

SECOND  
EDITION  
2



# Issues for Today

AN  
INTERMEDIATE  
READING SKILLS  
TEXT

Lorraine C. Smith  
Nancy Nici Mare

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## An Intermediate Reading Skills Text

*Second Edition*

Lorraine C. Smith  
Nancy Nici Mare

*English Language Institute  
Queens College  
The City University of New York*



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*Issues for Today, Second Edition* is a reading skills textbook intended for intermediate, academically-oriented students of English as a second or foreign language. The passages in this thematically-organized book introduce students to topics of universal interest. As students work with the materials in each chapter, they develop the kinds of extensive and intensive reading skills they will need to achieve academic success in English.

*Issues for Today* is one in a series of reading skills texts. The complete series has been designed to meet the needs of students from the beginning to the advanced levels and includes the following:

- *Themes for Today* .....beginning
- *Insights for Today* .....high beginning
- *Issues for Today* .....intermediate
- *Concepts for Today* .....high intermediate
- *Topics for Today* .....advanced

*Issues for Today* consists of four sections. Each section contains three chapters that deal with related subjects. At the same time, each chapter is an independent unit, entirely separate in content from the other two chapters contained in that section. This gives the instructor the option of either completing entire sections or choosing individual chapters as a focus in class.

All of the chapters provide the students with interesting and stimulating topics to read, think about, and discuss. The initial exercises are an introduction to each reading passage and encourage the students to think about the ideas, facts, and vocabulary that will be presented. The exercises which follow the reading passage are intended to improve reading comprehension skills as well as comprehension of English sentence structure. The activities will help them see relationships between parts of a sentence, between sentences, and between and within paragraphs. The articles contain useful vocabulary which the students can use in the real world and the exercises are designed to sharpen their ability to learn vocabulary from context. Students should learn not to rely on a bilingual dictionary. A word form exercise is included in each chapter to help students develop a "feel" for the patterns of word forms in English and an awareness of morphemes, for example, the suffix -tion always indicates a noun. Many vocabulary and word form selections are repeated in subsequent chapters to provide reinforcement.

The progression of exercises and activities in each chapter leads the students through general comprehension of main ideas, specific information,

understanding structural details, and specific vocabulary. Since reading college material also involves note-taking skills, students are trained to outline the article via diagrams, charts and outlines, and to briefly summarize the passage. Finally, the students practice manipulating new vocabulary by working with their different parts of speech, and varying the tense in both affirmative and negative forms, and singular and plural forms.

## **New to the Second Edition**

While *Issues for Today, Second Edition* retains the overall format of the first edition, the authors have made several significant changes to the original book. The second edition contains four new chapters: "Dreams: Making Them Work for Us," "Language: Is It Always Spoken?" "Innocent Until Proven Guilty: The Criminal Court System," and "How Lunar Eclipses Have Changed History." In addition, several of the original readings have been updated to reflect new information.

*Issues for Today, Second Edition* contains an enhanced Prereading Preparation section, which contains more thoughtful, motivating questions and activities. The second edition includes improved graphics, which are accompanied by questions designed to enhance students' comprehension of information presented in graphs. The Notetaking Outline exercise has been redesigned. The new Information Organization exercise includes outlines, charts and flowcharts, depending on each reading and the type of information it contains. This tailoring of the organization of information will make the Reading Recall, formerly called Comprehension Questions, a more purposeful activity. Furthermore, the Information Organization design takes into account students' different learning and organizational styles. The new Follow-Up Activities section contains a variety of activities, and provides more opportunities for discussion and interaction. Moreover, *Issues for Today, Second Edition* contains surveys, which provide students with the means and the opportunity to go out into the "real world" and interact with native English speakers in meaningful ways, and affords them the opportunity to collect data that they can bring back to class and combine, generating graphs of their own for interpretation and discussion. *Issues for Today, Second Edition* includes end-of-unit crossword puzzles, which provide a review of the vocabulary encountered in all three chapters of each unit, and Unit Discussion questions, which help students think about, discuss, and make connections among the topics in the chapters of each unit.

All of these revisions and enhancements to *Issues for Today, Second Edition* have been designed to help students improve their reading skills and develop confidence as they work through the text. At the same time, the second edition is structured so that the students will steadily progress towards skillful, independent reading.

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L.C.S. and N.N.M.

