

SIEPS TO BUILDING COLLEGEREADING SKILLS

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The Three Books in the TEN STEPS Series:

BUILDING COLLEGE READING SKILLS IMPROVING READING SKILLS ADVANCING COLLEGE READING SKILLS

Supplements Available for Each Book:

Instructor's Manual
Test Bank
Two computer disks
Guide to the Computer Disks

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Preface to the Instructor

We all know that many of today's beginning college students do not have the reading skills needed to do effective work in their courses. A related problem, apparent even in class discussions, is that they often lack the skills required to think consistently in a clear and logical way.

The purpose of TEN STEPS TO BUILDING COLLEGE READING SKILLS is to develop effective reading and clear thinking. To do so, the book first presents a sequence of word and reading skills that are widely recognized to be essential for sound comprehension:

- Using the dictionary
- Using vocabulary in context
- Identifying transitions
- Understanding the nature of main ideas
- Locating main ideas in different parts of paragraphs
- Determining implied main ideas
- Understanding the nature of supporting details
- Locating major details
- Identifying patterns of organization
- Drawing inferences

In every chapter in Part I, the key aspects of a skill are explained and illustrated in a clear and simple way. Each skill is followed by a series of practices, and two review tests then end each chapter. Taken together, the ten chapters provide students with the skills needed for a solid understanding of reading materials.

Part II is made up of four mastery tests for each of the skills. Students are thus given the additional practice they may need for the full learning of each skill. The tests are designed to allow for easy grading but also to ensure that students think carefully before answering each question.

Finally, Part III consists of fifteen readings that will help improve both reading and thinking skills. Each reading is followed by a series of *Skill Development Questions* that ask students to apply the skills presented in Part I. In addition, an activity in *Outlining or Summarizing* after each selection requires students to think carefully about the basic content of a selection. And an optional series of *Discussion Questions* provides teachers with a final opportunity to engage students in a variety of reading skills and to deepen students' understanding of a selection.

The treatment of outlining and summarizing is a distinctive feature of the book. While educators agree that these abilities are important for students to learn, they are all too seldom taught. From a practical standpoint, it is almost impossible for a teacher to respond individually to entire collections of class outlines or summaries. This book seeks, then, to create a series of varied activities that truly involve students in outlining and summarizing—in other words, that truly make students think—and yet that enable a teacher to realistically give feedback. It is through continued practice and feedback on challenging material that a student becomes a more effective reader and thinker.

Here are other important features of the book:

- Focus on the Basics. The book seeks to explain in an extremely clear, step-by-step way the essential elements of each skill. Many examples are provided to ensure that students understand each point. In general, the focus is on teaching the skills—not just explaining the skills briefly and not just testing them. Note, for instance, that three full chapters are devoted to helping students learn the essentials of the main idea in as thorough a way as possible.
- Frequent Practice and Feedback. In the belief that progress is made largely through abundant practice and careful feedback, this book includes numerous activities. Students can get immediate feedback on the practice exercises in Part I by turning to the limited answer key in the back. The answers to the review tests in Part I and the mastery tests in Part II are in the Instructor's Manual. And in the back of the book, students will find answers and explanations for the first, fifth, and tenth reading selections in Part III. Answers to the other twelve selections are in the Instructor's Manual.

The limited answer key enables students to take an active role in their own learning. And they are likely to use the answer key in an honest and positive way if they know they may be tested on the many activities and selections for which answers are not provided. (Answers not in the book can, of course, be copied from the manual and passed out at the teacher's discretion.)

• **High Interest Level.** Dull and unvaried readings and exercises work against learning. One of the unstated steps to good reading is to enjoy it. No one wants to

be bored, and students, above all, need the incentive of interesting reading. Also, a teacher's pleasure in a selection can carry favorably over into class work. All the readings in the book, therefore, have been chosen not only for the quality of the writing but also for their compelling content. They should fascinate teachers and students alike, and they are arguably superior in interest level to those in other current reading texts.

- Ease of use. The straightforward sequence in each chapter—from explanation to example to practice to review test—helps make the skills easy to teach. The organization of the book into three distinct parts also makes for ease of use. Within a single class, for instance, teachers can work on a particular skill in Part I, review another skill through the use of a mastery test in Part II, and provide variety by having students read one of the selections in Part III. The limited answer key at the back of the text also makes for versatility: it means that the teacher can assign some chapters or reading selections for self-teaching. Finally, the self-contained mastery tests—each on its own tear-out page—make it a simple matter for teachers to evaluate student progress.
- Integration of skills. While learning the skills individually in Parts I and II, students learn to apply the skills together through the readings and questions in Part III. They discover that effective reading and thinking involve a combination of skills.
- Supplementary materials. Three helpful supplements are available at no charge for instructors using the text. Any of the three can be obtained by writing to the Reading Editor, Townsend Press, Pavilions at Greentree—408, Marlton, New Jersey 08053.
- (1) An *Instructor's Manual* includes a detailed answer key, with answers organized onto letter-sized sheets so they can be easily copied and handed out to students. The manual also contains a model syllabus and an analysis of the reading selections in the book according to the Fry readability formula. In addition, writing activities are provided for each selection, for those teachers who want their students to work on reading and writing at the same time. Some composition teachers, indeed, may wish to use the book as a basic reader.
- (2) A Test Bank consists of two to three additional mastery tests for each of the ten skill chapters in the text. Teachers will therefore have at their disposal both the four mastery tests for each skill in Part II of the book and also several added tests from the Test Bank.
- (3) Finally, two very easy-to-use *computer disks* accompany the book. The disks contain additional mastery tests for the ten skill chapters in the book. The

