

Module 3

THE READING PROCESS



THE COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

General Education Modules
for Upper Primary and Junior Secondary School Teachers
of Science, Technology and Mathematics by Distance
in the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Developed by

The Southern African Development Community

Ministries of Education in:

- Botswana
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

In partnership with The Commonwealth of Learning

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GENERAL EDUCATION MODULES

This module is one of a series prepared under the auspices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and The Commonwealth of Learning as part of the Science, Technology and Mathematics Programme (STAMP 2000+). These General Education modules enable teachers to enhance their professional skills through distance and open learning. Many individuals and groups have been involved in writing and producing these modules. We trust that they will benefit not only the teachers who use them, but also, ultimately, their students and the communities and nations in which they live.

The eighteen General Education modules are as follows:

- Module 1: *Multigrade Teaching: Introduction to Multigrade Teaching*
- Module 2: *Multigrade Teaching: Classroom Organisation and Management*
- Module 3: *The Reading Process*
- Module 4: *Developing Reading Skills*
- Module 5: *Special Educational Needs: An Introduction to Teaching Traumatised Children*
- Module 6: *Special Educational Needs: A Practical Guide to Teaching Traumatised Children*
- Module 7: *Education Management Development: Part A*
- Module 8: *Education Management Development: Part B*
- Module 9: *Child Development*
- Module 10: *Concepts of Learning*
- Module 11: *An Introduction to Concepts in Language and Communication*
- Module 12: *Language and Communication: Language in Use*
- Module 13: *Curriculum Theory, Design and Assessment*
- Module 14: *Curriculum Practice*
- Module 15: *A Theoretical Framework on Innovations in Education*
- Module 16: *Effects of Social Changes on Education*
- Module 17: *Comparative Education: Introduction to Key Concepts in Comparative Education*
- Module 18: *Comparative Education: Themes and Trends in Comparative Education in SADC Countries*

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING



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THE READING PROCESS

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THE READING PROCESS

This is one of a series of modules in the General Education courses developed by Ministries of Education in the SADC region in cooperation with The Commonwealth of Learning.

Reading plays an important role in our lives. At school, learners are expected to read a variety of materials for learning purposes. Outside school and later in life, they read widely for general information. It is for these reasons that educational systems aim to produce individuals who are able to read fluently and with understanding.

The fact that learners read different textbooks makes reading a cross-curricular subject whose teaching should be the responsibility of every department rather than language departments alone. Therefore, as a teacher, you should have a clear understanding of the processes involved in reading and the strategies used to process texts. If you are aware of the processes in reading, you will be able to help learners develop their reading skills.

This module will introduce you to the processes involved when interacting with texts. With this understanding, you should equip your learners with appropriate strategies which they can employ independently as and when necessary.

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LEARNING TIPS

You will find the following tips helpful as you study this module.

- **Set aside some time each day to work on this module.** If possible, study at the same time and in the same place so you are comfortable with your study surroundings. Learning at a distance requires discipline and motivation.
- **Go through the module unit by unit.**
- **Note any words you do not understand.** Look them up in a dictionary or other reference source or discuss them with your colleagues.
- **Underline or highlight important passages.** Make summary notes in the margins of long passages. Writing will help you to remember the material. You may also choose to make diagrams that illustrate how different ideas are related or list the steps in a procedure or technique.
- As you work through this module, **keep in mind your learners and their educational needs** as well as your instructional goals and your subject matter. How will you apply what you are learning?
- Read the assignment instructions carefully. Then, **do all the self-assessment activities** before proceeding to the Suggested Answers section.
- **As you undertake each activity, relate it to the practice of teaching** and analyse how it will help you to enhance the teaching-learning situation. Always ask yourself how you could use this material.
- **Apply some of the suggested techniques to your teaching.** All suggestions may not be appropriate for your situation, but how will you know unless you try them? Keep a record of what techniques work and an explanation of why some techniques appeared to fail. What does not work now may work later with different students.
- It may be difficult, but try to **meet occasionally with other teachers** to discuss the content and application of suggestions provided in this module.
- If you experience difficulty in understanding some aspect of the module, do not despair! You are meant to be challenged. **Do not give up!** Just remember that your goal is to be the best teacher that you can be. Think of what you would tell a student who was experiencing difficulty in your classroom. Then, apply the same advice to yourself.

ICONS

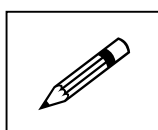
Throughout each module, you will find the following icons or graphic symbols that alert you to a change in activity within the module. Only the icons that are required are used in each module.



Text or Reading Material: provides information about the topics that are covered in a module. The subject matter for each SADC module is organised into units.



Introductory Activity: requires you to focus on the content that will be discussed in a unit.



Self-Assessment: enables you to check your understanding of what you have read and, in some cases, to apply the information presented in the unit to new situations.



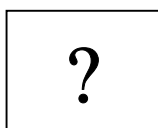
Practice Activity: encourages you to review and apply what you have learned before taking a unit test.



Reflection: asks you to relate what you have learned to your work as a teacher or education officer in your community.



Summary: highlights or provides an overview of the most important points covered in a unit.



Unit Test: concludes each unit.



Suggested Answers: allow you to evaluate your learning by providing sample answers to assessments, activities and the unit test.

UNIT 1: What Is Reading?



Introduction

Have you ever thought about how much reading you do? In addition to books, magazines and newspapers, you need to read a variety of materials such as road signs, bus schedules, slogans, letters, greeting cards, price tags, recipes for cooking and directions for taking medicines almost every day. Further, since success in school requires students to read textbooks in every subject, reading is central to teaching and learning. Consequently, it is your responsibility to ensure that both you and your students become proficient readers.

This module and the next one explore the cross-curricular nature of reading and emphasise the collaborative effort of teachers in the teaching of reading.

The unit defines reading and then helps you to understand some of the key aspects of reading and how your understanding of the reading process influences your ability to help your students become efficient readers.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Provide a meaningful definition of reading.
2. Explain some of the key aspects of reading.

Defining Reading

Reading means different things to different people. For example, for some, the definition may focus on the recognition and decoding of symbols, while for others, the focus is on the meaning.

Fox (1999) says reading is “being able to make sense out of print”.

Karlin (1984: 2) says:

Reading in a fuller sense involves more than merely pronouncing words. It is comprehending what writers say and mean.

Purkis and Guerin (1991: 19) make this observation:

So many assumptions are made about reading that once a child has been declared able to read,

often little is done by the teacher to refine that skill.

Indeed, a vast array of skills make up competence in reading. For example, **visual perception** and **discrimination** refer to the ability of the eye to distinguish shapes of letters and their different combinations into words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and larger text. These allow us to **comprehend** (understand and get meaning from) the printed page and thus increase our **vocabulary**.

The development of **comprehension** and vocabulary are directly related to what we have previously experienced through all our senses and life circumstances. The brain translates these things we see into thoughts and ideas on which our minds can comment; that is to say, gives us the opportunity to have opinions, think critically, draw conclusions and make inferences and judgments, which affect our lives in ways more profound than we sometimes realise. Sometimes we want to read **orally** (out loud) to clarify meaning or for pleasure. Detailed consideration of these skills is provided in Module 4, *Developing Reading Skills*.

Further, it is almost impossible to separate consideration of the question, “What is reading?” from questions such as, “How do we read?” and “Why do we read?” since the process of reading is closely related to the purpose for which we read.

Reading, as you can see, is not a straightforward activity, but a very complex one that must be constantly improved and refined. The fundamental goal of reading is to extract information from writing or print. In order to understand textbooks, the reader must also deal with graphs, diagrams and illustrations that clarify and extend the meaning of the written material. Further, the skills needed to read literature vary from those required to understand a textbook of history or geography, which also vary from those required to read a textbook in science or mathematics. Different kinds of reading ability are needed to comprehend different kinds of text (Purkis and Guerin: 1991).

Your students’ skills in school subjects will also vary. Therefore, you can never be certain of what is happening in your students’ minds when they are reading. Some may still be spelling out sounds to make words and reading word by word to make sentences; others may be relying heavily on pictures and visual clues; others may be able to use the context and relate the text to their previous experiences. Reading is thus a highly individual activity. Skilful teachers must be able not only to understand the reading process but also to help their students become efficient readers.

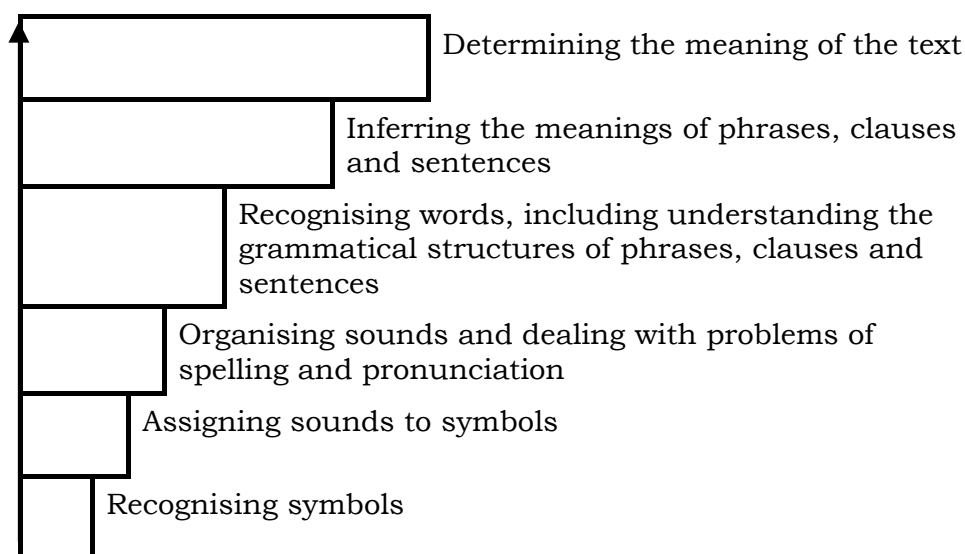
The Reading Process

This section examines three models that will help you understand the reading processes. These are:

- bottom-up model
- top-down model
- interactive processes model.

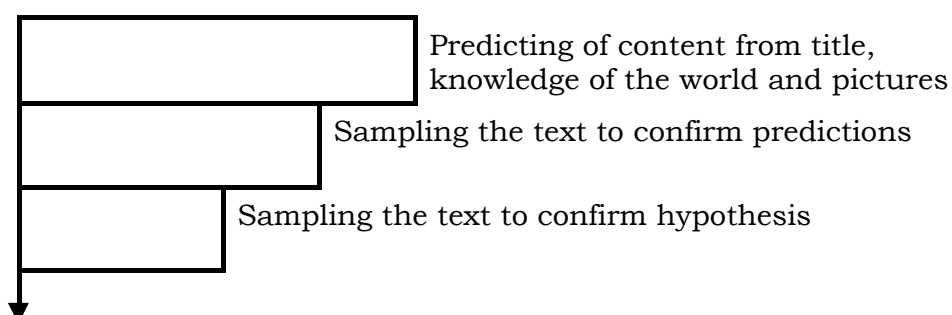
For the first two, a 'staircase' is used to illustrate the steps that may be followed during the reading process.

