



新世纪高等学校本科教材

XUEXIAO BENKE JIAOCAI  
YINGYU  
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# 英语

Yingyu Yuedu Jiaocheng

## 阅读教程

◎于敏 张秀峰 主编



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CAPITAL NORMAL UNIVERSITY PRESS

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# 英语阅读教程

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## 前 言

《英语阅读教程》是专门针对英语阅读课所编写的教材，适用于各级各类英语阅读的教学。该教程采取理论与实践相结合的方式，以现代外语教学理论为基础，以语言学、心理学等相关学科理论为辅助，以现代英语阅读理论为指导，聚焦阅读课的中心任务，精选国外英语阅读素材，通过系统的设计编排和大量有针对性的阅读实践，有效提高学生获取信息的能力和阅读理解能力，并注重人文主义教育，选取经典名篇，使学生在在学习语言的同时提高其鉴赏能力，提升其人格素养。

该教程包括三部分：理论篇、认知篇和鉴赏篇。

一、理论篇。该部分对阅读理解的过程、阅读的模式以及国外阅读理论等进行阐述，同时分析了英语母语阅读、英语二语阅读和英语外语阅读的异同，并对英语阅读策略进行了探讨，旨在从理论的高度帮助学生了解英语阅读的本质，把握英语阅读的特点和方法，从而提高其英语综合阅读能力。

二、认知篇。该部分关注学生的阅读认知策略和元认知策略的培养。鉴于英语阅读技能是一种复杂的综合性技能，教材采取了先分解、后综合的方法，从局部子技能入手，逐一进行专向训练，最后进行综合技能训练。内容涉及单词的认知与记忆、句子的整合、语篇的构建、长篇文章的阅读等。阅读策略涉及浏览、查读、研读、跳读、默读、意群读、快速阅读等。

三、鉴赏篇。该部分精选了15篇富有哲理性和人文性的英语文章，包括演讲辞、时事评论报道、散文以及小说节选等，旨在欣赏英语语言魅力的同时，提高学生的阅读思辨能力，提升其人文主义素养。

希望该书的出版能帮助广大读者把握英语阅读的实质和规律，掌握有效的英语阅读方法，从而培养良好的英语阅读鉴赏能力和综合应用能力。

编者

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# Part I      Reading Theory

This part has a brief review of reading theories to promote students' proper understanding about English reading, especially EFL reading. Meanwhile, this part introduces how to improve reading speed and how to further the understanding with the help of the context.



# Chapter 1 Refine Your Reading Style

## Chapter Survey

- Misconceptions about English Reading
- Techniques to Help Refine Your Reading Style
- Reading Style Flexibility

Intensive Reading

Extensive Reading

Skimming

Scanning

Study Reading

We are living in an age of knowledge explosion. We survived the Ice Age, endured the Dark Age, and flourished in the Modern Age. And now, during our new Space and Computer Age, we are experiencing an Information Revolution. Today our knowledge of the world doubles almost every few years. Much of this information is recorded and communicated in the form of printed words. Just as everything else seems to be moving more quickly, we too, have to speed up our reading rate and improve our reading efficiency so as to keep pace with the knowledge explosion and the fantastic increase in the volume of books and literature. The fundamental strategy to improve our English reading skills is to read more. However, the “catch” is that slow readers usually dislike reading since they deem it to be too time-consuming. Consequently, they usually read so little that they never practice enough to improve. On the other hand, better readers usually read a great deal and are constantly improving their reading skills. Thus, those who are good readers get better whereas those who aren’t, don’t.

This course is designed to offer some practical, effective reading techniques and plenty of selected reading materials for English learners, especially for college or university students and for those who will take part in the examination of CET-Band 4/6. The purpose of this book is to help those English learners refine their English reading style ( in other words, their reading habits, attitudes, and skills) and develop their reading ability ( especially the im-

provement of both their reading speed and comprehension) in a relatively short period of time.

In this chapter, we first will take a brief look at some of the misconceptions about efficient reading, and then we'll deal with several essential reading strategies, followed by relevant reading exercises.

## 1. Some Misconceptions about English Reading

There are many misconceptions about English reading process. Let's examine the most commonly held beliefs about efficient reading.

### **Misconception 1: Efficient reading can only be learned by a gifted minority.**

You do not need to have "superior" intelligence or exceptional vision to read better. Rather, you need an understanding of the reading process and an understanding of how you go about reading printed information. Armed with this awareness, you can learn some simple techniques and put them into practice every day to read more efficiently. The main ingredients for becoming a more efficient reader are practice and the willingness to devote time to changing the reading habits which keep you from reading well now.

