

# Four levels of Reading

In *How to Read A Book*, Van Doren and Mortimer talked about four main levels of reading: elementary reading, inspectional reading, analytical reading, and syntopical reading. Note here that the authors deliberately named them levels and not kinds because, according to them, kinds can be distinct from one another while levels denote a notion of embeddedness with lower levels included in higher ones. In other words, levels of reading are cumulative.

The four levels of reading as conceptualized by Mortimer and Charles Doren:

## 1- Elementary Reading

It's also called initial reading, rudimentary reading, or basic reading. Once this level is mastered, readers go from nonliterary to at least beginning literacy. In mastering this level, one learns the rudiments of the art of reading, receives basic training in reading, and acquires initial reading skills. The question that is asked at this level is: what does the sentence say?

## 2- Inspectional reading

This is also called pre-reading or skimming. This level is characterized by its emphasis on time...its aim is to get the most out of a book within a given time'. This is usually done through an examination of the surface of the book checking things such as the title of the book, its preface, table of contents, index, publisher's blurb if available..etc. Upon finishing reading at this level, one should be able to answer the following questions: What kind of book is it (a novel, a history, a scientific treatise)? What is the book about? What is the structure of the book?

## 3- Analytical reading

This is a more demanding level for readers. It's more complex than the preceding levels and represents a thorough and complete form of reading. Analytic reading is 'hardly ever necessary if your goal in reading is simply information of entertainment. {It is} pre-eminently for the sake of understanding".

## 4- Syntopical reading

It's also called comparative reading. This is the most complex and systematic level

of reading. A syntopical reader reads different texts on the same subject and compares them to each other to arrive at a holistic and more nuanced understanding of the subject.

## Reference

*Source:*

How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading (Revised Edition),  
by Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren

[www.educatorstechnology.com](http://www.educatorstechnology.com)

<https://www.educatorstechnology.com/2016/01/the-four-levels-of-reading-every.html>

---

## Main Approaches to Teaching Reading

Reading is one of the most important skills you can teach a child. A child's success not only at school but also in later life depends on this skill. To teach a child how to read, you must know different methods of teaching reading and apply them. In this article, we will explain the common methods of used to teach reading. To teach your child or someone else, you can use one method or a combination of two or more methods.

### 1. The phonics teaching

This is a well-known and one of the best methods of teaching reading. In this method, children are taught the alphabet first. And learning the alphabet involves learning not only the names of the letters but also the sounds they make. Children can blend two or three letters together to make words only when they have learnt

letter sounds. Among the methods of teaching reading, the phonics method is thought to be the most effective. To apply this method properly, you can buy your child phonologically written books that use regular and interesting words.

You should always try to keep the process short and entertaining, because children often find it boring to learn sounds and their blends. It often becomes boring when children focus too much on blending the sounds. They end up not learning the meaning of the words. To keep enthusiasm and make the learning process interesting, make sure you always explain the meaning of the words. To avoid boredom, you can consider teaching one letter a day. If your child needs three or four days to muster one letter, do not be disheartened. The key is to keep going. Children are naturally curious. They will try to please you and in turn gradually do well. Remember, the phonics method is one of the best methods of teaching and if you apply it well, your child will learn to read basic words or sentences within a very short time.

This method basically helps a learner learn how break words down into sound. It is effective because in the English language, to represent words on the page, we need to translate sounds into letters and letter combinations. Therefore, reading requires one's ability to decode words into sounds.

The phonics method, unlike some other methods of teaching reading, is all about the art of breaking down words and knowing the sounds they represent. The process learning may be slow in the beginning, but gradually it becomes automatized and more fluent. Although the phonics method is one of the most effective methods of teaching reading, you still need to teach your child to memorize some words, because there are some words that are not spelled the way they sound.

## **2. The whole-word approach**

Often referred to as 'look and say' method, the whole-word approach focuses on a learner's ability to recognize whole words. Show your child a word, sound the word and ask him to repeat the whole word. You can use flashcards to teach your

child to read. It is better to use flashcards with pictures because pictures will help your child understand the meaning of the words. Without the use of pictures, this method is not very effective. But it can be one of the best methods of teaching reading if applied properly. This method is also known as sight reading. This method is also known as sight-reading. It is based on the concept that when children are exposed to a certain words for a long time, they can eventually sight-read the words. Most specialists think that this method can be as effective as other methods of teaching reading. It's especially useful when learning how to teach a toddler to read because children this young may not be ready for phonics instruction.

You can also try to teach your child whole short sentences with this method. On flashcards, write short sentences that represent pictures. Then read the sentences aloud and ask your child to repeat you. When he repeats what you said, point and look at each individual word.

In this method, students try to recognize whole words in their written forms. Context is important to make this method effective. Start with familiar words and then move on to short sentences.

This method does not involve cognitive attention for processing words. As a result, this method is faster and it facilitates reading comprehension. This method is more effective for learning to read high frequency English vocabulary.

### **3. The language experience approach**

Another method, the language experience method, uses learners' own words to help them read. Unlike other methods of teaching reading, this method is grounded in personalized learning. In this method, every child learns different words. Children often find this method very easy because they learn words they are already familiar with.

This approach involves a shared experience such as common school experiences, excursions and everyday happenings. In other words, first hand experiences are

reflected through the texts written through the language experience approach. This approach is more effective when it is combined with other methods of teaching reading.

In the primary years of schooling, it is important to understand the difference between spoken and written language. This method helps learners understand the difference. Children also develop their language skills by interacting with their parents or teachers. The method also encourages children to develop their observations and write about their experiences.

The language experience approaches works in a different way from other methods of teaching reading because this method integrates the four basic aspects of learning a language through the development of a written text which is based on a learner's first hand experiences.

To use this method, notice which words your child likes most. Then make sentences with those words. When your child draws a picture, write a description underneath the picture. Then read the description aloud. It will help your child better understand what is written. This approach supports a child's vocabulary growth and concept development. Using oral language and personal experiences, this method also offers children opportunities for meaningful reading and writing activities.

#### **4. The context support teaching**

The context support method is one of the least discussed methods of teaching reading, but it is not less effective than other methods. To attract and hold the attention of the learner, it uses the associative connection between words and pictures. To learn something, paying attention is of utmost importance. But children who are disinterested cannot pay attention long enough. . Most educators believe that this method works because it holds a learner's attention.

Once children have passed their early reading stage, parents often have difficulty finding good reading material for the children. Children have their particular interests. Boys usually like robots and boats and girls like dolls. If boys and girls are provided with reading materials that really interest them, they are unlikely to lose interest in reading. The key is to provide them with interesting reading materials so that they can read for pleasure.

When children discover pleasure in reading, they read more and learn more. If they can relate to the content they are reading, they read with enthusiasm. There are books that especially have been written to support this method. These books have long as well as short sentences that you can read to your child. You can combine short and long sentences. To make the teaching process more effective, use the context support method with other methods of teaching reading.