

Professional Communication Skills

Part-5



Small, pocket-sized dictionaries provide only the most commonly used words and definitions. If you look up resistance in one of these dictionaries, you will probably only find the root word, resist, with several common endings but no mention of current flow.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are technical or scientific dictionaries that offer only technical terms and definitions. One example is *Websters World Dictionary of Computer Terms* by Bryan Pfaffenberg (Que. 1999). If you look up resistance in this book, you will find only the electronic, usage. This dictionary and others like it are useful guides for beginning technical students and people who need to read technical information.

"College editions" and large dictionaries include the comma and used definitions as well as an extensive number of technical definitions of terms that are used in different scientific disciplines. Keys such as Elec. or Mech. indicate the specific definition used in technology. If you look up resistance, you may find seven or more distinct definitions of how the word is used in different disciplines.

7.11 EXTENDED DEFINITIONS

Some objects or concepts require more than a one-sentence definition. An extended definition might require a paragraph or even several pages to fully define a complex concept or object. An extended definition includes the standard definition sentence, but also provides more details that describe the object. It can contain related definitions and examples that illustrate the term.

The following paragraph defines harassment by providing not only a definition, but also two differing situations under which harassment can occur and the legal consequences of each one.

Harassment is words or actions that are designed to threaten, intimidate, and/or make a person's workplace or educational environment unbearable and intolerable. E-mail can be harassing. If harassment occurs in the workplace and is directed toward employees of a certain race, ethnic group, age, disability, religion, or gender, then it is a violation of state and local EEO laws. If harassment is in an educational setting and is directed at students, then civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in educational and/or public institutions are violated.

More commonly, extended definitions include examples that illustrate and clarify the term or idea. For example, the author clarifies the definition of an e-mail discussion group by comparing it to an electronic roundtable:

An e-mail discussion group (newsgroup, listserv, chat room, etc.) is nothing more than an electronic roundtable. As with any roundtable, the participants share information about a particular topic. A subscriber to the group may ask other group members for a reference about a product or person, e.g., "Has anyone used (fill in name of product or service)? or has anyone worked with (fill in name of person or organization)?" Sometimes a subscriber warns or "advises" other subscribers about a product or vendor.

12. SUMMARY

Writing summary is a special skills one need to develop in his career. Summaries are condensed from of the matter. It contains all relevant details and important points. It helps in quick revision. The summaries are abstract and executive in nature. We can manifest the art of writing summaries by following few tips mentioned above. The technical definitions are needed to be designed for preparing reports and instructions in process of the technical operations. Technical definitions contain the special language that makes the reader the idea of the term involved.

13. EXERCISE

Summarise the following passages:

1. Cinema requires 'electricity. As there are many villages in India, especially in the Hindi heartland which have not received the benefits of electricity there are many people who 'have seen a film only once or- twice in their life time. The occasion arises when - the - villagers visit a neighbouring town or a rich farmer celebrates a marriage by installing a generator and screening' a film for the 'benefit of the populations of two or three neighbouring villages.

For a country that covers 32 million sq. kilometers and has a population of over 950 million, India has just about 13,* 181 permanent cinema halls and 5,000 temporary or touring ones. Andhra Pradesh leads the country with 2615 theatres halls while Tamil Nadu -has 2447, Maharashtra 1,071, and Kerala 1,379- (Figures of 1991). A recent development is that in cities like Bombay, cinema h4lls are being closed down as the owners find it more remunerative to build shopping, centers or residential blocks on the same site. Also the very high taxation by the state government leaves the theatre owner with a very meagre profit.

The language barrier acts as a great hindrance to the development of the cinema. Except Hindi films, all - other - films have only a -regional -market. In order to earn" back their investment, film producers are reluctant to experiment and prefer to produce mythological, historical and run of the mill escapist films of

the Hindi type. The- Hindi film industry, which has the .resources to experiment with the medium suffer from a severe lack of talent and, is under the constraints of the star system.

The film industry in India may be compared to a giant who is prisoner to himself. In terms of numbers the industry seems to have achieved a great d-cal. The Indian film industry is the biggest producer, of feature films in l the world. It produced 910 films in 1992. An estimated 70 million people watch these films' every day.

Many of these films are a craze in the neighboring countries of the sub-continent and among Indian residents abroad. One frequently hears of video tape smuggling of Hindi films. But in terms of social responsibility the film industry in India has failed miserably. The glossy, glamorous films of the make believe world encourage escapist trends among the people. And when the films are not unreal they wallow in vulgarity, obscenity and violence.

An unsavory aspect of the Hindi films industry was exposed in March 1993 by the Bombay bomb blasts. A nexus was found to exist between underworld and anti-national elements with black money and film producers and artists. After the boycott initiated by some political parties, it is expected that the film industry will be purged of these elements and such illicit funding will stop.

2. India is very different from the West in social structure, religious orientation and political - experience. But -more importantly, its time-scale of recorded civilization is daunting, while its size and internal regional differences involve the student in an ente4prise equivalent to that o f investigating all the countries of Europe together.

Some factors have to be taken for granted in any study of India. The essential starting point is India's geography. 'Then one has to consider its social structure which is based on caste rather ' than class. This was a development that arose out of the particular ecological context of the sub-continent and the use l made of its human, resources. , Thirdly, the ideological underpinning of society in Hindu-religious tradition has to be given due importance in any analysis of India. These factors have for centuries been accepted as facts in Indian history, and have constrained and, at times, even imprisoned those who attempted political dominion of the subcontinent whether Moghuls, British or post-independence governments.

A myth commonly heard even in scholarly circles in the past w a s that of- an "unchanging India" where,; values and social relations inhibited change, and economic development' in particular. This myth has been dispelled. It has been shown that

India's social structure and many long-established attitudes have proved adaptable, enabling industrial production and modern investment within traditional towns. Village studies show much that is still traditional. Even here though, there is change. India's economic development, her involvement in an international economic community and the emphasis on education are making their impact even in the villages.

But the "feel" of India is elusive, whatever the amount of academic study devoted to it. Among the best ways for the outsider to enter into India's culture and history is through the door of, imaginative literature.

3. There are basic differences in the way boys and girls experience the world, and more importantly, in the social-roles they are trained to fulfil. In the past, from childhood onwards the talents and ambitions of girls were channelled in directions - which were different; from those of boys. For boys, the family was the place, from 'which' they started: out and to which they returned for, comfort and support. But their field of action, was the larger world of adventure industry, labour and politics. For girls, the family was, their world, and the 'home' was their field of action. A man, expressed himself in his work, and through his work and social action, helped to change his environment. A woman's individual growth and choices, were restricted, and she expressed herself only through love, wifedom, and motherhood, that is, through supporting and caring for others. The way in which male and female roles were expressed changed in the course of history; the differences in the roles -given to the sexes widened or narrowed, but the fact of different sex -role indoctrination remained.

Life was experienced at a different - rhythm by men and women. For a boy education was directed toward a vocational or professional goal and his life ideally moved upward and outward in a straight line until, it reached a steady - level of fulfillment the girl's education was often interrupted; it did not lead to the fulfillment of her life role, but -rather competed with it. Her development was dependent: on her relationship with others and was, often determined by them; it seemed to move in circles. In the boy's case, the important stages of his, life were connected to his career; separation from the family for purposes of greater educational opportunity success or failures in his career; economic or losses. For the girls, the important stages in her life were connected with her biological development; transition from childhood to adolescence and then to marriage which meant, in the past, loss of freedom and greater restrictions, rather than the independence which it meant for the boy. Love and marriage for her meant only a shifting from one household to another and the beginning of her serious responsibilities childbirth, child rearing and caring for the

family. Finally came the crisis of widowhood which could mean, depending on her economic circumstances, increasing freedom and independence or a difficult struggle for economic survival.

7.14 EXERCISE

1. Write formal definitions for the following terms in your own words. The classes are provided for the first five terms. Find the technical definitions, noted in dictionaries by abbreviations in italics such as Elec. (electronics) or Mech. (mechanics).
Example Conductor—A conductor is a device or material that readily carries electricity, heat or sound.
 - i. Electron (particle)
 - ii. Torque (twisting effect)
 - iii. Piston (sliding piece)
 - iv. Girder (structural beam)
 - v. Fillet (concave junction or arc)
 - vi. Module
 - vii. Power
 - viii. S. Battery
 - ix. Chord
 - x. Load
2. Define 10 technical terms in your area of study. Write formal, one-sentence definition of each term.
3. Find a magazine article focused on your area of study. Locate and copy five technical definitions from various articles in the magazine. Then critique each definition, and revise it to include any elements needed to make it a formal definition.
4. Choose one term from earlier exercise, and write an extended definition in a paragraph. Write the definition sentence as your topic sentence. Include the details or examples that give meaning to the term.

USER INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Unit Structure

- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Introduction
- 8.3 Elements of Formal Instructions
- 8.4 Guidelines for Writing Instructions
- 8.6 Summary
- 8.7 Exercise

8.1 OBJECTIVES

- To learn the art of preparing user instruction manual
- To make aware of the different tips for effective user instruction manual

8.2 INTRODUCTION

We are all familiar with the statement, "If all else fails, read the directions." Why is it so common to avoid reading the directions? Why do people risk the trial-and-error approach rather than reading the instructions before beginning? Possibly it's because they are impatient to get started. Or possibly the instructions seem incomprehensible, as though the writer assumes the reader has technical training and fails to define terms, locate parts with graphics, or provide basic information.

To make matters worse, some instructions sound ridiculous, possibly due to poor translation from other languages:

On a kitchen knife: Warning keep out of children.