### **Misconception 2: Tell me some specific rules and I'll become an efficient reader overnight.**

Actually, there are no specific rules that can turn you into an efficient reader overnight. You learn to read by reading, not just by learning a set of rigid rules. Generally, the more you read, the better and faster reader you become. Although there is no such panacea as magic and once-for-all rules to learn, there are some useful techniques or methods you can learn to improve both your comprehension and rate. But remember that rules themselves are not ability, and knowing some reading rules is no substitute for reading practice and hard work. Methodology is one thing, and ability is another. Memorizing some rules or methods doesn't necessarily mean that you have already acquired or will automatically acquire the reading ability. The mastery of any ability needs corresponding practice. Without practice any good rules or methods will not work. What we advocate here is the combination of methods and consistent practice. In this way, you are bound to become an efficient reader.

### **Misconception 3: Reading happens when the eyes look at the words.**

Many people think that reading is simply a visual process and all you have to do is gaze at words, and then the ideas will descend into your brain. Unfortunately, reading is not that simple. Reading is a process in which your eyes perceive (take in) the printed words and your brain interprets (understand) the meanings of words. Reading takes place when the eyes

and mind work together. Your eyes only play a part in the reading process. You must become actively and aggressively engaged in getting meaning from the text. Only when you are actively seeking meanings, can your eyes and mind work together to help you read quickly and efficiently. In a sense you are responding to the words in print with your own experience and knowledge. You are reconstructing a meaningful world based on both the text (文本) you are reading and the experience of your own. You can easily become bored with the words unless you respond to them.

But “How do I respond actively to the words?” you may ask. Use both your eyes and brain —begin by asking yourself questions about what you are reading, and try to communicate and interact with the author or the characters (of the text) while reading.

**Misconception 4: Reading one word at a time aids comprehension and memory.**

If you stop and concentrate on each word in print, you are creating comprehension problems for yourself. In addition, you may find that you often read a passage but cannot recall much about it. Have you ever had this experience? This frustrates many readers. Research shows that the brain, in just one second, can sort out 100 million separate messages, distinguishing between the important and the unimportant. The inefficient reader sends to the brain such “weak signals” — seemingly unrelated chunks of information — that the brain loses its focus on reading and gets distracted or bored. The eyes continue to look at the print but the brain wanders: thinking, planning, daydreaming about unrelated topics. If you are unable to concentrate while reading or become easily bored or restless, you are probably reading too slowly to engage your mind.

You do not stop between each word when you talk or speak. You usually speak in groups of words. Since you think in a similar fashion, why not read the same way — in idea clusters or thought units? Such is the natural way to read. Your comprehension will improve if you learn to read for meaning and concentrate on ideas, not words.

**Misconception 5: The only way to read anything is slowly and carefully.**

Most people read everything the same way—slowly— whether it is the TV guide, the evening newspaper, a textbook, or a novel. Skillful readers, however, learn there is more than just one way to read. They vary their rate, depending on two main factors: (1) The difficulty of the material. This includes not only the complexity of the material, but also your background or familiarity with the information. (2) The purpose in reading. In other words, why you are reading—to relax, to gain information you need to understand and remember for the courses you take, or to increase your general knowledge. Different reading purposes need and decide different reading rates. (c. f. 1.3)

**Misconception 6: Vocalization or mentally saying the words helps you understand the writer's thoughts.**

Do you silently say the words or need to hear each word when you read? Then you are limiting yourself to the speed at which the words can actually be produced physically. You may either be “vocalizing” — moving your lips and saying the words in a whisper — or you may be “sub-vocalizing” — “hearing” them within your head. While you cannot eliminate mentally hearing all words when you read, you should not be mentally pronouncing every word. Good readers tend only to hear key words, those words which give meaning to the passage.

**Misconception 7: Going over just-read material improves understanding.**

If you have the habit of “regression,” constantly and needlessly going back and rereading parts of sentences, not only will you be reading very slowly but you may also have trouble understanding what you are reading. The smooth, logical flow of thought is broken if you continuously regress while reading.

Many people “regress” because they don't think they can understand what they read the first time around. At times, rereading is necessary to understand difficult material or to remember additional details. But the “regression” discussed here is unnecessary, unconscious, and not helpful.

**Misconception 8: Comprehension decreases as rate increases.**

Continually, students say with great pride that they read slowly because they want to be sure to get the full meaning and remember every single word. Actually, by trying to digest every word, these students read so slowly that they hamper their comprehension and often find themselves confused and disinterested.

Readers who absorb 80 percent of what they read have excellent comprehension. Striving for 100 percent all the time makes you read more slowly than necessary. Although the subconscious mind does store all experiences, the conscious mind can only remember a limited amount of new information. If you try to remember everything, you usually wind up remembering very little and you become frustrated because of the impossibility of the task. The faster, more efficient reader usually has far better comprehension than the very slow reader.

