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ACTIVE READING: SET A PURPOSE

Introduction

Different types of writing present different reasons for reading. For example, we read textbooks for a different reason than we might read magazines. When reading a textbook, you might skim for information to prepare for a test. When reading a magazine, you might read quickly for entertainment. Before reading, set a purpose for reading.

Setting a purpose for reading involves identifying specific questions that you will answer during reading. By asking yourself specific questions before you begin, you direct your attention to the key ideas in the passage. You can get an idea of what the selection is about by looking at the:

- title
- subheadings
- illustrations

You might also want to read the first sentence or passage for further information. Use three steps to help you set a purpose:

1. Study the title and illustrations.
2. Read the first sentence or paragraph.
3. Look for clues in the text (is the writing informative or entertainment?).

Model

Read the following beginning of a passage from “Mummy No. 1770” by Patricia Lauber. Think of questions that you could use to set a purpose for reading this selection. Then compare your questions to those below.

Museums have a limited number of mummies. Every time one is unwrapped, the number grows smaller, and so autopsies¹ are not often performed. But sometimes a museum has a mummy that is not important to its collection. This is a mummy it does not want to display and a mummy about which almost nothing is known. As it happened, the Manchester Museum had just such a mummy. Its wrappings were in poor condition and no one knew what period it dated from, where it was found, or who the dead person was. The mummy was known only by its museum number, 1770. This was the mummy the museum made available to a team of scientists who wanted to use modern techniques to study the wrappings and body in detail.

1. **autopsies:** Examinations and dissections of dead bodies to find the causes of death or physical damage from disease.

Questions

Why would you read this passage? What information might you expect to find?

Purpose for Reading

- To find out more about mummies and ancient Egypt
- To learn what period the mummy dated from, where it was found, and who the dead person was
- To find out more about modern techniques used by scientists



Practice

Below is another passage from “Mummy No. 1770” by Patricia Lauber. Read the passage and then answer the questions below.

One final step remained to be taken—to find out what 1770 had looked like. The skull had broken into about 30 pieces, some of them very small and fragile. The pieces lay in a jumbled heap and were mixed with mud and bandages. Once the pieces of bone had been cleaned, one member of the team made casts of them in plastic. When the plastic pieces were fitted together, much of the left side of the skull was still missing. A plaster cast was made to fill out the basic shape of the head. Now small pegs were placed in the plastic skull and cut to precise lengths. Each showed how thick the soft tissues of the face would be on a 13-year-old person. The face was then built up with modeling clay. First it took on a general human appearance. Then it took on an appearance of its own, shaped by the underlying bones. This model was used to cast the head in wax, so that changes could be made if more was learned about 1770. The wax head was painted, given glass eyes, a wig, and eyelashes. And there at last was 1770—an attractive teenager, perhaps of royal or noble birth, who had laughed, cried, and lived 3,000 years ago.

A. Answer the following questions.

1. What do you think might be the purpose or purposes for reading the passage? Why?

2. List at least six details you learned from the passage about the methods the scientists used.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

B. Challenge!

List three different kinds of books or written texts you might read on your own and your purpose for reading them.

Type of Book or Text	Purpose for Reading
1.	
2.	
3.	



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ACTIVE READING: PREDICT

Introduction

When you use what you *know* to explain what you *think* is going to happen, you are making a **prediction**. Predictions are based on two factors:

- information from the story
- knowledge from your own personal experience

Making predictions can make reading more exciting because you become actively involved with what you are reading.

Making Predictions: Three Steps

Step 1

Ask yourself what you know about the story and the characters so far; look for descriptions and clues in the text and make notes to yourself about those clues and details.

Step 2

Ask yourself what your own personal experiences have taught you about the details you wrote in your notes.

Step 3

Based on what you discovered in steps 1 and 2, ask yourself what you think will happen. Write your predictions down on a piece of paper.

Reading Tip

To help you make predictions in your reading, think about other stories and books you have read.

- What predictions did you make?
- Was the story different from your expectations? If so, how?
- What surprised you about the story if anything?
- Were your predictions correct?



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Practice

Suppose that you were about to read a short story entitled “The Fun They Had” by Isaac Asimov.

1. What would the title “The Fun They Had” lead you to expect about the events of the story?

Read this passage from “The Fun They Had” and answer the questions.

Margie even wrote about it that night in her diary. On the page headed May 17, 2155, she wrote, “Today Tommy found a real book.”

It was a very old book. Margie’s grandfather once said that when he was a little boy, *his* grandfather told him there was a time when all stories were printed on paper.

They turned the pages, which were yellow and crinkly, and it was awfully funny to read words that stood still instead of moving the way they were supposed to—on a screen, you know. And then, when they turned back to the page before, it had the same words on it that it had had when they read it the first time.

2. What do you think will happen in the next few paragraphs of the story?
3. What details in the passage helped you make this prediction?

Now read the rest of the passage and answer the questions below it.

Margie went into the schoolroom. It was right next to her bedroom, and the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for her...

