

How to Preview a Text

0:00	Owl: Welcome to How to Preview a Text, an instructional video on reading comprehension brought to you by the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab.
0:15	What would you do if you were suddenly dropped into an unfamiliar place?
0:19	Would you wander around aimlessly, hoping that somehow you will find your way?
0:24	Probably not.
0:25	You'd probably want to carefully explore and investigate your surroundings so that you can gather clues and information that can help you get your bearings and decide what to do next.
0:36	The experience of reading a new text can be similar to that of navigating an unfamiliar place.
0:42	Therefore, before reading you should explore the text first to gather clues and information that can help you get your bearings.
0:49	This is called Previewing.
0:52	Previewing involves surveying or scanning a text in order to create a mental map that can help you read more effectively.
1:00	When you preview, you look for sign-posts by doing the following things:
1:05	Scan for titles, headings, and subheadings
1:09	Skim the first paragraph or introduction
1:13	Skim the last paragraph or summary
1:16	Scan the first sentence after each heading
1:19	Skim the abstract (if provided)
1:22	Make a note of graphic aids such as figures, tables, charts, graphs, and images
1:30	Make a note of typographical aids such as bold-faced or highlighted words and phrases
1:36	Scan any supplemental material at the beginning or end of the text, such as chapter outlines, chapter objectives, discussion questions, or vocabulary lists
1:47	Previewing provides some great advantages:
1:51	First, it helps you evaluate a text in order to decide if it is relevant for your purposes.
1:57	This requires you to think about what your purpose is before you read.
2:00	For instance, if you're doing research on a topic, previewing can help you evaluate if a text provides information you need.
2:08	Second, it helps you read faster by identifying passages that you must read carefully versus those that you can skim or skip.
2:16	Generally, you want to slow down and read more carefully when a passage
2:21	covers a new topic you know very little about;

2:23	contains complicated or technical material;
2:26	is cluttered with essential visual aides like tables, charts, graphs, and images;
2:32	contains a lot of new or difficult vocabulary;
2:35	or requires a lot of visualization or interpretation.
2:40	On the other hand, you may want to skim or skip material when a passage
2:44	is easy to read,
2:46	covers material you already know well,
2:48	or covers material that isn't relevant to your purpose for reading.
2:53	Finally, it helps you read better by helping you identify questions you may have about the text.
2:59	We'll address questioning in another module.
3:03	Previewing is an excellent way to save time and improve your understanding of a text.
3:09	Just like you wouldn't want to wander around aimlessly in an unfamiliar place, you wouldn't want to wander into a text without previewing it!
3:22	Thanks for listening to this instructional video on How to Preview a Text.
3:27	Visit the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab for more support with reading and writing skills.

