

Reading Activity – Setting Reading Goals

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Objective : To facilitate readers to set goals prior to engaging with any text; there are different genres, which demand different reading styles.

Participation : Individual

Material : Texts of different genres

Preparation : Identifying different reading styles matching the text types

Procedure:

1. Familiarising readers with the variety of **text types** – samples of each type to be provided.

Some of the types that are popular with readers are as follows:

Mass Media – newspapers, magazines, radio, television, films, advertisements, etc.

Social Media – messages, chats, tweets, posts, blogs, Instagram, discussion forums, etc.

Literature – fiction, short stories, prose, plays, poems, biographies, autobiographies, etc.

Academic Texts – textbooks, journals, project reports, dissertations, articles, guides, etc.

Scientific Texts – research articles, manuals, reports, reviews, work-in-progress reports, etc.

Business Writings – proposals, reports, minutes, newsletters, memorandums, emails, letters, memos, press releases, technical documents, etc.

Reference Texts – dictionaries, encyclopaedias, brochures, catalogues, timetables, indexes, atlases, etc.

Children’s Writings – stories, cartoon strips, songs, fairy tales, folktales, flash fiction, riddles, picture books, etc.

Religious Writings – sacred books, scriptures, pamphlets, prayers, translations, interpretations, etc.

Legal Writings – judgements, case filings, case summaries, judicial reports, FIRs, deeds, wills, sale documents, petitions, affidavits, etc.

(Note that all these differ in format, layout, and content.)

2. Familiarising readers with different strategies of reading – demonstration for each type.

There are broadly two kinds: *Intensive reading* and *Extensive reading*.

Some of the useful reading strategies:

Skimming, scanning, speed reading, inferential reading, creative reading, parallel reading,

SQ3R strategy, PQRS strategy, scaffolding, visualisation, intertextual reading, critical reading, DRTA strategy, reading for synthesising, summarising, and so on.

3. Identifying the strategies appropriate to texts and purposes, for instance, a travel brochure and a manual.

a) Strategy for a travel brochure: It depends on the time and the purpose.

Brochures are usually written in an enticing language with appealing photographs, and are often bulky (some of them are 100 pages), as they have to provide travellers with all the details required.

Suppose that a traveller has to decide on the accommodation, he has to scan only for that particular information and does not have to focus on the other details, which may be of importance at other times. So, the strategy of *scanning* has to be employed.

b) Strategy for a manual:

In a user manual (for instance, an electronic gadget), every instruction counts. The gap between the product and the user is filled in by the manual and, hence, it has to anticipate all the queries and doubts of users and answer them. If the users are novices, they have to read every word carefully.

Manuals often contain, besides the instructions, health and safety measures, which the users have to familiarise themselves with. It is said a company's manual is "like a travel guide to a foreign land – it makes the unfamiliar manageable." Hence, it requires *intensive reading* – word by word.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Learners recognise that they need to have reading goals depending on their purpose and the text type to avoid the common mistake of following the same strategy for all the reading texts.
2. Learners realise that setting goals prior to reading a text can enable them to decide on the strategy, to maximise the benefits of time and energy they have invested in reading.

Further reading: Readers need to read texts of various genres to get to know the distinctive features of each.

***Reading Goals** are not the same for all readers; they vary from person to person, and from time to time. Even among the same age group of readers, goals might vary, as their interests and reading ability could differ.

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