



**ACTIVE
READING**



OBJECTIVES:

- DEMONSTRATE UNDERSTANDING OF WRITTEN TEXTS, AND OF THE WORDS AND PHRASES WITHIN THEM
- SUMMARIZE AND USE MATERIAL FOR A SPECIFIC CONTENT
- SELECT APPROPRIATE INFORMATION FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES
- DEMONSTRATE ACCURACY IN SPELLING, PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR.

WHY DO YOU READ?

- *If you catch a train, you will probably read the timetable to make sure you know when your train arrives/ departs.*
- *Whenever you use a computer, you need to read the different messages that appear on the screen.*
- *When you settle down to relax after a hard day's study, you might decide to watch TV. You will look at a TV guide.*


READING

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graph TD; A[READING] --> B[Passive]; A --> C[Active];
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The diagram features a central title 'READING' at the top. Two arrows point downwards from the title to two separate boxes. The left box is labeled 'Passive' and the right box is labeled 'Active'. Both boxes have a light green top section and a light blue bottom section. The background is a dark blue gradient with white circuit-like patterns in the corners.

Passive

Active



Passive reading:



The process by which we register what we read on road signs, etc. without consciously having to think about the meaning of the words used.

The process involved in making sense of more complicated pieces of writing, in which we have to engage more closely with what is written and think carefully about the meaning of the words used by the writers.

**Active
reading:**

Active Reading

Adjust how you read depending on the type of text and context within which you're reading.

Examine the purpose of the assignment before reading.

Alter your reading speed as you read based on the significance and difficulty of each passage.

Preview a text before reading by skimming headings, topic sentences, and key words.

Read with questions in mind.

Stop to monitor your understanding of the text as you read.

Annotate while you read: read with a pencil or highlighter in hand to mark important passages and jot down notes.

Make time to reflect upon and evaluate what you have read.

Passive Reading

Read each text the same way.

Read without examining the purpose of the assignment.

Read everything at the same speed.

Don't preview; just jump right into reading.

Read without questions in mind.

Don't stop to think about whether you are understanding what you are reading.

Don't annotate. Don't have anything in hand. Just read.

Don't make time to reflect upon and evaluate what you have read.

THE SIX ACTIVE READING SKILLS

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. Visualize | Students should try as best as they can to paint pictures in their mind of what is being described in the text. Visualizing brings the text to life and helps students to connect more easily. |
| 2. Clarify | Take a moment to summarize or explain to yourself what you have just read. If you need to reread a sentence, take the time to do so until you have a clear understanding of what you have read. |
| 3. Question | Do you have questions about the text? Is there something about which it made you wonder? Write your questions down. |
| 4. Predict | Try to imagine or guess what might happen next based on what you've just read. If it's a story, what do you think will happen to the character? If it's a news article, where do you think this information is going to lead? |
| 5. Connect | Try to make connections between what you are reading and things that you've seen, felt or experienced in your own life. |
| 6. Evaluate | Think about what you've just read. Is there a theme? Can you come to any conclusions? Try to develop an opinion about what you've read. |



**FOR
CAMBRIDGE
IGCSE FIRST
LANGUAGE
ENGLISH
YOU NEED
TO BE ABLE
TO:**

**Demonstrate understanding of
explicit meanings**

**Demonstrate understanding of
implicit meanings and attitudes**


**Analyze, evaluate and develop
facts, ideas and opinions, using
appropriate support from the
text.**



**FOR
CAMBRIDGE
IGCSE FIRST
LANGUAGE
ENGLISH
YOU NEED
TO BE ABLE
TO:**

Demonstrate understanding of
how writers achieve effects
and influence readers

Select and use information for
specific purposes.

The background is a gradient of blue, darker at the bottom. In the corners, there are decorative white and light blue circuit-like lines with small circles at the ends, resembling a network or data flow diagram.

**HOW DO YOU
DEVELOP THE SKILL
OF ACTIVE
READING?**

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS OF WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN DO THIS:

- Read a wide range of texts, not just novels and magazines but also newspaper articles, any leaflets or pamphlets you can find.
- Remember, work in other subjects, such as history or sociology, also requires you to read non-fiction books which contain complicated and well structured arguments. Other types of non-fiction writing include journals, travel books, blueprint, diagrams, letters and web and magazine articles.
- With everything that you read make sure that you think carefully about what the words, sentences and paragraphs actually mean.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS OF WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN DO THIS:

- It's good idea to have a pencil and notepad close to hand whenever you are reading in order to underline or highlight key words and phrases as you read.
- Make annotations in the margin to summarize points.
- Read critically by asking yourself questions as you read the text. Who wrote it? When? Who is the intended audience?

Test your active reading skills!

Exercise 1.

- Read through the following paragraphs, in which the writer describes a journey on the luxurious Simplon- Orient-Express train.
- As you read, make notes of any words or phrases about whose meaning you are not clear and then check their meaning by using a dictionary.
- Write down a one- sentence summary of each paragraph.
- Make up five questions /with answers/ to test your understanding of the passage and then give them to a partner to answer.

Aboard the Orient Express

Appropriately enough for a train steeped in romance, the principal routes of the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express link three of Europe's most beguiling cities, London, Paris and Venice. The chocolate-and-cream British Pullman train departs from London Victoria and glides through Kent on the way to the Channel. In France the royal-blue train with brass insignia, lined by uniformed and white-gloved attendants, is waiting to take you to the capital, while a four-course dinner is served. The dinner is made unforgettable by the sumptuous surroundings of the Lalique glass and wood-panelled dining cars as well as the quality of the food, a miracle of skill conjured up in the tiny galley kitchen.

