important as they go.

Successful readers **connect ideas** to what they already know: By making connections between topics in one class and/or between classes you will find that the reading becomes that much easier and more relevant to what you are learning.

Successful readers **monitor** their reading: Blindly reading a passage is the opposite of actively reading. Successful readers keep themselves from zoning out by frequently checking to make sure that they understand what they are reading.

Successful readers **adjust their reading rate**: Challenging readings may call for a decreased speed of reading, whereas if you are rereading or skimming your reading rate may be quite quick. It is also important that when you are sitting down to read that you track your progress to make sure you are in fact accomplishing what needs to be done.

Successful readers **understand vocabulary**: Exploring vocabulary can not only make you a better reader but also a better writer and test taker. Validate definitions of words you come across while reading by looking up their definition.

Successful readers **use resources** for learning: Branch outside of your textbook by reading helpful books on the same topic. Also, consulting a reading specialist or even your professor will likely increase your success at reading.