

# 62

## HOW TO READ MORE QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY

### CÓMO LEER DE FORMA MÁS RÁPIDA Y EFICAZ

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Suggested citation (APA, seventh ed.)

Gasimova, E. (2023). How to read more quickly and effectively. *Revista Conrado*, 19(95), 582-588.

#### ABSTRACT

In the contemporary world, reading is a fundamental skill for the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual development. The result of the act of reading is the literal comprehension of the ideas expressed, as well as other types of higher order that include interpretive, critical, and creative comprehension. Given its importance, the objective of this work is to analyze methods and techniques to improve the speed and efficiency of reading, which ultimately allows addressing the large amount of academic material effectively. As a main result, we found that by implementing superficial, selective and critical reading techniques, taking advantage of technological tools and managing time effectively, students can optimize their reading process and achieve a higher level of comprehension. Furthermore, while reading may have an academic component, fostering the pleasure of reading various types of literature is important as being exposed to various points of view has been shown to be helpful in developing the imagination. In addition, the role of the teacher from an early age plays a fundamental role since in various ways it can increase the motivation of students.

#### Keywords:

Reading skills, language and communication skills, understanding, learning habits.

#### RESUMEN

En el mundo contemporáneo, la lectura es una habilidad fundamental para la adquisición de conocimiento y el desarrollo intelectual. El resultado del acto de lectura es la comprensión literal de las ideas expresadas, así como otros tipos de orden superior que incluyen la comprensión interpretativa, crítica y creativa. Dada su importancia, el objetivo de este trabajo es analizar métodos y técnicas para mejorar la rapidez y eficiencia de la lectura, lo que permite en última instancia abordar la gran cantidad de material académico de manera efectiva. Como resultado principal se comprobó que al implementar técnicas de lectura superficial, selectiva y crítica, aprovechar las herramientas tecnológicas y gestionar el tiempo de manera efectiva, los estudiantes pueden optimizar su proceso de lectura y alcanzar un mayor nivel de comprensión. Además, si bien la lectura puede tener un componente académico, fomentar el placer de leer diversos tipos de literatura es importante puesto que se ha demostrado como verse expuesto a diversos puntos de vista es útil para el desarrollo de la imaginación. Además, el papel del maestro desde tempranas edades juega un papel fundamental puesto que de diversas formas puede aumentar la motivación de los estudiantes.

#### Palabras clave:

Habilidades de lectura, habilidades de lenguaje y comunicación, comprensión, hábitos de aprendizaje.

## INTRODUCTION

With the explosion of information technologies, a debate has arisen around the differences in the reading experience between digital devices and print books, which naturally exhibit different characteristics and implications. Reading on digital devices, such as e-readers, tablets, and smartphones, offers convenience and accessibility, allowing readers to carry a vast library on one device and access a wide range of materials instantly. The digital format often provides adjustable font sizes and lighting settings, catering to individual preferences and improving readability. However, the digital interface can present challenges such as screen brightness, potential distractions from notifications or other apps, and the potential for eye strain during extended use. On the other hand, printed books offer tactile and sensory engagement that digital devices cannot fully replicate. The physical sensation of holding a book, flipping through its pages, and the distinctive smell of paper contribute to a sensory-rich reading experience. Print books are free from the potential interruptions of digital notifications and provide a focused and immersive environment for reading. The choice between digital devices and print books often depends on personal preferences and the reading context. Digital devices offer convenience and portability, making them suitable for reading on the go and quick access to a variety of content. Print books, on the other hand, provide a tangible and focused reading experience, which some people find conducive to deep understanding and enjoyment (Bailey, 2019; Boechler et al., 2012; Tanner, 2014).

It does not matter if in an electronic device, or in a printed book, what does exist consensus is that engaging in regular reading yields several cognitive advantages. Consistent reading fosters improved reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary skills. It actively contributes to refining the mastery and application of reading techniques, encompassing phonetic decoding and word recognition. Reading also serves as a catalyst for cerebral activity, leading to the enhancement of cognitive functions such as memory retention, focused attention, and critical analysis. This mental exercise bolsters brain activity and sustains its vitality, potentially correlating with heightened cognitive performance. In addition, the consumption of fictional literature has been correlated with an increase in empathy and a more profound grasp of alternate viewpoints. By immersing readers in diverse characters' emotions and experiences, it nurtures empathy and bolsters emotional intelligence. Reading also exposes individuals to a spectrum of subjects, concepts, and viewpoints, thereby facilitating the acquisition of knowledge across multiple domains. This exposure broadens one's

comprehension of the world and propels intellectual advancement (McCollough et al., 2008; Merga, 2017).

