

Some Peculiarities And The Ways Of Giving Instructions On Reading Tests

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Abstract: this article is about peculiarities and the ways and also some difficulties on doing reading tests in English, the methods of teaching reading the learners.

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First of all, while teaching the language skills every teacher tries to develop his or her students' speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills as well as. And every student tries to develop his language skills. Giving instructions is the issue of how to talk to students becomes crucial when we give them instructions. The best activity in the world is a waste of time if the students don't understand what it is they are supposed to do. There are two general rules for giving instructions: they must be kept as simple as possible, and they must be logical. Before giving instructions, therefore, teachers must ask themselves the following questions: What is the important information I am trying to convey? What must the students know if they are to complete this activity successfully? What information do they need first? Which should come next? When teachers give instructions, it is important for them to **check** that the students have understood or not what they are being asked to do. This can be achieved either by asking a student to explain the activity after the teacher has given the instruction or by getting someone to show the other people in the class how the exercise works. There is a big difference between reading a book and studying a book when you study something you analyze it in detail and you learn a lot more. Many students want to be able to read texts in English either for their careers, for study purposes or simply for pleasure. Anything we can do to make it easier for them to do these things must be a good idea. And every student tries to develop his language skills. In order to achieve the needed

result, the learners should understand the given instructions clearly before doing any test. We all know that reading is useful for language acquisition. Provided that students more or less understand what they read, the more they read, the better they get at it. Reading also has a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and on their writing. Teachers may ask students to look at extracts from magazines, poems, Internet websites, novels, newspapers, plays and a wide range of other text genres as well as. And sometimes we see that our students have some difficulties in doing reading tasks, so we can advise some useful tips which are given below so that they can be helpful for students to do the different tasks on reading. There are several question types on reading: multiple choice, short answer questions, sentence completion questions and so on.

Multiple Choice

For these questions you may be given the start of a sentence which you have to complete with one out of four choices. Or you may be presented with a question and asked to find two, three or four items in a list of answers. You could be asked to identify facts or opinions in the texts. Multiple choice questions can test both your global understanding of the text or ask you for specific information. This means you will have to make the decision yourself whether to skim or scan the text.

How to do the multiple choice questions. Firstly, you should read the instructions carefully and check how many letters you need to circle. Then Skim all the questions and the answer choices quickly. As you do this, underline the key words (the words that give you the most information). Try to get an idea of the topic you will be reading about from the vocabulary of the questions. Go back to the first question. Decide if you are looking for specific information or whether the question requires you to understand the whole text. Then either scan or skim the text, as appropriate, to find the answer. After that read the relevant part of the text very carefully and also don't leave any questions unanswered, read the stem or question carefully, to eliminate unlikely answers.

Short answer questions.

These type of questions can be met among the reading questions and you should follow the below given instructions on how to do short answer questions.

Read the instructions carefully and skim all the questions quickly. As you do this:

Underline the key words. Decide what information you need to find in the text. Look out for question words like ‘where’ and ‘who’ which indicate and then you should pay attention for specific things like places and people. Go back to the first question and decide what part of the text you need to read. Read the part carefully to find the answer. You may use your own words. You don’t have to write a complete sentence but it does have to be grammatically correct. As we see grammar is needed here and plays an important role in doing tests. If you don’t know the meaning of any of the words in the questions, look at the other questions. They might have some associated vocabulary in them to help you guess the meaning. The answer could be one word, two words or three words but not four or more. If you think you need more than three words your answer is probably incorrect.

Sentence completion questions

There are **two types** of sentence completion questions in the reading exam.

Type 1. With a selection of possible answers.

Type 2. Without a choice of possible answers.

For the first type of questions required to complete the end of a sentence. The questions appear in the same order as the information in the text.

The second type questions are similar to the short answer questions in that they will always tell you to write your answers in *NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS*. So you can answer with one word, two words or three words but not more. They will also tell you to use words from the reading passage.

As with short answer questions: Also note that the answers should not require a hyphenated word (e.g. *non-smoker*) or a contraction (e.g. *They’ve*). Also, if the

answer requires a number, you can write it as a numeral (*e.g. 6*) or a word (*e.g. six*) or a combination (*e.g. 6 million*).

