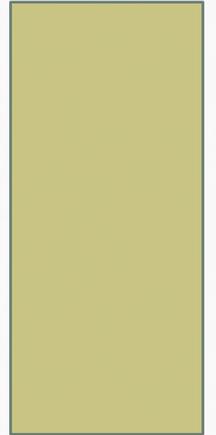


DEVELOPING STUDENTS' READING SKILLS

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AIM

- The aim of this presentation is to raise the awareness on the need to constantly develop the reading skills of students.

READING FOR CONTENT INFORMATION

- It's important to say that when discussing reading skills, one should always have in mind the language in which we want to analyze or develop the reading skills.
- However, this presentation centers on the common strategies for developing reading skills in either the mother tongue of the student or in a foreign language (English).
- When can we implement the same strategies? The answer is when reading for content information i.e. the primary aim is not to learn the language but reading for comprehension.

WHY IS THE READING SKILL SO IMPORTANT?

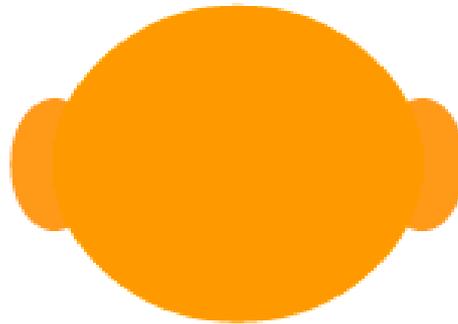
- Before I give some practical suggestions on how to develop the reading skills of our students, I would like to emphasize the importance of having well developed reading skills and why they should be constantly developed.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

SPOKEN

INPUT

OUTPUT



listening



speaking



WRITTEN



reading



writing



READING SKILLS

- Acquired once and for all?
- Neglected?
- Last received guidelines?

- Input
- Development of the other skills
- Make distinction between fact and opinion; important information and the opposite;
- Learn to summarize, analyze, connect; develop personal opinion and ideas.

HOW CAN WE DEVELOP STUDENTS' READING SKILLS?

- The first step towards improvement of the students' reading skills is being aware that it is our job as instructors to help them develop the reading skills, and to include it in our course outline as an **objective** among the others.

HOW CAN WE DEVELOP STUDENTS' READING SKILLS?

- Then, students should also be (made) **aware of the need** for well-developed reading skills.
- Instructors should **provide information on the nature of the reading skill and guidelines** on how it can be improved regardless of the course they teach.
- Finally, reading shouldn't be only assigned as homework. From time to time, **reading activities should be done in class** as well.

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- Interactive
- Interesting
- Student centered
- Helpful (Practice, Instructor's guidelines, fellow students' experience and technics)

- There is a long and rich history of research in the field of reading comprehension. The study of reading comprehension is well-developed and it's based on long tradition of theory and research.

TIPS

I will try to simplify and outline certain tips that students can be reminded of:

- Every reading activity must have a **clearly stated aim**. You should know why you are reading, and what's the purpose.

In order to understand the aim of the reading more easily, the purpose or the aim should be embodied in a follow up activity provided by the instructor.

- Students must be aware of the **reading technics** and know which one they should use in order to complete the task depending on the type of text and the aim/follow-up activity.

READING TECHNICS /TYPES OF READING

- **Skimming** is a reading technique that provides understanding of the whole text without reading it from word to word. It involves discovering the main ideas of a text by reading first and last paragraphs and topic sentences, and paying attention to other details on the page like titles, bold type or italics, photograph captions, etc.

READING TECHNICS /TYPES OF READING

- **Scanning** is a reading technic that one uses to find specific information without reading the whole text. It involves looking down and around a page quickly and efficiently searching for important words, facts or phrases to find specific information.
- When scanning a text, one should use peripheral vision and shouldn't focus only on the logical flow of the text.

READING TECHNICS / TYPES OF READING

- One should observe what he/she is reading with a wide-angle scope, as if he/she were looking at an image rather than a block of text. One should use the same wide-eye span as when driving, looking at all that surrounds us and heading our way.

READING TECHNICS / TYPES OF READING

- Using the wide-span approach, there are several methods in which one can "read" a page.
- - Read paragraphs diagonally, and place emphasis on the key words.
- - Read the page in a "Z"
- - Read in a "U", moving down the page, and back up.
- One can skim the text by reading the first sentence of each paragraph.
- One can always use the help of the index finger, by moving it at a slightly faster pace than the reading speed.

