

STUDYUP:
KNOWLEDGE TO GO

How to read effectively for study

National Centre for Teaching and Learning

Learning outcomes

By the end of this workshop, you should have a better idea how to:

- Read with a purpose
- Adjust your reading technique for purpose
- Take notes

Reading myths

- You need to read most of what's on your reading list, starting at the top and working your way down.
- All books and articles are well written and truthful.
- You can't really disagree with an academic text, because you're not an expert.
- Intelligent people only need to read things once



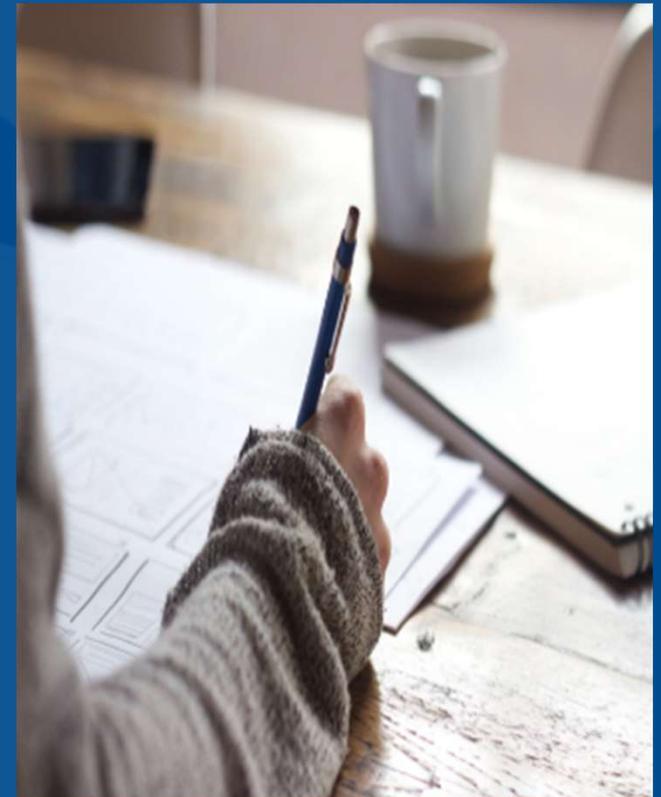
Stay awake – active reading

I pick up my textbook, but find myself daydreaming about what to have for dinner, or the tv show I watched last night...

- Reading for study requires not just your eyes, it requires active effort that engages your brain.
- Try *active reading*: techniques to help you concentrate and stay focused.

Active reading techniques

- Have a clear purpose
Why are you reading the book/article?
- Adjust reading technique for purpose
Scanning, skimming, close reading
- Link back to what you already know
How does it relate to what you've experienced/read?
- Take notes
Finding a method that suits you and the purpose



How do you know what to read?

Weekly study:

- Understand course lecturer's expectations
- See Stream (text book chapters for that week, selected readings)

For assignments:

- Understand assignment question
- Start with relevant sections of textbook
- List of readings
- Consult lecture and tutorial notes



Taking control of your reading

Understanding assignment questions

- What is the topic? What is the focus? What are you being asked to write about?
- Use the essay question to guide your selection of readings.

Sample essay question:

To what extent is there a correlation between the levels of happiness experienced by cats, and the dog being made to sleep outside?

Broad topic

Focus



Possible articles from your reading list

Which ones are relevant?

Parts will be relevant

Gibney, J., & Vorster, H. (2002). *The psychology of cats and dogs: An introduction*. London, England: Blackwell.

Looks directly relevant

Whitney, J. (2004). Levels of happiness in cats. *The International Journal of Pet Psychology*, 1, 22-45.

Doesn't look relevant

McArdle, J., & Katch, M. (1998). *The history of domestic pets in Samoa*. London, England: Penguin.

Searching for additional sources

Which ones would you use?

Graham, C. (2005, January 12). Why cats and dogs fight.
Australian Women's Weekly, 21(1), 21-24.

Dog-cat relationship. (2012). Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relationships_between_cats_and_dogs

Frey, T., & James, B. (2009). Addressing levels of happiness and aggression in felines and canines. *Journal of Feline and Canine Medicine and Surgery*, 7(29), 1-2.

Dog, G. (2004). *Why cats should be eliminated from the planet*. Retrieved from <http://www.dogpreservationsociety.org/>

Sources checklist

- What type of source is it? (book, journal article, information from a website etc.)
- Who wrote it and when?
- Is it relevant, reliable and academic? (if not, is that ok?)
- Why are you going to read it (what do you want to get out of it?)
 - a definition?
 - background information?
 - is some of it relevant for your argument?
 - is it a major theory/topic for your assignment/paper

Take control of the reading list

Start with minimum, then think about:

- Do you need to clarify some ideas/learn more?
- How much time do you have?
- Assignment due in a few weeks?

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How do you know how much to read?

