

EnglishConnect 3: Strategy Instruction

Reading

1. Pre-Reading:

Good readers take time to think and look before they begin to read. Thinking about and looking at the text you will read can help you understand better when you begin reading. Before you read, you should take time to

- Activate your background knowledge. Background knowledge is the information and experiences you have with the topic presented in the reading. For example, if the reading is about cooking, all of your knowledge and experiences with cooking are your background knowledge. Before you read, take time to think about your background knowledge. Do you have experience with the topic? What is your opinion of the topic? What facts do you know about the topic? Asking questions like this will help activate your background knowledge.

One way to activate your background knowledge is by using a KWL Chart. In a KWL Chart, you write down all the things you know about the reading topic, the things you want to find out as you read, and after you read, the things you learned.

- Example KWL chart:

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/4d/1f/02/4d1f02ccc536f5f6085d63a052af75d7.jpg>

- Make predictions. A prediction is a guess about what you think is going to happen in a reading passage. Before you read, take time to guess what the reading will be about and what it will say.
 - Practice making predictions:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDi_SKEsahU&t=7s
- Preview. “Pre” means before, and “view” means “look.” Before you read, you should preview, or look at the text you are going to read to get a general idea about the passage. As you preview, look at things like the title, headings, bold or underlined words, pictures, and the first and last sentences of paragraphs.
 - Previewing information and practice:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqp116kCRxA>
- Contextualize. Context is the place and time things happen. To understand a reading passage, you need to think about the context before you read. When and where was the reading passage written? Was the writer from the same culture you are from, or a different one? Will the attitudes and opinions in the text be similar to or different from your attitude and opinions? Thinking about the context of a reading passage will help you understand it better when you begin to read.
 - Passages to practice with: ask yourself what the context is (when and where the passage was written) as you read these passages.

Pre-Reading Example:

John is going to read an article about how to build a house. John is a good reader. Before he starts to read, he asks himself questions like

“What do I already know about building houses?”

“Have I ever built a house before?”

“What information do I think this article will give me?”

“When and where was this article written?”

John then previews the article by reading the title, looking at the pictures in the article, reading the first and last sentences of the paragraphs, and making sure he understands any bold or underlined words. He then begins to read.

2. During reading:

To be a good reader, you need to do more than move your eyes over the words on the page. You need to actively think about and work to understand what you are reading. Good readers always do this. To help yourself think about and work to understand a reading passage, you can use the following strategies:

- **Make connections.** Good readers think about how the text they are reading connects to their own lives, to the world, and to other texts they have read. Work to make these connections by asking yourself questions like “what things in my life relate to this text?” “Why is this text important in my community, country, and the world?” “Is this text similar to/different from any other texts I have read?” Asking questions like this will help you connect the text to your own life, knowledge, and experiences. It will make the text easier to understand.
 - Making connections exercise:
https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/TexttoText_handout_v.final_.pdf
- **Skimming.** Skimming is a type of fast reading. When you skim, you move your eyes quickly over the words in the reading passage to understand the main idea, the general meaning of the passage. You do not read for details. You do not read every word. You only read the things that will help you understand the main ideas in the passage. You should start by reading the title and headings. Then read the topic sentences, which are the first sentences in the paragraphs. After reading the topic sentences, move your eyes quickly, looking for information that supports and gives examples of the topic for each paragraph. Things to look for include names, dates, and events. When you skim, you will not know all the details! This is ok. Skimming is a type of reading that helps you understand main ideas, not all the information in a passage. You should not use skimming all the time, but you can use it when you are looking for main ideas, reviewing, or you need to read very quickly.
 - Information about skimming (and scanning):

1. <http://www.howtolearn.com/2013/02/skimming-and-scanning-two-important-strategies-for-speeding-up-your-reading/>
- Skimming practice:
 1. <https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=exercise-1-skimming>
 2. http://tle.westone.wa.gov.au/content/file/f4c1af2d-94ee-4aa9-833d-c41680b82680/1/COMM1085_reading_texts.zip/reading_texts/docs/ps_skim_prac1.pdf
 3. http://www.uefap.com/reading/exercise/menu_eff.htm (skimming and scanning)
 - Information and practice:
 1. <http://readingstrategies.wikidot.com/skimming>
- **Scanning.** Scanning is another type of fast reading. When you are scanning, you are looking for specific information in a reading passage. We often scan in our daily lives. For example, we scan when we are looking for a specific show in Netflix. To scan, you should move your eyes quickly over the words of the text, and look for the specific information/details that you need to know. Keep the questions you have in your mind, think about the information you are searching for, and move your eyes through the text. Don't read every word. Don't get stuck trying to understand words you don't know. Think about the information you need to know, the question you have, and focus on finding it.
 - Information about scanning (and skimming):
 1. <http://www.howtolearn.com/2013/02/skimming-and-scanning-two-important-strategies-for-speeding-up-your-reading/>
 - Scanning (and skimming) practice:
 1. http://www.uefap.com/reading/exercise/menu_eff.htm
 - Scanning practice:
 1. <https://www.esolcourses.com/uk-english/elementary-course/reading-skills/reading-skills-test-1.html>
 2. <http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/570/pulp/hemp2.htm>
 - **Making inferences.** Good readers make inferences as they read. Making an inference means you use the information you understand and know to make conclusions about information you don't know. For example, if your friend comes into class wearing a coat and carrying an umbrella, you can make an inference: it is probably cold and wet outside. You know this about the weather even if your friend does not tell you. You used the information you know (coat, umbrella) to make the conclusion that the weather is cold and wet. This is an inference.
 - How to make inferences:
 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=to30AJm2epQ>
 2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7szJbRv9Hc>
 - Making inferences examples:
 1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCmTIK_rb0U
 - Practice making inferences:

