My Academic Skills Plan for Reading

DIRECTIONS: In this activity, you’ll use the Wise Choice Process to design a personal academic skills plan to improve your ability to read. Following are the six steps for completing your two-page Academic Skills Plan found on pages 88–89. To see examples of how to complete each of the steps, refer to the Sample Academic Skills Plans for Reading on pages 86–87. The goals of this Academic Skills Plan are that you 1) master four new reading skills, 2) increase learning in your present courses, and 3) earn higher grades.

Step 1  What is my present situation?

On a blank Academic Skills Plan (page 88), write one of the “Challenges with Reading” that you circled on page 71, including its number. Write a different challenge on the second blank Academic Skills Plan (page 89). Explaining your reading challenges in detail will help you choose the best strategies to address them. See examples of how to do this step on pages 86–87. For additional blank Academic Skills Plans, go to www.cengagebrain.com to access the College Success CourseMate for *On Course*.

Step 2  How would I like my situation to be?

In Step 1, you identified two challenges you are having with reading. Now shift your focus from these challenges to how you would prefer your situation to be. On your Academic Skills Plan, write your goals for reading. State them in the present tense as if they already exist (e.g., *I understand* . . . rather than *I will understand* . . . or . . . *I enjoy* . . . rather than *I will enjoy* . . .). See examples on pages 86–87.

Step 3  What are my possible choices?

Review strategies for reading on pages 72–84. Choose two strategies you think will help with your first challenge and two strategies to help with your second challenge. Write these strategies (including their numbers) on your Academic Skills plan, two on each page. See examples on pages 86–87.

Step 4  What’s the likely outcome of each possible choice?

Picture yourself actually doing each of the four strategies you chose in Step 3. Write on your Academic Skills Plan what you think would be the likely outcomes and experiences of doing each strategy, both positive and negative. If the negatives outweigh the positives, choose a different strategy. See examples on pages 86–87.

Step 5  Which choice(s) will I commit to doing?

It’s now time to finalize your personal Academic Skills Plan for Reading. Write four specific actions that you commit to doing, two for each challenge. See examples on pages 86–87.

Step 6  When and how will I evaluate my Academic Skills Plan for Reading?

Choose a future date to evaluate your plan. At that time, you’ll compare your situation then with how you said you would like it to be in Step 2. If at that future time you have achieved your goals, consider your plan a success. If your results in the future fall short of your goals, then the plan needs revising. Make your goals as specific as possible. Because some goals are inherently general and difficult to measure (e.g., *I enjoy reading*), it helps if you create a scale (e.g., 1–10) on which to assess these general goals. Write your criteria for deciding whether or not your Academic Skills Plan for Reading is a success. See examples on pages 86–87.
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Au: Downing
Pg. No. 86
Title: On Course

Sample Academic Skills Plan for Reading

**Step 1**
What’s my present situation? (See page 71 for a list of common problems.)

**Step 2**
How would I like my situation to be? (Remember to use present tense.)

**Step 3**
What are my possible choices? (See pages 72–84 for a list of strategies.)

**Step 4**
What’s the likely outcome of each possible choice?

**Step 5**
Which choice(s) will I commit to doing? (Write the specific actions you will take.)

**Step 6**
When and how will I evaluate my reading plan?

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Challenge 2. I feel overwhelmed by the amount of reading I have. In my psychology class, we have 35–50 pages to read every week. That’s far more than I ever had to read in high school.

I get all of my reading done without feeling overwhelmed.

Strategy 2. Create a distributed reading schedule.


By reading fewer pages at one time, I think I will understand what I’m reading better and feel less overwhelmed.

Reading in chunks will help me read faster so I stay focused. I won’t waste time when my mind wanders.

Read my psychology book at least 5 different times a week, reading no more than 10 pages at one time.

Use my finger to keep my eyes moving steadily along a line in the book.

**When:** I will evaluate my reading plan after I get mid-term grades.

**How:** I rate my feelings of overwhelm as a 3 or lower on a scale of 1–10 (10 high). Now, I’m probably an 8 or 9.
Sample Academic Skills Plan for Reading  PAGE 2

**Step 1**
What’s my present situation? (See page 71 for a list of common problems.)

Challenge 21. I don’t do well on tests that are based on reading assignments. When I read, I never know what is important and might show up on a test.

**Step 2**
How would I like my situation to be? (Remember to use present tense.)

I get a B or better on all of my tests.

**Step 3**
What are my possible choices? (See pages 72–84 for a list of strategies.)

Strategy 9. Create a list of questions.

Strategy 15. Mark your text.

Creating questions will take more time, but I think it will help me learn and remember more of what I’m reading.

Marking my texts will slow down my reading, but I think it will help me review better for tests.

**Step 4**
What's the likely outcome of each possible choice?

Write a list of at least 3 questions before each time I read. After reading, write answers to each question.

Use a highlighter to mark key concepts and main ideas. Then compare my highlights with those of my study team.

**Step 5**
Which choice(s) will I commit to doing? (Write the specific actions you will take.)

When: I will evaluate my reading plan after I get mid-term grades.

How: I have at least a B average in all of my classes.

**Step 6**
When and how will I evaluate my reading plan?

When: I will evaluate my reading plan after I get mid-term grades.

How: I have at least a B average in all of my classes.
## My Academic Skills Plan for Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What’s my present situation? (See page 71 for a list of common problems.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How would I like my situation to be? (Remember to use present tense.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>What are my possible choices? (See pages 72–84 for a list of strategies.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What’s the likely outcome of each possible choice?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Which choice(s) will I commit to doing? (Write the specific actions you will take.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>When and how will I evaluate my reading plan?</td>
</tr>
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### When:  

### How:
My Academic Skills Plan for Reading PAGE 2

Step 1
What’s my present situation? (See page 71 for a list of common problems.)

Step 2
How would I like my situation to be? (Remember to use present tense.)

Step 3
What are my possible choices? (See pages 72–84 for a list of strategies.)

Step 4
What’s the likely outcome of each possible choice?

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Which choice(s) will I commit to doing? (Write the specific actions you will take.)

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When and how will I evaluate my reading plan?

When:
How: