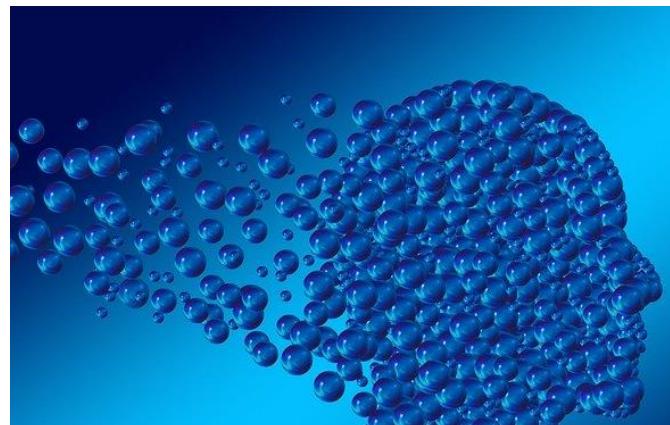




Get organised:

Physical Space

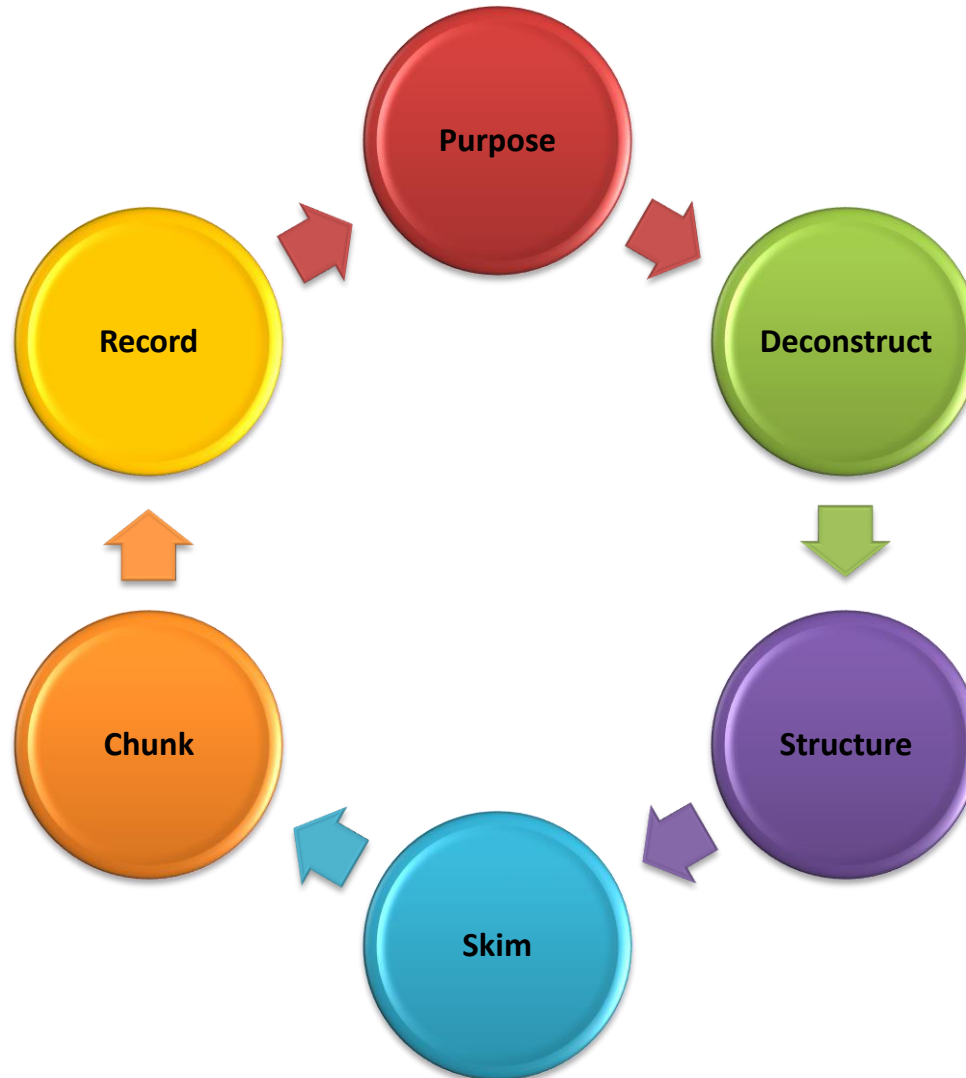
- Declutter your work space
- Remove distractions.