**Misconception 9: Faster reading takes the pleasure out of reading.**

It is wrong to assume that fast readers move so rapidly through print that they never stop to reflect and “drink in” a favorite passage or a difficult one. Efficient readers have learned how to speed up or slow down when necessary. They have mastered the art of flexibility, the hallmark (标志) of a good reader. Slow readers are prisoners to slowness. Efficient readers

know that they have a choice; they are free to vary their reading speeds.

Slow readers rarely have the experience of reading a novel or a short story at one sitting. Have you ever watched a favorite movie on TV, one you had seen in the theater or cinema? Isn't the intensity of the mood, the flow of the dialogue, the interaction of the characters, and the action of the plot rudely disturbed by all those commercials? The same can be true when a novel is read too slowly if you always need to put it down after reading a small portion of the story. When reading quicker becomes automatic, you derive as much, if not more, pleasure in reading than when you read slowly.

## 2. Some Techniques to Help Refine Your Reading Style

### 2.1 Avoid Regression

One of the tendencies most detrimental (harmful) to smooth reading is the movement of the eye back to words and phrases that have already once been read. This looking back movement is known as **regression**. The regressive reader feels he has always just missed something important. He is unsure of himself, never quite certain what he has just read, always going back a few words to make sure. He wastes much of his time in rereading what has been read. The regressive reader may have an inadequate vocabulary that makes him constantly return to words that he is unsure of. His comprehension level is low because his rhythm of reading is broken by the constant interruption of regressions. His speed is also obviously affected by the start-and-stop disconnection. Rereading is sometimes necessary to clarify ideas or remember information, but the habit of regression — constantly rereading within or between lines — will slow down one's reading speed and break one's thought flow. (c.f. **Misconception 7**)

### 2.2 Avoid Vocalization and Sub-vocalization

**Vocalization** (saying the words in a whisper) and **sub-vocalization** (silent pronunciation, or inner speech) set limit to the reading speed, thus making fast reading impossible. Instances of vocalization and sub-vocalization can be found in children and in many unskillful adult readers. When one has formed these habits, he can hardly expect to grasp the meaning of a page at even an average speed. Vocalization and sub-vocalization greatly impede (hinder or slow down) the progress of reading and therefore should be avoided. Instead of vocalization or sub-vocalization, the better way of reading we advise is **visual reading**. With this reading method there is no vocalization or sub-vocalization at all. The printed message goes directly from the eye to the brain without any form of inner or outer verbalization serving as a middle-man. It is like a camera: the image goes directly from the object to the film. This technique must, however, be acquired through deliberate practice. It is not usually taught in school and

it rarely occurs naturally. We should work hard at it as our lifetime goal. Here are three points to be kept in mind: (1) Reading is a visual process; (2) Read with your eyes, not with any part of your mouth or vocal organs; (3) Words can be, and should be, understood without “pronouncing” them in your mind.

### 2.3 Expand Your Eye Span, Reduce the Times of Fixation, and Read in Thought Units

It is important to understand how the eyes work (if you want) to become a more efficient reader. As you read, your eyes move along the lines of print in quick, “jerking” movements, that is, they move and then stop, move and then stop. Each time the eyes stop, words are seen and the printed messages are sent to the brain. The eyes cannot see the print when they are moving. The movement is so rapid, and the “stops”, known as “fixations(定睛)”, so brief that the average person is totally unaware of this sporadic movement (sporadic: appearing or happening at irregular intervals; occasional). Those readers who need to fixate on every word are naturally going to be slower than those who can take in three or four words per eye fixation. The dots in the following passages represent the fixations for slow and good readers.

#### Slow Reader

A very slow reader who often also has poor comprehension fixates or stops at every single word and even divides words into syllables if the words seem too long. He is the word by word reader who plows through print with little understanding of what he reads.

#### Good Reader

The efficient reader, / on the other hand, / usually fixates / in the middle of / a group words / and reads thought units / during each fixation. / The efficient reader / does not read / single words. / He has trained / his eyes to work / in such a way / that he perceives ideas / in chunks or groups. / He has become / a smooth, rhythmical reader. / He reads in clusters / connecting ideas naturally. /

To become an efficient reader, you need to look for meaningful groups of words and train your eyes and brain to fixate within the groups rather than to stop at every single word. This way of reading is called read in “**thought units**” or “idea clustering” or “thought groups”. As you begin to practice idea clustering, you should be aware that many phrases, such as “for this reason” and “on the other hand” are often repeated and can be perceived by the mind as a single unit. Generally speaking, a good reader fixates no more than three or four times for each line. It is advisable that you practice idea clustering daily until reading groups of words in thought units becomes an automatic procedure.

### 3. Reading Style Flexibility

To be an efficient reader, you need to know different reading styles and are expected to apply them appropriately. Good readers read differently depending on what they are reading and their purpose.

