

UNIT III

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Learn how readers integrate these facets to make meaning from print. Reading is making meaning from print. It requires that we: Identify the words in print – a process called word recognition.

"Reading" is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a *receptive* skill - through it we *receive* information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

Reading is the third of the four language skills, which are:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. **Reading**
4. Writing

In our own language, reading is usually the third language skill that we learn.

Academic reading differs from reading for pleasure. You will often not read every word, and you are reading for a specific purpose rather than enjoyment. This page explains different types of purpose and how the purpose affects how you read, as well as suggesting a general approach to reading academic texts.

THE PURPOSE OF READING.

The purpose of reading is to connect the ideas on the page to what you already know. If you don't know anything about a subject, then pouring words of text into your mind is like pouring water into your hand. You don't retain much.

For example, try reading these numbers:

7516324 This is hard to read and remember.

751-6324 This is easier because of chunking.

123-4567 This is easy to read

because of prior knowledge and structure. Similarly, if you like sports, then reading the sports page is easy. You have a framework in your mind for reading, understanding and storing information.

Improving Comprehension.

Reading comprehension requires motivation, mental frameworks for holding ideas, concentration and good study techniques.

Here are some suggestions.

- Develop a broad background. Broaden your background knowledge by reading newspapers, magazines and books. Become interested in world events.
- Know the structure of paragraphs. Good writers construct paragraphs that have a beginning, middle and end.
- Often, the first sentence will give an overview that helps provide a framework for adding details.
- Also, look for transitional words, phrases or paragraphs that change the topic.
- Identify the type of reasoning. Does the author use cause and effect reasoning, hypothesis, model building, induction or deduction, systems thinking?
- Anticipate and predict. Really smart readers try to anticipate the author and predict future ideas and questions.
- If you're right, this reinforces your understanding.
- If you're wrong, you make adjustments quicker.
- Look for the method of organization.
- Is the material organized chronologically, serially, logically, functionally, spatially or hierarchical?

- Create motivation and interest.
- Preview material, ask questions, discuss ideas with classmates. The
- the stronger your interest, the greater your comprehension.
- Pay attention to supporting cues. Study pictures, graphs and headings.
- Read the first and last paragraph in a chapter, or the first sentence in each section.
- Highlight, summarize and review. Just reading a book once is not enough.
- To develop a deeper understanding, you have to highlight, summarize and review important ideas.
- Build a good vocabulary. For most educated people, this is a lifetime project.
- The best way to improve your vocabulary is to use a dictionary regularly. You might carry around a pocket dictionary and use it to look up new words. Or, you can keep a list of words to look up at the end of the day.
- Concentrate on roots, prefixes and endings.
- Use a systematic reading technique like SQR3. Develop a systematic reading style, like the SQR3 method and make adjustments to it, depending on priorities and purpose. The SQR3 steps include Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review.
- Monitor effectiveness.
- Good readers monitor their attention, concentration and effectiveness. They quickly recognize if they've missed an idea and backup to reread it.

Types of purpose

Everyday reading, such as reading a novel or magazine, is usually done for pleasure. Academic reading is usually quite different from this. When reading academic texts, your *general* purpose is likely to be one the following:

- to get information (facts, data, etc.);
- to understand ideas or theories;
- to understand the author's viewpoint;
- to support your own views (using citations).

Many of the texts you read will have been recommended by your course tutor or will be on a reading list, and you will need to read them in order to complete assignments such as essays or reports, to take part in academic discussions, or to

help you give a presentation. If you enjoy your course of study you may, of course, also get pleasure from reading these texts, but that is very definitely *not* your main purpose.

How the purpose affects your reading

When reading a novel you will likely always do this in the same way: from beginning to end. The same is not true of academic reading, as your purpose will affect how you read it. Exactly how you approach the reading will depend on your *specific* purpose. For example, if you need to list the causes of global warming in an essay you are writing, you will look for texts on the topic of global warming. You are likely to find many texts, not all of which may be suitable, so in the first instance you might survey the texts to decide which ones to read more closely. Having identified suitable texts, you will then skim through each one to find which parts, if any, mention the causes. As your task is to *outline* the causes, you will not need any detail and so skimming the text for the main points should be enough. In this way, you could read twenty long texts in a fairly short amount of time.

