

# Read

## verb

\ 'rēd \

**read**\ 'red \; **reading**\ 'rē-diŋ \

### **Definition of *read***

*transitive verb*

**1** : to **receive** or take in the sense of (letters, symbols, etc.) especially by sight or touch

**(2)** : to **study the movements** of with mental formulation of the communication expressed *read* lips

**(3)** : to **utter aloud** the printed or written words of *read* them a story

**(4)** : **UNDERSTAND, COMPREHEND**

**(5)** : to **interpret** the meaning or significance of *read* palms

**(6)**: **FORETELL, PREDICT** able to *read* his fortune

**(7)**: to **recognize** or interpret as if by reading: such as

**(8)**: to **learn** the nature of by observing outward expression or signs *reads* him like a book

**(9)**: to **note** the action or characteristics of in order to **anticipate** what will happen

**(10)**: to **infer** based on schema ; as to what will happen next in the story.

**(11)**: to **attribute** a meaning to (something read) : **INTERPRET** how do you *read* this passage

**(12)**: to **INDICATE** the thermometer *reads* zero

**(13)**: to **acquire** (information) from storage *especially* : to **sense the meaning** of (data) in recorded and coded form —used of a computer or data processor.

## Reading



**Reading is the complex cognitive process of decoding symbols to derive meaning.** It is a form of language processing. **Reading can also be called a systematic, guessing game.** It is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a *receptive* skill - through it we *receive* information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

Do we need to read in order to speak English? The short answer is no. Some native speakers cannot read or write but they speak English fluently. On the other hand, reading is something that you can do on your own and that greatly broadens your vocabulary, thus helping you in speaking (and in listening and writing). Reading is therefore a highly valuable skill and activity, and it is recommended that English learners try to read as much as possible in English.

## Test Your English Reading Level

This test evaluates how well you understand what you read in English. It is strictly called a Written Comprehension Test because it shows how well you comprehend what somebody writes. You have 15 minutes to do this test. You must stop after 15 minutes and calculate your score. There are 20 questions.

For each question, choose the answer that is closest in meaning to the original sentence.

Example: The following question is an example only. When you are sure that you understand what you have to do, press the "Start your test" button.

0. Linda has a white cat and a black cat.

- She has one cat.
- Linda's cat is black and white.
- She has two cats.
- Linda likes brown cats.

**(You must stop after 15 minutes.)**

**1. A dog is bigger than a mouse, but smaller than an elephant.**

- A dog is smaller than a mouse.
- A dog is very big.
- A dog is the biggest.
- An elephant is bigger than a dog.

**2. Sam is English but Teresa isn't; she's American.**

- Teresa is English.

- Sam isn't English.
- Sam isn't American.
- Teresa and Sam aren't English.

**3. He is the oldest man in the world.**

- He is not as old as my grandmother.
- Many men are older.
- There are no older men anywhere.
- He's older than some other men.

**4. You can't come without a ticket.**

- You can come if you have a ticket.
- You mustn't go with a ticket.
- You don't need a ticket to come.
- You cannot buy a ticket outside.

**5. Asma is looking after the children.**

- She can see the children.
- She is taking care of the children.
- She is looking at the children.
- The children are in front of her.

**6. They only have one car for the family.**

- They only like cars.
- They do not like any other cars.
- They do not have two cars.
- They have a big family.

**7. What does Zara like?**

- What are her favourite things?
- How is she?
- Does she look like Zara?
- Does he like Zara?

**8. He hopes to go home, but he may go to work.**

- He'll be at home before the office.
- It is possible that he will go to work.
- He's allowed to go to work.
- He always goes home after work.

**9. I want you to clean the car when you come back.**

- You want to clean it.
- We will clean it together.
- I don't want you to forget to clean it.
- I want to clean the car.

**10. She used to smoke cigarettes.**

- She is used to cigarettes.
- She smoked before, but she doesn't now.
- She usually smokes cigarettes.
- She used two cigarettes.

**11. Shall I take you to the station?**

- Would you like me to take you to the station?
- Must I take you?
- Will it be necessary to take you there?
- Did I take you before?