#### 3.1 Intensive Reading and Extensive Reading

Generally speaking, there are two different ways to read a foreign language: *intensive reading* and *extensive reading*. You use both at different times depending on your purpose. One is slow, careful reading to note the structure of the language and the way words are used so that you can, in turn, use the structures, words, and phrases in sentences of your own. This is **intensive reading**. This method of reading is very useful in mastering the basic rules of a language and in learning its vocabulary and usage. However, this is not rapid and fluent reading.

To develop the ability to read rapidly and easily, you need to use a second method — **extensive reading**. This is rapid reading of a great deal of relatively easy material. Your main purpose here is not to learn new structures or to analyze every word and phrases, but rather to understand as quickly as possible the ideas being communicated. In extensive reading, you do not stop and ponder on meaning of every word or phrase or sentence. You do not have to consult the dictionary for things you do not understand unless you think it is absolutely necessary to do so. You just read on and on for the general meaning. Sometimes, you may read for nothing but pleasure or interest, or even simply for killing time.

Both intensive reading and extensive reading are important. They serve different purposes and aid each other in developing your reading ability. To English learners, especially to college students, neither of them is dispensable.

#### 3.2 Skimming, Scanning, and Study Reading

As far as reading behavior is concerned, there are three basic reading patterns: *skimming*, *scanning*, and *study reading* (reading for thorough comprehension). As mentioned above, good readers read differently depending on what they are reading and on their purpose. Using the three patterns appropriately and flexibly will greatly improve your reading efficiency. Now let's deal with the three essential reading methods one by one.

##### I. Skimming

**Skimming** refers to quick reading for general ideas. When you skim you move your eyes quickly to acquire a basic understanding of a paragraph, a passage, a text, a chapter or a

book. When skimming, you don't need to read everything in details. You just look at the important parts of the text, for instance, the title, the beginning, the end, the conclusion, the summary, the first sentence in each paragraph, which often contains the *main idea*. Skimming concentrates your attention on the essentials. Skimming is not a careless reading but a careful reading of selected parts. To see how skimming works, let's try it on the following passages. Instead of reading them word by word, sentence by sentence, read only the **underlined parts**, and then answer the questions to see if you have got the main idea of the passages by way of skimming.

### Exercise 1

College differs from high school in several important ways. In the first place, the college student generally does not attend classes in a course every day of the week but rather two or three times a week. Night courses might meet only once a week. In the second place, in college more information is presented in a shorter length of time. For example, a high school English course may be a year-long course whereas a college English course may be only one semester long. Finally, the college English student is expected to do most of his learning on his own outside of class; he is expected to be an independent learner.

What is the passage mainly about?

- A. The advantage of college.
- B. The night courses and the length of time.
- C. The difference between college and high school.
- D. The disadvantage of high school.

### Exercise 2

One major source of information in a college course is the instructor. Through lecture the instructor will give the student much of the information the student is expected to learn for the course. Of course, the textbook is another major source of information. The student should complete all reading assignments as they are made and not wait until immediately before a test to do the reading. Some students do not realize the importance of class discussion as a major source of information in the college classroom. In a class discussion, the instructor will often elicit (draw out) from students points that are important to learn. A final source of information is the supplemental material that the instructor may make available. Supplemental materials might include handouts, duplicated materials, and books or articles placed on reserve in the library or listed on the course outline as suggested but not required reading. In summary,



there are four major sources of information for a college course.

What does the passage mainly discuss?

- A. The college courses given by the instructor.
- B. The importance of class discussion.
- C. The text books and supplemental materials available.
- D. Some major sources of information for a college course.

The following passages consist of more than one paragraph. Remember that when you skim longer passages, you usually take the following steps: (1) Read the title (if there is one) and the first paragraph (sometimes the first two paragraphs, depending on the selection) to look for the subject or the author's point of view about the subject; (2) Read the first sentence of each following paragraph, looking for ideas related to the author's point; (3) Read the last paragraph (or last two, depending on the selection) to see if there is a summary or conclusion about the subject.

### Exercise 3

#### A Busy Student

Tomiko is a student in New York. She is studying English at Columbia University. She plans to finish her English course in June. Then she will work on her master's degree at New York University.

Tomiko likes the many beautiful buildings in New York. In fact, she plans to become an architect. Then she can build great buildings, too.

She also likes the people in New York City. There are many different kinds of people. They speak many languages. Tomiko has made new friends from other countries.

Best of all, Tomiko loves the theaters in New York. She goes to plays almost every day. Sometimes the plays are in theaters on Broadway. Sometimes the plays are in small theaters on other parts of the city.

Tomiko is far from her home in Japan, but she is not sad at all. She goes to class every day and, during weekends, visits her friends or goes to see new places. She attends many plays. She is very busy and happy in New York.

1. This passage is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. an American student in New York
  - B. a Japanese student in Japan
  - C. a Japanese student in New York
  - D. a Japanese man in New York