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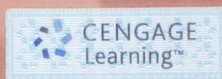
# ACTIVE

Skills for Reading: **Book 1** (最新版)

**积极英语阅读教程** 第一级

教师用书

TEACHER'S GUIDE



**W** 上海外语教育出版社  
外教社 SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS  
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# 英语阅读教学的积极探索

——《积极英语阅读教程》最新版导读

夏谷鸣

《积极英语阅读教程》(ACTIVE Skills for Reading)最新版是一套适合国内中学生使用的英语阅读教材,共分5册,由美国著名英语阅读教学专家尼尔·安德森(Neil J. Anderson)编写。教材充分显示了安德森丰富的阅读教学经验和策略。安德森在他的《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》(Exploring Second Language Reading: Issues and Strategies)<sup>1</sup>一书中将阅读教学理论与自己多年的教学实践经验相结合,归纳总结了8种英语阅读教学策略,即:

- (1) 激活背景知识 (Activate prior knowledge)
- (2) 培养词汇技能 (Cultivate vocabulary)
- (3) 传授阅读技巧 (Teach for comprehension)
- (4) 提高阅读速度 (Increase reading rate)
- (5) 验证阅读策略 (Verify reading strategies)
- (6) 评估学习效果 (Evaluate progress)
- (7) 建立阅读动机 (Build motivation)
- (8) 选择合适材料 (Select appropriate reading materials)

在这8种教学策略中,前6种的英语表述的第一个字母分别为A, C, T, I, V和E,刚好组成ACTIVE。由此看出,作者给这套阅读教材取名为ACTIVE的意图是显而易见的。

## 1. 激活背景知识

阅读是读者与作者之间的一种交流活动。作者用文字的形式叙述故事、陈述事实、论述观点或表述思想;读者在已有背景知识的基础上解读文本,获取信息、理解主题、推断意图。不激活已有的背景知识,则读者的阅读活动是无法进行的。这种背景知识又被称为背景图式(schemata),它包括所有与作者文本内容有关的读者经历:生活经历、教育经历、文章修辞常识、第一语言知识、第二语言知识以及文化背景等。

背景图式的激活主要通过提问和预测等方式进行。教师在日常阅读教学中,可针对阅读文本主题有目的地设计问题,引导学生进行头脑风暴(brainstorming)、脑图构建(mind mapping)和话题猜测(predicting)等活动,以激活学生已有的背景知识,并通过不断的训练,逐渐帮助学生形成自主激活背景图式的能力。假如学生对所阅读的内容完全不熟悉,教师则应该向学生提供必要的背景资料,引导学生搜索一些必要的背景知识,或者直接向学生提供有关的背景材料,以帮助学生构建背景图式。

在激活背景图式时,教师还应该注意背景图式的负面影响,这种负面影响主要是由学生已有背景知识的片面性甚或错误所造成的,它会直接妨碍学生对文本的理解。在激活学生背景图式的同时,教师要及时了解学生的社会、文化和认知水平等方面的差异,事先做好弥补性教学的预设,帮助学生纠正或完善背景图式。

在《积极英语阅读教程》中,安德森专门设计了两项激活背景知识的活动:Getting Ready和Before You Read。前者通过图片、文章说明和问卷调查等形式向学生展示了背景知识,并设计了讨论以激活或构建学

1 安德森, P4



生的背景图式。这类背景知识主要涉及有关话题的一般常识,属于一般人都应具有的世界知识(world knowledge)。后者是一些针对阅读文本主题的热身问题,通过学生自主活动或结对讨论,引导他们进一步熟悉有关主题的具体知识,为阅读文本做好背景图式准备,同时也激活他们已有的部分词汇。

## 2. 培养词汇技能

词汇在阅读过程中所起的作用是毋庸置疑的:词汇量(vocabulary size)大的读者的阅读速度和理解能力一般要优于词汇量小的读者。但也有特殊的情况,即具有同样词汇量的读者,其阅读能力的发展可能不尽一致,而词汇量较大的读者的阅读能力有时也会比不上词汇量比他们略少的读者。这些现象说明,阅读能力的强弱不仅跟词汇量大小有关,而且跟词汇技能(vocabulary skills)的高低有着十分密切的关系。“词汇技能”指的是词汇的运用能力,如词形识别、词性辨认、词义猜测和词汇选用等等。

