HIGHLIGHTING AND MARKING TEXTBOOKS

IF YOU HIGHLIGHT, DO YOU

______ read first, and then highlight (or underline)?
______ read analytically to determine what is important and how ideas are related?
______ usually highlight key words and phrases instead of entire sentences?
______ highlight selectively -- no more than 1/4 to 1/3 of a page?
______ highlight accurately to capture the key points?
______ stay focused and read actively while you highlight?
______ avoid highlighting unless you’ll have ample time to review what you highlighted?

IN ADDITION TO HIGHLIGHTING, DO YOU

______ circle the most important words within your highlighting?
______ mark important concepts, definitions, and lists in the margins?
______ write questions in the margins?
______ write numbers in the margin to indicate lists or sequence of points?
______ draw arrows in the margins to indicate relationships between points?
______ write annotations in the margins such as “Likely test item,” “Ask about in class,” “Compare to class notes,” or “Re-read”?
______ put stars or asterisks in the margin next to the most important points in the chapter?
______ draw vertical lines in the margin to draw attention to important points already highlighted?
______ use different colors of ink to distinguish between primary and secondary points?
______ use stick-on notes to mark important pages? (This is especially useful to prepare for open-book tests.)
______ fold over the corner of pages that contain especially important information?
______ at the top or bottom of each page, write questions and perhaps answers that a passage may have raised in your mind, or reduced a complicated explanation to one or two sentences, or recorded a sequence of major points?

IF YOU CHOSE NOT TO WRITE IN YOUR TEXTBOOKS, DO YOU

______ add sticky notes on each page, summarizing key points, noting your responses, and writing possible test questions?
______ write summaries after each section?
______ take notes while you read?
______ compare the reading with your class notes and add details to your notes?

Remember: Underlining or highlighting should not be passive. It should not substitute for the inevitable work of studying.