

What do we do when we read?

Can you comprehend what this text is about?

- Novices can learn the correct techniques by watching those more experienced.
- A log is an essential item for your safety.
- Maintain eye contact with your partner. Keep them close at all times. If the situation deteriorates, you may need to hold hands to stay together.
- Entering backwards is the correct protocol.
- Although there are no dress regulations, a suit is the most comfortable attire.
- Sometimes people also wear gloves and a belt.
- Did you know toothpaste can improve your vision?
- Spitting is not only allowed but recommended.

While you know all the words, you cannot tell what it is about unless you have had experience with this type of activity (see end of document for answer).

So what do you do to try and make sense of it? You do what all good or experienced readers do...

Good readers....

- do not always read continuously
- choose a style of reading (skim, scan, read closely) depending on text type and the purpose of reading
- read backwards/forwards when they don't understand
- ask themselves questions to make sense of the text
- connect what they are reading with what they already know
- visualise what they read in their head

These are active reading strategies that all good readers use and must be explicitly taught to students. Therefore good or experienced readers are able to select different **types of reading** and different **types of active reading strategies**.

What are the types of reading?

Type of reading	What is it?
Skimming	Looking rapidly through a text for general impression of the main ideas. Getting the gist.
Scanning	Looking rapidly through a text to pick out specific information by locating key words.
Close reading	Slowed down detailed reading that enables comparisons and connections to be made about the information.
Continuous	Reading without stopping, where the reader independently chooses reading strategies to make sense of what they're reading. This may include asking questions of themselves, making links with what they already know, and creating mental images of what they're reading.

To support students in making choices about which of these types of reading and which reading strategies they should employ, research by Graves and Fitzgerald (2003) in the *Scaffolding Reading Experiences* suggests planning lessons around a 'pre', 'during' and 'post' reading phase.

Prereading Activities

- Motivating
- Activating or building background knowledge
- Providing text-specific knowledge
- Relating the reading to students' lives
- Preteaching vocabulary
- Preteaching concepts
- Prequestioning, predicting, and direction setting
- Using students' native language
- Engaging students and community people as resources
- Suggesting strategies

During-Reading Activities

- Silent reading
- Reading to students
- Guided reading
- Oral reading by students
- Modifying the text

Postreading Activities

- Questioning
- Discussion
- Building connections
- Writing
- Drama
- Artistic, graphic, and nonverbal activities
- Application and outreach activities
- Reteaching

In this sequence of teaching reading, the teacher should choose the relevant activities and explicitly draw out the reading strategies the students are using to make sense of a text.

Of particular note, DARTs (directed activities related to texts) have become one of the main ways in which teachers develop these skills. See page three for examples.

Activities which encourage close reading

These activities are most effective when worked on by a pair or small group as the discussion of possibilities leads to a closer look at the text.

Cloze

Filling the gap involves the reader in actively constructing meaning. Skills include:

- paying close attention to the meaning of the sentence
- choosing a word that fits grammatically
- using one's existing knowledge of the topic
- working out what is likely from the rest of the text
- working out what will fit with the style of the text – eg whether a word has already occurred in the sentence
- attending to the sense of the whole sentence by reading and rereading.

Sequencing

Sequencing activities involve reconstructing a text which has been cut into chunks.

Skills include:

- reading and rereading
- paying close attention to the structure of the genre
- paying close attention to link words
- hunting for the logic or organising principle of the text – eg chronological order
- using previous experience and earlier reading.

Text marking

Text marking includes underlining, annotating or numbering the text to show sequence.

Skills may well include:

- skimming or scanning to find specific information
- differentiating between different categories of information
- deciding what is relevant information
- finding the main idea(s)
- questioning the information presented in the text.

Text restructuring

Text restructuring involves reading and then remodelling the information in another format.

For example, flow charts, diagrams, Venn diagrams, grids, lists, maps, charts, concept maps or rewriting in another genre. Depending on the format, skills used will include:

- identifying what is key and relevant in a text
- applying what they know in a new context
- remodelling the content and the format of the text
- awareness of the characteristics of different genres
- critical reading
- summary and prioritisation
- writing as well as reading skills.

Answer from page 1:

Advice to newcomers

- Novices can learn the correct techniques by watching those who are more experienced.
- A log is an essential item for your safety.
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