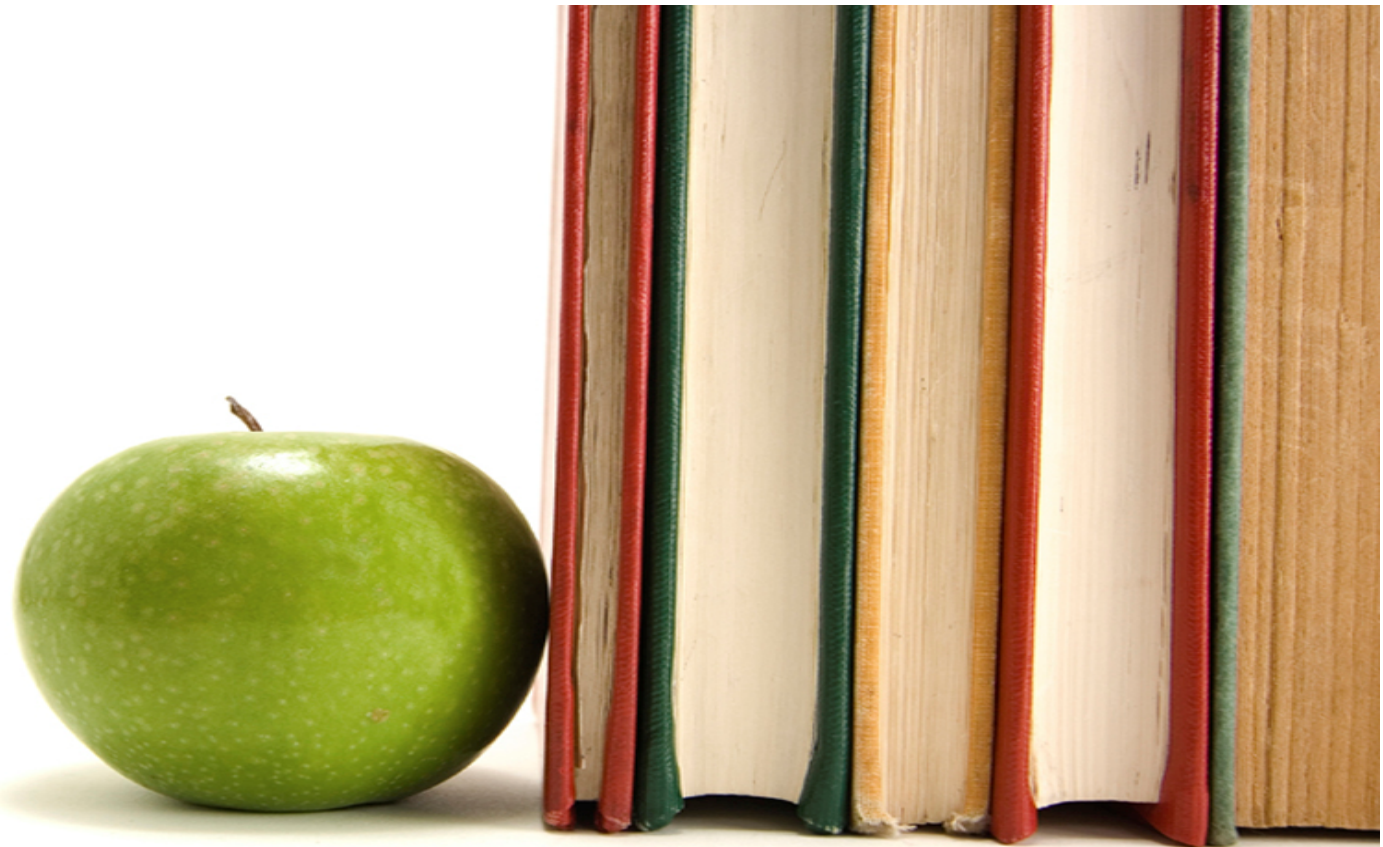




Reading and note-making





Outline of Session



Unravelling Reading

Reading techniques

**Note-making for
Research**

Note-taking in lectures

Further Sources of help

Unravelling Reading

- 1) What reading styles do you use?
- 2) Read the two quotes below. Do you agree with them. Give reasons for your answers.

Quote No 1:

“If I read more slowly it will help me to understand difficult concepts and texts which seem inaccessible because of the way they are written”

Quote No 2:

“ If I read a chapter/article/section of text over and over again I will be able to understand the concepts”

What does this mean for study...

