Study Skills 1

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Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to :

- set academic goals, apply effective learning strategies, and demonstrate achievement in their courses.
- demonstrate independent learning skills and apply critical thinking in academic and real-life contexts.
- develop and apply reading, writing, and research methodology skills effectively.

Chapter 05 : Research Skills
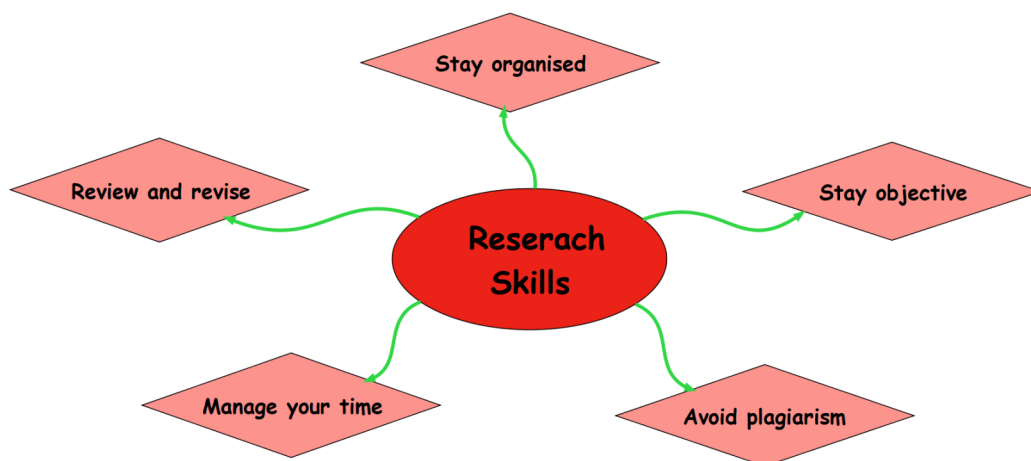
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1. Lesson 01 : Research Skills

Objectives : By the end of the lesson, students will be able to :

- Understand research skills.
- Recognize plagiarism and how to avoid it.
- Apply basic research skills to academic tasks.

1.1. Introduction to Research Skills

Research skills are essential for gathering, analyzing, and presenting information effectively. Whether you're conducting academic research, professional investigations, or personal inquiries, strong research skills help you collect reliable data, assess it critically, and draw meaningful conclusions.

Effective research skills are crucial for producing high-quality, credible work. These skills involve clear planning, critical analysis, and the ability to synthesize information. By following the steps outlined in this handout, you can conduct thorough research, present your findings logically, and create well-structured, evidence-based papers. Developing these skills will not only help you in academic settings but also in professional and personal decision-making.

1.2. Tips for effective Research

Method

1. Stay Organized

• Keep your research materials and notes well-organized. This will save time when writing your paper and make it easier to locate important information.

2. Avoid Plagiarism

• Always give credit to the original source of any idea, quote, or data you use. Paraphrase properly and cite correctly.

3. Manage Your Time

• Set deadlines for each phase of your research to avoid procrastination and ensure a smooth workflow.

4. Stay Objective

• Focus on facts and avoid letting personal biases influence your research findings.

5. Review and Revise

• After completing your research paper, review your work. Revise for clarity, coherence, and grammar errors.

1.3. Finding Information in the Library

Libraries are invaluable resources for conducting research and finding reliable information. Whether you're working on academic assignments, personal projects, or professional tasks, libraries offer access to a wide range of materials, including books, journals, magazines, and digital resources.

Finding information in a library is a systematic process that involves knowing how to search for materials, using appropriate resources, and critically evaluating the information you gather. Take advantage of both physical and digital resources, and don't hesitate to ask for help when needed. A well-conducted library search can yield high-quality, reliable information that will strengthen your research and academic work.

1.4. Using the Internet to Research

The internet is a vast and powerful tool for research, offering access to a wealth of information on nearly every topic imaginable. However, with this abundance of information comes the challenge of finding reliable, accurate, and relevant sources.