词汇技能的培养是词汇教学的主要内容之一。安德森在《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》中介绍了Clarke和Nation(1990)提出的4种词汇教学方法<sup>1</sup>:

- (1) 仔细选择阅读材料中的词汇,事先进行针对性的词汇教学;
- (2) 生词在文本中自然出现时进行同步的词汇教学,这是最常见的词汇教学方法;
- (3) 词汇教学与其他语言活动相结合,如在听或读的活动前向学生介绍一些关键词汇,也可以在语言活动后进行词汇练习;
- (4) 单独的词汇教学,譬如专门学习拼写规则、分析单词结构、介绍记忆方法、解析词义或猜词谜等。

在阅读理解层面上,词汇技能主要涉及词汇识记和词义识别。词汇识记有两种常见的方法:机械重复(rore repetition)和记忆术辅助法(mnemonic approaches);词义识别也有两种常用的手段:构词分析(analysis of word structure)和语境利用(use of context)。词汇识记能力的提高有助于扩大词汇量,而词义识别能力的提高则有利于理解文本材料。因此,词义识别与阅读理解的关联更加直接。安德森推荐的Clarke和Nation有关词义识别的5个步骤值得我们思考和实践<sup>2</sup>:

步骤1:注意生词,识别词性。

步骤2:注意该生词所在的整个句子。如果该生词是名词,那么应注意修饰它的形容词和所使用的动词,也就是要了解这个名词做了什么,或者被做了什么;如果是动词,那么应注意与它搭配使用的名词,以及是否有副词修饰;如果是形容词,那么应注意与它一起使用的名词;如果是副词,那么应注意被它修饰的动词。

步骤3:注意该句子与其他句子或段落的关系。有时,这种关系由一个连接词或副词表现出来,如but, because, if, when, however, as a result;有时,这类词并不出现,那么这种关系就可能是因果、对比、包含、时间、列举、总结等;标点符号也可能是一种线索,例如冒号表示包含关系、破折号表示重复说明等。另外, this, that, such等指示代词也能提供有效信息。

步骤4:利用步骤1—3中获得的信息,猜测词义。

步骤5:核对猜测的准确性。方法有(1)看猜测词的词性与生词是否一致;(2)用猜测词替代生词;(3)如果可能的话,根据前缀、词根或后缀拆开生词;(4)使用词典。

《积极英语阅读教程》中专门设计了Vocabulary Comprehension和Vocabulary Skills板块。Vocabulary Comprehension作为词汇练习,既训练学生词义识别的能力,又起到核对、评价的作用。Vocabulary Skills主要训练词汇的识记,同时也介绍了各种前、后缀的构词知识。此外,作者还在每册教材的开头提供了Vocabulary Learning Tips:

1 安德森, P26

2 安德森, PP26—27

- (1) 选定值得学习的单词;
- (2) 准备单词本以记录单词及需要学习的内容,可以包括:单词、中文释义、词性、原句、造句等;
- (3) 学习该单词的其他派生词,如名词、动词、形容词、副词等;
- (4) 学习该单词的主要搭配;
- (5) 创建词汇网,联系各种相关词汇;
- (6) 牢记常用的前缀、词根和后缀(在教材后附有Prefixes and Suffixes);
- (7) 定期复习单词本;
- (8) 制作单词卡片,正面写单词,背面写中文词义并造句。

### 3. 传授阅读技巧

阅读活动的主要目的是理解,因此,帮助人们掌握各种阅读技巧是阅读教学中非常重要的一个组成部分。如果说激活背景知识和培养词汇技能是阅读教学的前期活动,那么,传授阅读技巧就应是阅读教学的中心内容。阅读理解过程是信息的获取、加工、贮存、提取和使用等一系列认知操作的过程,其心理活动涉及感觉、知觉、记忆、想象和思维等。这些心理活动是隐性的,看不见也摸不着,但能够通过阅读技巧的训练被有效地激活,从而提高阅读理解质量。训练阅读技巧说到底就是培养读者学会使用一些策略去评估自己的理解,预计学习时间,选择有效的计划来解决问题,而这类策略就是元认知策略。