She was thinking about the old schools they had when her grandfather’s grandfather was a little boy. All the kids from the whole neighborhood came, laughing and shouting in the schoolyard, sitting together in the schoolroom, going home together at the end of the day. They learned the same things so they could help one another on the homework and talk about it.

And the teachers were people...

Margie was thinking about how the kids must have loved it in the old days. She was thinking about the fun they had.

4. How were your predictions about what would happen like the actual events of the story?
5. How were your predictions different from the events in the story?



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ACTIVE READING: QUESTION AND CLARIFY

Introduction

Question: Asking yourself questions as you read can help improve your reading comprehension. The first step is identifying what is confusing to you.

Clarify: Often, the answer to your question can be found right in the text, either at an earlier point or later in the text. When you have a question while reading:

- Stop to think.
- Look back over the material you have already read to try to find clues to the answer.
- Continue reading, keeping your question in mind. Often you'll discover the answer later in the text.

Model

Read the passage below from "Dragon, Dragon" by John Gardner. Note the interrupter questions in italics.

■ There was once a king whose kingdom was plagued by a dragon. ■

This story must be a fairy tale. I wonder what the word plagued means.

■ The king did not know which way to turn. ■

I see. The word plagued must mean something like troubled or confused.

The king's knights were all cowards who hid under their beds when the dragon came in sight, so they were of no use to the king at all. And the king's wizard could not help either because, being old, he had forgotten his magic spells.

It sounds as if this is going to be a comic takeoff—maybe a spoof of a fairy tale?

Nor could the wizard look up the spells that had slipped his mind, for he had unfortunately misplaced his wizard's book many years before. The king was at his wit's end.

Yes, I was right. The story sounds like a comedy.



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Practice

Below is a passage from “Becky and the Wheels-and-Brake Boys” by James Berry. As you read the passage, ask yourself questions about what is happening.

Even my own cousin Ben was there—riding away, in the ringing of bicycle bells down the road. Every time I came to watch them—see them riding round and round enjoying themselves—they scooted off like crazy on their bikes.

They can't keep doing that. They'll see!

I only want to be with Nat, Aldo, Jimmy, and Ben. It's no fair reason they don't want to be with me. Anybody could go off their head for that. Anybody! A girl can not, not, let boys get away with it all the time.

Bother! I have to walk back home, alone.

I know total-total that if I had my own bike, the Wheels-and-Brake Boys wouldn't treat me like that. I'd just ride away with them, wouldn't I?

Over and over I told my mum I wanted a bike. Over and over she looked at me as if I was crazy. “Becky, d’you think you’re a boy? Eh? D’you think you’re a boy? In any case, where’s the money to come from? Eh?”

1. While you were reading the passage, what questions did you have?

2. What information in the passage helped clarify the answers to these questions?



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ACTIVE READING: CONNECT

Introduction

There are many ways to respond to something that you are reading. One of the most natural responses is to think how the literature relates to your own experiences or to another text that you have read. As you read, you may **connect** to a character or to something that character says or does. Sometimes, you will be reminded of another story you once read or something that you recently learned. Making connections as you read is important because it allows you to relate to the text in your own personal way.

To make connections in your reading, ask yourself questions such as those below. They will help you to become a more active reader by giving you ideas about how you can connect to what you are reading.

Questions to Help You Connect

- What do I relate to about this character?
- Am I like this person? Do I know someone like this person?
- Would I have done or said the same thing as this person?
- Is there anything in this story that is similar to my life, my own experiences, or the experiences of someone that I know?
- In what ways is this story like another story that I have read?

Model

The passage below is from “Lob’s Girl,” a short story by Joan Aiken. As you read the passage, connect it to your own experiences, ideas, or perhaps another story you have read. The connections you make may be similar to or different from some of the sample connections shown below.

It began on the beach, the summer when Sandy was five, Don, her older brother, twelve, and the twins were three. Sandy was really Alexandra, because her grandmother had a beautiful picture of a queen in a diamond tiara and a high collar of pearls. It hung by Granny Pearce’s kitchen sink and was as familiar as the doormat. When Sandy was born everyone agreed that she was the living spit of the picture, and so she was called Alexandra and Sandy for short.

Possible Connections

- I know someone who’s also from a family of four children.
- I wonder how I got my name.
- Sandy’s grandmother sounds as if she loves history. I can relate to that, because I love looking at old pictures.



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Practice

Below is another passage from “Lob’s Girl” by Joan Aiken. As you read the selection, think about how you connect to it and respond by writing your ideas in the appropriate sections below.

“No, old fellow, you can *not* come in. Hospitals are for people, not for dogs.”

“Why, bless me,” exclaimed old Mrs. Pearce. “That’s Lob! Here, Lob, Lobby boy!”

Lob ran to her, whining. Mrs. Pearce walked up to the desk.

“I’m sorry, madam, you can’t bring that dog in here,” the guard said.

Mrs. Pearce was a very determined old lady. She looked the porter in the eye.

