

Reading skills

There are several types of reading but the most useful and important are as follows

1. Critical reading : refers to reading a piece of writing , literary works like poetry , novels, plays and non-fiction literature with a goal to find what the writer means. You must be able to analyse , evaluate and synthesize your reading example you must read ‘An enemy of the people’ by Henric Ibsen. We read critically in order to make a thematic and technical analysis by analyzing themes and messages.

2. Intensive or study reading: usually used on short texts like poems or articles in order to extract specific information. It includes very accurate reading for details. Reading to understand or grasp the details of specific situation; in this type of reading it is important to understand each word. If you read a poem ‘Eat more’ intensively you must understand each word but if you start thinking of imagery and symbolism or themes, that will be critical reading.

Example

Reading a contract or declaration

Reading notes in the class

3. Extensive reading: this is used to obtain a general understanding of a subject. It includes reading longer texts unlike in study reading (intensive reading) for pleasure you may use extensive reading skills to improve your general understanding or business procedures. Also known as reading for pleasure, used to learn foreign language it is believed that extensive reading is an important factor in education.

Example

Reading a book before you sleep

A love story from magazine or newspaper

4. Skimming: is reading quickly to gain a general idea. Skimming may allow you to read up to 1000 words a minute. Skimming helps you identify whether or not to continue reading, as with scanning, skimming does not involve reading every word. Instead, you may skim by reading

Titles

Subheadings

Words in that are in **bold** in *italics* or underlined

Diagrams

A reports abstract, introduction or conclusion

The first sentence of every paragraph

Chapter question

Chapter objectives

Chapter summaries

5. Scanning; scanning is used to find a particular piece of information you need. We use scanning on schedules meeting plans, in order to find specific details you require. For instance looking for your results example ACSEE or CSEE , Here you will just look for your name in the list. If you seen words or names you do not understand, you should not worry.

We scan in the following

A bus/ train/ airplane schedule

A menu in hotel

Searching for a number or name

A conference guide

Techniques or steps of reading

Search: here you have to search materials to read

Question: you have to ask yourself why you are going to read the materials you have searched

Read: the process begins to fulfill your goal

Review: here you have to review what you have read so as to full understand the text

Recall: here you have to memorize what you have read

In short we can call these techniques as SQ3R techniques

S stands for search

Q stands questions

And 3r are read, review recall

Reading skills principles

1. Consider where you read: always read in a well-lit and quiet place that is free of distractions and do not get into the habit of reading materials in bed (unless you intend to fall asleep)
2. Do not vocalize as you read: this will slow you down, it will not help concentration, and it will lead to bad reading approaches.
3. Read at times when you can concentrate: and maintain concentration by taking regular short breaks, perhaps every 30 or 45 minutes.

Set yourself reading tasks (10 pages, 1 chapter, 1 section of a chapter etc)

Give yourself enough time: remember that reading often takes longer than you expect and you often need to go beyond set texts.