Bottom-Up Model



The bottom-up process suggests that the reader starts at the bottom, doing the lowest-level task of decoding the smallest parts, the symbols, then working out the meaning from the grammatical patterns.

Top-Down Model



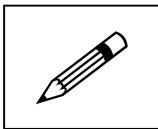
The top-down process assumes that meaning becomes possible only when the reader has experiential background related to the topic of the text. The model emphasises the use of information that the reader brings to the text and the reader's

use of prediction, interpretation and guessing in understanding the text.

Interactive Process

This process recognises that both the top-down and bottom-up processes must be used. They complement each other. A reader may decode words to take in the writer's ideas and then use his or her own knowledge to interpret the ideas. All this requires the active involvement of the reader in the search for meaning. The reader must interact with the text in order to determine the meaning. Williams and Moran (1989), in Weir (1993: 64), summarise the above ideas by saying:

Reading is seen as a selective process taking place between the reader and the text, in which background knowledge and various types of language knowledge interact with information in the text to contribute to text comprehension.



Self-Assessment 1

1. Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement: "Reading is the pronunciation of words."
2. Briefly describe three models that can be used to illustrate the reading process.
3. Explain the function of each of the following in reading:
 - experiences
 - illustrations
 - symbols
 - sentences
 - words.

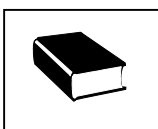
The possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Practice Activity

1. Name three models that can help you understand the reading process.
2. Choose one of the above models and discuss its advantages and disadvantages.

Possible answers to these questions are provided at the end of this unit.



Summary

This unit has introduced you to reading. The meaning of the word 'reading' was discussed, as well as the processes involved during reading. In addition, activities were provided to help you

reflect on your own reading experiences. We hope that your knowledge of what is involved during reading will influence the way you will teach it.



Reflection

How will the contents of this unit influence your teaching of reading in the future?



Unit Test

Briefly explain in your own words the processes involved during effective reading.

A possible answer to the test question is provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

1. Reading is more than the pronunciation of words. It also requires the reader to extract meaning from the text.
2. The bottom-up model involves the reader in recognising symbols, assigning sounds to the symbols, organising sounds, recognising words, inferring meaning and determining the meaning of the text.

The top-down model emphasises the experiences the reader brings to the text so that he or she can predict and interpret the text.

The interactive process involves both the bottom-up and top-down models. The reader not only recognises symbols, organises them and infers meaning, but also draws upon her or his experience to predict and interpret the meaning of what is read.

3. The functions of various aspects of reading are briefly described below.
 - The experiences of the learner help him or her interpret the information and place the symbols and words in context.
 - Illustrations provide visual stimulation and show relationships that may be difficult to explain in words.
 - Symbols represent words or ideas and may replace several words, sentences or explanations. Symbols can simplify reading.
 - Sentences contain complete thoughts and place words in context.
 - Words represent meaningful elements of speech. They are the building blocks of text material.

Practice Activity

1. The three models that can be used to understand the reading process are bottom-up, top-down and interactive processes.
2. Refer to the content of the unit for additional information about the model you have chosen, and consider what you have experienced when reading. Note that all three models could be used by one student.

Unit Test

An explanation of the reading process in your own words can be given in any form. Check the first few pages in this unit again to ensure that you have included the main points in your answer. Note that reading is more than the pronunciation or sounding of words. It must include the understanding or comprehension of what is read.

UNIT 2: Why Do We Read?



Introduction

Unit 1 reviewed the concept of reading and the process involved when reading. The aim of this unit is to outline various reasons for reading.

Objectives

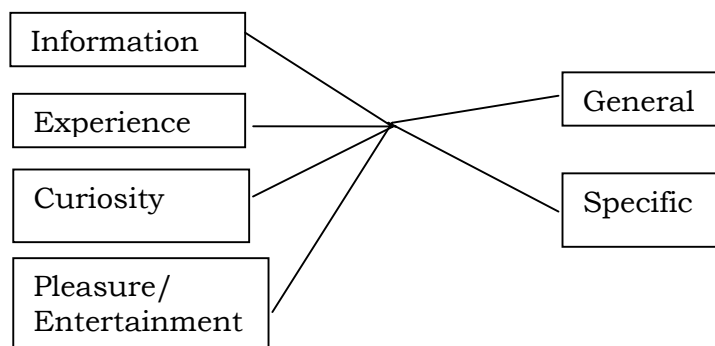
After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Identify the various reasons for reading.
2. Classify texts according to the reading purposes they satisfy.

Why Do You Read?

It is important to approach reading with a specific purpose in mind. Otherwise, the whole activity becomes meaningless. You read because you want to or have to. Your reasons for reading are driven by the goals you have set for yourself. For instance, during leisure time, you read texts that will enhance relaxation, that are of interest to you. You read them at your own pace.

The following are some of the many reasons for reading:



Karlin (1984: 130) reinforces the idea of purposeful reading when he says,

Reading with a purpose is more efficient than reading without one, for the power of motives to influence learning is considerable. Students who read with a purpose are thinking about what they read instead of merely receiving information they are to digest.

Now, let us look at the reasons for reading in more detail:

For Pleasure, Enjoyment and Entertainment

In everyday life, you may read magazines, novels and newspapers for the purpose of having fun with the content. Usually you target content that interests you most. For instance, if you are a sports fan, your immediate reaction to any magazine or newspaper is to flip through the sports pages. If you enjoy cooking, you will turn to the cookery corner. Your sole purpose here is to enrich your knowledge and satisfy your interest.

As you read, you experience a wide range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and writing styles. You absorb language forms unconsciously.

For Information

Here, reading is aimed at getting knowledge from a text. This knowledge may be in the form of ideas, facts, opinions and feelings. In other words, you are looking for knowledge that may be either general or specific. For example, if you intend to follow a degree programme at a university, you will request from the university a brochure that contains specific information on the course you are interested in. If you look for information on birds in an encyclopaedia, this is bound to be too general. If you want to get specific information on birds found in your area, you may have to turn to a book about birds in your country.

In addition, you read textbooks, journals and reference materials to obtain information to help you in your studies. Some people call this ‘reading for academic purposes’ because it is tied to the need to get information to help you achieve your academic goals. Crandall (1987: 47) supports this reading purpose across subjects by saying, “since reading is a way of acquiring information and learning, it is a skill to be addressed at all levels”.

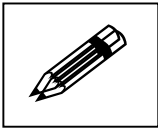
For Experience

You may turn to a text because you would like to share a writer’s ideas and experiences. This is how you enrich your life and learn about what is happening in other parts of the world. For instance, you may come from a country that has never experienced war. A good writer should be able to take you through the experience of war and leave you in tears, feeling almost as if you had experienced it. As Sesnan (1997: 145) says, “writers take readers into a world of adventure or romance which they could not normally enter”.

To Satisfy Curiosity

Sometimes you are eager to have information on something. Curiosity is a device often used by newspaper writers. They choose striking titles for articles that make you want to read to get the message. For example, an article entitled “Goat Eats Woman” would make you curious about what actually happened. You might even begin to form expectations, based

on your knowledge of goats and women. Your actual reading of the text will confirm or refute your expectations.



Self-Assessment 1

1. List reasons for reading and give at least one example of a suitable text to match each of the reasons you have stated.
2. Classify the following examples of reading texts according to the reasons for reading that they satisfy:
 - airline brochure
 - application form
 - bus schedule
 - journal
 - machine manual
 - magazine
 - menu
 - newspaper
 - novel
 - short story
 - textbook.

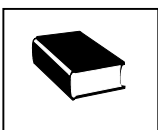
Possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Practice Activity

What can a teacher do to prepare for and guide a visit to the library so as to make the experience useful for students?

Possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Summary

This unit has explored the broad reasons for reading. The reasons range from the personal and communicative to general ones. Therefore, reading is a global activity that affects your life in many ways. It should be clear by now that you never select a text without a reason. You read to satisfy a particular need. For example, when you arrive in a new place, you need to learn about it. Thus, there is a purpose for reading street maps and information about the people, their language and activities.

In teaching situations, you should identify the purpose of the reading tasks you assign your students. If students are left wondering why they have to read a particular text, then they are bound to see the activity as meaningless. It is also

important to remember that developing effective reading skills empowers your students for life.

The next unit looks at the various reading sub-skills that are used to tackle different types of texts.



Reflection

Reflect on your teaching of reading and discuss with a colleague how you would expose your students to reading for various purposes.



Unit Test

Design a table with columns showing the purposes of reading and examples of relevant texts.

Possible answers to this test are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

- Reasons for reading are outlined below.
 - Pleasure, enjoyment and entertainment, e.g., newspapers, novels, magazines
 - Information and knowledge, e.g., brochures, textbooks, encyclopaedias
 - Experience, e.g., novels, biographies
 - Curiosity, e.g., newspapers, magazines
- The examples of various reading materials are classified below.

<i>Pleasure, Enjoyment and Entertainment</i>	<i>Information</i>	<i>Experience</i>	<i>Curiosity</i>
Novels Newspapers Magazines Short stories	Machine manuals Airline brochures Textbooks Journals Application forms	Novels Magazines Short stories	Newspapers Magazines Novels

Practice Activity

Below are some suggestions that a teacher can use to prepare for and guide a visit to the library.

- Establish the purpose for reading before the trip.
- Provide materials relevant to the interests and language level of the students.
- Explain how books are classified.
- Provide a layout of the library.
- Inform students about the expected outcome. For example, they could be asked to write a book summary.
- Ask the students to complete the form below.

Book title:
Name of author:
Classification number:
Characters in the story:
Interesting events in the story:
Why you selected this book:

Unit Test

Take a look at the responses for Self-Assessment question 2. If you have not already done so, try to include other items that have not been mentioned previously.

