

# Reading Strategies



In this lesson you will:



- find the main idea of the text through the use of skimming techniques
- find specific information from the text through the use of scanning techniques



## Introduction

There are different styles of reading for different situations. The technique you choose will depend on the purpose for reading. For example, you might be reading for enjoyment, information, or to complete a task. If you are exploring or reviewing, you might **skim** a document. If you're searching for information, you might **scan** for a particular word. You need to adjust your reading speed and technique depending on your purpose.

Web pages, textbooks, manuals, magazines, newspapers, and mail are just a few of the things that people read every day. Effective and efficient readers learn to use many styles of reading for different purposes.



**Read the advertisements for printers on the next page and then, with your partner, answer the questions. See who in your group/class can finish first.**

1. How many laser printers are advertised here? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there a printer that operates by spraying ink droplets onto paper? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which laser printer offers the highest resolution, or output quality? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which printer is the most expensive? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Which one would you recommend to a friend who does not have much money? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Which one has more internal fonts? \_\_\_\_\_
7. A printer language is software that tells printers how to print a document. Can you find two types of laser printer languages? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What connectivity features are offered by the Turbo Laser Writer QR? \_\_\_\_\_
9. A very common feature in advertisements is the use of abbreviations. Find the abbreviations for these expressions: dots per inch, characters per second, pages per minute, small computer system interface, and liquid-crystal display. \_\_\_\_\_

## Turbo Laser Writer QR

Workgroup laser printer. 15 pages per minute. 1,200 dpi for graphics. 36 MB of RAM. Includes Adobe PostScript and Hewlett Packard PCL printer languages. 75 resident fonts. Connectivity: one bi-directional parallel port, one LocalTalk port, and one Ethernet port for networks. 12 month warranty.

£1,150

## Stylus Dot-matrix Printer

Dot-matrix printer with 24 pins. Prints text and graphics. 450 cps. Compatible special interface. Free unlimited hotline support for our customers. One year on-site maintenance.

£179

## COLOUR POSTSCRIPT PRINTER

Colour printer. 40 Adobe Postscript fonts. 36 MB RAM with a SCSI Interface for an optional 20 MB hard disk. Parallel, serial and AppleTalk interfaces. HP plotter emulation. Thermal printing system. 30-day money-back guarantee and 1 year's on-site parts and labour.

£2,249

## Crystal Laser Printer II

14 pages per minute. 20 MB RAM. Two 200 sheet selectable input trays. LCD display. 80 internal scalable fonts. A resolution of 2,400 dpi. Comes with PostScript language and PCL (printer control language). Telephone hotline support.

£999

## COLOUR INK-JET

Stunning Plug & Play colour printer. Brilliant photo quality (up to 720 dpi) and fast-drying ink. Produces 8 pages per minute in plain text and 4 ppm in colour. 150 page paper tray. Fast, friendly service.

£210

## Micro Laser XT

Personal laser printer. 5 pages per minute. 4 MB RAM expandable to 64 MB. Parallel interface. 200 sheet input tray. 35 resident fonts. One-year on-site maintenance. Prints on a wide range of materials and sizes.

£649

This exercise practices **scanning** -- that means reading very fast to find specific information.

### What is scanning?

**Scanning** refers to **reading** a text **quickly** in order **to locate specific pieces of information**. When scanning you don't start from the beginning and read to the end. Instead, what you do is jump around in the text, trying to find the information you need. **When you scan, you can't read every word. You have to skip many words and look for information as quickly as you can.**



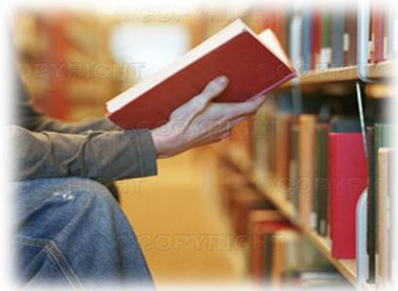
Many students try to read every word in a passage, so they read very slowly. **Scanning can help you improve your reading skills.** Practice with scanning helps you learn how to skip over words. You can learn to read faster and understand better.

**You can scan:**

- A table of contents in a book or magazine
- An index in a textbook
- A timetable
- The ads in a newspaper
- A list of movies in the newspaper
- A telephone book
- The page of a dictionary
- A passage/text/article to quickly find the information mentioned in the question.

