

ACADEMIC READING

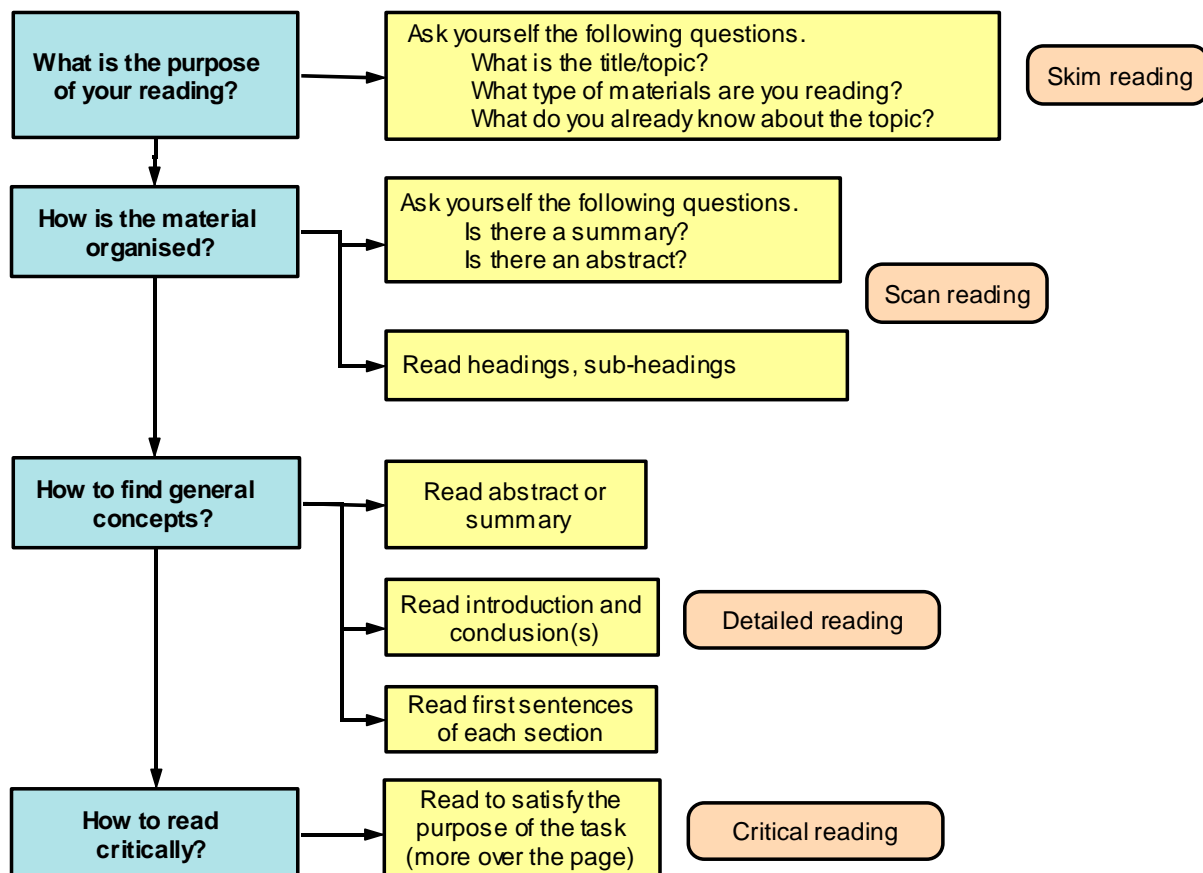
Reading is an essential part of university study. You read to grasp concepts, understand applications and to assist in the formation of your views or position on an issue or topic. You read in a variety of ways depending on your purpose and the format of the written material (e.g., study books, text books, journal articles, web sites).

DIFFERENT WAYS OF READING

1. **Skimming** is where you read to gain a general idea of the written material. When skimming you would not read every word, but look at the table of contents or section headings. You may follow up by reading first and last paragraphs, or key sections of the written material.
2. **Scanning** is where you look for specific information. Often you will be searching for specific material related to an assignment topic or scanning pages looking for mention of the topic.
3. **Detailed reading** is where you focus on the written material to gather specific facts or information, views or positions on a topic.
4. **Critical reading** is where you actively engage with the written material by questioning. This approach to reading is extremely important at university as you weigh an author's evidence, analyse strategies and methods, and comprehend applications.

BECOMING AN EFFICIENT READER

An efficient reader knows **where to look** and **how to look** to find the necessary information without wasting time. They will use all of the ways of reading described above to efficiently progress through course readings and texts.



CRITICAL READING

In critical reading you must scrutinize the reading text in detail in order to engage with it. The following are examples of some of the issues to consider as part of this process.

- Are there any contradictions?
- Is there an argument developed? Is it logical?
- Is the text biased?
- Is there an alternative conclusion than the one given?
- What supporting evidence is given and how valid is that evidence?
- Are there any 'hidden' assumptions?
- What alternative perspectives are available in the wider literature?

READING TROUBLESHOOTER

“I think I am reading a page, but when I look up I can't remember a thing.”

Think about why you are reading a text; try reading one paragraph or page at a time, making notes as you go. See QUICK TIP ON NOTE MAKING.

“There is so much reading I can only manage a small amount”

Try using skimming and scanning strategies before getting down to detailed reading. In courses with heavy reading loads include reading time in your weekly schedule.

“I would like to improve my reading comprehension”

Read single sections at a time, making notes and asking questions to confirm understanding. Ensure that you have a general and a subject specific dictionary when you read to check any words you do not understand. Practice reading faster with non-academic texts.

“I think I might be dyslexic”

Find out more about strategies that help. <http://www.dyslexia-college.com/reading.html>.

Talk with a Student Services counsellor. <http://www.usq.edu.au/student-services/counselling/>

Two things that go hand in hand with effective reading.

- Note making - see QUICK TIP ON NOTE MAKING.
- Finding the correct material and referencing it accurately - see Library “Finding Information” online tutorial <http://libtute.usq.edu.au/>

OTHER RESOURCES

- Other QUICK TIPS FOR STUDENTS <http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/tips.htm>
- Online resources
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/alsonline/>
<http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/reading/>
<http://unilearning.uow.edu.au/reading/1a.html>
- Talk with a tutor at The Learning Centre (tlc@usq.edu.au)

The Learning Centre
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W: www.usq.edu.au/learn/learnsupp/

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