

4.1: What is academic literature?

Teacher's notes

Background

This series of tasks is designed to foster a critical approach to selecting reading material in students preparing for undergraduate or postgraduate study. Signals that show whether a text is likely to suit their purpose are made explicit, to help students when they are faced with a large number of possible reading texts.

Aims

- to compare reading requirements for academic study in different cultures
- to identify the purpose and status of common types of academic literature
- to draw up a short list of background reading texts for each student's subject through individual research

Material

Copies of the discussion tasksheet on types of academic texts (Tasksheet 1), one for each group

Teacher's visual based on types of reading at different levels in the UK academic system (also acts as a key for Tasksheet 1)

Individual copies of the tasksheet for defining different types of academic texts and their status (Tasksheet 2)

Individual copies of the tasksheet for evaluating titles in a library catalogue (Tasksheet 3)
Keys for Tasksheets 2 and 3

Procedure

- 1 Introduce the topic of what sort of texts students read at university. Students form groups to discuss what they read in their previous school or college courses, and record their answers on the discussion tasksheet (Task 1). They compare their answers with other groups, and with information about the type of reading required on UK academic courses, provided on the Teacher's visual. They discuss any differences between their expectations and what they are likely to have to read on their degree courses.
- 2 Introduce academic texts as the main channel of communication for the academic world. Elicit students' ideas on who the audience is, and what the relationship between readers and authors is. (They may be equal in knowledge or the author may have more expert status in the subject area.) Ask students to think about the difference between books or papers written by lecturers to communicate their findings or ideas to other specialists researching the same topic area, and books or online material written by lecturers for students on academic courses. Students match the text types to their definitions (Task 2), and then discuss their understanding of the different types of texts. Any additional types of academic texts suggested by students can be added to the list.
- 3 Students study the list of book titles from a search of a library catalogue (Task 3) and decide which category each text belongs to. They suggest which texts might be useful as background reading for the undergraduate student in the task, and compare their suggestions with the key.

Follow-up

An out-of-class assignment can be set to suit the context. Students can go to the library and search the catalogue to make a short list of textbooks, key texts and academic journals in their field, using the way the references are laid out in Task 3 as a model for the list. Students without access to a suitable academic library could search for sources online. Compiling this list can be a group assignment for students with the same intended degree subject. Students can bring texts from their list to class, to survey these for typical layout features of the genre, e.g., contents page, headings, index or glossary. They can use the categories from Task 2 to classify and comment on the selected texts, producing a simple annotated bibliography which might be useful for their future studies.

As a reflective task, students can write a paragraph (or online blog) explaining how they found the sources on their lists, and any difficulties encountered in finding these or deciding which were useful. The texts they have found can be used as independent reading for a longer writing assignment, for example, defining and comparing some important concepts or items in their own field.

KEY

Tasksheet 2

These are suggested answers. The definitions have been checked in standard dictionaries, but tutors may wish to draw the boundaries a little differently, e.g., is a handbook sometimes a textbook? The important point is that students make a start in understanding the range of academic literature, and acquire some navigation skills for bibliographies and library catalogues.

- 1 b Course book: book with a series of lessons designed to be taught in class for a particular course
- 2 a Textbook: book that is connected with learning or intended for study
- 3 c Key work: important book on a topic that everyone studying the topic should read
- 4 d Seminal work: classic article or book that has influenced the way the understanding of a subject has developed
- 5 f Reference book: book that you look at to find information, such as a list of data, an atlas (maps), a dictionary or encyclopaedia
- 6 e Guidebook, handbook or manual: book which explains how to do something, aimed at people who need to carry out that activity
- 7 i Monograph: article or short book that discusses a narrow topic in detail
- 8 j Review (of other works or of the field): careful examination and analysis of what has been published about a particular topic
- 9 l Paper: report or discussion on a particular subject, by someone who has made an academic study of it, published in a journal or presented at a conference
- 10 k Academic (peer-reviewed)* journal or conference report: publications aimed at professional researchers, containing original research reports which have been checked by other specialists from that field
- 11 h Webpage of practising academic, where a lecturer or professor lists his or her publications, and may post articles or lectures and materials for his or her students
- 12 g Specialist magazine: subject-related general interest magazine aimed at interested professionals and the general public (e.g., *New Scientist*, *The Economist*)

Tasksheet 3

Possible clues for a: how specific the title topic is; words like *introduction*, *directory*, *handbook*, *Ed.* (suggesting a collection of papers); names of journals. Students might guess that Slutsky (1939) is a seminal article because the Slutsky effect is subsequently named after this author.

