

Chapter 4- Reading

4.1 Reading:

- Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning (reading comprehension).
- Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication, and of sharing information and ideas

Importance of Reading

1. Expose yourself to new things

- You expose yourself to new things, new information, new ways to solve a problem, and new ways to achieve one thing.
- Exploration begins from reading and understanding.
- Leads to knowledge building

2. Improve understanding

- increases the understanding of the rules of life, in order for you to adapt, adopt and accommodate into the society better.
- To play well in a game, you first need to understand the rules well.

3. Fundamental in society

- It is an essential to carry on daily activities. Like, for eg, Filling out applications becomes impossible without help. Reading road or warning signs is difficult.
- Day-to-day activities that many people take for granted become a source of frustration, anger and fear.

4. Connecting with your brain

When reading, you're in full silence because reading connects directly to your brain. In silence, you seek for more; in silence, your brain is clear and focuses. Thus, you learn and grow, and therefore you feel and see from the point of view of the author about everything in life. Hence you shape a better self.

5. Reading develops the mind

- The mind is a muscle. It needs exercise. Understanding the written word is one way the mind grows in its ability.
- Reading helps to focus on what someone else is communicating.

6. Self-improvement

- Through reading, you begin understand the world more.
- through reading, you create a structured path towards a better understanding and better actions to take in the future.
- for example: how to build self confidence, how to make plan better before taking action, how to memorize things better and more.

7. Boost imagination and creativity

Reading exposes you to a world of imagination.

By reading, you are exploring a different angle to see a thing you've known, on how different action leads to different results.

8. Gain Experience from Other People

- When you are reading, you are actually gaining the knowledge and experience of someone.
- It can hasten your success towards a goal, as you don't need to repeat the same mistake while focusing on the right path in achieving one thing.

9. Preparation to action

- In today's world, getting reviews and feedback from other people can make a big impact on your next decision, and the pros and cons of each choice.
- Read about how to cook a meal; how to play chess; which place is nice for the holiday family trip; read the menu before ordering food, read the manual before using a new gadget.

4.2 Reading Strategies

SQ3R is a well-known strategy for reading. SQ3R can be applied to a whole range of reading purposes as it is flexible and takes into account the need to change reading speeds.

SQ3R is an acronym and stands for:

- Survey
- Question
- Read
- Recall / Recite
- Review

Survey

This relates to **speed-reading, scanning and skimming** the text. At this initial stage you will be attempting to gain the general **gist** of the material in question.

Question

It is important that, before you begin to read, you have a question or set of questions that will guide you - why am I reading this? When you have a purpose to your reading you want to learn and retain certain information. Having questions changes reading from a passive to an active pursuit. Examples of possible questions include:

- What do I already know about this subject?
- How does this chapter relate to the assignment question?
- How can I relate what I read to my own experiences?

Read

Now you will be ready for the main activity of reading. This involves careful consideration of the meaning of what the author is trying to convey and involves being critical as well as active.

Recall / Recite

Regardless of how interesting an article or chapter is, unless you make a concerted effort to recall what you have just read, you will forget a lot of the important points. Recalling from time to time allows you to focus upon the main points – which in turn aids concentration. Recalling gives you

the chance to think about and assimilate what you have just read, keeping you active. A significant element in being active is to write down, in your own words, the key points.

Review

The final step is to review the material that you have recalled in your notes. Did you understand the main principles of the argument? Did you identify all the main points? Are there any gaps? Do not take for granted that you have recalled everything you need correctly – review the text again to make sure and clarify.

Other reading strategies

Preview

What is it? Previewing a text means that you **get an idea** of what it is about without actually reading the main body of the text.

When to use it: to help you decide whether a book or journal is useful for your purpose; to get a general sense of the article structure, to help you locate relevant information; to help you to identify the sections of the text you may need to read and the sections you can omit.

To preview, start by reading:

- the title and author details
- the abstract (if there is one)
- then read only the parts that ‘jump out’; that is: main headings and sub headings, chapter summaries, any highlighted text
- examine any illustrations, graphs, tables or diagrams and their captions, as these usually summarise the content of large slabs of text
- the first sentence in each paragraph

Intensive Reading

What is it? Intensive reading is detailed, **focused**, ‘**study**’ reading of those important parts, pages or chapters.

When to use it: When you have previewed an article and used the techniques of skimming and scanning to find what you need to **concentrate** on, then you can **slow down** and do some intensive reading.

How to read intensively:

- start at the beginning. Underline any unfamiliar words or phrases, but do not stop the flow of your reading.
- if the text is relatively easy, underline, highlight or make brief notes (see ‘the section on making notes from readings’).
- if the text is difficult, read it through at least once (depending on the level of difficulty) before making notes.
- be alert to the main ideas. Each paragraph should have a main idea, often contained in the topic sentence (usually the first sentence) or the last sentence.
- when you have finished go back to the unfamiliar vocabulary. Look it up in an ordinary or subject-specific dictionary. If the meaning of a word or passage still evades you, leave it and read on. Perhaps after more reading you will find it more accessible and the meaning will become clear. Speak to your tutor if your difficulty continues.
- write down the bibliographic information and be sure to record page numbers (more about this in the section on making notes from readings).

Strategies to speed up reading

They are each used for different purposes, and they are not meant to be used all the time. They are at the fast end of the speed reading range, while studying is at the slow end.

People who know how to skim and scan are flexible readers. They read according to their purpose and get the information they need quickly without wasting time. They do not read everything which is what increases their reading speed. Their skill lies in knowing what specific information to read and which method to use.

Skimming?

Skimming is one of the tools you can use to read more in less time. Skimming refers to looking *only* for the general or main ideas, and works best with non-fiction (or factual) material. With skimming, your overall understanding is reduced because you don’t read everything. You read only what is important to your purpose. Skimming takes place while reading and allows you to look for details in addition to the main ideas.

How to skim? Many people think that skimming is a haphazard process placing the eyes where ever they fall. However, to skim effectively, there has to be a structure but you don't read everything. *What you read is more important than what you leave out.* So, what material do you read and what material do you leave out?

By reading the first few paragraphs in detail, you will get a good idea of what information will be discussed. Once you know where the reading is headed, you can begin to read only the first sentence of each paragraph. Also called *topic sentences*, they give you the main idea of the paragraph. If you do not get the main idea in the topic sentence or if the paragraph greatly interests you, then you may want to skim more.

Scanning

Scanning is another useful tool for speeding up your reading. Unlike skimming, when scanning, you look *only* for a specific fact or piece of information without reading everything. You scan when you look for your favorite show listed in the cable guide, for your friend's phone number in a telephone book, and for the sports scores in the newspaper. For scanning to be successful, you need to understand how your material is structured as well as comprehend what you read so you can locate the specific information you need. Scanning also allows you to find details and other information in a hurry.

How to scan. Because you already scan many different types of material in your daily life, learning more details about scanning will be easy. Establishing your purpose, locating the appropriate material, and knowing how the information is structured before you start scanning is essential.

The material you scan is typically arranged in the following ways: alphabetically, chronologically, non-alphabetically, by category, or textually.

Alphabetical information is arranged in order from A to Z, while

chronological information is arranged in time or numerical order.

Information can be also be arranged in **non- alphabetical** order, such as a television listing, or by **category**, listings of like items such as an auto parts catalog.