

## How to Read a Book

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### General Ideas

- We don't need to know everything about something to understand it
  - Reading has to be done active to some degree
  - How much someone understands is correlated to the amount of work put into understanding
  - The first priority of reading should be understanding
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- Understanding is deeper, if you don't just know what is being said but what it means and why it is being said

### 4 Stages of Reading

1. Elementary Reading

Achieving Literacy and learning the basics of reading

- Understanding the meaning of sentences
- Understanding the words, grammar and sentences that are

2. Inspectional Reading

- Focused on the time it needs to read a certain amount
- Understanding the topic of the material.
- Recognizing the parts of a book and the structure
- Vary your reading speed. Do through unimportant paragraphs faster and slow for things you ant to understand.
- Don't speed read. You will lack understanding.

Stages of Inspectional Reading

<b>Stage 1: Skimming &amp; pre-Reading</b>	Goal: Checking if something is worth reading
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Look at the title</li><li>2. Study the table of contents</li><li>3. Look at the index</li><li>4. Read the Publishers Blurb</li><li>5. Look for chapters that support the core arguments</li><li>6. Go through the pages and read single paragraph/pages</li><li>7. Look at the last pages</li></ol>
<b>Stage 2: Superficial Reading</b>	Goal: Approaching difficult books?
	Read through first time without stopping or understanding everything. Look for what you understand. Read it multiple times.

Questions to ask about the Book

1. What is it about?
2. What are the main ideas?
3. Is the book true and how much?
4. Why does the author think like he does?

Techniques to use

<b>Underlining</b>	Major Points
<b>Vertical Lines</b>	Key Arguments
<b>Symbols</b>	Extra special points
<b>Numbers in the Margin</b>	Sequences of points
<b>References to other pages</b>	Parallels between points
<b>Circling of key points</b>	Major points
<b>Writing in the Margin</b>	Summary of the content

3 Types of Notetaking

- Notes cover these types of information about the book:

<b>Structural Notetaking:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General subject</li><li>• Structure of the book</li><li>• Order of ideas</li></ul>
<b>Conceptual Notetaking:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ideas arguments and concepts</li></ul>
<b>Dialectical Notetaking:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comparing several books</li><li>• Boarder discussion and context</li></ul>

3. Analytical Reading

1. Know what kind of book you are reading
2. State the content of the book in a few sentences
3. Visualize the different parts of the book and how they are put together
4. Find out what problems the author tried to solve
5. Find the most important words and what they mean for the author (Coming to terms)
6. Mark the most important sentences and find their propositions
7. Find the arguments of the book
8. Find out what the solutions are
9. Get a good understanding of the things before agreeing or disagreeing
10. Disagree with reason, not with conflict or argument.
11. Give reason to every judgement you make

Being able to say:

*The book is about \_\_\_\_.*  
*It is divided into \_\_\_\_.* *Number of parts with contents \_\_\_\_.*  
*These parts are divided into \_\_\_\_.*

Intentional Fallacy

The misconception to assume you can recover the authors full intention for writing by reading.

Coming to Terms with an Author

- It is necessary for two communicating parties to use the same words and have the same meaning for them
- Term = ambiguous word or phrase
- Words you have trouble to understand
- Words the author uses in a special way
- Find the small set of words that express the ideas of an author
- Find the meaning for the author by reading it in context
- Make a List of the important words
- Problem of Synonyms:  
The usage of synonyms makes it harder to spot the key terms.

Determining an Authors Message

- Look for the prepositio of a book
- Every argument of an author consists
- Look for words like
  - Because
  - If
  - Then
  - Since
  - Therefore
  - It follows

1. Divide the book into parts
2. Identify the statements and claims of the author
3. Look at the arguments behind the statements
4. Understand the terms of an author in context of the arguments

- Put speial emphasis on the sentences that are hard to understand
- State the suggestions in your own words
- Find the sequence of statements that form the argument
- Look for summaries at the en of the book or chapter
- Make sure you understand the **conclusion AND the reason**
- Look for **assumptions the author makes and maybe not states**
- Judge the validity of the argument to see if the conclusion is worth consiering
- Which problems did the author try to solve?
- Find out if they have been solved or not
- To see if you understand, make an effort to find an example of applicaiton

Critisizing a Book

- Try to first get the whole argument
- Analyse the arguments on where you agree or disagree
- Distinguish between knowledge and an opinion
- Discuss where the author is uninformed, misinformed or illogical
- Did the authos solve every problem he tried to solve?

4. Synoptical Reading

- More than one book is relevant to a question
- Problem: the topics of books vary drastically
- **Dialectical Objectivity:** recognising all opinions without taking one
- **Synoptical Paradox:**  
**The paradox of synoptical Reading:** If you don't know what books to read, you cannot read synoptically. If you cannot read synoptically you don't know what to read

5 Steps to Synoptical Reading

- Make a list of books that seem relevant
- Inspect them loosely to get a clear idea of the subject.
- Sort them by relevance. Start with the most relevant
- Find the relevant passages
- Frame a set of question

1. Finding important passages:

- Focus on your own goals
- Find what suits your needs
- Identify what could be useful

2. Bringing the authors to terms:

- Establish your own terms
- Bring the authors to your terms by summarising in your own words

3. Getting the questions clear:

- Set questions that define your problem

4. Defining the issues:

- Compare the different answers to the questions

5. Analysing the discussion:

- Ask the questions in a particular order
- Be able to defend that order
- Analyse why they disagree
- Be able to find the passaes in the books