



Effective and Efficient Reading

“The keys to success aren’t much good until one discovers the right locks in which to insert them.” -Chinese Proverb

Previewing

- Previewing is getting a sense of what’s in a given piece of work without reading the body of text
- Can help you decide whether a book or article is useful for your purpose and gives you a general sense of the content and locates sections to read or not
- How to Preview:
 - Read the title and author details
 - Read the abstract (if available)
 - Read main headings, chapter summaries, and anything that jumps out at you
 - Look at any diagrams, graphs, and tables - these usually summarize content of large written paragraphs

Skimming

- Skimming is reading small amounts from throughout the text to pick up key ideas quickly
- How to Skim:
 - If the introduction is short then read it in full. If it is long, read the first sentence of each paragraph.
 - Read the first sentence of each subsequent paragraph, or until you find the topic sentence
 - For a report of research paper, first read all of the Abstract, then look over section headings, subheadings, and any figures or tables before skimming the text
 - Read the conclusion

Scanning

- Skim the material to get the general picture, Scan when looking for specific information
- How to Scan:
 - Scan the text for keywords or phrases related to the topic
 - Run your eyes down the page looking for these expressions in chapter headings or subheadings, or in the text itself

Detailed Reading

- Detailed Reading is intensive reading that focuses on the important parts -- key chapters, books, poems, pages
- This is when you are likely to take detailed notes
- Usually the final step after you've previewed, scanned, and skimmed, when you know that it is worth it to read the full text