



Classroom Handout 4

Understanding Reading strategies – Activity

Think about what approach you would use when reading in these different situations.
How would your way of reading be different in each situation?

- 1 looking for a location on a department store floor guide
- 2 looking at the front page of the newspaper on a bus, a few minutes before your stop
- 3 reading a short story
- 4 assembling something using an instruction manual
- 5 choosing a holiday-read by looking at the brief description
- 6 looking at a sign in a foreign language

Now match these definitions to each of the situations above.

- A reading for gist
- B reading for the main points
- C reading for detailed understanding
- D reading for specific information
- E deducing meaning
- F following a narrative

Key tips for students for the Reading and Use of English paper

- 1 Many students run out of time and so reading all the texts intensively is not possible. Often reading the first or last sentence of a paragraph is enough to get an overall idea of the paragraph.
 - 2 Students need to choose the appropriate reading skill to achieve the task. Learning to skim (to read through the text quickly to get an idea of meaning) and to scan (to search a text for specific information) are essential.
 - 3 When scanning for information, students need to pay extra attention to the question stems. What kind of information do the following words want: What? When? Where? Why? How?
 - 4 Many students get stuck on unknown vocabulary. Students need to develop strategies for dealing with unknown words, or to simply ignore difficult vocabulary when reading a text for the first time.
 - 5 Students should read each text quickly at first to get an overall impression, then more slowly to find the answers to the questions.
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