元认知策略大致可分为3种:元认知知识(对认知活动过程、结果及相关信息的认识)、元认知体验(伴随认知活动而产生的情感体验)和元认知监控(主体对认知活动的监控与调节)。其中元认知监控是元认知的主体,它表现为主体根据自己的认知特点、知识特点和学习要求等定出计划、选择策略、评价其有效性、做出补救措施等。这些都是我们在阅读技巧培养过程中需要考虑和研究的。

安德森自己对于ACTIVE中T的理解也有一个过程。他最初将T解读为Test for comprehension,把阅读教学的重点定位在理解的结果上,关注的是如何测试学生的理解技能。后来他提出了Teach for comprehension,从而把重点转移到理解的过程上,使培养学生阅读理解过程中的元认知技能成为阅读教学的一个重要目标。

常见的元认知技能有:

- 解读主题信息;
- 选择、联想、解释文本信息;
- 根据有关信息进行分析、综合、推断;
- 假设、预测、设问;
- 略读、找读、查阅、检阅;
- 自我监控、自我修正,建立并扩大知识库;
- 自评阅读成功结果。

安德森在《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》中介绍了他自己实践过的一些技巧<sup>1</sup>:

(1) 要求学生在阅读时常停下来问自己一些问题,以调控自己的理解程度。如: Why am I reading this material? What do I hope to learn? Do I understand what I'm reading? What am I doing right now to comprehend what I'm reading? If I'm not understanding what I'm reading, what else could I do to comprehend?

(2) 要求学生设想一些问题。他们可以问一些自己读不懂的问题,并希望从老师或同学那里得到解释。

(3) 要求学生概括整个或部分篇章的内容,分清篇章不同层面的信息:主要观点,支持观点,细节内容。

(4) 与学生一起复习那些在阅读中遇到的过渡词。如表示补充信息或理由: also, besides, equally,

further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, too; 表示因果关系: accordingly, as a consequence, as a result, then, therefore, thus; 表示理由: actually, admittedly, certainly, for example, in fact, indeed, really, of course, that is; 表示比较: by comparison, likewise, similarly; 表示对比: however, instead, in spite of that, anyhow, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, still; 表示归纳: in all, in a word, in brief, briefly, in short, in summary; 表示次序: first, finally, last; 表示时间顺序: subsequently, later, next, after that, afterwards, then, now, nowadays, concurrently, simultaneously, first, formerly, earlier, previously, before that.

(5) 要求学生在回答理解性问题后验证自己的回答, 以加深理解或纠正误解。

如果说Teach for comprehension是教师的教学活动, 那么Think about meaning就涉及学生的阅读活动。安德森在《积极英语阅读教程》里把T解读为Think about meaning, 其用意就是要突出以学生为中心, 帮助学生深入理解文本。这套教材还专门针对文本理解设计了两类活动: Check Your Understanding和Critical Thinking。前者涉及文本理解, 包括主题和细节; 后者引导读者结合自身生活经历, 加深对文本的解读, 并由此形成自己的解读。

#### 4. 提高阅读速度

阅读速度与阅读理解的质量有着密切的关系。语言教学研究者对理想的阅读速度作了许多研究和实践。Jensen建议理想阅读速度为每分钟300词; Nuttall也认为, 受过一般教育、智力正常、把英语作为第一语言的读者的平均阅读速度约为每分钟300词; Carver提出了5种阅读速度<sup>1</sup>:

Reading Process	Processing Components	Target WPM
Scanning	Lexical accessing	600
Skimming	Semantic encoding	450
Rauding	Sentence integrating	300
Learning	Idea remembering	200
Memorizing	Fact rehearsing	138

由此可见, 阅读速度直接受阅读目的的影响, 不同的阅读目的对于阅读速度的要求是不同的。找读 (scanning) 的速度能够达到每分钟600词, 而若在阅读过程中要记忆一些细节, 则阅读速度就慢得多了, 只有每分钟138词左右。当然, 这些速度因人而异, 譬如本族语者也许会读得快一些, 而非本族语者可能会慢一点。但阅读速度会直接影响理解质量, 这是研究者的共识。

在阅读教学中存在一种误区, 许多人认为读得慢一点、仔细一点, 理解就会深刻一些。这大概是受到了传统精读教学的影响, 很多人习惯于逐字逐句、细嚼慢咽地解读和吸收, 他们常采用指读、唇读、盯读、心读和默读等方式。其实, 慢速阅读的方式并不能提高理解的质量, 因为阅读者关注的是词语, 他们理解更多的是语义层面, 而不是语篇层面。还有一种误区是把提高阅读速度简单地理解为read the following as quickly as possible。这种一味追求速度、忽视理解的做法只能让阅读活动停留在阅读的形式上, 而脱离了阅读的实质, 其结果只能是低效甚或无效的阅读。

