Scanning

What is meant by scanning?

Scanning is a fast reading technique. It's a way of reading to look for specific information in a text.

Scanning can be used to look up a phone number, read through the small ads in a newspaper, or for browsing TV schedules, timetables, lists, catalogs or web pages for information. For these tasks you don't need to read or understand every word.

Scanning is also useful when studying or looking to find specific information from a book or article quickly since there is not always time to read every word.

Hints and tips for better scanning.

1. Don't try to read every word. Instead let your eyes move quickly across the page until you find what you are looking for.

2. Use clues on the page, such as headings and titles, to help you.

3. In a dictionary or phone book, use the 'header' words to help you scan. You can find these in bold type at the top of each page.

4. If you are reading to study, start by thinking up or writing down some questions that you want to answer. Doing this can focus your mind and help you find the facts or information that you need more easily.

5. Many texts use A-Z order. These include everyday materials such as the phone book and indexes to books and catalogs.

6. There are many ways to practice scanning skills. Try looking up a favorite recipe in the index of a cookbook, search for a plumber in your local Yellow Pages, or scan web pages on the Internet to find specific information.

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