

## PSY:1010: Learning About Learning

### Metacognition for Comprehension Summary

Metacognition for comprehension: What you should do while reading to improve your comprehension.

#### 1. Previewing

Example from Bransford (1979)

*The procedure is actually quite simple. First you arrange things into different groups. Of course, one pile may be sufficient depending on how much there is to do. If you have to go somewhere else due to lack of facilities that is the next step, otherwise you are pretty well set. It is important not to overdo things. That is, it is better to do too few things at once than too many. In the short run this may not seem important but complications can easily arise. A mistake can be expensive as well. At first the whole procedure will seem complicated. Soon, however, it will become just another facet of life. It is difficult to foresee any end to the necessity for this task in the immediate future, but then one never can tell. After the procedure is completed one arranges the materials into different groups again. Then they can be put into their appropriate places. Eventually they will be used once more and the whole cycle will then have to be repeated. However, that is part of life.*

This passage is more easily comprehended if it is prefaced with a simple title: Laundry.

#### 2. Preparing for active reading

Come up with questions the reading can answer

#### 3. Paraphrasing

Summarize in your own words after each paragraph, integrating all of the previous paragraphs

#### 4. Reading actively

Take notes; concept maps; solve sample problems

Here are sample questions that you can ask yourself while reading to help with metacognition and comprehension:

“What is this chapter/section about?” (planning—look at headers)

“What do I already know about this topic?”

“What were the main ideas?” (monitoring and evaluation)

“How does this figure relate to what I’m reading?”

“Did that (section, paragraph, sentence) make sense to me?”

“What questions do I still have?”

“Does this challenge my existing knowledge or beliefs?”

“What was surprising to read about?”

## **The “Power Hour” and a strategy for lectures and learning class material**

Plan of attack for lectures and learning (McGuire, 2015)

### 5 easy pieces before/after lecture:

1. Preview assigned reading (e.g., look at section headers and skim sections)
2. Attend class (take notes by hand—remember our discussion in class)
3. Review (ideally the same day; paraphrase notes and lecture)
4. Intense study sessions (“Power Hour(s)”)
5. Assess (homework, review questions, etc.)

### “Power Hour” (intense study sessions—3-4 per night)

1. Set specific goals (“read Ch. 4”)
2. Do active learning tasks (metacognition—use the approaches and questions above)
3. Take a short break
4. Review (evaluate)