阅读速度应该同时体现fluently和automatically。Grabe指出: ... fluent reading is rapid; the reader needs to

<sup>1</sup> Carver, R.P. 1990. *Reading Rate: A Review of Research and Theory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. P14



maintain the flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences vital to comprehension<sup>1</sup>。流利的阅读 (fluent reading) 能够维持信息流, 并促进联想与推断。自动的阅读 (automatic reading) 指的是读者把各种阅读策略内化为能力, 能够自如地运用各种阅读技能。

为了有效地提高阅读速度, 读者首先要戒除以上各种不良的阅读习惯, 走出阅读“速度”的误区, 其次, 还需要开展专门的训练和实践。安德森在《第二语言阅读探索: 问题与策略》中介绍了4种提高阅读速度的方法<sup>2</sup>:

(1) 速度递增阅读。给学生一篇文章, 要求他们在60秒钟里尽可能多地阅读材料, 接着再给学生60秒钟读第二遍。按照这种方法连续4次, 每重复一次阅读, 学生都会比前一次读的内容多。在重复阅读前一次内容时, 学生会不自觉地提高阅读速度。

(2) 重复阅读。让学生反复阅读同一篇文章, 要求达到标准的阅读速度和理解程度。譬如每分钟200词, 理解程度达70%。

(3) 班级同步阅读。先确定一个班级阅读速度的最低目标, 比如每分钟250词。然后计算所需阅读文章每页的平均词数。假如每页平均词数是125个单词, 那么学生就被要求在30秒钟内读完一页。每过30秒钟, 教师就提示学生阅读下一页。而在此之前已经读完该页的学生则不必等待老师的提示就可以继续阅读下一页。

(4) 自控阅读。这种阅读速度训练方法与班级同步阅读方法类似, 只是学生需自行确定阅读速度目标, 然后再计算所要阅读材料的每行平均词数。例如: 某个学生设定的阅读速度为每分钟180词, 而阅读文章的每行平均词数是10个单词, 那么, 该学生只有每分钟阅读完18行才能达到目标。具体训练可以这样: 学生先对文章以每18行为单位做画线分隔, 再由教师提示时间阅读5至7分钟, 看看能否达到自己的阅读速度目标。

《积极英语阅读教程》充分体现了安德森的这些观点和经验。书中还安排了4个Review, 每个Review都设计了Fluency Practice活动, 它包含两篇文章, 每篇文章末尾均标出了词数, 并在附录部分配有相应的Reading Rate Chart和Reading Comprehension Chart, 以方便学生训练阅读速度, 同时要求他们重视理解的质量。

## 5. 验证阅读策略

如果说“传授阅读技巧”关注的是认知策略和元认知策略的培养, 那么“验证阅读策略”主要是帮助学生学会检验自己使用这些策略的情况。我们在平时的阅读教学中, 往往比较重视阅读策略的传授, 而忽视了对正确运用阅读策略的指导, 结果是教师把各种阅读技能都讲了, 并试图在阅读实践中训练学生, 但实际效果很难令人满意。也就是出于这个原因, 近年来许多语言教学研究者提出, 在阅读教学中我们不仅要向学生介绍阅读策略, 而且要帮助他们学会验证阅读策略的使用。

在平时训练学生使用某种阅读策略时, Winograd和Hare建议教师可以提出下列问题引导学生验证所运用的策略<sup>3</sup>:

- What is the strategy?
- Why should the strategy be used?
- How can the strategy be used?
- When should the strategy be used?
- Where should the reader look?
- How can you evaluate the use of the strategy?