**12. They should talk more slowly.**

- They talk too quickly.
- They would like to talk more slowly.
- They might have slower talks.
- Talking is not fast.

**13. Mira remembered to phone the doctor.**

- She remembered phoning the doctor.
- Mira forgot to remember to phone.
- She didn't forget to phone the doctor.

She remembered that she phoned her.

**14. Madame Timara has lived nearly 115 years.**

She was very old.

She is very old.

She died when she was nearly 115.

Madame Timara has many more years.

**15. She can hardly see it.**

She sees very hard.

She is hard with it.

She cannot see it very well.

It is hard to see her.

**16. Su Lee had her house painted white yesterday.**

She had to paint her house white yesterday.

Her house was not blue last week.

They painted her house white for her yesterday.

She painted her house yesterday.

**17. Either teacher knows the answer.**

No teachers know the answer.

Both teachers know the answer.

- All the teachers know the answer.
- Any teacher can answer.

**18. I'd rather be a millionaire.**

- I've been a millionaire.
- I'd better be a millionaire.
- I'd prefer to be a millionaire.
- You have more millions than me.

**19. You don't have to do this test.**

- You can choose not to do this test.
- You mustn't do it.
- You can't do this test.
- You have no desire to do it.

**20. If Ariel had come, she would have won.**

- If she hadn't won, she'd have come.
- Ariel didn't win because she didn't come.
- When Ariel came she always won.
- She didn't come, but she won anyway.

## Reading Skills Guide

Do you want to improve your reading skills and become a better reader? Many English learners have this goal in mind. This guide to reading can help you. You can also look below at the reading glossary for any words about reading that you don't understand.

Reading is the third of the four language skills. It is called a "receptive" skill because when we read we receive language coming in:

1. listening (← in)
2. speaking (out →)
3. reading (← in)
4. writing (out →)

## Why Read?

You probably know that even in your own language reading is regarded as important because it can be entertaining and educational, can open up new worlds enrich your life, can improve hand-eye co-ordination and enhance social skills.

But for learning a second language, in this case English, reading in that language has additional important benefits that can help you learn the language faster and more completely.

Reading is an essential skill for language learners. When your reading skills improve, your listening, speaking and writing skills improve too. Here are some of the specific reasons why English learners are encouraged to read in English:

- The constant repetition of words and patterns in reading helps you learn and remember vocabulary and grammar structures.
- Reading helps you become familiar with the rhythm of English. Over time it will start to feel natural and you will notice when a sentence or phrase doesn't seem right.
- Unlike conversation, reading is something you can do on your own.
- Reading is not expensive, often free.
- Good reading skills can improve your other language skills. You need to learn to read before you can write.
- Reading is the best way to learn and remember the proper spelling of words.
- Listening as you read aloud can help you improve your pronunciation skills.

*If you want to improve your English, learn to love reading in English.* The best readers often get the best grades, jobs and opportunities.

## **What to Read**

Are you overwhelmed by the reading materials that are available? Without spending a penny, you can read printed texts (books, magazines, newspapers at the

library), online materials (websites and blogs), and eBooks (on your mobile devices).

Think about what you like to read in your native language. Can you find these written materials in English?

There are two important things in deciding what to read:

1. It should interest you, so that the reading is fun and not boring.
2. It should be at a level that is not too difficult for you.

Here are some types of reading material to try:

- books (including children's books and graded readers)
- newspapers
- online news articles
- online blogs about topics that interest you
- letters (personal and commercial)
- transcripts (of some online videos) and sub-titles on films
- short stories
- poetry
- proverbs
- cartoons and jokes

- recipes for cooking
- advertisements and brochures

## **10 Reading Tips**

1. Read at a level slightly lower than what you understand. You should not have to look up a lot of words. It's okay to look up a few words.
2. Make reading a ritual. Choose a time and place to read every day or week. Commit to this reading time as if it were a job.
3. Read what interests you.
4. Understand what you'll be tested on. If you're working on your reading skills for a particular test, make sure to learn about the test. There may be specific formats such as advertisements that you'll have to read in the test.
5. Find free reading materials. Project Gutenberg is an excellent source, but be careful with public domain books that are written in outdated English. Some words and expressions are no longer in use.
6. Visualize what you are reading. Some people try to imagine they are reading a movie or a how-to video.
7. Listen and read. Find podcasts or videos that have transcripts and read along silently. You can also read out loud with the recording.
8. Relate what you read to your own life. How does the reading apply to you?