As one mature graduate pointed out, you need a range of reading styles:

- Different approaches needed for different subjects and different modules and different tasks.
- English, for example, may sometimes requires extremely close reading of one passage or short story, but a fairly speedy read-through of a lengthy novel.
- It is important to accept early on that sometimes speed-reading is appropriate and sometimes thoroughness is called for.
- The hard way is not the best way

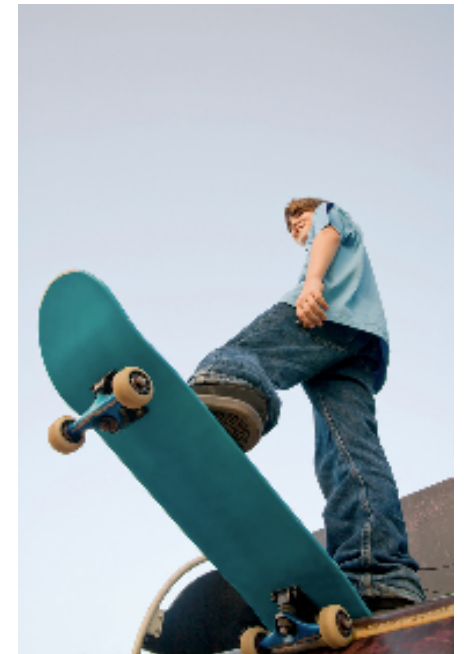


Don't just read and reread...

‘readers extract the same representation from the text both times it is read.’

Callender & McDaniel (2009: 39):

Do something with it!



The importance of Active Reading



Methods:

- Cross referencing
- SQ3R
- 3R
- "Gutting" a book

1) Cross referencing

When reading a text, keep relevant materials to hand to aid your understanding.

Then if you get stuck, you can try to find out more about the issue using another source such as:



Lecture notes
Textbooks
Journal articles
Subject dictionary
Electronic resources

3) The SQ3R System

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recall
- Review

Have a look at

[http://www.studygs.net/te
xred2.htm](http://www.studygs.net/te
xred2.htm)



2) Read-Recite-Review or 3R method

Recent research found that the effectiveness of the typical rereading approach to studying can be greatly improved by *reciting* before rereading.

The 3R method is where learners read a passage of text, set the text aside and recite out loud all that they can remember, and then read the text a second time.

3R is an easily learned method that can be performed efficiently by learners and that can produce memory benefits as well as generative learning (McDaniel, Howard and Einstein, 2009).



How to gut a book



The purpose is to extract:

- **the book's thesis**
- **the main lines of argument**
- **the main evidence used to support those arguments**

Process:

- **Look through the table of contents and the chapter titles**
- **Read intro**
- **Read first and last para of chapters**
- **Do the same with any subheadings**
- **Skim read**

Whatever the method... always read critically!

Ask yourself the following questions as you read:

- Why am I reading this/ for what purpose?
- What is the topic?
- What issues are addressed?
- What conclusions/arguments does the author advance about the issue(s)?
- What are the author's reasons for this argument/conclusion?
- How do these reasons relate to what I already know about the issues?





What kind of
reader are
you?

Have you tried
any of the
methods just
discussed?





Note making



Note making

Why is it important?

... 'students are moving from passive to active learners through the recontextualising and reorganising of ideas' (Sinfield et al 2009, np)



Available online at: http://www.aldinhe.ac.uk/symposium09/papers/17_paper.pdf



Note making for research

Be practical

Be purposeful

Be preparatory



Be practical...

Should you annotate your texts?

- underline important points *
- write margin comments (objections, cross-references)

Can help some readers...

But be purposeful and restrained! *

If uncomfortable with pen, pencil or post-it notes are other options!

Of course, don't write in the book if it's not yours (friend's/library's) or it's an open-book exam!

***See next slide for highlighting hysteria...**

*As one student said:
"Don't be scared to write
on your text books. It
took me a long time to
bring myself to write in
a book in pen, after
thirty years of not doing
so, but it really is vital to
make notes in, and
highlight key sentences
and paragraphs. Use a
pencil if you absolutely
must, but use
something."*

Be purposeful...

Highlighting (whether notes, handouts or texts) can be a very passive act (even though it can seem frenzied and compulsive)

You feel like you're doing something active, but are you really engaging with the text?

Excessive highlighting - highlighting hysteria - is useless!



Be preparatory...

One of the daunting things about University can be the amount of reading that you are asked to do. Organising information as you navigate your way through it will save you time and energy later on down the line.



Tips for managing heavy reading loads:

- Develop an annotated bibliography
- Write summary sheets
- Write 'Notes to Self'
- Record bibliographic detail on alphabetical index cards

More note making methods...



- KWL
- The notebook method
- QEC

K What I <i>know</i>	W What I <i>want</i> to know	L What I <i>learned</i>
- At the Treaty of Utrecht the Spanish had to give Gibraltar to Britain.	- What other lands did Britain get from the Treaty? - What other lands did Spain lose?	- Britain was also given control over Menorca, Saint Kitts (from France) and extensive lands in North America (also from France). - Spain also lost Sicily to Savoy, the Spanish Netherlands, Naples and Sardinia to the Holy Roman Empire, and several Spanish lands in Latin America were given to Portugal.