There are no definite answers to b; it is intended to promote critical discussion. Sloman (2003) might be useful to an undergraduate as its general title, and the fact that this is the fifth edition suggest a popular textbook. Burningham (1984) could be rather out of date. Frequent mention of the Slutsky effect suggests that it might be important to understand. Journal articles may be too technical for an undergraduate, but Saran (2005) might give a simple introduction, as the URL suggests it is for students. There is no clue to the fact that Smith (1950) is a reprint of the seminal 18th century book by Adam Smith, the father of economics. Students have to be alert for this type of anomaly when searching catalogues.

*Academic journals (sometimes known as refereed or learned journals) are often published by societies of professional academics in a field. Before publication, articles and papers are checked for academic or scientific reliability (rigour) by a panel of academics. This is known as *peer review*, and is an important method of maintaining standards in the academic world.

Title	Category
Burningham, D. (Ed.) (1984, 2 nd ed.) <i>Understanding Economics</i> . England: Hodder & Stoughton.	collection of papers
Directory of property developers, investors and financiers 1984–85.	reference book
<i>The Economist</i>	general interest magazine
James, D. E. and Throsby, C. D. (1973) <i>Introduction to Quantitative Methods in Economics</i> . England: Wiley.	textbook/handbook for researchers?
James, S. and Nobes, C. (2005) <i>The Economics of Taxation</i> . England: Prentice Hall.	textbook
Kagel, J. H. and Roth, A. E. (Eds.) (1995) <i>The Handbook of Experimental Economics</i> . USA: Princeton University Press.	handbook for researchers?
Kamien, M. I. and Schwartz, N. L. (1991) <i>Dynamic Optimization: The Calculus of Variations and Optimal Control in Economics and Management</i> . USA: Elsevier.	specialized textbook – or maybe a kind of mathematical guide?
Menezes, C. F. and Wang, H. (2005) Duality and the Slutsky income and substitution effects of increases in wage rate. <i>Oxford Economic Papers</i> 2005 57: 545–557.	paper in academic journal
Saran, R. (2005) Lecture: Slutsky Equation. There are two effects when price of a good changes. Brown University – Department of Economics, www.personeel.unimaas.nl/r.saran .	paper or lecture on webpage of practising academic
Seidl, C. (Ed.) (1984) <i>Lectures on Schumpeterian Economics</i> . USA: Springer.	collection of papers
Sloman, J. (2003) <i>Economics</i> . 5 th edn. England: Prentice Hall.	textbook
Slutsky, E. (1937) The summation of random causes as the source of cyclic processes. <i>Econometrica</i> Vol. 5: 105–46.	paper in academic journal/ seminal work?
Smith, A. (1950) <i>An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations</i> Vol. 1–2. England: Methuen.	seminal work

Tasksheet 1

Discuss these questions in your group and make notes of your answers.

What types of books or other texts did you read at different stages in your previous education (e.g., in secondary school, at the beginning of an undergraduate degree, near the end of undergraduate study, during a postgraduate course)?

How did you know what to read? Did you decide yourself or were you recommended to read specific books?

How many different reading sources were you expected to use for an assignment, for example, for a secondary school essay or an undergraduate essay?

Teacher's visual

Types of academic text

Types of text likely to be read on UK academic courses	Who would read them
course books	secondary school, short courses, non-academic subjects
set textbooks (subject – wide)	secondary school / beginning of UG study
textbooks (topics within subject)	UG and PG
key works / classic historically important works in the field	UG and PG (reading these books unprompted might show a serious student with a real interest in the subject)
reference books	all levels – especially for research projects
reviews of other works	UGs for a final-year dissertation PGs, as specific background
papers in academic journals / conference reports	UGs at higher levels PGs: essential reading at Masters, PhD and post-doc level
academic webpages	UGs (to supplement lectures – get a different explanation of key concepts) PGs: researching topics not directly related to first degree
specialist magazines	from secondary school onwards – act as 'newspapers' for the academic community and link with general public

Tasksheet 2

Study this list of types of academic literature and match the definitions to the types of texts.

Write the correct number beside each definition.

