

An example of practice:

Tips for using Wikipedia

In Wikipedia articles, there is usually so much text that it does not make sense to read it all. Many pieces of information might be irrelevant. That is why it is important to be able to, quickly and easily, find the most important and interesting information. Firstly, think about what kind of information you are supposed to find and for what purpose. Now search for an article you think could be of use.

Go through the list of contents and reflect on the following questions:

- What important pieces of information could you find under what headline and subheadings?
- What points of view seem dominant? Which are given less weighting?
- Is the list lacking some points of view?
- What points of view are irrelevant for your purposes?
- What sections are you going to concentrate on in your reading?

- Pick one section that is relevant for you and:
 - Firstly, read the first sentences of each paragraph of that section: what is each paragraph about?
 - Now concentrate on those paragraphs that seem to contain relevant information.
 - Gather important pieces of information in the form of a mind map, a concept map or a list.
 - Don't copy text directly but try, if possible, to reformulate it in your own words.
 - Don't write down anything you don't understand.

When you are ready, move on to another relevant section and do the same.

Task 1. What are the important pieces of information?

Consider the following information about Barack Obama and indicate what you think is useful to know. Strikethrough the pieces of information you think are not useful. Explain and give reasons for your choices.

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama)

- Obama was born on August 4, 1961, in Honolulu, Hawaii.
- He is the first African American as a President of the United States.
- Obama's mother was born in Kansas and his father was from Kenya.
- Obama's parents met in 1960 in a Russian class at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where his father was a foreign student on scholarship.
- Obama's parents divorced in 1964, and Obama moved to Indonesia for four years (from ages six to ten) to live with his mother and his mother's new husband.
- Obama is a graduate of Columbia University and Harvard Law School.
- In 1985, Obama was among the leaders of May Day efforts to bring attention to the New York City Subway system, which was in a bad condition at the time.



- Before his presidency, Obama has worked as a civil rights attorney and taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School.
- In his first presidential campaign in 2008, Obama emphasized issues of rapidly ending the Iraq War, increasing energy independence, and reforming the health care system.
- Obama's temperament is considered calm and even; he has been referred to as "no drama Obama" and "no shock Barack".
- In 2009, Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize "for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples".
- Obama and his wife Michelle have two daughters: Malia Ann and Natasha.
- The Obamas have two Portuguese Water Dogs.

Task 2. Writing an informative text based on web searching

Write an informative text on a president of your choice.

Use the beginnings of the sentences below.

_____ (person's name) was _____ (which country's)
president number _____. (S)he worked as a president during the
years _____.

(S)he was born in _____ and spent his/her childhood in
_____ (Where?). Are there any other interesting and important pieces of
information about his/her family and childhood?

(S)he studied _____ .

In her/his career, (s)he worked _____ (in what jobs and areas?).

As a president, (s)he worked especially to _____. (S)he has been appreciated for
_____ and criticised for _____ .

What other interesting facts could you find on him/her? Add them at the end.