

*Reading critically* is usually seen as the most challenging reading technique because you need to read beyond the basic meaning or to read between the lines. Although most writers would write everything they want to express, there are cases when they don't want to be so explicit all the time. This is especially true when the writers want to make their writing more interesting to read. You also need to read critically to evaluate the opinions of the writer. You may not agree with everything s/he says. Remember, we do not think alike; and therefore we share different opinions. Reading critically means you are ready to disagree with the writer's opinions, and be able to form your own judgement of the issues raised in the text. Or if you totally agree with the writer, you should at least know why you do so. Being an advanced learner of English, you should be able to read critically. Here are a few tips:

## Tips on reading critically

- The best thing to do is to read with a partner, and exchange your viewpoints on the text with each other.
- Distinguish facts from opinions. Facts are based on evidence, whereas opinions are not.

- For each of the opinions stated, think of the purpose of the writer. Does s/he state his/her opinions to:  
persuade?  
amuse?  
threaten?  
reassure?  
criticize?
- Think when you read. Stop between reading to allow yourself time to think about the content of the text and the opinions of the writer.
- If the argument is too complex to handle mentally, break down the points and represent them in whatever format you feel comfortable on a piece of paper. You may use diagram, flowcharts, point form, etc.

## What materials can I use for practicing?

Inside the Language Commons:

- “Study reading” units 8 & 9.
- “Reading and thinking in English”

Outside the Language Commons:

- Newspapers

- Magazines
- Lecture notes
- Course readings
- Advertisements
- Newsletters
- E-mail
- Any readings you come across in your daily life

## And now...

If you would like any help or advice, or just a chat about your progress, please get in touch - **we are here to support your independent learning!** To contact us:

- make an appointment to see an **adviser**. For details of advisers and their availability, please go to <https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-adviser-timetable/>
- e-mail your questions to **iLANG** ([lcilang@ust.hk](mailto:lcilang@ust.hk)).
- ask at the reception counter of the Language Commons — if the receptionist cannot help you directly, s/he will pass your query on to one of the advisers.

## What else can you do?

- browse the many physical (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-commons/#resources>) and online materials (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/resources-reading/>) for Reading.
- join a Reading activity or short course (<http://ilang.cle.ust.hk/reading/>).

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