Reading is closely related to the development of critical thinking skills (Zaim et al., 2021). For example, Hollis (2021) found that reading fiction is associated with improved social and imaginative reasoning that could lead to improved critical thinking. The study investigated the relationship between fiction and nonfiction exposure, narrative transportation, and factors of critical thinking (critical thinking disposition, and epistemological orientation). The findings showed that fiction scores were significantly associated with higher critical thinking disposition. On the other hand, it is of interest the study of different techniques to improve this process. In this regard, for example, Hazaymeh & Alomery (2021) found that using visual mind mapping as a reading strategy improved English language learners' critical thinking skills and reading ability and Wiseman (2011) demonstrated how interactive read aloud were important learning opportunities for emergent readers because they provided opportunities for open-ended responses combined with specific reading instruction.

Special importance has been given in research to strategies to improve reading speed without compromising comprehension. In this sense, regular reading practice can help improve both reading speed and comprehension. This can involve setting aside dedicated time for reading each day, as well as incorporating reading into other activities, such as commuting or waiting in line (Mora et al., 2021). Skimming and scanning are well-known strategies to improve reading speed but other approaches have been identified, such as summarizing, which can also help improve comprehension while reading more efficiently (Bapitha & Gunasekaran, 2019; Fauzi, 2018). Considering this, the objective of this work is to analyze methods and techniques to improve the speed and efficiency of reading.

## DEVELOPMENT

### On the importance of developing reading skills

Reading fires up imagination and stimulates the memory centers of the mind. Also, it helps recall information as well as stabilize emotions. Reading skills can take a person a step ahead and help you achieve your objectives by customizing the way you read. If you choose the appropriate reading skill, it will enhance the reading process and help you achieve your goal. Then reading enhances our life in several ways:

- **Exercising the mind.** One of the advantages of reading is that it engages various parts of your brain. When you read, you exercise your comprehension abilities and your analytical abilities.

- **The role of reading skills in communication.** Reading improves your writing style and flow. Another vital role of reading skills in communication is perfecting your oratory skills. By reading you know new words and perspectives.
- **Finding yourself.** They have the potential to broaden your perspective, shape your attitude towards others and life, open you up to new ways of thinking about everyday life. When you read, you decide who you want to become.
- **Becoming a well-read individual.** The words “well-read” are often used to denote a learned individual, full of wisdom. Before internet, books were the only sources of information and knowledge. One of the great benefits of reading is that it helps you evolve your understanding of the world.
- **Improves your thinking skills and analytical abilities.** When you read a book, your mind works faster. Reading elevates analytical and critical thinking abilities. In such case, each book becomes a puzzle your mind races to solve and with each book it keeps improving.

Active reading is about more than reading words in black and white and answering questions afterwards. Students' engagement is important in order to optimize learning, so as the teachers get their students involved in what they are reading. Active reading techniques can help students stay focused and retain more information, but it's a skill that takes time and effort to develop. Students sometimes forget all that they do while reading. We are predicting, making connections, contextualizing, critiquing and already plotting how they might use any new insights or information. As teachers we need to train students in each of these skills and begin to do so early on. Active reading helps learners the whole range of reading skills: prediction, vocabulary strategies, inference, skimming, topic sentences and more. Learners work on a wide variety of text types, based around lively, stimulating topics. They can listen to the texts and each unit finishes with a freer skills-based activity.

In fact, when students begin to read any text in English sometimes, they do not know the translation of the words. In my opinion, in such case, they can use a dictionary. We know that dictionaries can be helpful when they are reading because they help students find out the meaning of words. Students can use a dictionary to look up the meaning of any words that they do not understand.

A dictionary is a reference book containing the words of a language usually alphabetically arranged with information on their forms, pronunciations, functions, and idiomatic uses. In the language learning/teaching process the importance of using dictionaries cannot be defined. It is

obvious that the dictionary can be an extremely useful learning resource, especially as it makes the learner more independent of the teacher. If the students learn how to use a dictionary effectively, then the dictionary can be a very helpful resource for their studies. In fact, a dictionary is a reference book about words and as such it describes the functioning of individual words. Then, many dictionaries focus on a more narrow and specialized part of a language, for example the words used in engineering, economics, medicine, aviation, experimental psychology, etc.

