

剑桥英语

高级英语 阅读材料

(英文版)

Effective Reading

Reading skills for advanced students

Simon Greenall and Michael Swan

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*Simon Greenall and
Michael Swan*

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Effective Reading

Notes to the user

Introduction

The aim of this book is to help learners of English to read more effectively by presenting and developing the various skills needed for successful reading comprehension. The passages are all examples of contemporary British and American English taken from a variety of sources such as newspapers, magazines, novels, advertising material and instructions. None of them have been written specially for foreign students, and only three have been adapted to make them slightly easier to understand. The book is suitable for all advanced learners of English and in particular, for students who are preparing the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency examination. Each unit also includes a variety of suggestions for further language activities such as group discussion work, roleplays, intensive vocabulary study and writing practice. These extra activities allow the book to be used either as the basis or as part of any advanced course of English.

Structure of the book

There are 45 units in this book. Each unit contains:

- One or two reading passages
- Four or five exercises, each one designed to present or develop a specific reading skill or an examination skill (such as *Writing Summaries*)
- Suggestions for further work on the theme which has been introduced by the passage; these can be used in class or as tasks for homework.

If you choose to do all the exercises in each unit, they will take about 60–90 minutes to complete. However, it may not always be necessary to do all the exercises (see *How to use this book*). Your teacher will help you decide which reading skills you need to develop and which exercises to do.

How to read effectively

Everyone reads with some kind of purpose in mind; generally speaking, the purpose is either to enjoy oneself or to obtain information of some kind. Effective reading means being able to read accurately and efficiently, and to understand as much of the passage as you need in order to achieve your purpose. It may also be necessary to reproduce the content of the passage in some way or other, such as

discussing its main ideas or writing a summary. Not everyone can read effectively even in their own language. Sometimes comprehension failure happens and the reader is unable to achieve his/her purpose. This comprehension failure may be a simple matter of not knowing the meaning of a word; but it's just as likely to be a deficiency in one or more of a number of specific reading skills. The exercises in this book are grouped under headings which refer to the following specific skills.

Extracting main ideas

Sometimes it's difficult to see what the main ideas of a passage are, or to distinguish between important and unimportant information. The exercises in this section encourage you to read for the general sense rather than for the meaning of every word.

Reading for specific information

It's not always necessary to read the whole passage especially if you are looking for information which is needed to perform a specific task. The activities here are set to practise this skill in a variety of different ways.

Understanding text organisation

Readers may sometimes have trouble in seeing how a passage is organised. The exercises in this section give practice in recognising how sentences are joined together to make paragraphs, how paragraphs form the passage, and how this organisation is signalled.

Predicting

Before reading a passage, we usually subconsciously ask ourselves what we know about the subject matter. This makes it easier to see what information is new to you and what information you already know about as you read the passage. Developing this technique ensures that as you read, you are not overloaded with too much new information.

Checking comprehension

On certain occasions, such as in examinations, you need to study the passage very closely to find the answer to a question. The information you require is in the passage; all you have to do is find it.

Inferring

A writer may decide to suggest something indirectly rather than state it directly. The reader has to infer this information, which may well be one of the passage's main points. Some readers may need practice in understanding what a sentence implies.

Dealing with unfamiliar words

One of the commonest problems facing the foreign learner is simply not being able to understand a word or expression. But it is often possible to guess its general sense by looking for clues in the context. Exercises in this section develop the skills needed to make reasoned guesses about the meaning of new vocabulary.

Linking ideas

In any passage an idea may be expressed in a number of different words or expressions. The exercises here give readers practice in seeing how different words are related to the same idea.

Understanding complex sentences

Some writers use a deliberately complicated style in which it may be difficult to distinguish, for example, main clauses from subordinate clauses. Other writers are unintentionally obscure. The effect is that it is easy to lose sight of the general sense. In this section, the reader is given practice in seeing how long and complicated sentences can be simplified.

Understanding writer's style

An important part of the pleasure in reading is being able to appreciate why a writer chooses a certain word or expression and how he/she uses it. A number of stylistic devices and features are discussed in this section.

Evaluating the text

A lot of information about the passage may be contained in the reason why it was written, or the purpose that certain sentences serve. For example, it may be important to distinguish between a statement of fact and an expression of the writer's opinion. This section helps develop the reader's more critical faculties.