UNIT 3: Sub-Skills of Reading, Part 1



Introduction

In Unit 2, you explored the global reasons for reading. You realise that in order to satisfy a particular reading need, you need to go through the reading process and arrive at meaning. This involves choosing reading tools to help you achieve your reading goals. For example, if you have to find someone's telephone number quickly, you do not need to read through the entire telephone directory. You use reading tools to carry out the task. Units 3 and 4 aim to equip you with the various reading sub-skills you will use for different texts and purposes. In addition, these sub-skills, including scanning, skimming, prediction and anticipation will help you to read and arrive at meaning quickly. Scanning and skimming are covered in this unit.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Describe the reading sub-skills of scanning and skimming.
2. Explain their role in interpreting text.
3. Choose an appropriate sub-skill for a given reading context.

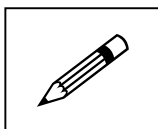
Scanning

The purpose of scanning is to locate specific information in a text. Nuttall (1982: 34) states that:

By **scanning**, we mean glancing rapidly through a text either to search for a specific piece of information (e.g., name, date), or to get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a given purpose, (e.g., whether a book on gardening deals with the cultivation of a particular vegetable).

Therefore, this skill would be needed in everyday use. You may employ the sub-skill of scanning when you read text such as:

- advertisements
- timetables
- telephone directories
- magazines
- newspapers.



Self-Assessment 1

Quickly scan the advertisement below to identify all the hair-dressing salons, and write down their names and addresses.

Day Star Wholesalers (Pty) Ltd C/o Alisra Business Services P.O. Box 20900 Gaborone	Specialised trading in clothing, shoes, radios, bags, blankets and hardware	Plot 5185 Ext. 8 Gaborone	Gaborone City Council
Botgood Investment (Pty) Ltd C/o Gurugroup Professional Services (Pty) Ltd P.O. Box 1816 Gaborone	Speciality goods, ladies clothing; kids, gents and shoes	Plot 13119 B'hurst Mall Gaborone	Gaborone City Council
Cox Auto Services (Pty) Ltd P.O. Box 30857 Tlokweng	Garage/Workshop	Plot 1247 Ext. 6 Gaborone	Gaborone City Council
PCJ Motor Accessories P.O. Box 2438 Gaborone	Workshop Goods, repair and service of all types of automobiles		Gaborone City Council
GTM Personnel Management & Secretarial Services P.O. Box 2438 Gaborone			
Sewalu Enterprises (Pty) Ltd t/a Mountain Image Salon & Boutique P.O. Box 797 Gaborone	Hair Dressing Salon	Otse Village	South East District Council
Duke Oteng Morlane Enterprise (Pty) Ltd P.O. Box 51 Ramotswa	Bottle Store	Taung	South East District Council
Julia David P.O. Box 20342 Gaborone	Hair and Beauty Salon		South East District
Crotone-Take-Away P.O. Box 2 Gaborone	Take Away	Plot 120 Tlokweng	South East District

Khabenyana P.O. Box 124 Artesia	Restaurant/Take Away	Artesia	Kgatleng District Council
Khotso Rampa P.O. Box 1541 Mochudi	Boutique Speciality	Raserura Mochudi	Kgatleng District Council
Christopher Mafoko P.O. Box 2747 Gaborone	Hair Dresser and Boutique	Makakatlela Ward Mochudi	Kgatleng District Council
Lorato's Fresh Produce & Butchery P.O. Box 496 Mogoditshane	Fresh Produce	Phaphane Ward Mochudi	Kgatleng District Council
Abueng Moatshe P.O. Box 20701 Mochudi	General Trading Fresh Produce	Boseja Mochudi	Kgatleng District Council
Jiyuan Trading (Pty) Ltd P.O. Box 30003 Tlokweng	General Wholesale: goods, Chinese clothing, shoes, bicycles, plastic and paper products, domestic hardware, bedding and cosmetics	Borakalalo Ward	Kweneng District Council

Possible answers are provided at the end of this unit.



Skimming

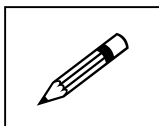
Sometimes you may have to get an impression of the message in a text quickly, without having to read every word. When you do this, we say you are skimming.

Skimming means moving the eyes rapidly over a page in order to get a general idea of what the text is about. You focus on certain key words, phrases or pictures in order to gain an idea of the content and organisation of the text.

Jarvis and Manhan (1986: 81) state that:

Skimming is a reading technique that enables a reader to make a quick survey of a text and find out what it is about. When we skim, we do not read every word. We concentrate on headings and the first and the last sentences of paragraphs.

This technique is used to achieve several purposes. For example, when studying, you could use skimming to make a general survey of a book to check its usefulness, or skim the content page, look at the beginning and ending of chapters to see which ones interest you, then decide which chapters to read in detail.



Self-Assessment 2

1. Describe what happens when you are scanning and skimming. Also give examples of suitable texts for scanning and skimming.
2. Select a poem that interests you. Identify the general idea in each stanza and ask a colleague to comment on your analysis.

Possible answers are provided at the end of this unit.



Practice Activity

Using the table below from the *Mmegi Newspaper*, identify team(s) that have:

- won most games
- lost most games.

<i>Kweneng District Mini League Log (Division II)</i>							
	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Thebephatshwa	11	10	0	1	49	6	30
Callies	11	7	2	2	20	8	23
Central Power	11	6	2	3	24	20	20
Lesedi/Knight	11	5	3	3	25	13	18
Mmankadibe	11	5	3	3	21	12	18
Matebejana	11	4	3	4	14	13	15
Marpetla	11	4	3	4	15	16	15
Metsimotlhabe	11	4	2	5	17	22	14
Mmankanke R/M	11	3	3	5	12	21	12
Blackfighters	11	3	0	8	10	36	9
Crystal Palace	11	1	3	7	12	28	6
Benisa G/Aces	11	1	2	8	9	33	5

Key:

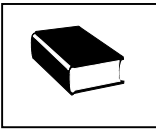
- P = Games played
 W = Games won
 D = Games drawn
 L = Games lost
 GF = Goals for
 GA = Goals against
 PTS = Points

Possible answers are provided at the end of this unit.

Reflection



You have read about scanning and skimming. Now, demonstrate how you would use them to improve your students' reading speed.



Summary

In this unit, you have learned that reading has sub-skills that are integral to its effectiveness. To become an effective reader, you need to practise the skills and apply them. You may have also realised that the use of each skill is determined by your purpose in reading. We hope that the skills that you have learned and practised, together with many others that were not mentioned, will be of some help to you in improving your students' reading skills.



Unit Test

In a school situation, which activities require skimming and scanning?

Possible answers are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

Below are the hairdressing salons contained in the list.

- Sewalu Enterprises (Pty) Ltd
t/a Mountain Image Salon and Boutique
P.O. Box 797
Gaborone
- Julia David
Hair and Beauty Salon
P.O. Box 20342
Gaborone
- Christopher Mafoko
Hair Dresser and Boutique
P.O. Box 2747
Gaborone

Self-Assessment 2

1. Scanning involves looking for specific information such as:

- names
- addresses
- dates.

Examples of texts suitable for scanning are:

- advertisements
- bus schedules
- timetables
- menus.

Skimming involves reading quickly in order to obtain the general idea or gist of a text.

Examples of texts suitable for skimming are:

- prose
- poem
- textbooks
- reference material
- magazines
- Bible.

2. Your interpretation of the poem you chose should be based on the key words in each stanza. Do ask your colleagues to help you with this interpretation.

Practice Activity

- The team that won the most games is Thebephatshwa.
- The teams that have lost the most games are Blackfighters and Benisa G/Aces.

Unit Test

In a school situation, skimming and scanning are used to review the material listed below.

<i>Skimming</i>	<i>Scanning</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• general reading situations• textbooks• reports• minutes of meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• school timetable• examination timetable• notices• textbooks• contents pages• index of a textbook

UNIT 4: Sub-Skills of Reading, Part 2



Introduction

In Unit 3, you reviewed the sub-skills of scanning and skimming. Now, you will look at the sub-skills of prediction and anticipation, inferencing and note-making. Just as in the previous unit, you will look at what they are and how they can help the learners interpret texts for different purposes.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Describe the reading sub-skills of prediction and anticipation, inferencing and note-making.
2. Explain the role of the sub-skills in text interpretation.
3. Choose appropriate sub-skills to use in given reading contexts.

Prediction and Anticipation

Sometimes you may be asked to predict or anticipate what is going to happen. In order to arrive at the answer, you will use whatever information is available, including your experience of the world.

Prediction has simply been defined as “what is going to happen” (*Longman Dictionary*, 1978).

Anticipation involves “a feeling of excitement about something that is going to happen” (*Collier’s Encyclopaedia*).

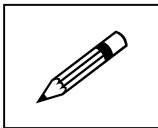
You may use the same strategies to predict and anticipate what will happen next. For this reason, the two terms will be used interchangeably.

You may recall from previous units that reading is an interactive skill. You use knowledge and experience that enable you to predict likely content before you read the text and during the reading activity. Your ability as a reader to accurately predict or guess what is going to happen enables you to follow the story line and interpret the text.

Therefore, in your teaching you should provide opportunities for your students to practise these skills. You may give them some of the activities listed below.

- Ask the learners to use the title to predict likely content. This can serve as a pre-reading activity.
- Expose the text to the learners bit by bit and ask them to predict the next part.

- Ask the learners to complete an unfinished story.
- Assign the learners to read the blurb or brief description on the cover of the book.
- Ask the learners to read biographical information about the writer in order to learn about the writer's background and qualifications for writing the text.
- Ask them to read the table of contents and index in order to get a 'feel' of the book.
- Ask them to read preliminary material such as the foreword, preface and introduction.



Self-Assessment 1

From your experience as a teacher, state other ways of enabling learners to predict content.

Possible points to include in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.



Inferencing

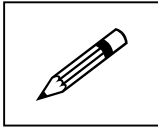
When you meet difficult and unfamiliar words in a text, don't despair! The context in which words are used can often help you work out their meaning. The skill that you use for this purpose is called inferencing.

Collins, Brown and Larkin, quoted in Zintz and Maggart (1989: 308), define **inference** as, "The 'missing connection' between the surface structure of the text and the reader's knowledge of the world". To arrive at a conclusion, you use facts and reasoning. Thus, we are reminded of the point raised earlier in the module that meaning is not readily available in the text; that is, after internalising the content, you go beyond it to draw conclusions and make assumptions. This is made possible because you use all the resources at your disposal to interpret the text. You base your inferences on the text, your experiences and the environment in which you live.

To work out the meaning of unfamiliar words, a good reader does not always use a dictionary. Using a dictionary slows down your reading speed and interrupts your thinking process. As a result, you can become less effective in reading.

Training your learners to infer has the following benefits:

- It gives them a powerful aid to comprehension and ultimately speeds up their reading.
- It makes them critical thinkers.
- It makes them more independent and efficient readers.



