

Readers come to texts with expectations, and writers, when they write, make promises in their texts. Effective writers will work to try to shape their readers' expectations. The introduction of a scholarly journal, for example, usually explains what the context of article and hints at what the writer's argument or hypothesis will be. A reader's job then becomes to compare the writer's promises with his or her own expectations, and with what follows in the article; in other words, the reader must think critically about what they find in the article.

Much of your reading, then, should not be about what information you can extract from the text, but instead, it should be about how the text meets the expectations the writer has set up, and how it intersects with your own purposes.

We read for many different purposes. You may be reading strictly looking for information, you may be reading to analyze a research article and decide how to use it in your own research paper, you may need to work through a business document to evaluate it, or you may be reading literature. Each of these different purposes for reading calls for different reading strategies. Use the chart below to think about all the reasons and you might be reading:





