

# How to develop Reading Skill?

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**Abstract:** There are 04 skills which play very significant role in acquiring the knowledge of any language of the World-Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Reading is very important characteristic of education along with Writing, and Arithmetic. Out of all these, 'Reading' occupies the foremost, leading place as it opens the door to the knowledge. As the title suggests, the present paper tries to find out the ways to develop Reading Skill.

**Key Words:** *Syntactic, Semantic, Skimming, Scanning, Restatement, Intensive Reading, Extensive Reading.*

With reading begins the education. Much knowledge can be attained through Reading. Reading is gateway to culture and literature as well. If the material is relevant, and thus meets the learner's needs, it will help instigate an interest in reading in the learner.

Everyone knows what the reading is. But if asked to define reading, in what way would we define it? As a first step, it would be useful to find what preconceptions, we have about reading. If we try to define reading, then, what sort of definition would we give? It's likely that we use words from at least one of three groups:

- (a). Understand, Interpret, Meaning, Sense, etc.
- (b). Decode, Decipher, Identify, etc.
- (c). Articulate, Speak, Pronounce, etc.<sup>1</sup>

**Group (b)** suggests that unless we can correctly recognize the words we meet in print or on mobile, tab, computer, etc., we cannot even begin to read. The process of identifying written word seems to be main concern here.

**Group (c)** suggests that reading can be used as an opportunity to teach pronunciation. It can also be used to encourage fluent and expressive speaking. Here, reading aloud can be of great help.

**Group (a)** seems to be suggesting that reading is something like understanding or interpreting the written text along with its meaning and sense.

Fancoise Grellet said, “Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible.”<sup>2</sup>

G.Kamyab and M.H. Tahririan<sup>3</sup> quote the definition of reading given by Wardhaugh in the following way:

“When a person is reading a text, he is attempting to discover the meaning of what he is reading by using:

1. The visual Clues of Spelling.
2. The knowledge of probabilities of occurrence,
3. His contextual pragmatic knowledge, and
4. His syntactic and Semantic competence.”

Here ‘*Syntactic*’ means-according to the rules/ the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences and ‘*Semantic*’ means-relating to the meanings of words and phrases.

### **Why do we read?**

There are two main causes of ‘Reading’

- Reading for Pleasure
- Reading for Knowledge

### **How do we read?**

The main ways of ‘Reading’ are as follows:

**Skimming:** Quickly running one’s eyes over a text to get the gist of it.

**Scanning:** Quickly going through a text to find a particular place of information.

**Extensive Reading:** Reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding.

**Intensive Reading:** Reading shorter texts, to extract specific information. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail

### **Some Suggestions for the Teachers:**

The teachers must keep in their minds that the beginner may be a child, an illiterate, or an adult second or foreign language learner of English, who is an illiterate in English. He/she may be highly educated or a moderately educated person in his/her own native language. That's why, M. S. Thirumalai<sup>4</sup> suggests keeping the following in mind when they begin teaching 'Reading' at the beginner's level.

1. The background of the beginner: *a child, an illiterate, a moderately educated person.*
2. The Reading task involves decoding the system of abstract symbols to discover its relation to the spoken language system.
3. The time taken to master this relationship varies with age, maturation, previous experience, and other social factors.
4. With primary emphasis on mechanics one may master the mechanics of reading in four months.
5. Some recognition problems in English: capital, small, italics, handwriting, left to right, distinction between letters, mirror image problems.
6. Choose the words which express familiar meanings or meanings which can be recognized and retained in memory.
7. Choose only those words which focus on the item to be learned.
8. Do not choose those words which may have the same spelling in English as well as in the learner's language, but are read (pronounced) differently.
9. Do not ignore the stress.

A student needs to be said to be in control of the basics when he, and of course, she:

- Regularly makes appropriate eye movements for English.
- Recognizes and discriminates among the vowel and consonant sounds in English.
- Associates vowel and consonant sounds with letters.
- Recognizes and discriminates among consonant blends and consonant combinations.
- Recognizes and discriminates among vowel combinations.
- Recognizes vowel sounds with /r/.
- Recognizes selected sight words.
- Recognizes rhyming words when not spelled with the same letter pattern.
- Recognizes upper- and lower-case letters and the basic punctuation marks.

In the Intermediate Reading level, the emphasis is on overall comprehension, and reading with purpose. This requires development of study skills. At the intermediate level of reading, the materials should be so chosen as to introduce the students subtly to the grammatical and stylistic conventions of English. Reading is exploited in these passages to help students internalize the grammar (structures) of English. The structures of English are linked to the reading process and the goals of reading. For example, students come to know through reading practice that certain phrases predict the transition in information discussed in the reading material.

Kitao<sup>5</sup> lists the following phrases as marking transitions in the information contained in the reading material. Acquaintance with these phrases helps students anticipate and predict the turns in the material.

<b>Additional information:</b>	and, furthermore, moreover, in addition, also
<b>Expected information:</b>	of course, naturally, surely
<b>Unexpected information:</b>	surprisingly, amazingly
<b>Intensified information:</b>	in fact, as a matter of fact
<b>Restatement:</b>	as I mentioned before, in short, in other words, i.e., that is
<b>Example:</b>	for example, for instance, to illustrate, such as
<b>Consequence:</b>	so, therefore, as a result, consequently
<b>Cause/effect:</b>	because, due to, thanks to, on account of, as a result of, in view of
<b>Contrasting information:</b>	however, but, although, even though, nevertheless

**Order:** first, second, then, next  
**Conclusion:** in short, therefore, in conclusion, in summary, on the whole

Brown <sup>6</sup> suggests asking the students to do the following ten things before reading begins.