Types of academic literature	Definitions
1 course book	a <u>2</u> a book connected with learning or intended for study
2 textbook	b ___ a book with a series of lessons designed to be taught in class for a particular course
3 key work	c ___ important book on a topic that everyone studying the topic should read
4 seminal work	d ___ a classic article or book which has influenced the way the understanding of the subject has developed
5 reference book	e ___ book which explains how to do something, aimed at people who need to carry out that activity
6 guidebook, handbook or manual	f ___ book that you look at to find information, such as a list of data, an atlas (maps), a dictionary or encyclopaedia
7 monograph	g ___ subject-related general interest magazines aimed at interested professionals and members of the general public (e.g., New Scientist, The Economist)
8 review (of other works or of the field)	h ___ web site where a lecturer or professor lists his or her publications, and may post articles or lectures and materials for his or her students
9 paper	i ___ an article or short book that discusses a narrow topic in detail
10 academic or peer-reviewed journal	j ___ a careful examination and analysis of what has been published about a particular topic
11 webpage of practising academic	k ___ publication aimed at professional researchers, containing original research reports which have been checked by other specialists from that field
12 specialist magazine	l ___ a report or discussion in an academic journal or a presentation at a conference on a particular subject by someone who has made an academic study of it

Tasksheet 3

An undergraduate economics student was told by her tutor to read more widely. She found over 1200 titles in the economics section of her university library catalogue. Here is a list of some titles she found.

- Which category from Task 2 do you think each one belongs to? How do you know?
- Which ones might be useful for her to read?

Title	Category
Burningham, D. (Ed.) (1984) <i>Understanding Economics</i> . 2 nd edn. England: Hodder & Stoughton.	
Directory of property developers, investors and financiers 1984–85.	
<i>The Economist</i> .	
James, D. E. and Throsby, C. D. (1973) <i>Introduction to Quantitative Methods in Economics</i> . England: Wiley.	
James, S. and Nobes, C. (2005) <i>The Economics of Taxation</i> . England: Prentice Hall.	
Kagel, J. H. and Roth, A. E. (Ed.) (1995) <i>The Handbook of Experimental Economics</i> . USA: Princeton University Press.	
Kamien, M. I. and Schwartz, N. L. (1991) <i>Dynamic Optimization: The Calculus of Variations and Optimal Control in Economics and Management</i> . USA: Elsevier.	
Menezes, C. F. and Wang, H. Duality and the Slutsky income and substitution effects of increases in wage rate. <i>Oxford Economic Papers</i> 2005 57: 545–557.	
Saran, R. (2005) Lecture: Slutsky equation. There are two effects when price of a good changes. Brown University – Department of Economics, www.personeel.unimaas.nl/r.saran .	
Seidl, C. (Ed.) (1984) <i>Lectures on Schumpeterian Economics</i> . USA: Springer.	
Sloman, J. (2003) <i>Economics</i> . 5 th edn. England: Prentice Hall.	
Slutsky, E. (1937) The summation of random causes as the source of cyclic processes. <i>Econometrica</i> Vol. 5: 105–4.	
Smith, A. (1950) <i>An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations</i> Vol. 1–2. England: Methuen.	

4.2: How can I read faster?

Teacher's notes

Background

This task is a fun way to raise students' awareness of their own reading techniques, and introduce one way to tackle slow reading. It helps students to overcome the conviction that they must read word-by-word for complete understanding. There needs to be plenty of time for students to put forward their own ideas about what causes slow reading, and to reflect on their own problems.

Aims

- to set targets to work towards improving reading speed
- to show that it is possible to read groups of words in each eye movement
- to practise reading in meaningful phrases

Material

Copies of three teacher's visual sheets, with phrases of increasing length and difficulty on each one, and a final sheet with a short text divided into meaningful phrases

A piece of cardboard to cover the visual sheets; a slot should be cut in it big enough to show a single line on the sheets

Means of recording time accurately for each pair of students (stop watches, etc.)

Individual copies of a text of about 500–700 words with an exact word count, appropriate for the students' level of reading without any special difficulty