在具体操作过程中, 安德森还介绍了“口头报告” (verbal report) 的方法, 也就是“有声思维” (thinking

1 Grabe, W. 1991. Current Developments in Second Language Reading Research. *TESOL Quarterly* 25: 378

2 安德森, PP62—63

3 安德森, P76

aloud)<sup>1</sup>, 以培养学生这方面的能力:

- (1) 教师选择一篇以前没读过的文章;
- (2) 教师大声朗读, 学生静静地跟着阅读。其间, 教师口头叙述心中的思维活动;
- (3) 在归纳自己的思路后, 教师鼓励学生补充他们心中的想法;
- (4) 教师可以向学生介绍更多的思路, 从而帮助他们了解做“口头报告”需涉及的内容;
- (5) 学生可以分成两三人一组一起训练, 把各自的思维活动说出来。组里由一个学生朗读文章, 其余静静地跟着阅读。这时, 鼓励他们口述阅读时的想法和所使用的策略;
- (6) 鼓励组内作为听众的学生补充他们的想法。

Irwin提出, 类似的训练活动可以采用“阅读循环”的形式: 教师选择一篇阅读材料, 要求学生一次一句轮流朗读, 然后口述他们各自的想法。另一种叫做hot seat的活动也比较常见: 朗读短文和口述思维活动都由一个学生完成, 班上其他学生只需静静地听着。在常规的默读中也可以采用“有声思维”活动, 在学生默读过程中, 不时地打断他们, 要求他们口述自己的思维活动, 也可以让他们在某一处停下来, 跟同伴交流想法。“口头报告”或“有声思维”不仅限于课内活动, 也可以作为课外作业。Davey建议学生在阅读的同时完成一张检查表, 以说明在阅读活动中所使用的各种策略。

对平常阅读教学中学生需要验证的阅读策略, 安德森在《第二语言阅读探索: 问题与策略》中罗列了24种, 其中包括认知阅读策略(cognitive reading strategies)、元认知阅读策略(metacognitive reading strategies)和补偿阅读策略(compensating reading strategies)<sup>2</sup>。

认知阅读策略有:

- (1) 预测文章内容;
- (2) 关注语法结构;
- (3) 理解中心思想;
- (4) 扩大词汇量、强化语法;
- (5) 猜测词语意思;
- (6) 分析主题、文体以及相关背景;
- (7) 区分观点与事实;
- (8) 分解长句;
- (9) 用英语词汇联想第一语言中所熟知的东西;
- (10) 构建相关意思的关联图;
- (11) 写概要总结。

元认知阅读策略有:

- (12) 确定自己需努力提高的目标;
- (13) 罗列与要阅读内容有关的词汇;
- (14) 与同学一起学习, 提高自己的阅读技能;
- (15) 抓住机会练习已知内容;
- (16) 自我评价。

补偿阅读策略有:

- (17) 借助已有知识;
- (18) 记笔记;

1 安德森, P77

2 安德森, PP82—83

- (19) 记忆阅读中的感悟;
- (20) 回顾文章目的和风格;
- (21) 心中描绘场景;
- (22) 回顾要点和细节;
- (23) 使用肢体动作辅助记忆;
- (24) 按词义分组帮助记忆词汇。

《积极英语阅读教程》在设计时充分考虑了验证阅读策略这一环节,因此,该教程中每篇阅读文章都配了Reading Skill栏目,而每单元都设置了Real Life Skill板块。Reading Skill既包含了阅读技能提示,又提供了具体方法描述,十分便于学生在阅读中尝试,也有助于他们在实践中验证。Real Life Skill主要涉及与学生日常生活生活有关的阅读技能,并同样介绍了具体方法。此外,该教程还在最开始为读者提供了Tips for Fluent Reading,并创意地利用了FLUENT READER作为每条Tip的首字母:

Find time to read every day (每天抽时间阅读);

Look for a good place to read (找一个理想的地方阅读);

Use clues in the text to make predictions (利用文章中的线索作猜测);

Establish goals before you read (读前设置目标);

Notice how your eyes and head are moving (注意眼球和头部移动的方式);

Try not to translate (不要翻译);

Read in phrases rather than word by word (以短语为单位阅读,不逐字阅读);

Engage your imagination (展开想象);

Avoid subvocalization (避免默读);

Don't worry about understanding every word (不要因为不能理解所有单词而感到忧虑);

Enjoy your reading (以阅读为乐);

Read as much as you can (尽量多阅读)。

这些tips同时也是验证一个成功读者的标准,教师可以在阅读教学的开始阶段就对学生提出要求并加以引导。

## 6. 评估学习效果

评估是教学活动的重要组成部分,也是最后一个环节。一方面,它能够帮助教师了解阅读训练的成效,以便及时调整教学计划,完善教学方法;另一方面,它也可以用来检测学生在一段时间训练后的阅读能力,从而促进学生阅读能力的形成和发展。

