

## Strategies: To Improve Effective Reading Skills

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### Abstract

Reading is a vital skill for the academic success of a student. It develops the mind and it is fundamental to function in today's society. Reading is important in developing a good self-image. It is a significant capability which empowers the access to information, communication. It is a lifelong skill to be used throughout the life. Reading is that part of the learning process through which we get to know about the world. For a student, reading skills are very essential to fare well in regular exams as well as to gain expertise in the concerned field of knowledge. Despite its importance, reading is one of the most challenging areas to be learnt by a student and taught by a teacher. Reading demands different styles depending on the purpose of the reading. The present paper highlights various strategies like skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading, comprehension, review which improves effective reading skills.

**Keywords:** Reading, vital, information, lifelong, skill, skimming, scanning, intensive, extensive reading.

### Reading - An Outgoing & Unrestrained Process

Reading is an important communicative process and reading skills are certainly the most important language skills required for academic and professional purposes. "Reading informs, socializes, and shapes an individual's life. Without understanding what is being read, one is not really reading (Bulut, 2015). To enhance once reading skills rapid, well-organized and creative reading techniques are necessary in order to accomplish academic success; academic result depends on the extent how one reads and the importance or prominence he/she gives to this skill of reading. Reading is a most complicated process of receiving and interpreting the written word. It involves recognizing what is written and thoughtfully understanding the matter.

### Reading Is Concerned with Four Factors

Decoding, comprehending, text analysis and response.

**Decoding** or interpreting in reading refers to the process of changing the coded message into information in an order and in a sequence and the interpretation of a written message may be influenced by our social, cultural, educational, professional, and intellectual frames of reference. A person decodes or interprets the message keeping in mind his/her own perceptions, which he/she confidently feels they are correct.

**Comprehension** in reading refers to the recognition and understanding of the main theme, thoughts, sustaining details and different styles of writing. To figure out different levels of messages one should have decisive and systematic thinking which is very important.

**Text Analysis** is a process of finding the associations among various units within the text to make out relevant and irrelevant information, facts and opinions and examples and ideas and draw inferences and conclusions.

**Response** is our reaction to the written message. It completes the reading process as it is the last step of the reading.

**DECODING----- COMPREHENDING-----TEXTANALYSIS-----RESPONSE**

<b>The reader reads letters and focuses on them to change the coded message into information</b>	<b>The reader interprets the message and understands its literal meaning</b>	<b>The reader critically examines and evaluates the message</b>	<b>The reader responds to the message</b>
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**Purpose**

Firstly, one should know why we are reading, and what is the purpose of reading the information. Is it for simply to pass the time, for getting information, or to keep the information in the mind and discuss later when we get a chance for discussion. People do read for different reasons:

- Some read to have fun during journey and pass their time.
- Some read as a hobby from their childhood.
- Professionals read and use the information practically in different contexts.
- Teachers read to gain knowledge and share information to their students.

We need to start and practice reading at a very early age, so that the interaction between language and literacy allows the child to be exposed to language and understand how it works (Lyon, 2003.) The consequences of reading failure are serious. In the present globalised scenario

students to be part of this competitive society needs to have all the Listening, speaking reading and writing skills. Among these reading plays a crucial role in their fast progress to crack any competitive examinations and many. More concentration should be given on reading skills if they lack the basic skill of reading, they cannot become successful in their academics and at their workplace.

A student has to read and interpret textbooks, research papers and articles in technical journals, teaching notes, lab materials, technical reports, lab manuals and so on. Though the sources for reading may vary, basic purpose of reading is the same.

- Get an idea of a text.
- Broad understanding of the subject matter.
- Obtain Specific information.
- Understand new changes and developments in a particular field.
- Discover the authors viewpoint and to seek evidence for one's own point of view.

### **Reading Different Kinds of Texts**

The reader should distinguish the kind of text that he/she has to read. This helps to find out suitable reading strategies.

### **Reading for Relaxation**

When we do this, we don't pay much attention to what we are reading. If we are reading a short story, chat or talk, we may read it mainly for entertainment. The reader may or may not concentrate on the main theme.

### **Reading Message/Texts**

Reading newspapers and magazine articles will enhance our general awareness or knowledge in which we are interested. In this process, the reader must concentrate on the theme, main points and supporting details of the text.

### **Reading Technical Texts**

Reading technical texts is a very difficult process as this deals with the subject-content. Understanding scientific and technical vocabulary involves visual skills, learning of vocabulary, skimming skills, critical reading skills. Here the reader must concentrate the entire theme, main idea, statistical data in the form of graphs and everything.

So reader should be able to find out the purpose of reading before he/she starts reading and comprehending the text.

**Reading can be divided into the following categories (Rizvi 2018)**

GENERAL READING	ACADEMIC READING	PROFESSIONAL READING
NEWSPAPERS	TEXTBOOKS	BUSINESS REPORTS
MAGAZINES	JOURNALS	PROPOSALS
JOURNALS	RESEARCH PAPERS	BUSINESS LETTERS
NOVELS/STORIES	SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES	MEMOS/EMAIL MESSAGES
ARTICLES	CLASSROOM NOTES	NOTES/NOTICES
PERSONAL LETTERS	LECTURE NOTES	CIRCULARS
EMAILS	THESIS	PROMOTIONAL BULLETINS
GENERAL BOOKS	DISSERTATIONS	CATALOGUES/INSTRUCTIONAL MANUALS
ENTERTAINMENT LITERATURE	ABSTRACTS	CORPORATE BROCHRES

**Developing a Good Reading Speed**

On all occasions we cannot do reading part slowly. Sometimes we get some situations where we need to go for quick reading. Those times we need to depend and concentrate in the extensive reading as well as intensive reading. Extensive reading is done to get wider knowledge about the subject while intensive reading is required to get an in-depth knowledge and understanding of finer details of the subject.

Most productive examinations demand selective intensive reading (Descriptive and so on).

Recognition type of exams such as Objective type, true or false, multiple choice, etc. requires extensive reading.

Reading speed is measured in words per minute (wpm).

Reading speed	Casual Reading	Academic and Professional Reading
Very fast	+ 400 wpm	+300 wpm
Fast	300-400 wpm	250-350 wpm
Average	200-300—wpm	150-250 wpm
Slow	Less than 200 wpm	Less than 150 wpm

## **Reading Strategies/ Skills**

Reading is a challenging activity because the act of understanding is not always simple. Depending on the purpose of reading, the reader will require different reading strategies and skills to understand the subject-content and language patterns of a message.

### **These skills include**

#### Vocabulary Skills

- The reader should recognize the definitions of the words being used.
- Guessing & inferring the meaning of the words from the structure and their context

#### Visual Perceptual Skills

- Accurate Visual perception of words and phrases
- Quick eye fixations

#### Prediction Techniques

- Using the chapter headings to predict the theme of the text
- Guessing to predict information
- Using discourse and linguistic clues

Scanning Skills: It is the ability to locate the specific information or facts as quickly as possible.

- Locating specific information
- Specific point or fact
- Relevant graphic details
- Formulae in a text.

Skimming Skills: It is a rapid reading technique that prepares the reader for detailed reading.

- The overall purpose of the text
- Identifying the main idea
- Identifying the organizational patterns of writing
- Identifying the theme or central idea.

#### Intensive Reading Skills; Reading for Details

- Critically reading a text
- Distinguish facts from opinions
- Identify and evaluate a writer's attitude
- Understand the authors intention
- Drawing inferences and conclusions.

These strategies can enhance effective reading skills which play a vital role to progress in the competitive world.

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