9. Think about the author or journalist. How would the reading differ if you were the author?
10. Check your eyesight. If you haven't had your eyesight checked in the last few years, make an appointment.

## Reading Strategies

Here are some strategies for improving your comprehension skills.

- **Skim:** read for the brief idea or overview.
- **Scan:** read for specific details or a specific reason.
- **KWL:** determine what you **K**now about the topic, what you **W**ant to know, and what you **L**earned.
- **Skip:** if you don't understand a word or section, keep reading ahead. Come back to the section or word again and try to figure out the meaning. Use a dictionary if necessary.
- **Look** for headings, subtitles and keywords.
- **Read out loud:** children read out loud when they first start reading. You can too. Get comfortable hearing your English voice.
- **Create timelines** or charts: reorganize what you read in a different format.
- **Rewrite in a different tense.**

- **Rewrite in a different format:** for example, rewrite an article in letter or list form.
- **Illustrate:** if you think you're a visual learner, sketch images or an infographic related to what you read.
- **Write the questions:** as you read, think about which questions you might find on a test or quiz. Write them down and answer them, or quiz a friend.
- **Summarize or retell:** you can do this by writing a letter to a friend, writing a blog post, making a web cam video, or just starting a conversation on this topic.
- **Learn affixes:** knowing prefixes and suffixes will increase your word recognition.
- Keep a **vocabulary journal**.
- Get a **vocabulary partner**.
- **Use a pen or ruler:** some people find it is easier to read with a pacer. A pen, ruler or fingertip can help you keep your place and prevent your eyes from wandering off. This may not be suitable if you are reading on a computer or mobile device. Adjust the screen to a larger size if necessary.

## Reading Levels

It is important to read texts that are at the right level for you - not too easy, not too difficult. You need to know what your personal reading level is. (Note that your

reading level may not be the same as your overall level in English. For example, your reading level is normally higher than your writing level, and higher than your overall level.)

Ask your teacher to help you determine your reading level. If you don't have a teacher, try reading a few texts from different levels. If you have to look up a lot of words in a dictionary, the text is too difficult for you. If you don't have to look up any words, the text is too easy for you. Try something at a lower or higher level. A teacher, librarian or bookstore clerk can help you find something easier or more difficult.

You can also try our reading test to help determine your reading level.

Designate a place and time for reading every day. Your reading level will increase with time.

### **Graded Readers**

Graded readers (also sometimes called "readers") are books that have been written for English learners at a specific level. Different publishers may use different ways of describing level, but essentially they range from Beginner to Advanced. The language in graded readers is graded by vocabulary and grammatical structure. Beginner graded readers typically use only easy grammatical forms (eg basic tenses) and a limited number of words (eg 300 headwords).

Advanced graded readers may use the full range of grammatical structures and many more words (eg 3,000 headwords). Most publishers of English language learning materials publish a range of graded readers on a variety of subjects covering fiction and non-fiction.

## Reading Tests

If you are taking a standardized English test or attending English language classes, you will probably be tested on your reading skills. Here are some things that you may be asked to do in a reading test or assignment:

- **Find the gist or main idea.** Write (or say) one sentence that explains what the reading is about.
- **Summarize.** Describe a few of the main points that are presented.
- **Locate details.** Find specific information that is provided in a piece of text.
- **Understand inferences.** Make assumptions based on information you are given in a text. You may be asked to make inferences about the author.
- **Make predictions.** Guess what a reading will be about. Guess what will happen next.
- **Identify genre and style.** Name the type or category of writing that you read.
- **Sort information.** Organize details in a systematic or chart form, such as creating a chronological timeline or labeling a map.
- **Match information.** For example, match dialogue to a character.
- **Paraphrase.** Rewrite the text in your own words.
- **Identify parts of speech.**

