HOW TO READ AN ASSIGNMENT:

Beginning the Research Process

 1. Read through the assignment to get acquainted with the language and general expectations of the project.

1. Highlight the requirements of the assignment. This will give you a clear idea of exactly what must be included in the project.
2. Underline the verbs (action words). These words will clarify the perspective of the project—to analyze, to inform, to argue, etc.
3. Make a list of words in the assignment that you are unfamiliar with or do not understand. Find these words in a dictionary or consult your professor.
4. Look for questions in the assignment. List any questions in the assignment. Analysis or explanation may be required to answer these questions. Whether these are specific questions to be answered in the assignment or 'food for thought," some acknowledgement of these questions will be expected in the project. Go beyond "yes" or "no" answers. Move toward "how," "why," or "why not?" to completely fulfill the requirements of the assignment.
5. Verify the assignment deadlines.
6. Once you determine the requirements of the assignment and have the deadlines, generate a work schedule. Allow yourself plenty of time for research, drafting, visits to the Writing Center, conferences with your professor, and editing. Be sure to factor in some "away" time—at least one or two days that you can be "away" from the project. This will give you a fresh perspective for the final edit.

\* REMEMBER to allow enough time to edit carefully—ideally with the assistance of others. Read the paper aloud. Go through the paper sentence by sentence. Keep a dictionary and a writing handbook nearby. Be aware of your personal grammar issues and be sure to check the paper for those.