



CSE4403 3.0 & CSE6002E - Soft Computing Winter Semester, 2011



Active Reading – Summary Writing

Two Activities in three parts

Activity 1 - Reading

- Part 1 – read the entire paper without stop – if you must stop, get back to it as quickly as possible. This will give you a general idea of what the author(s) are saying.
- Part 2 – read the paper again marking sections you do not understand or for which you have questions but don't stop.
- Part 3 – read the paper again pausing where you marked passages and try to answer the questions you had about the marked passage. If you cannot find an answer to your concern, note it for discussion with your advisor or friends for later.

Activity 2 – Writing Two-page summaries – no more, no less

- Part 1 – Approximately the first one third of 2 pps – summarize what the paper conveys – what are the salient points discussed and what contributions are made and in what context.
- Part 2 – The next one third – what are the problems encountered? Are there errors in the paper? Are there parts with which you disagree?
- Part 3 – The most important one third – you must write a critique of the paper, its methods, its conclusions, does the author address the problem (s)he identifies? What are the shortcomings? Can the work be extended? Is the work useful to you in your research pursuits?

Remember that critiques are always from your point-of-view. For example, unless there are errors of fact or technique or methodology, comments like “the work is good for xxx but cannot be easily extended to cover the case of yyy which I need to solve” or “extending this research to account for my problem (say the problem) is difficult and requires zzzz.”. These comments are critical but not insulting to the author.

Objective: Read one paper/week and write a two page summary. The critique will be the most difficult since “from your point of view” is not well formed initially. As time goes on and you read more, your point of view will crystallize and the exercise will become easier – this will take several months normally. In the end you will save much time in thesis writing and hone your research skills significantly. Much of this effort will become second nature to you if you are diligent and patient initially