



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Reading a History Textbook from Reader's Handbook, Great Source

Most textbooks have some of the same standard parts. They generally start with a table of contents. They are organized into units and chapters. They have headings, different typefaces, and photos and illustrations. They often have a glossary or index in the back.

History textbooks contain a great deal of information: dates, names, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and all kinds of special features about people and events.

Before beginning to read, you should set a purpose for reading, do a quick preview, and plan how to make the most efficient use of your reading time.

One way to **set a purpose for reading** history is to place yourself in the role of an investigative reporter. A reporter asks the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how*. Ask yourself these same questions as you read. For example, if you were reading a text entitled "The Rise of Islam," you might ask these questions:

- Who started Islam?
- What is Islam?
- When did Islam begin?
- Where is Islam important or practiced?
- Why is Islam important?
- How did Islam spread?

As you prepare to read, it is always a good idea to do a quick **preview** of the material. You should pay attention to the following:

- The title, any list of terms and names, and any introductory information near the title;
- The first and last paragraphs;
- The headings;
- Any names, dates, words, or terms set in bold type or that are repeated;
- Any bulleted lists; and
- Any photos, maps, or pictures and their captions.

The reason for previewing is to get an idea of what to expect before you begin to read.

Once you've set a purpose for reading and previewed the material, you should stop and think what you've learned. In a chapter about the rise of Islam, you no doubt learned some basic facts. Now, it is time to make a plan to meet your purpose for reading. One of the best strategies to help you gather historical information is note-taking. Two types of graphic organizers are helpful: 5W's and H, and Key Word or Topic Notes.

The Rise of Islam

Who

What

When

Where

Why

How

The Rise of Islam

Key Words or
Topics

My Notes /
Thoughts

Key Word or Topic Notes are sometimes called Cornell notes; they focus on key points.

Character Education

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/ISOC/>

Helping our students to develop important character skills will improve their commitment to education. The following writing suggestions address the trait of fairness. Think of how you might relate them to your bell work, your class work when you are absent, extra credit work, or as fillers at the conclusion of a lesson.

1. Think of a time when you've taken unfair advantage of a person or a situation, or when someone has taken unfair advantage of you. Describe it. What was unfair about it? How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the experience?
2. How is fairness related to having respect for others? How is it related to honesty? To being reliable? To being a good citizen?
3. Describe an unfair situation in your community and what you think should be done about it.