Identifying a Textbook

- Title/jacket copy/blurs:
  - “Introduction to...”
  - Generic title (e.g., “Social Psychology,” “Ecology”)
  - “Readings in...”
  - “Critical Readings in...”
  - “…in Context”
  - “…a Global Perspective”
  - Indication of many editions; if it’s the 9th edition, say, there’s a good chance it’s a textbook. Search for earlier editions to see how frequently revisions have been made. The more frequent, the more likely it’s a textbook.

- Introduction/preface: Skim for mention of concepts like:
  - the book’s purpose, especially the word “textbook”
  - specific courses or academic subjects
  - general history of the topic or broad, basic explanation of its importance
  - changes made for the edition in hand
  - studying the topic
  - an introduction to or a general overview of a topic
  - filling a gap in knowledge or in books available
  - new edition to account for recent developments
  - new member(s) of author team or honoring of a previous/original member
  - frequent use of “I” or “we” in describing approach to topic
Identifying a Textbook

- Table of contents
  - Glossary
  - Short names or nouns as chapter titles
  - Chapters/sections moving progressively or breaking down parts of a section
  - Instruction, lab, answer, or other special sections
  - Exercises or discussion questions
  - Chapter summaries