

# ***IQRA NATIONAL UNIVERSITY***

## ***PESHAWAR***

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## Reading Skills

Reading skills are the skills acquired through reading, such as comprehension, fluency, and independence. These skills give people the ability to give clear meaning to the turn words on a page. These skills are important because we read something in some form every day. It is an integral part of modern life. Reading skills lead a person to interact and gain meaning from written language. It is advisable to develop this skill at early age of schooling. When students comprehend or understand written text, and combine their understanding with prior knowledge, they are able to perform the following three reading-comprehension skills. Having strong reading comprehension skills is also necessary for passing academic achievement tests and for being able to read effectively for one's career. Reading allows the reader to make sense of what the text is about. Strategic reading methods can help students achieve not only their academic needs, but more importantly their life goals.

## COMPONENTS

There are several components one must master which lead to independently comprehending the intended message being relayed in the written content.

- **Phonemic** “recognizing and manipulating spoken words in language”
- **Phonics** “understanding letter-sound correspondences in reading and spelling”
- **Oral Reading Fluency** “reading text with speed, accuracy, and expression.”
- **Vocabulary** “understanding words read by linking the word to oral vocabulary”
- **Comprehension** “directly teaching students to be aware of the cognitive processes involved in reading”

## Active Reading Techniques

Active reading simply means reading something with a determination to understand and evaluate it for its relevance to your needs. Additionally, active reading, as opposed to the passive reading we do when skimming items or reading for pleasure, can help us

- Save time because we pay more attention to what we read the first time and do not waste time rereading.
- Prepare us for exams because we gain a more in-depth knowledge of the material.
- Stay informed about a subject that interests us.

- Develop exposure to new ideas or have familiar concepts reinforced.
- Create a deeper understanding of life's complexities.
- Achieve intellectual growth.

When we read actively, we try to understand the text thoroughly by reading slowly and carefully, pausing to question a main idea or to reexamine a passage that confuses us, and interpreting the larger meanings and implications of the text we're reading. We try to keep our minds actively thinking about what the text means. In general, active reading allows us to

- Capture main ideas, key concepts, and details of reading.
- Target, reduce, and distill the needed information from the text.
- Engage with the text by making connections with our own knowledge and lives.
- Ask questions that help us think deeper about the content.

## SKIMMING

Skimming is sometimes referred to as gist reading. Skimming may help in order to know what the text is about at its most basic level. You might typically do this with a magazine or newspaper and would help you mentally and quickly shortlist those articles which you might consider for a deeper read. You might typically skim to search for a name in a telephone directory. You can reach a speed count of even 700 words per minute if you train yourself well in this particular method. Comprehension is of course very low and understanding of overall content very superficial. Skimming will certainly save you a lot of time. But as stated above, it is not the best way to read because you're comprehension will be lowered.

However, skimming is useful when your goal is to preview the text to get a better idea of what it's about. It will help prepare you for deeper learning.

This strategy makes it much easier to recall what you're about to read.

1. Take a look at the table of contents first.
2. Review the subheadings in each chapter
3. Quickly read the first paragraph in that section
4. Check out anything in your text that is in bold or italics
5. If there is a chapter summary, now is a good time read it over.

This completely prepares your brain to have an overview of what this chapter is about.

You can then go on to use scanning to find specific important ideas.

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.

## GENERAL READING

General reading can be divided into three steps

**Step 1** Contains one longer, more complex text on a topic of general interest. Texts are authentic and are taken from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, books, magazines and newspapers.

**Step 2** Contains two or three short factual texts, one of which may be a composite (consisting of 6-8 short texts related by topic, eg. hotel advertisements). Topics are relevant to everyday life in an English-speaking country.

**Step 3** Contains two short factual texts focusing on work-related issues (eg. applying for jobs, company policies, pay and conditions).

## CAREFULL READING

Careful reading refers to different operations where the reader attempts to extract complete meanings within or beyond sentences right up to the level of the entire text so as to construct the text macro structure. Careful reading is a construct that is operationalized through the identification of lexis, the understanding of syntax, the seeking of an accurate comprehension of explicit meaning and the making of inferences. These tasks may take place at a local level (understanding lexis, identifying grammar) or at global level (seeking an accurate comprehension of explicit meaning and making inferences). Careful reading at the local level involves processing a text until the basic meaning of a proposition is established whereas careful reading at the global level involves processing the text until its macro-structure is built