TLC Reading Strategies
Some ways to find important parts of readings

1) **Look for *why* and *how***. Important parts are often about *why* and *how*.

2) **Don't read many sentences**. To find important parts, you need to see big parts of readings. There are probably only three or five big important ideas. Don't get lost in details. Don't read every sentence. You're just looking for important parts.

3) **Look for summaries** at the beginning of a reading and at the end. Sometimes readings begin with examples – a specific story. The main idea will probably be right after that opening example / story. The title of the reading might be helpful – or not. **Paraphrase the summaries.**

4) **Don't use a dictionary** when looking for important parts. Ignore unknown words. Guess meanings. Many words are not important. Important words to help you find main ideas – so, because, effects, reasons, but, if, when, before, after. You know these words. Find important ideas. Then look up important words. Only important words.

5) **Look for sections** of the reading. Look for beginnings and endings of parts of a reading. If sections have titles, maybe they are helpful. Often readings don't have section titles. Look at the beginnings and endings of paragraphs. Sections might be two paragraphs or three pages. The part about New York. The part about after the war. **Make titles for sections. How are sections connected?**

6) **Look for examples**. Examples are usually before or after main ideas. What is the example an example of? Why is it important?

7) **Look for causes/effects, problems/solutions, reasons, times, places**.

8) **Look at the study guide questions** – these indicate what the professor thinks is important. Find those points in readings. **Paraphrase them**.

9) **Look at lecture notes**. What did the professor emphasize? What did they talk about most? Look for connections between lectures and readings.

10) **Look at the essay question** if an essay is based on the reading. Look for parts in the reading that will help you answer the question. They are important. What are the connections between the important parts?