阅读效果评估的科学性、有效性和准确性在很大程度上依赖于阅读教学活动中的各种记录。有关具体的记录过程,安德森提出了几种方法<sup>1</sup>,譬如:(1)准备阅读日志;(2)要求学生记录每日阅读的内容(如下表);(3)使用阅读速度表和理解程度表以帮助学生制订个人目标(如该教程附录中的Reading Rate Chart和Reading Comprehension Chart)等。

Name: _____			
Date	Reading Time	Reading Materials	Comments

安德森还特别介绍了“阅读档案”(reading portfolios)的评估方法,其中有8个步骤:

<sup>1</sup> 安德森, PP90—93



- (1) 制订具体目标;
- (2) 利用评估信息;
- (3) 区分档案类型;
- (4) 评价内容与目标一致;
- (5) 记录学生进步;
- (6) 让学生参与;

(7) 管理评估时间;

(8) 交流评估后的结果。

档案中还可以包括一些有用的项目,如:失误分析;个人阅读细目;轶事记录;阅读书目;阅读篇章样本;阅读理解量表等。

在《积极英语阅读教程》中,安德森从3个层面设计了评估工具:(1)针对话题理解,他在每单元设计了What do you think?环节。该环节主要通过背景描述或话题设问,引导学生表达自己的观点。这些背景或话题均与该单元主题相一致,因此,学生自我表达的质量(语言和内容上)从一个综合的角度反映了他们阅读的质量,这也就对他们的阅读能力做了评估;(2)针对阅读速度 and 理解的准确性,他在附录中设计了Reading Rate Chart和Reading Comprehension Chart两张表(见上文“提高阅读速度”部分),用于阶段性的评估;(3)每册书的前面设置了Are You an Active Reader?问卷,且罗列了Start of course和End of course两栏,起到前测和后测的作用,能够比较科学、准确地评估学生阅读习惯的养成、技能的发展和水平的提高。

另外,在《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》中,安德森还专门就“建立阅读动机”和“选择合适材料”作了详细的讨论。其中的许多观点和方法对于正确使用《积极英语阅读教程》有着积极的指导意义,也有助于教师提高平时阅读教学的有效性、培养学生正确的阅读习惯,并发展他们的阅读能力。笔者以为,若教师能在认真研读安德森的《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》的基础上使用《积极英语阅读教程》,并把相关理论和经验应用到该教材的教学过程中,则效果会更好。

2009年11月

于西子湖墅

注:导读中关于安德森的引文均出自《第二语言阅读探索:问题与策略》,尼尔·安德森著,程晓堂导读,2003年:北京外语教学与研究出版社。

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reading Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reading Materials: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# What Is ACTIVE Reading?

ACTIVE reading is an approach to reading, advocated by Neil J. Anderson, that focuses on the following elements:

## A = Activate Prior Knowledge

- Activation of background knowledge can help improve reading comprehension.
- *Getting Ready* and *Before You Read* sections elicit learners' prior knowledge, and generate interest in the topic, through use of visual prompts and questions.

## C = Cultivate Vocabulary

- Vocabulary plays a crucial role in the development of reading ability.
- *Vocabulary Comprehension* sections in each unit examine vocabulary items encountered in the main reading passage.
- *Vocabulary Skill* sections provide learners with explicit skills-based instruction in how to learn, process, and decipher new vocabulary.

## T = Think About Meaning

- In addition to testing for comprehension, the ACTIVE approach encourages learners to think deeply about the meaning of the text.
- *Check Your Understanding* questions focus learners on the main ideas and key details of the text.
- *Critical Thinking* questions require learners to go beyond reading comprehension to analyze each text and the author's intent.

## I = Increase Reading Fluency

- Conscious development of reading rate and comprehension are key ingredients in building reading fluency.
- *Tips for Fluent Reading* (pages 8 and 9) encourage learners to become more aware of their own reading habits.
- Four *Review Units* reinforce learners' use of strategies and provide additional reading fluency practice.

## V = Verify Strategies

- Learners are encouraged to be aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it, as they read.
- Reading strategies are presented in the *Reading Skill* sections, the *Vocabulary Skill* sections, and the *Real Life Skill* section in each unit.
- *Self Check* sections in each Review Unit require learners to monitor the effectiveness of their own use of strategies.

