

THE EFFECTIVE METHOD TO READ A BOOK

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Abstract

There is more than one reason why one should read. Reading enables a person to think freely and independently. There are ample explanations given by many educationalists and thinkers how reading makes a man perfect. The sayings “book is a gift which you can open again and again” and “when you open a book, you open a new world” are right because reading habit plays a significant role in one’s life. There is another saying which tells us that “the pen is mightier than the sword”. To fulfill this, one must read and acquire the treasure of knowledge only then, it will overflow. This is where initiation of research happens and when this process continues the person become the master and a successful researcher. As a secondary source - the jurist’s opinion and convictions of ‘overflowed’ findings can effectively be used for research especially in legal research. This paper is an earnest attempt to communicate to my fellow researchers how to read a book efficiently for research purpose from my limited experience and to put it open to all how to use these materials as and when needed according to a research plan.

I Introduction

RESEARCH PLAYS a crucial role in the development and existence of a society. Researchers and research institutions are the key players in that field.¹ A legal researcher should be skilled in finding the material resources and tools with which he can effectively complete the task. In a nutshell, there are three components *viz.*, where to find law, how to find law and how to analyze the collected data. A good research outcome reveals where the law is and how it operates. As a legal researcher, one has to have access to statutes, judgments and juristic writings which are available in the form of articles and books. It is of great importance how one penetrates the judicial decision and pronouncement and utilizes it for effective research.² The relevance of the research article plays an important role in the value addition aspect of the research area and how it is helpful for the researcher. A good researcher is a person who has acquired all the skills and knowledge about the components mentioned above. Here comes the significance of identifying the relevant data, procuring the same and utilizing it. The sources of law including legislations, precedents, customs and practices *etc.*, are classified into primary and secondary sources, although no uniform definition or precise practice exists to discern which source is primary and which secondary. Primary sources are those documents which state the law, while secondary sources are documents that analyze and interpret the law.

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1 S. Sivakumar, “To Mould Millennium Law Researchers and Teachers: The Role of Indian Law Indian Law Institute” 50 *JILI* 699 (2008).

2 S. Sivakumar, “Judgment or Judicial Opinion: How to Read and Analyse” 58 *JILI* 273 (2016).

In the field of law, it is required of a researcher to thoroughly read various materials. These texts are required to be scrutinized and dissected in order to assemble the elementary understanding of the topic under consideration. In order to substantiate and validate one's own arguments and thus come to a conclusion, ready reference in the form of critically analyzed textual material should be available. An authentic legal text needs to have appropriately represented legal sentiments and this requires accurate use of legal terminologies and concepts. For a specialist in the field of law, the perusal of books and articles is as important as the perusal of legal conclusions. Just as it is important to read and understand judgments, it is imperative for a legal researcher to be an avid reader and have a vast expanse of reading preferences. The information provided by books is instrumental and of utmost importance for any researcher. Reading broadens the skyline of information and opens up a whole new world of brighter and novel perspectives that help in thinking in a different and refreshing manner. Its reach and advantage stretch out past specific individuals or sort of circumstances.

There are two types of data *i.e.*, primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the data collected by the researcher himself and secondary data is the data collected by others on which the researcher relies. Thus, data collection involves exploring the primary and secondary sources of law and differentiating it into primary and secondary data. Judicial pronouncements are a major source of law. The precedent -judge made law- is also considered as a main source of law. In 2016 and 2017, I have published two articles about Judgment³ and Article⁴ respectively. Books constitute a fundamental secondary source of information for the researcher. So far, reading of books was for innumerable purposes like entertainment, in quest for knowledge, to learn something new, to satisfy our curiosity and so on. Reading can be approached in a different way, while reading a book as a source of law. Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren's classic work on '*How to Read a Book*' prompted me to derive a framework to read and analyze the book as a source of law.⁵ This paper would like to guide a law researcher on how to read a book for the purpose of research. This paper would also give a detailed insight into the art of reading a book and transform the outlook about the very exercise of analyzing and interpreting a book. The different complexities associated with the perusing of the book would be spread out in a methodical manner.

II Book: What it means and types

Concept of book

Our encounter with books dates back to the time when we as children were taught how to read and write. Thus, began our interaction with textual matter. Some of us

3 *Ibid.*

4 S. Sivakumar and Lisa P. Lukose, "How to Read, Assess and Write A Research Article" 59 *JILLI* 123 (2017).

5 Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read A Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading* (Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1972).

forged an understanding that developed into a love for books, whereas others might not have developed any inclination to explore subject matters beyond the required course materials. Whatever be the interaction of different individuals with books, there is one common aspect that underlies all such interfaces between books and its readers. That is the basic understanding of what does it mean to write a book. To put it differently, what establishes a book, or rather what text would qualify as a 'book' is a puzzling inquiry. It is in reality the easiest of things, that have the most perplexing answers.

Alluding to the online variant of the Merriam Webster Dictionary, one may discover a large group of meanings of the term "book". In the most significant sense a book is, "something that yields information or comprehension" or has "the all-out accessible information and experience that can be applied as a powerful influence for an undertaking or issue; inside data or examination".⁶ It contains, "a substantive amount of content" or subject-matter, that may be, "pictorial, graphic, photographic, textual, or any combination of these".⁷

Traditionally, books were published in a physical form - "paper sheets bound at one edge – and which is not distributed serially".⁸ Technological advancements have made content transient and introduced "e-books" or "books in the virtual world".⁹ The International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science, in 2003, described an "e-book" as, "the result of integrating classical book structure, or rather the familiar concept of a book, with features that can be provided within an electronic environment is referred to as an electronic book (or e-book), which is intended as an interactive document that can be composed and read on a computer"¹⁰ or any other device having internet.

These definitions give us a concise thought regarding what precisely comprises a book. No definition can be the most comprehensive elucidation of what a book stands for, but in the most general and basic terms, the purpose of a book is to provide information. It depends upon an individual, in what manner and towards what goal does he/she wants to engage in the activity of reading the book. For instance, for a researcher, a book might be a storehouse of data and information for his/her referral. For a fiction lover, it might be a way to live the worlds of thoughts and possibilities that are nothing

6 See Merriam-Webster Dictionary (An Encyclopedia: Britannica Company), available at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/book> (last visited on Apr. 11, 2020).

7 Chris Armstrong, "Books in a virtual world: The evolution of the e-book and its lexicon" *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* (Sep. 2008), published by Sage Publications Ltd., available at: http://eprints.rclis.org/12277/1/Armstrong_BooksinaVirtualWorld_JOLIS.pdf (last visited on Apr. 12, 2020).

