




# HARVARD COURSE IN READING AND STUDY STRATEGIES

	ACTIVE READER	PASSIVE READER
PREPARES	<p><b>Prepares to read purposefully.</b></p> <p><i>Why am I reading this? What can I anticipate about what I am about to read? How does this relate to what I already know? What do I want to learn?</i></p>	<p><b>Skips.</b></p> <p><i>Opens the book without preliminaries.</i></p>
SKIMS	<p><b>Skims to get an overview.</b></p> <p><i>How is this organized? Where are the ideas/data I am looking for located? What can I skip? What are the main ideas?</i></p>	<p><b>Skips.</b></p> <p><i>Starts reading at the beginning.</i></p>
STUDIES	<p><b>Studies by means of actively asking and answering questions.</b></p> <p><i>How can I make sense of this? Who, what when, where, why?</i></p>	<p><b>Skips.</b></p> <p><i>Reads passively, word by word. Underlines randomly.</i></p>
TESTS/ TAKES STOCK	<p><b>Takes stock and self-tests frequently to monitor understanding and consolidate memory.</b></p> <p><i>How would I restate this in my own words? What sort of examination question might I make up for this material? What are my unresolved confusions or questions at this moment?</i></p>	<p><b>Skips.</b></p> <p><i>Closes the book and immediately moves on to other activities.</i></p>



**PSST!** A Harvard student, Rebecca Simmons, suggested this trick for remembering the four elements of active/passive reading. When you sit down to read, imagine this little snake trying to get your attention - "PSST!" - to remind you to read actively! "PSST! Prepare! Skim! Study! Test/Take Stock!"