Cognitive Space

- Declutter your mind
- Monitor your thinking while studying to minimise loss of concentration.
- This involves self-questioning.
 - Do I understand this?
 - Am I paying attention?
- Try to connect what you are reading with what you already know.

6 Practical tips for making sense of difficult material



Strategy 1. Know your purpose

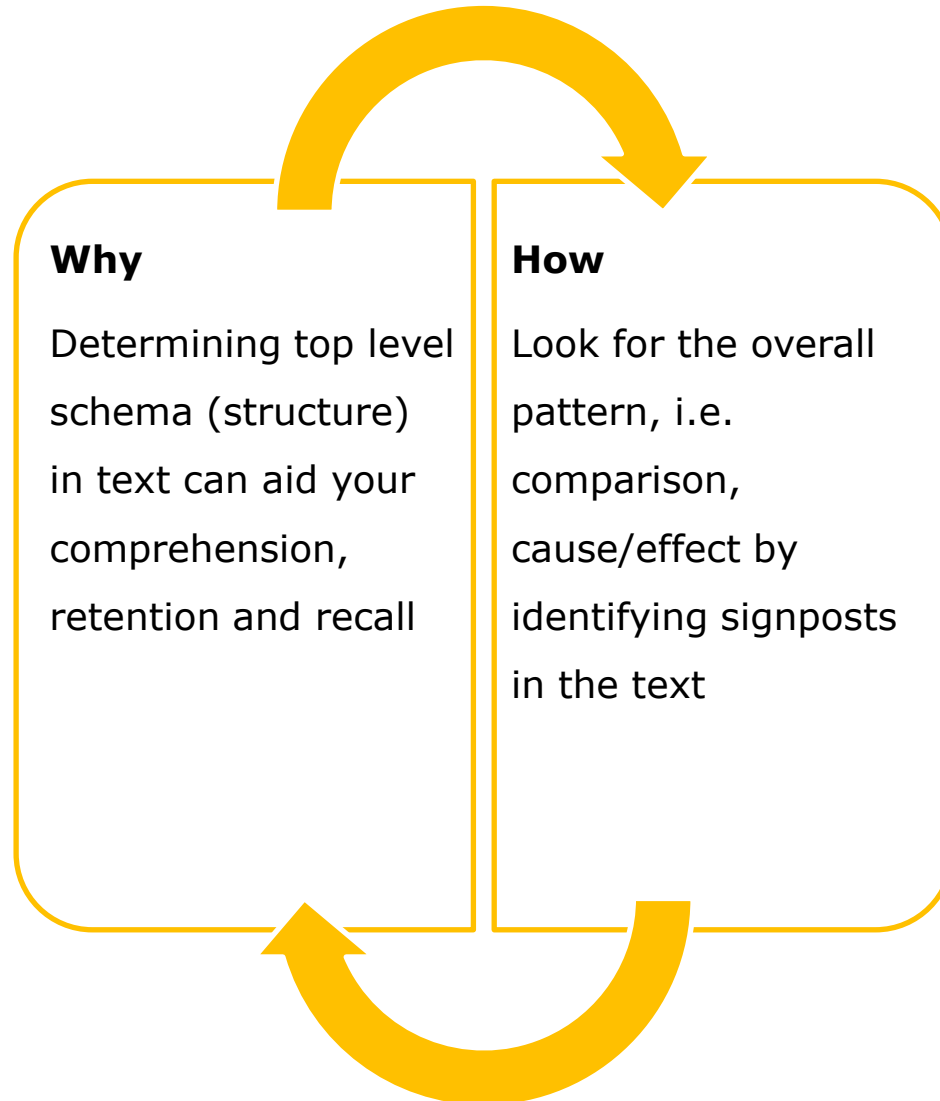
This will determine how you read.