KWL involves creating a chart with three columns:

K - What I **know**

W - What I **want** to know

L - What I **learned**

The notebook method

This method applies to the following academic situations, among others...

Writing an essay or paper.

Tackling a difficult book or reading assignment.

Buy a sturdy college-ruled notebook and a good pen

Go to the most relaxing, meditative, non-distracting place possible.

Spend 1 – 3 hours working out your thinking on the task at hand in the notebook. Spend the last 20 minutes carefully summarizing your results on a clean page that you mark with the date and a title.

It is useful because...

Writing down your thoughts forces you to clarify what you're thinking and confront ambiguities or inconsistencies.

You can't get distracted

Paper facilitates creative thinking. (You can draw arrows, and circle concepts, and sketch structures – it's a creative process!)

This method is about good, hard, deep thinking.



QEC

Helpful for the making of notes but also for the retaining of information.

QEC for note making:

The basic idea is to reduce material using the Q/E/C method.

Q is for a 'question'

E is for substantiating evidence

C is for the conclusion that responds



QEC for retaining information/Review

It is difficult to remember volumes of information but it is easier to learn the much smaller number of big ideas. For each question recorded in your Q/E/C notes, you should be able to lecture, out-loud, and without peeking at what you've written down, about the conclusion and a *sampling* of the evidence that connects the conclusion with the question. You don't have to remember every last piece of evidence, just enough to recreate the main idea.

Adapted from <http://calnewport.com/blog/>

Note-making in Lectures



3 ways to try:

- Linear
- Mind-mapping
- Cornell

Try the notemaker at

<http://learning.londonmet.ac.uk/TLTC/learnhigher/notemaker/>

Linear notes

Heading

Sub-heading

- Bullet point
- Bullet point
- Bullet point

Sub-heading

Linear notes are the most common form of notes and simply involve listing the key points as they come in a linear fashion

Subheading

More stuff – but condensed – so main stuff stays

Summary

Cornell note-taking

Use 1 of 2 ways:

One side same as linear note-making, but left-hand margin is for critical comments, like how does this relate to the articles you've just read; the essay title you've just collected; do you agree with the point. Etc

Or

Left hand side to record structure and right hand side for linear style notes. Good technique for 'keeping up'.

<p><u>Illustrated Internet</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - purpose for learning - improved memory - to record examples? <p><u>Selectivity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - choose - taking too much rel. to a "fear of failure" 	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Principles of Effective Learning</i></p> <p><u>1. Illustrated Internet</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - important to have purpose for learning and a - interest leads to better attention and possibility e.g., remembering the place to of a footballer mentioned in articles on the world's best football players from 1995. <p><u>2. Selectivity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - important to choose information relevant to you - most students try to take in too much, confuse - not selecting related to a "fear of failure"
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Mind-mapping

