



Reading Tips

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TIP SHEET

Use these practical tips to help you improve your **reading** skills:

- ✔ Use your finger or a bookmark as a guide to help you focus on the part of the text you are reading.
- ✔ Read slowly and focus on understanding the content. When you become more comfortable, increase your speed.
- ✔ Read in a quiet place where there are as few distractions as possible.
- ✔ Keep a dictionary close by so that you can look up unfamiliar words. Start by reading short texts. Slowly increase the length of texts as you become more confident in your reading.
- ✔ Highlight or underline the main points in a text to help you focus on key information.
- ✔ Before you start to read, ask yourself: "What do I need to learn from this text?"
- ✔ Make a list of new words that you come across when reading. Look them up in the dictionary or ask a friend or co-worker what they mean.
- ✔ Read whenever and wherever you can. The more you read, the stronger your reading skills will become.
- ✔ Read with, or to, your children every day, and start at the earliest age possible. Building strong reading skills begins at home.
- ✔ When you do not know how to pronounce a word, break it down by syllables or look it up in the dictionary—a pronunciation key is included.
- ✔ Read articles about topics that interest you (e.g. travel magazines about a city you plan to visit).

Higher Level Tips

- ✔ Try to understand the meaning of new words based on their context (how they are used within the sentence or paragraph) instead of using a dictionary.
- ✔ Skim text (read through quickly) to get a general idea of what it is about. When skimming, focus on key words, section headings, introductions and conclusions.
- ✔ Scan text when you are looking for specific information. When scanning, run your eyes over the text quickly looking for words or phrases related to the information you are trying to find.
- ✔ When you finish reading a paragraph, stop and summarize what you have read in your own words.
- ✔ Turn headings and sub-headings into questions, then scan the text for the answers.
- ✔ Take breaks often when reading longer texts. This will help you stay focused and ensure that you do not become overwhelmed with too much information.
- ✔ As you read, make notes on important sections or key pieces of information.
- ✔ While reading a text, write down any questions or thoughts you may have in the margin or on a sticky note so that you can follow up on them later.
- ✔ Read the dictionary or a thesaurus to expand and strengthen your vocabulary.