Today, as the chapter states, people expect readable, accurate instructions, ranging from easy-to-follow steps to multivolume user manuals and service guides. Companies that fail to provide good instructions for customers lose revenue due to technical support calls and product returns. For this reason, many companies hire technical writers—those who write documentation as their primary job—to complete the finished user information. These writers may or may not have any technical training, but they know the art of writing understandable instructions.

However, as indicated in the chapter, technical writers cannot do the job alone. Your employer might one day ask you to provide input into the documentation provided to your customers, either as a technical expert or as a reviewer.

Some technicians and engineers turn to technical writing as a career, drawing on their training and experience to make instructions and manuals more accurate. These people must take special care to understand the audience, listen to users' questions, and add the basic information sometimes unintentionally overlooked by technical experts.

More commonly, you will be asked to write informal instructions to coworkers and customers. You could be asked to write instructions to install a software program, assemble a piece of equipment, troubleshoot a problem, or drive from the nearest major airport to your office.

Following a few, simple guidelines can improve the readability and usefulness of your directions. You can adapt these guidelines for different types of instructions, as needed.

8.3 ELEMENTS OF FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS

TIP Formal instructions should include the following elements:

- **Orientation:** Provide an overview of the device, such as the purpose of the instructions or function and starting state of the device.
- **List of materials:** Specify the materials, including sizes, part numbers, and quantities, needed to complete the procedure.
- **Step-by-step instructions:** In each step (usually numbered), use the active, imperative voice with the implied "you."
- **Graphics:** When needed for clarity or understanding, add numbered or labeled graphics. Reference each numbered graphic in the text, or add a description under the graphic to orient the reader to the figure. Use consistent terms in the text and the description.
- **Conclusion or summary:** Describe the final state after following the instructions so readers can complete the project, and add information for any additional or optional procedures.

Some instructions for complex devices or procedures also include troubleshooting tips or frequently asked questions. This information should address typical problems with the procedures, based on your own testing and customer feedback.

8.4 GUIDELINES FOR WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

The following guidelines describe the general process of writing instructions. As an example, consider the task of writing instructions for using a new software program. Whether the end product will be a one-page "Fast Track" for colleagues or a full manual for users, the general guidelines are the same.

Step 1: Perform the procedure yourself. Learn all you can about the process or product before you start writing anything. This might include observing others performing the procedure or talking to the experts (such as a developer or engineer) or other involved people. Read the product specification or user manual. Become familiar with all the features and terminology.

Perform the procedures, logging all the steps you complete. It is easy to miss the small steps unless you perform them yourself. Don't rely on others to tell you how something is supposed to work.

If you experience problems, log the scenario in which the problem occurred. Then log what you did to correct the problem. Use your log to add information in your steps at the appropriate spot to prevent those same problems. Or, for longer documents, add a troubleshooting section with the problems you encountered and a description of what you did to correct (or prevent) them.

Step 2: Prepare a working draft. Write a draft of the numbered steps. Focus on the behaviors. Don't worry about spelling, grammar, or even complete sentences at this point. Let others read your draft, following each step. Their feedback will uncover missing or confusing information. Often, test subjects uncover confusing wording, such as: "When you said to 'Close all applications before starting the installation,' did you mean I have to close Windows, too, or just the programs running on my Windows desktop?"

Thinking like a new user can be the hardest part of writing instructions. If you write for the broadest audience (nontechnical), your instructions should pass the "6th-grader test," meaning that the instructions should be clear enough for the average 6th-grade student to follow. Revise your initial draft to clarify the instructions.

Step 3: Write the steps using simple, direct language. Now start to refine the language. If you struggle with describing a step, do more research and experimentation. Ask others to suggest alternatives for vague words or confusing sentences. Rewrite the instructions using an action verb and the implied "you." Don't worry about

Use standard terminology that is appropriate for the audience. If you are writing for coworkers, use the terms or

acronyms common within your company or industry. If you are writing for a general audience, use simple language as much as possible. If a technical term is unavoidable, define it the first time you use the term. When possible, use terms that are common in the industry rather than terms used solely by your company.

Step 4: Include graphics if needed. Not all instructions require graphics. However, if the steps include parts' names, users will appreciate a graphic that illustrates or labels the trickier parts. If you include callouts to labeled parts, be sure to use consistent terms in the callout and in the text.

If a step includes details difficult to describe clearly, an illustration can show the details in pictures to supplement the discussion. A flow chart with decision points can illustrate different paths or options, and better orient the reader.

Step 5: Format the instructions to identify the organization. Select a layout and format that make the instructions clear and easy to follow. For example, if your steps are brief, simple numbering is appropriate. If the process has several distinct stages with steps within each stage, use headings to identify each stage. Typically, writers increase the font size of headings and make them bold.

Use a consistent format for headings and text to clarify the organization. For example, use the same font, font size, and paragraph spacing for all main headings, use a slightly different appearance for subheadings, and so on.

Avoid overuse of bold, italics, underlining, font changes, and unimportant graphics. When overused, these elements add "noise" that distracts readers from the information and overall organization.

Use numbered steps when they must be followed in sequence (and check that the numbers are sequential—numbers can easily get mixed up during revisions). Become familiar with numbering formats available with your word processor, because they can provide a consistent style (font and margins) for numbered steps. Typically, writers indent the entire step so the numbers are easy to spot. Add white space between steps. If sequential steps require more than one paragraph with long explanations of each step, a numbered format is sometimes not practical, instead, use a standard paragraph format with other methods to identify separate steps, such as clear transition words that signal sequence. For example, use words such as first, next, then, and finally at the beginning of a paragraph starting a new step. Start a new paragraph for each new step. For exceptionally long steps, consider using headings and subheading for steps instead of numbers.

Use bulleted lists for alternatives within a step or for steps that do not have to be followed in order. Lists are easier to read than paragraphs. But they ' are most effective with only one or two sentences per bullet. Although most writers stick to the standard round or square bullet symbol, you can use other symbols, For other options, check your clip art set or the symbols set available with your word processor. Use consistent tabs and spacing between bullets to improve the appearance of the list.

Experiment with other layout techniques, such as centering headings, changing the font type or size, and manipulating the line spacing to increase the visual clarity.

Step 6: Write an introduction to orient the reader. Discuss who should follow this procedure and why, when or where to folio", it, what it does, and where to go for further information or questions. This is the information that lays the groundwork for the instructions and identifies the intended audience and outcome. Writers sometimes write the introduction last because they don't have all the information themselves until the end.

Building a Bookcase

Our pine bookcase features a simple design to be built with basic woodworking tools. We made i the case out of materials available at most lumberyards. These instructions will produce a 4-shelf bookcase with overall dimensions of 10" deep - 34" wide x 48" tall. While the depth of the case is directly tied to the 1 x 10 stock, you can vary the height....

Some writers also include a summary or conclusion at the end of the document, which further clarifies the expected outcome, or briefly describes any remaining steps not included with the instructions.

Adding the Finishing Touch

If you plan to paint your bookcase, first apply two coats of shellac over each knot to prevent the knots from bleeding through the final paint job. Then prime and paint the bookcase according to the manufacturer's instructions....

Step 7: Add a materials or requirements list. Include all equipment, tools, or minimum requirements needed for the complete project. Many writers include this information in a listed or bulleted format to make the items easy to spot. Include precise quantities, sizes, and part numbers. Categorise the materials into logical groups, especially if different types of materials are needed:

Materials List

Basic tools: Lumber:

Portable circular saw (1) 1/2 x 1/4" parting strip
 Block plane (2) pieces of 1 x 4 pine
 Combination square... (5) Pieces of 1 x 10 pine...

Step 8: Identify notes and warnings. Use clear wording and formats to highlight information that has special importance to the user. Use Notes, Tips, Cautions, and Warnings, according to the conventions of your style guide. Position the information prior to or within the relevant step, not hidden at the end of the document. General warnings belong at the beginning of the document. Use a box, bold heading, or special symbol to catch the reader's eye. Many companies have a guideline for the correct usage of each type. For example, the conventions at one company are the following:

- Use "Note" to emphasize information or supplement information that was already provided in the instructions but might apply only to certain situations.

Note: Becoming a registered user makes you eligible for discounts, updates, and free technical support.

- Use "Tip" to provide shortcuts, alternative methods, or techniques for performing an action, but not for essential information.

Tip: If you choose not to include this program in your Startup folder, you can start it using Start > Programs.

- Use "Caution" when an action or failure to take an action could result in loss of data. Caution! Back up each file weekly for archival purposes.
- Use "Warning" when an action or failure to take an action could result in harm to the user or damage to the hardware.

Warning! Unplug the power cable before opening the console casing.

Step 9: Edit, revise, and refine your language. Review your document, and, if possible, ask other people to review it. Aim for two types of reviews: one for language and one for technical accuracy. Each reviewer might suggest different revisions. Most professionals consider the review process an integral part of document development—a time to fillet (prepare) the instructions before they "go out the door." From time to time, reviewers disagree with each other or write conflicting edits. Sometimes you might disagree with their edits. When this happens, focus on the audience, your intended readers. Discuss disagreements with your reviewers, letting them understand the other viewpoint.

This is also the time to examine grammar and spelling, reduce wordiness, eliminate repetition, and sharpen your language. Revise the steps as needed, based on the review process.

Step 10: Observe someone follow your instructions. The best way to test instructions is to ask someone (a test subject) to read and follow your instructions. Avoid helping the subject; let the person rely only on the written information. Keep a log of difficulties experienced by the tester—they are bound to occur at unanticipated spots. Note where, when, and why the test subject had problems.

Then revise your document accordingly, clarifying misunderstood steps and adding missing information in places where the test subject had problems. If possible, ask another person to test your revised document.

Step 11: Put the final touches on the instructions. Complete the final revisions based on the testing. Take a last look at the layout, send the document to the printer, and give yourself a standing ovation!