1. Look at the title and the headings for each section. What do you think this passage is going to be about?
2. Look at the pictures. What do you think this passage is going to be about?
3. Read the first and last paragraphs and the first sentence of each paragraph. What do you think this passage is going to be about?
4. Read the title. Now quickly scan the passage and circle all the words that have a connection to the title.
5. Scan the passage and cross out all the words you don't know. After you read the passage again carefully, look up the words in a dictionary.
6. After looking at the title, pictures, and so on, brainstorm the specific words you expect to see in the passage.
7. After looking at the title and pictures, make up some questions you think this passage might answer.
8. What kind of passage is this? (Fiction? Non-fiction—what kind?) Why would somebody read this? For information? Pleasure?
9. Choose words from the passage and write them on the board. Ask students to scan the passage and circle them.
10. Tell a story about the background of the reading passage.

To help foster extensive reading, students should be given materials that are interesting to the students. Give them new materials to read aloud.

According to Bowen <sup>7</sup>, the most important intermediate reading skills are:

- Reading with incomplete information (Reading a passage with a sizable number of unfamiliar vocabulary items).
- Organizing for careful reading (skimming and scanning).
- Organizing information (specific time to preview).

- Reading critically.
- Developing effective personal reading strategies.
- Setting effective reading speeds for different kinds of reading.

Success at the intermediate level of reading depends a lot on the initiative the learner takes and the positive attitude he or she has towards reading. The learner should recognize the pivotal role reading plays in improving his/her diction and pronunciation, even as it helps him/her internalize the structures of English. The learner should find for himself or herself how studious reading habits help him/her perform better in English at all the levels - speaking, listening, and writing. Reading materials are abundant in all the surroundings and it is for the learner to take advantage of all these reading materials in his/her surroundings.

### **Scientific Facts About Reading Books And How Could It Really Improve Your Life:**

So, read, not only for getting pleasure or knowledge but keeping in mind its emotional, intellectual, and psychological effects as well on your personality. For more details, you can log on <http://www.unbelievable-facts.com><sup>8</sup>

- **Reading can help prevent Alzheimer's Syndrome:** A recent study found that people who read are two and a half times less likely to be diagnosed with Alzheimer's Syndrome later on in life. Although this does not mean that reading will prevent the disease, it proves a slight relationship between reading and prevention.
- **Being a reader means you're more likely to learn something new every day:** A study found that reading frequently does actually make you smarter. Not only does it help you retain knowledge, but it helps you to remember that knowledge later on in life. Whether or not you realize it, reading stockpiles your brain with new information, and you never know when it may come in handy.
- **Reading makes more engaged, more aware:** Reading makes you more engaged throughout life, taking advantage of any activities that may spring up during your life.

- **Reading can be therapeutic:** According to Cristel Russell, a behavioral researcher, reading can help with any stress or turmoil occurring in your life. If you're passing through tough time, or simply just need to relax, try a new book.
- **Reading enhances your memory:** Every time you read something new, your brain 'makes room' to fit it in. with these new spaces, you can take advantage of new information that may arise.
- **Reading helps to boost your analytical thinking:** Reading helps you to recognize various patterns that occur in writing. If you are looking for a law or medicine career, this is important!
- **Reading expands your vocabulary, so you'll sound like a genius:** The more you read, the more words you will come across. The more often you read these words, the more likely you are to understand them, and use them in your own writing and speaking.
- **Fiction books increase your ability to empathize with others:** A Study has concluded that access to possible realities and fictional story lines opens you up to new emotions and feelings. It also helps you to empathize with people, by understanding different cultures.
- **People who read are more likely to get ahead when it comes to their careers and life in general:** Honor Wilson-Fletcher said that reading "opens doors and makes life easier, so at the end of the day it doesn't matter what you read. What's more, it really can make you feel good! This is very true, and it outlines how important it is to read, if you want to live a successful life.

For knowing even more facts and benefits pertaining to reading, you can log on some of the following websites:

- <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/10-benefits-reading-why-you-should-read-everyday.html>

- <http://www.factsbarn.com/facts-about-reading/>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Read-a-Book>
- <https://in.answers.yahoo.com/question/index>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading \(process\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading_(process))

### Notes and References

<sup>1</sup>Christine Nuttall, *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language* (London: Heinmann Educational Book Ltd., 1987), p. 2

<sup>2</sup>Francoise Grellet, *Developing Reading Skills* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 3

<sup>3</sup>G. Kamyab and M.H. Tahririan, “EFL Learners’ Strategy of Employing Syntactic and Semantic Cues in Reading”, *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Jan.-June 1989, p. 44

<sup>4</sup>M.S. Thirumalai, “An Introduction to TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)”, *Language in India*, Vol. 2: 2 April 2002, pp. 77-78

<sup>5</sup>S. Kathleen Kitao, “Teaching Transitions”, *New Ways in Teaching Reading*, ed. Richard R. Day. Alexandria, Virginia: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., 1993, pp. 87-88

<sup>6</sup>Steven Brown, Ten Things to Do Before Reading. In *New Ways in Teaching Reading*. Ed. Richard R. Day. Alexandria, Virginia: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., 1993, pp. 125-126

<sup>7</sup>J.Donald Bowen, Madsen Harold, and Hilferty Ann, *TESOL Techniques and Procedures* (Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 1985), p. 240

<sup>8</sup>  
<http://www.unbelievable-facts.com/2013/09/10-scientific-facts-about-reading-books.html>

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