**You usually don't scan:**

- A mystery story
- A textbook for an important course
- A map for finding your way home
- A question on a test



In this lesson, you will practice scanning. **Don't try to read every word. Scan to find specific information** for the answer to the questions. **Work fast.**

**Practice-1:**

**Scan the computer advertisement below to find the answers to these questions. Work fast!**

### New! BITOSHI Plus Notebook Computer

Only \$1,949 with 60GB HD

- 2.4 GHz Processor
- 512MB DDR memory
- DVD-RW/DVD-R/CD-RW combo drive
- 15.4" XGA display



### Super Noteworks Notebook Computer

Special price—\$1,349

- 2.8 GHz Processor
- 64MB Integrated video memory
- 40GB Ultra DMA HD



### BITOSHI desktop package

This month only! \$749

- 512MB DDR memory
- CD-RW drive
- 16" viewable flat-panel monitor
- TEXA color printer



### OPUS-WORKS desktop package

Save \$250! Pay only \$1,479

- 512MB DDR memory
- High-speed MX440 graphics card
- DVD-RW/CD-RW combo drive
- TEXA color printer



### COMPUTER TRAINING—Courses in:

\* Networking

\* Website development

\* Power Point

\* Troubleshooting

**dsi** data systems international

150 West 17th St., San Diego, CA 95661

M-F 9-5, Sat. & Sun. 10-6 or [www.dsi.com](http://www.dsi.com)

1. Which notebook computer has the lowest price?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the price of the computer that comes with a 16-inch flat-panel monitor?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the name of the computer store?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How many different courses can you take at this computer store?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Which computers come with printers?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the price of the OPUS-WORKS package?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Write two more questions about this advertisement.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Ask other students to scan the ad for the answers to your questions.**

**Practice-2:** Scan the passage below to find the answer to these questions.

1. What does MP3 stand for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the difference between MP3 and WAV files?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What kind of sound does MP3 strip out?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What kind of information is included in the tag?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Understanding MP 3

The name comes from MPEG (pronounced EM-peg), which stands for Motion Picture Experts Group, MPEG develops standards for audio and video compression. MP3 is actually MPEG Audio Layer 3.

MP3 competes with another audio file format called WAV. The key



difference is that MP3 files are much smaller than WAV files. An MP3 file can store a minute of sound per megabyte, while a WAV file needs 11 or 12 megabytes to hold the same amount.

How does MP3 achieve this compression? CDs and audio files don't reproduce every sound of a performance. Instead, they sample the performance and store a discrete code for each sampled note. A CD or WAV file may sample a song 44,000 times a second, creating a huge mass of information.



By stripping out sounds most people can't hear, MP3 significantly reduces the information stored. For instance, most people can't hear notes above a frequency of 16 kHz, so it eliminates them from the mix. Similarly, it eliminates quiet sounds masked by noise at the same frequency. The result is a file that sounds very similar to a CD, but which is much smaller. An MP3 file can contain spoken word performances, such as radio shows or audio books, as well

as music. It can provide information about itself in a coded block called a tag. The tag may include the performance's name, a graphic such as an album cover, the song's lyrics, the musical genre, and a URL for more details.

**Now read the passage quickly and then answer the questions below.**

Everyone knows the advantages of using e-mail. It's much faster than ordinary mail. It's much cheaper than the telephone. And it's easier than trying to meet with someone in person. However, it is not always good to use e-mail at work. Some companies are limiting the use of e-mail in their offices for several reasons.

One reason is that e-mail is only one-way. You send out your message and then you have to wait for an answer. This is not a problem if you need to send simple information. You may only need to know that the message was received. But if the message is more complicated, email is not so good. It's not good, for example, if you need to make a decision or a plan. It can take many messages and a lot of time to decide something by email. In that case, it's better to talk on the phone. Or, if you're in the same building, you should go meet in person. Then, you can also take a little walk and you can



get to know each other better. There is another problem with e-mail: You don't get much information from the message. You have only the words themselves. This doesn't matter if the message is just about facts or if it is not important. But it might cause trouble if the message is about something important. You can't tell much about the person who sent the message. You have no idea what she was thinking or feeling. You may put your own feelings into the messages. And this can lead to communication problem in a company.

In England, psychologists did some research about using e-mail at work. They studied office workers opening their e-mail. The psychologists measured the blood pressure of the workers. They found that certain kinds of messages made blood pressure go up. It went up if the messages seemed angry or negative. It also went up if the messages were from the boss. It went up the highest when the messages were both negative and from the boss.

The psychologists said that people should be careful how they use e-mail at work. This is especially true for the people with top jobs in a company. Their messages can easily hurt or upset people. They should never send important news by e-mail. They should always meet face to face with the person. Then, everyone will understand each other better and will work together better.

1. What is the passage mainly about?

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2. What is the main idea of this passage?

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This exercise practices **skimming** -- that means reading very fast to find only the main ideas of a text.

Speed is often important when you are reading. You may have a lot to read but not much time. In fact, you probably don't need to read everything carefully. You don't need to know and remember all of the facts and ideas. You only need to get the general meaning of a chapter, article, or passage. You can do this by **skimming**.

### What is Skimming?

**Skimming** refers to **reading** a paragraph **quickly to get an idea of what it is about**, without trying to understand its details. This is another technique whose purpose is to gain a quick overview in order **to identify the main ideas of a text**.