Writing instructions might not be as easy as one, two, three, but you can feel a great deal of satisfaction from producing instructions that work.

6. SUMMARY

Technicians and engineers need to write on their training and expensive to make instructions and manuals more accurate. These people take special care to understand the audience, listen to users' questions, and add the basic information sometimes unintentionally overlooked by technical experts. The guidelines describe the general process of writing instructions.

7. EXERCISE

1. Internet assignment. Use keywords such as "create Web site" to search for instructions on how to set up a Web site. Test them by setting up your own Web page. Evaluate the effectiveness of the instructions.
2. Copy a set of instructions for a device. Critique the instructions by answering the following questions:
What makes them effective?
What can be improved?
Do they pass the 6th-grader test?
3. Write travel directions on how to get to your house from college, including a map.

4. Write numbered instructions for one of the following procedures:
 - i. Hook up a VCR.
 - ii. Install a car radio.
 - iii. Set up a campsite.
 - iv. Set a digital watch.
 - v. Prepare for a journey.

5. Expand the instructions from Exercise 4 into a formal set of instructions. Include the following elements:
 - i. An introduction (background, purpose, definitions)
 - ii. Materials list (all items, including quantities, needed for the procedure)
 - iii. Step-by-step instructions
 - iv. Conclusion (finishing tips or how to evaluate correct performance)

Unit V (REQUIRED SKILLS) READING SKILLS

Unit Structure

1. Objectives
2. Introduction: Reading
3. Types of reading
4. Reading to study type of reading
5. Summary
6. Exercise

1. OBJECTIVES

- To learn the reading skills
- To know various types of reading
- To develop good habit of reading

2. INTRODUCTION

Most of us think of reading as a simple, passive process which involves reading words in a linear fashion and internalizing their meaning one at a time. But reading is actually a very complex process that requires a great deal of active participation on the part of the reader.

To get a better sense of the complexity of reading, read what some experts in the field have said about the reading process:

What do we read? The message is not something given in advance--or given at all-- but something created by interaction between writers and readers as participants in a particular communicative situation. - Roy Harris in Rethinking Writing (2000)

Reading is asking questions of printed text. And reading with comprehension becomes a matter of getting your questions answered. - Frank Smith in Reading without Nonsense (1997)

Reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game. It involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time. The ability to anticipate that which has not been seen, of course, is vital in reading, just as the ability to anticipate what has not yet been heard is vital in listening. - Kenneth Goodman in *Journal of the Reading Specialist* (1967)

Literacy practices are almost always fully integrated with, interwoven into, constituted as part of, the very texture of wider practices that involve talk, interaction, values, and beliefs.- James Gee in *Social Linguistics and Literacies* (1996)

As you can see, reading involves many complex skills that have to come together in order for the reader to be successful. For example, proficient readers recognize the purpose for reading, approach the reading with that purpose in mind, use strategies that have proven successful to them in the past when reading similar texts for similar purposes, monitor their comprehension of the text in light of the purpose for reading, and if needed adjust their strategy use. Proficient readers know when unknown words will interfere with achieving their purpose for reading, and when they won't. When unknown words arise and their meaning is needed for comprehension, proficient readers have a number of word attack strategies available to them that will allow them to decipher the meaning of the words to the extent that they are needed to achieve the purpose for reading. Reading is also a complex process in that proficient readers give to the text as much as they take. They make meaning from the text by using their own prior knowledge and experiences. Proficient readers are constantly making predictions while reading. They are continuously anticipating what will come next. Their prior knowledge and experiences with texts as well as with the world around them allow them to do this. It is this continuous interaction with the text that allows readers to make sense of what they are reading.

9.3 TYPES OF READING

9.3.1 Survey Reading

Let's look at the basics of learning how to comprehend when reading.

1. Look at a book cover. What information is the author/publisher giving you about the story? What does the title suggest? Why did they use this particular graphic on the cover?
2. Read the Table of Contents. It's an outline of the story.

3. Read the Introduction or Preface. It gives you a good idea of where the author wants to take you.
4. Can you make any predictions about the story with this information alone?
5. Look at the back cover. What are the comments being made by critics who have read the book? What other clues can you pick up?
6. Preview the book to make sure it's what you are looking for. Skim the headings and subheadings.
7. Remember that the first and last sentences of a paragraph give you the essence of that paragraph, especially when reading non-fiction.
8. What do you know about the subject? Prior knowledge will help you to fill in information, to understand vocabulary words and concepts the author wants you to know.
"People often read slowly and carefully, because teachers in

elementary schools require students to sound and read the word aloud, which takes longer than "seeing" the word. As a young student matures he continues pronouncing each word in his mind as he reads" (Foster) Reciting the word in your head is called sub-vocalization and is what slows a reader down.

9.3.2 Scanning Type of Reading

Scanning is the first thing that you do when you select a resource. It answers the question: - Is this the right resource to help me find the answers to my questions? Will it give me the answers I want?

Scan - by zapping through the whole resource homing in on the important bits.

Scan before you start skimming.

Scanning gives you a feeling for the whole item.

Think about:

* Is it relevant?

* Is there anything in it that answers the target questions?

Look at:

* Title page.

* The contents page. Are there chapters or sections that you may want to read?

Are there maps, diagrams, pictures, captions? Do they look as if they would be helpful? Scanning involves running your eyes down the page looking for specific facts or key words and phrases.

Recall how you find a word in a vocabulary? You don't read any more than necessary to find the word you seek. Notice that you go directly down a column. Maybe you use your finger to guide your eyes. This type of reading is usually called scanning.

Scanning is a technique you often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. You search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when you first find a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions. Once you've scanned the document, you might go back and skim it.

When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

Reading off a computer screen has become a growing concern. Research shows that people have more difficulty reading off a computer screen than off paper. Although they can read and comprehend at the same rate as paper, skimming on the computer is much slower than on paper.

Similarly, scanning skills are valuable for several purposes in studying science. First, they are an aid in locating new terms, which are introduced in the chapter. Unless you understand the new terms, it is impossible to follow the author's reasoning without dictionary or glossary. Thus a preliminary scanning of the chapters will alert you to the new terms and concepts and their sequence. When you locate a new term, try to find its definition. If you are not able to figure out the meaning, then look it up in the glossary or dictionary. (Note: usually new terms are defined as they are introduced in science texts. If your text does not have a glossary, it is a good idea to keep a glossary of your own in the front page of the book. Record the terms and their definition or the page number where the definition is located. This is an excellent aid to refer to when you are reviewing for an examination, as it provides a convenient outline of the course).

Secondly, scanning is useful in locating statements, definitions, formulas, etc. which you must remember completely and precisely. Scan to find the exact and complete statement of a chemical law, the formula of a particular compound in chemistry, or the stages of cell division. Also, scan the charts and figures, for they usually summarize in graphic form the major ideas and facts of the chapter.

Just start: Scan how the page is laid out, and use bold headers and captions to get an overview of the ideas and themes.

* Use peripheral vision; don't focus only on the logical flow of the text. Observe what you're reading with a wide-angle scope, as if

you were looking at an image rather than a block of text. Use the same wide-eye span as you do when driving, looking at all that surrounds you and heading your way.

* Using the wide-span approach, there are several methods in which you can "read" a page.

- Read paragraphs diagonally, and place emphasis on the key words.

- Read the page in a "Z"

- Read in a "U", moving down the page, and back up.

* Skim the text by reading the first sentence of each paragraph.

* Try to speed up your eye movements to take in more per reading, rather than stay fixated and focused on a word.

* Use the help of your index finger, by moving it at a slightly faster pace than your reading speed. When reading on the Internet, scroll down quicker than you actually read.

9.3.3 Skimming Type of Reading

Skim by zooming through the text quickly trying to spot key words. Don't start at the beginning and plod or shuffle through the text. After you have scanned the text and found the bits that you think look relevant and interesting then skim read.

Concentrates keep your keywords and questions in your mind.

Skimming involves searching for the main ideas by reading the first and last paragraphs, noting other organizational cues, such as summaries, used by the author.

Skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper, you're probably not reading it word-by-word; instead you're scanning the text. Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. Use skimming when you want to see if an article may be of interest in your research.

There are many strategies that can be used when skimming. Some people read the first and last paragraphs using headings, summarizes and other organizers as they move down the page or screen. You might read the title, subtitles, subheading, and illustrations. Consider reading the first sentence of each paragraph. This technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. It might be used to review graphs, tables, and charts.

Skimming is when you "browse", or glance randomly through a book. It has great importance in learning and is emphasized as a strategy in speed reading particularly for exam taking. The purpose of skimming is to get an "overview" not the specific details of the material. We use it to decide if the book, article or report is worth our time, and has anything new and worthwhile to tell us. Why waste time if it is a rehash of stuff we already know?

Skim several times

When reading extensive material, you can first skim over the chapter and section titles to give you an idea of when the material is about. Then quickly scan through the material again to get a better idea of the topic. Finally, you read the assignment, but still reading rapidly.

Skimming is a step you should always take before you read any article of factual or practical narrative. You will soon be able to detect most important facts, strange vocabulary, and words that are clues to important relationships.

It's a good practice to skim everything in mass media after reading the title and first paragraph. You may get all the information you want. This keeps your skimming skills from deteriorating, or will give you the practice you need to develop necessary skills.

Skim everything you intend to read before you make a final decision to read, discard, or study the material.

Skim all highlighting and develop a read-skim pattern to use for rapid review. And don't overlook this! Reviewing frequently and rapidly is the best way to memorize (or simply remember information) from notes and long text assignments.

