

READING COMPREHENSION

*Read with your eyes
Think of your brains
Feel in your soul*

**EXAM
SUCCESS**

LANGUAGE SKILLS

RECEPTIVE SKILLS PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

- Reading skill
- Listening skill
- Writing skill
- Speaking skill

READING

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intention of constructing or deriving meaning (**reading comprehension**). It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. It is a **complex interaction** between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development.

Purpose determines reading technique

- Reading for pleasure
- Reading for specific information
- Reading to absorb information
- Reading for accuracy

Strategies that can help you read more quickly and effectively

- **Previewing:** reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection
- **Predicting:** using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension; using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure; using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing style, vocabulary, and content

Strategies

- **Guessing from context:** using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up
 - **Paraphrasing:** stopping at the end of a section to check comprehension by restating the information and ideas in the text
- **Skimming and scanning:** using a quick survey of the text to get the main idea, identify text structure, confirm or question predictions

Guessing Meaning of Vocabulary from Context

- In order to understand what you are reading from an English text, you need to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words (words you do not know) from the context. This will help you read faster and easier.
- Find the meaning of the underlined word in each sentence.
 1. She had often come into conflict with her mother-in-law.
 - a) announcement
 - b) attainment
 - c) argument

Exercise 1

- 2. The old woman's blunt questions embarrassed her, making her momentarily **tongue-tied**.
 - a) emit
 - b) **ashamed**
 - c) loathe
- 3. We just need **a couple** more chairs so everyone can sit down.
 - a) one
 - b) **two**
 - c) three

Exercise

-
- 4. Please, Uncle Jack, give me a piggyback!
 - a) a ride on someone back or shoulder
 - b) a small bag
 - c) people who arrived to settle in Bangkok 2000
 - 5. Leda does not like to eat papaya or carrots, which is high in vitamin A, so she lacks it. Her mother keeps telling her that an inadequate supply of vitamin A can lead to blindness
 - a) too big
 - b) not enough

RECOGNIZING DEFINITIONS

ACTIVITY 1

- Often when faced with a conflict, we engage in the kind of behavior called **vacillation** the tendency to be drawn first towards one possible solution of the conflict then towards another. Torn between studying or working and going out with friends, we may change our minds several times. At one moment we may lean strongly towards studying, at the next moment towards going out. In an extreme case of vacillation, we may take so long making up our minds that we wind up with very little time left for either of the possibilities.

Identify definition and an example

ACTIVITY 2

- The process by which cultural traits are transmitted from one culture to another is called cultural **diffusion**. Cultural diffusion is usually two-way process. Early white settlers learnt from the native Americans how to grow tobacco, corn and potatoes. The Indians borrowed horses and rifles from the whites. Even the most inventive cultures have gained more by cultural diffusion than from their own inventions.

ENUMERATIONS

- Like definitions, enumerations are key to important ideas. They are lists of items that may be numbered in the text. Often the lists are signaled by such words as first of all , second , moreover ,next ,also , finally, and others

TYPICAL PHRASES THAT INTRODUCE ENUMERATIONS

- There are three reasons why.....
- There are two causes of.....
- Five characteristics of.....
- There are several ways to.....

Spot the Enumerations **ACTIVITY 3**

- Several kinds of obstacles can cause frustration. **Firstly**, the environment surrounds us with physical obstacles, such as a drought frustrates farmer's attempts to produce a good crop, or a broken alarm clock, flat tire, or traffic jam that prevents us from getting to class on time. **Secondly**, our relations with other people create social obstacles, such as a refusal by others to give us the affection we desire.

ENUMERATIONS CONTEXT

- Or social circumstances that frustrate our motive for certainty by raising the threat of economic changes or of war and destruction. **Thirdly**, all of us are frustrated at times by personal obstacles; we may want to be musicians but find that we are tone deaf, or we may aspire to be Olympic champions but lack the necessary skill.

Reading Comprehension Activity No.4

Read the dialogue about a meeting carefully:

Alice: We're having a meeting tomorrow. Can you make it?

Kevin: When is it
taking place?

Alice: We're planning on 10 o'clock. Is that OK?

Kevin: Yes, that'll be fine.

Alice: We're going to go over last quarter's sales figures.

Kevin: Good. I have some input I'd like to make.

