Facing Barriers
As a college student, it is an everyday battle to comprehend all the texts we are assigned for class, but we can do it! Comprehension is greatly affected by an individual’s physical world, language background and attitude. Here are some tips to help each of these.

Physical Effects
- Avoid distractions like texting or loud music.
- Get plenty of sleep at night.
- Eat a well balanced diet.

Language Background
- Broaden your vocabulary by looking up words you do not know.
- Time-period words in historical texts can be difficult, so search out the definitions.
- Comprehension increases as our vocabulary increases.

Attitude
- Mental states can affect concentration.
- Remove all distractions before reading.
- Negative attitudes can change our perspective of the message.

Two Types of Text

**Narrative:**
Involves a story like a novel
Try to interpret what the author is trying to convey based on the reading

**Expository:**
Organized by topic like a textbook
Use the SQ4R method to get the most out of your reading
SQ4R Strategies for Reading

S : SURVEY

How? Explore the structure and content of the text before reading it. Pay attention to bold words and titles!

Why? This gives a framework to build on; prepares you to receive new information.

Q : QUESTION

How? Preview the first section and ask questions. Change heading into questions. Be curious. What do you want this text to answer?

Why? Doing this generates curiosity and interest, sets purpose for reading, and focuses your attention on learning from this author.

R : READ

How? Read the first section of the text with an alert mind. Actively search for information and try to answer your questions. Continually ask yourself, “Am I understanding this?” Fully engage your mind in constructing meaning: ask, connect, infer, synthesize, code the text, do what it takes to capture the meaning of the text.

Why? This informs and answers formulated questions, stimulates learning.

R : RECITE

How? Stop at the end of a chunk of text and write or tell yourself what you have read (mentally download). Re-read if you can't remember.

Why? This puts information into memory, it lets you know if you grasp the concepts and information.

R : REFLECT

How? Think about the information; pinpoint lingering questions and confusions, connect to what you already know, generate new thinking inspired by the text, demand understanding of yourself from the author, and integrate and think how to apply. Expand your perspective.

Why? This goes beyond memorization by increasing understanding. Being able to connect new information with what you have learned in the past as well as figuring out how it specially applies to you, will make the material memorable.

R : REVIEW

How? Go over the text with such methods as “Cover & Recite.” Re-read parts as needed and use any strategies to solidify and extend your thinking.

Why? This puts information into long-term memory for long-term use, evolving understanding, and creative scholarly production.