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**Field: Fashion Design**

**Assignment name: Reading Skills**

**Reading means:**

"Reading" is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a *receptive* skill - through it we *receive* information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

**What is reading:**

**Reading** is the complex [cognitive process](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_process) of decoding [symbols](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbols) to derive meaning. It is a form of [language processing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_processing).

Success in this process is measured as [*reading comprehension*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading_comprehension). Reading is a means for [language acquisition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_acquisition), communication, and sharing [information](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information) and ideas. The symbols are typically visual ([written](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Written) or [printed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Printing)) but may be tactile ([Braille](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Braille)). Like all languages, it is a complex interaction between text and reader, shaped by prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and the language community—which is culturally and socially situated. Readers use a variety of reading strategies to decode (to translate symbols into sounds or visual representations of [speech](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speech)) and comprehend. Readers may use [context](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Context_%28language_use%29) clues to identify the meaning of unknown words. Readers integrate the words they have read into their existing framework of knowledge or [schema](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schema_%28psychology%29).

Other types of reading are not speech based [writing systems](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing_system), such as music [notation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_notation) or [pictograms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pictograms). The common link is the interpretation of [symbols](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbols) to extract the meaning from the visual notations or tactile signals

**Active reading**

Active reading simply means reading something with a determination to understand and evaluate it for its relevance to your needs.

Simply reading and re-reading the material isn't an effective way to understand and learn. Actively and critically engaging with the content can save you time. Most OU study books and websites include in-text questions and self-assessed questions. Use these as built-in cues to make your study active. Try these techniques to make your reading active

* Underline or highlight key words and phrases as you read. When you return to it later on, you can easily see which points you identified as important. Be selective - too much highlighting won't help.
* Make annotations in the margin to summaries points, raise questions, challenge what you've read, jot down examples and so on. You can do this in printed books or e-texts. This takes more thought than highlighting, so you'll probably remember the content better. (Use sticky notes if you don't want to mark the text.)
* Read critically by asking questions of the text. Who wrote it? When? Who is the intended audience? Does it link with other material you've studied in the module? Why do you think it was written? Is it an excerpt from a longer piece of text?
* Test yourself by reading for half an hour, putting the text away and jotting down the key points from memory. Go back to the text to fill in gaps.
* Look for 'signposts' that help you understand the text - phrases like 'most importantly', 'in contrast', 'on the other hand'.
* Explain what you've read to someone else.
* Record yourself reading the module material or your notes, and listen to the recording while you're travelling or doing household chores.

## **General Reading**

**Reading** is defined as a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning. Reading is an active process of constructing meanings of words. Reading with a purpose helps the reader to direct information towards a goal and focuses their attention. Although the reasons for reading may vary, the primary purpose of reading is to understand the text. Reading is a thinking process. It allows the reader to use what he or she may already know, also called prior knowledge. During this processing of information, the reader uses strategies to understand what they are reading, uses themes to organize ideas, and uses textual clues to find the meanings of new words. Each of the three components of reading is equally important. Let's take a look at the components!

## The Reading Process

Reading is a process that involves recognizing words, leading to the development of comprehension. According to research, reading is a process that negotiates the meaning between the text and its reader. The reading process involves three stages.

The first is the **pre-reading** stage, which allows the reader to activate background knowledge, preview the text, and develop a purpose for reading. A strategy for students to utilize during this stage is to look at the title of the selection and list all the information that comes to mind about the title.

The second stage occurs **during reading**, when the reader makes predictions as they read and then confirms or revises the predictions. For example, double-entry journal enable the reader to write the text from the reading on one side and their personal reaction on the other side.

The final stage occurs **after reading** and allows the reader to retell the story, discuss the elements of a story, answer questions and/or compare it to another text. For example, students can create summaries, where they take a huge selection and reduce it to its main points for more concise understanding.

Comprehension is an intentional, active, and interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing.

## **skimming**

Skimming is a strategic, selective reading method in which you focus on the main ideas of a text. When skimming, deliberately skip text that provides details, stories, data, or other elaboration. 0Instead of closely reading every word, focus on the introduction, chapter summaries, first and last sentences of paragraphs, bold words, and text features. Skimming is extracting the essence of the author’s main messages rather than the finer points.

## **Why skim?**

**You need the “big picture” or main points when you’re reading.** Even if you’re going to do a more detailed reading of the text, skimming as a form of previewing can help you better comprehend what you read. Knowing when and how to skim will help you become a more efficient, strategic reader. You’ll become better at determining what parts of the text are most important. There may also be times when your professor wants you to understand the big picture, not all of the little details. In these cases, skimming helps you understand the overall points of the text and its relevance to your course without bogging you down.

**Make the most of your time.** Sometimes you don’t have time to do everything. With skimming, you’ll be able to cover vast amounts of material more quickly and save time for everything else that you have on your plate. Maybe you don’t have time to finish your reading before class, but skimming will help you get the main points and attend class much more prepared to maximize in-class learning.

**You need to review a text you have read before.** Skimming is also an efficient way to refresh your memory of large amounts of material before an exam. Skimming a text that you have already read helps you recall content and structure.

## **Skimming is not…**

Skimming can present problems if not done intentionally. Skimming is not simply flipping through a text quickly or paying half attention to it. When skimming, be deliberate and intentional with what you choose to read, and make sure that you are focused. Skimming is not a lazy way out or a half-hearted attempt at reading. Make sure that you use it carefully and strategically and are able to walk away with the main ideas of the text.

## **Skimming methods**

**Beginnings & endings:** Read first and last sentences of paragraphs, first and last paragraphs of major sections, and introductions and summaries of chapters.

**Wheat vs. chaff:** Read only the amount of text necessary to determine if a section presents a main idea or support for a main idea.

**Visual & verbal cues:** Watch for signal words and phrases that indicate an author’s direction (e.g., however, although, moreover, in addition to). Things to focus on while skimming:

* Introduction and conclusion
* Chapter/section summaries
* First and last sentences
* Titles, subtitles, and headings
* Bold words
* Charts, graphs, or pictures
* End of chapter review questions

## **When to skim**

There are certain texts that lend themselves to skimming better than others. It is typically less beneficial to skim novels, poetry, and short stories or texts that do not have text features. Non-fiction texts, like textbooks, journal articles, and essays are typically full of information and text features and are more suited for skimming.

Skimming can also be a good tool for conducting research and writing papers. Typically, when researching or writing, you will not need to read every word of every text closely, but will benefit more from skimming while evaluating your sources or identifying information important to your work.

Finally, know your context. There may be some texts that you are better off reading closely and thoroughly. Some professors specifically tell you that they include small details from the textbook on exams. You may have some classes that are just difficult to understand, and you may find that reading closely helps you comprehend concepts better. Before skimming, spend some time thinking about your classes, professors, and needs to determine if you have any texts you may need to read more closely.

**Careful reading**

 refers to different operations where the **reader** attempts to extract complete meanings within or beyond sentences right up to the level of the entire text so as to construct the text macrostructure (Weir & Khalifa, 2008a; Khalifa & Weir, 2009)