

NLB e-learning course: Paraphrasing and Summarising

Skimming and scanning methods

One of the reasons why people sometimes plagiarise is that they run out of time to complete their research. Maybe it's because they are taking too long to go through resources. Maybe it's because they don't know about **skimming and scanning** methods. Use this document to learn about these two methods that can help to speed up your research.

Skimming

Use this method to quickly familiarise yourself with an article or a chapter of a book.

Quick tips on skimming for information:

- Read the title
- Read the introduction or first paragraph
- Read the first sentence of every other paragraph
- Read any headings or subheadings
- Notice any pictures, charts or graphs
- Notice any words that are in italics or bold type
- Read the summary or last paragraph

Scanning

Use this method to find specific information such as names, dates and places. As you quickly read down a page, look for key words. Sometimes, these are in bold type or appear in headings.

Quick tips on scanning for information:

- State the specific information you are looking for in the form of a question
- Predict how the answer will appear and what clues you might use to find the answer
- Use headings, graphics, and bold or italic print to identify sections where information might be found
- Selectively read and skip through sections of text