Reacting to the text

Sometimes a passage may be interpreted according to the reader's own views on the subject being dealt with. In this section, practice is given in separating what the writer says from what the reader thinks.

Writing summaries

This section gives practice in what is strictly speaking a productive skill. But to be able to write accurate summaries requires accurate comprehension of the passage. Please note that the length of the summary depends on the extent of the original passage. In an examination (for example the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency)

the length of the summary varies, but it is usually up to 100 words. You may want to give your students exam practice by asking them to write shorter summaries.

How to use this book

Different learners have different problems, and as we have shown, there may be a number of reasons why someone does not read as effectively as he/she might. When you begin using this book, it may be a good idea to do all the exercises in the unit. (In particular, there are some important techniques which are presented in units 1–6 for *Dealing with unfamiliar words*; in later units, not all the difficult vocabulary is explained and you will need to use these techniques regularly.) But it's likely that you will find some exercises easier than others; in this case, you may decide that there is no point in spending too much time on these skills in later units. You should therefore concentrate on the exercises which you find more difficult in order to develop those reading skills which you lack.

If you are in a class with a large number of students, it may be difficult for your teacher to organise the correction of your work if you are all doing different exercises. However, if you work with students who need to practise similar skills to you, you can help correct each other's work.

Working with another student or in a group is an important feature of this book. It will allow you to practise your speaking and listening skills as well; indeed, some of the questions are deliberately ambiguous so as to encourage genuine discussion between you. But this will not detract from the value of the exercises if you are working on your own.

You will need to use a dictionary on occasions. If you don't have one, ask your teacher or bookseller which one he/she recommends. However, do try *not* to look up every word you don't understand. This may be difficult at first, but will get easier the more you practise the techniques in *Dealing with unfamiliar words*.

You will see from the contents page that the passages are grouped according to their general theme. This is to help you organise your vocabulary learning. But if you don't have much time on your course, it may only be possible to do one or two of the three units within each topic area (see *Contents*).

Note to the teacher or the student working alone

The Teacher's Book contains the answer key to the exercises, as well as a more complete explanation of the different skills practised in the book, and some suggestions on how to integrate the material into an advanced level course.

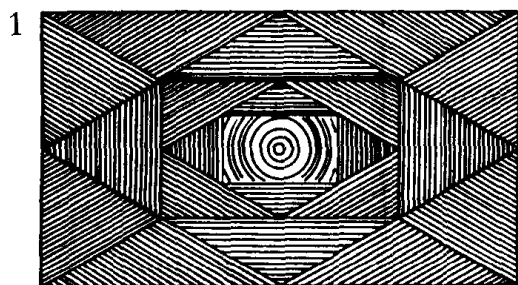
Unit 1 Doodles

Extracting main ideas

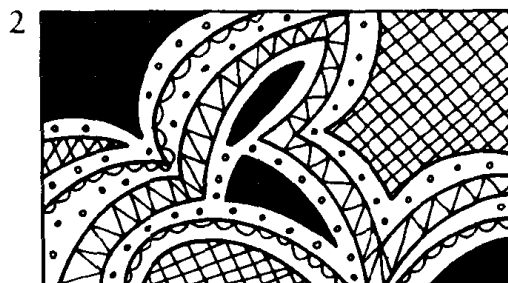
- 1 Work in groups of two or three. Look at the title of the passage below. Do you know what 'doodles' are? Ask the other students if they know.
- 2 Find the sentence in the introduction which explains what 'doodles' means. Did you choose the correct definition in 1?
- 3 The pictures are not next to the paragraphs which explain them. Read the passage through and match the paragraphs to their corresponding pictures.

Forget psychiatrists – analyse yourself with the help of doodles

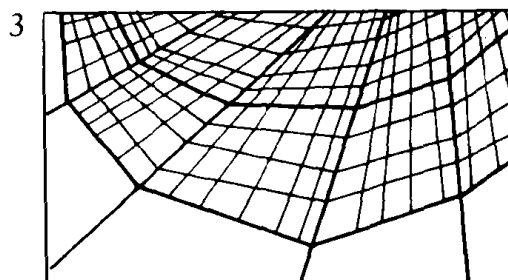
Most doodles are done unconsciously when you are holding a pen in your hand and just happen to start scribbling. However, there is more to these "diagrams of the unconscious" than meets the eye. Free from the restriction of the conscious mind, they can be a useful insight into your character and personality, revealing many important aspects of your secret hopes, ambitions, fears and dreams.



