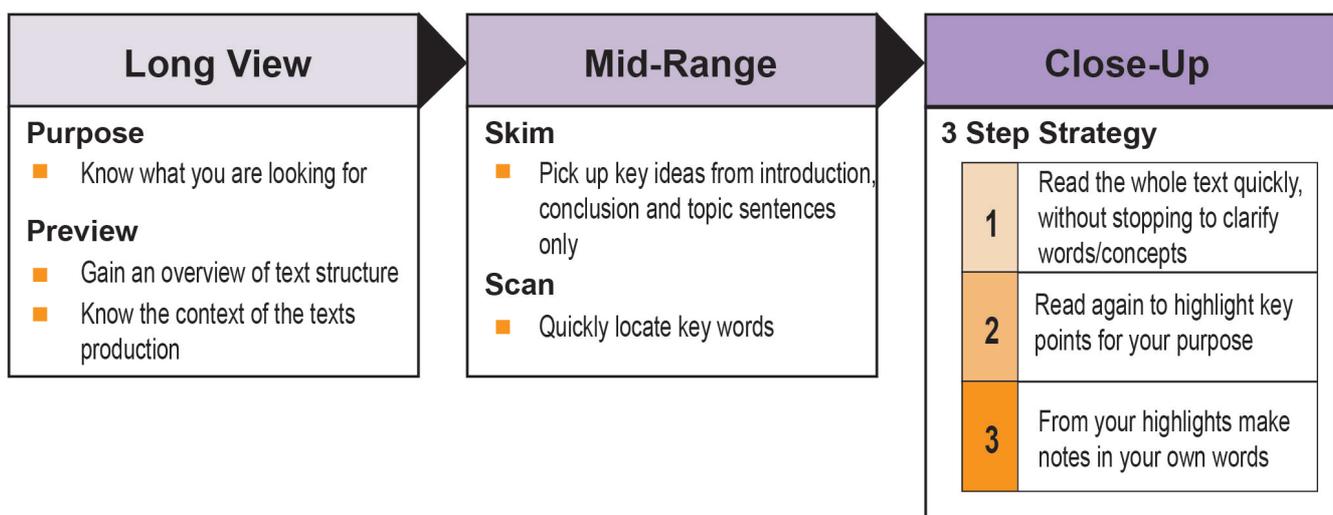


## Effective Reading

Reading academic materials can be frustrating, because the content and language is often quite complex. For this reason, it's difficult to make sense of this material by attempting to read it once through from beginning to end.

Effective, critical reading involves many steps – but carrying out these steps will ensure you a) don't waste time reading vast amount of material that won't be useful b) have a thorough understanding of the material you do need. Ultimately, while it sounds like a long process, effective reading can actually be quicker, and certainly more beneficial, than simply reading an article from start to finish.

### The three part process



### What to look for during each stage:

#### Long View

##### Preview

- Read titles, prefaces, tables of contents
- Acknowledge time-frames, seminal authors, recurrent themes

##### These steps are useful for:

- Identifying text types and structure
- Narrowing research
- Selecting appropriate sources of evidence

## Mid-Range

### Skim

- Headings, bold print, graphics
- First and last sentences of paragraphs

### Scan

- Specific information
- Key/relevant topic words

### These steps are useful for:

- Eliminating some texts as not so useful
- Getting familiar with a text
- Work out which parts to read, and which not
- Finding information quickly

## Close Readings

### Close Reading 1

- Relax, stop worrying about it – just enjoy it
- DON'T HIGHLIGHT or UNDERLINE
- You won't understand it all – that's OK!
- You are orientating yourself to this writer's voice and territory
- Notice overall how the material is organised
- (for words you don't understand, circle them and just move on)

### Close Reading 2

- Read with **your** purpose in mind:
  - to comprehend all main ideas about a topic
  - **OR** to understand the author's perspective as a whole
  - **OR** to extract key points relevant to your assignment task
- Identify the line of argument (*i.e. what is the sequence of ideas that support the one overall idea?*)
- *Find the meaning of those circled words (if the context has not clarified them by now)*
- **Highlight** key points, make margin notes

### Close Reading 3

- Review your highlights and mark-ups to make notes in your own words
- Make dot points:
  - Try to write phrases, not just sentences
  - Put authors' main argument into your own words
  - Relate argument to topic/essay focus
  - Use the **Reading Summary** table (page 3) to summarise your reading and link it to your discussion