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Ibid.*

10 Magda Vassiliou and Jennifer Rowley, "Progressing the definition of e-book", available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/41b4/82071541e1cf2a8ec6f625d705eba00b3d33.pdf> (last visited on May 24, 2020).

but a dream and just imagination in the real-life scenario. The sorts of books that are being perused and the methodology embraced by the reader are for sure, the central parameters which significantly figure out what the reader will be taking from the book. Based on readers' preferences and requirements, books have several genres and can be classified into various types.

Classification of books

Types – Non-Fiction and Fiction

When books are divided into categories and sub-groups, based on the specific content and subject matter they deal with, these divisions are known as genres and sub-genres of books.

Broadly speaking, there are two main genres:

Fiction

“Fiction” has been theorized in terms of “*an invited response of imagining or make-believe*”.¹¹ It refers to imaginary or created scenarios¹² that might have inspiration in real-life events but are based around characters that never existed or exist in reality. Fictional stories are make-belief narratives that are centered around places and people that the writer breathes life into, solely by his/her creative prowess. Its content is therefore, largely, unreal, untrue, non-factual or invented.¹³

A few sub-genres under fiction are:

- i. Drama:* Dramas are written for the purpose of performances that would move the audiences by the power of script, dialogue and narration. The plot is progressed by the characters whose emotions and contradictions are articulated in the form of the dialogues, speeches and soliloquies written by the dramatist.
- ii. Romance:* This genre caters to stories that chronicle the saga of affection and sentiments shared between lovers. It might or might not have a happy ending. The main spotlight of romance fiction is the development of a plot that revolves around the relationship and consequences of romantic affiliations.

11 Stacie Friend, “Fiction as a Genre”, *available at:* <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.644.5014&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (last visited on Apr. 23, 2020).

12 See Szu-Yen Lin, “Beardsley on Literature, Fiction and Non-Fiction” 8 *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture* (2016), *available at:* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/298916000_Beardsley_on_Literature_Fiction_and_Nonfiction/link/56f3b6f908ae95e8b6cbf2ac/download (last visited on Apr. 27, 2020).

13 See Kerri L. Huff, “Genre Fiction Classification: A Continuation Study of its Reception by Patrons in the Durham County (NC) Public Library” (Apr. 2006), *available at:* <https://ils.unc.edu/MSpapers/3171.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 20, 2020).

- iii. Satires:* This genre pointedly exposes and parodies the follies of men. It is an entertaining sub-category of fiction, that very intelligently takes a sarcastic take on the people, state and individuals in order to expose society's dark reality and hold up a mirror to them. A tone of irony and reprimand underlies this corrective yet entertaining sub-category of fiction.
- iv. Anthology:* The meaning of an anthology is a collection of works like poems, short stories, plays, etc written by various authors, which are meant to be curated as series. The collection is based on a common thread like similar theme or subject and is edited in a single volume.

Non-fiction:

This genre contains books based on real life events or having content related to certain factual enunciations. The information that they supply is generally verifiable and have concrete established proofs to back them up. Besides serving a recreational purpose, non-fiction books are also vital for knowledge acquisition and personal enrichment of the reader.¹⁴

The various sub-genres of non-fictional works are:

- v. Essay:* Essays are pieces of work where the writer expresses his/her views in order to bring a valuable idea or concept to the public notice. The particular topic that is dealt with is treated with an opinion-based approach, which is supported by facts and other arguments in favor of the point of view of the writer.
- vi. Memoir:* A memoir chronicles the events that have been experienced by the writer. It is a walk, down the memory lane, that tells the reader about the set of events that the author is referring to, in great detail.
- vii. Biography:* When the subject of a book/text is the life history of a person, it is termed as a biography. A memoir records only a few events in the life of the author, but biography and auto-biography explain in detail all the life events of the author and person under consideration.

The common expectation from a non-fiction book is of reading facts or the truth, nevertheless, akin to all forms of art, non-fiction may be a mere "representation of reality" and not necessarily "reality itself". There is elbow-room for research inadequacy, author's misinterpretation and minor errors in conveyance of information.

14 See Patricia R. Ladd, "The Availability of Access Features in Children's Non-Fiction" 2(1) *International Journal of Knowledge Content Development and Technology* 5-16 (June, 2012).

It is in this context that this genre may sometimes, be renamed or understood as “creative non-fiction” or “new journalism”.¹⁵

Irrespective of the end towards which an individual pursues his/her habit of reading a book, books always are a source of valuable information. The act of amassing knowledge through primary as well as secondary and shared experiences is fundamental to human growth and development. It is not only the gist of all our communications, but also forms a vital aspect of our lives in that it generates curiosity and acquaints us to the facets of life and the material world that our lived experiences may not allow us to have. Particularly, for a researcher, books are the very nectar of life, fountain of knowledge and the most revered source of information. But that doesn't qualify every text as incontestable and universally applicable. A researcher can only engage with a book in the healthiest and most productive manner if he/she critically scrutinizes, evaluates and examines the content. A book can be read proficiently only if the matter is subject to constant evaluation and is applied to the real life situations to test its validity and delve deeper into the nuances of its practical applicability.

Books establish fundamental data for the researcher and assist in substantiating the research question over the span of exploration. Up until this point, we have perused books for endless purposes like amusement, as sources of information, to gain some new useful knowledge, to fulfill our interest, *etc.* Books have been read for all the aforementioned purposes, but a thing that has been ignored often is the essential understanding that there could be a definite manner of proceeding with the reading of a book in the most efficient and effective manner.

III Books on law

“[L]aw is a science, and ...all the available materials of that science are contained in printed books.”¹⁶ The field of law is not confined to a particular understanding, but incorporates a wide range of disciplines for a better understanding of a case like, sociology, history, art and culture, economics, international relations, domestic politics, linguistics and more. With the passage of time, processes like “*internationalization, transnationalization, and globalization*”¹⁷ together with, the technological advancements have resulted in the development and the need for cyber security laws, intellectual property rights and copyright laws, for which the requirement of skilled and professionally trained new-age lawyers and researchers in the field of law are desirable, and sought after. A field that offers a wide swathe of knowledge and has a bigger

15 See Vera van Schagen, “A Hybrid Art: Literary Non-Fiction in the Netherlands and Non-Fiction Translation Policy” [A study carried out for the Dutch Foundation for Literature – Utrecht University Repository (2009)], *available at*: https://dspace.library.uu.nl/bitstream/handle/1874/35557/Scriptie_definitief.pdf?sequence=1 (last visited on Apr. 27, 2020).

16 Christopher Columbus Langdell, “The Harvard Law School” 3 *L.Q. REV.* 123-124(1887) .

17 See Simon Chesterman, “The Evolution of Legal Education” 10 *German Law Journal* 877 (2009).

scope for expertise with such in-depth knowledge from various disciplines cannot be put under a streamlined understanding. Thus, the scope of the field is wide and the amount of intricate knowledge base needed to become a legal expert or a researcher is multileveled and task, enormous.