## **How to Use This Book**

Each chapter in this book consists of the following:

- Prereading Preparation
- Reading Passage
- Fact-Finding Exercise
- Reading Analysis
- Information Organization
- Information Recall and Summary
- Word Forms
- Vocabulary in Context
- Topics for Discussion and Writing
- Follow-up Activities

Chapters 7–12 also include a Dictionary Skills exercise. Each unit contains a crossword puzzle, which incorporates vocabulary from all three chapters in the unit. The discussion section at the end of each unit ties in the related topics of the three chapters. There is a CLOZE quiz for each chapter located in the Pullout Section at the end of the book. This gives the teacher the option of removing the entire test section from all the students' books at the beginning of the term and giving out each test as the class finishes each chapter. The Answer Key is at the end of the Pullout Section and may also be removed by the teacher at the beginning of the term, along with the CLOZE tests.

## **Prereading Preparation**

This prereading activity is designed to stimulate student interest and provide preliminary vocabulary for the passage itself. The importance of prereading preparation should not be underestimated. Studies have shown the positive effect of prereading preparation in motivating student interest, activating background knowledge, and enhancing reading comprehension. Time should be spent describing and discussing the illustrations as well as discussing the chapter title and the prereading questions. Furthermore, students should try to relate the topic to their own experience and try to predict what they are going to read about.

## Reading Passage

The students will read the passage for the first time. They should be instructed to time themselves and to try to aim for a higher reading speed the second time they read the passage. They should also be encouraged to read *ideas*, not just words.

## Fact-Finding Exercise

After reading the passage again, the students will read the True/False statements and check whether they are true or false. If the statement is false, the students will rewrite the statement so that it is true. They will then go back to the passage and find the line(s) that contain the correct answer. This activity can be done individually or in groups.

## Reading Analysis

The students will read each question and answer it. The first question in this section always refers to the main idea. There are three possible answers. Two answers are incorrect because they are too general or too narrow, they are not mentioned in the passage, or they are false. When going over the exercise, the teacher should discuss with the students why the other two answers are incorrect. The rest of this exercise requires the students to think about the structure of the sentences and paragraphs, and the relationships of ideas to each other. This exercise is very effective when done in groups. It may also be done individually, but if done in groups it gives the students an excellent opportunity to discuss possible answers.

## Information Organization

In this exercise, the students are asked to read the passage again, take notes, and organize the information they have just read. They may be asked to complete an outline, a table, or a flowchart. The teacher may want to review the concept of notetaking before beginning the exercise. The outline, table, or flowchart can be sketched on the blackboard by the teacher or a student and completed by individual students in front of the class. Variations can be discussed by the class as a group. It should be pointed out to students that in American colleges, teachers often base their exams on the notes that the students are expected to take during class lectures, and that they, too, will be tested on their notes.

## Information Recall and Summary

The questions in this exercise are based on the notes the students took in the Information Organization exercise. Students should be instructed to



read the questions and then to refer to their notes to answer them. They are also asked to write a summary of the article. The teacher may want to review how to summarize at the beginning of the class. This section can be prepared in class and discussed. Alternately, it can be assigned for homework.

## Word Forms

As an introduction to the word form exercises in this book, it is recommended that the teacher first review parts of speech, especially verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Teachers should point out each word form's position in a sentence. Students will develop a sense for which part of speech is missing in a given sentence. Teachers should also point out clues to tense and number, and whether an idea is affirmative or negative. Each section has its own instructions, depending on the particular pattern that is being introduced. For example, in the section containing words that take *-tion* in the noun form, the teacher can explain that in this exercise the students will look at the verb and noun forms of two types of words that use the suffix *-tion* in their noun form. (1) Some words simply add *-tion* to the verb: *convict\conviction*; if the word ends in *e*, the *e* is dropped first: *execute\execution*; (2) other words drop the final *e* and add *-ation*: *combine\combination*. This exercise is very effective when done in pairs. After students have a working knowledge of this type of exercise, it can be assigned for homework.

## Dictionary Skills

This exercise, in Chapters 7–12, provides students with much-needed practice in selecting the appropriate dictionary entry for an unknown word, depending on the context. Students are given entries from the *Oxford ESL Dictionary*. The sentence containing the dictionary word is provided above the entry. After selecting the appropriate entry, the student rewrites the sentence using the chosen definition. The students should write the answer in a grammatically correct form, as they may not always copy verbatim from the dictionary. The students can work in pairs on this exercise and report back to the class. They should be prepared to justify their choices.

