

Surface- and deep-level processing

Ultimately, the quality of the work we produce depends upon the quality of our internal processing of the ideas.

Surface-level processing

When we resort to surface-level processing we use just the lower cognitive abilities (see Chapter 2) to recall, comprehend and describe what we read.

- 1 Reading passively
- 2 Without analysing and structuring what we read
- 3 Without critically evaluating it
- 4 Using just our lower cognitive abilities to recall, comprehend and describe

Deep-level processing

In contrast, deep-level processing involves the use of our higher cognitive abilities to analyse, synthesise and critically evaluate the ideas and arguments authors present.

- 1 Discussing the author’s ideas as we read
- 2 Analysing their implications
- 3 Critically evaluating them
- 4 Synthesising them into a form that reflects our own way of seeing and understanding the problem

Affirming and denying

Two simple rules

	Antecedent	Consequent
Valid	Affirm	Deny
Invalid	Deny	Affirm

Invalid forms:

- 1 To deny the antecedent
- 2 To affirm the consequent

For more information, see *How to Write Your Literature Review*, Chapter 8.