

# Activity . . . . . ➔ 20

## Adopting and adapting reading styles and strategies

### STUDENT HANDOUT

Read through the following scenarios. Once you have done this work with your group members to develop a reading strategy for each scenario using the example reading styles and strategies listed below as a guide (several of these should be combined into one comprehensive strategy for each scenario). You can also add new styles and strategies, if you think of any that would be more appropriate for a particular scenario. When you have worked through each scenario, be prepared to discuss and provide a justification or rationale for each of your reading strategies.

#### Scenario 1

Greta is 35 years old and has decided to return to education. Her children have just started school and she feels it is the right time to study for a degree in English Literature. She has always enjoyed reading and thinks that this is the right degree for her. However, she has just been presented with her reading list and is overwhelmed by the amount, type and level of reading required. Her course starts in two months' time. What reading strategy should she adopt?

#### Scenario 2

Amy is in the third year of an engineering degree. She must produce a dissertation (a long essay on a particular subject) for her course, but has not decided on a topic. Her tutor has suggested that she finds out more about the topics in which she is interested, to find out about current research. She hasn't a lot of time available and needs to decide on a topic fairly quickly. What reading strategy should she adopt?

#### Scenario 3

Jamila is studying sociology and has just been presented with a scientific paper, full of complex figures, graphs and charts. She feels daunted but has been asked to read the paper for her next tutorial. What reading strategy should she adopt?

#### Scenario 4

Kobe is moving onto a master's degree after having successfully completed his undergraduate degree in geography. He intends to carry out research into perceptions of earthquake hazard in Egypt and has obtained funding from his university. Although he studied geography at undergraduate level, this particular topic is new to him. What reading strategy should he develop?

#### Scenario 5

Richard has always had trouble reading. He finds it hard to remain motivated and carry out the required reading for his course and his marks are suffering. His tutor has told him that he must read more and that he is in danger of failing his

course if he doesn't do this. Richard doesn't want to fail so has agreed to try to improve his reading (and his attitude towards reading). What reading strategy should he adopt?

### Scenario 6

Feng is studying psychology. He is from China and English is his second language. He's finding it difficult to adapt to Western education, in particular, the requirement for critical appraisal. What reading strategy should he adopt?

### Scenario 7

Greg has his first-year exams in two weeks' time. His revision is going well but he feels his knowledge is lacking in one crucial topic. What reading strategy should he adopt?

### Examples of reading styles and strategies

- Preview;
  - prepare;
  - skim;
  - scan;
  - contextualise;
  - appraise critically;
  - check facts;
  - follow-up references;
  - read around the subject;
  - read primary texts;
  - read secondary texts;
  - compare and contrast with related texts;
  - recognise positionality (of author and reader);
  - recognise bias (of author and reader);
  - evaluate personal response;
- activate prior knowledge;
  - make predictions;
  - define technical terms;
  - visualise;
  - infer meaning;
  - ask questions;
  - prioritise information;
  - summarise;
  - read in spare time;
  - read translations;
  - read for understanding;
  - read intensively;
  - read extensively;
  - read to deadlines.

**Learning outcome:** By the end of this activity you will have a raised awareness of different reading styles and strategies and will know how these can be adopted and adapted, depending on reading purpose, subject and level of study.