



HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR READING TECHNIQUES

College involves a lot of reading. Most students have assignments that include getting information from documents such as textbooks, novels, references, papers and articles. Since there is so much for you to read, you can save time by learning about these reading techniques:

- Pre-read
- Skim instead of read
- Scan instead of read

You can also choose the reading techniques that are best for you. The purpose and use for each of the reading techniques is shown below.

Pre-read

Pre-reading doesn't take the place of reading. However, it gives you an overview of the text and helps you see how the text is organized. Pre-reading takes little time. And you usually make up the time you invested in pre-reading because it then takes less time to read the full text from beginning to end.

1. Read the title and heading
2. Read the introduction, objectives, review questions and summary
3. Study the pictures, graphs, tables and examples
4. Read any sentences that contain italics or bold text

Skimming

Skimming is similar to pre-reading. You can skim text quickly to get the main ideas and major details. Skimming works well when you're reviewing a short amount of text from beginning to end. For example you can skim a newspaper article to decide if you want to read the article

1. Read the title and first paragraph
2. Read the first sentence of each paragraph
3. Study the pictures and, graphs and tables
4. Read any sentence that contain italics or bold text

Scan

Scanning is not reading. Scanning helps you look through text or lists quickly to find one detail. To scan a document:

1. Decide what you're looking for
2. Look for clues. For example: capital letter for names and places, dates, statistics, addresses
3. Choose a scanning pattern. For example: A zigzag pattern or circular pattern for regular and large pages, a straight-down pattern for narrow columns

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