- **Compare and Contrast.**
- **Identify key words.**
- **Match paragraphs to headings.**
- **Write an opinion.**
- **Draw conclusions.**
- **Write comprehension questions.**
- **Decide whether something is True, False or Not Mentioned in a text.**

**Did you know you can increase your score by understanding the format of the reading and questions on a standardized test?** Stress stems from not knowing what to expect. Learn as much as you can about the types of questions and the rules for the test before you take it. This will help you to feel more relaxed on test day. Also, be sure to note how long you will have to read and answer the questions. Do some timed reading practice before test day.

## **Reading Categories**

Read what interests you. Here are some categories that can help you find what you are looking for in a library, bookstore or online search. Other categories such as poetry and drama may also interest you.

## **Fiction**

Writing that describes imaginary events and people (such as short stories and novels):

- classics
- crime and mystery
- fantasy
- horror
- literary fiction
- popular fiction
- romance
- science fiction
- short stories
- women's fiction
- young adult fiction

## **Non-fiction**

Writing about facts, real events and real people (such as history or biography):

- arts and crafts

- autobiography
- biography
- cooking
- gardening
- history
- how to
- memoir
- science
- self-help
- technology
- travel

## Reading terms

A glossary of words and terms that we use to talk about reading

**autobiography** (noun): story of a person's life written by that same person

**brochure** (noun): booklet or small magazine with information and images about a product, place or service

**comprehension** (noun): action of understanding what you are reading; ability to understand what you are reading

**dialogue** (noun): conversation between two or more people that is written in a text

**eBook** (noun): electronic book; book that you can download and read on a computer or mobile device

**fiction** (noun): writing that is about imaginary events and people

**genre** (noun): category based on content, style or form

**gist** (noun): central idea of a text; the essence of a text

**grade** (noun): mark or percentage that indicates the quality of your work (test, assignment etc)

**graded readers** (noun): books written at different levels specially for English learners

**heading** (noun): title of a section or division in a text, such as a chapter heading

**headword** (noun): (in a dictionary) first and main word of each entry; the word that is being defined (for example, *dog* is a headword but the plural *dogs* is not a headword; and *run* is a headword but the past tense *ran* is not a headword)

**inference** (noun): conclusion that one comes to based on logic and information provided

**info-graphic** (noun): visual representation of text or information, with minimal text used

**keyword** (noun): important word in a text; word that holds the "key" to meaning

**literature** (noun): written materials, especially when considered to be of great artistic merit

**memoir** (noun): personal account of an aspect of one's life, written from one's own memory

**non-fiction** (noun): writing that is about facts, real events and real people

**paragraph** (noun): distinct section of a text, containing one main idea or scene,

and usually indicated by a new line

**paraphrase** (verb): to rewrite (or describe) a text in one's own words

**proverb** (noun): short saying about a general truth or belief

**read aloud** | **read out loud** (verb): to read audibly, not silently, so that other people, if present, could hear

**reading level** (noun): grade that defines one's reading ability (levels may be shown, for example, as: beginner to advanced; low to high; numerically 1 to 5)

**scan** (verb): to read a text quickly looking for specific details

**skill** (noun): ability to do something well (the four main skills that we need in language are listening, speaking, reading and writing)

**skim** (verb): to read a text quickly to get a general idea or overview

**skip** (verb): to pass a word or section (and possibly go back later)

**subtitle** (noun): additional, more detailed heading that comes under a main heading

**summary** (noun): brief account of the main points of a text

**text** (noun): written work; the written words that you read

**transcript** (noun): written version of spoken words (for example, transcript of a film or podcast)

## Improve Reading Skills

By

Kenneth Beare

Kenneth Beare is an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher and course developer with over three decades of teaching experience.

OUR EDITORIAL PROCESS

Updated June 16, 2017

Reading is an important part of learning English, but many students find it difficult. This collection of tips will help you improve reading by using skills you use in your own language.

