



Ways of Teaching Reading

Dr. Ruth Wong

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

wongmh@ied.edu.hk

Sharing

- What is your learning experience re reading?
- How did you learn reading?
- How did your teacher teach reading at schools?
- How do YOU teach reading?
- What is reading to YOU and your students?



Are these the common teaching practice for teaching reading?

- Avoid passages which are “too difficult”
- Teach vocabulary
- Ask main idea of each paragraph
- Check answers
- Scanning and skimming

Reviewing the current practice of teaching reading

- Take a look at a chapter of a textbook.
- Discuss the effectiveness of the set.

(Example TP Unit 7)

Changes in the concept of reading skills

- Past: a piece of materials ready by the students then items of grammar and vocabulary developed based on the unit
- Adequate or inadequate?

The confusion of aim is:

- Often the students are not taught *ready* and how to develop reading abilities *per se*, but rather a written text is being used as a vehicle for the introduction of new vocabulary and /or structures.
- Intensive reading tasks focus on words → obsession on vocabulary.

Negative influence of such:

- The material seems artificial because the intention is to draw learners' attention to items of structural usage
- Sentences are strung together in isolation with little attempt at coherence.
- overlook authenticity
- Overlook authentic language use
- What is the language objective?
- What reading skill do the student learn?
- Any learning coherence?
- No real communication between the writer and reader

There are two main approaches for teaching reading.

- One is **bottom-up processing**. It focuses on developing the basic elements in the text.
- The other is **top-down approach**. It focuses on the background knowledge about the text.
- Which one do teachers focus on more?

Common problem:

- Traditional reading materials do not provide learners with useful texts or effective strategies to improve their reading abilities
- Teachers overlooks the coherence and spiral development of learning

Faulty reading habits

- Subvocalizing (forming the sounds of words and/or murmuring)
- Finger pointing
- Reading aloud in chorus together in class


Reading Skills and Strategies


1. To read without help
2. Unfamiliar texts
3. Authentic texts
4. Appropriate speed
5. Read silently
6. Adequate understanding


7. match reading skill to reading purpose!

E.g. poetry vs. today's newspaper

Scanning and skimming: useful in getting info,
but what about “reacting” or
“communicating” with the text?


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8. Efficient readers are not passive and do not operate in a vacuum. They have expectations and *react to the text*
 9. Efficient readers also *interrogate materials* by looking for clues in titles, subtitles and within the passage itself, and form expectations at every stage.

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10. Efficient readers can access content easier by changing reading speed according to the text
 11. Select significant features of the text and skim the rest
 12. Guess meaning or infer meaning from context
 13. Think ahead by predicting outcomes
 14. Use background knowledge to help them understand the meaning
 15. Switch reading strategies according to the types of text



16. Skills involving flexibility of techniques:
variation in reading rate, eye-movement* ,
skimming, scanning, study reading etc.

17. Skills of utilizing information that is not
part of the text itself: reference apparatus,
graphic conventions, illustrations and
diagrams

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18. **Word-attack skill:** morphology, inference from context, learn to ignore difficult words,
 19. **Text-attack skill:** interpret text as a whole, using clues like cohesion, rhetorical structure

THEREFORE,

- Teachers need to train students to do the above one by one and step by step!

A. Reading vs Vocabulary? (sight words*)

B. Reading vs skills? (Top down/Bottom up...)

C. Reading vs meaning? (react to text)

- Which one am I teaching today?
- Plan your reading programme!!

Reading skills as learning focus

- Facts
- Sequence
- Context
- Main Idea
- Conclusion
- Inference

Fact

Look for *who, where, when, how many*...etc.

Text A (Snake)



What skills are involved?

Top down or bottom up?

Scanning? Skimming?

Having got the answer, what is the next skill
to use? → read clearly... → what questions
will you ask students next?

Sequence

- Look for the time words e.g. first, next, last, later, during, while, today, months of the year, days of the week


Text B George Washington

Tip:

1. From short to long
2. Use tables, timeline, chart...
3. Practise repeatedly until the skill is internalised

Context

- Context means all the words in a sentence or all the sentences in a paragraph. In a sentence all the words together make up the context. You use the context to figure out the meaning of unknown words.

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- E.g. Typhoons develop over warm ocean water. They are made of heavy rains and strong, swirling winds. The winds can reach 200 miles per hour.
 - What clues can students get from the text if they don't know the word TYPHOONS?
 - This can be developed into a game. E.g. finding words made up to TYPHOONS.

Main Idea

- The main idea of a paragraph tells what the paragraph is about. All the other sentences are details that add to the main idea the main idea is often the first or last sentence in the paragraph.

$$3 + 4 + 5 = 12$$

Detail + detail + detail = main idea

Text C Butterflies

Conclusion

- In a story the writer may not state all of his or her ideas. When we read, we often have to hunt for clues so that to understand the whole story.


- E.g. The subject is a great change of pace during the day. Instead of sitting in a classroom, I go outside and get some exercise. Sometimes I run around the tracks, other times I jump over hurdles. If it is raining, I play an indoor game like basketball.
- I am studying.....
- *More examples (see Text D)*

Inference

- An inference is a guess you make after thinking about what you already know.
- Text E

General Teaching Steps

1. Age sensitive issues (critical period, physical response, sight words by diversifying strategies, phonics···)
2. What are the learning styles of my students?
3. Arouse student's interests by giving pre-reading questions which relate to their previous knowledge or own experience.
(Prediction, activate schema)
4. Give them time to search info in the text →
Developing specific reading skill (Top
down → bottom up)

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5. After reading, students can form discussion
(interrogate and react to text → recycle
language 1)
 6. Develop into writing by using the info
gained from discussion and reading.
(extension of language knowledge and
application of language use → recycle
language 2)


Assessing reading

- 5 types of written questions:
 1. Literal comprehension
 2. Putting info into the right order
 3. Inferring questions
 4. Personal response questions
 5. Questions of evaluation

Ponder: How should we assess whether students have read the assigned readers?

Reading & Curriculum


1. Decide the **overall learning objectives** of the reading programme
2. List and **sequence** the learning objectives for all school levels (sight words, phonics, skills...)
3. Identify the **texts and tasks** that each form required

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4. Identify the **linguistic elements** to be covered
 5. **Integrate** texts and tasks into class-based **work units**
 6. Link reading with other skills. *
 - a. Fact
 - b. Sequence
 - c. Main idea

(see example set)

Book report??

- Keeping book records
- Oral reports
- Book marks / book posters
- Making a picture dictionary
- Making scrap books
- Character chart
- Picture gallery

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- Making masks or puppets
 - Dramatization
 - Story telling
 - Picture sequencing or description
 - Interviews
 - Letter writing
 - Riddles

Classroom and school practices

- Materials should stimulate interest
- Do not use over-familiar content
- Interim reading assessment. Students need to know what level they are at.
- Grade materials according to the level of difficulty in terms of language, genre, length, topic. (classroom & library)
- If not, students will spend time on decoding language at the expense of reading for meaning.
- Provision of some individualized reading, e.g. library lesson
- Ask students to choose their own materials to be read according to their assessed level.



Thank you