

# *Reading*

*A guide for reading non-fiction*



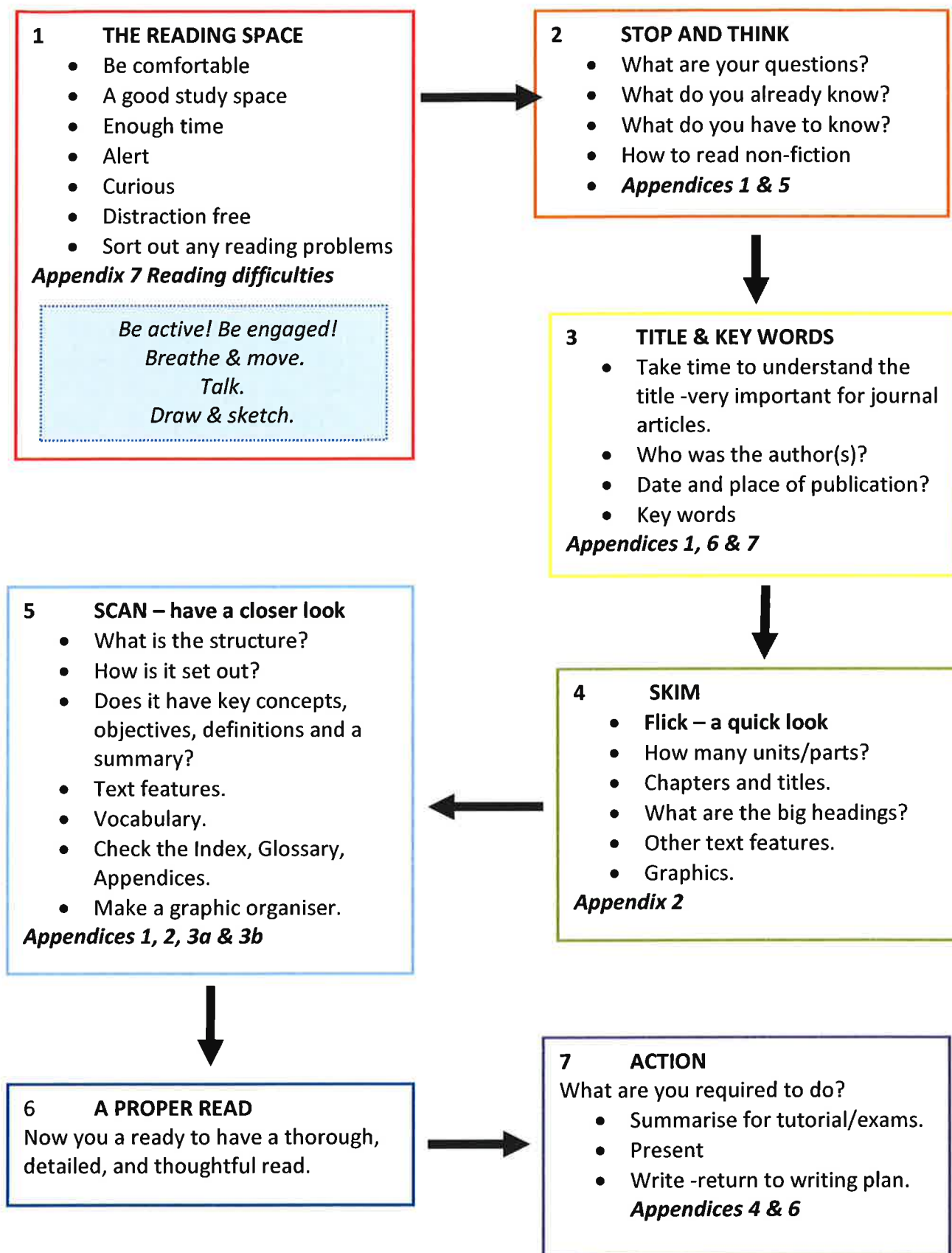
<i>Reading</i>	
<i>Questions to ask</i>	
<i>What</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What exactly am I looking for?</li> <li>• What do I need to know?</li> <li>• What does the title mean?</li> <li>• What do I have to do with the information?</li> <li>• What are the key words/concepts?</li> <li>• What are the words I don't understand?</li> </ul>
<i>When</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When do I need to have read this by?</li> <li>• When will I find the time?</li> <li>• When is my best time to read?</li> </ul>
<i>Why</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why am I being asked to read this?</li> <li>• Why is it important?</li> </ul>
<i>Where</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is a good place for me to read?</li> <li>• Where can I learn about words that I don't understand?</li> </ul>
<i>Who</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who can help me improve my reading skills?</li> <li>• Who do I have to explain this to?</li> </ul>
<i>How</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do I tackle this reading?</li> <li>• How do I record key points?</li> <li>• How do I keep track as I go?</li> </ul>

