

Lesson 1

How to Read Scholarly Writings and Understand Them

The main features of academic register are not unknown to third-year students as in the previous year of study you learned how to write an academic essay. This year you will be reading fundamental theoretical papers, which are also written in academic style, yet they display a much greater level of complexity, and if you dive headfirst in the ocean of laws and theories, you may well be frustrated. So, before you approach a scholarly text, you need a strategy of not just how to read it, but of how to read it efficiently and make the most of it for your own future research. Be ready to go through the text multiple times.

Preview

You can get a general idea of the text before you even start reading it thoroughly. Study the title and the author. Google the author if the name is unfamiliar to you. Study the table of contents and the references: this information will initiate you into the topic. At this stage you start establishing links between what you already know on the subject and what is in store for you in the paper.

Read

Read the paper thoroughly, pencil in hand, highlighting key words and making notes in the margins. To this end, it is reasonable to have a printed copy of the article or a device that makes note taking available

Summarise

After you read the text, it is useful to draw a mind map, jot down a quick summary, or otherwise structure the ideas you have received from the text even if it is not assigned to you. This will help you not only to structure the information you have received from the article, but also to retain it in your memory.

Review

You do not have to read through the whole text over and over again, but it is a good idea to skim it before a class discussion or test for a quick refresher.

Revise the features of academic register (consult E. B. Yastrebova *As You Write It* textbook, Unit 1 Section1. Style Matters: Formal vs Informal or online resources, e.g. <https://academic-englishuk.com/academic-style>)

Complete the following table with the features of academic register making use of what you already know about it.

Vocabulary	Grammar	Punctuation

Lesson 2

Text 1 Kenneth N. Waltz. Theory of International Politics. Chapter 1 Laws and Theories

Before you read

1. What do you know about the author of the text? What is his contribution in the theory of international relations? Have you read anything by this author before?
(<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kenneth-N-Waltz>)
2. Skim the text very quickly and say who it is intended for.
3. What is the register of the text?

While you read

- I. Read the first four paragraphs carefully, pencil in hand and
 - 1) find the following words in the text; try to guess their meanings using the context
remedy (verb)
vie (verb)
invariant (adjective)
imputation (noun)
pertain (verb)
conjecture (noun)
viable (adjective)
 - 2) find Russian equivalents of the words above
 - 3) match the words from the list with their less formal synonyms

<i>vie</i>	<i>guess</i>
<i>invariant</i>	<i>refer</i>
<i>variable</i>	<i>accusation</i>
<i>imputation</i>	<i>factor</i>
<i>pertain</i>	<i>compete</i>
<i>conjecture</i>	<i>correct</i>
<i>viable</i>	<i>unchanging</i>
<i>remedy</i>	<i>workable</i>
- II. Read the whole text of Chapter 1 very attentively and
 - 1) elucidate on the following notions from the text
law
theory
description
explanation
correlation
causation
induction
deduction
hypothesis

After you read

- I. Answer the following questions
 1. What is the difference between dependent and independent variables?
 2. What is the role of probabilistic thinking in science?

3. What is the 'inductivist illusion'?
4. What is the difference between laws and theories in science?
5. How do people come up with theories?
6. Why are theories important?
7. How to assess the quality of theories?

II. Summarise the ideas of the chapter. Assess the text critically according to the following criteria:

- novelty (have you learned anything new?)
- relevance (is this information relevant? Will it be of any use in your own research paper?)
- complexity (was it hard to grasp the main ideas of the text?)