- You may be reading **weekly content** to understand background information to participate in tutorials or online discussion forums.
- You may be reading for a more **specific purpose** such as finding answers to tutorial questions. This requires detailed, targeted reading.
- You may be reading for assignment research. This requires you to read **critically** and evaluate the quality and the relevance of the information to your assignment task.
- You may be reading for **exam preparation**. This requires memory and application.

Strategy 2. Deconstruct the text

| Component | Purpose |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Chapter introductions and conclusions | Provide summaries – good for brief overview of content – read first |
| Subheadings | Break information into chunks |
| Dot points | Emphasise important points or steps (often numbered), pose questions to the reader |
| Diagrams | Represent important concepts in visual manner |
| References | Follow up reading |

Strategy 3. Structure





Strategy 4. Skim

Skimming is useful when reading for an overview

- Skim a book by reading the table of contents, introductions and conclusions of sections, and headings and subheadings.
- Pay attention to any diagrams, images, graphics or highlighted or bolded words.

Strategy 5. chunking

- **Break your reading time into manageable sections and set yourself short term goals and rewards.**
- Always have a plan or goal for your reading before you start to read.
- Do not spend any longer than 50 minutes reading without a break.
- Always review and evaluate your progress against your plan and adjust if necessary.



Strategy 6. Record and Organise

Use active strategies to help focus and concentrate

- **Highlight** or underline key ideas/ concepts
- Make margin notes or use post-it notes to make your own comments on relevance to your task or links between authors or concepts
- Use concept maps to plan and connect ideas/concepts from your readings



Image sources:

<https://pixabay.com/photos/highlighter-fluorescent-pens-color-603993/>

<https://pixabay.com/photos/postit-memos-notes-colorful-1726554/>

Strategy 6 Record and organise

Use colours to organise your notes into themes relevant to answering the question.

Your notes from source 1

In a recent study, (McGregor, 2019, p.75), 72% of Australians expressed opposition to the live export of animals.

This figure has risen sharply and is attributed in part to the recent media reports regarding the inhumane treatment of animals destined for abattoirs in Indonesia (Four Corners, 2019).

Your notes from source 2

An increasing number of Australians are largely unsupportive of the live export of animals. This is due to recent media attention that has shown the inhumane treatment of sheep during transport

This ban is not popular in some rural communities however, where it is believed a ban on live animal exports will create further difficulties for struggling farmers

Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

Try organising your information like this to see what you have collected on each theme or aspect of your topic.

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Theme 1 | Chen and Lui, (2018, p. 25) | Green (2017, p. 21-24; 35) | Davies (2017, p. 75) | |
| Theme 2 | Chandler, (2017, p.37) | Howard, (2018, p.65) | | |
| Theme 3 | Davies, (2017, p. 83) | Chen and Lui, (2018, p. 30) | | |

Record the references that relate to each theme across the horizontal axis. Use these as your supporting evidence.

These themes become the main sections of the body of your assignment

Note taking tips

Consider how you take notes:

- Are they meaningful to you?
- What do you do with them?
- Do you even look at them after class,
or only when think you need to study?



Organising your lecture notes

- Consider how you take notes:
- Are they meaningful to you?
- What do you do with them?
- Do you even look at them after lectures – or only when think you need to study?



Cornell note taking method

| Cues | Notes |
|---------|-------|
| | |
| | 1 |
| 2 | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Summary | 3 |
| | |
| | |

- 1) Notes: Take notes from your lecture here.
- 2) Cues: Write questions, main points, visual clues- do this after each lecture.
- 3) Summary: Overview of most important points do this after each lecture.

