How to read an article quickly

Steps to selecting a peer reviewed article for your research:

1. What information do you need?
2. How does the article relate to your research topic?
3. What do you expect to learn from this article?
4. What is the purpose of the article?
5. Who is the audience?
6. What information will this article provide for your thesis statement or research needs?

Steps to scanning a peer reviewed article to determine the main idea and gather only what you need:

1. Read the title
2. Read the abstract of the article. This will provide a summary of the findings.
3. Review graphs, charts and illustrations
4. Read the introduction of the article. This will include information about the research topic and usually include a literature review
5. Read the discussion section
6. Read the conclusion

All these areas inform us about the article without reading the complete article.

Avoid difficult articles if you do not understand the sections as you skim the article.

Suggestions:

1. Use a dictionary to define terms in the article
2. Look over the literature review section to locate other research articles
3. Consult the reference section to locate other relevant resources

How to read a book quickly

Steps to selecting a book for your research:

1. Read the title
2. Review the table of contents. Identify a chapter about your research topic.
3. Look at the index in the back of the book. Use the index, when available, to locate specific information when the book covers a broad topic. Be aware of the following:
   o Indexes sometimes force you to look up a subject many times. Learn to use the index and the table of contents together to speed up your research.
   o Indexes sometimes take the subject out of context.
   o Who is the author? Review the author biography provided in the first few pages of the book or the back cover. Is the author an expert in the field?
   o Read the preface of the book.
   o Read the opening and closing portions of each chapter
Review the subheadings in the body of each chapter
Go over any summary or concluding chapter at the end of the book
Review the notes and/or bibliography chapters for supporting evidence
Look for a book review about the book. A book review will highlight any controversies about the book

5. When reading the chapter that you need, make sure you understand the argument presented to you.
   - What is the author saying?
   - What point of view is the author expressing? Any biases you should know about?
   - Is the author exploring the issue thoroughly or is there any missing information?
   - Is the evidence presented fairly in the chapter? Is there enough evidence? Does the evidence support the author's case? Are there other arguments you could make?
   - How does this author's points of view compare or contrast with other readings?