

Thumbnail Overview of How to Read a Scientific Article

Recommended sequence in reading research articles:

You should always take notes while you read, or at least use a highlighter for crucial details and ideas.

1. Read the abstract—looking up any words that seem key.
2. Read the introductory section, looking out for hypotheses/research questions and a look-forward summary of what is to come.
3. Skim methods and results sections, but postpone close reading until after you ...
4. Read the opening paragraphs of the discussion section—looking for summary of results/method.
5. Read the methods and results sections closely; visualize the study and its results.
6. Read the discussion/analysis section very closely.

Adapted from:

<http://cla.calpoly.edu/~jrubba/495/howtoread.html>