Self-Assessment 2

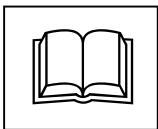
1. As you were looking for information about schools in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), you came across the information below:

All girls at ADC school do well in chemistry.

If you know that Olga is a girl in ADC school, what conclusion can you make about her performance in chemistry? Briefly explain how you arrived at the conclusion.

2. Explain why it is not always advisable to rely on the dictionary to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

The possible answers to this question are provided at the end of this unit.



Note-Making

You are often asked to make or take notes in different situations. You may be aware that you make notes from written material or while listening as someone speaks. Students need to make notes in class during your teaching presentations and make notes for study purposes.

Schools give learners books that support the curriculum. However, they are not required to read everything in the books because some of the information may not be important and relevant to their studies. Even in a chapter or on a page, some of the information may not be relevant. Therefore, they need to make notes of important points.

From the previous paragraphs, it is clear that note-taking is a very important skill for all of us. You and your students should be able to isolate key points and leave out what is less important. Note-taking can improve your students' reading proficiency. Thus, it is necessary to train them in the role played by linking words and other guides that facilitate the interpretation of texts. These items will be discussed in the next unit of this module.



Practice Activity

Imagine that you have been asked to address a group of environmentalists on solutions to the waste problem. Read the extract below and isolate the main points and less important points.

Is There an Answer?

One answer to the rubbish problem is simply for people to throw less important things away. Cars and mechanical goods could be built to last longer. We could use less packaging.

Another answer is to recycle rubbish. This means separating the different materials, treating them and using them again. This method would help prevent the earth's minerals and trees being used up and would solve the problem of where to put our enormous mountains of waste.

Source: Harris, Harrison and Smithson. *Man's Environment*. Macdonald's and Co. Publishers.

Possible points to be included in the answer to this question are provided at the end of this unit.



Summary

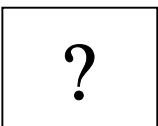
This unit has introduced you to the additional reading sub-skills of prediction and anticipation, inferencing and note-making and some strategies you can use to teach them. Therefore, you have been equipped with a few tools that will help you to become a more effective teacher of reading.

Units 3 and 4 have demonstrated the value of teaching the sub-skills of reading. These sub-skills will improve your students' performance at school. You may agree with Karlin (1984: 6) when she says, "It is through systematic instruction that we can help students overcome weaknesses that interfere with learning and possibly avoid some of the consequences of failure."



Reflection

Reflect on your current teaching strategies. Think of how insights gained from this unit will change your performance in teaching the sub-skills of reading.



Unit Test

Briefly explain how your learners will benefit from using the sub-skills covered in this unit.

Possible answers to this test are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

You may have identified the following ways of enabling learners to predict content:

- pictures
- graphs
- maps
- illustrations.

Self-Assessment 2

1. You can draw the following conclusion: Olga is going to pass chemistry.

You used the text and knowledge of the world to arrive at the answer.

2. The dictionary may not be available each time you read, and using a dictionary slows your reading speed. The dictionary meaning may not be in line with the context of the reading.

Practice Activity

Your answer may look similar to the table below. Additional items could have been added in the second column.

<i>Main Points</i>	<i>Less Important Points</i>
Throw fewer things away.	Build more durable cars.
Recycle rubbish.	

Unit Test

Students who use the reading sub-skills will process the text much more easily. This is because the sub-skills can be used for pre-reading tasks that enable the reader to share the writer's view and use a framework on which to organise information obtained from the reading.

UNIT 5: Intensive Reading



Introduction

This unit considers another important aspect of reading. You have now realised that there are a variety of reading sub-skills. Your ability as a reader depends largely on how best you choose:

- texts that address your reading purpose, and
- tools or sub-skills that help you to achieve your reading goal.

Jarvis (1985) effectively summarises these points in Jarvis and Mingham (1986: 89) by saying,

To be a flexible reader, we need two things. The first is a purpose in reading, and the second is a reasonable command of different reading approaches.

Furthermore, Jarvis (1985) draws an interesting comparison between reading and clothing. She says:

We do not wear exactly the same clothes for digging and for going to a wedding. We have a sense of which clothes suit our purpose as a farmer or wedding guest. We change our clothes to fit our purpose.

In Units 3 and 4 you explored the sub-skills that help you to read quickly. These are useful because they help you absorb a lot from the text. You can obtain specific details and a general impression. However, you need to read further for a full understanding of the text. It is the intention of this unit to provide you with some tools needed to derive a full understanding of the text.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain what is involved in intensive reading.
2. Identify situations in which intensive reading is required.
3. Apply the tools used for intensive reading.

What Is Intensive Reading?

You may recall a reading situation in which you quickly went through a chapter you had to read for an assignment. At this stage, you concentrated only on numbers, statistics, illustrations and dates. Then you stopped and said to yourself, 'Now I want to carefully go through this chapter.' In your view, what does this mean? Perhaps this means that you are

‘changing gears’. If you had been travelling at gear 5, you change down to 4. You now engage a different reading style. According to Sesnan (1997: 51), **intensive reading** is “reading a passage or a book slowly and carefully, paying attention to each word and every idea”.

Although the above definition focuses on reading a passage or a book, you can apply intensive reading to any text, depending on your purpose for reading. In addition, you do not necessarily have to read slowly. The important thing is to be careful in your reading, as you want to obtain a full understanding of the writer’s intentions. Haarman et al. (1988: viii) describe intensive reading as “the style we employ when we wish to have a very clear and complete understanding of the written text”.

From the above definitions of intensive reading, you may realise that you cannot label a text as an intensive reading text; it is, rather, the way in which you read which determines its status.

Having established what intensive reading is, let us now look at the tools to use when reading intensively. These include the following:

- content words
- linking words.

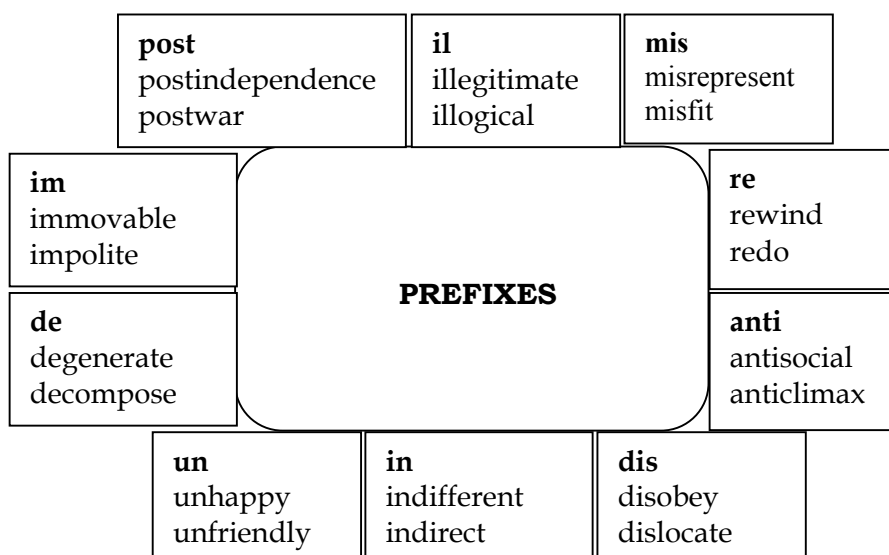
(Haarman et al., 1988: viii)

Using Content Words

You derive meaning from a text because you understand most of the words used to express the message. Note the use of ‘most’ as you do not expect a reader to know all the words and you do not want the text to have many unfamiliar words. Your knowledge of additions to existing words should help you in handling new word formations. These additions are made at the beginning and ending and they are called **affixes**. The ones at the beginning are **prefixes** and the ones at the end are **suffixes**. Sometimes, it is the **root** of the word that gives you a guide towards its meaning. You should note that prefixes and suffixes affect the meanings of words in different ways. For example, prefixes change the meaning of a word, as in:

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>New Word Meaning</i>
un	reasonable	unreasonable, meaning not reasonable
im	possible	impossible

The following diagram gives you a few examples of prefixes.



Here are the meanings introduced by the above prefixes

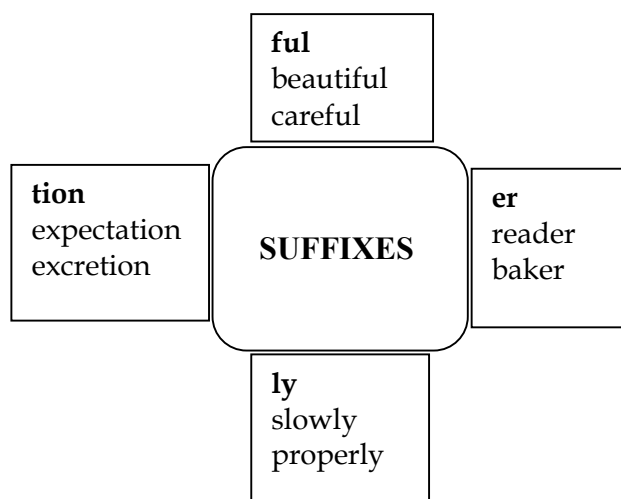
Prefix	Meaning
il	not
im	not
un	not
in	not
dis	not
mis	incorrectly
anti	against
re	again
post	after
de	reverse action

Take note of the fact that not everything that comes at the beginning of a word is a prefix. For example, there are no prefixes in the following words: predict, impose and impede.

Most suffixes change the word class, as in the examples below.

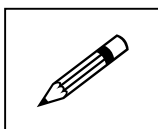
Word	Suffix	New Word
bake (verb)	er	baker (noun)
educate (verb)	tion	education (noun)
care (verb)	ful	careful (adjective)
slow (adjective)	ly	slowly (adverb)

The diagram below illustrates some suffixes.



Note that not all words are affected by the above suffixal changes.

The above information on word formations should help you and your students to determine the meaning of some words without using the dictionary. Therefore, you will not be thrown off-balance upon meeting an unfamiliar word. Do you realise what an active reader you are?



Self-Assessment 1

1. Describe what intensive reading involves.
2. Supply examples of texts and situations when you have read intensively.
3. Complete the table below by inserting the correct prefixes, suffixes and meanings:

Prefix	Meaning	Example
inter		
	after	
un		
Suffix	Meaning	Example
	one who	
able		
ize or ise		dramatise



Function Words

Function words are words that fall under the following groups:

- determiners or articles (e.g., the, a)
- prepositions (e.g., with, in)

- auxiliary verbs (e.g., may, can, do)
- pronouns (e.g., I, you, who, this, those).

You should be able to list additional examples for each group.