*"There is an art of reading, as well as an art of thinking,  
and an art of writing."*

*Isaac D'Israeli*

## *Reading Process*

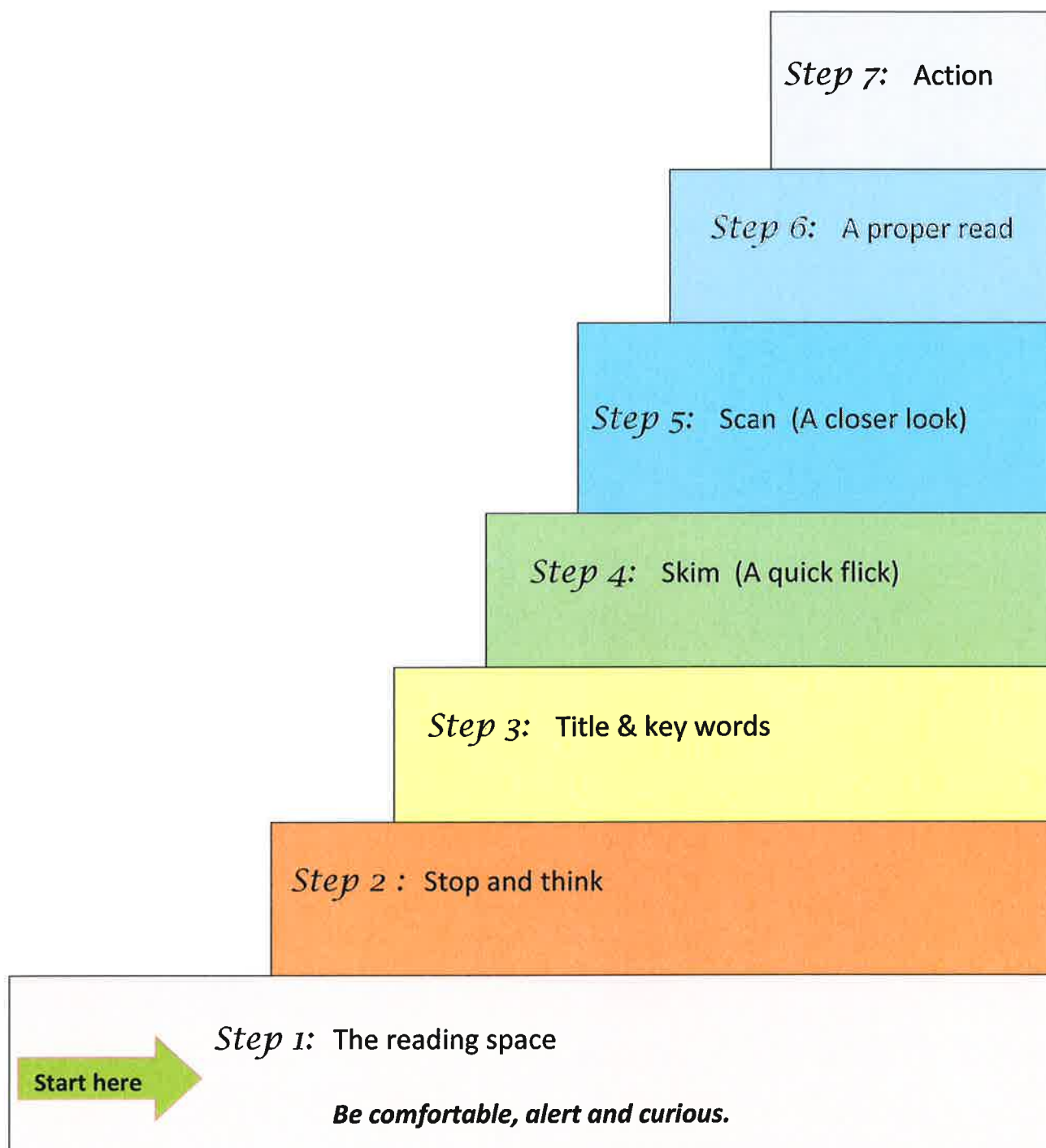
- 1. The reading space**
- 2. Stop and think**
- 3. Title & key words**
- 4. Skim - a quick flick for the general idea**
- 5. Scan - a closer look**
- 6. A proper read**
- 7. Take action**



## *A visual summary of reading*

### ***A 7-step Poutama model***

*Start on step one*



*What is text?*

Text is any piece of writing. For example it could be a letter, an email, a novel, a poem, a recipe, a note, instructions, a text book, an article in a newspaper or a journal, writing on a webpage, a contract, a street sign or an advertisement.

