

Margaret Keenan Segal



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Heinle & Heinle Publishers, Inc. 286 Congress Street Boston, Massachusetts 02210 U.S.A. ENCORE 2, English Developmental Reading Series

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INTRODUCTION

THE ENCORE SERIES

The *Encore* series is a four-level developmental reading course for secondary and adult students of English as a Second Language. It is equally appropriate for developmental reading or basic skills classes. Based on the lives of students and staff at a school for performing arts in San Francisco, the series progresses from a beginning to an intermediate level, and each book of the series can be used independently.

The series is based on several crucial premises:

- Motivating and interesting readings are the key to an effective reading course.
- A reading series should teach reading skills and not just test reading comprehension.
- Through a variety of tasks students can successfully develop these reading skills.

The *Encore* series motivates students through its dynamic and relevant story line. The characters associated with the Academy of Performing Arts are real people with real-life dramas. Their conflicts, romances, joys and disappointments are dramatized in the style of soap operas. Within the limits of vocabulary and structures beginning students can handle, the readings build suspense, develop the characters, and resolve problems. Therefore students have a reason for wanting to understand the readings in order to find out what happens.

Readings in the first two books are primarily narratives since beginning English students' vocabulary and grammar are best suited to this dramatic form. As the series develops, more and more emphasis is placed on expository readings in subject areas which students are likely to encounter in their academic or vocational preparation. Since the expository readings are linked to themes developed in the stories, students will be prepared and motivated to read them. In addition, practical reading of forms, maps and ads help students develop skills they need in their everyday lives.

In addition to motivating students with dramatic readings, the series develops reading and thinking skills as preparation for a variety of language-related activities. An *active* approach to the selections is encouraged. Students are guided as they approach and prepare for reading.

They learn effective methods of bringing their own knowledge to the reading process and using textual clues which aid comprehension. The exercises are designed to enable students to complete them successfully in order to build a sense of confidence. For example, students are initially encouraged to guess the meaning of new vocabulary from context through multiple-choice exercises in which there are only two choices.

Since learning to read is a complex and multi-faceted process, the *Encore* series approaches it through several different methods shown to be effective in recent research.

- Both pre- and post-reading activities are included.
- Students are encouraged to read a selection several times in order to establish context and increase comprehension.
- Activities encourage students to relate the material to their personal lives, which makes the reading process more meaningful.
- Each chapter in the first two books includes a language experience story. The students in the class develop their own short reading text based on a model—an effective method for beginning readers.
- Sound-symbol correspondence is also taught at the beginning level to help students decipher new words, bridging oral and written language.

ORGANIZATION OF BOOK 2

Students who have had some exposure to the English language are ready for Book 2 of the series. Book 2 is appropriate for students who have completed the equivalent of Level 1 of a 6-level course. Students can work through Book 2 in 20-50 instructional hours, depending on the amount of homework they do.

The structures and vocabulary at this level are carefully controlled so that students can understand the readings with a minimum of frustration. The structures of the *Encore 1-4* series are correlated with *New Intercom Books 1-4*, which has a grammatical progression typical of basic series for secondary and adult learners. When challenging content is presented, special activities provide support.

Each of the twelve chapters in Book 2 includes the following sections:

Getting Ready to Read

In this section, students learn how to approach a reading and anticipate content. They use the title of the reading, its organization, accompanying illustrations, and their knowledge of the theme of the reading to establish the context. They read purposefully—to establish the main idea and then move on to the next level, which is an active and careful reading of the entire text.

Reading Selection

Each reading selection is based on the lives of people students can relate to. The staff and students at the Academy of Performing Arts are appealing characters and the scenarios are interesting and dynamic. The beginning readings in this book are in dialog form for easy comprehension. Later extended narratives are introduced and students are taught how to read this kind of text. Students should be exposed to the structures listed after each title before they approach the selection. Mastery of the listed structures is not assumed since reading is a receptive skill.

Building Reading Skills

This section provides a variety of exercises that develop important reading skills. Students learn to:

- infer the meaning of new vocabulary from context
- understand pronoun reference
- focus on details
- develop inference skills
- decipher the meaning of unfamiliar structures and complex

They are helped to develop a sense of the main characters' personalities and to interpret their actions.

Making It Personal

Here students have the opportunity to relate the readings to their own lives and to react personally to them. They interpret the story in a meaningful way—and the reading process becomes vital and motivated.

Create Your Own Reading

Students develop language-experience stories in this section. After reading and understanding a model, the class as a whole creates its own reading based on sentences generated by different students. The teacher writes the sentences on the board and the class then practices reading the selection.

Reading Aloud

Sound-symbol correspondence and oral reading are taught as a separate skill from silent reading. Since comprehension is more effective with silent reading, students will read a selection silently before attempting to read it aloud. However, oral reading can help students with pronunciation, intonation, and reading in meaningful phrases. As students read dialogs, poems or songs aloud, encourage them to read with feeling and expression. This is an important reading skill as well as an enjoyable one.

Practical Reading

In this section, students read materials such as forms and ads. They gain familiarity with the kind of reading they will encounter in their everyday lives. Practical activities and comprehension exercises follow each reading.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES

If you as a teacher approach reading as a *process* in which students gradually develop more and more effective reading skills rather than as a result-oriented task with right and wrong answers, students will approach reading happily and with ever-improving confidence. Since reading depends a great deal on guesswork, inference, and interpretation, encourage your students to contribute whatever they can to the process. Avoid penalizing them for incorrect or unlucky guesses.