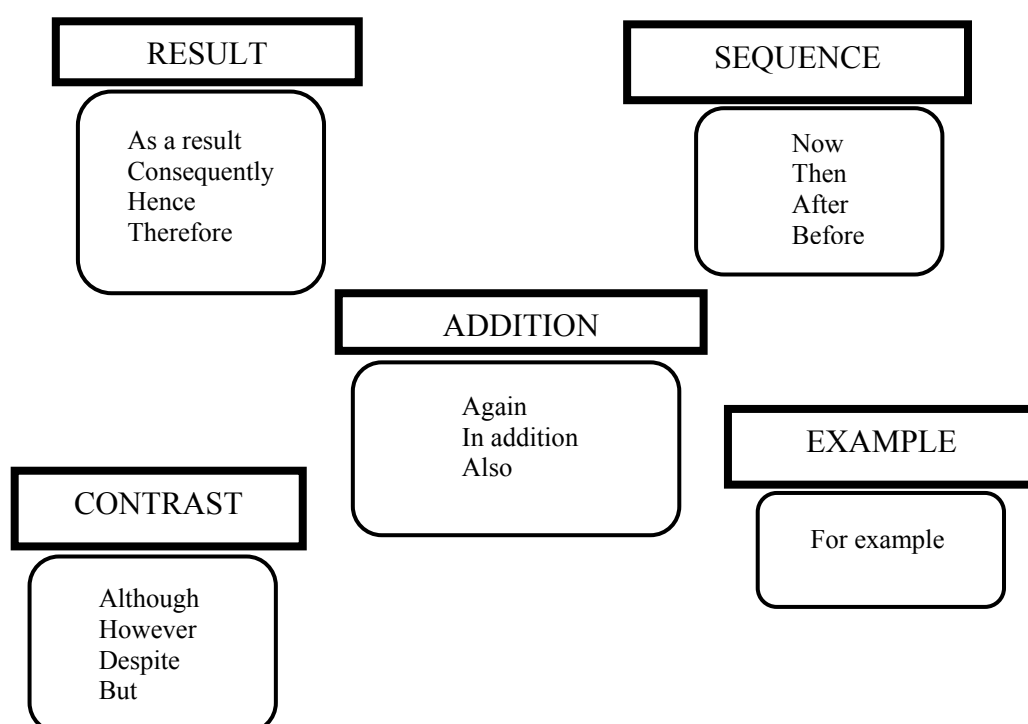
Linking Words

For any writing to flow, there has to be something to bind the ideas together. The good thing is that there are tools to help you achieve 'togetherness'. These tools are called different things by different people, but the effect is the same. Linking words also be referred to as:

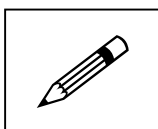
- meaning-markers
- signposts
- connectors.

They all achieve one purpose, which is to organise ideas by introducing a variety of relationships and directing the meaning in a text.

The following illustration summarises the different groups of linking words or meaning-markers and some examples.



Note that these groupings and lists are not exhaustive. You may be able to add additional categories of linking words.



Self-Assessment 2

1. Match the following linking words with their functions.

Linking Word	Function
also	result
however	
for example	example
but	
as a result	addition
despite	
although	contrast
now	
first	sequence

2. The following text includes many linking words. Enjoy the text and list the meaning-markers used.

Seeing What the Writer Is Doing

Sometimes, when we read, it is hard to believe the writer of the passage really wants us to understand her words. Yet the writer wants to say something. She has some reason for writing.

Let me give you an example. Perhaps a writer wants to explain a teaching technique to us. She therefore has to describe the technique clearly, perhaps by using examples. Maybe the writer of another passage wants to argue for a particular political policy. So, she has to contrast her policy with others, and show why hers is better. If we realise that the writer is explaining a technique or arguing for a policy, we understand the words more easily. That is, we need to understand what the writer is doing with words in order to understand them fully.

I used the words 'Let me give you an example' in the last paragraph. If you noticed them, you knew the paragraph would contain an example of the point I had just made. So, you had a clue to what I was doing with words in that last paragraph.

There are many clues like 'Let me give you an example'. They help us see what the writer is doing with words, and how her points fit together. We can call these clues 'meaning-markers', because they mark what the writer means to do with her words. They are also called 'signalling devices' or 'signpost words', but let us use the name 'meaning-markers'. It reminds us that meaning-markers show what the writer means to do with her words.

I shall now group meaning-markers into different groups according to the relationship between points, which they mark.

- The first group of meaning-markers shows us that the writer is adding points. The commonest addition marker is 'and'. It signals that the writer is adding a point of the same kind to what she has said already. Other addition markers are 'also' and 'moreover'. We can remember this group as the 'and' markers, showing addition of points.
- The second group of meaning-markers shows us the sequence or order of the writer's points. A common sequence marker is 'next'. Numbers and letters can also be used, such as 'first', '2', 'a', 'b)', etc. We can remember this group as the 'next' markers, showing sequence of points.
- The third group is of markers showing contrast. The commonest contrast marker is 'but'. It, and others like 'however', shows us that the writer means to make two points that are different in some way. We can remember this group as the 'but' markers, showing contrast.

Let me now give an example of the uses of 'and', 'next' and 'but' in a short passage:

'Reading requires thinking. We cannot hope to understand a text unless we use our brains on it, and try to work out what the writer is talking about.

'The next point to consider is that even quite young learners have experience of life and words, which they can use while they read. They have background knowledge to use. But, they must have a chance to use it. They cannot use their experience if we teachers explain all new words to them before they read. They will just remain dependent on us, and not learn to think as they read.'

One reason why meaning-markers are so useful is that there is a large number of them. Therefore we will find a meaning-marker from one group or another in almost every authentic paragraph of English that we read.

Source: Jarvis. (1985). *Ideas for Teachers of Reading*. Leeds, England: University of Leeds.

Possible answers are provided at the end of this unit.



Practice Activity

Demonstrate to a colleague the use of some of the tools for intensive reading.

Possible points to be included in the answer are provided at the end of the unit.



Summary

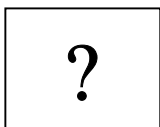
In this unit, we have covered the following: intensive reading, content words, function words and linking words. All of these will help you and your students understand the text that is being read. Remember, texts do not have meaning until you breathe meaning into them. Bring into use your knowledge of the world and your knowledge of how language works and have some lively interaction with the text.

We hope that you will share the processes experienced in this unit with the students you teach. You should aim at developing independent readers.



Reflection

Reflect on your teaching of intensive reading and show how the insights gained will influence your practice.



Unit Test

Using insights from the unit, write three paragraphs describing what transpired during a departmental meeting. Analyse the three paragraphs in terms of your use of content words, function words and linking words.

After completing this activity, refer to the Suggested Answers section at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

1. Intensive reading involves reading a text carefully in order to obtain the interpretation and meaning intended. It involves active examination of the text by the reader.
2. Examples of texts that are read intensively:
 - manuals
 - brochures
 - textbooks
 - journals.
3. You may have used different examples in the following table.

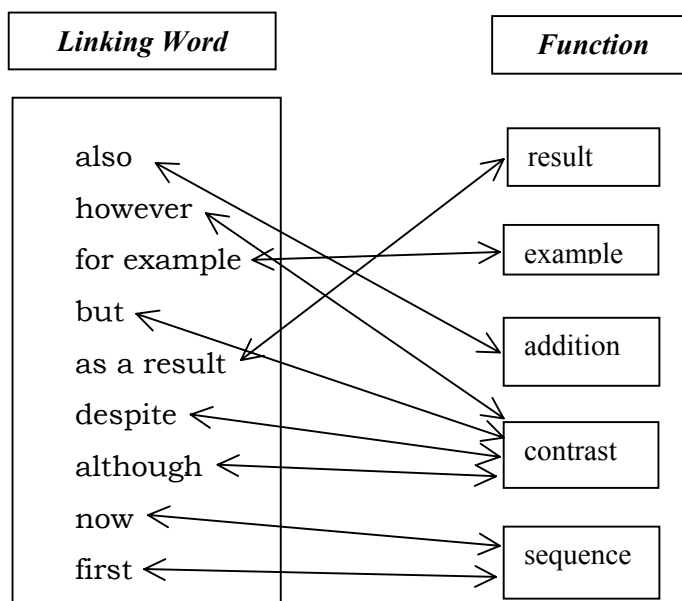
<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Example</i>
• inter	between	intercept
• post	after	post-independence
• un	not	unfriendly

<i>Suffix</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Example</i>
• er	one who	baker
• able	capable of being	teachable
• ize or ise	to make into	dramatise

Adapted from Reynolds (1995: 46-49).

Self-Assessment 2

1.



2. Some of the meaning-markers found in the passage include:
yet, so, if, let me give you an example, and, now, therefore
and next.

Practice Activity

Choose a text to be read intensively and ask students to experience the processes. Allow them to go through the process of finding the meaning themselves. Refrain from explaining words for them. Ask them to find the clues or meaning-markers themselves.

Unit Test

Your responses to this activity will vary according to your own experience.

However, ensure that you identify content words that provide ideas to your text; function words that perform specific functions when they act as articles, prepositions and pronouns; and linking words that connect ideas or thoughts in a variety of ways.

UNIT 6: Extensive Reading



Introduction

Up to this point, this module has covered what you need to do in order to support pupils during class activities. The previous unit introduced tools that help a reader to process a text for full understanding. This unit will take you away from the classroom into a private world where students receive minimal teacher support.

The following content will be covered:

- the meaning of extensive reading
- advantages of extensive reading
- developing a culture of reading.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain what is involved in extensive reading.
2. State the advantages of extensive reading.
3. Apply the strategies used in organising an extensive reading programme.

The Meaning of Extensive Reading

As mentioned earlier in the module, we read for different purposes and use different skills and tools to arrive at meaning. The purpose determines the skill and tools to be used to process a text.

Richard et al. (1992: 133) state that “Extensive reading means reading in quantity and in order to get general understanding of what is read.”

According to Haarman et al. (1988: viii):

Extensive reading is the term used to describe the strategies called into play when we read longer texts either for pleasure or information, and may involve so many strategies, which the reader applies according to the individual text and his interest in its various parts.

From the quotations, it is clear that by using different strategies, you can obtain a general understanding without necessarily understanding every word or part of the text. You will notice the contrast with intensive reading, in which the reader should understand all aspects of the texts.

The aim of extensive reading, therefore, is for the reader to get the sense of the text. Since you can arrive at meaning without knowledge of every word in the text, you are motivated to read on, realising that you can still get the sense of the text.