## Vocabulary in Context

This is a fill-in exercise designed as a review of the items in the previous exercises. The vocabulary has been covered either in the questions or the Reading Analysis section. It can be done for homework as a review or in class as group work.

**Topics for Discussion and Writing**

In this section, students are encouraged to use the information and vocabulary from the passage both orally and in writing. The writing assignment may be done in class or at home.

**Follow-Up Activities**

This section contains various activities appropriate to the information in the passages. Some activities are designed for pair and small-group work. Students are encouraged to use the information and vocabulary from the passages both orally and in writing. The teacher may also use these questions and activities as home or in-class assignments.

**Index of Key Words and Phrases**

This section contains words and phrases from all the chapters, for easy reference. It is located after the last chapter, before the pullout section.

**Pullout Section****CLOZE**

The CLOZE quiz not only tests vocabulary, but also sentence structure and comprehension in general. The quiz is a modified version of the reading passage itself, with 20 items to be completed. At the top of the answer page, students are given the 20 words to be filled in the blank spaces. The quiz for each chapter is placed at the end of the book in the Pullout Section. The teacher has the option of collecting the entire Pullout Section of quizzes, including the Answer Key, from students at the beginning of the semester. In this way, the teacher will have a copy of all the quizzes for each student in the class and can administer the quizzes after each unit is covered. The quizzes can be done either as a test or as a group assignment.

**Answer Key**

The Answer Key is part of the Pullout Section and provides the answers for the exercises in the book, including the CLOZE quizzes.

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# Trends in Living



C · H · A · P · T · E · R

1



# A Cultural Difference: Being on Time

## • Prereading Preparation

1. What does **on time** mean?
2. Is it always important to be on time? Look at the table below. How important is it to be on time for each appointment? Put a check mark in the box to show your answer. Discuss your answers with the class.

How Important Is It . . . ?

| Type of Appointment           | Scheduled Time | Very Important | Slightly Important | Not Important |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| dentist                       | 9 A.M.         |                |                    |               |
| university class              | 11 A.M.        |                |                    |               |
| lunch with a friend at school | 12 P.M.        |                |                    |               |
| dinner with your spouse       | 7 P.M.         |                |                    |               |
| a friend's party              | 9 P.M.         |                |                    |               |
| job interview in a bank       | 2 P.M.         |                |                    |               |

3. Are you usually on time, or are you usually late? Why?
4. Read the title of the article. What do you think this article is about?

Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

1 In the United States, it is important to be on time, or  
2 punctual, for an appointment, a class, a meeting, etc.  
3 However, this may not be true in all countries. An  
4 American professor discovered this difference while  
5 teaching a class in a Brazilian university. The two-hour  
6 class was scheduled to begin at 10 A.M. and end at 12 P.M.  
7 On the first day, when the professor arrived on time, no

8 one was in the classroom. Many students came after 10  
9 A.M. Several arrived after 10:30 A.M. Two students came  
10 after 11 A.M. Although all the students greeted the pro-  
11 fessor as they arrived, few apologized for their lateness.  
12 Were these students being rude? He decided to study  
13 the students' behavior.