Remind yourself:

- Why are you reading this article?
- Keep assignment questions in sight

Ask yourself:

- How does it relate to your assignment?
 - Does all of it relate, or just some of it?
- Where will you find the information you need?
- Do you need to scan it quickly, or read it thoroughly?
 - Adjust reading technique to suit your purpose



Different ways to read:

1. Scanning
2. Skimming (or gist reading)
3. Close reading (in-depth reading)



Scanning

Looking over material quickly in order to pick out specific information

Why scan information?

- Browsing a database for texts
- Scanning a text for specific information
 - Eg. A **definition** of a concept
 - Table of contents/Index
 - in the text
 - pdf documents: Ctrl f
- Looking back over material



Adjust reading technique to suit purpose

Skimming (Gist reading)

Reading something quickly to get general idea of whole

- Books: Introduction, headings, subheadings
- Journal articles: Abstract

Useful for:

- Deciding whether to read or reject a text
- Deciding whether to read in more detail
- Getting an overview to help with close reading



Close reading

Reading something in detail

- To clearly understand the topic
- To take notes and use information for an assignment
- To take make notes for tests and exams



A few tips for close reading

- Understand structure of different text types
 - eg. journal articles, textbooks
- Use reading aids in textbooks
 - Learning outcomes
 - Chapter summaries and questions
 - Index and glossary
- Use provided examples/cases
 - there to help you understand
- Consciously link new information to what you already know
 - your own experience
 - lecture notes, previous sections studied
 - what you've read in the text already



Linking to what you've already read in a text

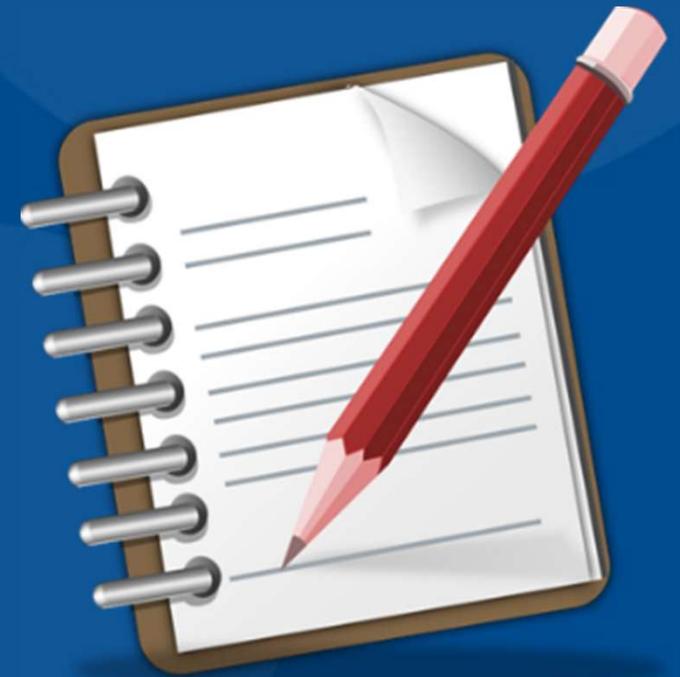
- Textbooks present knowledge in a **cumulative** way
 - Any chapter/section prepares you for the next chapter/section
- Go back in the text to move forward in understanding
 - previous chapters, paragraphs, sentences



Keeping track of information you've read

Taking notes:

- Helps you remember
- Helps you learn
- Helps you stay awake while reading!