*The differences between nonfiction and fiction*

- Non-fiction is based on things that are real and is informative; fiction is not true.
- We read things differently depending on whether they are true (non-fiction) or not true (fiction). When you read fiction the overall story is more important than the detail, you use your imagination and you can read easily and quickly. When you read non-fiction you need to concentrate, use your prior knowledge as well as think critically.
- We read things differently depending on the purpose of the text – why it was written.
- We use different strategies depending on why we are reading (our purpose) the text. Think about some things you have read lately: newspaper, novel, bank statement, road sign, txt, recipe, or rental contract. You don't read these in the same way.

*GAP*

**Genre:** What style of text is it? How do you know?

**Audience:** Who is it written for? Who is going to read it?

**Purpose:** Why has it been written?

*What makes non-fiction more challenging to read?*

- **Vocabulary:** is made up of specialized terms relating to the topic. An ordinary word you know may have a different meaning in this context.
- **Text features:** non-fictional texts are organised by headings and subheadings. Information is shown in a variety of ways, e.g. graphics such as diagrams and tables, and information is referenced. Important features to notice include: headings and subheadings, use of bold-face print and italics.
- **Text structure:** is the organizational pattern within the text and it is important to understand how the information is presented.

## Text features

## Appendix 2

- Text features are important elements of non-fiction.
- Understanding text features can make reading much easier to follow and understand.
- Text features can help readers identify the most important ideas, understand challenging ideas, find information they are looking for and anticipate what's to come.
- Learn how to use various text features such as graphs, charts and diagrams.

<i>Examples of text features</i>	
<i>Title</i>	<i>Font</i>
<i>Headings/subheadings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>UPPER /lower case</i></li> <li>• <i>size</i></li> <li>• <b><i>bold</i></b></li> <li>• <i>colour</i></li> <li>• <i>italics</i></li> </ul>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>Punctuation</i>
<i>Index</i>	<i>1. Numbering</i>
<i>Glossary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Bullets</i></li> </ul>
<i>Appendix</i>	<u><i>Underlining</i></u>
<i>Further reading</i>	<b>Highlighting</b>
<i>References</i>	<i>labels</i>
<i>Footnotes</i>	<i>Maps</i>
<i>Layout</i>	<i>Graphics: tables, diagrams, figures</i>
<i>Structure</i>	<i>Photographs</i>
<i>Case study</i>	<i>Illustrations</i>

There are five kinds of text structures commonly found in Non-fiction. Each uses key words which will help you identify the particular structure used.

1. *Description* or listing is the most common pattern found in textbooks. It provides information and is often used at the beginning of a text as an overview or introduction.  
*Key words* include: to begin with, for instance, most important, in front, beside, near.
2. *Sequence* or time order presents a series of events that take place in a time order. Sequence structures are often used to explain a procedure.  
*Key words* include first, second, third, before, on (date), not long after, after that, next, at the same time, finally, then, following.
3. *Compare and contrast* points out the likenesses and/or differences between two or more subjects. This structure often appears in the middle or ending of a text after two or more subjects have been explained.  
*Key words* include like, unlike, but, both, in contrast, however, also, too, as well as, on the other hand.
4. *Cause and effect* is a structure used to help explain why something happens; how facts or events (causes) lead to other facts or events (effects). A single cause often has several effects and vice versa.
5. *Problem and solution* describes a problem and presents one or more solutions to that problem.  
*Key words* for both Cause and effect and Problem and solution: if ...then, therefore, consequently, so, this led to, as a result.

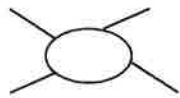
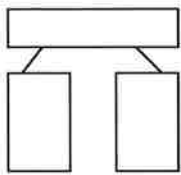
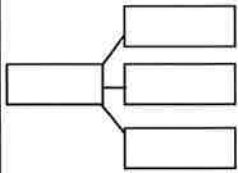
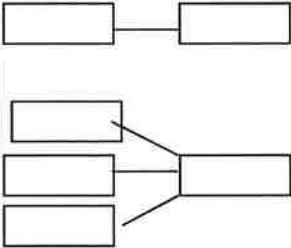
Learn how to identify the text structure as this will make reading, understanding, and retention much easier and quicker.

It will also help you select the correct graphic organizer to use for your notes.