### **Tip 1: Read for Gist**

Gist = the main ideas

Read the text a first time. Don't stop. Read to understand the main ideas, and don't look up new words. You'll be surprised that you can usually understand the general idea of the story.

### **Tip 2: Use Context**

Context refers words and situations that are around a word you don't understand. Look at the example sentence:

*I went to the schlumping to buy some chitla for dinner.*

What's 'schlumping'? - it must be a store because you bought something there.

What's 'chitia'? - It must be food because you are going to eat it for dinner.

### **Tip 3: Use Your Own Language**

One of the best tips on improving reading is to think about how you read in your own language. Start by thinking about how you read different documents. How do you read the newspaper? How do you read novels? How do you read train schedules? and so on. Taking time to think about this will help give you clues on how to read in English - even if you don't understand every single word.

Ask yourself this question: ***Do I read every word in your own language when I am reading a schedule, summary, or other outlining document?***

The answer is most definitely: *No!* Reading in English is like reading in your native language. This means that it is not always necessary to read and understand each and every word in English. Remember that reading skills in your native language and English are basically the same.

### **Tip 4: Understand Different Reading Skills**

Here is a quick overview of the four types of reading skills used in every language:

Skimming - used to understand the "gist" or main idea

Scanning - used to find a particular piece of information

Extensive reading - used for pleasure and general understanding

Intensive reading - accurate reading for detailed understanding

## **Skimming**

Skimming is used to quickly gather the most important information, or 'gist'. Run your eyes over the text, noting important information. Use skimming to quickly get up to speed on a current business situation. It's not essential to understand each word when skimming.

*Examples of Skimming:*

- The Newspaper (quickly to get the general news of the day)
- Magazines (quickly to discover which articles you would like to read in more detail)
- Business and Travel Brochures (quickly to get informed)

## **Scanning**

Scanning is used to find a particular piece of information. Run your eyes over the text looking for the specific piece of information you need. Use scanning on schedules, meeting plans, etc. in order to find the specific details you require. If you see words or phrases that you don't understand, don't worry when scanning.

*Examples of Scanning*

- The "What's on TV" section of your newspaper.
- A train / airplane schedule
- A conference guide

This lesson plan focusing on scanning reading skills can be of help in practicing these skills on your own or in printed out for in-class use.

## **Extensive reading**

Extensive reading is used to obtain a general understanding of a subject and includes reading longer texts for pleasure, as well as business books. Use extensive reading skills to improve your general knowledge of business procedures. Do not worry if you understand each word.

### *Examples of Extensive Reading*

- The latest marketing strategy book
- A novel you read before going to bed
- Magazine articles that interest you

This lesson focusing on improving vocabulary through extensive reading can be of help putting these skills into practice.

### **Intensive reading**

Intensive reading is used on shorter texts in order to extract specific information. It includes very close accurate reading for detail. Use intensive reading skills to grasp the details of a specific situation. In this case, it is important that you understand each word, number or fact.

### *Examples of Intensive Reading*

- A bookkeeping report
- An insurance claim
- A contract

## **Reading Tips to Improve Your Pronunciation**

If you're working on pronunciation, these tips can help you use reading as a way to practice outside of class, either by yourself or with a couple of friends.

### **Top Tips**

- Choose a paragraph and read aloud.
- Choose a paragraph and mark each sentence with a sound script (helpful pronunciation markup). This will help you read more naturally, and thus pronounce correctly.
- Choose a few sentences from your reading material and highlight content words. Read these sentences focusing on accenting these content words while quickly speaking over the structure words.

- Once you become comfortable reading a single paragraph aloud, read an entire page by reading a paragraph aloud and then reading one silently.
- Choose some nursery rhymes to practice. They will help you with pronunciation through rhythm.
- Read a short story or a few paragraphs to a friend who is also studying English. Compare the differences and discuss what might be the reasons for the differences.
- Choose a paragraph, short article, or newspaper story with new vocabulary. Use the Babylon dictionary or another online pronunciation resource to help you learn the correct pronunciation of these words.
- Read a play with some friends. Each friend takes a different part. Start with short scenes. Once you are comfortable, read longer pieces together.

