

STUDY TIPS

As you read *Human Learning*, you'll encounter numerous suggestions for effectively studying and learning from textbooks. To get you off to a good start, I offer the following suggestions:

- **Determine your best learning times and use them wisely.** Are you a “morning person”? a “night owl”? Identify the times that you read and concentrate most effectively, and leave the dirty dishes, campus errands, and favorite television programs (record those programs for later viewing!) for times when you're relatively brain dead.
- **Be realistic about how much you can learn in one sitting.** As you will discover when you read Chapter 7, you can think about and learn only a limited amount of information in a limited amount of time. Don't try to do too much too fast. And certainly don't leave everything until the last minute!
- **Minimize distractions.** Find a quiet place to study where you will have few things competing for your attention. Turn the radio and CD player off, or play soft background music that you will barely notice. And definitely turn off that television set!
- **Pay attention as you read.** Don't let your eyes wander mindlessly down the pages. Keep your mind actively attuned to the things you are reading.
- **Mark up the book.** Underline or highlight the main ideas of each section. Mark essential details that support the main ideas. Put brackets or stars beside examples that you find especially helpful.
- **Relate what you read to things you already know.** Think about how concepts and principles are consistent with personal experiences you've had or with things you've learned in other classes.
- **Elaborate on what you read, going beyond it and adding to it.** Draw inferences from the principles I present. Generate your own examples of the concepts I introduce. Consistently think about how certain ideas might have implications for instructional practice.
- **Use mnemonics to help you remember hard-to-learn information.** Use memory tricks that make difficult ideas more memorable. For examples of specific mnemonic strategies you might use, see Chapter 12 in the textbook.
- **Periodically check yourself to make sure you understand and remember what you've read.** Try to summarize each section as soon as you've read it. Ask yourself questions about the material, or have a classmate ask you questions. Try to explain a difficult concept to someone who doesn't yet understand it.

- **Know when to quit.** If you're tired or having a hard time concentrating, close your book for the time being. Pick it up again when you're more rested and less distracted.
- **Reward yourself for your accomplishments.** Give yourself a break or a treat when you've finished a section or a chapter. Get a bite to eat. Call a friend on the telephone. Go to the mall, the movies, or the park.
- **Review.** Research is clear on this point: Periodic review of previously learned material definitely helps students remember it more effectively and accurately.