

“Active Reading” Brogan Sullivan

Brogan Sullivan is a college professor, dedicated to helping students improve their reading and writing skills. Here he walks students through the process of reading a text, introducing them to the idea that reading requires their full participation.

Vocabulary...

integral (adj)
associate (v)
exertion (n)
daunting (adj)

discourse (n)
pertinent (adj)
subsequent (adj)
nuance (n)

emphatic (adj)
cornerstone (n)
deliberate (v)
diligent (adj)

Reading Questions...

1. What are the differences between “Active” and passive reading? Why does Sullivan make this distinction?
2. In what ways is reading like a conversation? Does this also apply to writing?

Discussion Questions...

1. What do you read for pleasure? In what ways is reading for pleasure different from the “Active Reading” that Sullivan describes? In what ways is it similar?
2. Recall Sullivan’s comparisons of reading to hiking through wilderness and of reading to having a conversation. How might writing an essay be described in similar terms? Which comparison do you think is more appropriate for reading? For writing? Why?

Activities and Assignments...

1. Actively read an article or textbook chapter from another class. Then, without referring to the text, write a summary of what you have read. Did your active reading help you to remember the main points of the text?
2. Write an essay in which you describe the process of watching a fictional movie or television show, where the movie or show is the “text”. How do you make sense of the text’s content, even when you are engaging with it for entertainment? What are the similarities between this kind of engagement and the “active” engagement that Sullivan describes?