Alice: Frank is also going to make some suggestions on improving the
bottom line.

Kevin: That'll be interesting. He's got keen insights.

Alice: Yes, he's going to outline some new sales strategies.

Kevin: Is Alan attending?

Alice: No, he's flying to San Francisco and won't be able to make it.

Kevin: Oh well, maybe He'll phone in.

QUIZ

Q 1

When is the meeting?

- 1. Next Monday at 10
- 2. Tomorrow at 10
- 3. This afternoon

Q 2

What's the subject of the meeting?

- The San Francisco accounts
- Last quarter's sales figures
- This year budget

QUIZ

Q 3

What type of suggestions will Frank make?

- 1.Improving research
- 2.Improving the bottom line
- 3.Sales on the east coast

Q 4

What is Frank going to outline?

- 1.Keen insights
- 2.New sales strategies
- 3.San Francisco partners

QUIZ 5

Who isn't going to attend?

- 1. Kevin
- 2. Frank
- 3. Alan

Developing reading speed

- 1.Keep the eye moving from left to right
- 2.Keep Lips and tongue motionless
- 3.Read the beginnings of the words:
 - Undoub_____
 - Remem_____
 - Partici_____

Reading speed

- 4.Keep Building Vocabulary
- 5.Constantly practice
- 6.Note the time it takes you to read the selection

The Cherry Trees of Washington, D.C.

- When you think about the things that attract millions of visitors to Washington, D.C., each year, you probably think about the monuments, the White House, the Capitol, the Library of Congress. But have you ever thought about the living things that are also a major tourist attraction? Many Americans and international tourists make a special visit to Washington, D.C., in the spring to see the blooming pink and white Japanese cherry trees that circle the Tidal Basin and the Jefferson Memorial.

THE CHERRY TREES

- The trees were originally planted as a gift from the people of Tokyo, Japan, in 1912. In 1910, a previous donation of 2,000 cherry trees had to be destroyed after they were infested with insects. Each spring, the National Cherry Blossom Festival, a two-week-long celebration, attracts tens of thousands of visitors from around the world to see the magnificent trees in full bloom.

Have you ever seen these magnificent blossoms?

Post-Reading Questions

1. The cherry trees in Washington, D.C. were a donation from...

- a. People of Japan
- b. Thousands of visitors
- c. The Library of Congress
- d. The President

2. How long is the does the National Cherry Blossom Festival last?

- a. two weeks
- b. two months
- c. four days
- d. four weeks

QUIZ

3. All of the following are Washington, D.C. monuments, except:

- a. The White House
- b. The Capitol
- c. The Tidal Basin
- d. The Library of Congress

Guessing meaning from the context

Example 1

As the summer sun sent scattered rays through the maple and oak leaves overhead, the young deer stood **frozen**, making it almost impossible for the hikers to see her.

In the above passage, the word “frozen” means _____.

- a. very cold
- b. visible
- **c. not moving**
- d. not melted

Guessing meaning from the context

Example 2

- Christmas is a time when Dad **reverts** to his childhood. I really think he looks forward to Santa's visit more than any other member of the family. Mom says that he'll always be a child during this season.

What does “reverts” mean in the above passage?

- a. stands up straight
- b. peeks at presents
- c. drinks too much punch
- d. goes back to being what he was

VOCABULARY RELATIONS

- Fortunately, the explosion diverted the asteroid from a course that would have sent it hurdling into our planet.

To **divert** is to _____.

- a. change the direction of
- b. look for really high waves
- c. jump into a dry river
- d. look through a telescope

VOCABULARY RELATIONS

- A wonderful 98 year old woman is working day and night to knit scarves to send as gifts for the troops. What a **selfless** person she is!

A selfless woman _____.

- a. is selfish
- b. has no name
- c. likes to wear scarves
- d. **cares more about others than herself**

Reading for specific information and comprehension

- **Prediction**

Look at the title of the text and try to predict what you will read about. Share your ideas with a partner.

What questions would you ask to find out your classmates' opinion about leadership? Make a list of five questions. Ask each other the questions.

- **Useful expressions:**

- I (don't) think...
- am (not) sure...
- From my point of view... As I see it...
- To my mind...