READING PROCESS

The reading process involves 5 stages:

- Prereading
- Reading
- Responding
- Exploring
- Applying

Throughout the reading process readers use a variety of strategies, sometimes multiple strategies at once, to help them make meaning from a text. (Interview with Lynn Marsden).

Reading Strategies

- Activating prior knowledge
- Predicting
- Visualizing
- Questioning
- Drawing inferences
- Finding important/main ideas
- Summarizing
- Synthesizing
- Monitoring comprehension
- Evaluating

Stage 1: Prereading

Pre-Reading Strategies Include:

- Activating Background Knowledge
- Setting purposes for reading
- Making predictions and previewing a book
- Going on a Picture Walk
- Making a KWL map
- Questioning and making predictions about a story

Stage 2: Reading – Responding and Exploring

There are a variety of ways to engage students in the reading process. A balanced approach provides the necessary teacher support for reading.

- Modeled reading (reading aloud to students)
- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Independent reading

During reading a number of strategies are used to help students develop comprehension skills. By way of example, view the guided reading video clips and observe how a variety of strategies are employed at various stages of the reading process by both the teacher and student.

Making Connections

Students relate to what they read by making connections to their own lives, to other texts they have read and to the things or events that occur in the world. They compare themselves with the characters in the text and recall similar situations or experiences.

Encouraging students to make connections helps the reader to stay engaged and to see the connections between reading and everyday life. Capable readers use previous personal experiences, prior knowledge, and opinions to make sense of what they have read. Capable readers make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. In the guided reading clip, the child makes text-to-self and text-to-text connections. Notice that the teacher prompts her to make connections at certain points, but the child also offers connections without being prompted.

To encourage students to make connections you can provide them with some prompts:

- “This reminds of the time that ...”
- “I had a similar experience ...”
- “I remember when...”

Predicting

Making predictions or “best guesses” about what will happen in a text is an important literacy strategy and skill. Students’ predictions are based on their prior knowledge and experiences about the topic, the genre, and what has happened so far in the text (using both the print text and illustrations). Having students make predictions engages them in the reading task and encourages them to become active participants in the learning.

Ask the learner to make predictions at the following points:

- **Before reading:**
 - Examine the cover illustration and read the title of the book. Ask the student to predict what it might be about based on the cover illustration, the title, or both. Sometimes the cover is not very helpful in giving students clues about what the story might be about so you may have to provide a brief summary of the book.
 - You might say: “Look at the picture on the book and read the title. What do you think this book is about?”

- **During reading:**
 - Students make predictions at several key points throughout the text and as they read, they confirm or revise their predictions. In the guided reading clip, the teacher uses post-it notes to mark places in the text where the student might make a prediction.
 - You might say: “What do you think [main character] is going to do?”
- **After reading:**
 - The student compares the predictions to what the text says. Students can record their predictions on a chart as they read and they can see how accurate they were when they finish reading.

Developing Language Skills

In the guided reading clip, the teacher uses the opportunity to help the child develop language skills by focusing on specific words and punctuation marks.

Did you notice any other reading strategies being used in the video clips?

Synthesizing

Readers synthesize by summarizing information into key points and combining their ideas into a main idea. Synthesizing helps the reader to make generalizations and develop opinions and to integrate new information with prior knowledge.

Readers need to be encouraged to stop and reflect on what they have read, to identify and select and summarize important information and to merge new information with existing knowledge to gain new insight. Being able to summarize is very important because big ideas are easier to remember than a lot of small details.

In the guided reading clip, the teacher provides the child with an opportunity to summarize the main idea of the story.

Post-Reading – Applying

Strategies Include:

- Story retelling all or part of a story
 - Discussing favourite parts or elements of a story
 - Answering questions
 - Comparing to another book
 - Writing new ending
 - Drawing a picture about the story
 - Playing a game related to the story
 - Creating a radio play or other kind of performance
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Shared Reading

The shared reading model was developed by Holdaway (1979). The model is based on research that supports storybook reading as critically important in the development of young children's reading (Wells, 1986). Research also suggests that engaging in storybook reading at home with parents is particularly effective in reading development (Strickland & Taylor, 1989). It is very difficult for classroom teachers, however, to orchestrate one-on-one reading time for each student. Sometimes parent or community volunteers in the classroom can take on this role but usually, a teacher reads to a group of children at the same time. The shared reading model provides many of the benefits that are part of the storybook reading experience that happens at home.