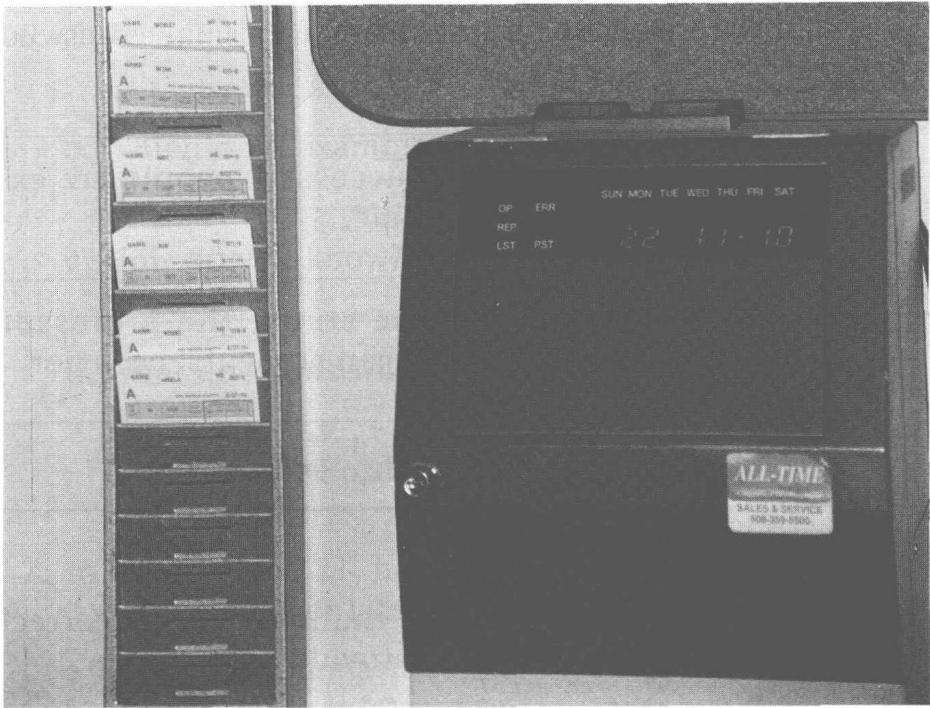
14 The professor talked to American and Brazilian stu-  
15 dents about lateness in both an informal and a formal  
16 situation: lunch with a friend and in a university class,  
17 respectively. He gave them an example and asked them  
18 how they would react. If they had a lunch appointment  
19 with a friend, the average American student defined  
20 lateness as 19 minutes after the agreed time. On the  
21 other hand, the average Brazilian student felt the friend  
22 was late after 33 minutes.

23 In an American university, students are expected to  
24 arrive at the appointed hour. In contrast, in Brazil, nei-  
25 ther the teacher nor the students always arrive at the  
26 appointed hour. Classes not only begin at the scheduled  
27 time in the United States, but they also end at the sched-  
28 uled time. In the Brazilian class, only a few students left  
29 the class at noon; many remained past 12:30 to discuss  
30 the class and ask more questions. While arriving late  
31 may not be very important in Brazil, neither is staying  
32 late.

33 The explanation for these differences is complicated.  
34 People from Brazilian and North American cultures have  
35 different feelings about lateness. In Brazil, the students  
36 believe that a person who usually arrives late is prob-  
37 ably more successful than a person who is always on  
38 time. In fact, Brazilians expect a person with status or  
39 prestige to arrive late, while in the United States late-  
40 ness is usually considered to be disrespectful and unac-  
41 ceptable. Consequently, if a Brazilian is late for an  
42 appointment with a North American, the American may  
43 misinterpret the reason for the lateness and become  
44 angry.

45 As a result of his study, the professor learned that  
46 the Brazilian students were not being disrespectful to  
47 him. Instead, they were simply behaving in the appro-  
48 priate way for a Brazilian student in Brazil. Eventually,  
49 the professor was able to adapt his own behavior so that  
50 he could feel comfortable in the new culture.

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**• A. Fact-Finding Exercise**

Read the passage again. Read the following statements. Check whether they are True (T) or False (F). If a statement is false, rewrite the statement so that it is true. Then go back to the passage and find the line that supports your answer.

- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F

1. On the first day of class, the professor arrived late, but the students were on time.

\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F

2. The professor decided to study the behavior of Brazilian and American students.

\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F

3. In an American university, it is important to be on time.

\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F

4. In a Brazilian class, the students leave immediately after the class is finished.

\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F

5. In an American university, many students probably leave immediately after the class is finished.

\_\_\_\_\_



- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F    6. Most North Americans think a person who is late is disrespectful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F    7. In Brazil, most successful people are expected to be on time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ T    \_\_\_\_\_ F    8. As a result of the study, the professor changed the Brazilian students' behavior.

### • B. Reading Analysis

Read each question carefully. Either circle the letter of the correct answer, or write your answer in the space provided.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?
  - a. It is important to be on time for class in the United States.
  - b. People learn the importance of time when they are children.
  - c. The importance of being on time differs among cultures.
2. Why did the professor study the Brazilian students' behavior?
  - a. The students seemed very rude to him.
  - b. He wanted to understand why the students came late.
  - c. He wanted to make the students come to class on time.
3. a. Read lines 1 and 2. What does **punctual** mean?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. How do you know?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In line 11, what does **few** refer to?
  - a. the professor
  - b. the students
  - c. greetings
5. Read lines 10–13. What is **rude** behavior?
  - a. impolite behavior
  - b. noisy behavior
  - c. studious behavior