Lesson 3

Text 2. Edward Hallett Carr. The Twenty Years' Crisis Part 1 National Interest and the Universal Good (pp. 96-102)

Before you read

- I. Think over the following questions
 1. What do you know about the author of the text? What is his contribution in the theory of international relations? Have you read anything by this author before?
(<https://www.britannica.com/biography/E-H-Carr>)
 2. Skim the text very quickly and say who it is intended for.
 3. What is the register of the text?
- II. Do some Internet research and look up the information on the following:
 - Walewski's maxim ("The business of the diplomat is to cloak the interests of his country in the language of universal justice")
 - John Bull (a character typifying the English nation;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Bull)
 - Abyssinian crisis (<https://schoolhistory.co.uk/notes/abyssinian-crisis/>)
 - Tammany leader (Tammany Hall was a dishonest political organization that had a lot of influence in New York City in the 19th and early 20th centuries; sometimes the term is used to refer to any dishonest political organization
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tammany-Hall>)

*Note the pronunciation of the name of 26th American President Franklin D. Roosevelt
[roʊzəvəlt]

While you read

- I. Read the text carefully, pencil in hand and
 - 1) find the following words in the text; try to guess their meanings using the context
expose ()
cull from (verb)
contend (verb)
belligerency (noun)
petty (adjective)
admonish (noun)
utterance (noun)

- 2) find Russian equivalents of the words above
- 3) match the words from the list with their less formal synonyms

<i>expose</i>	<i>say</i>
<i>cull</i>	<i>show</i>
<i>contend</i>	<i>rebuke</i>
<i>belligerence</i>	<i>unimportant</i>
<i>petty</i>	<i>hostility</i>
<i>admonish</i>	<i>choose</i>
<i>utterance</i>	<i>hostility</i>

II. Read the text again and elucidate on the following notions:

postulate (a statement that is accepted as true, that forms the basis of a theory, etc.)

doctrine (a belief or set of beliefs held and taught by a Church, a political party, etc.)

maxim (a well-known phrase that expresses something that is usually true or that people think is a rule for sensible behaviour)

proposition (a statement that expresses an opinion or a possible fact)

After you read

I. Answer the following questions

1. How does the author criticise the utopian thought? (When the utopian preaches the doctrine of the harmony of interests, he is innocently and unconsciously adopting Walewski's maxim and clothing his own interest in the guise of a universal interest for the purpose of imposing it on the rest of the world)
2. What two propositions does the utopian find identical? (1. What is best for the world is best for his country. 2. What is best for his country is best for the world)
3. The author quotes quite a few Anglo-Saxon writers of late 19th – early 20th ct. How do these writers justify the maintenance of British supremacy in the world? (Maintaining the greatness of the Empire would before the benefit of Christianity, of peace, of civilization, of human race.)
4. What triggered doubts as to British supremacy as one of the moral assets of mankind? Did this disillusionment linger? (The Peace Conference and its sequel [...] threw some passing doubt on the belief in British supremacy as one of the moral assets of mankind. But the period of disillusionment and modesty was short. Moments of international tension, and especially moments when the possibility of war appears on the horizon, always stimulate this identification of national interest with morality.)
5. Give examples from the text of the American presidents identifying their action with pursuing universal good. Could you give more examples of the kind? (Franklin D. Roosevelt answering the questions in court and Woodrow Wilson explaining the bombardment of Vera Cruz by serving mankind)
6. The author claims that this tendency to identify national interests with universal right prevails among Anglo-Saxon statesmen and writers. What are the two explanations for this? (1. The policies of the English-speaking nations are in fact more virtuous and altruistic. 2. The English-speaking nations are masters of concealing their selfish interests in the guise of the universal good; hypocrisy is ingrained in their nature)
7. Does the author support either of the above explanations? What is the real reason for British supremacy? (Theories of social morality are always a product of a dominant group which identifies itself with the community as a whole, and which possesses facilities denied to subordinate groups or individuals for imposing its view of life on the community)

II. Summarise the ideas of the chapter. Assess the text critically according to the following criteria:

- novelty (have you learned anything new?)
- relevance (is this information relevant? Will it be of any use in your own research paper?)
- complexity (was it hard to grasp the main ideas of the text?)

Lesson 4

**Text 2. Edward Hallett Carr. The Twenty Years' Crisis
Part 2 The Realist Critique of the Harmony of Interest (pp. 102-107)**