

ENGLISH FOR PUBLIC POLICY

HOW TO READ AN ACADEMIC ARTICLE

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WHAT IS AN ACADEMIC ARTICLE?

Academic writing:

- ⦿ is writing done by **scholars for other scholars.**
- ⦿ is devoted to topics and questions that are of **interest to the academic community.**
- ⦿ should present the reader with an **informed argument.**

Source: <https://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/materials-first-year-writers/what-academic-paper#sthash.suXOtOh2.dpuf>

IS IT EASY TO READ AN ACADEMIC ARTICLE?

Reading an academic article is tough, even to native English readers!!!

Why???

- ◉ Knowledge
- ◉ Language
- ◉ Target audience: highly educated / specialized circle
- ◉ Writing standard/style
- ◉ **INEFFECTIVE WAY OF READING!**

SO HOW TO READ?

- ◉ Different ways, of course.
- ◉ Below is just a suggestion

Source:

http://www.lenmholmes.org.uk/students/how2read/how2read_a.htm

BUT FIRST, REMEMBER:

- ⦿ Academic articles cannot be read effectively in the same way as a short story, a novel or a newspaper report.
- ⦿ identify the **structure** of the author's argument.
- ⦿ reading an academic article is a **skilful practice**;

NOW - 5 STAGE MODEL

**Stage 1. Look at the title
(and subtitle)**

Stage 2: Identify the structure

E.g: a journal paper:

- *Title*
- *Author details*
- *Abstract*
- *Introduction*
- *Theoretical discussion*
- *Presentation and discussion of empirical findings*
- *Conclusion*
- *Bibliography*

**Stage 3: Read the abstract for
main idea**

Stage 4: Skim read whole article

- ⦿ rule 1: read only **the first sentence** in each paragraph
- ⦿ rule 2: read *fully* **the first paragraph** of each section
- ⦿ rule 3: read *fully* the first and **last paragraph** of the Introduction and the Conclusion sections

Stage 5: Read the article fully

only when you have gained an understanding of the structure and the main content.

LET'S PRACTISE

With the article “**Export to Mars**” (in Microeconomics course)

- ◉ **Stage 1. Look at the title (and subtitle)**

What does it tell you?

- ◉ **Stage 2: Identify the structure**

How many main parts?

- ◉ **Stage 3: Read the abstract for main idea (No abstract- just skip)**

- ◉ **Stage 4: Skim read whole article**

- ◉ **Stage 5: Read the article fully**

STAGE 4: SKIM READ WHOLE ARTICLE

- ◉ **ECONOMISTS** are constantly urging governments to adopt policies that would reduce global imbalances—which, in crude terms, means that China should slash its current-account surplus and America its deficit.
- ◉ Are aliens buying Louis Vuitton handbags? Are little green men bagging the best sunbeds by the hotel pool? **The more down-to-earth explanation is that the global surplus reflects statistical errors.**
- ◉ The puzzle is compounded by the fact that **the world ran a persistent current-account deficit** for at least three decades until 2005.
- ◉ Since that report, however, **measurement errors in merchandise trade have jumped and now match those in services.**
- ◉ Another possible explanation posits that the surge in the global discrepancy broadly coincides with both **the explosion in vertically integrated businesses, where firms locate different stages of production in different countries, and the increase in China's trade.**
- ◉ **Overinvoicing of imports and underinvoicing of exports by American multinationals** trying to reduce their tax bills would mean that America's true current-account deficit is smaller than officially reported.
- ◉ To understand whether global imbalances really are widening or not, you need to know where the errors lie.
- ◉ The good news is that **international concerns about global imbalances may be much less pressing than many think.** The bad news is that **conventional balance-of-payments measures are clearly less reliable** in a world of rising intra-firm trade and complex supply chains. That matters because dodgy statistics lead to policy mistakes. Governments should clean the figures up.