Strategy #4 – Content Knowledge- How to Read Your Textbook

The most important thing to remember when reading a textbook in any content-heavy subject is to make sure to read it! Skimming it to find answers to questions or only reading the main text is not going to ensure that you learn, understand, and remember the information. Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your textbook:

* Be sure to read captions and other extra information given in your texts (headings, outlines, summaries, charts, diagrams, introductions, etc.) Don’t think of them as extra things to read – think of them for what they are – information presented in different ways that is meant to increase your comprehension, and in turn, your success!
* Read a lot of this information BEFORE it is assigned or discussed – in other words, preview it!
* Make sure to look up vocabulary – either in the margins of the text if it is defined there, or in the glossary if it isn’t. Since vocabulary words are usually in bold or highlighted in the text, you can see them used in context ahead as well.
* When you are assigned a section with questions to answer, read the questions first, so you can be looking for the answers as you read and can also get a sense of what the section will be about.