The internet is an invaluable research tool, but it's essential to approach it with a critical mind and effective strategies. By using advanced search techniques, evaluating sources for credibility, and organizing your findings, you can ensure that your online research is thorough, reliable, and productive. Remember to stay organized, stay safe, and always verify information before using it in your work.

1.5. Strategies for Effective Online Research

Method

A. Plan Your Search

• Define your research questions or objectives before you start searching. This will help you stay focused and avoid getting overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information available.

B. Be Patient and Persistent

• Online research can take time. Be patient and persistent in refining your searches and evaluating sources. Always check multiple sources to ensure the information is accurate.

C. Keep Notes

• Keep track of the websites you've visited and the resources you've found. Document the citation information for each source to avoid scrambling later when compiling your references.

1.6. What is Plagiarism ?

Definition

Plagiarism is the use of the work of others without acknowledgement of your source of information or inspiration. This includes:

★ using words more or less exactly as they have been used in articles, lectures, television programmes, books, or anywhere else

★ using other people's ideas or theories without saying whose ideas they are

★ paraphrasing what you read or hear without stating where it comes from. Even if you change a few words or sentences you have 'borrowed', or if you have reordered them, the result is still plagiarism.

Plagiarism is treated very seriously, and plagiarized work is usually disqualified. This can have a major impact on your marks or grades.

1.7. How to Avoid Plagiarism

Method

Write all your notes in your own words.

★ Note down exactly where you read the information you put in your notes.

★ In your assignment, cite the sources of ideas and information. Do this even when not using a quotation, and make it clear what is and what is not a direct quotation.

★ At the end of your work, write a full list of references.

Plagiarism is a serious academic and ethical issue that can have far-reaching consequences. To avoid plagiarism, it is essential to understand how to properly cite sources, paraphrase ideas, and use quotes. By maintaining good research practices, keeping track of your sources, and using plagiarism detection tools, you can ensure that your work is original and properly credited. Always aim to uphold academic integrity and respect the intellectual property of others.

1.8. Praraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting

When writing academic papers or conducting research, it's crucial to know how to properly use and distinguish between paraphrasing, summarizing, and quoting. Each serves a different purpose and requires careful attention to detail. Here's an overview of each technique:

1. Paraphrasing

Definition:

Paraphrasing is the process of rewording or rewriting someone else's ideas or information in your own words, while keeping the original meaning intact. The goal is to simplify or clarify the original content.

Key Points:

• Rewriting: Paraphrasing involves changing the structure and wording of the original text without altering the meaning.

• Length: Paraphrased content is usually similar in length to the original.

• Citation: Even though the text is rewritten in your own words, you still must provide a proper citation to acknowledge the original source.

When to Use:

• When you want to express an idea from a source in a clearer or more concise way.

• When the specific wording of the original text is not as important as the idea it conveys.

2. Summarizing

Definition:

Summarizing involves condensing a larger piece of information or a longer text into a shorter form, focusing only on the main ideas or key points. The aim is to provide a brief overview of the original text.

Key Points:

• Conciseness: A summary is shorter than the original content and highlights only the essential information.

• Generalization: You focus on the broader concepts or the most important aspects, leaving out detailed explanations or examples.

• Citation: Like paraphrasing, summarizing requires proper citation to credit the original author.

When to Use:

• When you want to provide a brief overview of a large amount of information.

• When you need to condense lengthy sources, such as articles, books, or lectures, into manageable sections.

3. Quoting

Definition:

Quoting involves using someone else's exact words, typically when the phrasing is particularly powerful, significant, or authoritative. A quote is placed within quotation marks and must be attributed to the original author.

Key Points:

• Exact Words: A quote is an exact reproduction of someone else's words, with no changes or rewording.

• Quotation Marks: The quoted material must be enclosed in quotation marks to indicate that it is not your own work.

• Citation: Always provide a citation to attribute the quote to the original source, including page numbers if applicable.

When to Use:

• When the exact wording is important for the argument you are making or when the author's phrasing is particularly impactful.

• When referencing a primary source, such as a famous speech, law, or historical document, where the original wording is crucial.