Books, in the legal fraternity, are required for diverse purposes for instance, understanding a particular legal topic, studying a specific case law, deciphering a certain legal terminology, undertaking a comparative research, tracing the legislative intent behind a statute and the author's analysis of it, *etc.*¹⁸

Eminent authors and experts in the field have tried to list down an order of books related to the field, yet there are several types of study material that needs to be referred to in order to gather a detailed knowledge of the issues. As a discipline, law is a dynamic one, which keeps changing with time and the demands of the society; the study materials also keep evolving. Our attempt below is to bring together a comprehensive list of law books that can be referred to:¹⁹

Casebooks: A specific kind of law book which can be utilized intrinsically by graduate law schools. Casebooks contain parts of important cases where law of a particular region was applied. The book aims to cover important issues of a particular case, helps the graduates as well as readers to analyze and make an argument for an effective conversation. It is because of this primal function, casebooks are of extreme significance to any law student or researcher.²⁰

Legal Citation Guides: A guide meant for referential purposes, which might be comprehended to be a formal law book consisting of a list of important cases, which can be used as points of reference regarding some specific issues.

Law Dictionaries or Legal Encyclopedias: As the name suggests, legal encyclopedias comprise of data about meanings of terms, expressions that are utilized in the field of law.²¹ It characterizes words that can be found in rules or sentiments that are used in important cases, valuable for law specialists to understand the right expressions to the various themes, issues while clearing the meanings of exact significant terms.

Legal History Books: The books that explain themes related to the history and evolution of legal discipline. It also explains the particular zones of law, which further addresses the important cases from history and its equivalents.

18 Cue taken from: "Legal Research: How to Find Law", *available at:* <http://www.commonlii.org/in/journals/NLUDLRS/2010/1.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 24, 2020).

19 The discussion and further elucidation of the different categories of law books is discerned from the reading of the following: "What are Law Books", *available at:* <http://law-school.laws.com/law-books> (last visited on May 1, 2020).

20 Myron Moskovitz, "On Writing a Casebook" 23 *Seattle Univ. Law Rev.* 1019 (2000).

21 Henry Campbell Black, *Black's Law Dictionary* (West Publishing Company, Minnesota, 4th edn., 1971).

Legal Treatises: A type of law books designed specifically for academic purposes. As the casebooks serve the primary manuals for specific cases related to an issue, the legal treatises are helpful as auxiliary yet valuable additions to knowledge base for candidates, to enhance their understanding. Treatises are more like book-length articles on specific cases pertaining to specific subjects.²² There are varieties of legal treatises that serve various purposes.

Restatements: Codification of legitimate standards in a case and the case laws are the major contents of a restatement. A restatement is meant to clarify statutory positions, as well as sets out the standards in territories which are not usually secured by Statutes. It is also meant to be a manual for perceived and acknowledged standards. The main aim of a restatement procedure is to highlight the strain between reiteration of law and reformulation of the same while changing it in the process.²³

Research articles and research books

Human curiosity is insatiable. Every researcher needs to embrace a careful and precise manner of investigation in specific research zones. As part of a larger picture, the researchers need to keep in mind the support they get from various corners of the society for their noble research.

A researcher is asked to embrace a very careful and precise manner of investigation in his field of research. As a research is supported and developed by the help from various specific fields which further help in opening gates for more researches which help in a nuanced understanding of our evolving society.

A legitimate legal research ought to consider the social, economic, political as well as lawful specifics into account. A research should not be driven with an intention of building onto what already exists, but on what more angles can be seen, and how the gaps can be filled. Further, a research should be palatable for the general masses to know and to read about the major changes that occur with time.

By keeping in mind these standards, it is imperative to know that a research should correspond to the research questions and the foundations on which the research lies.

22 Secondary Sources: ALRs, Encyclopedias, Law Reviews, Restatements and Treatises, Research Guides, Harvard Law School, *available at:* <http://guides.library.harvard.edu/content.php?pid=103327&sid=1030213> (last visited on Apr. 12, 2020).

23 Capturing the Voice of The American Law Institute: A Handbook for ALI Reporters and Those Who Review Their Work (American Law Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2005), *available at:* https://www.ali.org/media/filer_public/08/f2/08f2f7c7-29c7-4de1-8c02-d66f5b05a6bb/ali-style-manual.pdf (last visited on Apr. 5, 2020). In India, the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi has undertaken a major Research Project in the American Law Institute Model and published three volumes of Restatement of Indian Law *viz.*, *Contempt of Court*, *Legislative Privilege and Public Interest Litigation* in 2012 under the aegis of Supreme Court Project Committee on Restatement of Indian Law in which the author was the chief coordinator.

Research just does not progress by sharing the outcomes of each query, but by the estimation of interests that can be investigated in such a manner, the outcomes turn to maximized utilization.²⁴ A major significant aspect of research is not only understanding the research questions, but keeping a record of each step towards the research, as a reminder of the steps which led to the conclusion.²⁵

A research book, unlike other articles and books are well-written, as they try and answer the major contention points which drive the book towards its completion. A research book, not only seeks to answer the questions, but also tries to draw from the already existing literature to address the issue at hand, which is called as literature review. A review of the literature is not just meant to cater to the questions, but to set right the fallacies in the previous research which has somehow, not been able to answer the questions that you were seeking answers for. A good, well researched book is one, which lets you delve deep into its contentious issue, yet sailing ashore with the pragmatic genuine questions that the research tries to answer.

A research paper on the other hand, is a compact version of a research book which, precisely tries to answer the important points in a concise manner, further leaves some to the interpretation of the audience, for them to ponder over.

Research articles and books are of utmost importance in any field of study as they form the basis of knowledge generation and dissemination. A researcher in the field of law requires persistent measures and dedication towards research. One of the tedious processes is research where one could easily fall prey to the time that it consumes. But the key to success is that one needs to believe in the topic and the research and full dedication towards it. Articles and research books help in keeping ourselves abreast with the recent trends in research, yet diversification of the discipline is also taken care of. Hence, for a research in legal field, knowledge of just the discipline is not enough, but it also requires the knowledge and sensibilities of other disciplines as well, to explain a particular phenomenon which would be earmarked by future research scholars. That is how a discipline moves forward.

IV Grouping of books

Books cannot be arbitrarily grouped. It is not an easy task to group and classify book as there is no general thumb-rule that one can follow in characterizing and hence grouping various books. Various classifications of books are done on the different aspects that these books cater to. For instance, the groups can be entertainment,

24 Open Access to Scholarly and Scientific Research Articles, Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, *available at:* http://www.sparc.arl.org/sites/default/files/Open_Access.pdf (last visited on Apr. 20, 2020).