... And then read

Some speed reading methods have you first skim-read the material and then read it over a second time more carefully, but yet still at high speed. In skim reading you often just scan through the material, letting your eyes catch key words that give you the crux of the written material.

Take some reading material and read it as fast as you can for a minute. When reading at this pace you do not have to understand a single word of what you are reading. Then start over for another minute and try to get to a further point that you did the last. Repeat this step over and over trying to beat the place where you got to last. Eventually time yourself for a minute and read for comprehension and you will see how fast you can really read.

Like scanning, skimming requires you to read quickly. When you skim a text, though, you are not looking for specific information, but rather, you are trying to get the main idea or point of the text you are reading. When skimming a reading selection, start with the title of the text, then read the topic sentence of each paragraph. Skimming is a skill that is especially suited for doing research. By skimming a few pages of a reference book or novel, you can generally tell if the book or novel will be useful for your research.

4. READING TO STUDY TYPE

A method of reading for study is called SQ3R2, (SQ3R, SQ4R, and PSQ5R) the aim is to understand the material in some depth. The method involves five simple steps; Survey, Question, Read, Recall and Review.

- * Survey: skim through to gain an overview and not key points.
- * Question: devise questions you hope the text will answer.
- * Read: slowly and carefully.
- * Recall: from memory, write down the main points made by the chapter.
- * Review: revisit your questions - compare these to your recall and establish how well the text has answered them; fill in any gaps by further reading and note-taking.

9.4.1 Practice and speed reading

Question: I'm currently interested in speed reading, a possibly useful augmentation on my natural state, I'm not sure about its effectiveness (or even possible effectiveness). A bit curious about the experiences of others, and of possible studies into the subject. So, the question is, do you happen to have some information that might help me?

Answer: A few things to look at:

1. How much do you read?
2. How often do you read?
3. How much do you enjoy reading?

Speed reading is a skill that is acquired after much reading. I started heavily reading at the age of 10 and by the time I was 12-13 I could speed read flawlessly. That skill has not degraded at all over the years. I think the more you read the more your mind adapts to it, to were eventually it will pick out the most important words, naturally to were with less words you understand it as well as if you read every word or the whole sentence.

2. SQ4R Reading

The SQ4R Method will help you keep studying organized and efficient. The steps to SQ4R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Record, Review) are explained in the steps below.

SURVEY

Glance over the material to get a feel for what you will be reading.

Survey the entire text

When you first receive the text, spend about 20 minutes skimming the entire textbook to acquire an overall understanding of how the book is organized.

1. Read at the title page.
2. Read at the copyright page.
3. Read at the table of contents.
4. Read the preface.
5. Read at the ancillary material (appendix, glossary, bibliography, and index)
6. Read at any illustrations (including charts, graphs, and tables)

Survey each chapter

Survey a chapter assignment before you actually read it. Survey should tell the scope of the content, how different topics are organized, and what the author's purpose and point of view are. The chapter survey will also give you sufficient background information for class notes.

1. Read the chapter title.
2. Read the chapter objectives.
3. Read the chapter summary or review.
4. Read the major headings and subheadings.
5. Read the visual aids.
6. Read the italicized and/or underlined words and terms.

Survey the illustrations

Our society is visually oriented; authors and publishers are well aware that effective use of illustrations in textbooks is more necessary than ever. Illustrations can literally replace hundreds of words and convey a message more dramatically and quickly than a comparable section of text. Formats range from equations, theorems, and formulas to tables and graphic illustrations.

QUESTION

Ask questions before, during, and after reading the material

As you survey the material, ask the questions about what you will be reading and what you will try to answer. Turn the headings and subheadings into questions. These questions give

you a real reason for reading and will help you concentrate on the subject you are reading.

Imagine, as you read the textbook, that the author is speaking directly to you. Question the author statements. Challenge the ideas presented. Textbooks are not the A final word, but are a means of actively involving you, the reader, in the learning process. Do not passively accept the author is presentation of material; look at it critically and read with a questioning and searching attitude. Ask the standard questions: what, why, and how.

READ

Read for the main ideas and organization

Now you should read actively with these certain questions in mind and attempt to answer the questions and organize the material. These answers will be the important facts and details. Read everything in a chapter including any of the visual aids such as picture captions, graphs, charts, etc. Note any words or phrases that are italicized, underlined, or in bold print (there=s a reason this material is highlighted!) The tendency in reading is to keep going, but you should stop at the end of each section to see if you can answer the questions you asked at the start of the section.

Find the main ideas in each chapter or section. Textbook authors write as you have been taught to write: they develop a topic sentence and/or paragraph, substantiate it, and draw conclusions.

Concentrate on what you are reading. Try to feel the rhythm of the author's prose (short, snappy sentences or long, labored explanations) and then "go with the flow." Note particularly the headings and subheadings; they indicate the relative importance of each topic.

Study the illustrations. These serve as "pegs" to help you remember the major points being discussed in the text.

RECITE

Summarize aloud what you read: Recite the main ideas, in other words, aloud or to yourself, after finishing a page. Check the comprehension and make sure you have the correct information. Do the same for the major points after reading each section or chapter.

By reciting what you've read, you are able to see how much information you absorbed, areas you didn't understand and need to review, and answers to the questions you generated for yourself. If you cannot answer the questions, go back to the material and reread.

RECORD

Marking words in the books increases understanding of the material for the present and for future reference. The process of selecting and marking requires you to find the main ideas. Later, when you review the text for exam purposes, you will find that the textbook markings and highlights enable you to grasp the essential points without having to read entire paragraphs and chapters again.

Write down the central points for the chapter or section in the notebook. Do each assignment before class. This will prepare you to participate in class discussions which will, in turn, help you remember the material you have read and to put it into perspective. Underline and make marginal notes: Underlining key words and sentences will make those items stand out in the mind.

Marginal notes give you the opportunity to question a statement or position taken by the author as well as making you select the key words or items you want to remember from the paragraph. Summaries enable you to write a brief summation of a section in other words.

Develop your own system of reading: Use whatever facilitates your retention of the material and works best for you. You might use the following: a double underline for main ideas and a single underline for supporting points; a bracket to enclose several consecutive lines that are important, rather than underlining all of them; or a box or circle around key terms.

Read before you mark. Read a few paragraphs or sections and then go back over the material and underline those topics and/or words that you feel are important.

Be selective: Underline only those points that are clearly essential. You will then have a visible outline of the major points on a page.

Use other words: Marginal notations and summaries should be in other language so you can readily recall the original material as you review. Using the text in this manner enables you to extract all that the book has to offer you in a learning situation, now and in the future. You will be able to use the texts for review in later softwares in the same field or in an allied field, thus reducing the need to re-read the material. You will reap the most benefit from reviewing the notes in the text, rather than being distracted by notes you may find written by some other person in a used text.

Coordinate class notes and textbook notes: Read the textbook material on time and prior to the corresponding class or lecture if at all possible. You can then follow the instructor's thought more

easily, separate important points from lesser details, and have class notes become more meaningful to you.

Develop your own note-taking technique for each class. Many students use only one side of the paper for class notes, leaving a 2- or 3-inch margin on the left side of the page for writing key words and labeling.

Combine the text notes and class notes. Do this by writing class notes on the right hand page of the notebook and transferring text notes to the appropriate left hand facing page. You can then easily review all the information gained from class and text reading.

REVIEW

Review constantly. Reviewing is an essential part of retention. Review the textbook notes shortly after you have written them and continue to review them periodically.

Spend a few minutes going over the earlier notes before beginning a new reading assignment. This will help you keep the overall picture of the author's development in mind and will let you place the new material properly within that arrangement.

Review any and all supplements to the text. These usually contain quizzes and self tests on material in the text which will prepare you better for examinations. Constantly review throughout the software will greatly reduce the time you will need to spend preparing for exams and will make that time less stressful ("cramming") and more relaxing ("reviewing").

9.4.5 Active Reading

Keep paper and pen within reach. Before beginning to read, think about the purpose for the reading. Why has the teacher made this assignment? What are you supposed to get out of it?

Use the cursor on computer like a magic wand as you read text. Underline reading text. The cursor becomes a finger, and instinct kicks in - your eyes follow for moving object. This increase information perception on 50%, and add that important 10% to memory and concentration.

So that's it, you're on the way to improved knowledge acquisition. Want to know why the most intelligent people hate reading? It slow and boring and their brain is moving at the speed of sound.

Use a guide (pencil, finger, ruler) to stop regression. Train yourself to bypass your automatic response to mentally speak each word. Reading groups of words and phrases at a time, using our

peripheral vision. Specifically, taking in a sentence in three gulps, not ten, which is typical for educated professionals. But now you have the first two steps.

When you are reading it is often useful to highlight, underline and annotate the text as you go on. This emphasizes information in the mind, and helps you to review important points after you have finished studying the text. Active reading helps to keep the mind focused on the material and stops it wandering.

This is obviously only something to do if you own the document or book. If you find that active reading helps significantly, then it may be worth copying information in more expensive texts. You can then read and mark the photocopies.

Marking & Underlining in a Textbook

1. First read a section.
2. Review the section, marking and underlining selectively.
3. Underline information as if you were preparing brief notes from which you could study.
4. Underline all definitions of terminology.
5. Mark or label examples that represent main ideas.
6. Circle and box special vocabulary words and transitional words and phrases.
7. Number important or sequential ideas.
8. Jot down paraphrases, questions, and summaries in available space within the text.

Readers should use a pen or finger to trace each line of text as they move down the page to keep track of where they are reading.

Use index and middle fingers to run across the text. Switching fingers with each line previews the next, and you can grasp the information better. The eye sees the next line.

Subconsciously, the eye will skip around a page of text, which is why reading can take so much time.