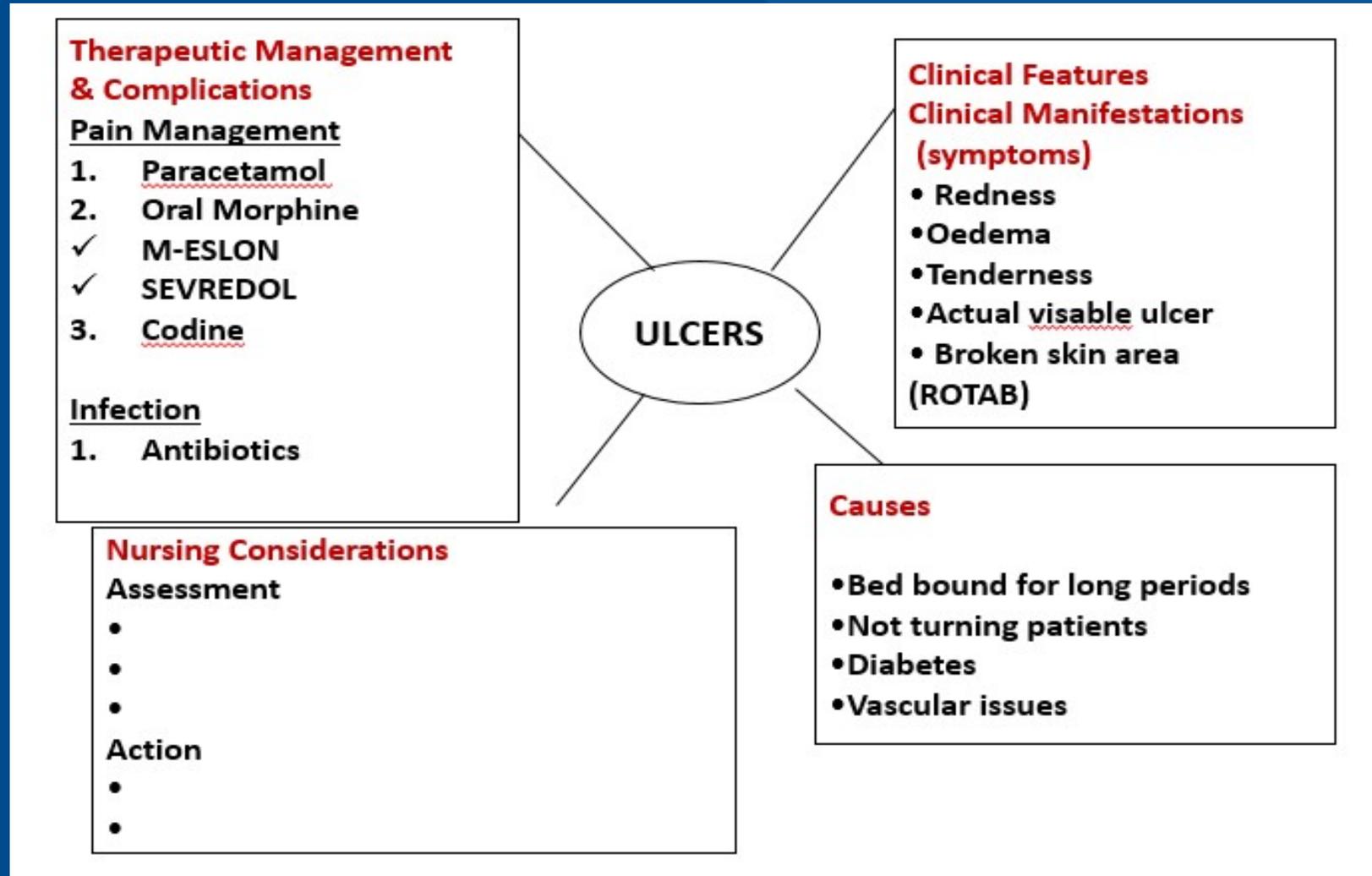


Experiment with different note-taking formats

- Mind maps
- Cornell method
- Outlining method
- Charting method
- Study matrix
- Annotated bibliography



Mind map



Note-taking method

Cornell method

Example of Cornell Note Taking Method

**Keyword /
Concept goes here**

Key word/
Concept

Description of Keyword or concept

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Duis ligula lorem, consequat eget, tristique nec, auctor quis, purus. Vivamus ut sem. Fusce aliquam nunc vitae purus. Aenean viverra malesuada libero. Fusce ac quam. Donec neque. Nunc venenatis enim nec quam. Cras faucibus, justo vel accumsan aliquam, tellus dui fringilla quam, in condimentum augue lorem non tellus. Pellentesque id arcu non sem placerat iaculis. Curabitur posuere, pede vitae lacinia accumsan, enim nibh elementum orci, ut volutpat eros sapien nec sapien. Suspendisse neque arcu, ultrices commodo, pellentesque sit amet, ultricies ut, ipsum. Mauris et eros eget erat dapibus mollis. Mauris laoreet posuere odio. Nam ipsum ligula, ullamcorper eu, fringilla at, lacinia ut, augue. Nullam nunc.

Description
of key word/
concept

SUMMARY:

It is important to prepare for lecture by reading or previewing the material.

Your summary

Outlining method

Write a series of topics and sub-topics:

Main topic
 Subtopic
 Detailed point 1
 Detailed point 2
Main topic 2
 Subtopic
 Detailed point 1
 Detailed point 2

Use indenting,
numbering or
bulleting to identify
levels of topic

Note-taking methods

Charts

Especially good for planning **compare** and **contrast** questions

3 basic issues	Piaget	Vygotsky
Continuous or discontinuous development?	Discontinuous – stages of development	Continuous – gradually acquire skills
One course of development or many?	One – stages are universal	Many possible courses
Nature or nurture most important?	Both nature and nurture	Both nature and nurture

Annotated Bibliography

For cross-referenced notes on individual readings

Thomson, K.H. (2016). The way forward to equity. In A. Bell (Ed.). Issues of social justice,

- Argues that
- Addresses ...
- Recognises ...
- Rejects ...
- Advocates ...

See OWLL for more on note-taking

Top tips for note-taking

- When copying direct quotes make them stand out
 - use a different colour
 - use obvious quotation marks
- Avoid highlighter syndrome
 - passive reading
- Work with others in reading, understanding and taking notes



Before lectures:

- Read set readings
- Preview appropriate sections of textbook/study guide
 - Headings
 - Introduction
 - Key concepts (may appear as margin notes)
 - Diagrams
 - Chapter summaries
- Note down key topics/ideas found
- Mentally re-run previous lecture