Skimming is a fast-reading technique.

Skimming helps you to get the big picture of what a book or text is about.

You can use skimming to decide whether a book is useful for study or if you think a book interests you for personal reading. Here are some things to look for.

At whole book level

- Read the title.
- Look at the contents page.
- Read the blurb if it has one.
- Read the introduction.
- Flick through the book to see if there are any pictures, charts, tables, maps or graphs that look interesting or useful.

At chapter level

- Look at the headings and subheadings.
- Read the first and last sentence in a paragraph – the first sentence is often the topic sentence, which sets out what the paragraph will tell you in more detail.
- Don’t read every word or every sentence – let your eyes skim over the text looking for key words.
- Look for words that are highlighted, written in italics or bullet-pointed.