

Transcript in English

Video: Skimming and Scanning

Skimming is fast reading to get a **general idea** of the text. It will give you an overview or main points of the text. You may wonder what skimming looks like. When skimming text, you:

- ✓ Let your eyes run along the page or pages.
- ✓ You choose what to read.
- ✓ It is fast reading to get a general idea of the text and
- ✓ It might be what you already do when you're on the internet.

When skimming you are looking for or reading:

- ✓ Keywords
- ✓ Bold words
- ✓ Headings or titles, and
- ✓ The first and last sentence of a paragraph or the first and last paragraph on a page. (That really depends on the length of your text.)

Let's try. Let's say I am doing a research project on alligators. One thing I may want to put in my report is how alligators are different than crocodiles by skimming: reading titles, bold words, first and last sentences of the paragraphs. I may find my information quickly so:

I see a title "*All about alligators*"

By quickly skimming, I don't see any bold words or titles so I'm going to begin reading the first and last sentence of the paragraph:

"Alligators come from a family of reptiles called crocodilians ... Their skin is made of thick scales."

"There are two main types of alligator... American alligators only have them on their backs."

I'm not finding information about how alligators and crocodiles are different yet. I'm going to try the next paragraph:

"Many people confuse alligators with crocodiles... Crocodiles can live in both fresh and saltwater."

This paragraph may have the information I need, so now I'm going to read it carefully for details:

Scanning is a little different than skimming. When you are scanning, you are rapidly moving eyes over text to locate a specific detail and you already know what you want to look for. When you need to scan you are:

- ✓ Searching for or reading keywords
- ✓ You're doing more searching and less reading and
- ✓ You're looking for specific words, numbers, names and so on.

When you need to scan, you are:

- ✓ Searching for or reading key words, numbers or names (and this is specific to what you are searching for) and,
- ✓ Headings or titles.

Let's try. Sticking with my research project on alligators. I may want to include information on the life expectancy of alligators. I know that I need to search for a number, and a keyword I could scan for is for the word “live” so I let my eyes scan. I don't read every specific word or detail, but I move my eyes quickly to find the word “live” or a number... *enemies... alligators live...* and here are two numbers so I'm going to read carefully now to see if this is the information I need.

How long do alligators live? Answer: Alligators live about 50 years in nature. In captivity, they can reach more than 70 years of age.

Skimming and scanning does take time and practice to learn how to do. This reading technique is not always appropriate, especially when you need to read for comprehension or details. But it can be very useful if you need to find specific information quickly.