A short summary of the text with gaps for content words

Procedure

- 1 **Reading speed.** Ask students how fast they think they read in L1 (in words per minute). How fast do they think a native speaker reads, for example, when reading a novel? Suggest about 400 w.p.m. Do they know their reading speed in English? Explain that they are going to measure and record this. Students are given the chosen text, record the time when they start and finish reading, and calculate their reading speed in words per minute. To check comprehension at this speed, they complete the summary without referring to the text. Discuss how far their reading speeds are from a target such as 200 w.p.m. Do they expect to understand the whole text? Suggest that 50–70 per cent comprehension is a reasonable target for quick reading.
- 2 **Reading in chunks.** Elicit possible reasons for slow reading. Explain that good readers can take in several words at once, seeing the words in groups or meaningful phrases. The longer the phrases are, the faster and more effective the reading is. Explain that the class can now try reading phrases. Put up the first visual, completely covered. Ask students to shout out when they recognize a word or phrase. Uncover STOP for an instant only. Then work through the sheet. Students will find these common phrases very easy. Work through the next sheet, keeping the exposure time as fast as possible. Finally, put up sheet 3. These phrases will cause more problems, and it needs to be pointed out that it is normal to stop and take time to decode long and unknown words, such as psychosomatic, or unexpected collocations, such as cost stickiness. The important thing is that reading should be as flexible as possible.

- 3 **Reading and eye movement.** Explain that they are going to find out whether they read in phrases, by measuring the number of eye-movements they make as they read a line. Students form pairs and sit where they can see their partner's eyes. As one student reads a paragraph of the selected text, their partner records the number of jumps the eyes make as they read each line. They work out the average number of jumps per line. A student can also record the teacher reading, for comparison. After comparing the results, the teacher shows a passage of text, marked into meaningful phrases, on Teacher's visual 4. Students try to read this silently to see if they can use the technique. Finally, students mark a section of the copy of the selected text into phrases, and try to read it phrase by phrase. They can try the eye-movement count again with a partner, to see if they have improved.
- 4 **Discussion and reflection.** Students discuss how they can tackle their own reading speed, and negotiate some targets and possible class activities, for instance, spending a short time each week at the beginning of a class reading a text in this way.

Follow-up

One lesson is not enough to develop this skill. The teacher needs to make sure this work is followed up by devising further tasks, and by regularly monitoring students' targets and progress. Students can keep a log recording their reading speed over the course, and set higher targets as they progress. The teacher can collect a bank of accessible texts of a similar length and level, and prepare simple gapped summaries so that students can test their speed and comprehension regularly.

Teacher's visual 1

STOP

THE END

Good luck!

Open here

Thank you

NO ENTRY

FIRE EXIT

Low fat

FREE OFFER

Teacher's visual 2

**There are many
a major factor
a serious issue
on the contrary
in terms of
more significant than
this is situated
On the other hand
on the basis of
the fact that**

Teacher's visual 3

psychosomatic illness

collocation exercises

insubstantial evidence

pathogenic bacteria

efficient reading techniques

mobile robot localization

instinctive behaviour

cost stickiness analysis

Teacher's visual 4**Reading in phrases**

**There are many ways to categorize
blogs. They can be categorized by
media type: a blog which is made
up of videos is called a vlog, and
one which is made up of photos
is called a photoblog.**

**They can also be categorized by the
device which is used to compose it so
that a blog written by a mobile device
such as a mobile phone is called a
moblog; or they can be categorized by
genre, such as political blogs
or travel blogs.**

4.3: How do you read?: reading strategies

Teacher's notes

Background

This task is intended to be used in the early stages of an EAP course for undergraduates or postgraduates, to prepare students for the strategies they will need in academic reading. This is an open-ended task and, at this stage, the aim is to raise awareness of their own strategies, and of the possibility of self-monitoring, rather than to force students to accept particular ideas.

Aims

- to introduce strategies for approaching reading difficult texts
- to present reasons for prioritizing global reading strategies
- to enable students to reflect on the reading strategies they currently use

Material

Individual copies of the tasksheet *What academic readers do* and the list of reading attack strategies

Teacher's visual to record the categories of the strategies (Task 3)

Procedure

- 1 Ask students what advice they would give to a student needing to do a large amount of reading in a short time. Introduce the word *strategies* to describe deliberate approaches to reading. Give out quotations from academic readers (Task 1). Students identify the readers' purposes and strategies, and compare their answers with the key. They compare the purposes with those they expect to have on their degree courses, and to reflect on which of these strategies they use when reading.
- 2 Students identify their own reading attack strategies from the list in the tasksheet, then compare their answers and categorize the strategies. The teacher records the answers, using the visual provided. Students may wish to add their own strategies and tips. Ask which strategies students think are most useful for helping them to read more efficiently. Present the rationale for prioritizing purpose, prediction and global strategies for successful reading.

Follow-up

Type up the list of strategies students have prioritized as a record to give out in the next lesson. The class can return to these regularly as the course progresses to monitor which strategies they are using and how successful they seem to be. When they read texts, students can be encouraged to monitor the strategies and report back in tutorials or keep a log of their progress.