25 Michael Dertnl, "Basics of Research Paper Writing and Publishing" 6 *Int. J. of Technol. Enhanc. Learn.* 105 (2014).

information, a particular discipline or a sub-division within the same. Hence, there are many broad premises on the basis of which books can be classified. They are as follows:

On the premise of discipline

Depending upon the subject and concepts books are dealing with, they can be classified as:

- (i) *Single Discipline:* Books that pertain to a single subject and elucidate the main ideas and concept of that particular discipline are known as single discipline books. These kinds of books are subject specific books that explicitly present the fundamental concepts and create a perspective. The contents of such books assist the reader with grasping the central notions, assumptions, arguments, deliberations and key aspects of the discipline in a stand-alone manner. This enables the reader to have an exhaustive comprehension regarding the subject matter. They acquaint the reader with specific theories and developments of the particular discipline and build new thoughts and alternate thinking patterns in the reader's mind. When the brain is empowered, the reader can engage in thought-provoking arguments which can aid the research.
- (ii) *Multi-Disciplinary:* A multi-disciplinary book covers topics and concepts across various disciplines. These books might be extremely valuable for an analyst. A multi-disciplinary book encompasses complex interactions between different aspects of social systems. Any of the ideas introduced via several structural institutes have an array of contesting and connecting theories. These are explored by a multi-disciplinary text. It is very important for a researcher to read intensely and across several disciplines so that wider perspective is developed and exploration of diverse possibilities is achieved. Multi-disciplinary texts are highly fascinating and educational.

On the premise of information

To systemically arrange a book, one should consider the data in the book as an effective premise. Methodically, it serves as a significant approach for a coherent characterization of a book. The orchestrated arrangement that establishes then is as follows:

- (i) *Driven by Content:* The content-oriented books are dependent on the information that it wishes to disseminate. To offer top-notch quality, a 'top-to-bottom' channel of information is imperative. Apart from this structure of dissemination, precise and suitable font strengthens the base of a content driven book.
- (ii) *Driven by Information:* The information-oriented books simply rely on data. But then, the data relayed is matter of concern, an equilibrium needs to be maintained pertaining to transmitting of falsified data. The primary difference between content-oriented and data driven books seems to be that the former is more extensive and disseminates information point-to-point to the reader as per the desired needs. The information driven classification of books are based more on general, universalized data, and may be rendered as not expansive, mostly.

On the premise of volume

Another strategy for classification could be on the basis of a book's volume or abundance. This particular arrangement solely depends on the bulky nature of a book and not on its substance. Accordingly, books may be classified as:

- (i) *Bulky*: Bulky books have ample content and dependent on its extensive nature. Having plentiful of pages is its another primary characteristic. Such books usually deal with an abundance of integrated data, and its length shall not be a virtue of judgment for its accuracy or credibility. There is no standard parameter to decide about the productivity of any given book, the reader must never have any bias of pre-existing conceptions.
- (ii) *Limited*: A limited or small book is the one that is precise and deploys constraint in its material. Once again, a reader shall not judge any book with relation to its length. The brilliance of any book should be outside such measuring parameters, though the content of any book should be well-arranged for a harmonious dissemination of information.

On the premise of research

Books can be scrutinized and hence, classified through their research-oriented nature. The explorative nature of any given book can be analytically classified and studied. A reader can analyze the authorial intentions, after a careful examination of writer's credentials and context. The desired audience of the book that the writer intended while writing can also be explored to get more clarity and certainty about the underlying contentions of both, the writer and the book.

A well-researched book would be one which shall be free of a writer's subjective inclinations and conceptions. Objective and a 'scientific' approach towards the data is vital for claiming the validity and credibility of a research-based work. To add more to its credibility, a reader must contribute more by exploring the significance of the work while analyzing it under the lens of contemporary scenario and context. The research-oriented books can be further characterized as, the ones that are edited and the authored (single or multiple) books. An edited book involves a varied collection of essays, composed by various writers on a similar discourse. It can also be a collection of articles by one writer. Such books are a sufficient resource for people who desire to explore multiple voices on a similar topic or subject. The multiplicity of voices and opinions in a single book proves to be very enriching intellectually to research-oriented individuals. In a single or multiple authored books, the work is attributed to one writer or many as envisioned about a particular discursive topic. They can also include those books which are exclusively written, either by an individual or by multiple people, without accumulating someone else's work, but purely rests on their findings.

It is not suitable to decide whether an edited book or a created one is more refined. Both of these classification aims to serve a reader in a fruitful manner. The edited ones are mainly the works of a specialist and involve a certain mastery of content and information disseminated which might involve a possibility of introducing a new strand of wonder and exploration. Having said that, the created books become imperative for a researcher to advance the course of his research or topic of examination.

Research assignments and reports

There are some books which include reports and information about some discoveries. These books are another classification based on explorative nature. One should not confuse them with research-oriented books as, they are exhaustively created with a different intention. The researcher will need to be alert about the motivation behind any given examination or an explorative venture. The reports resulting from a deep, extensive exploration may not be entirely credible and a specialist needs to be mindful of these loopholes while incorporating these reports in his work. A specialist should check the credibility of these reports and discoveries without leaving any stones unturned.

V The art of reading

“Reading” is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.²⁶ It is understood as a “process” since reading involves, capturing visual information from a printed or published material, and processing it to achieve a meaningful outcome.²⁷ The predominant purpose, reading serves, is “to gain, and retain, information”.²⁸ Reading, to be fruitful, preconditions adoption of certain skills.²⁹ The key element within the act of reading is the attribution of an in-depth perusal and comprehension to a given book. “Comprehension” is a vigorous, cognitive process, necessitating “an intentional and thoughtful interaction between the reader and the text”.³⁰ The “cognitive abilities”,

26 Richard C. Anderson, Elfrieda H. Hiebert, *et.al.*, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading* (The National Institute of Education, US Department of Education, Washington, DC, 1985), *available at*: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED253865.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 27, 2020).

27 Robert J. Sternberg (ed.), *Handbook of Human Intelligence* 132 (Cambridge University Press, New York, US, 1982).

28 Paul N. Edwards, “How to Read a Book”, *available at*: <https://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 28, 2020).

29 Sharon Hanson, *Learning Legal Skills and Reasoning* 464 (Routledge, New York, 2016).

30 *See* Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, US Department of Health and Human Services (April, 2000), *available at*: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/nrp/smallbook> (last visited on Apr. 5, 2020).

the reader makes use of when reading a book are, “memory, problem-solving, and making inferences”.³¹

“Perusing” is integral to the practice of reading; in the absence of which, the subject matter of the writing becomes worthless for the readers. It will only be a brain-dead glossing over the words on the page. Perusal entails a close reading of the words and subsequently the meaning of the sentences. Perusal is a challenging exercise as it requires deep concentration coupled with focusing on the cognitive part to interpret profound meanings of a given writing.

