

# Tips for reading textbooks

Excerpted from *Reading History*, pages 119-20

As with a monograph, read the beginning and end of any chapter first. If the author makes larger points, they will likely appear there.

Pay attention to titles of chapters and subchapters.

First check the beginning and end of the chapter for any study questions. Such questions can be the author's way of directing you to especially important issues.

Pay special attention to pictures and even maps and their captions. While such material can be there just to make the book more fun, it can also be used to provide examples of statements in the text.

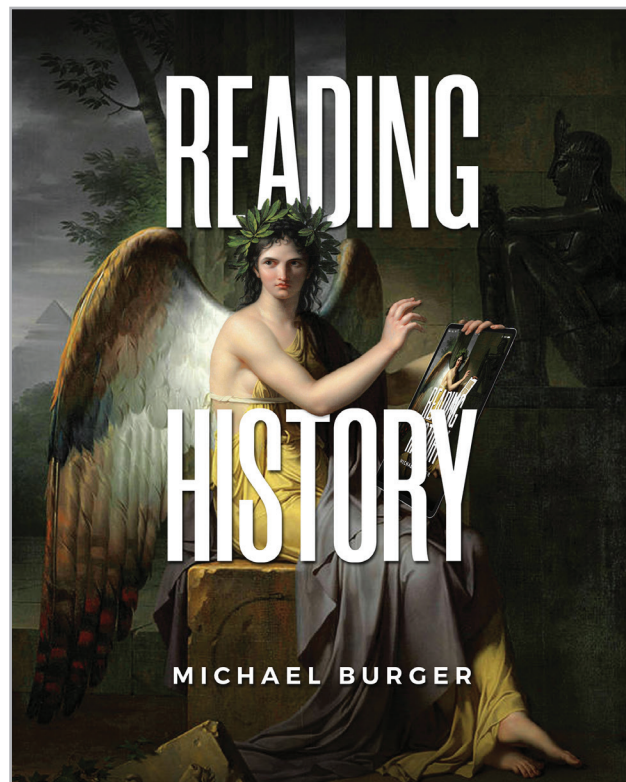
If the author provides a vocabulary list, pay attention to those terms in the text. The author thinks they are important.

Be prepared to read the text (at least) twice. Do so once before class; greater familiarity with the subject will probably help you follow what is going on in class. Read it again after class; in class, your instructor may highlight especially important issues, putting you in a better position to pick up on those matters when you reread the text.

Take notes as you go, either in the margin of the book or on a separate paper. You are much more likely to remember what you read if you do so. Highlighting with a marker or underlining is less likely to have this effect.

## ***Reading History*** By Michael Burger

Full of practical advice and hands-on training that allows students to be successful, *Reading History* will cultivate a wider appreciation for the discipline of history.



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