CM107 Unit 2 | Reading and Practice

**Strengthening Your Reading Comprehension Skills**

In this document, you will find links to the Unit 2 reading assignments and practice activities that focus on strengthening your reading comprehension skills. In order to be an effective writer, you also need to be an effective reader and thinker. You learn to do things in life by watching and modeling your behavior after other people and what they do, and reading and writing are the same. Reading good writers helps you to see how to write well, how to establish a clear purpose, how to write to and for a specific audience, how to organize and develop ideas, and how to craft effective sentences that are readable and error-free.

Additionally, understanding what you read is important to your college and career success. You will spend a lot more time reading information than you may realize, both on the job and in your college courses, so comprehension skills are vital to doing well in both areas. In addition, a lot of the writing in both your college courses will involve finding and incorporating sources to support and validate your ideas. Being able to understand what you read is an important skill.

To learn about strategies you can use to strengthen your ability to read with comprehension, read Chapter 10 of *The Kaplan Guide to Successful Writing*: [Chapter 10](#)

Read the following KUWC material that offers you even more strategies for building your reading skills: [Analytical Reading](#)

In addition to these valuable strategies, learn about SQ3R and how to use this strategy to help you become an active, engaged reader by reviewing 1.5 and 1.6 (pages 36-44) in the following KU Library text: [SQ3R](#)

Now that you have read about these strategies designed to develop your analytical reading and comprehension skills, apply what you have learned by completing the following activity: [Developing Reading Comprehension](#)

**What is a Main Point or Thesis?**

When you read and write, one key concept to understand is the MAIN POINT or THESIS. The writers you read, whether they are writing an email, a report, or a class essay, establish a clear point or purpose. This purpose is the driving force behind any document. It is the reason the writer is writing. It is the writer's goal. Many writers struggle because they may be unclear why they are writing, or they
may have ideas that are unfocused or that go all over the place. However, if you establish a clear point when you write, that will help you to not only stay focused but also to achieve your goal for writing. When you read what others write, it also helps to understand their main point. If you know why they are writing, you will be better able to follow the logic of their information or argument and understand why they include the information they include as well.

To learn more about what a main point or thesis is and how to identify one in a document you are reading, as well as how to establish a thesis when you write, read the following KUWC information: Writing a Thesis

Now that you have read about main points or thesis statements, apply what you have learned by completing the following activity: Identify the Writer’s Main Point Quiz

How Writers Develop an Idea
One thing you have no doubt noticed when you read is that not only do effective writers establish a clear main point or purpose, but they also then explore, develop, clarify, and defend the point they are making.

Learning more about how writers support their main points will help you as a reader and writer. If you are able to identify the ways that a writer explains, develops, clarifies or proves a main point or thesis, you will be better able to understand what the writer is trying to accomplish through including this information. In addition, this information will help you to strengthen your own writing skills. Your aim in writing is to show the audience that your main point or thesis is valid, and by including relevant information to support your thesis, you can accomplish that goal.

Strategies for Developing Ideas
So how do writers do that? Depending upon their audience, they may incorporate their own experience and observation, experiences they have had or observed, or they may develop their ideas using evidence. They may also provide examples, details, explanations. They may compare or contrast objects, people, or places, or they may combine these various strategies. It all depends, though, upon who they are writing to and why they are writing. If a writer is addressing an audience of scientists, for example, she will more than likely focus on using research evidence or case studies to develop ideas. What works with that audience, though, may not work effectively with a different audience. A group of middle school students might not respond as well to research as they will to a well-chosen personal experience with the topic.

Writing Strong Paragraphs that Support Main Ideas
You will also notice that writers organize their documents, whether they are reports, e-mails, or class essays, into distinct paragraphs that also have clear main points (and that support the thesis of the paper). It is important for you as a reader and writer to understand what a strong paragraph is, as well as how it is organized and developed, and how it supports the thesis that the writer has established.

Read the following KUWC information on paragraph development to learn more about what a strong paragraph is and how it is important to writing success overall: Paragraph Development
Now that you have read more about the value of establishing a main point and writing strong paragraphs that develop or support that main point, complete the following activity to learn more about ways a writer supports and develops a main point or thesis: Supporting a Main Point

Clear Writing
One other thing you will notice when you read other writers is that their documents have other qualities in common that make them effective.

Review the following Writing Center information on writing that is clear, concise, complete, and correct: Clear Writing

Next Steps
Now that you have learned about the importance of building your reading skills and the value of establishing and developing a main point, you are prepared for success in the Unit 2 Discussion Board, as well as the Unit 2 Assignment. In this Assignment, you will apply what you have learned by selecting an article on a topic in your field of study and analyzing the main point and strategies used to develop that main point.

Before you move to the Discussion Board and Unit 2 Assignment, complete the Unit 2 Quiz to earn your activities credit.