LEADERSHIP

- **Skimming and scanning**
- You have 20 seconds to skim the text and check your predictions in task 1.
- Scan the text and find what 2012 and 1930s stand for.
- **AIESEC, International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences**, is an international non-profit organization that provides students with leadership training and internship opportunities at for-profit and non-profit organizations.
- In August 2012, the AIESEC network includes over 86,000 members in 113 countries and territories.
- It is the largest students run organization in the world, being present in over 2,400 universities across the globe, provides more than 24,000 leadership experiences to its members and sends students and graduates on 20,000 international exchanges yearly.
- The idea behind AIESEC started in the 1930s, when representatives from schools across Europe exchanged information about various programs and schools that specialized in business and economics. At the time, the mission was “to expand the understanding of a nation by expanding the understanding of the individuals, changing the world and a person at a time”.
-

SKIMMING PROCEDURE

Skimming refers to the process of reading only main ideas within a passage to get an overall impression of the content of a reading selection.

How to Skim:

- Read the title.
- Read the introduction or the first paragraph.
- Read the first sentence of every other paragraph.
- Read any headings and sub-headings.
- Notice any pictures, charts, or graphs.
- Notice any italicized or boldface words or phrases.
- Read the summary or last paragraph.

SCANNING PROCEDURE

Scanning is a reading technique to be used when you want to find specific information quickly.

- In scanning you have a question in your mind and you read a passage only to find the answer, ignoring unrelated information.

How to Scan:

- State the specific information you are looking for.
- Try to anticipate how the answer will appear and what clues you might use to help you locate the answer. For example, if you were looking for a certain date, you would quickly read the paragraph looking only for numbers.
- Use headings and any other aids that will help you identify which sections might contain the information you are looking for.
- Selectively read and skip through sections of the passage.

Try the exam folder task 1

Read the interview with a Ukrainian designer Levko Davydiuk. Match the questions (A-H) with the answers (1-5). There are three choices you do not need to use.

A large-scale design contest called Ukrainian Design has taken place this summer. A haystack-shaped hotel has become the winner in the Environmental Design category.

Levko Davydyuk's project called "Three Haystacks" represents a concept of a restaurant-hotel complex built using ethnic motives in its design. Three buildings are haystack-shaped and the landscape reminds Volyn region embroidery patterns.

- **A** How many people took part in the contest?
- **B** Do you pay more attention to details or to the overall impression of your works?
- **C** How much time did it take you to create the contest work?
- **D** What problems did you have to face?
- **E** Are there any chances of implementing the project of the contest work in real life?
- **F** To your mind, how important a higher education is for a designer?
- **G** When did you finally decide upon your future occupation in life?
- **H** What are you doing at present?

- 1

The idea had been forming for about a year, before the contest began. The main task for me at the time was implementation of an interesting idea. I spent four months creating detailed image.

- 2

At the age of 5 I used to build houses from LEGO; at 10 I made my first attempts to design a building. All this specified my future profession afterwards.

- 3

The diploma was not of the highest priority for me while I was studying in the Design Academy. I got my education participating in real projects. Starting from the first year of my studying I had completed projects and this facilitated positive experience.

- 4

At present I am involved in interior design development for a Kyiv apartment, for the program “Repair plus” (1+1 TV channel). Besides,

I am busy formulating a public garden concept for the central part of Lutsk.

- 5

As for the project realization, the effort is being taken to raise interest to the project in the Bukovel administration but the issue remains open. We continue to search for ways to implement the project because any designer is judged primarily by his completed works.

Use the following procedure:

Read the instructions carefully and look at the text to check what needs to be done in this type of a test.

- Look at the title and try to predict what you will read about.
- Skim the text to get a general idea of meaning. If you meet new vocabulary in the text, work out what it means from the context.
- Read the questions A-H and underline key words.
- Underline expressions with similar meanings in the text.
- You are looking for specific information to answer the questions, so you need to scan the texts rather than read them in detail.
- Go on to the next question even if you are not sure of the answer to the previous one.
- When you've finished the easy questions, go back and have another go at the difficult ones. If you still don't know — guess.

Reading for detailed understanding of the text. Gap filling (choosing which part of sentence fits into gaps in a text)

1. Prediction

Look at the title of the text and try to predict what you will read about. Share your ideas with a partner.

