

UNIT 1: Developing reading skills

Recommended Prior Knowledge: Students will have read and engaged with a variety of First Language English texts drawn from newspapers, magazines, reference books, biographies/autobiographies, travel literature, websites, letters, advertising and propaganda material, narratives, drama and poetry. These may have been extracts or whole texts. They will have been read for information and for response.

Context: This unit should be studied as an introduction to the work in Units 3, 4 and 5.

Outline: The Unit shows students how to be aware of their own reading skills and performance and gives practice in identifying, extracting and discussing information and ideas from texts.

1	Learning Outcomes	Suggested Teaching Activities	Related assignments	Resources
A	Read for gist and detail	Students read unseen, short narrative text in only (e.g.) 2 minutes. They identify main points orally. They re-read for significant detail and discuss what the 2 nd reading has added and how successful each reading has been.	1: Repeat exercise with discursive texts, e.g. identifying arguments. 2: Give texts individually to students to read quickly: they give brief oral accounts.	1 Self contained short texts from stories and novels. 2 Texts from newspapers and magazines explaining issues and presenting arguments.

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B	Find your own reading speed R 1-3	Students read silently from the same place at their normal speed. Teacher monitors how far they have reached after 10-15 minutes. Teacher announces where (a) the average (b) the quick and (c) the slower readers have reached on average, and ensures that all reach the same place (e.g. by reading extracts out loud).	Test effective reading by average, quick and slow readers by asking 10 questions, “ what do you think?” type questions and deductions, such as what is learnt about character.	A short story or a new chapter in a novel.
C	Brain and eye activity R 1-2	1: Students open books at given page and are immediately given questions from the text using words in the text and then paraphrases. 2: In pairs, one watches the other’s eyes during silent reading to detect re-reading of passages. Eyes should pause twice per line, not on each word. 3: Students read first sentence per paragraph and then scan down. How much do they understand?	1: Discuss why it was possible to answer so promptly. 2: Discuss ways of avoiding re-reading and of using eyes more effectively. 3: Discuss whether detail was noticed using this method.	1: A single page from a book of short texts. 2 and 3: Any text.

1	Learning Outcomes	Suggested Teaching Activities	Related assignments	Resources
D	Self-assessment	Create a leaflet. Include a space for a reading list of whole texts from the start of the school year. Ask questions or start statements relating to comments on strengths and weaknesses, how improvements could be made, attitudes towards reading (silent and aloud), spaces for teacher and parent comments.	Use this document after addressing skills in this Unit and not more than twice in the school year. Use individual and group strategies to encourage improved skills for each student over the period of the course.	A well-designed, non-threatening leaflet with questions and statements in everyday language such as: 'What do you think when a teacher tells you to read for homework?' or 'The worst thing about my reading is...'
E	Note-taking and highlighting R 1-3 W 2-3	Teacher discusses different methods of making notes (esp. diagrams, headed notes, buzz-words, etc.) and asks students to discover which suits them. 'Own words' is set as the norm. Students read informative texts and make rough notes. They make a final draft of the notes that is suitable for others' use.	Make notes from 1: A TV broadcast, 2: A radio documentary, 3: A talk given in class, and develop them into an article for a magazine called 'Info'.	Any informative text, sound text, or moving image text.
F	Use websites and the library Note that students will need to understand how the books in the library are classified. R 1-3	Teacher chooses topic(s) and checks out (3) websites containing potentially useful information. Students search for and select information, creating a note-file. Results are cross-referenced and ordered as notes.	1: Notes form basis of brief talk (C5: 1 and 6:1), (S1, 2 and 4) 2: or an article for an encyclopaedia (W2-4), 3: or a double spread in a kids' magazine.	1: Pre-selected or random websites. OR 2: Reference and specialist books in the library.