KEY

Task 1

a The readers' purposes were:

- 1 to answer a specific question (the relationship between the size of a roll of plastic and the pressure between layers)
- 2 to find references to support what he wanted to say in his dissertation
- 3 to find sources to provide enough information for his project

b Strategies are underlined.

- 1 I wanted to know how pressure builds up between layers as the size of a roll of plastic film builds up. ... I looked at the contents page and picked one chapter that seemed relevant to answer my question according to its title, 'Winding Models'. I read that chapter in depth. I skipped through the rest of the book and the index to see if there was anything interesting and I also read bits of other chapters whose input was directly related to the chapter I wanted.

(professional process engineer working in research and development)

- 2 Teachers can direct you to sources but you have to come to your own conclusions. I went through library journals typing search words into the library catalogue. There were a lot of sources so I had to use my own judgement. I read the abstracts. Some weren't related to my topic but in fact it helped me narrow down my topic. When I got an online article, I used 'find' to look for the key word and read the bit around that. I located textbooks through their titles. I spent a lot of time filtering, matching what I was trying to say and backing it up with a reference.

(final year undergraduate preparing a dissertation project)

- 3 This was a project, which means I needed to do some research. ... So during these weeks, I learnt how to read effectively and get my necessary information. For example, an article from a journal contains lots of content but sometime I just used the conclusion of the articles and read one paragraph or one sentence.

(EAP student preparing a course assignment)

Tasks 2 and 3

It is important that students make personal choices in terms of the strategies that they find most helpful. However, this classification and ordering are suggested to draw attention to the strategies related to purpose, prediction and global understanding. Students should be encouraged to take a top-down approach, and to try for close reading and complete understanding only where this is necessary for their reading purpose.

Strategies which involve purpose

- 5 Formulate some questions you want to find the answers to in the text.
- 16 Accept that you might only understand half or three-quarters of what you are reading.

Strategies which involve prediction

- 9 Decide the purpose of the text.
- 3 Identify the topic quickly, and then stop reading and think about what you know about the subject and the processes involved with it.
- 4 Identify the topic quickly, and then stop reading and think about the vocabulary you would expect to see in the text.

Strategies that help in seeing the big picture and understanding the main points

- 1 Glance through the text and let key words, ideas, topics, questions jump up at you.
- 2 Float above the text like a bird, trying to take in as much of the view as possible.
- 6 Glance through the text very quickly and identify the subjects of sentences.
- 14 Look for things in the text that you do understand.
- 10 Identify the overall structure of the text.
- 11 Identify some of the meaning relationships in the text, by finding the language of comparison or cause and effect.
- 8 Find the topic sentences and the key words.

Strategies for close reading

- 7 Find the verbs in the text.
- 12 Look for paragraph structures which cross sentence boundaries.
- 13 Look for things in the text that you don't understand.
- 15 Look up words you don't know in your electronic dictionary.

Strategies for reading critically

- 17 Stop reading and try to think of examples from your own experience, or relate the writer's points to your own knowledge.

Tasksheet: What academic readers do

Task 1

Here are three academic readers talking about how they read.

- a Can you find the purpose each reader had?
 - b How many different strategies did each reader use to achieve the purpose quickly and effectively? Underline each strategy you find.
- 1 I wanted to know how pressure builds up between layers as the size of a roll of plastic film builds up. I found a book called 'The Mechanics of Winding'. I looked at the contents page and picked one chapter that seemed relevant to answer my question according to its title, 'Winding Models'. I read that chapter in depth. I skipped through the rest of the book and the index to see if there was anything interesting and I also read bits of other chapters whose input was directly related to the chapter I wanted.
(professional process engineer working in research and development)
 - 2 Teachers can direct you to sources but you have to come to your own conclusions. I went through library journals typing search words into the library catalogue. There were a lot of sources so I had to use my own judgement. I read the abstracts. Some weren't related to my topic but in fact it helped me narrow down my topic. When I got an on-line article, I used 'find' to look for the key word and read the bit around that. I located text books through their titles. I spent a lot of time filtering, matching what I was trying to say and backing it up with a reference.
(final year undergraduate preparing a dissertation project)
 - 3 This was a project, which means I needed to do some research. So I had to find a lot of materials, such as journals and books. In fact, if you want to read all the things that you find, it is impossible. So during these weeks, I learnt how to read effectively and get my necessary information. For example, an article from a journal contains lots of content but sometime I just used the conclusion of the articles and read one paragraph or one sentence.

