



Scanning and skimming

Scanning and skimming are NOT equivalent to reading. They are to be used only for certain purposes: either when material and purpose permit OR time demands.

Scanning

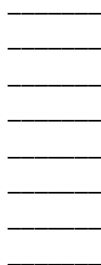
This is a method of covering pages and paragraphs quickly in search of the answer to one question, i.e., in search of one detail, one fact, one item. Scanning involves a few procedures. Decide what you're looking for and in what form it will most likely appear in print: a name, a statistic, a concept, etc. Scan for appropriate clues: capital letters to locate names, numbers to pinpoint statistics, related words to indicate concepts. Develop a mental set to scan only for what you're seeking; don't be distracted by other words, pictures, etc. Only likely clues should come into sharp focus; the rest should be "hazy." Use an appropriate scanning pattern: one which will enable you to cover material quickly and thoroughly, yet keep you from becoming involved in the sequence of presentation.

There are a few common patterns you will come across as you scan: wide columns, narrow columns, and whole pages. Tailor your scanning pattern to the type of text you encounter.

WIDE COLUMNS



NARROW COLUMNS



WHOLE PAGE



Skimming

This is a method of reading only selected portions of material in order to obtain knowledge of the general ideas and major supporting details. It is **not** a casual, haphazard process in which the reader winds up with only a vague idea about what he has read. It **is** a highly selective process requiring intense concentration and constant analysis and integration of those portions of the material that are read.

The procedures for skimming differ from those of scanning. The general intent of the skimming process is to eliminate reading everything except those key sentences and key words that are most likely to contain the essence of the information. Read the title, introductory remarks, and Table of Contents. Read the first paragraph that really introduces the chapter. Don't be distracted by attention-getting anecdotes. Quickly survey the entire chapter. Read the first sentence of each paragraph, and then anticipate what clues it gives you about the rest of the paragraph. Scan (using steps on previous page) to pick up the key words essential to completing the main idea and key details of the paragraph. Read the last sentence of the paragraph if necessary. Read the concluding paragraphs. Be flexible. Read a whole paragraph if it really seems to be "meaty;" skip a whole paragraph if it is superfluous, repetitious, or just an anecdote.