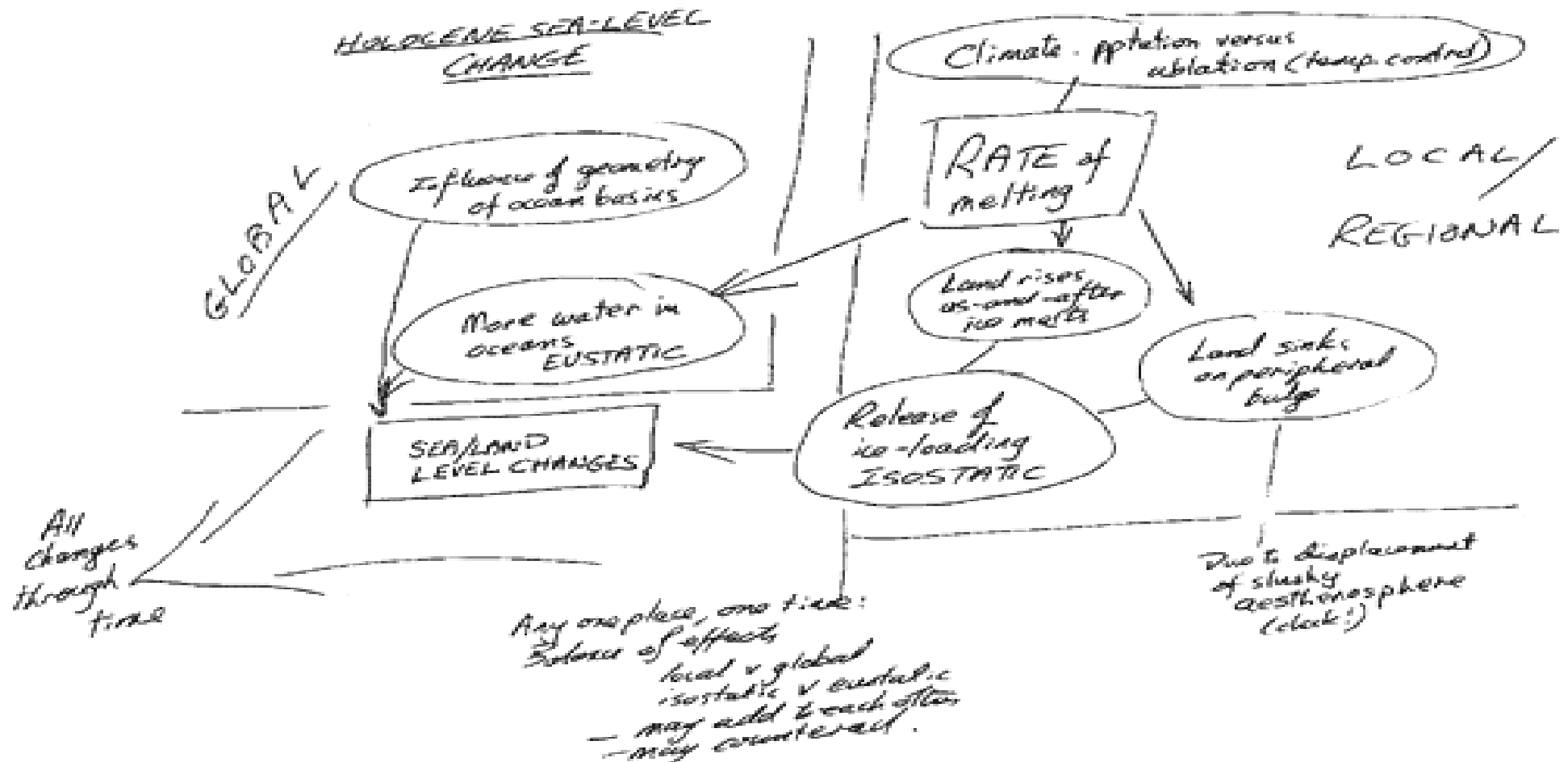


Image taken from

Activity

Pick a note making strategy that you haven't used to try out when listening to a very short video

http://learning.londonmet.ac.uk/TLTC/learnhigher/notemaker/noteTaker_2.html





And what the literature says...

Makany, Kemp & Dror (2009) carried out a study to compare the cognitive performances between linear note-takers and non-linear (NL) note-takers.

Their findings included the following:

The NL technique allowed its users to record 20% more comprehensive information compared with linear controls.

There was no difference in the accuracy of information recorded.

NL note-takers were also more positive than the linear group about their own capabilities of recording information.

NL note taking is less demanding and allows the note-taker to focus on the learning material.

(Makany, Kemp & Dror 2009)

But...

The participants were Information Management students. Does the subject you are studying effect the results?

There are various forms of NL note-taking methods. This study used the SmartWisdom technique, a sophisticated form of mindmapping. Do these results translate to other NL note-taking modes?

It is recognised that the outcome of taking notes in a NL format depends on the actual technique used and the competence in utilising it.

However...

The majority of researchers agree that NL methods using concept maps are a better way to help learners remember the content of study materials.

The application of any form of note-taking is going to contribute to the effectiveness of those notes, non-linear or otherwise.

The resounding message is that NL methods of note-taking are more effective than linear and contribute much more greatly to learner cognition and meta-cognition.

Reading and note-making - one final point

Whatever approaches to reading and note-making you use, always act critically, i.e: always be clear on:

- *Why* you are reading something /making notes
- *What* you want to get out of it
- *How* it fits together with what you already know and the course as a whole



References

Callender A.A., and McDaniel M.A. 2009. The limited benefits of rereading educational texts. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 34, 30–41.

Makany, T., Kemp, J., and Dror, I.E., 2009. Optimising the use of note-taking as an External Cognitive Aid for Increasing Learning. *The British Journal of Educational Technology*. Vol 40, No 4, pp 631-634

McDaniel, M. A., Howard, D.C. and Einstein, G.O., 2009. The Read-Recite-Review Study Strategy: Effective and Portable *Psychological Science April 2009 20: 516-522*

Sinfield, S., Holley, D., Burn, T., Hoskins, K., Smith, C., Connor, J., and Haynes, R., 2009. Attaching information to space: the development of a notemaking tool to enable students to reconceptualise ideas anywhere, anyplace, anytime. *6th LDHEN Symposium Bournemouth University 6/7 April 2009*