

READING ASSIGNMENTS' WORKSHEETS

To be effective, reading assignments need to be relevant to the course material, directly related to other materials used in the course, focused, and included in the course as an ongoing component, not just something to memorize for a test. Reading materials, especially chapters in textbooks, reflect the individual author's preferred mode of teaching; they are also structured to adhere to publishers' standards. Both factors may not be supportive of any other teacher's teaching format.

To ensure that reading assignments meet each instructor's standards and are consistent with teaching/learning formats of that class, customized worksheets can be developed to assist and guide students in their reading. The following is a simple process for developing the worksheets:

1. Determine the specific outcomes expected from reading assignments.

Examples:

- Key terminology familiarization
- Basic concepts identification
- Process development
- Critical issues identification
- Author's point of view
- Reader's point of view

2. Create a template of a worksheet that will include of all of the important elements listed above as desired outcomes, plus additional expectations.

Example:

Reading Assignment: _____ **Date Due:** _____

1. **Define the following terms:**
2. **List the three main _____
(components, arguments, etc., whatever best fits the subject)**
3. **Answer the following questions: _____**
4. **List at least one question you have regarding the content of this assignment: _____**

Use of a template, i.e., a consistent worksheet format, helps students develop the desired reading skills (and is easier on the instructor).

3. For each reading assignment, tailor the worksheet template with the appropriate items.
4. In pairs, have students compare their worksheets and discuss any differences. While this type of guided reading is not a test, credit may be given for its completion. If that is the case, any notations resulting from pairs of students comparing notes, should be done in a different color ink so that the instructor can assess the general level of understanding.

Benefits of this strategy:

1. Students learn to focus their reading
2. Reading assignments are more apt to be done in a timely fashion
3. Important information is highlighted
4. Students learn to read critically