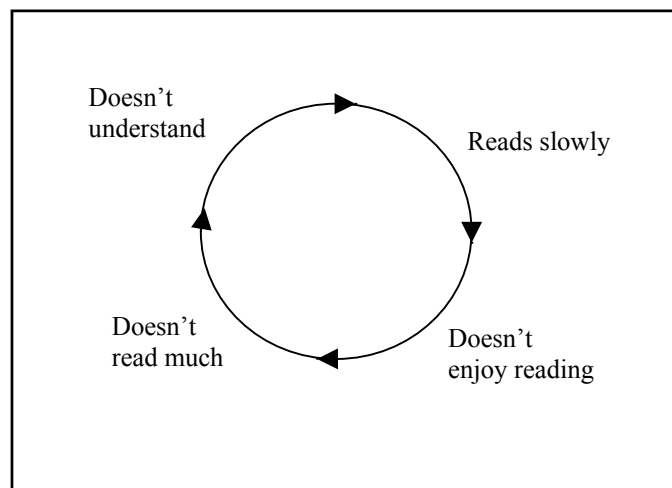
Is there a relationship between intensive and extensive reading? You will recall from previous units that general understanding, or getting the gist of the text before reading, facilitates interpretation. Think of the skimming activity you did in Unit 3. Similarly, intensive and extensive reading complement each other in that the readers use skills developed through intensive reading activities to read texts on their own.

Extensive reading, also known as wide reading, has been associated with pleasure and entertainment. It may be interpreted to mean reading without any particular objective. However, extensive reading has been found to have several benefits to the learner. What, then, are its advantages?

Advantages of Extensive Reading

It is likely that the majority of your learners have reading problems both inside and outside the classroom. This means that it is difficult for them to do any reading on their own. You will agree with Nuttall (1982) that a good number of learners are trapped in the circle below:

The Vicious Circle of the Weak Reader

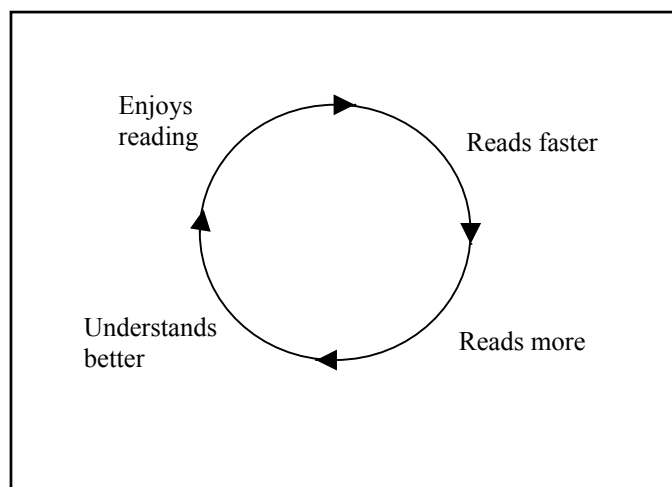


Source: Nuttall (1982: 167). *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. London: Heinemann.

What can we learn from this circle? The weak reader lacks the necessary reading skills and this leads to frustration. However, if your learners have the tools to process the text and are given opportunities for practice, they will become efficient readers. Providing opportunities for reading on their own will address

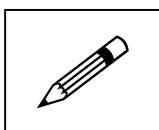
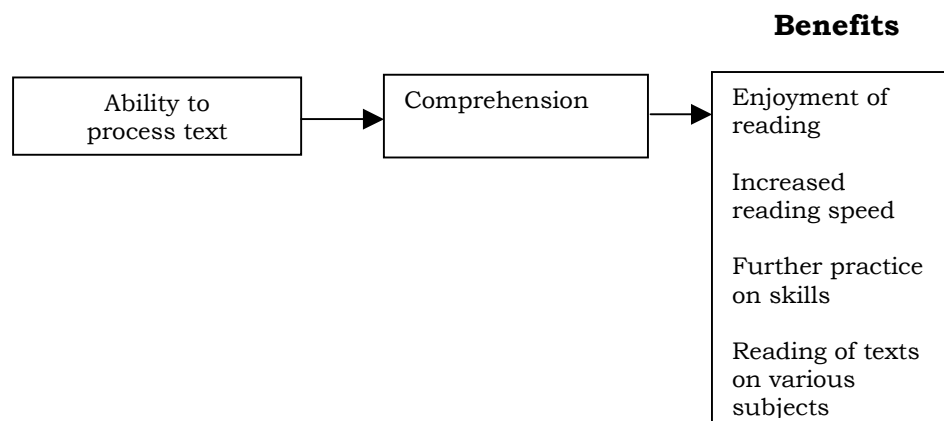
this problem and make your learners efficient readers, as shown below.

The Vicious Circle of the Good Reader



Source: Nuttall (1982: 167). *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. London: Heinemann.

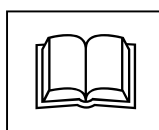
The diagram below summarises this section and identifies more benefits of reading to the learner.



Self-Assessment 1

From your experience as a teacher, list three other advantages of extensive reading.

Points to include in your answer are identified at the end of this unit.



Developing a Culture of Reading

What should be done to ensure that learners enjoy the benefits mentioned in the previous section?

One of the benefits of extensive reading for learners is that it enables them to read various subject texts with understanding. Unfortunately, not all teachers pay attention to the teaching of this skill. You may be aware of the following:

- Where English is an official language, the task of developing reading is assigned to the English department.
- Schools normally cater to reading in the official language (English for most SADC countries) and disregard other languages despite the fact that our educational systems aim to produce well-rounded individuals who are literate and fluent in both official and local languages.

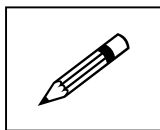
We all realise the value of reading in education and its usefulness later in life. Therefore, to ensure that our learners receive the necessary exposure, all teachers, irrespective of their subject area, should be involved in teaching this skill.

You may want to do the following in your schools:

- Develop reading policies to give direction to all teachers in the school.
- Select appropriate material for your learners.
- Provide a variety of reading materials on different subjects and topics.
- Give guided reading tasks especially in subjects with factual content, such as social studies and science. Remember, the learners will find texts more manageable if the purpose for reading has been explained.
- Explain the rationale for reading a variety of materials to your students.
- Serve as examples to your students by reading widely.
- Allocate reading times during your teaching in order to ensure the integration between intensive and extensive reading. Some schools have set aside time for this purpose every week. For example, the first thirty minutes of a given school day may be designated for silent reading supervised by teachers from different subject areas. This procedure is called **Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading** (USSR).
- In your reading programmes, include such languages as Setswana, Shona, Ndebele, Chinyanja and Isi-Zulu. Being literate and fluent in other languages in the curriculum enhances the learners' linguistic competence.

We can conclude from what has been said so far that the success of a whole-school reading programme depends on the availability of a variety of materials on different topics and subject areas. These materials can be organised into class

libraries or put in the school library. An adequate library allows students to borrow and take books out of the library for reading on their own. Ideally, the library should be accessible not only to the learners in your class, but also to the entire school community.



Self-Assessment 2

A school inspector recommends a reading programme for your school. In a staff meeting the school head says that students should not take books out of the library, but use them in the library only. Would you support the head's position? Why or why not?

Possible points that could be included in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.



Assessing Extensive Reading

Considering the value of extensive reading, it is important that all learners read widely. To ensure that this happens, you can use the following strategies to monitor your learners' progress.

- Ask them to give a brief summary of the text they have read.
- Tabulate key information for future use. Record what books have been read, the classification of each book and who read the books.
- Develop a whole-school reading programme.

These activities and many others that you may think of should not create anxiety among the learners because the primary aim is not to test, but to ensure that learners engage in reading activities outside of the time devoted specifically to teaching reading skills.



Practice Activity

Imagine that a new science teacher has come to your school. She or he believes that reading should be overseen by the language departments. How would you convince this teacher that she or he also has a role in teaching reading?

Possible points to include in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.



Summary

This unit has introduced you to extensive reading. The content covered included the meaning of extensive reading, advantages of extensive reading, developing a culture of reading and reasons for assessing extensive reading. We hope that with the information acquired, you will be in a better position to

contribute towards the development of a whole-school reading programme where you teach.



Reflection

Reflect on your role in promoting reading in your school. Think of what you would do as a result of the knowledge gained from this unit. If your school does not have a whole-school reading programme, then meet with your school head and other teachers to establish such a programme.



Unit Test

State what you would do to promote a culture of reading in your school.

Possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

Advantages of extensive reading may include:

- exposure to vocabulary and structures,
- exposure to different writing styles,
- exposure to function words, linking words and punctuation marks, and
- acquisition of background information on topics and subjects taught in school.

Self-Assessment 2

Based on the information presented in this module, we hope that you did not support the school head who would like books to remain in the library. Such a policy would deny the learners the benefits of wide reading, as they will only read at specified times. If library books can be borrowed and read outside the school, students can learn independently and at their own pace without the pressures that a school environment and timetable may impose. They may begin to associate reading with entertainment and enjoy classroom reading more as a result.

Practice Activity

In trying to convince your new colleague of the merits of reading across the curriculum, you could:

- explain the value of reading in any learning situation;
- describe the teacher's role in supporting this collective effort;
- outline the life-long learning benefits of reading; and
- indicate that reading, like science, does not stop at the classroom door. Reading and science affect everyone's daily life.

Unit Test

In order to promote a culture of reading in your school, you could:

- explain the rationale for extensive reading to colleagues and students,
- participate in policy formulation regarding reading across the curriculum,
- acquire reading materials,
- consider assessment procedures that would monitor reading activities,

- ensure that all subjects and languages in the curriculum include reading activities,
- encourage teachers to read widely and share their reading experiences with the students, and
- invite members of the community to discuss books they have read and to emphasise the importance of reading in their lives and their jobs.

UNIT 7: Selection of Texts



Introduction

You have learned about several reading processes and reading skills. The previous unit discussed the role of extensive reading in learning. In this unit you will consider guidelines for text selection. The following content will be covered:

- readability of texts
- suitability of texts
- exploitability of texts.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Select suitable materials for your learners.
2. Provide appropriate material to meet identified learning needs.

Readability of Texts

Read the passage below and give your impressions of it.

Structural Abnormalities

Open neural tube defects such as anencephaly and open spina bifida allow a fetoprotein to escape from cerebral spinal fluid into the amniotic fluid, whence it is absorbed into the maternal blood, producing higher than normal concentrations. This is the basis of a fetoprotein screening performed between 14 and 16 weeks. It is virtually non-invasive, entailing only taking a blood sample, and has a high predictive value. Fetal gestational age must be estimated by ultrasonography. False positive results can be caused by multiple pregnancy, a dead fetus, bleeding behind the placenta (which may manifest as a threatened abortion), and a few rather rarer abnormalities of the fetus such as gastroschisis.

