# Reading for main ideas 1

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| **Student focused learning outcomes:**  By the end of the session, you will be better able to:   * identify and apply appropriate strategies in reading for main ideas (predicting, skimming, scanning, careful reading); * recognise the meanings of key vocabulary connected to the topic of wellbeing |

This session and the *Reading for Main Ideas 2* lesson use the following journal article:

Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235. Available at: doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4

The reason for reading this source is to find out how researchers define wellbeing.

### Predicting

Making predictions is a useful habit to develop in reading because it utilises your existing knowledge to help you engage with the material. Before reading, you should think about the topic and make some predictions (guesses) about the content of the source.

## Task 1

Discuss the following questions:

1. What do we mean by ‘wellbeing’?
2. Why is wellbeing important to students?
3. The source is a ‘literature review’ journal article. Considering its title, ‘*The challenge of defining wellbeing’*, what do you expect it to contain?

## Task 2

Try to predict the content of each section of the article from its subheadings. Number 4 has been completed as an example.

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| **Section** | **Content predictions** |
| 1. Introduction |  |
| 1. The historical background to wellbeing research |  |
| 1. What constitutes wellbeing? |  |
| 1. Equilibrium: | *How different factors balance* |
| 1. Challenges |  |
| 1. Resources |  |
| 1. A new definition of wellbeing |  |
| 1. The considered strengths of the new definition |  |

## Task 3

The vocabulary items (1-14) below are found in the article’s abstract**.** Match each item with the correct definition (use an online dictionary if necessary).

For example:1 = e (‘dimension’ means ‘an aspect or feature of a situation’)

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| 1. **dimension = e** | 1. a situation which is difficult to deal with |
| 1. pertinence | 1. communicate a message or information |
| 1. dynamic | 1. relating to different academic subjects |
| 1. equilibrium | 1. having many different aspects or features |
| 1. homeostasis | 1. **an aspect or feature of a situation** |
| 1. propose | 1. a way of viewing an issue, subject or situation |
| 1. convey | 1. a condition in which opposing influences are balanced |
| 1. multi-faceted | 1. a steady state of equilibrium between different elements |
| 9. challenge (n) | 1. thinking in a positive way about the future |
| 1. multi-disciplinary | 1. the state of being relevant and important to the issue under discussion |
| 1. universal | 1. applicable to everybody |
| 1. perspective | 1. constantly changing or progressing |
| 1. optimistic | 1. make a suggestion or put forward a plan |

## Task 4

Discuss the meaning of the following terms.

1. an abstract
2. skimming
3. scanning

## Task 5

Now match the terms from Task 4 to their correct definition below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ refers to what we do when we look at a text in order to find the location of specific information. We may just need some specific details from the text, such as a statistic, or we may need to identify which sections of text will require careful reading.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is what we do when we look over a text quickly to get a general idea of what it contains. This can help us decide if the text is relevant to our needs and whether we need to read it all, or just parts of it.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ occurs at the beginning of a source. It summarises the piece of work, or, in the case of a research article, briefly outlines the study undertaken, including aims, methodology and findings. The abstract helps us to determine whether the source is relevant to our own needs. It can therefore be the basis on which we decide whether to read the source and how carefully to read it.

## Task 6

Find the article’s main argument in the abstract.

Wellbeing is a growing area of research, yet the question of how it should be defined remains unanswered. This multi-disciplinary review explores past attempts to define wellbeing and provides an overview of the main theoretical perspectives, from the work of Aristotle to the present day. The article argues that many attempts at expressing its nature have focused purely on dimensions of wellbeing, rather than on definition. Among these theoretical perspectives, we highlight the pertinence of dynamic equilibrium theory of wellbeing (Headey & Wearing, 1989), the effect of life challenges on homeostasis (Cummins, 2010) and the lifespan model of development (Hendry & Kloep, 2002). Consequently, we conclude that it would be appropriate for a new definition of wellbeing to centre on a state of equilibrium or balance that can be affected by life events or challenges. The article closes by proposing this new definition, which we believe to be simple, universal in application, optimistic and a basis for measurement. This definition conveys the multi-faceted nature of wellbeing and can help individuals and policy makers move forward in their understanding of this popular term.

Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International*  *Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235. Available at: doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4

### Preparing to read independently and to share information in groups

To prepare for *Reading for Main Ideas 2*, you will work in TWO ways.

1. You will now read your part(s) of the Dodge et al. article independently and make notes on a template that will be provided for you.
2. You will have an online discussion in *Reading for main ideas 2* to share information about what you have read. You will need to arrange this meeting yourselves.