Note taking for exams: the Cornell method
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtW9IyE04OQ&app=desktop>

Cornell note taking examples

John O. Student
Biology 101
April 1, 2000

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Phylum | Arthropods |
| subphylum | Chelicerata |
| Chelicerata | 2 parts: → prosoma |
| examples | → opisthoma (first pair of appendages are for feeding) |
| | scorpions, spiders, mites, ticks |
| Prosoma + Opisthoma | sensory, feeding, and locomotor tagma |
| Chelicerae | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pincerlike or chelate • used for feeding • first pair of appendages |
| Pedipalps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • second pair of appendages • used for sensory purposes |
| | feeding locomotion reproduction |

Phylum arthropods is made up of subphylum chelicerata.
 Subphylum chelicerata is characterized by two parts called prosoma and opisthoma. The prosoma and cephalothorax are sensory, feeding, and locomotor tagma. The chelicerae is the first appendage and refers to the pincerlike. The pedipalps are the 2nd pair of appendages, and they are used for sensory purposes: feeding, locomotion, and reproduction.

Active vs Passive strategies

- Take purposeful notes
- Relate notes to chapter objectives
- Highlight/make margin notes
- Ask questions while reading
- Answer textbook or tutorial questions

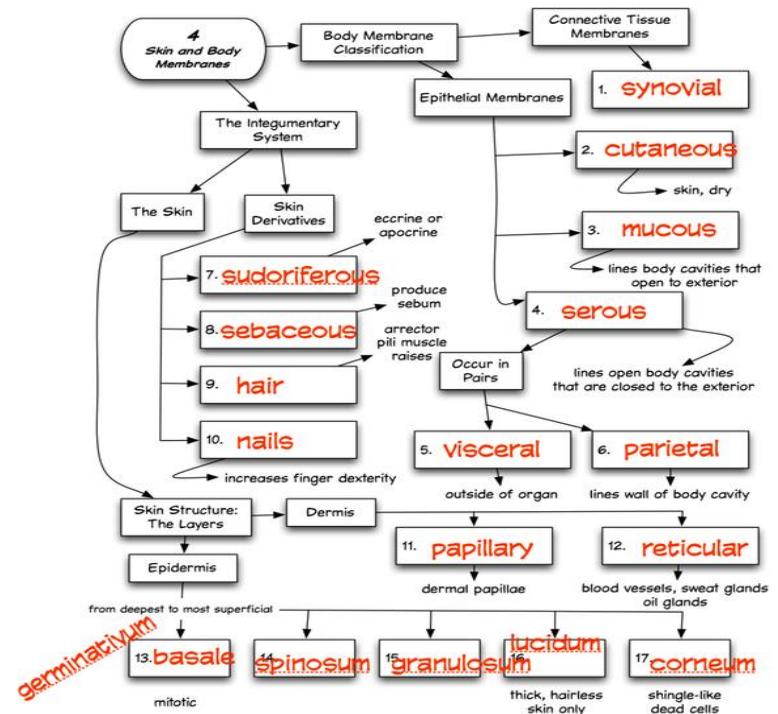
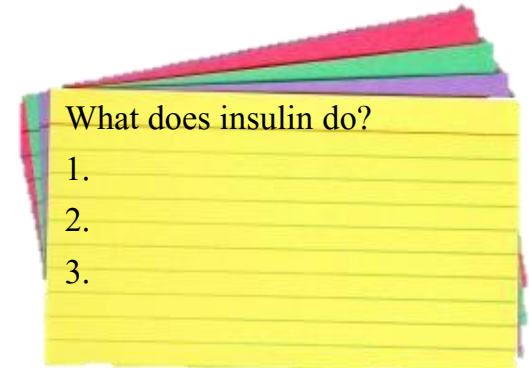
- Make the content meaningful for you
- Use diagrams
- Create Mnemonics (memory words or phases) to remember processes, e.g RICE



Mnemonics

Rest
Ice
Compression
Elevation

- Make the content meaningful for you
- Make flash cards (use an app)
- Create mind maps
- Create a personal terminology dictionary using an A-Z indexed notebook



Summary

6 Practical tips for making sense of difficult material:

