

Using Subheadings & Headings

Extracting the main idea(s) of text is often the most difficult task when reading. Frequently, students will become frustrated by details instead of focusing on the heart of the discussion as they read. To understand cause and effect or relationships between events and people, students must understand the broader context of the argument before they can apply specific details properly.

In this strategy, students are actively searching for the main idea of each subheading as they read. Then they are synthesizing that information to apply to the section and ultimately to the chapter title.

This strategy is a first step in understanding a text. After this step is mastered, students will learn how to ask questions instead of making a one-sentence generalization for each section.

What should you do?

Make an outline of each chapter. The chapter title will be Roman numeral "I", the first heading is capital letter "A". In your text, *The American Pageant*, there are no subheadings. If there were, the first subheading would be "1", the second one "2" etc. At times, you may be asked to complete an outline for each section ("heading").

Chapter 3 of your text:

- III. *Settling the Northern Colonies*
 - A. The Protestant Reformation Produces Puritanism
 - B. The Pilgrims End Their Pilgrimage at Plymouth
 - C. The Bay Colony Bible Commonwealth
 - D. Building the Bay Colony
 - E. Trouble in the Bible Commonwealth
 - F. The Rhode Island "Sewer"
 - G. New England Spreads Out
 - H. Puritans Versus Indians
 - I. Seeds of Colonial Unity and Independence
 - J. Andros Promotes the First American Revolution
 - K. Old Netherlanders at New Netherland
 - L. Friction with English and Swedish Neighbors
 - M. Dutch Residues in New York
 - N. Penn's Holy Experiment in Pennsylvania
 - O. Quaker Pennsylvania and Its Neighbors
 - P. The Middle Way in the Middle Colonies

Take notes (I will not ask to see them) on each section. Use the notes to create a one-sentence (this means **ONE SENTENCE**) summary of the heading. You must use the words in the heading in this sentence. The sentence must convey the **main idea** of the section.

After you have completed all of the headings in a chapter, use this strategy to write a new "title" for the chapter. In this case, rewrite the chapter title *Settling the Northern Colonies* – turn it into a sentence.

Assessment: With this strategy, students are assessed on how well they are able to synthesize the information for each section and articulate their thoughts back on paper. The expectation is for students to use higher level terms (see attachment) when writing these headings. An emphasis should be placed on terms/concepts such as: cause/effect, relate, **evaluate the relative importance of**, predict...