Always read with a pen in your fist underlining each word of a sentence as you think. You will increase speed reading in 50%, and add 10% to concentration and memory. It's an instinct - our

eyes follow a moving object. It's what saved our cave-dwelling ancestors from sneaky dinosaurs and enemies next door.

5. SUMMARY

Reading is a skill. People read for different purposes. But reading is actually a very complex process that requires a great deal of active participation on the part of the reader. The reading is of different types which include survey reading, active reading, scanning, skimming, SQ3R, SQ4R or etc. We can profess this art only on practicing in a perfect way and reading with a purpose.

6. EXERCISE

Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions given below:

1. Thomas Alva Edison lit up the world with his invention of the electric light. Without him, the world might still be a dark place. However, the electric light was not his only invention. He also invented the phonograph, the motion picture camera, and over 1,200 other things. About every two weeks he created something new.

Thomas A. Edison was born in Milan, Ohio, on February 11, 1847. His family moved to Port Huron, Michigan, when he was seven years old. Surprisingly, he attended school for only two months. His mother, a former teacher, taught him a few things, but Thomas was mostly self-educated. His natural curiosity led him to start experimenting at a young age with electrical and mechanical things at home.

When he was 12 years old, he got his first job. He became a newsboy on a train that ran between Port Huron and Detroit. He set up a laboratory in a baggage care of the train so that he could continue his experiments in his spare time. Unfortunately, his first work experience did not end well. Thomas was fired when he accidentally set fire to the floor of the baggage car.

Thomas then worked for five years as a telegraph operator, but he continued to spend much of his time on the job conducting experiments. He got his first patent in 1868 for a vote recorder run by electricity. However, the vote recorder was not a success. In 1870, he sold another invention, a stock-ticker, for \$40,000. A stock-ticker is a machine that automatically prints stock prices on a tape. He was then able to build his first shop in Newark, New Jersey.

Thomas Edison was totally deaf in one ear and hard of hearing in the other, but thought of his deafness as a blessing in many ways. It kept conversations short, so that he could have more time for work. He called himself a "two-shift man" because he worked 16 out of every 24 hours. Sometimes he worked so intensely that his wife had to remind him to sleep and eat.

Thomas Edison died at the age of 84 on October 18, 1931, at his estate in West Orange, New Jersey. He left numerous inventions that improved the quality of life all over the world.

1. Thomas Edison did things in this order:
 - a. he became a telegraph operator, a newsboy, and then got his first patent
 - b. he became a newsboy, got his first patent, and then became a telegraph operator
 - c. he got a patent, became a telegraph operator, and then became a newsboy
 - d. he became a newsboy, a telegraph operator, and then got a patent
2. Edison considered his deafness:
 - a. a disadvantage
 - b. a blessing
 - c. something from a priest
 - d. a necessity
3. Of all the inventions, _____ was probably the most important for civilization.
 - a. the vote recorder
 - b. the stock ticker
 - c. the light bulb
 - d. the motion picture camera
4. The main idea of this passage is:
 - a. Thomas Edison was always interested in science and inventions, and he invented many important things.
 - b. Thomas Edison could not keep a job.
 - c. Thomas Edison worked day and night on his experiments.
 - d. Deaf people make good inventors because they can focus without the distraction of spoken conversation.
5. Summarise the above passage.

6. His mother, a former teacher, taught him a few things, but he was mostly self-educated.
 - a. taught himself
 - b. born a genius
 - c. loved school
 - d. thought of himself
7. His natural curiosity soon led him to start experimenting with electrical and mechanical things at home.
 - a. experiencing
 - b. inventing
 - c. making tests and playing with
 - d. ignoring
8. He left numerous inventions that improved the quality of life all over the world.
 - a. numbered
 - b. many
 - c. none
 - d. modern
9. Sometimes he worked so intensely that his wife had to remind him to sleep and eat.
 - a. passionately and with great focus
 - b. carelessly and with many distractions
 - c. hard
 - d. problems
10. Make notes of the above passage.

II. In Glacier National Park, which is in the Rocky Mountains of Montana, there once roamed a little deaf Indian boy. He loved to wander in the forest, and made friends with the animals who lived there. Since he loved animals, he would observe them intently and learn their habits. This little Indian boy's name was John Lewis Clarke.

John Lewis Clarke's grandfather was a graduate from West Point and a captain in the U.S. Army. He was married to the daughter of a Blackfoot Indian Chief and adopted by the tribe. His son, John Lewis Clarke's father, also married an Indian princess, the daughter of Chief Stands Alone. Sadly, John's grandfather was later killed by Indians of another tribe near Helena, Montana.

John Lewis Clarke was not born deaf. He became ill at a young age with scarlet fever. Though he survived, he could no longer hear the sounds that the forest animals made. He could not hear his Indian friends when they called to him. Scarlet fever had caused him to lose his hearing. His Indian friends gave him the name Cutapuis (Cu-ta-pu-ee) which means, "man who talks not."

Because John could not talk, he could not tell his parents about his many animal friends in the forest and the exciting things that he saw, but he found another way to express himself. He made figures of them out of clay from the river banks. Later, when he was older, he learned to carve things out of wood. He loved to carve animals. With an axe and a pocket knife, he carved a life-sized image of a bear from a cedar trunk. The bear looked so real, the only thing missing was its growl.

When John was old enough to go to school, his parents sent him to the Fort Shaw Indian School. However, since he needed special education, he was transferred to a school for the deaf at Boulder, Montana. He also attended the School for the Deaf at Devil's Lake, North Dakota. When he was older, he enrolled at St. Francis Academy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he studied wood carving.

While he was still in his teens, John returned to Montana and opened a studio. He began to carve all the animals he had known very well in his childhood, and offer them for sale. He made models of animals out of wood, clay, and stone. He painted pictures using water colors and oils, and did excellent pen and ink drawings. He began to make a name for himself as an artist.

John spent most of his 89 years at his home studio in Glacier Park. Every year when the park season was over, he continued his work in Great Falls, Montana, his second home. Many important people bought John's work. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the famous multimillionaire, was one of them. John's work was on exhibit in many places in this country. John died on November 20, 1970. In his life-time, he literally carved his way to fame.

1. John probably started to use American Sign Language as soon as:
 - a. he became deaf.
 - b. he entered a school for the deaf.
 - c. he could make figures out of clay.
 - d. his Indian friends taught him.

2. The subject of his artwork was mostly animals. This is most likely because:
 - a. the environment he grew up in influenced him.
 - b. he was an Indian.
 - c. it was his way of expressing ideas.
 - d. he did not like people.
3. "The bear looked so real. The only thing missing was its 'growl.'" This phrase means:
 - a. John forgot to add one more thing.
 - b. the bear was missing.
 - c. the bear missed growling.
 - d. the bear looked perfect except that it could not make any sound.
4. During the course of his education, John attended:
 - a. two schools.
 - b. only a residential school for the deaf.
 - c. four different schools.
 - d. a school in Maine.
5. Because John could not talk, he could not tell his parents about his many animal friends in the forest and the exciting things that he saw, but he found another way to express himself. He made figures out of clay.
 - a. speak with voice
 - b. be quiet
 - c. communicate
 - d. write his thoughts
6. The bear looked so real. The only thing missing was its growl.
 - a. snarl
 - b. growth
 - c. mouth
 - d. talking back
7. Since he needed special education, he was transferred to a school for the deaf at Boulder, Montana.
 - a. traveled by train
 - b. moved to

- c. kept at
 - d. transformed
8. John's work was on exhibit in many places in the country.
- a. sale
 - b. loan
 - c. walls
 - d. display
9. In his lifetime, he literally carved his way to fame.
- a. in action
 - b. really
 - c. probably
 - d. supposedly
10. Many important people bought John's work. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the famous multimillionaire, was one of them.
- a. someone who has many millions of dollars
 - b. someone who has a million dollars
 - c. someone who gives a lot of money to charity
 - d. someone who doesn't care about money
- III. People can lose their hearing at any age - before they are born, as infants, during childhood, or as _____1_____. Each age of onset has a different name and the deafness may have different origins.

Prenatal deafness means that a baby is born deaf. There are several reasons why this can happen. If parents are deaf, they may have a deaf baby. There are genes related to deafness that hearing parents can also pass on to their child. Genes control the way we look and all of our characteristics. If the baby gets the right genes from hearing parents, it will be born deaf. Other prenatal _____2_____ of deafness can include: accidents; medicine or drugs that the mother takes; illnesses; and genetic syndromes.

Genetic syndromes are a group of characteristics that a child inherits from its parents. There are two very common types of genetic syndromes related to deafness. One is Waardenburg's Syndrome. Its characteristics are very _____3_____. The person may have pigment disorders: a streak of white hair; two different color eyes; or streaks of white in a man's _____4_____. Most residential schools have children with these characteristics. It is possible to

have the physical traits of Waardenburg's Syndrome but not be deaf.

Usher's Syndrome is also fairly common. Children with Usher's Syndrome are born with a hearing loss and later lose their vision. The first symptoms of this genetic syndrome occur at _____5_____. A person with Usher's Syndrome will experience problems seeing well in the dark. Later, they will lose their peripheral vision and see only within a tunnel area in front of them. This is called "tunnel vision." Persons may eventually lose more and more of their vision and become blind or partially blind.

If you notice that a deaf person does not see you when you stand at his or her _____6_____, that person may have this syndrome. The best way to communicate with a person who has Usher's Syndrome is to stand directly in front and to sign _____7_____.

“Adapted from Deaf Heritage: A Student Text and Workbook. National Association of the Deaf.”

