

READING SKILLS

Significance

Definition: Reading is a method of communication that enables a person to turn writing into meaning. It allows the reader to convert a written text as a meaningful language with independence, comprehension and fluency, and to interact with the message.

Reading skill refers to the ability to understand written text. Reading is one of the most important ways of knowing the world around us. Reading influences us in the following ways: Reading helps us expand our mind. Reading help us know who we are, what is important to us, and it helps us understand the world around us. 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.

Techniques of Reading

Reading is a great habit that can change human life significantly. The ability to read is as important today as it ever was. It can entertain us; amuse us and enrich us with knowledge and experiences narrated.

There exist some reading techniques, which if mastered at a growing stage can help us, be better and far more comprehensive readers. The four main types of reading techniques are the following:

- Skimming
- Scanning
- Intensive
- Extensive

Skimming – Reading for the gist of a text

This reading technique is used for getting the gist of the whole text lead. We generally use this technique at the time of reading newspaper or magazine. Under this technique, we read quickly

to get the main points, and skip over the detail. It is useful in getting a preview of a passage before reading it in detail or reviving understandings of a passage after reading it in detail.

Gist is the general meaning or purpose of a text, either written or spoken. Reading a text for gist is known as skimming. Before answering detailed comprehension questions on a short story, learners read it quickly for gist, and then match the text to a picture that summarises what happens in the story.

Scanning – Reading for specific information

Scanning through the text is a reading strategy that is used for getting some specific points by looking at the whole text. For highlighting the important points of a book the readers can skim through the summary or the preface or the beginning and ending chapters of that book. For example, This technique is used for looking up a name from the telephone guide book.

Intensive Reading

You need to have your aims clear in mind when undertaking intensive reading. If you need to list the chronology of events in a long passage, you will need to read it intensively. This type of reading has indeed beneficial to language learners as it helps them understand vocabulary by deducing the meaning of words in context. It moreover, helps with retention of information for long periods of time and knowledge resulting from intensive reading persists in your long term memory.

Extensive reading

Extensive reading involves reading for pleasure. Because there is an element of enjoyment in extensive reading it is unlikely that students will undertake extensive reading of a text they do not like. It also requires a fluid decoding and assimilation of the text and content in front of you. If the text is difficult and you stop every few minutes to figure out what is being said or to look up new words in the dictionary, you are breaking your concentration and diverting your thoughts.

The followings are some techniques of reading used in different situations:

5. Active Reading Style

Active reading aims to get an in-depth understanding of the text. Under this technique, the reader actively involved with the text while reading it.

Getting in depth knowledge on the text at hand is not possible by reading to skim through or scan through the text. This technique of Structure-Proposition-Evaluation. This is an interesting reading technique suggested by Mortimer Adler in his book *How to Read a Book*. This reading technique is mainly applicable to non-fiction writing. This technique suggests reading as per the three following patterns: Studying the structure of the work; Studying the logical propositions made and organized into chains of inference; Evaluation of the merits of the arguments and conclusions.

6. Detailed Reading

This technique is used for extracting information accurately from the whole text. Under this technique, we read every word for understanding the meaning of the text. In this careful reading, we can skim the text first for getting a general idea and then go back to read in detail. We can use a dictionary to find the meaning of every unfamiliar word.

7. Speed Reading

Speed-reading is actually a combination of various reading methods. The aim of speed-reading is basically to increase the reading speed without compromising the understanding of the text reading. Some of the strategies used in speed reading are as follows:

- Identifying words without focusing on each letter
- Not to sounding-out all words
- Not sub vocalizing some phrases
- Spending less time on some phrases than others

a. Skimming small sections. Reading is the basic foundation on which academic skills of individuals are built. As we know the paramount importance of reading, it is given the top priority in primary education. Many believe that reading is a true measure of a person's success in academics. Most of the subjects taught to us are based on a simple concept – read, understand, analyze, synthesize, and get information.

8. How to Read Your Textbook More Efficiently

PREVIEW - READ - RECALL at first glance seems to be an intricate and time consuming process. However, it gets easier and faster with practice, ensures thorough learning and facilitates later "re-learning" when you revise for exams.

Preview

Why

If you give your mind a general framework of main ideas and structure, you will be better able to comprehend and retain the details you will read later.

HOW?

1. Look quickly (10 minutes) over the following key parts of your textbook to see what it's all about and how it is organized:

- a. Title
- b. Front and back cover info.
- c. Author's biographical data
- d. Publication date
- e. Table of Contents
- f. Introduction or Preface
- g. Index
- h. Glossary

2. Before you read each chapter, look over:

Title

Introduction

Sub-headings

First sentences of each paragraph (should give main idea).

Any diagrams, charts, etc.

Conclusions or summaries

3. Then answer the following questions:

What is this mainly about?

How is it organized?

How difficult is it?

About how long will it take to read?