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# Reading Strategies

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Dr Martin Davies  
Teaching and Learning Unit  
<[wmdavies@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:wmdavies@unimelb.edu.au)>



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- Reading Styles
  - Skimming and Scanning
  - Surface reading
  - Analytical reading and Deciphering
  - Phrase reading
  - Focussing
  - Eliminating backtracking and vocalisation
- What to read in academic articles

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- Scanning is glancing through material very quickly to find a specific item
- Examples:
  - looking up a word in a dictionary
  - or a name in a telephone directory
- You visually ignore anything that is not relevant to the item you are searching for
- you can “read” up to 1,500 words a minute with this style.



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# Skimming

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- Skimming is similar to scanning except that you are not looking for anything specific.
- You are glancing through to get a general idea of what the material is about.
- To do this, you read in full only selected parts of the material:
  - the title
  - the subheadings
  - the opening and closing paragraphs
  - pictures that catch your eye
- The average reader can skim at 1,000 words a minute

# Practice in Skimming and Scanning

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- Scan a page of a dictionary to see:
  - how many two-syllable words are defined
  - which of the words are nouns
  - what languages the words are derived.
- Scan a page in a telephone directory, looking for:
  - people in a particular district
  - people with the same initials
  - numbers that add up to less than, say, 12.



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## Surface Reading

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- Surface reading is the next stage on from skimming, but not as fast.
- You read everything in full, but you do not stop to think about it
- An overall though superficial view of the material.
- This is the way in which most people read, most of the time, for information and entertainment (newspapers, advertisements, textbooks, novels and so on).
- The average, untrained reader surface reads at about 250 words a minute
- With ten minutes training a day for one month, this can be boosted quite easily to over 300 words a minute



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# Analytical Reading (1)

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- Analytical reading (or study reading) is needed when you want to make sure that you fully grasp and appreciate what you are reading
- You may have to read statements more than once, stop to think about them, or jot down key words when using this style
- As a result, your reading rate can easily drop to below 100 words a minute

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One of the first things that should be done in the evaluation of structural equation models is an assessment of the adequacy of input data and the statistical assumption underlying any estimation methods used in the analysis. (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988, p. 76)

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Deciphering becomes necessary when you encounter unfamiliar words and phrases.

- ParisisthecapitalofFrance
- Antidisestableishmentarianism

A single unfamiliar word or phrase can sometimes take a minute or more to decipher.

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- Watch the eyes of a friend or a member of your family while he or she is reading.
- You will see that they move along each line of print in a series of jerks.
- The pauses between the jerks are known as fixations. It is during the fixations that your eyes take in words.
- Poor readers take in only one or two words in each fixation.

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| This is | how a | poor | reader's |  
| eyes move | along | lines | of print. |

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A good reader, on the other hand, takes in several words in each fixation

| This is how | a better reader's |

| eyes move along | lines of print. |

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Read the two sentences below, focusing only on the highlighted words

- Today it is more important than ever to be able to read fluently. For example, if you are a car-driver you have to be able to read a great many road signs.



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## Phrase Reading (5)

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What are the two sentences mainly about?

reading       writing       travelling

Which word is used to complete the first sentence? ...

able to read ...

slowly                       fast                       fluently

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Which example of writing is mentioned in  
the second sentence?

application forms  road signs  advertisements

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- Today it is more important than ever to be able to read fluently. For example, if you are a car-driver you have to be able to read a great many road signs.
- Nouns and verbs are the key words you need to focus on

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- Can you read the following sentence?
- The English alphabet contains twenty-six letters

Now try this sentence:

- The most commonly used letter is e.

## Focussing (2)

• • • •

The first century of white settlement in Australia was

• • •

dominated by the need to “open up” the land. Without an

• •

instant body of laws and regulation development took

## Focussing (3)

• •

place in a haphazard manner, and the most

• • •

common was the squatter. This was the term

• •

applied to any man

## Focussing (4)

• • •  
who wanted to try his hand at running in a property for  
• • •  
sheep, cattle or agriculture. He sought his land, took  
• • •  
possession of it by "squatting", and proceeded with the  
• •  
rigours of pioneer farming.

## Focussing (5)

• •  
He was unauthorised but accepted. At first,

• •  
he paid nothing for his spread, which was

• • •  
sometimes very large indeed. Later, rents were

•  
introduced.

## Focussing (6)

• •

In the 1860s, with most potential farm land taken

• •

up, Acts were passed which challenged the

• • •

position held by the squatters. These Acts allowed

## Focussing (7)

- men to “select” small allotments of squatters’ land,
- on which to begin (usually agricultural) farming •
- themselves. This land was to be paid for in three
- years (money going to the Crown).



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## Focussing (2)

• • • •

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• • •

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● ●  
place in a haphazard manner, and the most

● ● ●  
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● ●  
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## Focussing (4)

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## Focussing (6)

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● ● ●

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## Focussing (7)

- 
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- 
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- 
- on which to begin (usually agricultural) farming •
- 
- 
- 
- 
- themselves. This land was to be paid for in three
- 
- 
- years (money going to the Crown).