While students should be free to approach the reading process at their own level of competence, the discipline of working hard at reading should also be encouraged. Urge your students to approach reading actively, not passively. Students must understand that comprehension is not magical, but is a learned skill. Constant questioning, rereading, and reinterpretation develop that skill. Reward students for trying to understand a piece of text, not just for correctness.

Getting Ready to Read

The prereading activities help students to establish a context for the reading and to make hypotheses about it. Both correct and incorrect guesses about the content of the reading should be encouraged. During the reading, students can check their hypotheses and recreate them as needed. Again, students should be aware that an incorrect hypothesis which is abandoned or reformed is as helpful as a correct one.

Reading Selection

Teachers may want to time the first reading of a selection in order to encourage student to skim the text for the main idea. This discourages word-by-word reading. (Give the students double the time it takes you to skim the material.) After the first reading, students can discuss the hypotheses they made in the prereading section and reformulate them with each new bit of information.

Several fast readings are more effective than one slow reading because each perusal is likely to offer contextual clues. The information at the end of a selection may help the students to understand material at the beginning of it. Reading can be compared to putting together a jigsaw puzzle. People don't start at one corner and then find each surrounding piece. Usually the outline is completed first, then the easiest sections, and gradually holes are filled in until the entire puzzle is completed. Even if several pieces are still missing, the picture can be understood.

Building Reading Skills

These exercises are not meant to be *tests* of comprehension but rather aids to comprehension. Students may do them for homework, in small groups, or with the class as a whole. Encourage open discussion and react nonjudgmentally to all opinions and students' interpretations of the readings. You may also want to expand on themes that the class finds interesting, and provide appropriate cultural information.

Creating Your Own Reading

There are a number of ways to exploit the language-experience stories. As information is provided, unobtrusively correct grammatical and word-choice errors and write the sentences on the board. In general, students should volunteer sentences for the story, although you might call on shy students to encourage their participation. Students can then read their stories silently or aloud.

Each student can copy the story or one student can be in charge of copying it for later duplication. The class can make its own booklet, which can be exchanged with other classes' booklets. A list of new vocabulary and structures can be made and reviewed during later classes. Although it is best not to focus on errors during the creation of the story, this is a good opportunity for you to note the structures students need more practice with, so they can be reviewed later. Students can eventually write stories in small groups, and the stories can also be used to teach writing skills.

Reading Aloud

The oral reading section should be done in class so the students will have a good model. Since the purpose of this section is to teach soundsymbol correspondence and not perfect pronunciation, any comprehensible approximation of letter sounds should be accepted. For instance, you need not insist on the perfect pronunciation of the short i sound, a difficult sound for speakers of many Romance languages. When the dialogs are acted out, they should be made as dramatic and realistic as possible. Props and accompanying actions will make this activity effective and fun.

Practical Reading

Whenever possible, bring in your own examples of the different realia in the practical reading section for the students to read and discuss.

Since this is a beginning reader, competence in dealing with the various realia rather than perfect comprehension of every word is the goal here.

Finally, we hope that you and your students will enjoy *Encore*. Studies have shown again and again that motivation is the key factor in language learning. Students' interest will be maintained if you alternate serious skills work with free and open discussion of the themes in the story line. If the students are having fun, they'll be motivated to read, and if they're motivated to read, they will learn effective reading skills.

To the staff and students at the East Harlem Music School in New York City, who were the inspiration for this book. All characters, of course, are fictional, and resemblance to real people is accidental.

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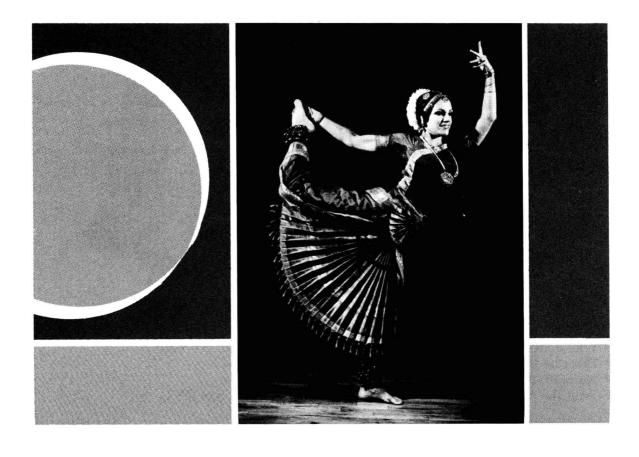
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Unit 1

The Academy of Performing Arts



Getting Ready to Read

Reading is like a guessing game. If you know a lot about the subject of the reading before you read, you can guess what new words and phrases mean. You can be a better reader if you think and talk about the reading before you read. These activities can help you think about the reading.

Look at the title of the reading on page 3.

- What is the title of this reading?
- Circle the subjects that are performing arts.

math

drama

music

chemistry

dance

English

• What can you learn at an academy of performing arts?



Celia García, director, and some students during an exciting evening at the Academy of Performing Arts.

Look at the picture.

- Who is in the picture?
- Describe the people in the picture.
- Name some of the things in the picture.
- Read the explanation below the picture. What is this a picture of?

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