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INFOST 230

Unit 4 Reading Reaction

Given the average college student and the amount of research we have to do for several papers a semester, it's highly unlikely any of us are going to completely read the 27-page essay about the biomechanics of sporting gear that we proudly displayed in our works cited page. I for one am thankful for abstracts. My mind can't handle going on a scavenger hunt through an entire article, only to find one or two goodies (and then do that 10 times over, oh gosh). Skim reading just doesn't cut it with references when there aren't any headings or emphasized font.

Show me a world without abstracts, and I will show my multicolored fist print in the lower left corner of my computer screen digitizer. Okay, maybe not so much. The general consensus, after some brief research, seems to be that people read 60 pages an hour when the reading is *pleasurable*. I also imagine that in that world without abstracts, it would take me twice as long to get through the same amount of material for academic reading (given the diminishing marginal utility of the rate of pages, and the fact that the satisfaction did not start as high in the first place). Not to mention, an hour is a long time to be doing research only to end up having turned about 30 pages give or take a few more. I found nothing pleasurable about getting an article that was too in-depth, vague, or biased about my topic when I did research for the non-bibliographic paper.

When I switched from ordinary to scholarly Google search, I was immediately refreshed by the summaries. Usually, all the facts and points I needed to know were right there in the abstract, which meant less reading, browsing, and guessing which articles were a good fit for me. I found out I could cut down articles to the right context with the help of keywords, but I still needed that briefing to make sure the article and the author's position was a good fit before I read further. I would definitely say that abstracting is great for the abstract mind, and it is a feature that is highly used on my end.