## E = Evaluate Progress

- Both qualitative and quantitative evaluation of learners' progress is advocated.
- The *Reading Rate Chart* and the *Reading Comprehension Chart* allow learners to plot their achievements in building reading fluency.
- *What Do You Think?* sections provide opportunities for learners to show comprehension of the unit theme, through verbal or written discussion.

For more information on his ACTIVE reading methodology, see Neil J. Anderson's professional title *Exploring Second Language Reading: Issues and Strategies*, part of Thomson Heinle's TeacherSource series as well as his online professional development course, *ELT Advantage: Teaching ESL/EFL Reading*.

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**Active Skills for Reading, 2nd Edition, Teacher's Guide 1**

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**Active Skills for Reading Teacher's Guide 1, 2nd Edition**

**Neil J. Anderson, Nancy Hubley**

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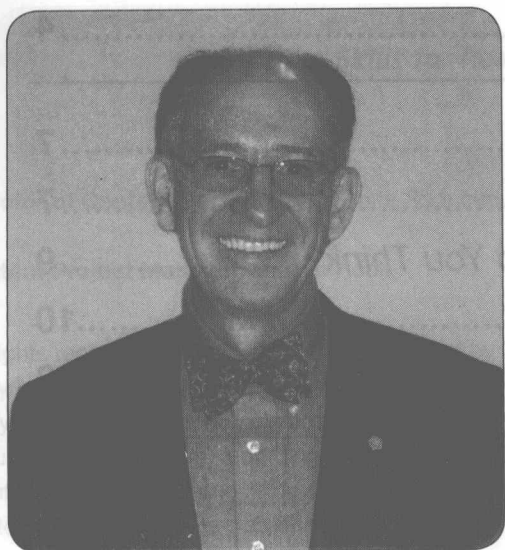
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# Frequently Asked Questions



Over the years I have been fortunate to be able to meet and train a wide variety of EFL/ESL reading instructors from many places around the world. All reading instructors recognize that the teaching of good reading skills and strategies is a vital part of learners' English development.

In my discussions with these teachers, certain questions have come up a number of times. In the following list of frequently asked questions, I have provided some answers to these common concerns.

Neil J. Anderson

***"It's sometimes difficult to get my students motivated to read in English. How can this book help?"***

I understand exactly how you feel. I face that same challenge in my classes. Motivation can come from outside the reader (external motivation) as well as inside the reader (internal motivation). I work hard to make sure that I am providing the appropriate external motivations so that my students will want to be in class and will want to try to improve their reading.

*ACTIVE Skills for Reading* uses high-interest texts relevant to students' lives and interests. For example, there are readings on studying abroad, money and budgets, use of the Internet, and cross-cultural topics. In the second edition, I have included a wider variety of text types. Students will get practice reading interviews, diary extracts, and recipes, as well as articles—the kinds of reading materials they'll face in real life. I find that these text types, in combination with the topics, really help to motivate readers.

***"My students want to read in English but they think it's too difficult. How can this book help?"***

Sometimes students get discouraged because they are reading a book that is too difficult. There are five books in this series. The passages in each of these books are carefully graded to the appropriate level. The passages here are designed so that they are not too long and that they incorporate suitable vocabulary and grammar. I encourage teachers to select the appropriate level of book from the series so that they will be able to engage their students appropriately. Furthermore, an Intro level has been added to meet the needs of beginning level readers.

***"What should I do before I have students read the passage?"***

Engaging students in prereading activities is an essential part of getting them motivated to read more. If we fail to prepare them well, they will not be meaningfully engaged while reading. Each unit begins with the *Get Ready* section with thought-provoking questions to

activate the students' prior knowledge (the A in ACTIVE Reading). Each chapter begins with a *Before You Read* section that also provides an opportunity for the reader to link what they already know with what they are about to read.

***"My students struggle with reading because they find so many unfamiliar words. How can this book help them deal with vocabulary?"***

Vocabulary knowledge is essential for successful reading. The C in ACTIVE Reading focuses specifically on cultivating vocabulary. Two successful features from the first edition of the series are the vocabulary comprehension and vocabulary skill sections.