disks are self-booting and contain a number of other user- and instructor-friendly features, including brief explanations of answers, a sound option, frequent mention of the user's first name, a running score at the bottom of the screen, and a record-keeping score file. Furthermore, all of the tests on the disks are reproduced in their entirety in a booklet titled *Guide to the Computer Disks*. Instructors can therefore decide how to use the materials without having to work through each of the tests on the computer.

• One of a Sequence of Three Books. This book is the basic text in a series that includes two other books. TEN STEPS TO IMPROVING READING SKILLS is an intermediate text, and TEN STEPS TO ADVANCING COLLEGE READING SKILLS is a more advanced text.

The BUILDING book is suited for a first college reading course. The IMPROVING book is appropriate for the core developmental reading course offered at most colleges. The ADVANCING book is a slightly higher developmental text than the IMPROVING book. It can be used as a sequel to the intermediate book, or as a second-semester alternative to it.

Together, the books and their full range of supplements form a sequence that should be ideal for any college reading program.

To summarize, then, TEN STEPS TO BUILDING COLLEGE READING SKILLS provides ten key skills that will help beginning college readers become independent readers. Through a carefully designed series of activities and tests and an appealing collection of readings, students will receive extensive, guided practice in vocabulary development, reading, and thinking. The result is an integrated approach to learning that should, by the end of a course, make them better readers and stronger thinkers.

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John Langan Gary Kay

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How to Become a Better Reader and Thinker

Would you like to improve your reading skills? Would it help to become a stronger thinker? You, like most students, will probably answer a quick "Yes" to these questions. You may be a little doubtful, though, about whether reading and thinking can be developed at the same time.

In fact, reading and thinking should be worked on together. They are closely related skills, and practice in thoughtful reading will serve at the same time to make you a stronger thinker. To find out just how the book will help you achieve these goals, read the next several pages and do the brief activities as well. The activities are easily completed and will give you a quick, helpful sense of the entire book.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The book is organized into three parts, each of which is described below.

Part I: Ten Steps to Building College Reading Skills (Pages 7-138)

To make you a more effective reader and thinker, this book first presents a series of ten key reading skills. They are listed in the table of contents on page v. Turn to that page to fill in the several skills missing in the list on the next page.

1

1	Dictionary Use
2	Vocabuloury in Context
3	Transitione
4	Main Ideas I
5	Main Ideas II
6	Main Ideas III
7	Supporting Details I
8	Supporting Details II
9	Patterns of Deganization
10	_ loteraries
	Each chapter is developed in the same way First of all a skill is

Each chapter is developed in the same way. First of all, a skill is explained and illustrated. Practice exercises are then provided, so you have the "hands-on" experience needed to understand the skill.

- How many practices are there to help you learn the second skill, "Understanding Vocabulary in Context" (25-31)?
 How many practices are there for the third skill, "Transitions" (34-
- How many practices are there for the third skill, "Transitions" (34-41)? Fixe

Closing each chapter are two review tests.

- On which pages are the two review tests for "Main Ideas I"? (45-59)?
 Transfer
 On which pages are the two review tests for "Supporting Details I"
- On which pages are the two review tests for "Supporting Details I" (87-96)? Programme (87-96).

Part II: Mastery Tests (Pages 141-220)

This part of the book provides mastery tests for each of the ten skills you will have studied in Part I.

• Look through pages 141-220 and note how many mastery tests there are for each skill. Write the number here:

The tests are perforated and can be torn out and given to your instructor. And note that there is a scorebox at the end of each test so you can track your progress. Your score can also be entered on the "Reading Performance Chart" at the back of this book.