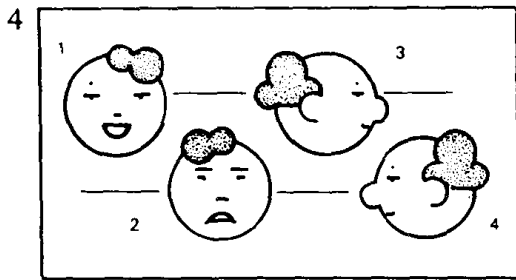
- A Faces are a sign of sociability or lack of it. If you doodle happy, smiling faces (1), you have a friendly, out-going disposition which people respond to, and you enjoy an active social life. You also have a tendency to be sentimental. If your faces are grumpy (2), this may indicate anti-social tendencies. Faces looking to the right (3), are a sign of gregariousness and anticipation about the future, to the left (4), a sign of shyness and reserve.



- B Bare or narrow trees show a lack of warmth, while landscapes demonstrate coldness and spiritual weariness. You've probably been disappointed in love or could even be suffering from a minor ailment that needs attention.

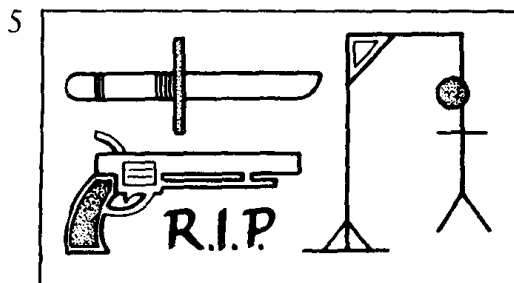


- C Confused lines and squiggles show that you're a bit of a muddlehead, lacking the organisational ability to cope with everyday living. This makes for chaos and a lack of self-control.

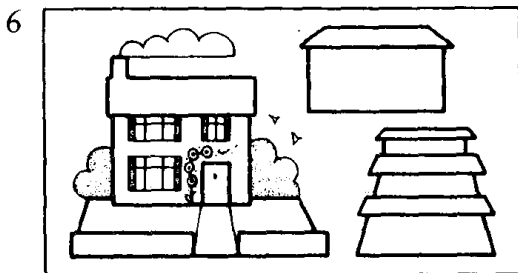


D Houses are wish-fulfilment doodles indicating a desire for a home, family, children and happiness. How you doodle your house is important. If you have curtains at the window, smoke coming out of the chimney, little trees, flowers, figures, a path or a fence, you are seeking emotional security and a happy, fulfilled marriage away from the outside world. Beware of becoming too complacent. If your house is stark and bare with no embellishments or signs of life, no door or garden, you're lacking love and warmth in your life.

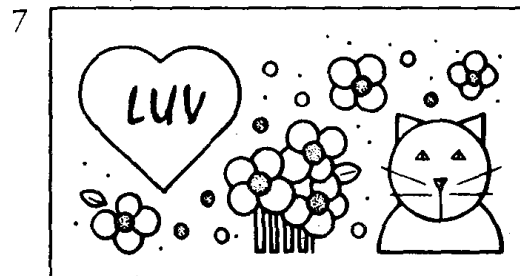
If you build a house in layers, each layer separate – you could be too houseproud, too eager to make your loved ones do your bidding and jump to attention. A little untidiness in a house makes the occupants feel comfortable, secure and happy. Are you repressing your emotions and neglecting to let yourself go now and then?



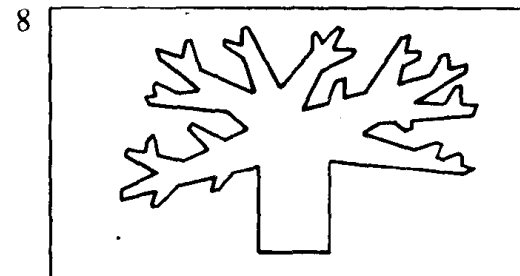
E Filled in or shaded doodles with heavy pressure are often a sign of aggression or anger. The heavier the pressure the more angry you feel, the lighter the pressure the more likely you will be to use sarcasm and a highly-developed critical faculty as a defensive measure.