## Text structures

## Appendix 3b

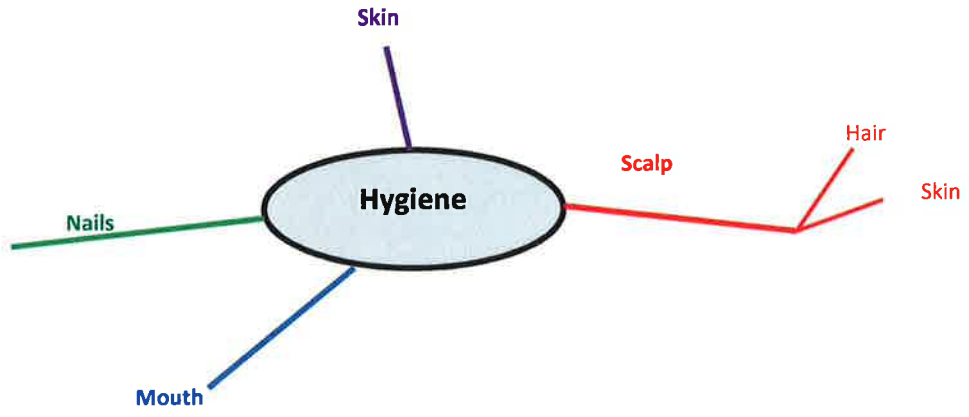
<i>Pattern</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Cue words</i>	<i>Graphic organizer</i>
<b>Description</b>	Describes by listing	<i>To begin with</i> <i>Characteristics are</i>	
<b>Sequence</b>	Lists in an order	<i>First, second</i> <i>Next</i> <i>Then</i> <i>Following</i> <i>Finally</i>	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
<b>Comparison</b>	Explains how things are alike and/or different	<i>Like</i> <i>Unlike</i> <i>Different</i> <i>Same as</i>	
<b>Cause &amp; effect</b>	Lists one or more causes and the resulting effect(s)	<i>If...then</i> <i>Therefore</i> <i>Consequently</i>	
<b>Problem &amp; solution</b>	States a problem and lists one or more solutions	<i>Problem, dilemma</i> <i>Answer, solution</i> <i>(Can be the same as cause and effect)</i>	

# Graphic organizers - an example

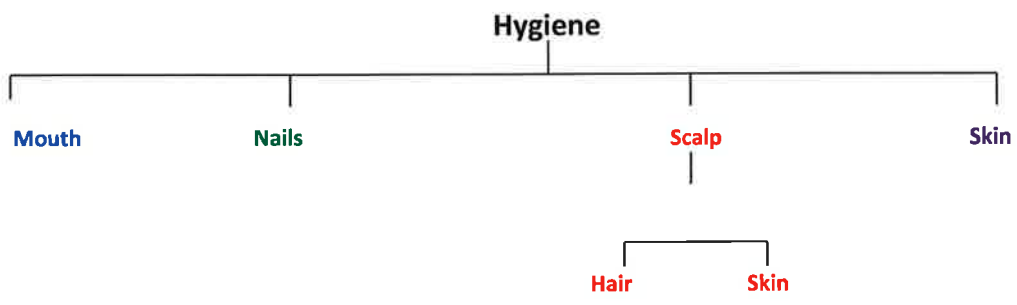
## Appendix 4

If you prefer to see ideas then this is a good way to get an overview of what you are reading. Here are three different examples created from a chapter about hygiene.

### 1. Mind map



### 2. Hierarchy



### 3. Bullet points/numbers

- Hygiene
  - Mouth
  - Nails
  - Scalp
    - Hair
    - Skin
  - Skin

These will give you a good mental image before you start, will help you pick out key concepts and will also be helpful for revision.

To learn more about text structures and organizers refer to Appendices 3a & 3b

Strong readers follow strategies to understand what they read before, during and after reading.

1. *The SQ3R Method* (check links below for a full explanation).

**Survey** – before you read

**Question** – ask yourself (refer page 2)

**Read** – look for and notice

**Recite** – after you have read

- Orally summarise what you have just read *or* ask yourself questions about it.
- Go back to the section and highlight important points.
- Take brief notes, in your own words, about what you have just read.
- Use drawing, symbols, colour, and recording – whatever suits your learning style. Make it mean something to **you**.
- Use your senses: write, draw, say, listen, discuss, sing, dance – we are smart in different ways so do whatever works for you.