	• Where is this chart?				
Part III:	Fifteen Reading Selections (Pages 221-343)				
	Part III is made up of fifteen reading selections. Turn to the table of contents on pages v-vi and answer the following questions.				
	 Which selection may describe helpful study hints? 				
	• Which selection may tell you how to "read" a person's body movements?				
	Each reading proceeds in the same way. Look, for example, at "The Gentle Giant and the Reluctant Robber," which starts on page 223. What are the headings of the two sections that come before the reading itself? •				
	•				
Vocabula	ary Questions				
	Note that the vocabulary words in "Words to Watch" are followed by the numbers of the paragraphs in which the words appear. Now look at the first selection (223-225) and explain how each vocabulary word is set off in the reading itself:				
	After each selection there are four kinds of activities that will improve your reading and thinking skills. The first activity consists of vocabulary questions; the second consists of (fill in the missing words)				
	; the third involves an outlining or a summarizing				
	activity, and the fourth consists of (fill in the missing word) questions.				
	Look at the vocabulary questions for "Dear Sir" on page 232. The first five of these questions deal with vocabulary in context. The last five deal				

with words that are taken from the (fill in the missing words)_____

Reading Comprehension Questions

	Look at the reading comprehension questions for "Dear Sir" on page 234.
	How many questions are there in all? The first questions in this and all the other selections involve the "Central Point and Main Ideas." The next group of questions always involve (fill in the missing words)
	The next question or questions relate to "Transitions" and at times to "Patterns of Organization." Finally, the last questions
	always involve (fill in the missing word) This series of questions gives you a chance to use and to reinforce the skills you learned in Part I and strengthened in Part II.
Outlinin	g or Summarizing
	Next, a thinking activity for each reading appears in the form of an outlining or a summarizing exercise. What kind of activity is there for "How To Make It, Now That You're Here" on page 246?
	The outlining or summarizing activity will help you focus on the essential ideas in each reading. Doing such activities will sharpen your ability to get to the heart of each piece and to think logically and clearly about what you read.
Discuss	ion Questions
	Note and write down how many discussion questions there are for "The Gentle Giant and the Reluctant Robber" (228) (and for every reading):
	The questions provide a final chance for you to deepen your understanding of each selection.
Other M	aterial
	As you will see on page 229, there is a (fill in the missing words)
	chart at the end of each selection. The chart helps you keep
	track of how well you do with the vocabulary and comprehension questions as well as with the outlining or summarizing activity. Your scores can then be transferred to the "Reading Progress Chart" at the back of the book.

To help you pronounce the words in the vocabulary chapter and in the reading selections, there is a "Glossary of Word Pronunciations" at the back

of the book. Find and write here the first and the last words that appear in this glossary:									
	<u>-</u> .		and _			 .	You'll n	ote a	s well
that	this	glossary	includes	a	vowel	pronunciation	guide	on	page
(fill i	n the	missing nu	mber)						

HELPFUL FEATURES OF THE BOOK

- 1 The book centers on what you really need to know to become a better reader and thinker. It presents ten key word and comprehension skills, and it explains the most important points about each skill.
- The book gives you *lots of practice*. We seldom learn a skill only by hearing or reading about it; we make it part of us by repeated practice. There are, then, numerous activities in the text. They are not "busy work" exercises, but carefully designed materials that should help you truly learn each skill. Feedback for the practice activities in each chapter comes in the form of a limited answer key at the back of the book. Using the key will help prepare you for the review and mastery tests, whose answers do not appear in the book.
- 3 The selections throughout the book are *lively and appealing*. Dull and unvaried readings work against learning, so subjects have been carefully chosen for their high interest level. All of the selections here are excellent examples of how what we read can thoroughly capture our attention. For instance, read the first several paragraphs of "Disaster and Friendship" and then try to *stop* reading.

HOW TO USE THE BOOK

1 A good way to proceed is to read the basic explanations and examples in a chapter until you feel you understand the ideas presented. Then go on and do the practice exercises. As you finish each practice, check your answers with the limited answer key that starts on page 345. Always try to figure out just why any errors you made are wrong before going on. By using the answer key to help teach yourself the skills, you will prepare yourself for the review tests at the end of the chapter and for the mastery tests in Part II of the book. Your instructor can supply you with answers to those tests.

If you have trouble catching on to a particular skill, stick with it. In time, you will learn each one.

- After you have worked through three chapters or so in Part I (and the corresponding mastery tests in Part II), you may want to begin the reading selections in Part III. When you read a selection, do so with the intent of simply enjoying it. Read, in other words, for the pleasure of reading. There will be time afterwards for rereading the selection and using it to develop your comprehension skills.
- At first, you may not be able to answer all the "Reading Comprehension Questions" in Part III. Some questions will involve skills you have not yet covered. In such cases, simply use your common sense to answer the questions as best you can. You will be able to return to such questions with more authority later as you continue work on Part I of the book.
- 4 Keep track of your progress. In the "Reading Performance Chart" on the inside back cover, enter your scores for the mastery tests in Part II. In addition, fill in the "Check Your Performance" chart at the end of each of the reading selections in Part III. These scores can also be entered on the back cover chart, enabling you to get a good view of your overall performance as you work through the book.

In summary, the book has been designed to interest and benefit you as much as possible. Its format is a straighforward one, its explanations are clear, its readings are appealing, and its many practices will help you learn through doing. It is a book that has been created to reward effort, and if you provide that effort, you will become a better reader and a stronger thinker.

Part I

TEN STEPS TO BUILDING COLLEGE READING SKILLS