The Shared Reading Process

For students in primary classrooms, the teacher often uses “big books” (oversized versions) that contain large print and illustrations. For junior students, texts can be projected through technology such as overheads, visualizers or using a data projector. As the teacher reads the text aloud, all of the children can see the print and illustrations and follow along.

The teacher and students return to the text several times over the course of several days. The first reading is generally for enjoyment. In subsequent readings, the children are encouraged to read along orally as they become more comfortable with the text. The teacher uses these opportunities to extend comprehension of the story or to focus students' attention on

vocabulary development. The teacher often pauses during the reading to ask for predictions or to allow students to make connections to the text. The use of repeated readings and predictable texts (such as Simms Taback's version of "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly") encourage students to become familiar with patterns and to recognize words and phrases.

Benefits of Shared Reading:

- Quality children's literature that might not be accessible to the children at their stage of reading development, can be used, even with very young students
 - The teacher models reading at the same time that students practice their reading
 - Allowing students to become familiar with the text's language patterns through multiple readings promotes word-recognition skills and builds students' confidence as readers
 - All of the students experience success because less skilled readers still have the support of the teacher and their classmates, while more advanced readers can enjoy the challenge of reading high quality literature
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Guided Reading (back to Stage 2)

- Based on careful observation of students, the teacher selects books that are supportive, predictable, and closely matched to the students' needs, abilities, and interests. The chosen texts should support the objective, but be readable enough for students to proceed with minimal assistance. (Approximately 90-94% accuracy)
- The guided reading lesson provides the opportunity for the teacher to interact with small groups of students as they read books that present a successful challenge for them.
- The assessment provides information for the homogeneous groupings which are necessary for guided reading. This allows the teacher to tailor instruction to suit students' changing instructional needs.
- The teacher acts as a facilitator who sets the scene, arouses interest, and engages students in discussion that will enable them to unfold the story line and feel confident and capable of reading the text themselves.
- Guided reading is reading by students. The students are responsible for the first reading of the text, although the teacher might read a page or two to begin the session, particularly at the primary level.

- Approximations and predictions are encouraged and praised. The teacher closely observes, monitors, and evaluates ways in which individual students process print utilizing reading strategies such as checking meaning and self-correcting.

ESSENTIALS OF READING

In accordance with our commitment to deliver reading programs based on research-based instructional strategies, Read Naturally's programs develop and support the five (5) components of reading identified by the National Reading Panel:

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemes, the smallest units making up spoken language, combine to form syllables and words. Phonemic awareness refers to the student's ability to focus on and manipulate these phonemes in spoken syllables and words. According to the National Reading Panel, teaching phonemic awareness to children significantly improves their reading more than instruction that lacks any attention to phonemic awareness.

Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between the letters (or letter combinations) in written language and the individual sounds in spoken language. Phonics instruction teaches students how to use these relationships to read and spell words. The National Reading Panel indicated that systematic phonics instruction enhances children's success in learning to read, and it is significantly more effective than instruction that teaches little or no phonics.

Fluency

Fluent readers are able to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Fluency is the ability to read as well as we speak and to make sense of the text without having to stop and decode each word. The National Reading Panel's research findings concluded that guided oral reading and repeated oral reading had a significant and positive impact on word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension in students of all ages.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary development is closely connected to comprehension. The larger the reader's vocabulary (either oral or print), the easier it is to make sense of the text. According to the National Reading Panel, vocabulary can be learned incidentally through storybook reading or listening to others, and vocabulary should be taught both directly and indirectly. Students should be actively engaged in instruction that includes learning words before reading, repetition and multiple exposures, learning in rich contexts, incidental learning, and use of computer technology.