READING TECHNICS / TYPES OF READING

- Scanning often comes before skimming. For example, scanning can be used to determine if a resource has the information you are looking for. Once the resource is scanned, it can then be skimmed for more detail.

<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/09/skimming-and-scanning-using-the-times-to-develop-reading-skills/>

READING TECHNICS / TYPES OF READING

- **Light reading**

Reading for leisure tends to be 'light':

- Read at a pace which feels comfortable.
- Read with understanding
- Skim the boring, irrelevant passages.

An average light reading speed is 100-200 words per minute. This form of reading does not generally require detailed concentration.

READING TECHNICS /TYPES OF READING

- **Word by word type reading**

This type of reading is time consuming and demands a high level of concentration. People use this type of reading for unfamiliar concepts, scientific formulae etc.

READING TECHNICS / TYPES OF READING

- **Reading to study**

Its aim is to understand the material in depth. The method involves five simple steps; Survey, Question, Read, Recall and Review.

- **Survey:** skim through to gain an overview and not key points.
- **Question:** devise questions you hope the text will answer.
- **Read:** slowly and carefully.
- **Recall:** from memory, write down the main points made by the chapter.
- **Review:** revisit your questions - compare these to your recall and establish how well the text has answered them; fill in any gaps by further reading and note-taking.

- **Speed reading**

TIPS

Depending on the reading technic and aim, students can:

- o Underline important, key sentences, and definitions.
- o Highlight words or whole paragraphs
- o Use special marks on the margin to indicate importance, relevance, or reference to other parts
- o Take notes in a notebook
- o Draw visual representations of the text like charts and graphs etc.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTORS FOR IN-CLASS READING

- **Up-front planning** is crucial
- Choose units or chapters from the course book or some other relevant books, articles, newspaper articles that you think are essential for the students to read for the course you teach at the beginning of the semester.
- If you don't have an electronic version of the texts, type them or ask some of your students to type them for you (it also involves reading).

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTORS FOR IN-CLASS READING

- **Start with easier tasks/ follow-up activities** that require recognition, matching, filling in, T/F, multiple choice rather than making outlines, drawing charts and graphs, answering questions, summarizing.
- Students can work **individually, in pairs, or in groups** of three. You can start with group work, then pair work, and last individual work.

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- Each reading activity should be preceded by a **worm-up activity** relevant to the type of text and the **follow-up activity** or the **aim** of the reading.
- You can introduce the topic, ask opinion, check background knowledge on the topic;
- you can ask a question connected to the main idea, elicit possible answers from students;
- they can predict the content of the text (from the title, photo, key word(s) provided by the instructor);
- the reading can also be based on the previous lecture, and used as revision, so the students will be familiar with the content.
- **Provide clear instructions. Assign time for completion of the task. Monitor. At the end of the task, leave enough time for checking the answers, feedback, comments, questions.**

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- **Putting paragraphs in order;**

Cut the text in meaningful paragraphs (one A4 page cut into no more than five paragraphs and not less than 3). Distribute the same paragraphs to all groups of students or if the text is bigger, you can give different parts of the text to each group, and then ask them to connect the whole text between groups.

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- **Missing sentences**

Take out important sentences from a text. Ask the students to find their place in the text (3-5 sentences per page). Distribute the text from where you've abstracted the sentences to students in one page. Then print the sentences on separate pieces of paper. When the time is up, provide the original version of the text to the students for insight.

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- Matching headlines to paragraphs
- Filling -in a table

