Twitter Thread by Dr Raul Pacheco-Vega



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THREAD. On writing, note-taking, reading, and synthesizing information. This fall, I taught Research Design at the doctoral level, and a Masters' Research (Thesis) Seminar.

Because of the way I like teaching (research design, research methods and mechanics of research), ...

... I quickly realized that teaching Note-Taking Techniques, Reading Strategies, and Synthesis Methods was complicated. It's kind of a chicken and egg problem. What do students need to learn first, reading or taking notes? Teaching strategies for both is hard to do simultaneously

I tried the following sequence:
- Reading Strategies
- Note-Taking Techniques
- Synthesis Methods
- Writing Tips

Turns out that students are thrust into the "you need to read a lot to understand what I am teaching" model quite early during their programmes. This poses challenges

Normally, I would assign Adler and Van Doren's "How to Read a Book" https://t.co/F8vQIIKSfg so that my students can learn various levels of reading.

Only problem? A&VD is a massive 350 pages' book. Just imagine the amount of time it's going to take them to even *skim it*.

After teaching this class over the summer at ITAM and this fall at CIDE and FLACSO, at the Masters and PhD levels, and after decades of teaching undergraduates, I am convinced now that

(a) students need a range (repertoire) of reading strategies https://t.co/dQvzmr9lZx

(b) students need a "quick read" strategy before anything else (I teach my AIC method)
https://t.co/nVzDQtYocy

(c) once they learn how to skim, they NEED to learn how to take notes (whichever you want, Cornell Notes, Everything Notebook, Index Cards)
https://t.co/lKZe0IgfGQ

(d) once they learn the basics of note-taking, they need to dump those notes into an organizational system (I teach my Conceptual Synthesis Excel Dump, CSED) https://t.co/LuNbAcwzhX

(e) once they learn this "quick read-quick notes-quick summary/synthesis/organization" strategy, students need to develop routines (I teach #AICCSED) https://t.co/KljF5N1qml

These "Read-Annotate-Dump Notes-Organize" routines help them develop a system of their own. That way...

... they can then move to more advanced reading, note-taking, systematizing routines/techniques/strategies. Once they've developed these routines and systems, THEN they can get into the habit of writing (and developing a writing practice).

You can teach writing earlier, surely.

But from experience, I can tell you that what my students have developed, a reading-note-taking-systematizing-writing practice, is driven by my pushing them to READ FIRST, and then TAKING NOTES, and only after having read broadly and deeply, THEN writing.

Reading should be a priority. Before you even send them on the field, or ask them to choose a model and download a dataset and run regressions, you (or your program, somehow) need to teach them this Reading-Taking Notes-Systematizing sequence first and foremost.