The goal of the big dictionaries is to make a complete inventory of a language, recording every word that can be found. Its most general functions are the following:

- The dictionary provides information on parts and aspects of the lexicon of one language. This is monolingual dictionary.
- The dictionary provides help in translating between languages. This is a plurilingual dictionary (mostly, bilingual).
- An alphabetical dictionary provides statistical information on each entry.
- A frequency dictionary in which terms are ordered according to some statistical value. Commonly just their frequency in the corpus.
- The basic dictionary of a language is the core of its lexicon.
- A retrograde dictionary is a dictionary whose lemmas are ordered alphabetically according to their end.

A terminological dictionary is that whose entries are constituted by the elements of a terminology. A terminological dictionary comprises the following items:

- Analysis of the term: information about origin, and meaning of the components
- Equivalent terms in other languages that many terminological dictionaries are in order to extend vocabulary.
- The concept of the onomasiological dictionary presupposes the converse relation between onomasiology and semasiology, for which see the corresponding section.

Reading skills are abilities that concern to students' talent to read, understand, interpret paraphrase written language and texts. We know that reading skills can be highly beneficial to assimilating and react to written communications like emails, messages, texts, and articles. Using reading skills in many places, especially universities can also be the main step for ensuring effective written communication. Reading skills can also assist in some key aspects that work together to develop overall literacy skills, including comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and strategies

that help students interpret and find meaning in texts. So, how to improve reading skills? I think that the following steps also help in order to improve and expand their reading skills:

1. Set aside time to read each day. One of the main ways to expand skills is to practice. Developing reading skills will finally take practice and students can set aside 15 or 20 minutes each day to read in English.
2. Set reading goals. They can establish reading goals for themselves to assist to develop a wider vocabulary, obtain a deeper understanding of different texts, and promote their ability to make connections between things they read and their own perspectives and ideas.
3. Pay attention to the text you read. Previewing texts can be another step toward improving reading skills. They can employ this strategy by previewing titles, headlines, and other text features to get an idea of what they are reading about. This way can help students form the main ideas about the text before they begin reading it.
4. Define the purpose. If students begin to read different texts, practice determining the purpose. Students have to think about why different articles were written and what meanings can be understood from a text or article. Furthermore, they can recognize the purpose that they are reading for, such as to get information, follow instructions in a manual, or take pleasure in a story. Knowing the aim of reading a text can help them look for the main ideas and details that support their purpose.
5. Apply key reading strategies. If students read different texts, they can apply some key strategies to help to increase their comprehension. When previewing a text, students can determine the text structure as informational, logical, or instructional. Also, they can determine key elements of different texts like the central themes, difficult situations and solutions, or comparative ideas presented in what they read.
6. Take notes when you read. Another main effective method for developing their reading skills is to take notes when students read. Taking notes while reading an interesting text is useful to gain a deeper understanding of the author's choice of language. To my mind, note-taking can be highly beneficial for comprehension exercises like summarizing, too.
7. Use a dictionary when you read. When students start to read any text, sometimes, they face difficult situations. Using a dictionary help to increase their vocabulary, enhance their concentration and understand a text as a whole since a dictionary assists to enrich in all aspects.

While reading is the work of the mind, incorporating the senses provides extra reinforcement for students who are

still growing their skills. Reading paragraphs aloud and verbalizing questions they would mentally ask while reading can be a great benefit to students. In fact, students sometimes have no idea how to ask questions, or what type of questions to ask, so modeling this skill is invaluable. In such cases, teachers have to help and encourage students to read accurately and give translations of the words. Besides, teachers have to guide students in setting reading goals. When writing goals are used regularly in the classroom, students do not assess personal reading skills on a regular basis. After reading a short story help students evaluate their reading skills. Students should evaluate goals on a regular basis and create new goals based on their needs and growth. Teachers should give an opportunity in order to be freed in the classroom and students should be able to demonstrate their skills in assessment. Given comprehension questions are a good way to check for basic understanding. The majority of teachers always incorporate skill building in their classes to some degree, however, taking time to discuss and actively engage students in the process will keep skill development at the forefront of learning. The result will be students who not only make gains in reading but also have an understanding of how to become better readers.

### **The art of Reading more effectively and efficiency**

Reading quickly with good comprehension requires focus and concentration. In order to speed reading students, have to investigate techniques that they can use to read better and faster. Speed reading is the process of rapidly recognizing and absorbing phrases or sentences on a page. All speed-reading techniques have one thing in common: avoid pronouncing and hearing each word in their head as they read it, a process known as "sub-vocalization".

Learning to read faster takes practice and like many other skills that students have to practice, there are exercises that can be done to improve their reading skills. One main exercise that can be predictable to practice is the basic "sped training". Speed training helps students improve their reading speed by forcing them to see words at a movement that is faster than their regular reading speed. Here are key examples of speed training.