If the serum, a fetoprotein concentration, is high either an amniotic fluid sample can be obtained by amniocentesis to measure a fetoprotein concentration or acetylcholinesterase activity, which is more specific, or a special ultrasound scan is performed to examine the spine and head carefully at 18-19 weeks of gestation.

Now, answer the questions below.

- What is your opinion about the passage?
- Did you find it easy to read?
- What do you think should have been done to help you understand the contents?
- How did you find the level of language?
- Did you learn anything?

You may have found the passage difficult because of the following:

- difficult words in the text
- too many new words
- complex language structure
- lack of background knowledge.

It is important for you to know your students' linguistic background before you teach them new material. Matching the difficulty level of the reading materials to the learners' reading competence is called **readability**. This view is supported by Nuttall (1982: 25), who says:

If you do not know your students well, you will need to find out about them as soon as possible. You must find out how much language they know if you are to select suitable texts.

You now know that if the text is too difficult for your students, learning does not take place. If it is too easy, it does not challenge them. Therefore, you need to be able to select appropriate material relevant to your learners' competencies.

There are tests that you can use to determine the reading levels of your students. These tests will assist you in selecting appropriate texts for the different reading levels. When assessing the reading performance of your students, you could use a cloze test or any other readability test.

In a **cloze test**, the students are given a passage with gaps to be filled in. For example, the LASER test developed at Tonota College of Education (TCE) in Botswana is used to test the reading competencies of students when they enter junior secondary school. For more details about the LASER test, read the instructions on administering the test below.

Tonota College of Education (TCE) LASER Test

The procedure for checking the reading performance of junior secondary school pupils with published materials is described below.

The results of the TCE LASER tests will be used to estimate the capabilities of junior secondary pupils in situations where they are reading independently, as when they read in the library. It is hoped that as a result of this study it will be possible to produce a list of books which could be confidently tackled by junior secondary pupils in each of the four bands of reading ability as identified by the LASER tests.

Procedure for TCE LASER Test

1. Choose pupils who have the following scores on the LASER test ("A Strange School") LASER TEST SCORE: 4, 9, 14 and 17 (April 1994 revision).
2. Use the accompanying "Draft Graded Publisher's List" as a starting point and give books to each pupil of approximately suitable reading difficulty. (This draft list is what needs to be confirmed or altered in the light of your findings.)

LASER Band 1	=	Publisher's List A
LASER Band 2	=	Publisher's List B
LASER Band 3	=	Publisher's List C
LASER Band 4	=	Publisher's List D and E

3. When the pupil has been reading for at least 15 minutes, interview him or her and arrive at a subjective view as to whether the book is easy enough or too hard. Use several of the following questions or activities during the interview. You do not have to use all of the items below.
 - Ask him to read aloud, and assess whether he is reading at an independent reading level. (Additional information about the independent level is provided in the next section of this unit.)
 - Ask if she thinks that the book is too easy, too hard, or just right.
 - Ask him to explain why it has this title or ask him to suggest an alternative title.
 - Ask her, "Do you want to read the rest of this book? Why or why not?"
 - Ask, "What have you been reading about it?"
 - Ask, "What do you think is going to happen next?"
 - Say, "Look at this picture. What is he saying/what do you think has been happening here?"
 - Say, "Write a brief account of what you have been reading about."
3. Use the criteria below to make your subjective view a little more precise.

Independent Reading Level

To determine the independent reading level, follow the steps below. Note whether the pupil:

- has not made more than one word recognition error per 100 words when reading.
- is able to comprehend 90% or more of the material when you are judging his or her silent reading and are asking him or her about it.
- shows a general lack of tension and anxiety during the reading and interview session.
- exhibits frustration.

Enter your findings on sheets similar to the one below.

School: _____			Term: _____	
Name of Pupil	LASER Score	Name of Text	Series (publisher and level/stage)	Independent Reading level Yes/Nearly/No
Patrick	7	"Mystery of Mr E"	Heinemann Jaws 4	No
		"Kitso the Wind"	Longman Gems 3	Yes

Exploitability of Texts

After identifying the students' linguistic competence and what they would like to read, you should examine the exploitability of texts. Considering that we read for different purposes, you should choose texts that can be used for different purposes. A text might be chosen because it offers the following:

- new language structures,
- information needed for learning lessons, and
- new vocabulary.

We can conclude that texts that are readable, have suitable content and are exploitable should equip learners with a variety of skills. Therefore, you should consider these criteria when you select reading materials for your learners.

Suitability of Texts

The focus here is not on language, but on interest and motivation. How much students want to read and the type of books or topics they want to read will be determined more by their interest and motivation.

You may have noticed that some students are stimulated by:

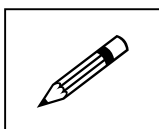
- the external appearance of a book,
- illustrations,
- photographs, and/or
- graphs.

You will recall from the previous units that the above items can be used for pre-reading, if students are asked to look at them individually or in pairs before they read a text.

You may want to conduct a survey to find out what topics students are interested in. Data could be collected through interviews and questionnaires, or you could ask the librarian and other teachers about:

- the types of books read most often,
- the topics and books students had read before,
- the types of reading materials in the students' possession, and
- what they have learned from the materials.

In addition to the above, you could read guidelines for text selection, refer to relevant syllabuses and read book reviews.



Self-Assessment 1

Lately, schools have experienced a rapid expansion. This has resulted in large classes of students with mixed abilities. How would you select books for the different ability groups in your class?

Possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Practice Activity

Imagine that you have been assigned to the textbook selection committee. What advice would you give regarding the readability of texts?

Possible answers to this activity are provided at the end of this unit.



Summary

This unit introduced you to several criteria for text selection, including the readability, suitability and exploitability of texts. You learned how each of these criteria facilitates the selection of reading materials for learners. We hope that you will use ideas from the unit to choose relevant and appropriate texts for your students.



Reflection

Reflect on the procedures used in text selection at your school. Does your text selection need to be improved? What could you do to improve it?



Unit Test

Examine the passage below and state whether it is suitable for your class. How did you arrive at your conclusion?

Poverty

Poverty is both a contributor to and a result of population growth and environmental degradation. This cyclical relationship shows that the poor often have few alternatives but to exploit resources in an unsustainable fashion. Hungry families attempt to grow food on any available land, regardless of the fragility of the soil or the suitability of crops. If it is cold, they will burn wood for cooking and heating and when the wood is exhausted, they will burn dung and crops stems that would otherwise have been used as fertiliser. The poor are unable to let land lie fallow or to undertake reforestation.

High fertility rates in the Third World, up to seven children per family, exert pressures on land resources. Agricultural areas are no longer capable of sustaining the population growth. Shanty towns and slums spring up.

Political stability and longevity are threatened. Shadowy economic alternatives develop in the informal sector.

Apart from the effects of these economic factors on development, there are also social and cultural factors that affect development and have an environmental impact.

Possible answers to this test are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

In order to address the different ability levels in your class, you could:

- provide a variety of reading material to cater to low, average and above-average students.
- determine the pupils' interests and use this information to select materials.

Practice Activity

If you were part of the textbook selection committee, you could suggest that they use the following procedures:

- Check to see whether the vocabulary or the organisation of the material is appropriate for your students. Texts that are too difficult for students may demotivate them, while those that are too easy may not challenge them.
- Use readability measures to ascertain the appropriateness of a text.

Unit Test

Answers to this activity will vary depending on your situation. That is, the reading on poverty might be suitable for some students and not for others.

In order to assess its suitability, you should have subjected the passage to readability measures and used other criteria such as student interest in this topic and relevance to the courses being taught in the school.

UNIT 8: Reading Policy



Introduction

So far, the module has emphasised the value of reading and why, as a teacher, you should actively participate in a reading programme. You have also learned about some of the strategies a reader employs to process different texts. In this unit, you will be taken through the process of formulating reading policy. The content to be covered will include:

- the meaning of policy
- stages in policy formulation
- policy formulation.

Objectives

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain what is meant by the term 'policy'.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the steps in policy formulation.
3. Formulate a sample reading policy.

The Meaning of Policy

You may have realised that schools often talk about promoting reading. Unfortunately, their efforts are not always successful. What do you think is the cause of this problem?

One of the main reasons is lack of a policy. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines policy as a "plan of action, statement of ideas, proposed or adopted by a government, business etc."

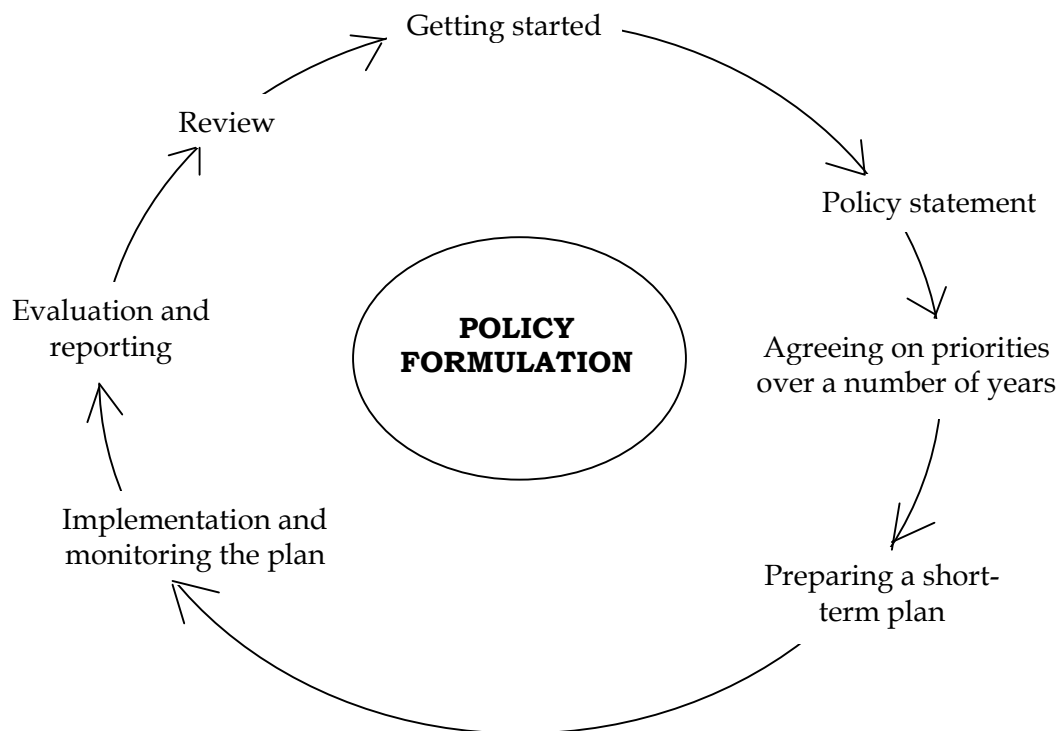
Let us now examine the key phrases of the definition, which are the statement of ideas and plan of action.

