Getting started on your research reading

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First … a quick discussion about your research

• what is the purpose of your research project?
• what materials and methods will be used?
• how will it be organised?
“WHAT IS ACADEMIC DISCOURSE?”

• Different traditions, conventions and ways of thinking

• Disciplinarity

• Key into those conventions as you read, read, read, and then read some more, and then start to write, write, and write using them

• There are some common (micro/macro) patterns

THE SCIENCES ??

An IMRD-staged scientific research article is divided into specific sections:

Introduction
Methods & Materials
Results
Discussion
IMRD STAGING OR STRUCTURING

In a STRICT scientific way it basically answers:

- why and where the study was done
- what was its purpose
- what materials and methods were used
- what did the study find
- what do the results mean
- why does it matter
- and what is next?

Reading the Research

Reading with a purpose

What can you do to read with a purpose for your

- RESEARCH FOCUS?

- INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION?
Reading with a purpose

- Understand how the whole is made up of parts
- Understand how the parts are related
- Understand which parts are missing
- Decide what the essential elements are

ANALYTICAL READING/WRITING

- You need to read *analytically* while you are reading *descriptively* for your Lit Review.
- You need to *make connections* between the descriptions, and ask more developed *analytical* or *critical* questions of your reading.
- What gives you the right to *be critical* of others’ work?
KNOWLEDGE

- You need to keep on READING.
- You need to BUILD UP YOUR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
- You need to keep on READING
- You need to develop a SYSTEM with your READING
- You need to keep on READING.

[READING] ACADEMIC WRITING

it’s not just sentences

- Headers and sub-headings, and note bold and slightly larger fonts, or italics.
- Visual cues to information-structure and important information.
- Diagrams/images: are not just inserted; use them to gain a macro-view, and as a guide to specifics.
READING STRATEGIES

Entry points into the process:

- Previewing (look at the title, keywords, flip through)
- Skimming (for an overview)
- Scanning (to locate specific information or ideas)
- Close reading (to extract certain detail)
- Reading analytically (text structure, categories, hierarchies)
- Reading critically (connecting new information to what you already know)

Reading CRITICALLY means to make judgments:

• The truth, merit, relevance, effectiveness, breadth, contribution of something to a particular field [or your area of investigation].

• Comes from an understanding of its informational structure.

• Information is connected to what you already know or have read previously.

• Then you’ll be able to reflect on the validity and significance of information and ideas.
Reading a research article?

Collect information on these questions:

- **Who** wrote the article and what are the author’s qualifications?
- **When** was it written?
- **Who** is the article for?
- **Why** was the study carried out?
- **What** is the author’s main point, or thesis?
- **How** has the author collected the data?
- **What** results were found?
- **What** relevant sources does the author use?
- **What** limits did the author place on the study?
- **What** aspects of this study are relevant to your research question/area?

APPLICATION TASK

Using your research article:

1. Using previewing, skimming and scanning, get a sense of the basic information in the article.

1. Answer the set of descriptive questions which allow you to extract the most relevant information.

Discuss what you have done, how, and why with someone else in the allotted time.
FINAL DISCUSSION

General questions and answers