I have included a vocabulary index at the back of the student book to help both the teacher and the students. I have also added eight vocabulary learning tips to help readers be focused in how they approach vocabulary study. Review these tips on pages 6–7. I've added a list of common prefixes and suffixes in order to help readers focus on word analysis skills.

Together, these sections will help your students successfully address their vocabulary learning needs.

***"Sometimes my students understand the words in a passage, but they don't really understand the overall meaning. How can I help my students to really comprehend the meaning of a text?"***

This is an excellent opportunity for you to help your students see that successful reading is more than knowing the meanings of individual words. To be a successful reader, students must move to understanding the overall meaning of what they are reading. After each reading passage, *ACTIVE Skills for Reading* provides reading comprehension questions that cover a range of comprehension skills from literal (facts and main ideas) to more inferential.

We have also added *Critical Thinking* questions to encourage students to use their own opinions and thoughts to relate to the ideas in the texts. These sections of the book are designed to get the readers to think about meaning, the T in ACTIVE. Those who used the first edition will notice that the T has changed from "teach for comprehension" to "think about meaning." This is because I want to provide the readers with more opportunities to think about meaning and monitor their own comprehension.

***"My students often take a long time to read a text in English, which discourages them. How can I get them to read more fluently?"***

Fluent reading is the area that interests me the most about teaching reading. I know that most second language readers read more slowly in their second language than in their first. This is a matter that must be directly addressed by teachers. We cannot ignore the explicit teaching of fluent reading.

Twelve tips for fluent reading are provided on pages 8–9 of the student book. As well, the Review Units provide explicit practice in developing readers' reading rates. Specific instructions on how to use rate building activities in the classroom are addressed on pages 10–11. Have your students record their progress using the charts at the back of the book. Those charts have become a great source of motivation for my students for improving their reading fluency.

***"I'm worried that my students might try a reading strategy once, then forget about it. How can I encourage them to really develop their strategy use?"***

I keep a list of the key reading skills taught in each chapter in the classroom and encourage students to report how they are using them outside of the classroom. These key reading skills are recycled through each book, and across the series (predicting, main ideas,



scanning, etc), so that students get multiple opportunities to practice them.

New to this edition are other strategy techniques, presented in the Review Units—see above and below, which students can use in any type of reading. The Review Units also provide a *Self Check* section to help readers focus on how to transfer the use of the strategies from in-class reading to all their reading opportunities.

***“How can I tell whether my students are making progress in their reading?”***

The *E* in *ACTIVE* reminds us to evaluate progress. Making learners aware of their progress ties into their motivation to continue learning to be good readers. One way this is done in *ACTIVE Skills for Reading* is quantitatively. Readers can get a “score” on the comprehension questions and the vocabulary questions. Monitoring reading rate through the use of the charts is another progress marker.

In addition to the quantitative progress markers, there are qualitative markers as well. Responses to the *Critical Thinking* and the *What Do You Think?* questions provide progress markers. Teachers can use the question bank on the ExamView® assessment CD-ROM to create progress tests, or mid-book and final exams.

***“Many of my students are planning to take a standardized exam in the future, such as TOEFL®, TOEIC®, or IELTS. How can this course help them prepare?”***

All of the reading skills covered in *ACTIVE Skills for Reading* are useful for standardized examinations. Strong reading skills are essential for any of the standardized exams. Reading rate development will help students deal with the time limits in the exam. ExamView® includes question formats that appear in standardized exams like TOEFL®

iBT and IELTS.\* The ASR website also gives additional quizzes to develop vocabulary.

***“There’s only so much I can do with my students during class time. How can I encourage them to read more outside of class?”***

We should encourage our students to take responsibility for their own development as readers by encouraging them to read as much as they can outside of class. The Internet is an excellent resource for extensive reading. The ASR website [elt.thomson.com/asr](http://elt.thomson.com/asr) includes guided search activities that allow students to build on what they are learning from the readings in the book.

The *Real Life Skill* section of the coursebook gives guidance on dealing with Internet research and blogs as well as other contexts. This section acts as a bridge between the coursebook and out-of-class reading.

I also encourage students to use graded readers. The Thomson Heinle *Foundations Readers* and *Footprint Readers* series, for example, are excellent resources that students could turn to for appropriate reading material. As students become better readers they will be better language learners.

\* See page 64 for an overview of the TOEFL® iBT reading skills covered in *ACTIVE Skills for Reading Book 1*.