**Step 1.** Students have to use and choice material that they normally read. For example: textbooks or regular books, newspapers, or magazines, etc.

**Step 2.** Read 10 minutes. Don't go faster or slower read normally. Especially, read for good comprehension.

**Step 3.** When read a text students have to take notes after every paragraphs.



**Step 4.** After reading a text go back to the beginning, where originally started and try reading the same material again but in less time. May be 6 minutes. The purpose is to see words at a paragraph and the easiest way to do that is by going through material they have already read. To my mind. This process the first speed training. Don't worry if it feels a little too fast, because the main goal is to get used to see words. Using hand, finger or pen as a guide while doing this exercise.

**Step 5.** Go back to the beginning were started reading for the first 10 minutes. Get through the material now in 5 minutes. Remember purposely trying to go faster than normally read even if that means donating comprehension.

**Step 6.** Go back to the beginning. Get through the material again in 4 minutes. This is last speed training.

**Step 7.** Students have just finished 15 minutes of speed training. After that they have to calculate their reading speed. Find some new material to read. They could pick up where they left off at the beginning of the first 10 minutes of reading that they did, or they can choose separate material. Just make it is of the same difficulty level. Read for 1 minute. Make sure that they are reading normally in order to get positive expectations. Using this process, they will get better with practice. Ideally, this training should be practiced for 2 weeks, 15 or 20 minutes per day.

The goal during speed reading exercises is to change muscle memory and improve reading habits and eye movements. Speed reading will allow students to read more materials in the same time that they spend reading now. Thus, it allows them more time to read the materials that they want to. As their speed-reading skills improve, they will also train yourself to focus in on important details within the reading material. They will begin to retain more of the material that they read and also find time to continue doing things that were preventing their reading more in the past. In order to maintain a positive attitude and mindset is very important for speed reading. Success in speed reading, as well as in anything that students will undertake has more to do with their feeling good about themselves. It is the confidence that they lace in themselves that sees them through the tasks. As the correct frame of mind is of the most importance to success, also the wellness of the body. It helps greatly if the body itself feels supple and ready to go. Furthermore, the proper maintenance of the body, in turn, affects the mind positively. Reading efficiency is a critical component of reading proficiency. An efficient reading process is fluent and feels easy and comfortable.

Efficient readers can read for extended periods of time with good comprehension because they expend little

energy on the mechanics of reading. Mental resources are focused on making meaning from text. Reading involves physical and cognitive processes. First, students' eyes must navigate across lines of text in a coordinated and sequential fashion to recognize words and phrases. Next, students' vocabulary and comprehension skills work to connect ideas and create meaning. Efficient eye-movement behavior is visually unnatural, and many students struggle with it. Efficient eye movement is a learned behavior one that improves with good practice. Synergically, improved reading efficiency leads to higher rates of comprehension and motivation.

When students struggle with the physical act of reading, reading becomes laborious and unproductive. Inefficient readers find it difficult to maintain the level of attention required to comprehend the text and as a result, are less likely to develop the motivation to read on their own. In contrast, a fluent reader's visual and perceptual skills are efficient, enabling the reader to focus attention on constructing meaning from the text. The fluent reader's mental energy is freed up to focus on what truly motivates reading the meaningful experience of being inspired and engaged as well as learning from what he or she reads. Reading more effectively means developing a main process to concentrate ideas, analyze factors and ask the right questions. So, it means identifying the right books to read, understanding the different reading goals, and using evidence-based techniques to increase reading productivity. In my opinion, who want to read effectively have to use a variety of skills and techniques such as:

- start by creating an optimal setting for reading. Students have to pick up the best time, place and conditions.
- students have to engage in pre-reading strategies before starting to read.
- students have to try to read material with potential and efficiently. What do they have to do? They have to pick up a piece of material, take an active part in reading and finish.
- students have to investigate content they don't fully understand.
- students have to discover the central meaning of the piece. What do they have to do? They ask themselves 1) What is the text trying to say? 2) What story or text is the author telling? and 3) How does the author create and build this meaning?

The role of the teacher is also essential. When teachers act as facilitators of class discussion students see themselves as valuable contributors to their own learning. Allow students the opportunity to take part in the discussion that involves elaborating on their thinking receiving feedback will lead to the construction of their knowledge and

understanding of a text. In a sense, language teachers act as tour guides during the lesson, especially give to be freedom. Besides, teachers must ensure that they have ample opportunities to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the target language. Comprehending and communicating through print texts is central to language arts programming.