1. http://highered.mheducation.com/sites/0072982772/student_view0/part7/making_inferences_quiz.html
 2. https://www.ccsf.edu/dam/Organizational_Assets/Department/ESL/CLAD/infer.pdf
- **Vocabulary in context.** You will almost always find new words as you read. Good readers do not stop to translate every new word they find. To be a good reader, you need to focus on the words that you can understand, and use them to help you infer or guess the meaning of the words that you don't know.
 - Using context to learn new vocabulary words:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm5d7c0xGt0>
 - **Take notes.** Good readers take notes as they read, especially as they read nonfiction texts. To take good notes, you should write down main ideas and important supporting examples you find. You should not copy sentences out of the text. You should use your own words. Try to keep your notes short, focusing on the main, important ideas, and not the details. As you write, try to use bullet points, lists, or other visual ways of showing the organization of the reading passage.
 - Note-taking information: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/write/notes-reading.html>
 - SQ3R note-taking method: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxzWbvdhQsg>
 - SQ3R and Cornell methods for note-taking:
<https://odi.osu.edu/assets/pdf/ODI%20scholars/Effective%20Reading%20and%20Note%20taking%20Strategies.%20Final2.pdf>
 - **Visualizing.** When you visualize something, you try to see it in your mind. When we are reading, we do not usually see images. Instead, we have to create images in our minds to help us “see” what we read about. This is visualizing. Good readers will actively visualize as they read to help themselves understand and remember what they read.
 - How to visualize when reading:
 1. https://learnzillion.com/lesson_plans/9039-visualize-a-text-while-reading
 2. <http://study.com/academy/lesson/reading-strategies-using-visualization.html>

During Reading Example:

Fred is a good reader. He always works to actively think about and understand the passages he reads. Fred is reading an article about starting a business. First, Fred skims the passage, looking at titles, headings, and topic sentences to help himself understand the main ideas. Then, as he reads, Fred does not stop every time he finds new words. Fred uses the context (the words he understands) to guess meaning of the new words he finds. Fred also works to imagine or “see” what he is reading in his mind. Fred asks himself questions about the text, like “Why is starting a business important in my life/community/the world?” “What do I already know about starting a business?” and “What have I learned in other texts about starting a business?” As Fred does these things, the reading is easier for him to understand and remember.

3. Post-reading:

Good readers do not stop working when they finish reading a passage. Good readers continue to think, study, and learn through post-reading activities. Post-reading activities are activities you do after you finish reading a passage. There are many things you can do after you read that will help you to understand the text better, and remember more about what you read. After you finish reading a passage, you should:

- Summarize. Good readers can summarize the things they read. Summaries are short descriptions of the main idea or topic, and examples from the passage that help the listener to understand the main idea or topic. Details are not included in summaries. A summary should not copy exact sentences or phrases from the passage. Summaries are your words, describing ideas from the reading passage.

In order to summarize well, many readers like to take notes with a paper and pencil as they read. When taking notes, do not write every word you read. Write one or two words to describe main ideas, topics, and key (important) concepts that help you remember what you read. Then, as you summarize, use the notes you wrote to describe in your own words what the reading passage was about. Remember, do not try to repeat exactly what you read. Summaries should be short, use your words, and should focus on the main ideas.

Summaries can be made in many ways, for example:

- Journaling. Write summaries down on a paper or in a notebook.
- Peer discussion. Talk to a classmate or friend, summarizing what you read.
- Speaking aloud. If you are studying alone, you can speak summaries out loud, practicing saying what you read and understood.
- Mentally summarizing. You can summarize what you read in your mind. This can be done both after reading a passage, and as you read a passage. Be sure you don't try to mentally repeat every word you read. Simply say the main ideas to yourself as you read.

