

Applying skimming and scanning strategies

SKIM to find out what the text is about

The New Historicism

That historians can articulate a unified and internally consistent worldview of any given people, country, or time period and can reconstruct an accurate and objective picture of any historical event are key assumptions that Cultural Poetics challenges. Appearing as an alternate approach to textual interpretation in the 1970s and early 1980s, Cultural Poetics - often called *New Historicism* in America and *Cultural Materialism* in Great Britain - declares that all history is subjective, written by people whose personal biases affect their interpretation of the past. History, asserts Cultural Poetics, can never provide us with the truth or give us a totally accurate picture of past events, nor the worldview of a group of people. Disavowing the old historicism's autonomous view of history, Cultural Poetics declares that history is one of many discourses, or ways of seeing and thinking about the world.

SCAN to find important information.
Look for key words

Some of the academic texts you will be expected to read may be quite long.

It is therefore a good idea to glance at the text first to extract as much information as possible on the topic.

When you **skim**, you look at titles, headings, sub-headings, pictures and captions that will give you a general idea of what the text is about.

If you **scan**, instead, you look for key words, key expressions, dates, figures or even tables of contents that will provide cues to important information contained in the text.