

NORMAN LEWIS

FOURTH EDITION

**How to
Read
Better
and Faster**

How to Read Better and Faster

Fourth Edition

NORMAN LEWIS

Rio Hondo College

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How To Read Better and Faster, Fourth Edition

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Dedication

No writer exists in a vacuum; no author's work is untouched, in one way or another, by family, friends, and associates.

The following warm people have given me so much of themselves—personally, professionally, or both—that this book is far better than it could possibly have been without them:

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Preface to the Fourth Edition

Anyone who can read can learn to read better and faster!

Consider: The most effective method for mastering any skill is continuous practice under professional instruction.

Therefore: The royal road to better and faster comprehension in reading is simply—

Reading, more reading, and still more and more reading—under expert guidance.

The fourth edition of *How to Read Better and Faster*, which has been completely revised and updated to reflect the present state of the art of reading instruction, offers just such expert guidance.

As a glance through the table of contents will immediately indicate, the book now places particular emphasis on *five indispensable techniques* that will:

- Sharpen your comprehension
- Build your self-assurance and skill in dominating a page of print
- Permanently increase your reading efficiency and speed.

These five techniques are:

1. *Reading more, and for longer periods of time.*

Methods of reading an entire novel or a complete magazine in a single evening are discussed, taught, and encouraged.

A greatly expanded list of current books in many areas of knowledge, including novels, mysteries, and science fiction, is provided.

Frequent challenges (which, with determination, you can meet) are set for you to read more, more widely, and more continuously.

2. *Reading always, and everything, with a calm, sure, confident "sense of urgency."*

Chapter after chapter, session after session, exercise after exercise, you will learn how to avoid dawdling and daydreaming as you read.

You will thus conquer, once and for all, any slightest tendency you may now have to mind-wander through pages of print with little or no comprehension.

3. *Reading with a keen awareness of the structure of a piece of writing.*

Selections from magazines, newspapers, and textbooks are thoroughly analyzed.

You quickly become familiar with how a writer structures material.

You learn how to look for, and how to find, "comprehension clues" to a writer's pattern of thinking.

You gain ever-increasing skill in distinguishing main ideas from supporting details.

You discover the difference between the "theme" of a selection and the "variations on the theme."

You become adept at skimming what can be profitably skimmed; at scanning what requires no more than superficial scanning; and at paying close attention to what is important and central in a page of print.

4. *Reading flexibly.*

You practice adjusting your rate and style of reading to *what* you read and to your *purpose* in reading it.

You gain skill in suiting your technique to the type of material you read.

You learn the efficient way to study textbook material, if such study is necessary.

You learn the efficient way to whip through light novels.

You learn the efficient way to skim technical material for the essential facts.

You learn the efficient way to drive through a magazine article, a newspaper column, or a chapter in a book for immediate comprehension of the gist of what a writer is saying.

And as you practice varying your techniques according to *what* you are reading and to *your reason for reading it*, you will find that your own efficiency as a reader (in short, your comprehension and speed) will improve spectacularly.

5. *Reading so that you interpret more of what you see in less time.*

New perception exercises have been added that will increase your span of recognition and permit you to make greater use of your peripheral vision.

Repeated practice with such exercises will help you respond more quickly, more smoothly, and more dynamically to the *meaning* of a longer portion of a line of print.

This fourth edition has been thoroughly rewritten, revised, and expanded.

New material, new techniques, new exercises, and new selections have been added.

Outdated matter has been eliminated.

As a result, *How to Read Better and Faster* is now a complete handbook that will, if you work with it seriously, consistently, and methodically, go very far toward revolutionizing your reading skill.*

NORMAN LEWIS

*Please note, as a matter purely of convenience, and not male chauvinism, the words "he," "him," and "his" denote a person of either sex. Women read as much as men—possibly more—and it would, I suppose, be equally logical to use "she" and "her" for a person—equally logical, but since untraditional and therefore unusual, likely to be conspicuous and to interfere with a reader's concentration. Where possible, I have used the plurals "readers," "people," "they," "them," "their". In any case, in the text of this book, "he" always means "he/she" or "she/he"; "him" and "his" include "her", etc.

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