

Reading comprehension is compromised when text is read on a computer monitor, according to an Ohio State study. Students were divided into three groups and asked to read and answer questions on two magazine essays. One group read the articles on paper and answered questions on paper; another read the article on a PC and answered questions on paper; and the remaining group read the articles and answered questions on a PC. The paper-based group had the highest understandability rating (7.76 out of 10) as opposed to the second group that read the same article on the PC but answered on paper (6.85), and the third group that read the same article on the PC and answered questions on the PC (6.55). A coauthor of the study suggests that students may need to be trained to better absorb material from a computer screen. The fact that online information often contains links is an example of how reading a Web page differs from the more linear nature of reading a paper page.