- 1 People can lose their hearing at any age - before they are born, as infants, during childhood, or as _____.
 adults
 friends
 relatives
 students
 citizens
- 2 Other prenatal _____ of deafness can include: accidents; medicine or drugs that the mother takes; illnesses; and genetic syndromes.
 benefits
 causes
 degrees
 tests
 results
- 3 The characteristics of Waardenburg's Syndrome are very _____.
 rare
 valuable
 old-fashioned
 obvious
 dangerous

- 4 The person may have pigment disorders: a streak of white hair; two different color eyes; or streaks of white in a man's _____.
- smile
 - clothing
 - picture
 - glasses
 - beard
- 5 The first symptoms of the Usher's Syndrome occur at _____.
- night
 - home
 - dinner
 - rest
 - recess
- 6 If you notice that a deaf person does not see you when you stand at his or her _____, that person may have this syndrome.
- window
 - rear
 - side
 - door
 - mirror
- 7 The best way to communicate with a person who has Usher's Syndrome is to stand directly in front and to sign _____.
- politely
 - clearly
 - quickly
 - quietly
 - English
8. Make notes of the above text and give suitable title to it.

IV. In cobra country a mongoose was born one day who didn't want to fight cobras or anything else. The word spread from mongoose to mongoose that there was a mongoose who didn't want to fight cobras. If he didn't want to fight anything else, it was his own business, but it was the duty of every mongoose to kill cobras or be killed by cobras.

"Why?" asked the peacelike mongoose, and the word went round that the strange new mongoose was not only pro-cobra and anti-mongoose but intellectually curious and against the ideals and traditions of mongoosism.

"He is crazy," cried the young's mongoose's father.

"He's sick," said his mother.

"He is a coward," shouted his brothers.

"He's a mongoosesexual," whispered his sisters.

Strangers who had never laid eyes on the peacelike mongoose remembered that they had seen him crawling on his stomach, or trying cobra hoods, or plotting the violent overthrow of Mongoodia.

"I am trying to use reason and intelligence," said the strange new mongoose.

"Reason is six-sevenths of treason," said one of his neighbours.

"Intelligence is what the enemy uses," said another.

Finally the rumour spread that the mongoose had venom in his sting, like a cobra, and he was tried, convicted by a show of paws, and condemned to banishment.

Moral: Ashes to ashes, and clay to clay, if the enemy doesn't get you your own folks may.

Exercise:

THE PEACELIKE MONGOOSE

The only question in the whole text is _____ and it is asked by the _____ mongoose. The fact that a mongoose must inevitably cobras _____ isn't obvious to him so he wants to know the _____ for such behaviour. However, this is interpreted by his fellow mongooses as _____. If you look closely at the words "reason" and "treason" you will find out they have letters _____ in common, that is why the author refers to reason being of treason.

The other mongooses have never asked themselves questions about _____ and they have been _____ to think that this is the only way to _____. This blind acceptance of ideals and traditions has led them not only to constant _____ against cobras with no hope of an end but also _____ towards anyone who _____ such behaviour. They have not been taught to use either _____ or intelligence.

Can you relate the story and its moral to any particular historical event? If you do, write a short paragraph describing it, making a parallel between both stories and send it to us.

V. English as a National Foreign Language

India has two national languages for central administrative purposes: Hindi and English. Hindi is the national, official, and main link language of India. English is an associate official language. The Indian Constitution also officially approves twenty-two regional languages for official purposes.

Dozens of distinctly different regional languages are spoken in India, which share many characteristics such as grammatical structure and vocabulary. Apart from these languages, Hindi is used for communication in India. The homeland of Hindi is mainly in the north of India, but it is spoken and widely understood in all urban centers of India. In the southern states of India, where people speak many different languages that are not much related to Hindi, there is more resistance to Hindi, which has allowed English to remain a lingua franca to a greater degree.

Since the early 1600s, the English language has had a toehold on the Indian subcontinent, when the East India Company established settlements in Chennai, Kolkata, and Mumbai, formerly Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay respectively. The historical background of India is never far away from everyday usage of English. India has had a longer exposure to English than any other country which uses it as a second language, its distinctive words, idioms, grammar and rhetoric spreading gradually to affect all places, habits and culture.

In India, English serves two purposes. First, it provides a linguistic tool for the administrative cohesiveness of the country, causing people who speak different languages to become united. Secondly, it serves as a language of wider communication, including a large variety of different people covering a vast area. It overlaps with local languages in certain spheres of influence and in public domains.

Generally, English is used among Indians as a 'link' language and it is the first language for many well-educated Indians. It is also the second language for many who speak more than one language in India. The English language is a tie that helps bind the many segments of our society together. Also, it is a linguistic bridge between the major countries of the world and India.

English has special national status in India. It has a special place in the parliament, judiciary, broadcasting, journalism, and in the education system. One can see a Hindi-speaking

teacher giving their students instructions during an educational tour about where to meet and when their bus would leave, but all in English. It means that the language permeates daily life. It is unavoidable and is always expected, especially in the cities.

The importance of the ability to speak or write English has recently increased significantly because English has become the de facto standard. Learning English language has become popular for business, commerce and cultural reasons and especially for internet communications throughout the world. English is a language that has become a standard not because it has been approved by any 'standards' organization but because it is widely used by many information and technology industries and recognized as being standard. The call centre phenomenon has stimulated a huge expansion of internet-related activity, establishing the future of India as a cyber-technological super-power. Modern communications, videos, journals and newspapers on the internet use English and have made 'knowing English' indispensable.

The prevailing view seems to be that unless students learn English, they can only work in limited jobs. Those who do not have basic knowledge of English cannot obtain good quality jobs. They cannot communicate efficiently with others, and cannot have the benefit of India's rich social and cultural life. Men and women who cannot comprehend and interpret instructions in English, even if educated, are unemployable. They cannot help with their children's school homework every day or decide their revenue options of the future.

A positive attitude to English as a national language is essential to the integration of people into Indian society. There would appear to be virtually no disagreement in the community about the importance of English language skills. Using English you will become a citizen of the world almost naturally. English plays a dominant role in the media. It has been used as a medium for inter-state communication and broadcasting both before and since India's independence. India is, without a doubt, committed to English as a national language. The impact of English is not only continuing but increasing.

1. According to the writer, the Indian constitution recognises
22 official languages
Hindi as the national language
2 national, official languages 2
national languages

2. English's status as a lingua franca is helped by
 - its status in northern India
 - the fact that it is widely understood in urban centres
 - the fact that people from the south speak languages not much related to Hindi
 - it shares many grammatical similarities with Hindi
3. In paragraph 3, 'toehold' means that English
 - dominated India
 - changed the names of some cities in India
 - has had a presence in India
 - has been in India longer than any other language
4. Hindi-speaking teachers
 - might well be heard using English
 - only use English
 - only use English for instructions
 - do not use English
5. In paragraph eight, it says 'the prevailing view', which suggests that
 - the view is correct
 - the view is held by the majority
 - the view is incorrect
 - the view is held by the minority
6. English in India
 - is going to decrease
 - has decreased since independence
 - causes disagreement
 - is going to have a greater importance
7. Summarise the above text into one third of it.
8. Make the note points of the text given above.

NOTE MAKING AND PRECISE WRITING

Unit Structure

- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Note Making: Introduction
- 10.3 Note-making or note-taking
- 10.4 Note-making techniques
- 10.5 Note-making tips
- 10.6 Checklist/tips
- 10.7 Précis Writing: Introduction
- 10.8 Summary
- 10.8 Exercise

10.1 OBJECTIVES

- To learn the note making techniques
- To understand and adopt the strategies for effective note making
- To know the concept of precise writing
- To learn the art of precise writing

10.2 NOTE MAKING: INTRODUCTION

The notes you make whilst studying at university are a valuable resource for our learning and they will build up quickly during your studies. They help you to map and record what you are learning, and then to recall and understand it later. You will depend upon your notes for exam revision, as well as for preparation of essays and other coursework assignments. It is therefore important to develop efficient and effective skills for both creating notes and keeping study records. This guide suggests ways in which you can use the note-making process to engage with your subject as well as ensuring that your records are easy to use and contain all the information you need.

3. NOTE-MAKING OR NOTE-TAKING

Note-taking can mean you write down what you hear or read without thinking about the material, perhaps by copying from the original source and re-written in a similar format. They are often non-selective, covering most or all of the information given. Note-taking is a passive study technique, where note-making is active.

When making notes, be selective, find one or two 'learning points' rather than noting everything the speaker or writer says (Levin, 2009). Remember that the introductions and conclusions usually summarise the key ideas. Note-making requires concentration as you have to select, analyse and summarise what you hear or read. If you have never thought about how you make notes, ask yourself:

- What sort of notes do I make?
- What do I do with my notes after I have made them?
- Are my notes effective for revising or assignments?

(After Burns and Sinfield, 2004)

4. NOTE-MAKING TECHNIQUES

1. Sequential or linear notes usually follow the same order as the speaker or writer. Good sequential notes include key words, headings and sub-headings to express the connections between key concepts, accompanied by extra information in brief. It helps if you leave wide margins and write on every other line as this provides space for comments or the addition of further notes at a later date; the inclusion of diagrams and flow charts enhance sequential notes and usually reduce the number of words you need to write. Underlining and highlighting will focus your attention and enable you to find the important points quickly. Both annotating (making brief notes in the margins), and abbreviating speed up your note-making. Summarising, which involves writing a much shorter version, may save time and reduce the risk of plagiarism (using others' words or ideas and representing them as your own).

When making sequential notes, you are following the sense of what is being said/read and creating a set of notes for review that can be quickly scanned for the main points. You should also be helping yourself to think creatively by focusing on concepts and ideas, rather than becoming immersed in the detail.

