

## Reading Academic Articles



### Warm-up

**Discuss in small groups.**

1. How often do you have to read academic articles? How many of the articles you read are in English?
2. How do you go about reading those articles?
3. Do you read them in one go (from beginning to end without stopping), or do you use specific strategies?
4. What challenges do you face when trying to understand or summarize research papers?

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### Vocabulary Work

Below are key terms you will hear in the instructional video. Match them to their definitions.

<b>SKIMMING</b>	<b>THESIS</b>	<b>HEADING</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>ARGUMENT</b>	<b>CRITICAL EYE</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>

#### Definitions:

1. A brief summary at the beginning of an academic paper that provides an overview of the paper's content.
2. A part of a paper where the final remarks and findings are presented.
3. A general statement of the main point or claim of the paper.
4. A section of a paper where the writer explains the approach or techniques used in the study.
5. A brief, fast reading to get an overall idea of the content.
6. The reasoning and justification given for a claim or idea presented in the paper.
7. A section title that marks the beginning of a new topic or part of the paper.
8. The ability to assess and question the validity or logic of arguments presented in a paper.

#### Prior to watching (say why/why not)

1. You should read an academic paper from beginning to end, like a story. (True / False)
2. The abstract helps you quickly understand the main points of the paper. (True / False)
3. The conclusion section provides a summary of the methodology used in the study. (True / False)
4. The introduction section of a paper usually outlines the background and purpose of the research. (True / False)
5. The headings in a paper help you quickly locate the main sections and understand the structure of the paper. (True / False)

Watch the following [video](#) on how to read academic papers.

**Step-by-Step Summary**

Summarize the video in three short paragraphs, one for each reading pass. You can use full sentences, bullet points, or even diagrams.

Pass 1: Framework

Pass 2: Detailed Reading

Pass 3: Critical Reflection

## Group Discussion

How did the video change your approach to reading academic papers? What new strategies are you planning to try?

## Activity 1: Read an Article

### Pre-Read Instructions:

1. **Skim the Abstract and Conclusion First (3-5 mins):** Begin by reading the abstract and conclusion to get an overview of the paper's main points and the author's findings.
2. **Scan the Structure (4-5 mins):** Pay attention to the introduction and the section headings to understand the structure of the paper.
3. **Underline Unfamiliar Words:** As you read, underline any unfamiliar words or phrases that you can look up later.
4. **Read Strategically:** Don't read every word. Instead, focus on the key arguments and findings of the paper.

### Goals for the Reading:

- **Goal 1:** Identify the main argument or thesis of the paper.
- **Goal 2:** Highlight the key findings or conclusions from the research.
- **Goal 3:** Understand the paper's contribution to the field by focusing on the introduction and conclusion sections.

*Your notes*

## OPTIONAL Activity 2: Critical Reflection (Critical Eye)

Template for Reflection:

- 1. Argument Clarity:
  - Was the paper's argument clearly stated?
  - Was the evidence used to support the argument convincing?
- 2. Methods Evaluation:
  - Are the methods used in the study sound and appropriate for the research question?
- 3. Conclusions:
  - Do you agree with the conclusions of the paper? Why or why not?
- 4. Assumptions:
  - What assumptions does the author make? Are these assumptions valid or questionable?

Checklist for Critical Reflection:

- Argument: The paper clearly presents its main argument.
- Evidence: The evidence supports the main argument effectively.
- Methods: The research methods are clearly described and seem appropriate.
- Conclusions: The conclusions are based on solid evidence and logical reasoning.
- Assumptions: The author's assumptions are clearly identified and assessed.

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### Appendix

#### Common Components of Original Research Articles\*

*\*Note that not every article contains ALL the components listed below.*

Title	Offers clues to article's main topic.
Author(s)	Describes who is responsible for this work. May be one person, a group, or an institution. Make note of authors and institutions you see repeatedly during your search process.
Abstract	Summarizes article contents and findings; may include methodology.
Keywords	Describe the content in quick words or phrases. Help you place the work in context with other literature. Good for quick reference!
Introduction	Summarizes the article's main idea, thesis, or research question. Should answer the question, "Why this?" Includes background knowledge on the topic and provides information about research motivations, impact, or purpose.
Literature Review	Places the research in context with prior work. Analyzes important contributions that the author(s) believe are relevant and that the article builds upon to create new knowledge. Sometimes includes a theoretical framework. A good place to look to find additional sources for your research!

Methods (or Methodology)	An explanation of how and why the authors approached the examination of their question and the collection of data. May include information about the limitations of their chosen methodology.
Discussion	An examination of the meaning and implications of the research for existing and future exploration.
Figures	Graphical representation of findings and other relevant information. Includes charts, graphs, maps, images, tables, etc. Look at figures during your initial scan to determine relevancy and quality.
Conclusion	A synthesis of the findings and importance of the research.