Useful expressions:

- I wonder...
- I am (not) sure...
- Does anybody know...?
- As I see it...
- To my mind...

2. Skimming and scanning activities

- **Skim** the text and check your predictions.
- **Scan** the text and answer the questions. What does The Washington Post report? How much does the supercomputer cost?

WEATHER WATCHER

Yellowstone is one of the greatest natural treasures in the American West, and there is now a new environmental “sheriff” in town. A supercomputer of the same name is set (1)----- and *forecast* extreme weather.

The Washington Post reports that Yellowstone will help researchers (2) -----rather than continental, *scale*. With a better understanding of how warming may affect local water resources, *endangered* species and extreme winds, local and state governments will be able(3) -----

The \$30 million supercomputer, (4)-----, will generate climate projections for 7-square-mile *tracts*, instead of the previous capability of 60-square-mile units. It will also provide climate *snapshots* in intervals of hours (5) ----- .Mathew Maltrud, of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, in New Mexico, says, “We’re moving into a *realm* where we have models(6)-----, the atmosphere, the ice and the land to a high degree. Yellowstone will show a more realistic interaction of these components.”

Read the text and match the highlighted words to the following definitions:

- Read the text and match the highlighted words to the following definitions:
-

1 one that soon may not longer exist

2 a photograph taken quickly; a piece of information that quickly gives you an idea of what the situation is like at a particular time

3 the size or level of something

4 to say what you think is likely to happen in the future based on information that you have now

5 a large area of land

6 a general area of knowledge, activity or thought

3 Text structure

- **Read** the text again. Try to make a question to the last word or phrase before a gap. e.g. “A supercomputer of the same name is set...” — why? — “to model future climate changes”.
 - **Choose** from **A-H** the one which best fits each space 1-6. There are two choices you do not need to use.
- **A** calculate climate change on a regional
 - dation
 - **D** that look like the ocean
 - **E** to plan their work more effectively
 - **F** predicting natural disasters
 - **G** to model future climate changes
 - **H** rather than days
 - **B** who was sponsored by the government
 - **C** funded by the National Science Foun

Yellowstone is one of the greatest natural treasures in the American West, and there is now a new environmental “sheriff” in town. A supercomputer of the same name is set (1)----- and **forecast** extreme weather.

The Washington Post reports that Yellowstone will help researchers (2) -----rather than continental, **scale**. With a better understanding of how warming may affect local water resources, **endangered** species and extreme winds, local and state governments will be able(3) -----

The \$30 million supercomputer, (4)-----, will generate climate projections for 7-square-mile **tracts**, instead of the previous capability of 60-square-mile units. It will also provide climate **snapshots** in intervals of hours (5) ----- .Mathew Maltrud, of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, in New Mexico, says, “We’re moving into a **realm** where we have models(6)-----, the atmosphere, the ice and the land to a high degree. Yellowstone will show a more realistic interaction of these components.”

- **A** calculate climate change on a region
- **B** that look like the ocean
- **C** to plan their work more effectively
- **D** predicting natural disasters
- **E** to model future climate changes
- **F** rather than days
- **G** who was sponsored by the government
- **H** funded by the National Science Foundation

Use the following procedure:

- Read the instructions carefully and look at the text to check what needs to be put into the gaps.
- Read the base text for general understanding (skimming).
- Read the text around each gap carefully (scanning).
- Read the parts of sentences (clauses) and firstly consider which ones can or cannot fit in grammatically, only then find the one that fits in with the meaning of each part. Remember that words in the text may refer forwards to something in the missing part or to something in the text before or after the gap. Check for topic and language links before and after the sentence

- *e.g. .“A supercomputer of the same name is set...”* matches *“to model future climate changes”*,

which gives additional information about a supercomputer.

- Look for pronouns and determiners because they refer to the people or things mentioned in the text.
- Try to put a question to the last word or phrase before the gap.
- Look for words like *first, then, in the end*, etc. which show the order of events in the story.
- Read the whole story once more to check that it makes sense. Some clauses are likely to fit into more than one gap, but only grammatically. There is always only one correct answer to each question. Make sure that two extra choices do not match any of the gaps neither logically nor grammatically.



Learn and practise a lot!
Keep collecting and calm!
Plan your time carefully!