How to make a summary:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGWO1dEhtQ>

Summary practice:

1. <http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/exwrirep.htm>
2. <http://www.txkisd.net/curriculum/focusplans/Reading-English-Language%20Arts-Writing/9-Reading/1.7G%20Animal%20Farm%20Epitomes/Handout%201%20Summarizing%20Practice.pdf>

- Ask questions. Asking questions can help you to understand the reading passage better, learn new information, think about what you read in different ways, and remember the things you read longer. After you read a passage, ask yourself questions like:

1. "What is the meaning of the things I read?"
2. "What is the opinion of the person who wrote this passage?"
3. "How was this passage organized?"
4. "Were my predictions about this passage correct? What information in the passage talks about the things I predicted?"
5. "Why did the author end the paragraph (or chapter, or book) in this way?"

6. "What was the author's purpose in writing this?"
 7. "What do I understand about the things I just read? What questions do I still have?"
 8. "What is the main idea of this reading passage?"
 9. "What picture do I see in my mind?"
 10. "Do I need to re-read so that I understand more?"
 11. "What connections can I make to the text? How do I feel about the text?"
 12. "What will I do with the information I read?"
- Practice: ask yourself the questions above after reading the texts on this website:
<http://www.readingesi.ca/>
 - **Re-read.** Very often, reading a text one time is not enough. Good readers usually read a text more than once. Reading a text two or three times can help you to understand more, find information you missed the first time, and remember the things you read better.
 - Practice: read the texts on this website more than once to increase your understanding before answering the questions about the passages.
<http://www.esl-lounge.com/student/reading-intermediate.php>

Post-reading Example:

Jane just finished reading a news story about a boy who was rescued from a fire. Jane is a good reader. After she reads, Jane wants to understand the story better. So she reads it again, and takes notes. After she finishes reading, Jane uses her notes to help her write a short summary of the story. Then Jane thinks about the story she read. She asks herself questions like

- "What is the opinion of the person who wrote this story?"
- "How was this story organized?"
- "Were my predictions about this story correct? What information in the story talks about the things I predicted?"
- "What is the main idea in this story?"
- "What picture do I see in my mind?"
- "What connections can I make to this story in my life? How do I feel about it?"
- "Do I need to re-read so that I understand more?"

Jane decides she needs to read the story one more time to find the answers to all of her questions. The third time she reads the story, Jane understands it very well.

4. Increase your reading rate:

Good readers do not read too slowly or too quickly. People who read too quickly do not understand very well. People who read too slowly are too focused on words and details to understand the main idea in the reading, and have to re-read many times. Good readers read slowly enough that they can understand, but quickly enough that they don't get lost in the

details, and forget what they read. A good reading speed is around 150-200 words per minute. These exercises can help you increase your reading rate:

- Reading Rate Build-up:
 1. Find a text that you are interested in reading.
 2. Read for one minute at a speed that is comfortable to you.
 3. If you are studying with friends, discuss what you read.
 4. Read the same text again for one minute. Start in the same place where you started the first time, re-reading what you read the first time. But this time, try to read a little bit faster than you did the first time. Try to read more in one minute than you read in the first minute.
 5. Again, discuss what you read with your friend.
 6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 two more times. Each time you read, you should start in the same place, re-reading the same text. But you should try to read faster so you can read more each time. The goal is to read twice as much as you read the first time by the fourth time you read.
- Repeated Reading:
 1. Find a reading passage that is about 250 words long.
 2. Read the passage three times, in three minutes.
 3. As you read, watch your time. When the first minute ends, you need to start over, reading the passage from the beginning. You also need to start over when the second minute ends.
 4. Each time you read, work to read more of the passage than you read the first time. Try to read all 250 words during the third minute.
 - * If 250 words is too difficult, try with 150 words.
- Keep a reading rate log:
 - As you practice reading, especially as you practice reading quickly, write down how many words per minute you are able to read. Keeping a record helps you to see when you are doing well and when you need to practice more. It also helps you to see which activities and exercises are most useful for you as you work to read faster.

Reading rate practice:

- Eye exercises: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0a1gCbAZfc0>
- Timed reading practice:
https://college.cengage.com/collegesurvival/watkins/learning_companion/1e/students/timed_reading.html
- Information and practice exercises:
<https://web.mst.edu/~gbert/SpeedReader/read.html>
- Reading tips: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmDMrxUSXKY>

Reading Rate Example:

Mary wants to read faster and understand what she reads better. Mary is reading a book called *Alice in Wonderland*. Mary opens the book and selects a passage of 250 words. Mary then looks at her clock, and tries to read all 250 words in one minute. When the first minute is over, she has only read half of the words. Mary starts reading at the beginning of the 250 word passage again during the second minute. During this second minute, she tries to read more than she did in the first time. She reads three-fourths of the passage during the second minute. Mary then repeats the same reading passage again a third time during the third minute. During the third minute, Mary is able to read all 250 words. After doing this exercise, Mary writes down in her reading rate log about the exercise she did, the text she was reading, and how many words she was able to read in one minute.