

Reading Techniques

Quick Reminders:

These techniques are similar in process but different in purpose.

Quickly “looking over” is neither skimming or scanning.

Skimming - Is a method of rapidly moving the eyes over the text with the purpose of getting only the main ideas and a general overview of the content

Skimming is useful in three different functions:

- Pre-reading – Skimming is more thorough than simple previewing and can give a more accurate picture of text to be read later
- Reviewing – skimming is useful for reading text that you’ve already read
- Reading – skimming is most often used for quickly reading material that, for any number of reasons, does not need more detailed attention

Steps in skimming an article

1. Read the title.
2. Read the introduction or lead paragraph.
3. Read the first paragraph completely
4. If there are subheadings, read each one and look for relationships among them.
5. Read the first sentence of each remaining paragraph.

The main idea of most paragraphs appear at the first line.

If the author’s pattern is to begin with a question or anecdote, you may find the last sentence more valuable.

5. Dip into the text, looking for:

Clue words that answers who, what, when, why, how

Proper nouns

Unusual words especially if capitalized
Enumerations
Qualifying adjectives (worst, best, most, etc.)
Typographical cues – italics, boldface,
underlining, asterisks, etc.

* Skimming can usually be accomplished at about 1000 words per minute.

* Mastering skimming requires that you use it as often as possible.

Scanning - rapidly covers a great deal of material in order to locate a specific fact or piece of information. It is very useful for finding a specific name, date, statistic, or fact without reading the entire article.

Steps in Scanning an Article

1. Keep in mind at all times what it is you are searching for.
2. Anticipate in what form the information is likely to appear.
3. Analyze the organization of the content before starting to scan.
4. If material is familiar or fairly brief, you may be able to scan the entire article in a single search.
5. If the material is lengthy or difficult, a preliminary skimming may be necessary to determine which part of the article to scan.
6. Let your eyes run at several lines of print at a time.
7. When you find the sentence that has information you seek, read the entire sentence.

* In scanning, you must be willing to skip over large sections of texts without reading or understanding them.

* Scanning can be done at 1500 or more words per minute.