**Text Complexity in Mathematics**

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As information increases and becomes more complex, reading textbooks is going to demand greater skill. As educators we can help our students learn to read textbooks by modeling this reading in front of the classroom. We can also teach students to take notes from the textbook and reflect on the knowledge using the review in summary section at the end of the chapter.

Our brains can only process between five to nine items at a time. Hopefully the author of your textbook has designed the text pages with that idea in mind. There are some basic items that you should focus on and as you begin to incorporate reading textbooks into your study habits, you should try to approach each section in the same way. Be methodical and organize information in the same way every time you read a textbook. So what should you glean out of a math textbook? In every section there are mathematical facts, examples, diagrams or graphs, and sometimes tables of information.

*Mathematical facts* include definitions, properties, and theorems. Often this information is in bold print or has a separate box around the information. Organize this information in a list and if possible re-word definitions and properties into your own language.When taking notes on *examples*, students should make sure to copy the steps and the explanation for each step and two column format. Again, it would be best if you can translate the mathematical reasons into your own words.Draw *diagrams* exactly as they are shown in the textbook. Take personal notes all over the diagram with arrows pointing to important information and markings. It important to make sure that denotes are not only the information given in the textbook, but also include a personal narrative regarding the meaning of the content.

As you are taking notes from the textbook and processing this information you are building knowledge structures called schemas. Being systematic in your process of taking notes and examining texts should make your schema stronger through repetition. This will strengthen your long-term memory.