Having comprehended the significance of the term perusing and what it truly entails, the following inquiry is the way an individual can continue with the perusing procedure in a successful manner. At this stage, comprehension of the whole procedure engaged with perusing is applicable to be examined and reflected on.

Most often the term perusal is used while presupposing its definition and utility. One doesn't stop to ponder over to consider and value this activity and the complexities related with perusing. The method towards perusing is inculcated in students at an early age, when they are generally more responsive. As children, joining letters to form words and perusing words coherently to construct sentences, was the primary way of understanding profound reading. Perusing words together then becomes the stepping stones for children to be acquainted with this exercise. From that point, at first, perusing as an activity, started out with leafing through portions from books, stories, reading material, propelled learning manuals *etc.*

As the readers gain further ground in reading and interpreting, perusing becomes clearer and more important as readers progress and mature with texts. Readers understand how inevitable perusing is in their everyday life. Its importance continuously increases as we move forward in our scholarly undertakings. Perusing is a long drawn process and often during the process of acquiring the knack for perusing, the readers are apprehensive. Since perusing is an activity that progresses with time and effort, patience becomes a key element. We are simultaneously engaging with a plethora of material extending from books, papers, course books, articles and so forth.

Notwithstanding the fact that, reading is done for work as well as recreation, the fact of the matter remains the same for deploying perusing as an activity. Although, the manner in which one reads various materials changes according to our enthusiasm for it. An individual would peruse something important to him with significantly more interest, energy and focus contrasted against something which he/she is required to

31 Parbati Kumari Pokharel, “Learning to Read and Reading to Learn in English” 5 *Journal of NELTA Surkhet* 75 (2018) at 79, available at: <https://www.nepjol.info/index.php/JNS/article/view/19490/15933> (last visited on Apr. 11, 2020).

peruse out of impulse, the reader in this case would just want to get over with it and would peruse haphazardly.

There is no uniform methodology for perusing. Nonetheless, there are three broad levels of understanding a book, namely “*literal, referential and critical understanding*”.³² In “literal understanding”, the reader confines himself to the “superficial meaning” of the text. He is focused on the “main implications” or, the “information and ideas explicitly stated”. The “referential or interpretative understanding”, allows the reader to analyze the text and read into its “deeper meanings”. It is the final phase of “critical reading”, after having understood the ideas presented by the author, the reader evaluates his findings.

In this regard, the researcher would specify the various classifications of perusing and how they vary from one another.

Stages of reading³³

i) Perusing the book

The way towards perusing is a multi-faceted and a complex procedure. It includes diverse components, unlike the prevailing view that reading is merely getting to know words and understanding them. It is worthy to note that the significance of the term goes way beyond the layman understanding of it. At this juncture, it is important to understand some fundamental meanings of perusing set forth by some eminent researchers. Perusing, they define, as the way towards creating importance from composed writings which requires the bringing together of various interconnected data. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) describes perusing as follows:³⁴

Perusing is an effective as well as complex procedure that includes:

- (i) Understanding content,
- (ii) Creating and interpreting meaning, and
- (iii) Using importance as a means to sort content and purpose.
- (iv) Reading ability entails a triad of interrelated abilities that include - language and correspondence, techniques of perusing, and information.

32 Feng Liu, “Reading Abilities and Strategies: A Short Introduction” 3(3) *International Education Studies* 153 (2010). [Published by Canadian Centre for Science and Innovation], available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1065868.pdf> (last visited on May 2, 2020).

33 Taking cues and seeking inspiration from the author’s reading of - Mortimer J. Adler & Charles Van Doren, *How to Read A Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*, *supra* note 5.

34 See Lori Connors-Tadros, “Definitions and Approaches to Measuring Reading Proficiency” Centre on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes 2 (2014), available at: http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ceelo_fast_fact_reading_proficiency.pdf (last visited on Apr. 29, 2020).

To understand the process of perusing better, it is important to understand the five phases associated with perusing a book, which include:

- i. Pre-reading:* The pre-perusing process includes depiction of fundamental information. This is also called “skimming” wherein, the reader overviews the book³⁵ to set up a reason for perusing before he begins perusing a book.³⁶ The reader prepares himself to read the book by glancing at its fundamentals like, book’s title, its introduction, summary, author details, *etc.*, to evaluate the its usefulness for him.³⁷ This is before the perusing of something new.
- ii. Reading:* The subsequent stage is that of perusing. When the reader distinguishes a reason for perusing, he should begin the conventional understanding procedure “to extract the author’s meaning and purpose”.³⁸ The way towards perusing ought to be comprehensively exhaustive. Exceptionally close and cautious consideration must be paid to all the subtleties. The reader is required to be very mindful of the intricacies.³⁹
- iii. Responding:* Over the course of perusing, the reader has to be observant enough to react to the questions that he had initially started out with. The reader is required to be amenable to the ideas passed on by the writer over the span of the writing so as to figure an all- rounded and educated assessment.
- iv. Exploring:* During perusing, the reader ought to go beyond the minor words and scrutinize all the conceivable outcomes that the writer is attempting to pass on through his composition. This procedure leads the reader to peruse in the middle of the lines and display signs of improvement in comprehension of what has been perused. A receptive stance would consistently encourage and stimulate the understanding process.
- v. Applying:* The last stage is post-perusing. This is the phase of use. When the reader has wrapped up a book or some understanding material, he ought to have the understanding to explain what the book is about. This is recapping the significant portions of the book. This is the phase of utilization to assure that the reader has understood the totality of the work and is able to provide a basic analysis of the composition and is able to appreciate it.

35 Academic and Critical Reading (2014), *available at:* <http://liubovborisova.com/images/Uacaden Writing/Newcastle Library Academicreading.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 30, 2020).

36 See Rachel Billmeyer and Mary Lee Barton, *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas: If Not Me, Then Who? Teacher’s Manual* 46 (McREL, Colorado, US, 1998).

37 Skimming and Scanning, *available at:* <https://www.stetson.edu/administration/academic-success/media/SKIMMING%20&%20SCANNING.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 29, 2020).

38 “Reading Strategies” (University of Westminster), *available at:* https://www.wmin.ac.uk/eic/learning-skills/literacy/strat_read.html (last visited on Apr. 6, 2020).

39 *Ibid.*

Firstly, specialists start out by identifying the various classifications of books. Next, the various ways to deal with perusing a book are selected. The methodology adopted, not only relies upon the sort of book being perused but also on the individual perusing the book. Further on, an endeavor to differentiate and classify the phases in perusing would be completed. From the point of view of exploring, these following ways could be significant.

