

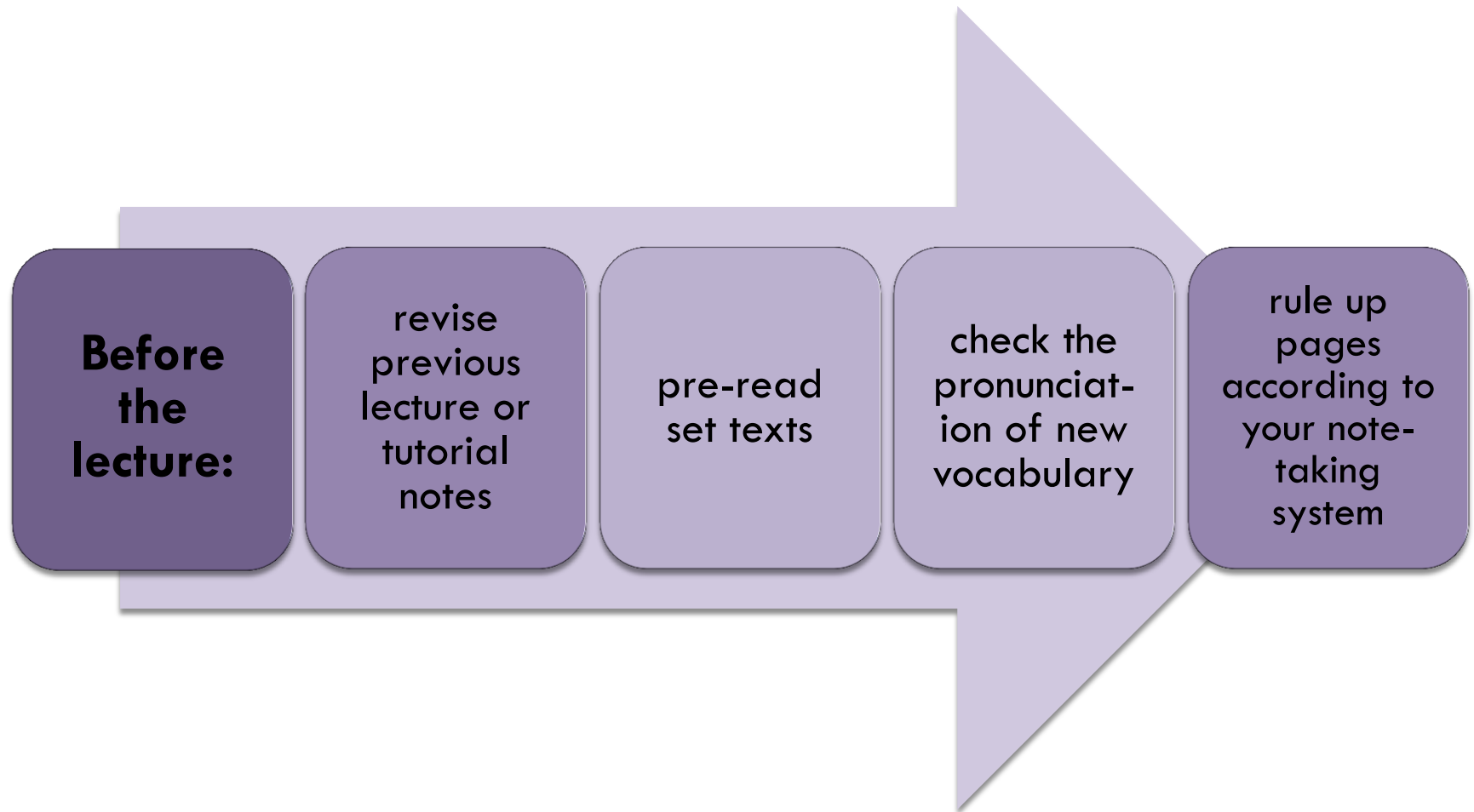
LISTENING, READING & NOTE-TAKING

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Introduction

- **Listening to lectures**
 - Before
 - During
 - After
 - Improving your listening skills
- **Reading**
 - Reading with a purpose
 - Strategies for reading
 - Critical reading
- **Note taking strategies**

Listening to lectures



During the Lecture

- Be on time and sit near the front.
- Distinguish between main points, elaboration, examples, repetition and restatements, by:
 - listening for verbal cues (transition words, introduction, body and summary stages);
 - looking for non-verbal cues (facial expression, hand gestures);
 - looking for visual cues (copy the content of visual aids used, note references to names and sources for future research), and
 - listening for phonological cues (change in volume and speed of voice).

Note taking in lectures

- Don't try to write down everything the lecturer says;
- use headings;
- make use of diagrams and mind maps and
- leave room on your page to add your comments or questions concerning the lecture.

After the Lecture

Revise notes within 24 hours

Write comments on notes and tidy up

Attach handouts to lecture notes

Improving your listening (NESB)

- Listen to the radio: Radio National 576 am.
- Listen to Podcasts.
- Listen to DVDs without English subtitles.
- Join conversation groups. SDI, the Hub and the Learning Centre all run different classes.
- Join conversation groups run by your local council.
- Offer to teach your language to English speaking students in exchange for English conversation.
- Join a volunteer group.