(EAP student preparing a course assignment)

Reading attack strategies

Task 2

How many of these approaches do you use when reading in your first language?

Which ones might be helpful for reading in English?

In which order might you use these reading attack strategies with texts?

- 1 Glance through the text and let key words, ideas, topics, questions jump up at you.
- 2 Float above the text like a bird, trying to take in as much of the view as possible.
- 3 Identify the topic quickly, and then stop reading and think about what you know about the subject and the processes involved with it.
- 4 Identify the topic quickly, and then stop reading and think about the vocabulary you would expect to see in the text.
- 5 Formulate some questions you want to find the answers to in the text.
- 6 Glance through the text very quickly and identify the subjects: the things or people involved.
- 7 Find the verbs in the text.
- 8 Find the topic sentences and the key words.
- 9 Decide the purpose of the text, i.e., why it was written; what the writer wanted to achieve.
- 10 Identify the overall structure of the text: is there a problem and a solution? Does the writer make a number of points that lead to a conclusion? Does the writer make claims, and then give evidence to support them?
- 11 Identify some of the meaning relationships in the text, by finding the language of comparison or cause and effect.
- 12 Look for paragraph structures which cross sentence boundaries, e.g., *Some ...*, *However, others ...*, which indicate a contrast of ideas.
- 13 Look for things in the text that you don't understand.
- 14 Look for things in the text that you do understand.
- 15 Look up words you don't know in your electronic dictionary.
- 16 Accept that you might only understand half or three-quarters of what you are reading.
- 17 Stop reading and try to think of examples from your own experience, or relate the writer's points to your own knowledge.

Task 3

Which of the strategies above involve: reading for a purpose, prediction, seeing the big picture, reading carefully, or reading critically?

Teacher's visual

Reading attack skills

Strategies which involve reading for purpose

Strategies which involve prediction

**Strategies that help in seeing the big picture
and understanding the main points**

Strategies for close reading

Strategies for reading critically

4.4: The Metropole and the Luxus hotels: taking notes and writing from a text

Teacher's notes

Background

This text was written to introduce the function of comparison, and also the genre of a case study. It is suitable for mixed subject undergraduate classes. For postgraduates, the amount of support can be reduced to make the tasks more challenging. The focus is on note-taking strategies as a stage in transforming information so that it can be used to answer questions in their own writing. This includes grouping related features, and choosing suitable general nouns or noun phrases as headings to label these.

Aims

- to identify features of comparison texts
- to practise taking notes suitable for the reading purpose and text function
- to practise using information from a case study in an authentic way

Material

Individual copies of the tasksheet for the case study *The Metropole and the Luxus Hotels* containing reading, note-taking and writing tasks

Keys and model answers for the tasks

Teacher's visual *Organizing comparison texts*

Procedure

- 1 Ask students to name famous hotel chains, and to suggest why travellers choose to use them.
- 2 Negotiate a very short time for the students to read the text and find the answer to the big picture task. Elicit the purpose of a case study. Ask students to suggest how they might use information from a case study like this to answer an exam question.
- 3 Ask students to identify the main function in the text (comparison). Explain that there are two ways to organize information when we are comparing. In pattern A, two or more items are compared in turn, in terms of their features (what can be noticed or described about them). In pattern B, one feature is selected and the writer compares how this feature differs in the items. Show the visual illustrating these two patterns, and check that students understand the difference. Students identify the pattern in paragraph 1 of the case study (pattern A). Elicit the reasons for this choice (to give a quick overview of the two hotels and their features). Students study how the author uses pattern B for the rest of the text, in order to compare closely the features that are relevant to the purpose of the text (Task 2). Explain that this pattern is for guidance only, to help them in their writing, and that sometimes several paragraphs deal with one item or feature.
- 4 Elicit suggestions for a suitable note-taking format for comparing two items. Students can take notes directly, and then compare them with the key showing model notes (3b). Students who need more support can complete the gapped note-taking table provided, and then check the key.

- 5 Students look at an exam question (Task 4), and decide what is likely to be the main point of an answer to this question. (That a more personal style of management is likely to be more successful in a crisis, because decisions can be made more quickly.) Then they evaluate their notes critically to see what information is relevant to answering this exam question.
- 6 Students write a summary of the text, which forms part of the exam answer (Task 5), as homework or in a subsequent lesson.