How to do sentence completion questions

- Read the instructions carefully.
- Quickly read through all the sentences halves. As you do this underline the key words.

Then try to work out what information you need. And think about the grammatical form as well as the vocabulary that should follow immediately from the stem.

- Go back to the first sentence and decide what information you need to complete it.
- Find the place where the information should be in the text and read it carefully.

Look out for synonyms and parallel expressions because the questions are not likely to use the same words as those in the text. Make sure your sentences make sense both logically and grammatically. Pay attention for type two, the answer could be one word, two words or three words but not four or more. if you think you need more than three words your answer is probably incorrect. **P 9-10**

According to Jeremy Harmer, the success of the activity will often depend on the level of the text we are asking them to work with when we ask students to read. Ideally, we would like students to read **authentic** texts - in other words, texts which are not written especially for language learners, but which are intended for any competent user of the language. However, at lower levels this can often present insuperable problems since the amount of difficult and unknown language may make the texts impenetrable for the students. A balance has to be struck between real English on the one hand and the students' capabilities and interests on the other. There is some authentic written material which beginner students can understand to some degree: menus, timetables, signs and basic instructions, for example, and, where appropriate, we can use these. But for longer prose, we may want to offer our students texts which are written or adapted especially for their

level. The important thing, however, is that such texts are as much like real English as possible.

How well the students are able to deal with reading material will depend on whether the texts are designed for intensive or extensive reading. Where students read with the support of a teacher and other students, they are usually able to deal with higher-level material than if they are reading on their own. If we want them to read for pleasure, therefore, we will try to ensure that they do not attempt material that is just too difficult for them - as a result of which they may be put off reading. This is why lower-level students are encouraged to use simplified or graded readers for extensive reading. The readers are graded so that at different levels they use language appropriate for that level - very much like the comprehensible input. As a result, the students can take pleasure in reading the books even when there is no teacher there to help them.

It is very important to mention about one thing students, like the rest of us, need to be able to do a number of things with a reading text. They need to be able to **scan** the text for particular bits of information they are searching for (as, for example, when we look for a telephone number, what's on television at a certain time or search quickly through an article looking for a name or other detail). This skill means that they do not have to read every word and line; on the contrary, such an approach would stop them scanning successfully. Besides that students also need to be able to **skim** a text - as if they were casting their eyes over its surface - to get a general idea of what it is about (as, for example, when we run our eyes over a film review to see what the film is about and what the reviewer thought about it, or when we look quickly at a report to get a feel for the topic and what its conclusions are). Just as with scanning, if students try to gather all the details at this stage, they will get bogged down and may not be able to identify the general idea because they are concentrating too hard on specifics. Whether readers scan or skim depends on what kind of text they are reading and what they want or need to get out of it. They may scan a computer 'Help' window to find the one piece of information they need

to get them out of a difficulty, and they may skim a newspaper article to pick up a general idea of what's been happening in the world. Of course, it is important for students to study reading texts in class in order to find out such things as the way they use language, the number of paragraphs they contain and how many times they use relative clauses. But the meaning, the message of the text, is just as important as this. As a result, we must give students a chance to respond to that message in some way. It is especially important that they should be allowed to show their feelings about the topic - thus provoking personal engagement with it and the language. With extensive reading this is even more important. Reading for pleasure is - and should be - different from reading for study.

We agree to the idea that **Prediction** is a major factor in reading, because when we read texts in our own language, we frequently have a good idea of the content before we actually start reading. Book covers give us a clue about what is in the book; photographs and headlines hint at what articles are about; we can identify reports as reports from their appearance before we read a single word. The moment we get these clues – the book cover, the headline, the web-page banner - our brain starts predicting what we are going to read. Expectations are set up and the active process of reading is ready to begin. In class, teachers should give students 'hints' so that they also have a chance to predict what is coming. In the case of extensive reading - when students are choosing what to read for pleasure - we should encourage them to look at covers and back cover copy to help them select what to read and then to help them 'get into' a book.

So make sure you are familiar with the instructions for the different question types so you can quickly glance at the questions and know what to do.

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