

Student Worksheets

Strategic Reading

Core Unit (90 min)

of the starter course module

Reading Academic Texts in English

The following activities will help you read academic texts in English. Particular emphasis will be given to strategies that can be used when reading to get an overview, reading to find a specific piece of information and for detailed reading. These strategies can be applied to any academic text, independent of its specific content.

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Starter course

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For more information about the research project, see our website: <http://www.mumis-projekt.de/>

For questions and feedback please contact us at: mumis-projekt@uni-siegen.de

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Activity 1: Scanning



🕒 1 min

Two sequences of a text will be displayed for 20 seconds each. Scan both sequences to find the term carbon nanosheets.

In which sequence did you find the term carbon nanosheets?

Sequence 1 ☐

Sequence 2 ☐



Activity 2: Which Strategy for Which Purpose?

🕒 5 min

Which strategies would you regard as useful for each of the following scenarios? Choose at least two strategies per scenario and connect them with arrows. You can find the characteristics of the four reading strategies on page 2 of the reference material. The first one has already been done for you.

Scenarios

1

You have to prepare a presentation about the central points of a text which your lecturer has recommended to you. How do you approach the text?

2

You are going to write a term paper and you are searching for texts that might be relevant for your topic. You have already found some texts that seem to be connected to the topic. How can you find out which of the texts are most relevant for your term paper?

3

You have to read a text about the topic you are going to deal with in the next session of your seminar. How do you know which information will be most important? How do you extract these pieces of information from the text?

Strategies

Activating
background
knowledge

Scanning

Asking
questions

Skimming



Activity 3: Trying to Infer a Word's Meaning

5 min

What could the nonsense word *ewozzle* mean in this sentence? How do you come to this conclusion?

“In the classical theory
black holes can only
absorb and not ewozzle
particles”

(to) *ewozzle* ≈ _____

Unaltered text in: Hawking 1975: 199.

Example: Recognising Sentence Structure

“We propose a framework of factors required by people to perform their jobs.

1. Capability, 2. Opportunity, 3. Motivation

These three components are derived from a long research tradition suggesting that individual performance is a multiplicative function of ability and motivation (Vroom 1964, Maier 1955, Cummings and Schwab 1973), subsequent critiques of the simple model (Campbell and Pritchard 1976) that suggest that the environment determines the expression of ability and motivation (Gilbreth 1909, Dachler and Mobley 1973), and recent work suggesting that situational constraints and opportunity are key to a theory of work performance (Peters and O'Connor 1980, Blumberg and Pringle 1982)”¹

¹ Taken from: Boudreau, John W., Wallace Hopp, John O. McClain and L. Joseph Thomas (2002). “On the Interface Between Operations and Human Resources Management”. *CAHRS Working Paper Series*. Paper 63.



Activity 4: Handling Unfamiliar Words

10 min

Have a look at the text.

Choose three of the words in bold print and apply the strategies you have just learned about in order to infer the words' meanings without the help of a dictionary.

Try to formulate definitions, find synonyms, or make an attempt at translating the words.

Afterwards, you may want to consult a dictionary to verify or disprove your hypotheses about the meanings of the words.

"In the view of T.H. Marshall, the eighteenth century was the century of civil rights, the nineteenth century was the century of political rights, and the twentieth was the century of social rights. If this is so, there is a reasonable **prospect** that the twenty-first century will be dominated by **advances** in *economic rights*.

In the era of globalization and flexible **labour relations**, inequalities and **insecurities** can be expected to remain **pervasive**, which will mean that new form[s] of redistribution and social protection will be required to **rectify** what many see as intolerable **strains**. And yet in the early years of the century, mainstream **policymakers** seemed resolutely determined to give as little attention to **redistribution** as possible. Both 'Third Wayists' and 'Compassionate Conservatives' have placed most of their emphasis on the 'duties', 'obligations' and 'responsibilities' of individuals. They have gone further, much further, in telling people how they should behave, and in seeking to use taxes and **benefits** to encourage behaviour of which they approve, reward those who behave in the approved way and punishing those who do not. The resultant *fiscalization* of social policy is one of the great trends of the era. It is bringing with it shades of social engineering"²

1. _____


2. _____

3. _____

² Standing, Guy (2005). "Introduction". In: Guy Standing (ed.) *Promoting income security as a right: Europe and North America*. London; New York: Anthem Press. p. xiii.



Activity 5: How is the Text Organised?

 10 min

Read the text “*Promoting income security as a right: Europe and North America*”:

Try to divide the text into sections according to its organisational structure (e.g. “Presentation of the central problem”, “Summary”/“Conclusion”, “Hypothesis 1/2/3/...”, “Introduction”, “Arguments for/against...”, ...).

The first one has already been done for you.

Sections

“In the view of T.H. Marshall, the eighteenth century was the century of civil rights, the nineteenth century was the century of political rights, and the twentieth was the century of social rights. If this is so, there is a reasonable prospect that the twenty-first century will be dominated by advances in *economic rights*.”

Introduction /
Topic

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