- **Statement of ideas.** This is what is normally referred to as the policy statement and it simply means what you wish for as an individual or an institution.
- **Plan of action.** This refers to a systematic or organised approach used to accomplish an objective.

You will realise that a statement or a plan alone will not help you achieve the objective. They should be linked. The statement gives direction, while the plan is a strategy for realising the objective identified by the statement.

What do you think are the steps in policy formulation?

The stages in policy formulation can be summarised as shown below.



Adapted from *Module 4: Resource Material for School Inspectors* (1998: 93).

What do you think happens at each stage?

Stages in Policy Formation

Getting Started

This is a stage during which you will be consulted on the planned change. The rationale for starting a reading programme to cater to all students will be explained to all stakeholders. The stakeholders will be expected to provide their input regarding what should be done to make the programme a success. If some stakeholders are left out of this planning process, you might encounter resistance during the implementation process.

Self-Assessment 1

You are one of the stakeholders mentioned in this section. Who are the other stakeholders?

Points to include in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.

Policy Statement

You need to write the statement of intent. It can take the form of a mission statement, such as “Through cooperative effort, we will produce effective and efficient readers.”

Agreeing on Priorities over a Number of Years (Long-Term Plan)

At this stage, the long-term strategies for addressing the mission are established. You need to think about the resources required, define roles, set deadlines and determine the success criteria.

Preparing a Short-Term Plan

As you may be aware, some of the strategies must be divided into chunks and implemented over many years. For administrative purposes, you should start with what is reasonably easy to manage over a short period of time. Trying to implement everything all at once will only cause chaos in the school.

It is crucial that roles are clearly defined, and that resources in terms of time, money and materials are spelt out. The success criteria should also be defined. How will you measure progress and ultimately success? When will you know that you are successful?

Implementation and Monitoring of the Plan

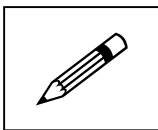
After working out the plan, you must now implement it. Close monitoring will ensure smooth implementation of the plan. If problems occur, do you have any contingency plans? Have you established a mechanism that allows you to inform stakeholders of the progress made and to receive input or feedback as the implementation progresses?

Evaluation and Reporting

While formative evaluation will have been taking place continuously, this stage requires summative evaluation. All the information is collected and analysed. This will shed light on progress made and help in determining which direction to take next.

Review

At this stage, you review the plan and, if necessary, re-strategise. It would be logical to go back to the stakeholders to consult them and obtain feedback. Then, repeat the same cycle using revised strategies.



Self-Assessment 2

Which stage in the cycle would you consider to be most crucial? Give reasons for your answer.

Points to include in the answer are provided at the end of this unit.



What to Consider When Formulating a Reading Policy

Policy formulation at the school level is guided by national policies. As you may be aware, our education systems in the SADC region are generally silent on reading. What is usually available is a recommended extensive reading programme that is prepared by the Curriculum Development Unit. This programme is part of the language syllabuses. Therefore, the formulation of a reading policy lies with the school.

You also know too well that other subject teachers do not regard themselves as teachers of reading. Despite the fact that they give reading assignments, they do not assist their learners with reading.

The following should therefore be spelt out in the policy:

- availability of resources
- roles of stakeholders
- evaluation procedures
- success criteria.

Each of these will be briefly described below.

Resources

You should think of how and where funding for the programme is going to be secured and what personnel are needed. For instance, will the library be run by the teacher alone or by a librarian?

Time is an important resource. As pointed out earlier, implementation is a process and not an event. Thus, activities will need to be divided into manageable tasks and timelines set for the completion of each task. Reading times should also be indicated on the timetable.

Stakeholders

The roles of all the stakeholders listed below must be defined:

- teachers
- students
- parents and community
- Ministry of Education.

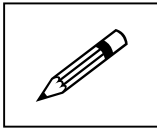
For example, parents may be asked to donate books to the school and they could be asked to supervise their children's reading at home.

Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation strategies should be indicated. Evaluations can be used to help you devise new strategies.

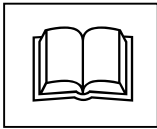
Success Criteria

How will you know that your aims are being achieved? It is important to indicate how you will rate your achievement levels.

**Self-Assessment 3**

Imagine that you have been assigned to coordinate the formulation of a reading policy for your school. List the steps that you will follow to ensure successful implementation of the policy.

Possible points to include in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.

**Sample Reading Policy**

A suggested sample policy comprising a statement and long-term and short-term plans is suggested below. You may decide to adapt it to suit your situation.

Mission Statement

Through teamwork, we will produce effective and efficient readers.

Long-Term Plan

In order to develop students into skilled independent readers, you must:

- train teachers to teach reading or at least show them how they can support learners who are attempting to read; and
- acquire appropriate materials because most likely what is available is not appropriate and/or varied.

Short-Term Plan

Priority	Tasks	By When	By Who	Time	Success Criteria
Training of teachers	Discuss the need to introduce a whole-school reading programme.	1 September	Reading Committee	1 hour	All teachers agree to take up tasks.
	Workshop on teaching strategies.	October	Reading Committee resource person from the group	5 hours	Act as reading teachers.
Acquisition of reading materials					
Students developed into skilled independent readers					



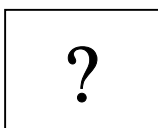
Summary

This unit has introduced you to a variety of ideas on reading policy formulation. We have covered the definition of policy, stages in policy formulation and what to consider when formulating a reading policy. Thus, you have learned strategies for formulating a reading policy and the processes leading to the successful implementation of this policy. You have also been sensitised to the role you can play in helping your students to become skilled independent readers.



Reflection

Reflect on your current reading policy in your school. How would you implement changes to the policy?



Unit Test

Explain why all teachers, irrespective of the subject area they teach, should be involved in the formulation of the reading policy for your school.

Possible points to include in your answer are provided at the end of this unit.



Suggested Answers

Self-Assessment 1

The stakeholders may include:

- other teachers
- school administration
- school librarian
- students
- Ministry of Education personnel
- parents and community members.

Self-Assessment 2

Please note that answers may vary, but the first stage is usually considered to be the most important because this is the stage during which you sensitise colleagues on the policy formulation. You also discuss the contribution expected from them. Both you and your colleagues must work together to map the way forward. Therefore, the entire school will support what is agreed upon.

Self-Assessment 3

The following steps should be followed:

- Form a committee with representation from all subject areas and the administration.
- Arrange meetings to inform and involve other stakeholders such as students, parents and community leaders.
- Consider everyone's input. Draft a policy statement to be refined by the stakeholders.
- With input from all, develop long- and short-term plans.
- Implement the plans.
- Evaluate and review the plans and, if necessary, revise your plans.

Stakeholders should be involved at each stage of the process.

Unit Test

The overall aim is to produce fluent and independent readers in all subjects in the curriculum. Readers use the same strategies to process texts in different subjects. Therefore, a skill they learn in a Portuguese lesson can be easily transferred to a history lesson.

Remember, all teachers are teachers of reading. Therefore, they should give learners the necessary assistance towards becoming effective readers.

Module Test

1. Describe the three models of the reading process outlined in this module.
2. Why is it important for teachers to have a clear understanding of their perceptions about what reading is?
3. Match the following text types with the possible reasons for reading them:

Letter	To find out the time for doing something
Instructions	To get specific or general information
Timetable	To find out what is happening in the world
Map	To see if something is worth buying
Newspaper	To see who it is from and what it is about
Brochure	To find out the way
Advertisement	To gain pleasure
Books, fiction	To find out how to put something together
Books, non-fiction	To find your way
Traffic sign	To find out a specification

Source: (Weir, 1993: 65).

4. State the main reasons for reading and give examples of texts that correspond to each reason.
5. From your study of this module, identify what you consider to be the major components of an effective reading program. Justify your answers with specific reference to the module.
6. Use the text below to create opportunities for practising the sub-skill of scanning.

**Republic of Botswana
Directorate of Public Service Management
Vacancy Circular No. 7 of 2000**

REFERENCE NO: L739/99

VACANCY: TYPING POOL SUPERVISOR

Applications are invited from suitably qualified citizens for the above post at the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime.

SALARY: C4/3-P25596 per annum

LEAVE: 25 Working days per annum

BENEFITS: Optional contributory Medical Aid Scheme (Government pays 50% and employee 50%)

QUALIFICATIONS: National Diploma in Secretarial Studies or its equivalent.

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE JOB:

To provide an efficient typing and word processing service for the Department, supervising and directing the work of a Typing Pool.

APPLICATIONS:

Quote the number of this vacancy circular and give the following details: a) Full names, address, date and place of birth b) Brief summary of career with duties (Curriculum Vitae) c) Certified-true copies of certificates and references d) In case of serving public officers: i) Date of first appointment ii) Present post and date of appointment thereto. Applications should be addressed to: Directorate of Public Service Management, P/Bag 0011, Gaborone.

IMPORTANT:

All applications from serving public officers should be routed through their Heads of Departments and Permanent Secretaries. Applications not so routed will not be considered.

CLOSING DATE: 18TH February, 2000.

For further information required, please contact Mr Omphile Rhee Hetanang, Telephone: 358782 or 358731.

7. Read the article below and provide the following:

- a. a suggested title
- b. summary of each paragraph

What reading sub-skills did you employ to answer a and b above?

By Lewis Machipisa

HARARE: Most of the times Cuba hits international headlines, the story is either about its sour relations with the U.S. government or about the dangerous small boats smuggling its nationals across the 144 kilometre journey to Florida.

The current story involves six-year-old Elian Gonzalez, whose mother drowned as she tried to smuggle the boy into the United States in November. Elian was rescued alive.

A legal battle over the boy's return to his father in Havana, the capital of Cuba, is going on, with U.S. authorities and some of the boy's relatives based in U.S. arguing that he should not be returned to his homeland.

But far away from the boats smuggling economic refugees into the U.S., Cuba is a messiah to many African countries. Starting way back in 1959, when Cuba helped Africa's liberation movements fight colonial oppression, the Latin American country still maintains strong links with Africa.

"Africa has received solidarity from Cuba for many years. We have helped Africa in many fields: education and medicine," says Esther Armenteros, Director for Sub-Saharan African Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Havana.

8. Describe, with examples, how affixation can be used as a tool to help students cope with new vocabulary.
9. List the different types of linking words and the functions they perform.
10. Why is it important to encourage students to read extensively?
11. Discuss factors that should influence the selection of texts.
12. Discuss factors to be considered when formulating a reading policy for your school.

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