RESEARCH and READING

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Aims of this workshop - RESEARCH

- What is research?
- Defining the research issues
- Establishing the purpose
- Working with a range of sources
- Establishing a time line
- Keeping records
- Embedding research in essays/projects
Reading
Aims of this workshop

- Coping with the reading load
- Selecting reading material
- Effective Reading
- Different approaches to reading
- Critical reading
- Reading efficiently
Establishing the purpose

- Examples:
  - 2,000 word essay
  - What are you trying to prove
  - Do not create a ‘laundry list’
  - Aims to demonstrate you have a core understanding
  - Extensive original research
What is research?

- Thorough Investigation
- Connecting key literature
- Extending learning within boundaries
Identifying the boundaries

- Define the research issues
- Establish the purpose of your research
  - 2K coursework essay
  - 12K Dissertation, for Masters or 3rd Year UG
  - PhD
- Beware!
Planning Research

- Start with a general source
- Working with internet resources
  - http://www.vtstutorials.ac.uk/detective/
- Use a range of sources
- Work with reading lists
- Subject guides
  - http://www.kent.ac.uk/library/subjects/index.html
Establishing a time-line

- Move on at (self)agreed times
- Set clear and realistic targets
- Use a weekly planner/schedule
- Allow time for reading!
- Formulate a reading schedule
The literature review approach

- Dissertation, MA, PhD
  Systematic survey
  Chronological, thematic, conceptual approach

- General Essays
  Survey range of sources
  How do they relate to each other?
Whilst researching....

- Finding other sources
- Keep records
  - Citations
  - References
  - Bibliography
  - Date of access
- Avoid Plagiarism
Selecting and Managing the reading load

- Plan ahead
- Identify relevant readings
- Read actively
- Maintain concentration
Effective Reading

- Ask – why and what
- Question in advance
- Survey the text
- Read actively
- Take notes
Different Approaches to Reading

- Surface Approach
- Deep Approach
- Skim reading
- Scanning
- Reading with purpose
Different Approaches to Reading

- Skim Reading
  as much as possible as quickly as possible
- Scanning
  looking for something specifically
- Reading with purpose
  do not waste time!
Henry Tudor, named after his father, Henry VII, was born by Elizabeth of York June 28, 1491 in Greenwich Palace. Since he was the second son, and not expected to become king, we know little of his childhood until the death of his older brother Arthur, Prince of Wales. We know that Henry attended the wedding celebrations of Arthur and his bride, Catherine of Aragon, in November 1501 when he was 10 years old. Shortly after the wedding, Arthur and Catherine went to live in Wales, as was tradition for the heir to the throne. But, four months after the marriage began, it ended, with Arthur's death. A treaty was signed that would allow Catherine to marry the next heir to the throne -- Prince Henry. Until then, Catherine's parents, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain would send over 100,000 crowns worth of plate and gold as a wedding gift and Henry would pay the agreed upon dowry. It was deemed necessary for a papal dispensation to be issued allowing Henry to marry Catherine, as she was his dead brother’s wife, and this marriage was prohibited in Leviticus. At the time, and throughout her life, Catherine denied that her marriage to Arthur had even been consummated (and given the boy's health, that is most likely the case) so no dispensation was needed. However, both the parties in Spain and England wanted to be sure of the legitimacy of the marriage, so permission from the pope was sought and received.
Skim to find the answers

- Who was Henry’s mother?
- How old was Henry when his brother married Katherine of Aragon?
- What did Katherine of Aragon’s parents send as a wedding gift to Henry and Katherine when they married?
- Whose permission did they need to marry?
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Skim Reading

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According to Aristotle, comedy was slow to gain official acceptance because nobody took it seriously yet, only sixty years after comedy first appeared at 'The City Dionysia', Aristophanes observed that producing comedies was the most difficult work of all. Competition at the Dionysian festivals needed dramatic conventions for plays to be judged, but it also fuelled innovations. Developments were quite rapid and Aristotle was able to distinguish between 'old' and 'new' comedy by 330 BC. The trend from Old Comedy to New Comedy saw a move away from highly topical concerns with real individuals and local issues towards generalized situations and stock characters. This was partly due to the internationalization of cultural perspectives during and after the Peloponnesian War. For ancient commentators such as Plutarch, New Comedy was a more sophisticated form of drama than Old Comedy. However Old Comedy was in fact a complex and sophisticated dramatic form incorporating many approaches to humour and entertainment. In Aristophanes' early plays, the genre appears to have developed around a complex set of dramatic conventions and these were only gradually simplified and abandoned.
Critical reading

- Before reading ANYTHING ask: Why?
- Whilst reading:
  - survey the text
  - break into sections
  - make notes
Establishing reading priorities

- Categorise and read in order
- Take a literature review approach
- Map research against time lines and targets
- Allow extra time for new discoveries
Keeping records

- Make your evidence identifiable
- Converting research into references
- Beware of ‘mosaic plagiarism’
Strategies for critical reading

- Go beyond the text
- Raise questions in advance
- Survey the texts – books
- Survey the web site
- Survey the text - journals
Reading for different purposes

- Skim
- Scan
- Reading for detail
- Active reading
- The Structural approach
Notes from reading

- Using photocopies:
- Notes on paper:
- Avoiding the ‘plagiarism trap’:
Strategies for speeding up reading

- Practise all the above!
- Quick reading depends on-
  - Anticipation; context; active reading strategies
- Build up a specialist vocabulary
- Read in chunks
- Read selectively
- Make brief interim summaries
- Keep eye movement forward
Don’t be afraid to ask for help!

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