



**Enhanced Learning
Educational Services**
“the study skills specialist”

IMPROVING READING SKILLS



Reading is a skill that crosses all subjects. Having strong reading skills will help you save time and be more effective in your work.

- You should read each point and **highlight the key phrases** in that point.
- Discuss with a friend or parent as you read through the handout.
- You may like to work through this over a number of sessions.



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*First Published 2016 by Enhanced Learning Educational Services
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Enhanced Learning Educational Services Profile

Our Organisation:

Enhanced Learning Educational Services (ELES) is the leading provider of study skills resources in Australia. Since 2001 over 500,000 students across Australia have benefited from our study skills worksheets and workbooks. An Australian business based in Sydney, our clients extend throughout Australia and to international schools overseas. We are committed to helping all students improve their ability to learn and study by providing study skills seminars and resources on the topics students need.

Our Mission:

To provide a worthwhile and effective service to teachers, students and parents, enhancing students' learning skills and abilities through dynamic programs, resources and strategies to unlock the power of the mind and enable greater success at school and in life.

Our Commitment:

As part of ELES' commitment to education, 5% of all gross income is donated to charities that help and assist children.

For further information about ELES or our products or contact details:

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1. SCANNING

A good reader thinks about their purpose for reading before starting and then uses appropriate reading strategies.

*If you are looking for specific information you need to **SCAN** by:*

- Looking for **key words, headings**, and terms in bold or italics that refer to information you need.
- Reading the **first and last sentences** of the paragraphs on the page.
- **Moving your eyes quickly** over the material keeping what you are searching for clear in your mind.



a. Can you think of some instances at school when you might need to SCAN material? Have you used these techniques before?

2. SKIMMING

- *Are you about to start reading something you haven't read before?*
- *Are you reading to see if the information is what you need for an assignment?*
- *Are you reading to get an overview before you start summarising?*
- *Do you have a large amount of material to read in a short period of time?*



SKIMMING is glancing quickly over a text to get a general idea of the topic or to see if the material is useful or to decide if the material should be examined in greater depth.

SKIMMING means:

- Quickly **looking over the entire page**, focusing on any titles and headings.
- Looking at the illustrations, **diagrams**, and captions. What do they describe?
- Identifying **main ideas** in paragraphs but not worrying about the detail in supporting sentences.
- Focusing on **key words** and ignoring filler words.
- **Skipping** what you already know or material that doesn't apply to you or that seems confusing.



IS THIS THE RIGHT RESOURCE?

If you are skimming resources particularly to see if they have the type of information you need follow these steps:

1. **GENERAL INFO:** Look at author, date of publication, preface and table of contents. Look at the diagrams and pictures.
2. **BEGIN/END CHAPTERS:** Skim read the first and last chapters. Often these are introductory and summary chapters, and may give you all the information you need.
3. **NOW READ THESE:** Then read the first and last chapters and skim the chapters in between. This takes you into the book in greater depth, and allows you to decide which, if any, of the following chapters you should read.
4. **EXTRA STUFF:** Look at the glossary, index, and appendices if needed.



b. Can you think of some instances at school when you might need to SKIM material? Have you used these techniques before?



3. READING TO REMEMBER

READING TO REMEMBER is where you are reading for a higher level of comprehension. You can use the SQ4R technique for this.

SQ4R

- **SURVEY:** Get the big picture first so your brain can see how everything is related and what material is being covered BEFORE you start learning the information in detail.
 - Flick through all your notes and textbook.
 - Look at the chapter headings, section headings, illustrations and diagrams.
 - Look at introductory paragraphs or chapter reviews or conclusions.
- **QUESTION:** Ask yourself questions as you read.
 - What do I already know about this topic? This activates prior knowledge.
 - Try and predict what will come next.
 - Think about the what, why, how, when, who and where of the content you are reviewing.
 - Turn headings into questions.
- **READ:** As you read, make the process active.
 - Read actively to try and answer the questions you ask yourself.
 - Read at a rate slower than your normal reading speed.
 - You might like to read out loud to help you absorb the info better.
 - Try and form pictures in your mind about what you are reading.



- **RECITE:** Every now and then during the process, stop reading and see if you can recall what you read.
 - Try to recall the main information, the important concepts, definitions and key ideas by reciting out loud what you can remember (without looking back at what you are reading).
 - Once you have recited out loud everything you can remember, look back and see how accurate your recall was.
 - Make a note of or highlight the info you didn't remember fully.

- **REDUCE-RECORD:** Writing notes as you read the information really helps you to read and retain.
 - Underline or highlight key phrases.
 - Make a brief outline of the question and your answers.
 - Make your own study notes or add points to study notes you have already made trying to put the information into your own words.
 - Develop your own summary of the chapter and compare it to the summary presented in the book.

- **REVIEW:** Fill in the holes in your information.
 - Look back over all the material.
 - Read with purpose: read to check and see that you understand what you studied, that it seems familiar to you and to clarify points.
 - Check what you remember on each of the headings.
 - Test yourself on the information (orally or written).
 - You may like to add in notes as you go about anything that you don't feel as confident about or re-read to clarify points you are unsure of.
 - The next day, review what you studied yesterday before starting to review new material.



c. Had you heard about the SQ4R technique? Have you used this technique or elements of this technique?