Follow-up

Students can find and record language exponents in the text for the function of comparison, e.g., *both*, *whereas*, *in contrast*, *the former*. In subsequent classes, students can read other comparison texts and identify the purpose of the comparison, which items and features are being compared, and how the text is organized. They can find further examples of vocabulary for comparison in these texts. They can also write a parallel text, comparing two or more items, based on notes in a table, e.g., information about cities, or types of cars, or they can compare items related to their own field. The text should have a purpose, e.g., a report for a tourist company or for consumers.

KEY**Task 1**

Correct answer: b

Answers a and c are incorrect because the style and content do not match these purposes. Students may think d is the right answer. This is included to help them think about the purpose of a text. Comparing and contrasting is not a purpose, but a means of achieving a purpose, such as evaluating items for a specific reason. Only b represents the whole purpose of the text in terms of its genre as a case study, function of comparing, and topic of effective management style.

Task 2

- a The facilities (paragraph 2), and the response to the problems following the banking crisis in 2008 (paragraph 5)
- b The ownership and management of each hotel (paragraphs 3 and 4). This group of related features (structure and style of management, the type of ownership and aims of the owners) are important for the main message of the text, so the writer gives a paragraph to each hotel to reflect the importance of this information.
- c *The facilities offered by each hotel reflect the market which it aims to attract.* This helps the reader to see the key connection between facilities and target markets. When there was a problem, the Metropole was able to adapt its facilities to a different target market.

Task 3

Features	Metropole	Luxus
location	central location	edge of city location
target market	tourist market	business traveller
size	150 rooms	186 rooms
facilities	leisure facilities	business facilities
ownership	one of a small group of hotels	part of an international chain
management structure / style	major decisions made by owner	devolved management structure
aims	luxury hotels reflecting local environment	similar standard of accommodation / service in all hotels
effects of 2008 downturn	successful response after 2008 – attracted more business travellers	less successful response after 2008 – lost tourist part of its business

Task 4

There is no single answer to this, but students may feel the number of rooms is not relevant or likely to be remembered. A few facilities might be useful to remember as examples, but not the complete list. The aims of the companies do not seem relevant to the exam question.

Task 5**Suggested model answer**

Management styles can affect the success of businesses in a time of change or crisis. An example of this is the case of the Metropole and Luxus Hotels in the period following the banking crisis in 2008. These were both similar-sized hotels in a large tourist city. The Metropole was individually owned by Sir Marco Polo, and was run with a very individual management style, whereas the Luxus was part of a large international chain with a devolved management structure. The facilities of the city centre Metropole were aimed at the tourist market, while the main market of the Luxus was business travellers, as it was near the airport. The banking crisis in 2008 caused a reduction in international tourist travel. Hotels had to react quickly to deal with the loss of customers. The Metropole was able to do this quickly, adding facilities, such as wireless access and conference rooms, to accommodate business customers rather than tourists. This was because of the very personal style of management of Sir Marco Polo, who was able to take major decisions quickly, and implement them without consulting any higher levels of management. However, the devolved management structure at the Luxus led to slower decision-making so that the hotel could not adapt quickly to the situation. As a result, it suffered a loss of profits. (226 words)

Tasksheet

Task 1

Reading: The big picture

What is the purpose of this text? Read the text very quickly and decide if it is:

- a a description of the hotels for customers who might wish to stay there
- b a case study, using a comparison of two hotels as an example in order to discuss management theories
- c part of the website of one of the hotels giving general information about the company
- d a text comparing and contrasting two hotels

The Metropole and the Luxus hotels

The Metropole and the Luxus are large hotels in a major British tourist and business city. The former, situated in the centre close to a famous shopping street and theatres, attracts the top end of the tourist market whereas the Luxus, on the edge of the city beside the airport, caters for the business traveller. Both hotels have a similar number of rooms: the Luxus has 186 rooms while the Metropole has 150 rooms.

The facilities offered by each hotel reflect the market which it aims to attract. The Metropole offers a wide range of leisure facilities such as quality gift shops, a high class restaurant, a beauty salon and a swimming pool as well as the gym and sauna expected in a hotel of this class. The speciality of the Luxus is the provision of facilities to assist the business traveller such as modem points in every bedroom, wireless access areas, and 22 conference rooms where clients can hold their own meetings.