Every book needs to be perused in totality than in parts. It is important to comprehend the essence of the book as a whole than in pieces. Despite the methodology followed, the process of perusing will happen in two ways - in parts and as a whole. A book is composed of several sections, though each part is connected to the previous one. In this regard, coherence in the perusing exercise is paramount. The field of law is a complex one and immense care to detail needs to be exercised. The responsibility of a researcher in the field of law is huge. The specialist in the field of law should possess diligence to assure that whatever he is passing on is right. As noted by Damon Young in his book, “*reading is always a meeting of two liberties: the artist’s and the audience’s*”.⁴⁰ There must hence be, *consensus ad idem* between the author’s intention and the reader’s/ researcher’s construction so that the book’s content is not misconstrued or contended without a substantial cause. Similarly, while comprehending books, the analyst in the field of law ought to be incredibly watchful.

Towards the completion of reading a book, the perusing must have clarity with respect to what the writer has endeavored to communicate through his composition. This requires to be an extensive understanding of what the book conveys in essence. Selecting the book as specified by the subject matter or the topic is of utmost significance. The reader needs to simply recognize the type of the book that he has made an effort to peruse. At the end of the day, the reader needs to know about the extensive range or the topic which is located in the book. The order is important and it is one of the primary requirements that a reader needs to follow while perusing a particular work.

The first in the structure is to frame fundamental questions that are like a framework to the body of work. There are no doubts as to take the course of action for perusing for answering certain question that merge out of the composition. The researcher could perhaps, create a framework with perusing the titles or headings amongst other things. These would enable the reader in perusing in a more detailed way, extending more deliberation to the details.

One needs to hone his/her concentration span by classifying the content in order to have an effective reading experience. The reader needs to meticulously stamp all the important content or focuses that he is reading forth. This is quite useful as it makes

40 See Damon Young, *The Art of Reading* (Scribe Publications, Melbourne University Press, Australia, 2016).

the way towards perusing progressively quick and in the long run, it will help the reader in recalling the important details. By highlighting important areas, the researcher is able to focus on the significant details and not focus on the irrelevant thoughts that spring to mind while he is reading.

The art to summarize quickly what the book is about is a very fine skill that a reader needs to develop. After perusing the book, the reader needs to be in a situation to summarize the key ideas of the book. This must not be done in a lengthy manner. Brevity is central to this standard. It is a fundamental rule that to express precisely, the researcher must have a thorough comprehension of the content. In light of the above, this would assure that the book is perused in a correct way, with utmost care and caution.

Another important aspect of reading a book thoroughly, is identifying the significant parts. Each book is written in various parts which the reader would get an idea, after an extensive perusing of it. In this way, after the perusing, the reader needs to have the choice to differentiate these numerous parts and specify them as and when the requirement arises.

Finally, it is important to comprehend the subject matter, the writer has made an attempt, to have a proper understanding of the book. Each book is an attempt by the creator to answer certain issues or address certain unexplored ideas. After the completion of the perusal, the reader must be able to understand the issues raised and the premises on which the writer has written the piece of work.

ii) Interpreting a book's content

This is the second most important parameter in the sphere of perusing a book. The reader should be able to understand what has been said in the book in detail. He analyses the “overall meaning” of the written text to grasp the essence of the book.⁴¹ In this section certain guidelines are laid out, which would foster the understating of a reader. They are as follows:

i) Understanding the catchphrases: The reader, during the course of perusing a book, must acknowledge certain keywords. Each writer utilizes certain catchphrases while writing. The reader must endeavor to examine how the creator has used these catchphrases. Their significance in the particular context must be analyzed. This would provide an insight into the creator's mind. This in turn would help the reader to understand and get into the same mental fabric as the creator. This is specifically important in the field of law research. There are many terms which are completely used that have a bearing on the law and its tenets.

41 See Dan Kurland's [www.criticalreading.com](http://www.criticalreading.com/ways_to_read.htm), available at: http://www.criticalreading.com/ways_to_read.htm (last visited on Apr.25, 2020).

ii) *Comprehending the main suggestions*: The reader must be in a condition to grasp the main arguments made by the writer by perusing the most important sentences in the composition. At this time, key focus areas should be acknowledged. The key suggestions should be noticed in the course of perusing.

iii) *Discovering and acknowledging the main arguments of the writer*: The reader should find the important arguments made by the writer in the course of the book. These can be recognized by the construction of the sentences and their progression in the composition. These help the reader to acknowledge the value of the arguments made by the writer and his stance on the matter. Following these lines, the core ideas can be grasped without wasting much time and effort.

iv) *Examining the topics that were delineated by the writer*: The reader must attempt to distinguish and decide how the writer has resolved certain questions that he had enumerated while writing the book. The task of the reader is to understand the issues that were brought on by the writer and his attempt to resolve the same in the course of his writing. It is also the reader's task to understand the areas where writer has been failing.

iii) *Evaluating the book adroitly*

This is the last stage in perusing a book. Evaluation refers to “*making judgments about the intellectual/cognitive, aesthetic, moral or practical value of a text*”.⁴² The reader in this phase questions, the book's value or contribution to a particular discipline, the originality of the conclusions drawn by the author, the strengths, weaknesses and logic of the arguments advanced or theory forwarded, the credibility of the sources he has relied on, etc.⁴³ This fundamental examination is foremost in a law research. It is the “*building block for larger analysis*” of “*how*” the writer reaches or deduces his conclusion.⁴⁴

The reader must look forward to critiquing the book sensibly with an open outlook. The reader should make sure his personal reservations and opinions shouldn't seep in while making a basic assessment of the book. He must attempt to find out whether, the writer has correctly conveyed the information through his composition. It should similarly be documented with relation to the data, whether it is valid and to what degree; especially the confirmation of the data is of colossal importance.

It is always the best practice to follow the general principles of intellectual decorum. It is straightforward that the reader need not appreciate the basic assessment unless he

42 Jennifer Duncan, Handout on “Reading Critically” (The Writing Centre, University of Toronto, Scarborough), available at: <https://www.utoronto.ca/twc/sites/utoronto.ca/twc/files/resource-files/CriticalReading.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 29, 2020).

43 *Ibid.*

44 “Basics of Critical Reading”, available at: [https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Critical%20Reading%20\(03F\).pdf](https://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Critical%20Reading%20(03F).pdf) (last visited on Apr. 26, 2020).

has effectively interpreted the book. The reader should be in a situation to distinguish between the information delineated through the book and the authorial intention or belief. The analysis hence made should be grounded in cogent and valid principles. The analysis shouldn't be tainted or arise out of the reader's personal standpoint but should be true reflection of the creator's composition.