Reading with a purpose

- You need to get the most out of your reading in the limited time available, therefore, identify:
 - ▣ Why you are reading
 - ▣ What you need to achieve
- Are you reading:
 - ▣ To locate specific information?
 - ▣ To understand difficult ideas?
 - ▣ To gain an overview of something
 - ▣ To relax and escape into a novel?
 - **Working out why you are reading something will determine the way you will read it.**

Being selective

- Establish the readings **required** for your course and which are **suggested** (not compulsory).
- There are times when you need to read a whole chapter/article or book in detail.
 - ▣ At other times you may only be looking for specific information which could be found in:
 - A couple of pages
 - A couple of paragraphs
 - A sentence
 - Once the information is found you may not need to read the rest.

How would you select what to read?

- Know what you are looking for (have a purpose)
- Identify key words to help you search. Look for them when browsing the table of contents and index for relevant pages.
- Obtain an overview to further narrow down the 'possibly useful' field.

Establishing what you already know

- Any prior knowledge will help you read more effectively.
 - Ask what you know or think about the topic (from lectures, other reading, personal knowledge).
 - Identify your expectations – what do you think the reading will be about.
 - Write them down.

Focusing on the task

- If you are reading for a specific assignment, read with a copy of the question or task near you so that you don't waste time reading irrelevant material.

- Ask yourself what it is you need to find out.
 - ▣ Identify questions you want to answer.
 - Actively look for those answers and evidence to support them.



Asking yourself questions while you read is important.

Breaking reading into manageable segments

- If you find the reading difficult, break reading into manageable segments (a chapter, a few pages, a paragraph).
- Set yourself a goal (to read a certain number of pages, or to read for a set length of time).
- Reward yourself with a break (or chocolate) when you reach that goal.
 - ▣ If you still don't understand a reading set it aside and read it the next day.
 - this gives your brain a chance to process the material.



Different readings for a single text

Previewing or surveying

Skimming/scanning

Reading for a general understanding of a text

Reading for detail in order to summarise or take notes.

Strategies for reading

- Look at the introduction for clues on the aims and the particular approach of the text.
- Look at the conclusion to see what the author hopes to have established.
- Skim through the text to get an idea of the style, vocabulary and approach. Look for headings to consider possible content. Look for signposts, for example:
 - firstly;
 - finally;
 - essentially;
 - the most important.

More strategies for reading

- Mark key passages and note reasons why these passages are relevant.

- Re-read more carefully, bearing in mind:
 - the main points of the passage;
 - whether it is convincing in terms of the arguments presented;
 - what follows from this, and then, importantly,
 - record your findings and conclusions (take notes) including your own responses to what you have read – we'll come back to this point in detail.

Critical reading

A critical reader:

- understands and uses the ideas and information in texts
- questions the information and ideas in texts;
- comments critically on that information and those ideas, and
- evaluates or judges the texts.
 - What could prevent you from reading (and thinking) critically?

Blocks to critical reading and thinking



Cultural
conditioning

Reliance on
authority

Black and
white
thinking

Stereotypic
thinking

Taking notes

- Reading with a purpose and being a critical reader is not much use unless you take good notes.
- That is, even if you read with a purpose, it is not enough for the words on the page to pass through your brain.
- How do good notes help?
 - ▣ Above all, they provide you with a record of the critical insights that occurred to you while you were reading.
 - ▣ When you are planning what you want to write, you simply need to go through your notes and identify the main arguments you want to make (these will be the points that you most frequently discuss in your notes).

Note-taking methods

Lazy method

- mark passages in text and note comments in the margins

Mind maps

- can show the development of ideas

Column method

- excellent for future reference

The column method

Include bibliographical information –author, year, title, volume/issue no.s, publisher, place published

State the aim or main argument of the source

Direct quotes “.....” p. 17

Summaries (main ideas, no elaboration or examples)

Paraphrases (say it in your own words)

How does this information relate to other texts I have read?

What important links can be made to the topic/other research?

How is the information relevant? (if not, should I pursue it at this time?)

Does the author say anything new or interesting?

Is there anything I don't understand?

Is the author saying anything I disagree with? Why do I disagree?

Does the author contradict other authors on the same topic?

What conclusions can be drawn from the text?

Jones, W. (2001 September) Keeping Cars from Crashing, IEEE Spectrum. pp 40-45

Bibliographic information

summary

This article is about the latest developments in Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC) for automobiles.

"Every minute at least one person dies in a car crash" p.40

quotations

"The ultimate solutionis to keep cars from smashing into one another" p.40

The technology exists for sensors and processors that can respond instantly to the distance and movement of other vehicles- cars speed & distance from other objects can be very expensive –installed in luxury cars(p44)

paraphrase

This topic relates to my topic- 'smart car' as use of radar, lidar, microprocessors and expert systems are explained.

Jones' main claim

I agree as it would be a very smart car to do this.

Your thoughts

Conclusion

- ▣ Listening to lectures:
 - read previous lecture notes and set texts
 - sit up the front
 - work out a scheme for taking notes that includes your comments
 - revise notes within 24 hours

- ▣ Read with a purpose:
 - use different strategies
 - read critically

- ▣ Take notes:
 - make sure you include your comments



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