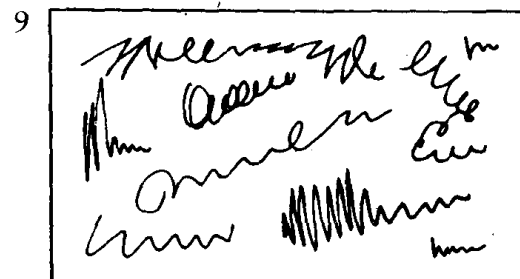
F If your doodle resembles a web, you are making a cry for help in solving a problem. You feel trapped, and are seeking a way out, perhaps you even want to travel, try out new ideas and spread your wings. But you lack confidence to step out into the world on your own because of the web you've created around you.



G Knives, daggers, guns, or thin and angular strokes show aggressive behaviour patterns and sometimes even sadistic tendencies. Such things as whips and instruments of torture can reveal inherent masochistic tendencies.



H Heavy lined shapes are often a sign that you've built a barrier between yourself and the external world. You keep your emotions in tight check because you feel that you can't cope with them and yet underneath that carefully erected barrier you know that once you meet the right person it will be well.



I Hearts, flowers, animals with furry coats, entwined letters and groups of faces indicate that you're in love. You enjoy day-dreaming, and building castles in the air. Sentimental, kind, affectionate and spontaneous in your emotions, you long to belong to someone special.

(Patricia Marne in *Company*)

Reading for specific information

Look quickly through the interpretations again and decide which doodles would indicate someone who is:

- a) affectionate. b) -cruel. c) disorganised. d) happy.
-

Dealing with unfamiliar words

There may be some vocabulary in the passage which you don't understand. Here are two techniques you can use to guess the general sense of an unfamiliar word.

1 *Decide what part of speech the word is.*

Look at the following words and decide whether they are nouns, verbs or adjectives.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 'angular' (paragraph G) | 'embellishments' (paragraph D) |
| 'inherent' (paragraph G) | 'repressing' (paragraph D) |
| 'ailment' (paragraph B) | 'muddlehead' (paragraph C) |
| 'gregariousness' (paragraph E) | |

2 *Look in the context for clues to its general sense.*

Choose the most likely answer to the following questions.

- a) 'angular': Look at the drawing. It probably has something to do with (i) shape, (ii) size, (iii) material.
- b) 'inherent': Are the masochistic tendencies characteristic of (i) whips, instruments of torture etc., or (ii) people and their behaviour?
- c) 'ailment': This is probably something which makes you feel (i) unhappy, (ii) well, (iii) ill.
- d) 'gregariousness': Faces looking to the right probably mean the opposite of faces looking to the left. So it probably means something like (i) being careful, (ii) being sociable, (iii) being pessimistic.
- e) 'embellishments': A house with no embellishments is one that is stark and bare. So it probably refers to the house's (i) shape, (ii) decoration, (iii) position.
- f) 'repressing': If you repress your emotions, you neglect to let yourself go. It means something like (i) controlling, (ii) releasing.
- g) 'muddlehead': Someone who is a muddlehead probably (i) is chaotic, (ii) copes with everyday living.

You can check your guesses by looking the words up in a dictionary.

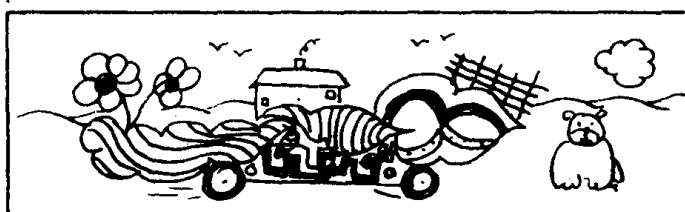
3 *If there are any other words which you don't understand, write them down and then use the two techniques to try and guess their general sense. You may look up five of them in your dictionary. Make sure you choose them carefully.*

Writing summaries

- 1 Read the passage again carefully, and fill in the chart below with a few of the words or phrases which describe the general characteristics of each type of doodle. In certain cases, you may have to summarise the interpretations.