Furthermore, the reader needs to acknowledge and note where the creator of the work is uninformed or wrong. These are not very common purposes of analysis. Certainly, even in circumstances where the reader believes that the writer has not been up to the mark in explicating his point or contention, the needful is required to be done in an orderly way by making sure that the reader is attentive to the premise and conclusion derived coherently, and attention needs to be steered in that direction. Moreover, the reader should point out to the incongruities in the work of the creator wherever there are lacunae in understanding.

These points are integral aspects within perusing a book and need to be systematically followed. The reader must also remember that no stage of perusing should be skimmed or ignored while perusing a book; otherwise it will impede the whole understanding experience of the reader. Following every one of these focuses would improve the comprehension of the reader as well as encourage the whole understanding procedure.

Reading as an activity

The pursuit of knowledge comes with the commitment to read. "*Reading is a private activity. It is a mental or cognitive process,*"⁴⁵ involving, "*the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text*".⁴⁶ It is not just a habit but an art. As we have already seen that the art of reading encapsulates several facets of perusing a book like comprehension, retention, analysis and more. To acquire knowledge one has to indulge in extensive reading. Reading gives you a wide exposure to multifarious ideas and concepts, across all the disciplines, helping you to build a strong foundation for your own research and assessment.

When you hold a book and prepare to read it, it demands commitment and insight. The reading part is easy but to develop an insight, unraveling the larger meaning and comprehending the content correctly, is the challenging part. Books are the very lifeblood of an active and stimulating thought process. They act as our companions, guides and intimate confidants. The key to most effective and productive reading is

45 Syaifudin Latif Darmawan, "The Implementation of Skimming Technique Towards Students' Reading Comprehension" 5(2) *Premise Journal* 2 (2016), available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319942577_THE_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_SKIMMING_TECHNIQUE_TOWARDS_STUDENTS'_READING_COMPREHENSION/link/59c2a4e90f7e9b21a82a9ff1/download (last visited on Apr. 3, 2020).

46 *Id.* at 3.

not a superficial glossing over of the content matter but to wisely concentrate on the most relevant part of the book as per your requirement. We have already dealt with the purpose that books fulfill depending upon what a reader is seeking. Thus, the best way to embark upon the exercise of reading a book is to first discern what you are perusing the book for, and accordingly select the portions and excerpts that serve your purpose. Primary focus should be on how you are approaching the content of the book and how well you are able to relate to it and connect it to your ultimate goal.

VI Goals of reading

“*A reader’s purpose determines whether and how a reader interacts with a particular text*”.⁴⁷ To improve your skills at reading, four cardinal aspects outlined by Mortimer Adler in his “*How To Read A Book*”, originally published in 1940, will prove extremely beneficial. The groundbreaking and most sold book covers systematically and inclusively all the characteristics of a book and how one should approach texts, depending upon their reasons to read them. One needs a methodology to read so as to derive the maximum benefits from it. Reading, as an activity, is very intricate. Good reading entails numerous acts that need to be performed with precision to be able to understand better and in a constructive manner. The following sections shall deal with the types of reading.

Simple reading

This type of reading can be classified as the kind done only in leisure time, with the purpose of receiving the joy and bliss of reading. Easygoing or uninvolved reading has only one end goal; of diversion or just being educated about the relevant data.

Active/analytical reading⁴⁸

Active reading involves perusing in an organized manner with a dynamic approach to the text. It stretches beyond the simple act of consuming available information and involves the utilization of resources in a way that enlightens the reader’s mind by picking up something new and intriguing. The mission of the reader is to follow a structured approach whereby he/she organizes the reading activity in such a manner that, cautious and careful attempt to highlight and retain certain important aspects is made. A researcher especially needs to device a proper methodology to read the books in such a manner that he/she is able to clearly understand the point that the writer is trying to establish. This happens when the researcher analyses the content of the book by reading it with interest and active mind that readily makes necessary connections with the practical situations as well as the reader’s prior knowledge.

47 A.H. Urquhart and Cyril Weir, *Reading in a Second Language: Process, Product and Practice* 119 (Routledge, New York, US, 2013).

48 See Colleen Pennell, “In the Age of Analytic Reading: Understanding Reader’s Engagement with Text” 68 *The Reading Teacher* 251 (2014), available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264807883_In_the_Age_of_Analytic_Reading (last visited on Apr. 23, 2020).

Reading for understanding⁴⁹

There are several goals every reader has in mind while reading the book. If one wishes to read the book in order to comprehend the nuances of the subject matter, then the reader should remain mindful of the nitty-gritty of the content. He/she constantly keeps an eye for unequivocal responses appertaining to the questions on his/her mind. The inquiries and assumptions are conspicuous in the reader's mind and specific ideas and contentions in support or opposition of the same are sought. When reading from the point of view of understanding, several cross reference and citations are thoroughly referred to in order to remain engaged with the subject and relevant concepts in the most intelligible manner possible.

To understand what the book has to offer, one must attentively go through the introduction in order to examine what the writer has brought to the table and how useful it would be for the reader, depending upon his/her goal. It is fundamental to understand that reading one book will not provide you with all the information required. Sometimes to understand one text, a reader/researcher has to go through several other related books to understand the matter clearly and accurately.

Reading for information⁵⁰

While reading a text or any piece of writing with the soul motive of gaining new information about a particular thing or event, then the activity requires less of analytical skills. This kind of reading generally pertains to the newspapers media content that we consume. Even though it requires less examination, such kind of reading does involve a bit more concentration than simple reading. When reading for information, our understanding is not developed to much extent because we passively accept the information provided. The moment we try to investigate further, our purpose shifts from mere information amassing to understanding the reasons and concepts behind the same. Alternatively, we can try to read something written by someone who knows more about the subject than we do.

Reading for entertainment/pleasure

“*Reading for pleasure*” may be understood as, “*reading that we do of our own free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading*”⁵¹ or simply because, it appeals to our interests. Certain books are read by the reader only with the purpose of deriving gratification and amusement out of them. The end goal of indulging in the activity of

49 See “The Four Levels of Reading: Improve Skills One Level at a Time”, available at: <https://fs.blog/2013/06/levels-of-reading/> (last visited on Apr. 10, 2020).

50 *Ibid.*

51 Christina Clark and Kate Rumbold, *Reading for Pleasure: A Research Overview* 5 (National Literacy Trust, London, 2006), available at: https://pennykittle.net/uploads/images/PDFs/Reports/Reading_pleasure_2006.pdf (last visited on Apr. 14, 2020).

devoting time to read them is not to retain any information or comprehend the series of events or data listed in the text, but to enjoy the work and the process of reading it. The most proper model would be a novel. A novel introduces the reader to the world of many possibilities and charms him/her. The larger goal of reading a book of amusement should not be seen as just leisure reading, but a means to interact with such perspectives that the author tries to weave into soulful narratives which assist the reader in self-introspection and discreet contemplation.

