

# Summary Sheet for Pre-Reading and Reading Strategies

## **PRE-READING STRATEGIES:**

- ✓ Set a mastery comprehension goal.
- ✓ Recognize and keep in mind that courts are creating meaning by their opinions and lawyers are creating meaning when they read opinions.
- ✓ Develop some knowledge about the subject of the case by:
  - Gaining insight about the relationships among the concepts addressed in the cases from the organization of the syllabus and of the tables of contents of the casebook and a supplemental text;
  - Getting background information by reading an introduction to the topic if the casebook has one;
  - Developing some insight into the important points by reading the questions and comments following the case before reading the case; and
  - Learning about the subject by reading about it in a supplemental text.
- ✓ Preview the opinion before reading it by reading the headings and the first sentence of each paragraph of the opinion.
- ✓ Be conscious of background details that might explain the decision: the court, the author of the opinion, the historical context and the parties' statuses.
- ✓ Generate questions expected to be answered by the opinion.

## **READING STRATEGIES:**

- ✓ Read the entire opinion once all the way through without making a mark on it and then read it in depth.
- ✓ Monitor learning at all times to make sure goals are being achieved.
- ✓ Search the opinion for answers to pre-reading questions.
- ✓ Develop graphic depictions of key facts.
- ✓ Dialogue with the opinion, arguing with the court's reasoning and assertions.
- ✓ Continue to generate questions and search for answers to those questions.
- ✓ Attend to the details of the opinion on a word-by-word basis (using dictionaries).