Your tutor will give you a number: 1, 2, 3 or 4. The number shows which part(s) of the article you will read.

1. ‘Introduction’ & ‘Historical background’
2. ‘What constitutes wellbeing?’
3. ‘Equilibrium’, ‘Challenges’ & ‘Resources’
4. ‘A new definition of wellbeing’ & ‘The considered strengths of the new definition’

## Task 7

Follow the steps.

1. Search for and download the article using the doi in reference below (it is not in UoM Library but is open access on the Internet)
2. Scan the article to locate your part(s) using the subheading(s)
3. Make a note of the page numbers.

Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. International Journal of Wellbeing, 2(3), 222-235. Available at: doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4

### Dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary

When you find a word, you do not understand in a text, you first need to decide whether it is necessary to understand the word. If you can understand enough of the text, keep reading. Looking up unnecessary words will slow you down. Alternatively, the context in which the word is located may allow you to guess the meaning of the word well enough to continue reading. If neither of these applies, you may have to look up the word in a dictionary.

At the end this document, you will find a glossary, which contains some less familiar words from the text. It could be used instead of a dictionary or as an additional resource.

## Task 8

You will need to employ skills in skimming and scanning, as well as some more careful reading, to find the main ideas in your section of the article.

## Follow steps 1-4 below and read your section of the article.

**Remember**: you are only looking for main points about how wellbeing is defined. You should not spend too long on this.

1. Skim through your part(s) of the article first to identify where definitions of wellbeing are given (i.e., you should quickly look over this material, without reading every word).
2. Now look at the headings in your section of the note-taking template (below)
3. Scan for information in your part(s) of the article using the headings in your section of the template. (You should look for key words in the headings, then focus on the relevant sentences / paragraphs in the article.)
4. Make notes under the headings in your section of the template. These do not have to be in full sentences but should contain enough information for you to use them later to explain the main points to other students.

## Task 9

## After you have made notes in your section of the template, consider the following:

1. What are the main points in your part(s) of the article?
2. What did you learn about how wellbeing is defined?
3. How will you explain these points to other students?

### NOTE-TAKING TEMPLATE (Reading for Main Ideas 2)

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| **DEFINING WELLBEING: NOTES ON A JOURNAL ARTICLE**  Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235. Available at: doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4 |
| STUDENT 1: Introduction & Historical background (pp. 222-223)  Previous problems with defining wellbeing:  Beliefs of modern researchers:  Two ‘traditional’ approaches to wellbeing  Hedonic -  Eudaimonic -  Focus of Bradburn’s research: |
| STUDENT 2: What constitutes wellbeing? (pp. 223-226)  Components of wellbeing, according to:   * Diener & Suh (1997): * Ryff (1989): * more recent research (e.g. Foresight Project, 2008; Pollard & Lee, 2003):   Problem with the term ‘quality of life’:    Is wellbeing the same as happiness? (see Shah and Marks, 2004) |
| STUDENT 3: Equilibrium, Challenges & Resources (pp. 226-229)  Headey & Wearing’s (1991, 1992) dynamic equilibrium theory - relationship between subjective wellbeing (SWB), personality and life events:  Cummin’s (2010) ideas about how ‘challenges’ affect SWB:  Resources - how individuals cope with challenges: |
| STUDENT 4: A new definition of wellbeing &  Considered strengths of the new definition (pp. 229-232)  Dodge et al.’s new definition of wellbeing:  Advantages of this new definition:   * Simplicity: * Universal application: * Optimism: * Basis for measurement: |

### Glossary

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| --- | --- |
| affect (n) | a feeling or emotion |
| autonomy | the ability to function independently |
| baseline | a minimum value used for comparisons |
| cognitive | related to conscious thinking |
| concept | an abstract idea |
| construct (n) | an idea or theory, particularly relating to a hypothetical situation |
| correlate | have a mutual relationship or connection |
| eudaimonic | related to living a life in pursuit of happiness |
| fluctuate | change frequently, especially in level |
| flourish | develop well |
| fulfil | achieve an aim, gain satisfaction |
| hedonic | related to pleasant feelings |
| inevitability | the fact that something will definitely happen |
| layperson | a non-expert |
| mastery | the ability to have control over something or cope very well with something |
| phase (n.) | a stage |
| potential | the ability to achieve something in the future |
| psychiatric | related to mental illness |
| psychological | related to feelings or thinking |
| pursuit | action taken over time in order to achieve something |
| realisation | the act of achieving a goal |
| resource | something of value that can be used to aid achievement |
| subjective | related to the feelings of the individual |
| stock (n.) | something available for use / in supply |
| trial | a situation causing difficulty / a challenge |