Reading for instruction or discovery⁵²

Just knowing something, obliquely, does not enable us to answer what and how of the question. It is only an in-depth analysis of something that enables us to understand the connection of an argument with what follows it.

If one remembers what an author had written, he/she has learned something from reading that author. If the author's explication holds true, that means the reader has understood the concept. Notwithstanding, the knowledge of facts or of the world, one has essentially not achieved anything if it is only based on their memory. It is far from being enlightened. True enlightenment is attained only when, along with knowing what an author intends, the readers know what he means and the reason why he does that. One can be well informed of the matter of fact data and not be enlightened, but one cannot be enlightened without first being informed of data. There are two primary deterrents to the course of reading; first, those who do not know the basics of things due to ignorance. The second is the ignorance of those who have misinterpreted the books. The Greeks used the term "*sophomores*" to refer to people who read widely but not deeply. There is a colossal difference between being widely read and well-read. Adler contends that to avoid such an error one needs to differentiate between how one can learn instruction and discovery.⁵³

The art of reading is analogous to the art of independent discovery, and it includes willingness to observe, an open memory, a large expanse of imagination, and most importantly, a mind proficient in reflection and interpretation.

VII Levels of reading⁵⁴

We make the most out of the content that we are reading based on the intent with which we are reading it. The intent changes our approach towards absorbing the content. If we are reading for leisure, then we will consume that content a lot of differently than how we would consume it if we wanted to write a research paper after our reading session.

52 *Supra* note 49.

53 *Supra* note 5.

54 The ensuing segment draws inspiration from *supra* note 49.

It is pertinent to have a deep understanding of the different stages of reading if we want to enhance our reading habits. One has to start from the grass-root level and keep going higher up to have a holistic approach about the process of reading.

The four levels of reading, hence, are:

- i. Elementary Reading:* This is the kind of reading that is taught in elementary classes and helps one in making the transition from illiteracy to literacy. This is the most basic level of reading.
- ii. Inspectional Reading:*⁵⁵ This is a more methodical way of reading in a limited time span. It pertains to skimming through a book but in a systematic way. With this approach one can determine whether they want to read the whole book or not because one gets a gist of what the book is about. Adler also refers to this stage as pre-reading. A lot of people like to read page by page but because of this slow and steady approach they end up getting stuck at the initial pages itself.
- iii. Analytical Reading:*⁵⁶ This is the third stage of reading and is the deepest way of understanding the book. “*Readers should have a purpose to why they are reading*”.⁵⁷ Instead of just reading the content it is about delving into all the aspects of the book. In order to truly analyze a book one has to constantly ask questions. This process is more complicated in nature and one needs to have a much longer time frame available for this. In this type of reading the reader is so deeply engrossed into the contents of the book that one ends up feeling like they are merging all their thoughts entirely into it. Francis Bacon once elaborated upon the types of books and divided them as ones that are tasted, swallowed or chewed and digested.
- iv. Synoptical Reading:* Also referred as, “*comparative reading*”,⁵⁸ this type of reading requires maximum effort and it is not just about reading one book but multiple books on the same subject, juxtaposing their content,⁵⁹ and then trying to understand the common thread that weaves them together. It is called

55 See Mortimer Adler “Speed Reading” That Works: How to Intelligently Skim a Book, *available at*: <https://fs.blog/2013/06/the-art-of-reading-inspectional-reading/> (last visited on Apr. 15, 2020).

56 See The Art of Reading: Analytical Reading, *available at*: <https://fs.blog/2013/06/the-art-of-reading-analytical-reading/> (last visited on Apr. 25, 2020).

57 Kristin Conley, Monica Frees and David McCall, “Foundations of Analytical Reading”, *available at*: <http://fir.ferris.edu:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2323/6229/OER%20TEXTBOOK%20READ%20175.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (last visited on Apr. 18, 2020).

58 The Four Levels of Reading Every Student Should Know, *available at*: <https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2016/01/the-four-levels-of-reading-every.html> (last visited on Apr. 19, 2020).

“comparative reading” because one is required to make an analysis about the subject by understanding the contents of each book in context to another. Even if the content of individual books seems simple the reader has to put in added labor into deriving a sense about the larger issue and arriving at a synopsis.

VIII Conclusion

“*Literacy is the combination of reading, writing, and speech*”.⁶⁰ The same principle is the premise for a good research *i.e.*, an effective reading, meticulous writing, and an adept communication of one’s findings. In the course of this article, the author has made an earnest attempt to chalk out the numerous deliberations of the readers regarding the predominant elements in the reading process involved in research. The importance of books as a fountainhead of research has been expressed by various writers in various ways. In the article, it was extensively discussed how perusing of books, articles and data can render a treasure of knowledge adding to the corpus of research. The article discussed the different methods and stages in the process of perusing a book.

Within the dynamism of research that is going on, the current research is increasingly changing as well, especially in the field of law. An ardent researcher must be well-versed with both, “what” to read and, “how” to read it.⁶¹ It leads to a compelling need for researchers to add more to the techniques of perusing. As we read more and more, we are constantly honing our reading skills. With enhanced reading skills we are also enriching our understanding that leads us to more productive outcomes. Perusing without a result is a futile exercise; the *telos* of a perusing activity should be a productive one. Perusing necessitates a productive end goal. The entire perusing process should be a highly systematic one. It needs to be organized with a plan, a primary objective leading to a productive end result. In the process, the reader’s mind must always be open to learning and curiosity for novelties. A classic characteristic of a research is a fair and functional perusal of the composition of the creator. The reader, in the course of perusing should upgrade and evolve himself, only then the examination is an evolved one.

Understanding that the process of perusing is a skill in itself and not a relaxed exercise is fundamental to the whole exercise of perusing. It is a comprehensive endeavor that requires utmost concentration and perseverance of the pursuer. In the field of research, in particular, in connection with the researcher undertaking perusing, it becomes extremely important for lackadaisical readers to be obliterated to give way to more serious and effective readers, undertaking the essential task assigned to them.

59 L. Kip Wheeler, “Critical Reading of an Essay’s Argument”, *available at*: http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/reading_basic.html (last visited on Mar. 28, 2020).

60 Jessica Marinaccio, “The Most Effective Pre-reading Strategies for Comprehension” (2012) [*Education Masters*, Fisher Digital Publications – St. John Fisher’s College], *available at*: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/education_ETD_masters/208/ and, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/48616676.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 8, 2020).

61 J. Charles Alderson, *Assessing Reading 1* (Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, 2000).