

Reading Strategies

What is reading?

Reading is interactive. Readers use their previous experience with reading and their knowledge of the topic to make sense of the information they are reading.

For you as a student, reading is coming to terms with new ideas, the language used to discuss them, and the way the information is structured in different reading materials or texts.

Characteristics of effective readers

- 1 They have a clear purpose in mind to guide their reading
- 2 They are aware of how well their reading is going
- 3 They change their strategies to suit their reading, the type of material, and their level of understanding
- 4 They use the structure of the text to help guide their reading.

Reading critically

It is important that the information you are reading is credible and reliable:

- Who is the author?
- What is the background of the person or organisation?
- Why is the information on the web?
- Is the author trying to convince the reader to support a particular view?
- Is there evidence for the ideas presented?
- Is the evidence from reliable sources?
- Are the sources acknowledged through a recognized referencing system?
- Is the argument put forward reasonable?
- Does the author use sound evidence rather than emotive and persuasive language?

Reading strategies

- Ask questions as you read, use "self talk":

Why am I reading this? What do I want to achieve?

Ok, what's important here?

What do I need to know about this?

This doesn't make sense. How does this fit in?

This is the same as the other book.

Good, here are some examples.

What can I do to make more sense of this?

- Use a variety of techniques: *Scanning, Skimming, Intensive reading*
- Look back and ahead in the text to confirm and clarify meaning
- Search for the main idea of the paragraph and then decide if you need to read in more detail
- Realise that good readers don't necessarily read every word or chapter slowly and carefully
- Become familiar with the layout of the textbook and the structure of different texts
- Look for recurring patterns and structures in writing
- Be aware of connectives, words and phrases that signal the structure of paragraphs
- Consciously try to summarise, draw inferences, and connect new information to what you already know.

As you read: set priorities, know why you are reading, consciously use strategies to assist your reading, monitor your progress, and ask for help if needed.

For further information:

- Contact the Academic Skills Adviser on your campus
- Visit our web pages on myACU.

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