### On how to motivate and stimulate reading

Motivation is an important element in reading engagement, which ultimately results in reading achievement. In my opinion, the basic approach for increasing main motivation for reading consists of teachers using situational interest to encourage the development of long-term individual interest in reading by using stimulating tasks such as hands-on science observations and experiments to expand situational interest. Students with a high number of stimulating tasks increase their reading comprehension when they take an active part in the lesson. Students' motivation predicts their level of reading comprehension after controlling for initial comprehension. To demonstrate the importance of using different resources in a class, like innovative materials can motivate the learners to participate and produce more. In the case of recycling materials, it becomes easier, more accessible and more economical which must be prepared by the teachers and students and will contribute to developing more abilities, creativity, and imagination in students who will enjoy what they do. Inspire and motivation in the educational world is a term that is commonly used in order to get an increasing variety of learning. The process of motivation is characterized in the following way:

- Motivation is an internal feeling.
- Motivation is related to needs.
- Motivation shows goal-oriented behavior.

To motivate students in an effective way would be necessary to find out what their main needs are and, in this way, they would be solving the main reason for their disinterest in learning. As a teacher, we always to find out ways in order to motivate students to stimulate reading (Radach & Kennedy, 2013). So, here are some tips on how to motivate students to stimulate reading:

1. Allow students to be freedom what they read. If we are able to encourage students to read, then we better make sure we are leading by example. When students begin to read a text, let them read aloud.
2. Let students to read the whole text before discussing it. Give the opportunity to read an article before we divide it apart and talk about literary devices. Besides, allow students the chance to read it once through, then we must go chapter by chapter and dissect.

3. Teach students reading strategies. Many students sometimes do not like to read because it's hard for them. Teach students reading strategies and help them feel confident and read fluently.
4. Help students see the importance of reading.
5. In fact, reading is one of the most complex tasks. In order to read, they must translate visual symbols into words and words into meaning. For this reason, sometimes some students face difficulties when they begin to read any text. Unfortunately. Students with poor reading abilities do not just outgrow their limitations. So, in order to move off the challenge of learning in reading and stimulate reading they can use the following tips:
  - Help students activate their prior knowledge of a topic and take guesses about what they are about to read by analyzing the text to assess the main idea.
  - Build vocabulary. very often students can not translate a text because they do not the translation of words. Teaching vocabulary is also helpful for spelling skills. Teachers can provide a glossary alongside a text or pre-teach key terms before the reading begins. As learning and understand the translation of words in context will provide additional depth in meaning of words.
  - Read aloud helps students in order to increase their abilities. Rading aloud should help students stay focused, understand better and remember what they are reading (Hazzard, 2016).
  - Explain to be careful. When they are reading explain them to focus their attention on each word and be sure that they read what is written.

### CONCLUSIONS

Reading is essentially a problem-solving task. Comprehensive what is read, like problem-solving, requires effort, planning, strategy selection, and reflection. As students move through university, reading materials become more complex. Students who approach reading as a problem-solving activity take an active and strategic approach to reading, being able of higher awareness of how well understand what they read. Especially, teachers have to know that a distinction is made in the literature between two forms of reading: intense and extensive reading. Intensive reading involves the deconstruction of a text. The aim is to get as much information as possible. By reading intensively students are concerned with every detail related to the text. The learner is encouraged to deal with vocabulary and grammar activities to get deeply understanding of the text. Extensive reading, however, refers to simply reading as much as possible without concerning oneself with every detail. To my mind, occasional unknown words are not supposed to get too much attention because the focus is on the overall meaning. That is to say,

extensive readers look up words only when they deem it absolutely necessary for the comprehension.

The focus of developing reading skills should address phonemic awareness, spelling practice, vocabulary learning and grammar study. In order to stimulate a reading strategy is a main plan that good readers adopt to understand a text. By becoming aware of these purposeful strategies, students may get full control of reading comprehension. Students must be also encouraged to practice daily; extensive reading helps them become fluent and increase their speed at reading different texts in order to obtain the academic success that assists students' future careers.

Guided reading is also helpful, teaching reading skills the main approach in order to build and improve reading comprehension. Guided reading is a small group approach to the explicit teaching of reading skills. In this approach, the teacher guides the students to make meaning as they read. Students read, think, retell, discuss, and ask questions to each other. However, in order to enhance imagination teachers, have to let students during lessons to be free even if they cannot express their opinions. In the end, it is a matter of balance which demand a high preparation of the professor.

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