

How I read the news and why it matters

I am an avid news follower. I have been reading a newspaper daily since I was eight years old (really). At times, I even read two and three dailies (when I was in grad school up at Boston University, I decided I should read the *Wall Street Journal*, in addition to the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe*. The *Globe* was not owned by the *Times* then, but I digress). Additionally, I read lots of stuff online plus I watch the CBS and/or NBC evening news broadcasts when I can.



Reading the newspaper in park by Zoetnet on Flickr

When I read the newspaper, what I am really doing is scanning. I scan all the headlines first. If the headline is about an interesting subject, then I read the first few paragraphs (same goes for op-eds). I usually discard the sports section, but only after reading the main headline on the front page (it is important to know the results of the game, but I have no

patience for the analysis of why).

I don't read long articles—never have and never will. I don't have the patience or the time.

Even though most people don't read printed newspapers, they are acting the same online: **They scan. They skip long form. They only read what interests them.**

Lessons here are:

- Headlines matter A LOT.
- Longer is not necessarily better.
- People will always read *only* what interests them.

In other words, keep it short and keep it interesting.