2. Visual notes some learners prefer to make visual notes organised around particular concepts or ideas. Pattern notes, spider-diagrams and mind maps use lines, arrows and circles to

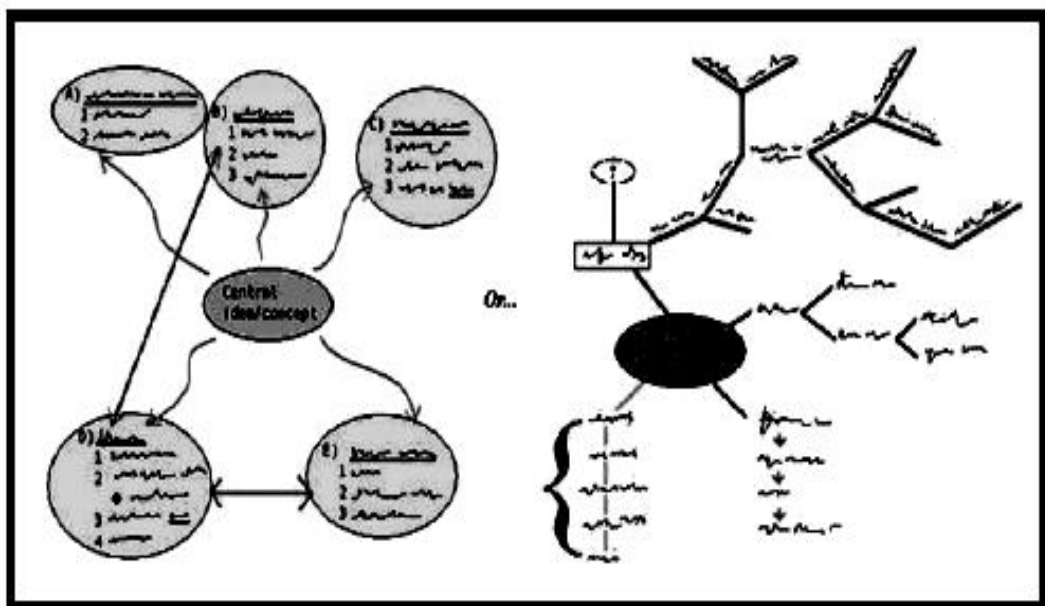
link key ideas. Pattern note-making reduces the impulse to make notes in the order the information was presented— you have to re-process and organise it at the point when you receive it.

When using visual note-making, you are expressing your understanding of the information by thinking through where each aspect fits in relation to all other aspects. You are also creating a unique visual image which may be easy to recall. These techniques can take many forms but may look something like the example below in figure 1.

There are a number of other methods of visually, or graphically, representing what you have heard or read. These include:

- flowchart/series of events chain – to express stages or sequencing of an event or process
- continuum scale – to rank items from one end of a spectrum to another e.g.: time line or low to high
- compare and contrast matrix – table or chart which is good for showing similarities and differences
- fishbone map – shows the causal interaction in a complex setting
- cycle/process – with an emphasis on circularity, a cycle stresses patterns of repetition

Figure 1. Visual note-making techniques



If you are a slow writer, experiment with pattern techniques. Essentially, any note-making technique that supports quick, easy and informative review is good. Experiment and choose the approach which best suits your needs.

3. Concept Maps and Diagrams

You can set down information in a concept map or diagram. This presents the information in a visual form and is unlike the traditional linear form of note taking. Information can be added to the concept map in any sequence. Concept maps can easily become cluttered, so we recommend you use both facing pages of an open A4 note book. This will give you an A3 size page to set out your concept map and allow plenty of space for adding ideas and symbols.

- Begin in the middle of the page and add ideas on branches that radiate from the central idea or from previous branches.
- Arrows and words can be used to show links between parts of the concept map.
- Colour and symbols are important parts of concept maps, helping illustrate ideas and triggering your own thoughts.

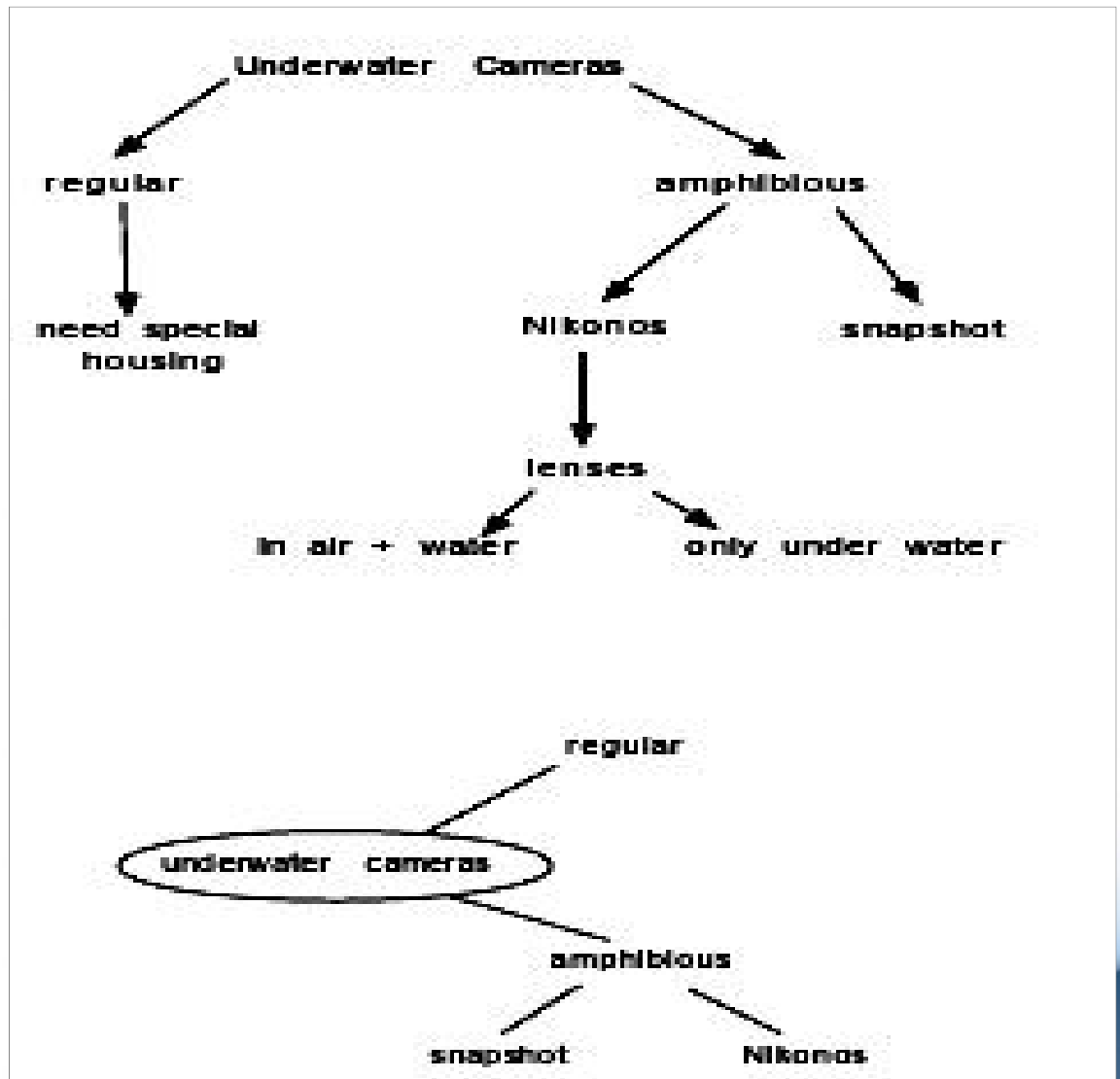


Fig 2 Concept Maps

4. Use Symbols and Abbreviations

The use of symbols and abbreviations is useful for lectures, when speed is essential. You also need to be familiar with symbols frequently used in your courses.

- Develop a system of symbols and abbreviations; some personal, some from your courses
- Be consistent when using symbols and abbreviations

Some examples of commonly used symbols and abbreviations are presented in the following tables.

Symbols	Meaning in note making
=	equals/is equal to/is the same as
	is not equal to/is not the same as
	is equivalent to
	therefore, thus, so because
+	and, more, plus
>	more than, greater than
<	less than
—	less, minus
	gives, causes, leads to, results in, is given by, is produced by, results from
↗	rises, increases by
↘	falls, decreases by
	proportional to
∅	not proportional to

10.5 NOTE-MAKING TIPS

You will make your best notes when you are well-prepared. Consider what you already know about the topic, how it fits in with the whole course and what you now need to find out.

Do not be intimidated by academic language. You may not be familiar with all the terms you hear and read or the way in which language is used, but you will get used to it. Note any terms you do not understand and check their meanings later.

Be aware that some sources are more valid than others – many websites, magazines and newspapers base their content on opinion rather than research-based evidence. Remember this if you are considering referencing them in your academic work. If you understand why the source exists – to inform, advertise, entertain etc – this will help you to select according to your need.

Regard your notes as part of a learning cycle. Any activity which takes you back to your notes later will contribute to your learning. So set yourself regular review tasks based on your notes.

10.5.1 Identify How Information is Organised

Most texts use a range of organising principles to develop ideas. While most good writing will have a logical order, not all writers will use an organising principle. Organising principles tend to sequence information into a logical hierarchy, some of which are:

- Past ideas to present ideas
- The steps or stages of a process or event
- Most important point to least important point
- Well known ideas to least known ideas
- Simple ideas to complex ideas
- General ideas to specific ideas
- The largest parts to the smallest parts of something
- Problems and solutions
- Causes and result

2. Record keeping

Plan how you are going to keep and store your notes before you begin to make them:

1. Paper notes:

- Ensure you have the necessary notebooks to meet your needs – avoid merging all your notes together on consecutive pages, especially when you are working on more than one module at the same time.
- Keep lecture notes separate from your own research notes for assignments so you can navigate your files quickly and easily.
- Label and store handouts, photocopies and notes in folders.
- Consider having a colour code to represent specific topics.

