



## **Teach Critical Reading Strategies: Help Move Student Writing from “Reporting” to “Contributing”**

### **Why Don't Students Understand Scholarly Sources?**

- Students may be unable to critically read scholarly sources
- Reading a textbook, a persuasive journal article, or scientific research requires different strategies (Jetton & Dole, 2004, p. 83)
- Critical reading skills may not be “explained [or] taught in any clear and strategic manner” (Hewitt, 2015, p. 86)
- Students may have deep-rooted habits of simply using sources to find a “quote” to support their current view of a topic instead of reading to understand the on-going conversation on the topic

### **Lack of In-depth Reading May Lead to Shallow Student Writing**

- Students may simply report on what they find
- These reports may be characterized by extensive quotes and summaries, lack of argument or counterargument, and absence of contribution to the on-going conversation on the topic
- Students may not alter the original text or structure
- Students may rely heavily on quoting and summarizing
- Students may lack an original point of view or argument (Hauptman, 2003, p. 128)

### **How Can We Help?**

- Do NOT assume students already know how to read critically!
- Students need to be taught to critically read scholarly sources in your discipline (Different disciplines organize their scholarly material in unique ways)
- Students may lack skills to analyze what they read; teach them to integrate knowledge from multiple sources
- Model the skills needed to read scholarly materials in your discipline. Show students how you critically read articles and how you analyze what you are reading.
- Help students understand the differences between shallow reading and critical reading. “Writing demands both a depth of thought and a more thorough consideration and coordination of information. . . . [Then] students should take a position. It is this writing that is most likely to lead students to deeper conceptual understanding—beyond just pouring in new facts” (Jetton, & Dole, 2004, p. 67)

**Passive reading will not lead to deep understanding.**

(Gottschalk & Hjortshoj, 2004, p. 19).

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### References

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