1.9. Practice

Exercice
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Research skills are essential for   , analyzing, and   information effectively. Whether you're conducting academic research, professional investigations, or personal inquiries, strong research skills help you collect   data, assess it critically, and draw meaningful
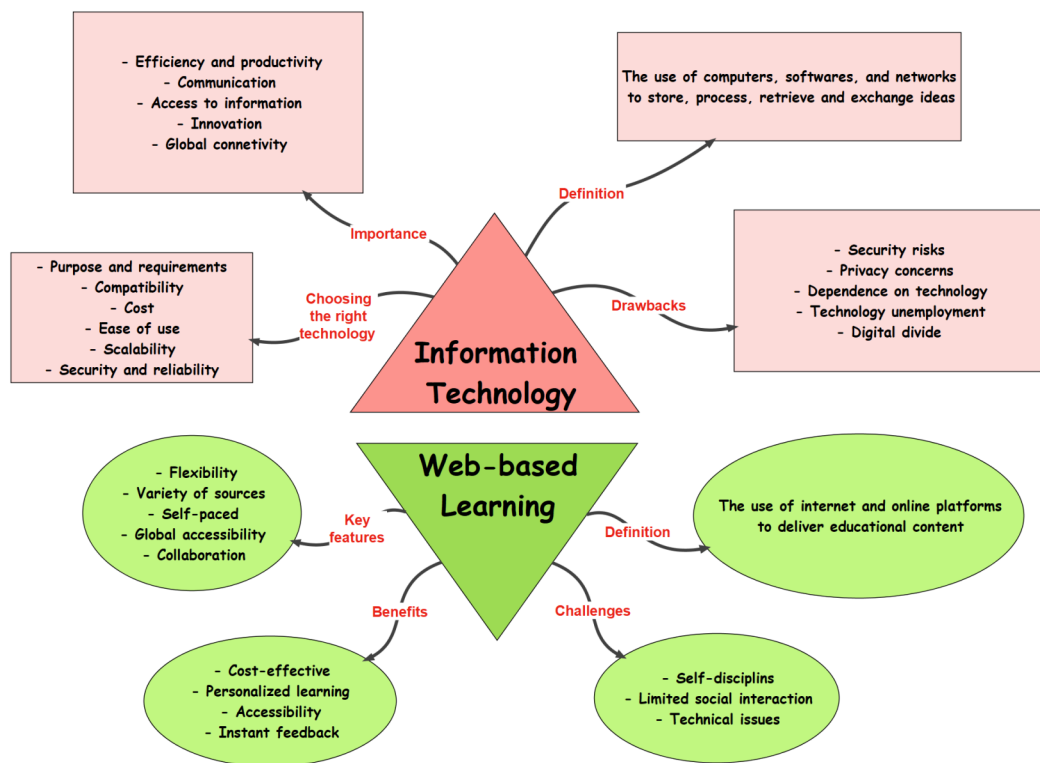
Exercice
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Define plagiarism

2. Lesson 02 : Information Technology and Web-based Learning

Objectives : By the end of the lesson, students will be able to :

- Use IT and web-based resources to gather, evaluate, and integrate information effectively.

2.1. Definition of Information Technology

✎ *Definition*

Information Technology (IT) refers to the use of computers, software, networks, and other electronic systems to store, process, retrieve, and exchange data. IT encompasses a wide range of technologies used to manage and manipulate information, including hardware (computers, servers, and devices), software (applications and programs), and the systems and networks that connect them.

2.2. Importance of Information Technology

Information Technology plays a crucial role in virtually every aspect of modern life, particularly in education, business, and communication. Here are some key reasons why IT is important:

● **Efficiency and Productivity:** IT improves the efficiency and productivity of individuals and organizations by automating tasks and enabling faster decision-making.

● **Communication: I**T enables seamless communication through email, messaging, video conferencing, and collaboration tools, connecting people globally in real-time.

● **Access to Information:** IT provides quick access to vast amounts of information, enhancing research, learning, and decision-making processes.

● **Innovation:** IT fuels innovation by providing tools for creating new products, services, and business models in various industries.