In Paris the train uses the same station, Gare de l'Est, from which the first Orient Express departed on October 4 1883. The sense of dinner-jacketed style is enhanced by the contrast with passengers milling about on the platforms, the bar car's piano and period tunes a world away from the iPods of today's Parisian commuters.

It is likely to be dark by the time the train weaves through the hills growing the grapes that produce the Champagne served on board.



Passengers slumber through eastern France and northern Switzerland, usually waking somewhere east of Zürich. Raising the blind to reveal the waters of Zürichsee or the majestic peaks lining the northern shore of Walensee is part of the pleasure of overnight train travel – that sense of being somewhere so different from the landscapes and architecture of the previous evening.

The snow-capped peaks of tiny Liechtenstein are a prelude to the Austrian Alps, as a continental breakfast is delivered to your compartment. A pause at the Tyrolean capital of Innsbruck is an opportunity to stretch one's legs before the train reverses to head south through the Brenner Pass, its crags periodically topped by stone fortresses controlling valleys through the Dolomites. Lunch is served as the train drops down from the summit on the border with Italy, conifer-clad slopes giving way to huddled villages surrounded by vineyards and orchards.

The architectural style of the pale stone castle and palaces forming Buonconsiglio Castle in Trento emphasises the transition from central European to Mediterranean culture. With the Adige River for company, the train makes for Verona, forever associated with the doomed love of Romeo and Juliet.

Afternoon tea is served as the train crosses the fertile landscape of the countryside around Vicenza. The last major city before journey's end is Padua, where Galileo once taught mathematics at the university, founded in 1222. The causeway linking Venice Mestre and the island is the perfect approach to the city and its towers and domes rising above the tiled roofs. Then, when the train arrives and you walk out of Santa Lucia terminus, you find yourself on the bank of the Grand Canal.

Source: Adapted from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/rail-journeys/The-Orient-Express-Great-Train-Journeys/>



SKIMMING AND SCANNING- GETTING THE GIST

Sometimes you need to be able to read as much as you can and understand it as fully as you can, in a limited period of time. This is why developing your active reading skills is so important. You must read through the whole question paper carefully, but if you are skilled at reading actively, then you can save some time by employing the techniques known as **skimming** and **scanning**.



KEY TERMS

Skimming: Reading quickly through a passage or article in order to gain an overall understanding of its content, in particular by using clues from headlines, sub-headings, etc.

Scanning: Reading sections of the passage or article more closely once you have established the overall meaning by skimming, in order to ensure understanding of the most important points relating to the overall meaning.



KEY TERMS

Gist: The substance or general meaning of a piece of writing.

Key words: These are words in a question that either give clear instructions as to what you should do to answer the question (explain-describe) or which make clear what should be the focus of your answer (character's behaviour, details of a place, etc.)



KEY TERMS

Topic sentence: The sentence in a paragraph that sums up the main idea of the paragraph. It is often, **but not always** , the opening sentence of that paragraph.

PRACTISE YOUR ACTIVE READING SKILLS!

- Read the question
- Read the text
- Find the information
- Write notes
- Write your answer

Voice Across the Sea

Man is, pre-eminently, the animal who communicates, but until little more than a hundred years ago his thoughts could travel abroad no more swiftly than the sailing ship or the running horse.

The great change began when lightning itself became a messenger for mankind. At first, the electric telegraph was regarded as a

superfluous novelty, but within a single lifetime engineers had spun a cocoon of copper wires around the world. In 1886 was laid the first successful Atlantic cable. From that moment, Europe and America were only seconds, and no longer days, apart. However, even when the telephone was invented in 1876 it was not possible to speak across the Atlantic; the early submarine cables could carry only telegraph messages. They were too sluggish to respond to the hundredfold-more-rapid vibrations of the human voice. Although a transatlantic telephone service was opened in 1927, it depended entirely on radio, which meant that even at the best of times conversations were liable to fadings and cracklings, and to eerie, Outer Space whistles and wails.

The first transatlantic telephone cable went into service in 1956. As a result of the vastly improved service, there was an immediate jump in the number of calls between Europe and America. More cables had to be laid – first across the Atlantic and later across the still wider expanses of the Pacific.

By the dawn of the Space Age, therefore, the problem of inter-continental telephone calls had been solved – but it had been solved so successfully that it had raised yet more problems. The cables could carry only a limited number of conversations, and it seemed unlikely that they could keep up with the rising demand. Moreover, just as the Victorian cables could not cope with the telephone, so the submarine cables of the 1950s were unable to deal with the latest miracle, television – and for very similar reasons. The electric signals involved in the transmission of TV pictures were a thousand times too complex to be handled by a cable. A new breakthrough was needed and the satellites provided it in the nick of time.



Exercise 4

- 1 Using your own words**, explain what the text means by:
 - 'Man is, pre-eminently, the animal who communicates' (lines 1–3)
 - 'the electric telegraph was regarded as a superfluous novelty' (lines 15–17)
 - 'a cocoon of copper wires around the world' (lines 17–18)
- 2** From paragraph 2, **using your own words** explain why it was not possible to use the early 'submarine cables' for telephone calls across the Atlantic.
- 3 Using your own words** explain what the 'yet more problems' mentioned in paragraph 4 were and say what solved them.



good
LUCK