<i>webs</i>	
<i>knives, daggers, guns</i>	
<i>trees and landscapes</i>	
<i>faces</i>	
<i>houses</i>	
<i>filled in or shaded doodles</i>	
<i>hearts, flowers, animals</i>	
<i>heavily lined shapes</i>	
<i>confused lines and squiggles</i>	

- 2 Decide which of your words and phrases describe positive qualities in this context and mark them with a + sign. Then mark the negative qualities with a – sign.
- 3 Look at the doodle below. Working in groups of two or three, decide which of the doodles illustrated it most resembles. Use the interpretation to analyse the person who drew it.



Write two or three sentences, beginning like this:

'The doodle shows flower shapes which suggest that the person is sentimental and kind. However. . .'

Further work

Do you know of any other ways of analysing the personality? Think about astrology, graphology (handwriting), palm reading. Choose one and prepare a short description of how it analyses the personality. Try and include at least ten words and expressions from the passage.

When you are ready, present your description to the others in the class.

Unit 2 Money is the only home

Extracting main ideas

Read the passage through. In your opinion, which of the statements below best sums up its main idea?

- a) Creighton Montgomery was particularly protective of his daughter.
- b) Very rich girls are rather Victorian and old-fashioned.
- c) The rich still have families because of the influence of their money.
- d) The generation gap only occurs in the lower and middle classes.
- e) The rich can control their children's lives without being near them.
- f) Marianne Montgomery lived a very sheltered life.

Marianne Hardwick was timid and unadventurous, her vitality consumed by physical activity and longing, her intelligence by indecisiveness, but this had less to do with the innate characteristics of the *weaker sex* (as her father, Creighton Montgomery, called it) than with the enfeebling 5 circumstances of her upbringing. Creighton Montgomery had enough money to mould his daughters according to his misconceptions: girls were not meant to fend for themselves, so he protected them from life. Which is to say that Marianne Montgomery grew up without making 10 any vital choices for herself. Prevented from acquiring the habits of freedom and strength of character which grow from decision-making, very rich girls, whose parents have the means to protect them in such a crippling fashion, are the last representatives of Victorian womanhood. Though 15 they may have the boldest manners and most up-to-date ideas, they share their great-grandmothers' humble dependence.

Most parents these days have to rely on their force of personality and whatever love and respect they can 20 inspire to exert any influence over their children at all, but there is still an awful lot of parental authority that big money can buy. Multi-millionaires have more of everything than ordinary mortals, including more parent power, and their sons and daughters have about as much opportunity 25

to develop according to their own inclinations as they would have had in the age of absolute monarchy.

The rich still have families.

The great divide between the generations, which is so much taken for granted that no one remarks on it any longer, is the plight of the lower and middle classes, whose children begin to drift away as soon as they are old enough to go to school. The parents cannot control the school, and have even less say as to what company and ideas the child will be exposed to; nor can they isolate him from the public mood, the spirit of the age. It is an often-heard complaint of the middle-class mother, for instance, that she must let her children watch television for hours on end every day if she is to steal any time for herself. The rich have no such problems; they can keep their offspring busy from morning to night without being near them for a minute more than they choose to be, and can exercise almost total control over their environment. As for schooling, they can hand-pick tutors with *sound views* to come to the children, who may never leave the grounds their parents own, in town, in the country, by the sea, unless for an exceptionally secure boarding school or a well-chaperoned trip abroad. It would have been easier for little Marianne Montgomery to go to Cairo than to the nearest newsstand.

(Stephen Vizinczey: *An Innocent Millionaire**)

* *An Innocent Millionaire* by Stephen Vizinczey is published in the United Kingdom by Hamish Hamilton and in the United States by Atlantic Monthly Press.

Dealing with unfamiliar words

- 1 Read the passage again and choose seven or eight words which you don't understand. Then use the two techniques explained in unit 1 to help you guess their general sense.

Decide what part of speech the word is.

Look in the context for clues to its general sense.

Write down what you think the word means.

- 2 Work in pairs. Ask your partner if he/she has written down any of the words that you have on your list. Do you both agree on their meanings? Discuss the meanings of any words which only appear on one list.