**Review** – after to help remember (check links below for a full explanation).

2. *Skimming* – a quick flick

3. *Scanning* - a closer look

4. *Detailed reading*

5. *Critical reading strategies* - An essential skill of academic study is being able to read critically. As well as understand, summarise and paraphrase what you read you must be able to actively engage with what you are reading, you need to be thoughtful and ask many questions. Learn more!

Paraphrasing means putting into your own words the essential information and ideas expressed by someone else.  
You present what you have read in a new form which is your own understanding.

Paraphrasing is a valuable and essential skill because it means that you have taken the time to grasp the full meaning of what you are studying. Simply reading something does not mean you have understood the information or could explain it to someone.

### *6 Steps to Paraphrasing*

1. Read the piece of work
2. Reread it until you understand what it means
3. Shut the book
4. Jot down key words and points  
**or** you may want to stand up and say the key words and points
5. Now write it in your own words (paraphrase)
6. Check what you have written with the original.  
Does it accurately express all the essential information in a new form?

As a student you will be reading and learning from other peoples' work.

You will be assessed on how well you have understood, remembered, thought about, evaluated, integrated and applied this material.

## Appendix 7

### *Reading can be difficult for a variety of reasons*

#### 1. *You may have missed out at school.*

Maybe you moved house a lot or things were difficult at home or school, perhaps you were sick or had to look after your family.

This can affect vocabulary, spelling, reading, writing and understanding as well as confidence.

#### 2. *English may not be your first language.*

Studying in a second language can be difficult and academic language can be complex. Maybe you need to start in an English language course.

#### 3. *Poor Eye sight.*

Poor vision and visual problems will make studying harder. Make sure that you have a good eye test if you are having trouble with your eyes and with seeing; an eye test checks many things about your eyes including eye health which is very important.

#### 4. *If bright light bothers you may have Irlen Syndrome.*

People with Irlen Syndrome may get headaches, eye strain and /or fatigue especially when reading. Irlen Syndrome is a visual perceptual problem which means that people are sensitive to light. As a result it can mean getting headaches and finding reading difficult. Complete the check on the following page.

#### 5. *Dyslexia and Learning Difficulties*

It is important that you let us know so we can find ways of making learning easier.

#### 6. *Stress and lack of confidence*

Finding ways to stay positive and focussed, studying purposefully and having a balance in your life are all important parts of being successful.

#### 7. *Health concerns*

Keeping well: managing your health is important as study can be stressful.

### *Things you can do.*

Many students have difficulties to start with – what is important is that you sort these things out as early as you can.

- Come and talk to someone if you are not sure what to do
- You can ask at our Information and Enrolment Centre
- Check out our Support Services
- Make sure you start your studies at the correct level for you
- Have a look at Smart Word on our Home page
- Make sure you learn the meaning of words and build your vocabulary
- Join, or create, a study group
- Learn and develop good study skills and habits
- Identify how you are smart and use those strengths to help you learn
- Develop a weekly plan so you use your time wisely

*Do you, or someone you know, have difficulty reading?*

Check for Irlen Syndrome: Answer the following questions

	Yes	No
Do you skip words or lines when reading?		
Do you reread lines?		
Do you lose your place?		
Are you easily distracted when reading?		
Do you need to take breaks often?		
Do you find it harder to read the longer you read?		
Do you get headaches when you read?		
Do your eyes get red and watery?		
Does reading make you tired?		
Do you blink or squint?		
Do you prefer to read in dim light?		
Do you read close to the page?		
Do you use your finger or other markers?		
Do you get restless, active, or fidgety when reading?		

If you answered yes to three or more of these questions, then you might be experiencing the effects of Irlen Syndrome which is a visual perceptual problem that can interfere with your reading efficiency.

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### **Make a time for an Irlen Screening**

*Clare Hazledine*  
 Academic Advisor (Accessibility) *Certified Irlen Screener*  
 Poutama Academic Learning Services

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Check the website [www.irlen.com](http://www.irlen.com)

## *Acknowledgments*

Thank you to all those students over so many years who have struggled with reading. Working with you has inspired me in so many ways. This handout *Reading: A guide for reading non-fiction* and the DVD *Cracking the Reading Code* has evolved from your stories, your wisdom and the times we've shared.

Clare Hazledine

## *References and further resources*

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*“There is an art of reading, as well as an art of thinking,  
and an art of writing.”*

*Isaac D'Israeli*



*For any help with reading please feel free to make an appointment with Poutama Academic Learning Services located in Te Kete Wananga (The Learning Centre) next to the library.*

*Contact our Administrators Kat or Mina:*

*237 3100 ext 3721*

*[Poutama@whitireia.ac.nz](mailto:Poutama@whitireia.ac.nz)*