

## SKIMMING AND SCANNING

Skimming and scanning are two forms of selective reading. The reader does not read all the content. Instead he/she consciously selects and reads only portions of the text, skipping over a considerable amount. The rate used for skimming or scanning may be 200-400% faster than the normal reading rate.

I SKIMMING : Skimming can provide a good idea of what the author is writing about, what main topics will be covered, the general sequence of major ideas and the kind of approach used by the author.

A key decision a student must make while skimming is how much to leave unread. Sometimes this figure will be as high as 50% of the content.

There are two approaches which can be used for skimming:

1. Read the first sentence of each paragraph or the first several sentences, or if the material dictates, read up to 50% of the paragraph.
2. Move the eyes along the first line or two of each paragraph and then float over the remainder of the paragraph, picking up any words, names, dates or other material of high stimulus value on the way to the start of the next paragraph.

II SCANNING : Scanning is a process that involves looking for something. We all scan when we look for a particular number in the telephone book. The reader knows exactly what he/she is looking for; the structure or organization of the material is a guide which helps in this search. When the reader finds the portion of the material that he/she knows will contain the information, he/she begins to read more slowly and carefully.

A student should search through the subheadings and headings, graphics material (charts, graphs, figures, illustrations), and names, dates and words in bold-face or italic type to aid in the search. Scanning is directly influenced by the organization of the material and the types of locational guides which the author may have written into the material.

SKIMMING AND SCANNING are reading skills . They have to be practiced in order to be of any help to the reader. At all times, a student should refer to the Guide for Flexibility in Reading Rate to make sure that his choice to skim or scan is an appropriate one according to the material he is reading.