

LCLM4001_LON Academic Skills

Reflective report

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Introduction

Reflective Report on Academic Skills

Note-taking, Information Research, and Paraphrasing

Mastering fundamental skills is crucial for achieving success in an academic environment. This report will thoughtfully examine three vital academic skills: note-taking, information retrieval, and paraphrasing. Each of these skills plays a significant role in enhancing learning and fostering deeper engagement. Consequently, they are essential for developing clear concepts. Reflecting on these skills will allow me to reassess their importance within an academic context.

Note-Taking

Effective note-taking skills are essential for retaining and comprehending information. My approach to note-taking has evolved significantly over time. Initially, I relied on a linear method, transcribing information verbatim, which often resulted in a disorganized collection of notes. Upon discovering the Cornell note-taking system, which categorizes information into cues, notes, and summaries, I experienced a marked improvement in the organization of my materials. This method also promotes active engagement with the subject matter. For instance, during a lecture on time management, employing the Cornell method to capture information proved beneficial.

Rewriting summaries in my own words not only reinforced my comprehension but also facilitated easier review of the study material later (Pauk & Owens, 2013). Research indicates that effective note-takers perform better academically compared to those who do not take good notes (Kiewra, 2002). To enhance my note-taking practices, I plan to incorporate visual aids and mind mapping techniques.

Furthermore, I have explored various digital note-taking applications, including OneNote and Notion, which facilitate efficient organization and retrieval of information. For example, during my preparation for an exam in cognitive psychology, I developed a digital notebook that comprised lecture notes, pertinent articles, and visual tools such as mind maps. This diverse approach significantly improved my comprehension of intricate topics, such as cognitive biases and memory processes, as it allowed me to visually link ideas and swiftly access information (Kiewra, 2002).

Information Research

Locating credible and pertinent sources is essential for academic research. My research endeavours began to falter when search engines provided irrelevant results filled with low-value content. However, I have since discovered academic databases like JSTOR and Google Scholar, which offer access to peer-reviewed journal articles unavailable through general search engines, significantly improving my research capabilities.

For example, while investigating critical thinking, I utilized targeted keywords and phrases such as "importance of critical thinking" and "critical thinking in education." This focused strategy enabled me to discover scholarly articles, books, and studies offering comprehensive analyses and discussions. Concentrating on peer-reviewed literature ensured the credibility and academic foundation of the information I collected. Since that time, I have consistently sought information through a more integrated approach.

I also learned to critically assess sources based on the credentials of the authors, the date of publication, etc., and whether the information is relevant to my research question. Critically thinking about differing perspectives on how best to frame our mission proved quite useful in my thinking about conflicting frameworks for critical thinking while at the same time holding differing perspectives.

As I continue to develop my information-finding skills, I aim to enhance my ability to discern credible sources from unreliable ones. I plan to engage in workshops and training sessions offered by my university's library to refine my research techniques further and stay updated on best practices in academic research.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is a crucial skill that facilitates the incorporation of ideas from diverse sources while upholding academic integrity. Initially, I faced challenges with paraphrasing, often defaulting to directly copying phrases from texts. However, I recognized the necessity of articulating ideas in my own words to avoid plagiarism and convey understanding.

For instance, when preparing a literature review, I encountered a complex argument regarding the impact of social media on mental health. Rather than quoting the original text, I paraphrased the argument by summarizing its key points and presenting them in a new context. This approach not only allowed me to express my understanding more clearly but also contributed to a more coherent narrative in my paper (Bailey, 2019). Since then, I have practiced paraphrasing by summarizing academic articles and comparing my interpretations with the original content. To further improve this skill, I intend to engage in exercises focused on rephrasing complex ideas while preserving their original meanings.

I have discovered the value of paraphrasing as a means of critically engaging with texts. By restating intricate concepts, I can evaluate the soundness of the arguments put forth and pinpoint any biases or shortcomings in the existing literature. For example, during my examination of a study regarding educational interventions, I rephrased the authors' conclusions and juxtaposed them with results from other studies. This approach enabled me to cultivate a deeper comprehension of the subject and generate my own insights.

Conclusion

In conclusion, note-taking, information retrieval, and paraphrasing are interconnected academic skills that significantly enhance learning and research effectiveness. By refining my note-taking techniques, developing targeted strategies for information retrieval, and improving my paraphrasing abilities, I have become more adept in my academic pursuits. Moving forward, I aim to continue enhancing these skills by exploring additional note-taking methods, utilizing advanced research tools, and practicing paraphrasing to ensure clarity and originality in my writing.

References

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