The Luxus is part of a major international hotel chain, Luxus Hotels Inc., which owns 400 hotels in 75 countries and employs 50,000 people worldwide. The aim of this company is to produce reliable, high quality accommodation and service of a similar standard in every hotel. The group has a devolved management structure. Apart from large financial decisions, the management of each hotel is delegated to a local management team. In fact in some cases the hotels are leased or run on management contract.

In contrast, the Metropole is one of a small group of hotels owned by the millionaire Sir Marco Polo, who set up the group as an individual project after his original business empire was taken over by a larger company. He had the vision of creating a luxury hotel which would be the best in its class in each major city of the world. He also wanted each hotel to reflect the character and traditions of the city. An unusual feature of the management of these hotels is that although each hotel has its own management team for day-to-day operations, Sir Marco takes a personal part in all aspects from choosing the locations to making financial decisions.

The hotels had varying fortunes after the downturn in global travel, following the banking crisis in 2008. Despite its dependence on the tourist market, the Metropole has fared quite well, perhaps because Sir Marco's very individual style of management enabled it to respond more quickly to the problem. He immediately ordered wireless access areas to be set up and turned some bedrooms into conference rooms, in order to attract more business customers. The Luxus might have been expected to have fewer problems, as it catered mainly for business travellers who had to travel whether they wished to or not. However, it did suffer some effects and lost the tourist part of its business. This was because people with children could no longer afford to take short-term holidays. Because of its less personal management structure, the hotel was not able to respond to the crisis as quickly as the Metropole.

(523 words)

Task 2

Structure of the text

Using the structure of the text to identify important points

- Two features or aspects are given a whole paragraph each. What are these features?
- The writer uses a separate paragraph to describe each hotel's ownership, aims, and management structure and style. Why do you think he does this?
- In paragraph 2, the facilities of the hotels are described in detail. Facilities might not seem very important if you are not going to stay in the hotels. Highlight the sentence in paragraph 2 which shows the reason for including this information.

Task 3

Note-taking

- Highlight phrases in the text that show the differences between the two hotels.
- Choose a general noun or noun phrase from the box below to make a suitable heading for each feature or aspect being compared and add them to the table below. There are more headings than you need.

size	location	interests of management	aims	hotel chains
ownership		effects of 2008 banking crisis	quality	varying fortunes
facilities	target market	management structure and style		

- Add short notes to complete the table below, comparing the features of the two hotels. Use noun phrases and your own words, where possible.

Comparison of the two hotels

Features	Metropole	Luxus
	central location	
		business traveller
size		
	leisure facilities	
	one of a small group of hotels	
		devolved management structure
	luxury hotels reflecting local environment	
		less successful response after 2008 – losing tourist part of its business

Task 4

Critical thinking

Here is an exam question for an undergraduate management course.

How might different management styles affect the way in which companies are able to respond to a crisis or difficult situation? Give an example from a case study you have read.

You are going to use the case of the Metropole and the Luxus as an example to include in your exam answer. With a partner, look critically at the notes you have made, and discuss these points:

- Which items in my notes are relevant to the purpose of the text?
- What will help me remember the important points from the text?
- What will help me to remember enough details about the two companies if I need to use this case study to answer an exam question?

Now delete any parts of your notes which seem irrelevant or unsuitable for these purposes.

Task 5

Writing a summary

You are answering the question above in an exam. You make this quick plan for your exam answer.

- Paragraph 1 Introduction – types of management style
- Paragraph 2 Example of how management style affected the two hotels when there was a problem
- Paragraph 3 Analysis of the way different management styles can affect organizations, based on what we learned in this management module
- Paragraph 4 Conclusion: evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of different styles – need for flexibility

The opening of paragraph 2 is given below. Use your notes from Task 4 to write the rest of the paragraph.

Management styles can affect the success of businesses in a time of change or crisis. An example of this is the case of the Metropole and Luxus hotels. ...

Teacher's visual

Organizing comparison texts

Pattern A: item-by-item comparison

Subject of a paragraph	Content of the paragraph
item 1, e.g., a hotel	Description of a group of features of this item, e.g., the location, facilities and room price of hotel 1
item 2, e.g., a different hotel	Description of a group of features of this item, e.g., the location, facilities and room price of hotel 2

Pattern B: feature-by-feature comparison

Subject of a paragraph	Content of the paragraph
feature X, e.g., the facilities	Comparison of items 1 and 2 in terms of this feature, e.g., the facilities in two different hotels
feature Y, e.g., the location	Comparison of items 1 and 2 in terms of this feature, e.g., the locations of the two hotels