**When skimming**, you must change the way you read. You can't read every word or even every sentence, but you have to skip a lot. Some useful techniques are to **read the first and last sentences of paragraphs**, the **introduction**, and the **summary** if one is provided. When examples are given, you may want to read a few of them until you understand the concepts they are meant to illustrate.



When skimming a textbook, quickly note the title, subheadings, italicized words, boldfaces prints, and illustrations.

Both scanning and skimming can help you locate specific pieces of information and gain an overview of the main points in an article or text.

**Practice-3:**

**Read quickly through the text below, then answer:**

1. What is the passage about? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the main idea of the passage \_\_\_\_\_



Many of the robots in use today do jobs that are especially difficult for human workers. These are the types of jobs that require great strength or pose danger. For example, robots are particularly useful in the auto manufacturing industry where parts of automobiles must be welded together. A welding tool used by a human workers weights about 100 pounds or more and is difficult to handle. As mechanical supermen robots may be called upon to do anything from moving heavy components between workstations on a factory floor to carrying bags of cement.

## Practice-4:

Read quickly through the text below, then match each paragraph with the appropriate summary.

- (a) Network uses, past and present
- (b) How distributed systems work
- (c) Networks and the future
- (d) What networks are and how they operate
- (e) The growth of networks, past and present



## Computer networks

Computer networks link computers by communication lines and software protocols, allowing data to be exchanged rapidly and reliably. Traditionally, networks have been split between wide area networks (WANs) and local area networks (LANs). A WAN is a network connected over long-distance telephone lines, and a LAN is a localized network usually in one building or a group of buildings close together. The distinction, however, is becoming blurred. It is now possible to connect up LANs remotely over telephone links so that they look as though they are a single LAN. Originally, networks were used to provide terminal access to another computer and to transfer files between computers. Today, networks carry e-mail, provide access to public databases and bulletin boards, and are beginning to be used for distributed systems. Networks also allow users in one locality to share expensive resources, such as printers and disk-systems. Distributed computer systems are built using networked computers that co-operate to perform tasks. In this environment each part of the networked system does what it is best at. The high-quality bit-mapped graphics screen of a personal computer or workstation provides a good user interface. The mainframe, on the other hand, can handle large numbers of queries and return the results to the users. In a distributed environment, a user might use his PC to make a query against a

central database. The PC passes the query, written in a special language (e.g. Structured Query Language – SQL), to the mainframe, which then parses the query, returning to the user only the data requested. The user might then use his PC to draw graphs based on the data. By passing back to the user's PC only the specific information requested, network traffic is reduced. If the whole file were transmitted, the PC would then have to perform the query itself, reducing the efficiency of both network and PC.

In the 1980s, at least 100,000 LANs were set up in laboratories and offices around the world. During the early part of this decade, synchronous orbit satellites lowered the price of long-distance telephone calls, enabling computer data and television signals to be distributed more cheaply around the world. Since then, fibre-optic cable has been installed on a large scale, enabling vast amounts of data to be transmitted at a very high speed using light signals.

The impact of fibre optics will be considerably to reduce the price of network access. Global communication and computer networks will become more and more a part of professional and personal lives as the price of microcomputers and network access drops. At the same time, distributed computer networks should improve our work environments and technical abilities.

## Practice-5:

**Read the text quickly and then answer the questions below.**

Copying music from the Internet is the latest craze sweeping the world. With the spread of broadband, digital downloading is revolutionizing the way we listen to and purchase music. However, as CD sales plummet, many believe that illegal downloading poses a grave threat to the music industry, putting thousands of jobs at risk. On the other hand, some music fans maintain that illegal downloading is a victimless crime.



Since the late nineties, it has been possible to upload one's entire CD collection and make it available via the Internet without the permission of the recording company or artist. Millions of people now download tracks, and play them on the latest portable audio players. In 2004, 900 million tracks were illegally downloaded. Many draw a connection between CD sales, down from \$40bn to \$33bn over the past five years, and downloading and piracy (in 2001, 28% of all CDs sold were pirated copies).

Many people who engage in illegal downloading see nothing wrong with copying tracks. They claim the music industry already earns billions of dollars, charges far too much for CDs, and pays recording artists millions in royalties. In addition, the people who download music illegally are actually some of the highest spenders on CDs, and commonly use the Internet to sample tracks before making a purchase.

With the download culture going mainstream, the music industry is beginning to fight back with a business strategy that deals with the demand for downloadable music. Over 14,000 people have faced legal action for allegedly sharing music online. Legal alternatives are emerging which allow consumers to download a music track for as little as 70 cents. So far, millions of songs have been legally downloaded and the number continues to grow. CD prices are also being slashed, often by as much as 30%. As the music industry gets to grips with the download culture, visits to high street music stores could soon become a thing of the past.

1. What is the passage about? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is main idea of each paragraph?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why has illegal downloading become popular?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

4. How is the music industry fighting back?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_