## **How to Improve Your Vocabulary**

There are many ways to improve your vocabulary. When working to do so, it's important to know your goals in order to best choose the way in which you want to learn. For instance, reading can be a great way to improve your vocabulary, but it won't be much help on a vocabulary test next week. Here are a number of methods to help you improve and expand your English vocabulary.

### **Synonyms and Antonyms**

A synonym is a word that has a similar meaning. An antonym is a word that has the opposite meaning. When learning new vocabulary, try to find at least two synonyms and two antonyms for each word. This is especially important when learning adjectives or adverbs.

### **Use a Thesaurus**

A thesaurus is a reference book that provides synonyms and antonyms. Used by writers to help find just the right word, a thesaurus can also help English learners expand their vocabulary. You can use an online thesaurus which makes finding a synonym easier than ever.

## Vocabulary Trees

Vocabulary trees help provide context. Once you've mapped out a few vocabulary trees, you'll discover yourself thinking in vocabulary groups. When you see a cup your mind will quickly relate such words as *knife, fork, plate, dishes, etc.*

## Create Vocabulary Themes

Create a list of vocabulary themes and include a definition and an example sentence for each new item. Learning by theme emphasizes words that are related. This will help you memorize new vocabulary because of the connections between these words and your chosen theme.

## Use Technology to Help You

Watching movies or sitcoms is a great way to help you understand native speakers of English. Use the options of watching individual scenes to make DVD use into a vocabulary learning exercise. For example, watch one scene from a movie in English only. Next, watch the same scene in your native language. After that, watch the same scene in English with subtitles. Finally, watch the scene in English without subtitles. By watching the scene four times and using your own language to help, you'll pick up a lot of idiomatic language.

## Specific Vocabulary Lists

Rather than studying a long list of unrelated vocabulary, use specific vocabulary lists to help you prepare for the type of vocabulary you need for work, school, or hobbies. These business vocabulary word lists are great for industry-specific vocabulary items.

## Word Formation Charts

Word formation refers to the form a word takes. For example, the word *satisfaction* has four forms:

Noun: satisfaction --> *The satisfaction of a job well done is worth the effort.*

Verb: satisfy --> *Taking this course will satisfy your degree requirements.*

Adjective: satisfying / satisfied --> *I found the dinner very satisfying.*

Adverb: satisfyingly --> *His mother smiled satisfyingly as her son won the award.*

Word formation is one of the keys to success for advanced level ESL learners. Advanced level English exams such as the TOEFL, First Certificate CAE, and Proficiency use word formation as one of the key testing elements. These word formation charts provide the concept noun, personal noun, adjective, and verb forms of key vocabulary listed in alphabetical order.

### **Research Specific Positions**

A great place to start learning vocabulary for a specific job is the Occupational Outlook Handbook. At this site, you will find detailed descriptions of specific positions. Use these pages to take note of key vocabulary related to the profession. Next, use this vocabulary and write your own description of your position.

### **Visual Dictionaries**

A picture is worth a thousand words. It's also very helpful for learning precise vocabulary. There are a number of excellent English learner visual dictionaries for sale. Here is an online version of a visual dictionary dedicated to jobs.

### **Learn Collocations**

Collocations refer to words that often or always go together. A good example of a collocation is *do your homework*. Collocations can be learned through the use of corpora. Corpora are huge collections of documents that can track the number of times a word is used. Another alternative is to use a collocation dictionary. This is especially helpful when focusing on business English.

## Vocabulary Learning Tips

1. Use vocabulary learning methods to focus quickly on the vocabulary YOU need to study.
2. Don't make random lists of new words. Try to group words in themes. This will help you memorize new words more quickly.
3. Always add context by writing out a few example sentences using new vocabulary.
4. Keep a vocabulary notepad at hand whenever you are reading in English.
5. Use a flashcard app on your smartphone to review vocabulary when you have some extra time.
6. Before you begin your day, choose five words and try to use each word during conversations throughout the day.