T - C h a r t s f o r A c t i v e R e a d i n g

To understand what we read, we have to read actively. For many of us, active reading means interacting physically by flipping pages, doodling, or note taking. A T-chart is one way to interact with what we read. We can use T-charts in many ways:

- to improve reading comprehension
- to avoid marking up rented or borrowed textbooks
- to record literature reflection and analysis
- to create a vocabulary study guide
- to keep track of research notes

To create a T-chart, divide a page into two vertical columns with a big letter T. On the left side, you record bits from the reading. On the right side, you react and respond in a variety of ways.

T-charts to improve reading comprehension

Try a T-chart to break down difficult reading. It forces you to be more active both mentally and physically, as you pick out individual passages and work through them.

What the text says	How I understand/react/respond to it
"they can learn to distinguish information from noise, differentiate the red herring from the important clue, and synthesize...unrelated spheres of knowledge." p. 37	*red herring=something misleading* *differentiate=tell apart* *spheres of knowledge, like bio, philosophy, physics...* *synthesize=make something new using parts of the old*
mental agility/"operational adaptability" p. 37	*think outside the box* *imagination (SpongeBob's box)*
"He had not sufficiently valued this private storehouse of information [about comic books] or imagined the ways in which it intersected with what he thought of as a discrete academic pursuit." p. 39	 *He turned out to be an expert on comic book heroes!*

T-charts for textbook notes

If you don't like to mark up your books, use a T-chart to make notes:

What the text says	How I react/respond

conduct disorder, 4 criteria, P.68
    aggression, people/animals
    property destruction
    lying or theft
    serious rule breaking
	physical or mental—aggression is aggression
	 vandalism, fires
	 ?? what about lying if it doesn't result in material gain?
	 skipping school (I ran away from home at 14)

oppositional defiant disorder, p.70	*(includes blaming)*

Feeding disorders, p. 71
    pica
    rumination
	non-nutritive: chalk? dirt?
	 !! weird

T-charts for literature

For literary analysis you can record passages on the left, and your impressions and thoughts on the right:

What the text says	How I react/respond
Ch 7 "What you doin' with this gun?" I judged he didn't know nothing about what he had been doing, so I says: "Somebody tried to get in, so I was laying for him." "Why didn't you roust me out?" "Well, I tried to, but I couldn't budge you." "There was freckled places on the ground where the light sifted down through the leaves, and the freckled places swapped about a little, showing there was a little breeze up there."-Ch 8	Huck "covering" for pap is similar to codependent families of alcoholics . Abuse victims tend to stay and tolerate the known evil rather than escape? Question: why does Huck decide to escape? What makes him different from domestic abuse victims? reminds me of camping in July… figurative language—shadows like freckles

T-charts for vocabulary

You don't master a new word just by reading it. To own a new word, you have to actively use it. A double-entry vocabulary journal allows you to record a new word as you find it, and then use it yourself right away:

The new word (the original sentence)	How I can use it
"The tension is especially acute in first-year students." "…new facts, terms, and concepts that can eclipse whatever it is they thought they knew about the way the world works." "they divorce their private or extracurricular expertise from knowledge they acquire in a formal academic context."	(acute = intense) She gets acute anxiety whenever she goes to the dentist. (eclipse = overshadow, make seem less important) His worry about his mother eclipsed his worries about school. (divorce = completely separate) His political views seem divorced from common sense.

Triple T-charts for research notes

You don't always read the material you find online; often you only scan it rapidly. A double-entry research journal forces you to slow down. The result is that you have time to generate more ideas, and you end up with better analysis and stronger papers. Plus, you don't lose track of where you read something or even worse, "lose" a source entirely. For a research journal, divide your page into *three* columns:

Source & publication info	What it says	What I think about it
McMaster University. "Scientists Turn Skin Cells Directly Into Blood Cells, Bypassing Middle Pluripotent Step." ScienceDaily, 8 November 2010. Web. 9 November 2010. Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. "Bypassing Stem Cells: Adult Skin Cells Turned Into Muscle Cells And Vice Versa." ScienceDaily, 1 May 2009. Web. 9 November 2010.	Skin cells were changed to blood cells, people will be able to have blood manufacture d from their own skin, clinical trials in 2012. Will also try to make other kinds of organs from skin cells. Change skin cells to muscle cells. Advantage is they can avoid controversial embryonic cells. Also avoids the "bottleneck" of having to re-program cells to pluripotency.	No organ rejection problem. Should be cheaper because there will be no expensive patents owned by pharmaceutical corps, we all own our own skin! Pro-life groups will like this. Actual therapies available sooner.

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