Comprehension

Comprehension is the complex cognitive process readers use to understand what they have read. Vocabulary development and instruction play a critical role in comprehension. The National Reading Panel determined that young readers develop text comprehension through a variety of techniques, including answering questions (quizzes) and summarization (retelling the story).



Spelling

The National Reading Panel Report did not include spelling as one of the essential components of reading. The report implied that phonemic awareness and phonics instruction had a positive

effect on spelling in the primary grades and that spelling continues to develop in response to appropriate reading instruction. However, more recent research challenges at least part of the National Reading Panel's assumption. A group of researchers found that, although students' growth in passage comprehension remained close to average from first through fourth grade, their spelling scores dropped dramatically by third grade and continued to decline in fourth grade (Mehta et al., 2005). Progress in reading does not necessarily result in progress in spelling. Spelling instruction is needed to develop students' spelling skills.

IMPROVING READING SKILLS

Reading skills encompass a variety of skills that can permeate all aspects of life. Having strong reading abilities can enable you to interpret and find meaning in everything you read, and when you continuously improve these skills, you can develop your ability to communicate effectively through writing. Literacy encompasses so much of what we do that it can be a critical skill to possess, both in your personal life as well as within your career.

There are a variety of ways you might improve your reading skills. You might practice speed reading to improve your fluency or make notes each time you encounter unfamiliar vocabulary. The following steps also help outline what you might do to improve and further develop your reading skills.

1. Set aside time to read each day.
2. Set reading goals.
3. Preview the texts you read.
4. Determine the purpose.
5. Apply key reading strategies.
6. Take notes while you read.
7. Apply what you read by summarizing.

1. Set aside time to read each day.

One of the most effective ways to build your skills is to practice. Developing your reading skills will ultimately take practice, and you can set aside 10 to 15 minutes each day to read. You can read news articles, fiction, magazine issues or any kind of text, as long as you are taking the time to practice your reading skills.

2. Set reading goals.

You can set reading goals for yourself to help you develop a wider vocabulary, gain a deeper understanding of different texts and improve your ability to make connections between things you read and your own perspectives and ideas.

For example, you might set a goal to learn different vocabulary related to a central topic like business management, technology or another subject that interests you. Then, you can find meanings to unfamiliar words that help build your vocabulary as you read. As you build your vocabulary to higher-level words and phrases, you can increase the difficulty level of the texts you read.

3. Preview the texts you read.

Previewing and scanning over texts can be another step toward improving your reading skills. You can apply this strategy by previewing titles, captions, headlines and other text features to get an idea of what you are reading about. This can help you form central ideas about the text before you begin reading it.

4. Determine the purpose.

As you read through different texts, practice determining the purpose. Think about why various texts were written and what meanings or themes can be understood from a text. Additionally, you might identify the purpose that you are reading for, such as to find information, follow instructions in a manual or to enjoy a story. Knowing your purpose for reading a text can help you look for key ideas and details that support your purpose.

5. Apply key reading strategies.

As you read different texts, you can apply several key strategies to help you increase your comprehension. For instance, when previewing a text, you might identify the text structure as informational, persuasive or instructional. You might also determine key elements of different texts like the central themes, problems and solutions or comparative ideas presented in what you read. Using strategies like identifying text features, determining the purpose and taking notes can all work to help you improve your reading skills.

6. Take notes while you read.

Another highly effective method for improving your reading skills is to take notes while you read. For instance, you might take notes while reading a fiction novel to gain a deeper

understanding of the author's choice of language, or you might write down new vocabulary while reading a science journal. Effective note-taking can prompt you to ask questions about and make connections to what you read.

Similarly, creating visual representations like charts, tables or diagrams can clarify themes and ideas and can help you form inferences from your reading. Note-taking can be highly beneficial for comprehension exercises like summarizing, too.

7. Apply what you read by summarizing.

Summarizing what you read can also improve your reading skills. Summarizing forces you to remember specific details and central topics about what you read in your own words and through your own unique perspective. You might try verbally summarizing what you read by sharing information with a friend or write a short summary to help you retain and comprehend what you read.

As you develop your reading skills, your communication and overall ability to interact with others and perform in your career can develop as well.