● **Global Connectivity:** IT connects people, businesses, and governments worldwide, creating opportunities for collaboration and global trade.

2.3. Drawbacks of Information Technology

While IT offers numerous benefits, it also comes with some challenges and drawbacks:

● **Security Risks:** The use of technology can expose systems to hacking, viruses, and data breaches, putting sensitive information at risk.

● **Privacy Concerns:** With the collection of vast amounts of personal data, privacy issues have become a significant concern, leading to a potential loss of personal autonomy.

● **Dependence on Technology:** Over-reliance on IT can lead to a reduction in critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and human interaction.

● **Technological Unemployment:** Automation and AI technologies may replace certain jobs, leading to job losses in certain sectors.

● **Digital Divide:** Not everyone has equal access to technology, which can lead to inequalities in education, employment, and information access.

2.4. Choosing the Right Technology

Selecting the right technology depends on specific needs, goals, and circumstances. Here are factors to consider when choosing the right technology:

● **Purpose and Requirements:** Understand the specific problem you are trying to solve or the task you need to accomplish. Choose technology that best fits the requirements of your project or organization.

● **Compatibility:** Ensure that the technology integrates well with existing systems and infrastructure. Compatibility with other software and hardware is crucial for smooth operations.

● **Cost:** Evaluate the cost of acquiring and maintaining the technology. Consider both initial setup costs and long-term operational costs.

● **Ease of Use:** The technology should be user-friendly and accessible to those who will be using it. Training and support may also be necessary.

- **Scalability:** As needs grow, the technology should be able to scale and adapt. Look for solutions that can expand or evolve with your needs.

- **Security and Reliability:** The technology should be secure and reliable, with backup systems in place to avoid data loss and ensure business continuity.

2.5. Web-based Learning

Definition

Web-based learning (also known as online learning or e-learning) refers to the use of the internet and online platforms to deliver educational content. It allows students to learn at their own pace, anytime, anywhere, using digital resources such as videos, quizzes, and online discussions.

2.6. Key Features of Web-based Learning

- **Flexibility:** Students can access learning materials and engage with content from any location at any time.

- **Variety of Resources:** Web-based learning offers a wide range of multimedia, including text, videos, interactive tools, and forums to enhance learning.

- **Self-Paced:** Learners can progress through materials at their own pace, making it easier to manage time and balance studies with other responsibilities.

- **Global Accessibility:** Students from all over the world can access the same materials, promoting inclusivity and broadening learning opportunities.

- **Collaboration:** Many web-based learning platforms offer collaborative tools such as group discussions, webinars, and peer reviews.

2.7. Benefits of Web-based Learning

- **Cost-Effective:** Typically, online courses are more affordable than traditional in-person classes, and they often eliminate travel and accommodation costs.

- **Personalized Learning:** Learners can tailor their educational experience to their needs by selecting courses that align with their interests and goals.

- **Accessibility:** Web-based learning offers opportunities for individuals with disabilities or those in remote areas to access education.

- **Instant Feedback:** Many platforms provide quizzes or assignments with automatic feedback, allowing learners to track their progress

2.8. Challenges of Web-based Learning

- **Self-Discipline:** Since web-based learning requires self-motivation, some learners may struggle with staying on track without the structure of traditional classrooms.

- **Limited Social Interaction:** Learning online may limit face-to-face interactions, which can affect the development of interpersonal skills and reduce networking opportunities.

- **Technical Issues:** Access to reliable internet and technology is required, which can be a barrier for some learners in underdeveloped regions.

2.9. Practice

Exercice

Information Technology (IT) refers to the use of _____ , software, **networks**, and other _____ systems to store, _____ , retrieve, and _____ data. IT encompasses a wide range of _____ used to manage and manipulate information, including _____ (computers, servers, and devices), _____ (applications and programs), and the systems and _____ that _____ them.

Exercice

While IT offers numerous benefits, it also comes with some challenges and drawbacks:

☐ Security risks

☐ Digital divide

☐ Technological unemployment

☐ Privacy concerns

Exercice

What is web-based learning ?