2. Electronic notes:

- Organise your work folders in a clear and logical way.
- Use comment boxes to annotate documents and colour (text and highlighter) to indicate key ideas and themes.
- Keep video and audio files within your electronic storage system.

Important: When making notes from books, journals and web sources remember to record the bibliographic or reference information. This includes: name(s) of author(s), year of publishing, title of book/journal and the specific chapter/article title, place of publishing and publisher (in the case of a book) and volume number and issue number (in the case of an article) and the exact page(s) that your notes come from (Pears & Shields, 2008). If the book or journal you accessed is an e-version, include the exact URL and the date you accessed the material. The university library has Metalib and Voyager which can track your resource searches. For further information contact the library. For other electronic resources copy the exact link with your notes. If you do not do this, you may have difficulty finding the page again later.

6. CHECKLIST/TIPS

- Plan in advance. Ensure you always have a pen and paper.
- Experiment with different note-making techniques to see if they work for you.
- Be selective. Get the main points down; don't get hung up on detail.
- Note concepts/ideas or terms you don't understand so you can clarify meaning later.
- Store your notes carefully and always note the bibliographic source or reference.
- Review your notes to improve your learning
- Label and store handouts, photocopies and notes in folders
- Consider having a colour code to represent specific topics.

1. Electronic notes:

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page(s) that your notes come from (Pears & Shields, 2008). If the book or journal you accessed is an e-version, include the exact URL and the date you accessed the material. The university library has Metalib and Voyager which can track your resource searches. For further information contact the library. For other electronic resources copy the exact link with your notes. If you do not do this, you may have difficulty finding the page again later.

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- Note concepts/ideas or terms you don't understand so you can clarify meaning later.
- Store your notes carefully and always note the bibliographic source or reference.
- Review your notes to improve your learning

10.7 PRECIS WRITING: INTRODUCTION

A *précis* (form both singular and plural, pronounced “pray—see”) is a brief summary of the essential thought of a longer composition. It attempts to provide a miniature of the original selection, reproducing the same proportions on smaller scale, the same ideas, and the same mood and tone, so far as possible. The writer of a *précis* cannot interpret or comment; his or her sole function is to give a reduced photograph of the original author's exact and essential meaning. Nor can he or she omit important details. Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, for example, is not really a series of *précis*, because from the originals have been deleted some important subplots as well as all that was thought unfit for children.

Précis (pray-see, pl. pray-seez) writing is a basic and very useful skill. It has been variously referred to as 'abbreviation', 'subtraction', 'abstract', 'summary', and 'condensation'. The French gave it the name '*précis*' — the pruning away of all that is inessential.

10.7.1 Definition

"A *précis* is a brief, original summary of the important ideas given in a long selection. Its aim is to give the general effect created by the original selection." It is a concise and lucid summary that forsakes all unnecessary details (including illustrations,

amplifications, and embellishments) in favor of reproducing the logic, development, organization and emphasis of the original. Retaining the substance of a fuller statement, it seeks to articulate another author's thoughts by extracting the maximum amount of information and carefully conveying it in a minimum number of words.

10.7.2 The Purpose

Précis writing aims at intelligent reading, and clear and accurate writing. It is a skill of both analysis and genesis that critically questions every thought included and excluded, each word used to express those thoughts, and the proportions and arrangements of those thoughts — both in the original and in the précis. In its exaction it mercilessly reveals an author's wordiness and looseness or thinness of thought and construction. It should strengthen our style, our sense of proportion and emphasis, and our sensitivity to word meanings and an author's viewpoint,

A précis is usually reduced to at least one-fourth of its original length and frequently much more. How long it is will be determined by its purpose and by the nature of the original.

3. Preliminary to Precise Writing

1. An abstract is a condensation of a passage, the important words, phrases, and sentences containing the essential thoughts being worked as simply as possible into sentences. It simply requires the ability to pick out essential facts.

Exercises in abstracting will involve underscoring the essential facts in a passage and combining them into a single whole. (N.B.: Here 'abstract' is used in its narrow sense to mean a digest or running summary.)

2. A paraphrase is a restatement of a difficult passage, stating clearly and fully in language of the simplest sort just what the passage means. Because it clarifies hidden meanings and obscure passages, it is usually longer than the original." Précis writing involves the ability to paraphrase, but adds to it concision, all the while being careful to not to lose or distort the original meaning Exercising in paraphrasing might involve transposing poetry to prose, explaining the meaning of proverbs, etc.
3. In précis writing it is necessary to say as much as possible in as few words as possible." A word may substitute for a

phrase and a phrase for a clause. The concern is for the precise meaning or connotation of a word.

4. The proper use of the colon and semicolon in punctuation is an aid to good précis writing.
5. Generally a précis should be written in reported or indirect speech. This means a précis will be in third person, in the past tense. Exercises will involve the change of direct speech to indirect speech.
6. A précis title must be cold and matter of fact, not attractive to the imaginative mind. It is a précis of the précis.

4. Method

“It will be well to remember the object of précis writing: a brief and clear summary — or précis — of what you have first carefully read. No words, phrases, clauses, or sentences which are unessential to the thought of the selection, are considered. Every unnecessary word is discarded until all that you have left is the thought, the dominating idea, of what you have read. Then in your own words, give this thought as briefly and clearly as possible. Your sentences must be carefully constructed. Do not omit any essential articles, prepositions, or conjunctions.”

1. First Reading

1. Read every word slowly and carefully until you clearly understand the sense of the passage.
2. Look up all unfamiliar words, phrases, and allusions
3. Identify the dominating idea, the essential thought, of the passage. Ask if this idea were omitted, would the fundamental meaning of the passage be changed?
4. Determine what emphasis and space to give the thought in each section; write a heading for each section.

1. Second Reading

1. Underscore with a pencil the important facts containing the essential thoughts. This is a process of differentiation between what is essential and what is not. Generally you will omit examples, illustrations, conversations, and repetitions.
2. Reread your selections to see that they are wise and adequate.
3. Determine if your underscoring expresses the main ideas.

3. Final Reading

Rapidly and intensely reread the origin, dwelling on the important facts selected for a précis.

4. In constructing a précis, follow these suggestions

1. Select carefully the material to be condensed. Some selections can be reduced satisfactorily, but others are so tightly knit that condensation is virtually impossible. You can make précis of novels, short stories, speeches, or essays, but do not select material the style of which is especially compact and epigrammatic.

Avoid material which has already been summarized, edited, or abridged; “continual distillation” cannot accurately indicate the essential thought of the original composition.

2. Read the selection carefully. The major purpose of a précis is to present faithfully, as briefly and clearly as possible, the important ideas of the selection being “cut down.” In order to grasp the central ideas, you must read carefully, analytically, and reflectively. Look up the meanings of all words and phrases about which you are in doubt. Do not skim, but look for important or key expressions. Before starting to write, you must, to use Sir Francis Bacon’s phrase, “chew and digest” the selection, not merely “taste” it or “swallow” it whole in a single gulp. You must see how the material has been organized, what devices the writer has used, what kinds of illustrations support the main thought. You must be sure to distinguish fact and opinion, and you will want to question critically the writer’s statements. These suggestions are, of course, those which you would ordinarily follow every time that you attempt to read and to think as intelligently as you can.
3. Use your own words. Quoting sentences—perhaps topic sentences—from each paragraph results in a sentence outline, not a précis. You must use your own words for the most part, although a little quotation is permissible. Ordinarily, the phrasing of the original will not be suitable for your purposes. Once you have mastered the thought of the selection, your problem is one of original composition. You are guided and aided by the order and wording of the material, but the précis itself represents your own analysis and statement of the main thought.
4. Do not use too many words. Nothing of real importance can be omitted, but you must remember that the central aim of a précis

is condensation. The length of a condensation cannot arbitrarily be determined, but it is safe to say that most prose can be reduced by two-thirds to two-fourths. Some verse is so compact that it can hardly be condensed at all; other verse can be shortened far more than most good prose.

5. Do not alter the plan of the original. Follow the logical order of the original so that the condensation will be accurate. Thoughts and facts should not be rearranged; if they are, the essence of the original may be distorted. Give attention to proportion. Try to preserve as much as possible of the mood and tone of the original.
6. Write the précis in good English. The condensation should not be a jumble of disconnected words and faulty sentences. It should be a model of exact and emphatic diction and clear, effective sentence construction because it must be intelligible to a reader who has not seen the original. Transition from sentence to sentence must be smooth and unobtrusive, emphasizing the unity of the summarization. The précis is not often likely to be so well written as the original, but it should read smoothly and possess compositional merit of its own.

10.7.5 Examples

10.7.5.1. ORIGINAL

For a hundred years and more, the monarchy in France had been absolute and popular. It was beginning now to lose both power and prestige. A sinister symptom of what was to follow appeared when the higher ranks of society began to lose their respect for the sovereign. It started when Louis XV selected as his principal mistress a member of the middle class; it continued when he chose her successor from the streets. When the feud between Madame Du Barry and the Duke de Choiseul ended in the dismissal of the Minister, the road to Chanteloup, his country house, was crowded with carriages, while familiar faces were absent from the court at Versailles. For the first time in French history, the followers of fashion flocked to do honor to a fallen favorite.

People wondered at the time, but hardly understood the profound significance of the event. The king was no longer the leader of society. Kings and presidents, prime ministers and dictators provide at all times a target for the criticism of philosophers, satirists, and reformers. Such criticism they can

Thank You