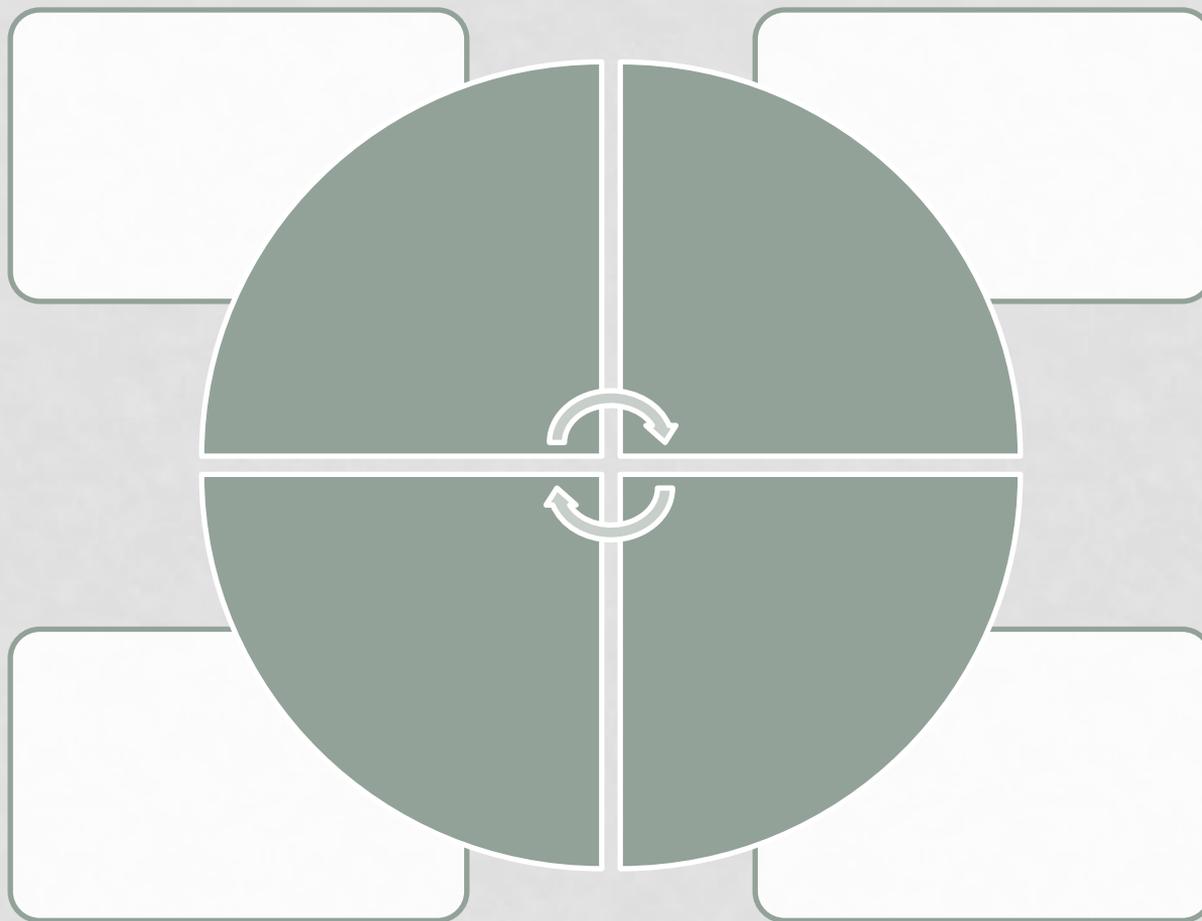
<http://www.uefap.com/reading/exercise/scan/monst.htm>

- **True/False questions** (*not stated* – as third option) If you cannot find already made T/F questions related to a text/ make them on your own (not less than 5 not more than 8), or it can be done as a reading exercise (students make the T/F questions, you check and give the questions to another group to answer them).

IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- **Multiple choice questions** (3-4 choices, *all of the above, none of the above* also possible as options; no less than 5 no more than 10).
- **Visual representations of a text** - Charts, graphs, timelines, taking out definitions, concepts, important figures from a written text within a provided model, or students can make their own organization.

USE THE SMART ART OR CHART TOOL
BAR IN MICROSOFT WORD.



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IN-CLASS READING ACTIVITIES

- Write a one-sentence summary/ heading of a paragraph
- Writing an outline of a text (major characteristic of a concept, phenomenon, process)
- Summarize a text
- Reading-comprehension questions - Answer questions based on a text (the questions can be written on a separate sheet of paper and distributed to the students; they can be based solely on the text, or combining previous knowledge, connecting through the material, demanding critical thinking, **discussion questions** etc.) Students can also generate their own questions within groups and then answer the other group's questions.

CONCLUSION

- Development of students' reading skill should be one of the course objectives which will show the instructors' commitment to creating competent professionals and future scholars/ researchers.
- The first step to improve the students reading skills is by introducing it in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

- The introduction of the reading activities in the classroom helps the students develop their reading skills by training them to become more proficient, by making them aware of the need to work on their skill, and by making them more confident in dealing with such activities. Finally, it helps them pass the exam more easily by learning in class.
- It prepares them for individual, in-home reading necessary for successful exam preparation, writing Master or PhD thesis, and other personal purposes. Finally, it helps them become independent learners, develop the critical thinking, problem solving, analytical skill as well. Last but not the least, it provides an excellent learning but relaxed, student centered atmosphere.

- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngextremeexplorer/pdf/effectivepractices.pdf>
- <http://ababasoft.com/words/scanning.html>