

Reading for information – the critical reading approach

Reading critically does not always mean being critical of what you read. Critical reading means connecting with the text. Do not simply be satisfied by what you read. Start the reading process by asking some questions like these:

- 'What is the author trying to say?'
- 'What is the main argument being presented?'
- 'What is the purpose of the text?'



Critical reading involves thinking about the text and analysing what it means. Remember that you are reading the writer's perspective when researching for ideas and information. Therefore, you need to be aware of biased writing. Consider the different viewpoints, and only then decide based on what you have read. This information has been adapted from <https://bit.ly/2KXQmKE>.

In the Listening and Speaking lesson, you discussed research-based projects. Let's recap the 'Read/Think/Select/Write' approach when reading critically:

1. Read or view a paragraph from a source without writing any notes.
2. Think about what you have read. What was important?
3. Select the essential facts from the paragraph to match your chosen subtopics. Do not write sentences, just keywords or essential facts.
4. Write down only the essential facts that answer the questions.

Adding some notes to the four steps of the 'Read/Think/Select/Write' approach:

1. The first step to reading and viewing while researching is skimming and scanning. Your initial aim is to understand the overall idea of the text. It is essential to survey the text with purpose, so always have some questions ready before reading actively. Some questions you might ask yourself:
 - 'What do I already know about this topic?'
 - 'How does this text relate to my project topic?'
 - 'How can I relate what I read to my own experiences?'Once you've answered these questions, you can read for information. Carefully consider the writer's message.
2. Once you have read the information, stop and think about the text so you do not forget the important points. Recalling the information helps with concentration and lets you focus on the main ideas you have just read.

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3. It is time to write the key points of what you have recalled – in your own words. Do not write entire sentences, only notes.
4. Review your notes: Did you understand the central beliefs of the argument? Are there any gaps? Review the text again to make sure you have clearly understood the content. Adapted from <https://bit.ly/2KXQmKE>.

Remember that you must give credit to the source: in-text citations and reference list (bibliography). This is an example of how to reference a source from a website:

**Teen Kids News (2018) *Why Being a Musician Is Good For Your Brain*.
Available at: <https://goo.gl/RK4E4E> (Accessed: 22 June 2022).**

Are you ready to put all the critical reading steps into practice? This is an excellent way of preparing for your research-based project. Imagine that you have been asked to write a post on social media promoting the importance of literature to teenagers. You find this article during your research accessed from <https://bit.ly/3bnDfoh> compiled by the Department of the Eastern Cape in 2018:

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERATURE IN OUR LIVES?

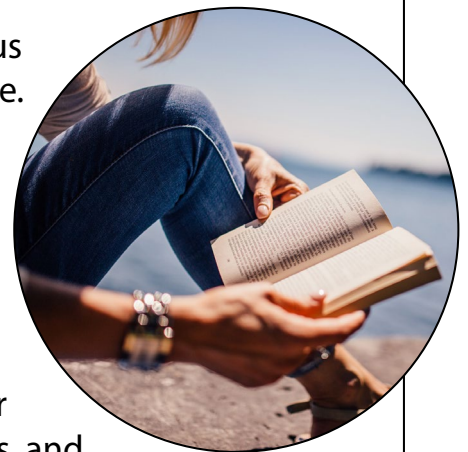
Too many people believe literature is unimportant or underestimate its ability to stand the test of time and give us great knowledge. There is a stigma that one who is more inclined toward science and maths will be more successful, and one who is more passionate about literature and other art forms is destined for low-paying jobs and unsatisfying careers. Somehow the world has come to think that literature is insignificant.

Here are the opinions of two people on this matter:

Rob Wanless – English Teacher: Authors in literature aren't just entertaining us.

They are helping us understand people. Not just the people around us, but people from other times in other cultures. We learn about other genders and other trades, other times, and other ideas.

Literature expands our minds and helps our imagination fly like the eagle it is. Literature increases our vocabulary without our knowing it. Literature helps us in our





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waking life, giving us heroes, a catharsis, an escape, and sometimes a laugh. The more students read, the better they write. And the more they read, the better they get at reading.

Bhuvandas MK – Motivational Speaker:
To instil social and spiritual values,
literature is a basic tool without which our
lives will be so materialistic and greedy. A
value system is a must for every individual,
community and country to be effective and
success-oriented.

In several countries, literature has supported and inspired the downtrodden and labourers to unite and fight against corrupt rulers.

Self-development, inspirational books and (auto)biographies of successful personalities are helpful to billions of people in leading a successful life. Career enhancement, detailed study materials and research journals also contribute in a great way.

Your task:

(10 marks)

- Read the information in the article entitled: **WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERATURE IN OUR LIVES?**
- Write a social media post to promote the importance of literature to teenagers. Your title: **Seven reasons why literature is relevant for teens.**
- Write your title and list SEVEN points underneath it. Even though your post is in the form of a list, you must write in full sentences – in your own words.
- Write between 70 and 80 words. Indicate your word count at the end of your post. Note that your title and source credit is not part of the word count.
- Remember to give credit to the source at the end of your post.

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