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- Solar energy is released by atomic reactions in the sun. Solar cells can capture sunlight and convert it to electrical energy. One of the latest ideas is to send huge collecting panels into orbit around the earth. There, in perpetual sunlight, they could capture light energy, and convey it to antennae on the earth's surface. It could then be converted into electricity.



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One of man's oldest sources of power, water, has the additional advantages of being reusable and clean. The energy of water as it rushes downhill in pipes, gives hydroelectric schemes the power to turn their turnings and produce electricity. Wave power is another method for using the energy of water to drive generators for producing electricity. Tidal energy makes use of the ebb and flow of tides in partially enclosed basins, such as the Bay of Fundy, in Canada, which has a tidal range of 16 metres!



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The rationale is rather different from the traditional textbook arguments about the choice of exchange rate regime. The new argument is a response to the volatility of capital flows and the threat of self-fulfilling speculative attacks: both strong fixes and



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free floats are immune from attack, at least in the definitional sense. At the fixed end, the emphasis is on credibility, so irrevocably is an important element of the fix – hence the interest in currency boards and the ultimate fix – dollarisation.



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At the other end of the spectrum, the pure float also has the attraction of its ability to withstand an attack (or large volatile capital flows) without the exchange rate regime collapsing.



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## A Harder Example

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The rationale is rather different from the traditional textbook arguments about the choice of exchange rate regime. The new argument is a response to the volatility of capital flows and the threat of self-fulfilling speculative attacks: both strong fixes and



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- No more than 50% of the words in an average textbook are really important information words.
- The other words are like glue and paint: they are there to provide connections and add interest: they are not essential.
- If you concentrate on information words, you can read faster and with better comprehension.

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- How do you learn to pick out the important information words?  
The trick is to pay attention to what the author is trying to say.
- Look for the message and the information words will emerge naturally.



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## Surface Reading (3)

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Some advertisements \_\_\_\_\_ undesirable effects  
\_\_\_\_\_. One form \_\_\_\_\_ advertising suggests  
\_\_\_\_\_ buying \_\_\_\_\_ brings happiness. \_\_\_\_\_ more  
\_\_\_\_\_ happier \_\_\_\_\_ feel. Parents in  
particular \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure \_\_\_\_\_ this  
form \_\_\_\_\_. Advertisements \_\_\_\_\_  
expensive toys \_\_\_\_\_ imply \_\_\_\_\_ greater  
pleasure than lower priced \_\_\_\_\_.



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## Surface Reading (4)

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\_\_\_\_\_ example \_\_\_\_\_ children \_\_\_happier

\_\_\_\_\_ video game than \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Scrabble. \_\_\_\_\_ not true.

\_\_\_\_\_ opposite \_\_\_\_\_ more likely.

Advertisements \_\_\_\_\_ make \_\_\_\_\_

people \_\_\_\_\_ more discontented.



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## Surface Reading (5)

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Another form \_\_\_\_\_ undesirable advertising  
\_\_\_\_\_ associates \_\_\_\_\_ products  
\_\_\_\_\_ success. \_\_\_\_\_ example  
\_\_\_\_\_ washing powder \_\_\_\_\_ linked  
\_\_\_\_\_ promotion \_\_\_\_\_ work, or \_\_\_\_\_  
toothpaste



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## Surface Reading (6)

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\_\_\_\_\_ success \_\_\_\_\_ attracting

\_\_\_\_\_ boyfriend \_\_\_ girlfriend. \_\_\_\_\_

effect \_\_\_\_\_ these advertisements

\_\_\_\_\_ encourage \_\_\_\_\_

false idea \_\_\_\_\_ success. Genuine success

\_\_\_\_\_ earned \_\_\_\_\_ effort: \_\_\_\_\_ not

\_\_\_\_\_ money.

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- According to research at an English university, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter is at the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without a problem. This is because we do not read every letter by itself but the word as a whole.

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- When reading academic articles/books
  - What is your purpose?
  - How much time do you have?
  - How thorough do you need to be?
  - What are you preparing for (essay/tute)?
  - Does the article/book need to be read?

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### When looking for ...

- Facts
- Dates
- Key points
- Statistics
- Trends

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### When looking for ...

- Main arguments
- Key points
- Overall thesis/position
- Objective
- Relationships

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*Look first at:*

- Conclusion/concluding section

*Then at:*

- Abstract/Summary
- Introductory paragraphs

*Then:*

Read each section heading

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*Then:*

Read the first sentence in each paragraph

*Then:*

Pictures or diagrams

YOU SHOULD TAKE NOTES AS YOU READ

If you need to, repeat the process

*Only then do you surface read the entire article*

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- Knowing 'how' and knowing 'that'
- Now you know *that* reading is a complex activity and there are various techniques involved
- However you still may not know *how* to read
- This means practice: ½ a day for 2 weeks gives improvement.
- Chose appropriate articles and get a friend to help you.
- IT'S AMAZING WHAT IT CAN DO