“Now, see here, young man. That dog has walked twenty miles from St. Killan to get to my granddaughter. Heaven knows how he knew she was here, but it’s plain he knows. And he ought to have his rights! He ought to get to see her! Do you know,” she went on, bristling, “that dog has walked the length of England—*twice*—to be with that girl? And you think you can keep him out with your fiddling rules and regulations?”

“I’ll have to ask the medical officer,” the guard said weakly.

1. Do you know anyone that these characters call to mind?

2. Do any of the events in this passage remind you of experiences in your own life? Explain.

3. Does this passage remind you of another story? In what way?



ACTIVE READING: SQ3R

Introduction

Most of the time, people read for either pleasure or to learn about new things. When “reading to learn,” it is helpful to use the **SQ3R** strategy. This strategy helps you understand and remember what you read, especially when you are reading a difficult or unfamiliar text.

SQ3R stands for the five steps a reader can use to remember information.

Survey	Survey the text and get a general idea of what it is about. Try reading the first sentence of each paragraph.
Question	Keep in mind questions you have as you look over the selection. What do you want to find out about in the selection? What looks unclear to you?
Read	Read the text carefully from the beginning. Pause to think about what you are reading and to make sure you understand it. Look up unknown words and reread difficult sentences or paragraphs.
Recite	See how well you understood and remember the text by reciting what you learned out loud. Recite the information to yourself or to a friend. Helpful Hint: Try to answer these questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?
Review	Summarize the text and think about the main ideas by talking with someone else about it. You may also want to make an outline, use note cards, or make an illustration to help you remember key points.



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Practice

Practice using the SQ3R strategy with the passage below from “Overdoing It,” a short story by Anton Chekhov. Do not read the entire passage first. Follow the steps below.

I. Survey

What does this passage seem like it will be about?

II. Question

Write some questions that you have.

III. Read

Read the passage. Pause as you read to make sure that you understand it.

The land surveyor¹ Gleb Smirnov got off the train at Gnilushka. The station was some twenty miles from the estate he came to survey, and he had to cover that distance in a horse-drawn vehicle of some sort.

“Tell me, please, where could I find post horses and a carriage around here?” the surveyor said to the station guard.

“What kind?...Post horses?...Here for fifty miles around you couldn’t even find a sled dog, let alone post horses....Where are you bound for?”

“For Devkino—the estate of General Khokhotov.”

“Well,” the guard yawned, “try on the other side of the station. You may find some peasants over there who haul passengers.”

The land surveyor made his way across from the station. After looking for some time, then after prolonged negotiations and hesitations, he engaged a husky peasant—glum, pockmarked, and dressed in a tattered gray coarse wool coat and bast-bark shoes.

“What kind of a wagon do you have here!” grumbled the surveyor as he climbed into the wagon. “You can’t tell the front from the rear.”

“What is there to tell? Near the horse’s tail it’s the front, and where your lordship is now sitting is the rear.”

1. **land surveyor:** One who measures land boundaries.

IV. Recite

Verbalize what you have just read by telling yourself or a friend about it.

V. Review

In your notebook, write a brief summary or outline of the passage.



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IDENTIFY MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

Introduction

The **main idea** of a passage is its central and most important idea. Effective readers look for this central idea as they read. The main idea can appear at the beginning, middle, or end of a passage.

Writers reinforce their main ideas with **supporting details**. These words, phrases, or sentences tell something about the main idea. They can be facts, statistics, dates, names, opinions, or details.

The main idea of a passage can be stated clearly in one sentence in the selection. This is called a **stated main idea**. Sometimes the main idea is not stated in any one sentence but is a summary of the information in the passage. This is called an **implied main idea**. When you are reading, begin to identify the main idea, whether stated or implied, and look for its supporting details.

Model 1

In the following example from “A Backwoods Boy” by Russell Freedman, the underlined sentence is the stated main idea. Each sentence that follows provides support for the idea.

He also had a reputation as a comic and storyteller. Like his father, Abraham was fond of talking and listening to talk. About this time he had found a book called *Lessons in Elocution*, which offered advice on public speaking. He practiced before his friends, standing on a tree stump as he entertained them with fiery imitations of roving preachers and politicians who often visited Little Pigeon Creek.

Model 2

In this example from “Exploring the *Titanic*” by Robert D. Ballard, the main idea is implied rather than stated directly.

In the radio room, Harold Bride was exhausted. The two operators were expected to keep the radio working twenty-four hours a day, and Bride lay down to take a much-needed nap. Phillips was so busy with the passenger messages that he actually brushed off the final ice warning of the night. It was from the *Californian*. Trapped in a field of ice, she had stopped for the night about nineteen miles north of the *Titanic*. She was so close that the message literally blasted in Phillips’s ears. Annoyed by the loud interruption, he cut off the *Californian*’s radio operator with the words, “Shut up, shut up, I’m busy.”

The implied main idea might be stated as follows:

Because of exhaustion and lack of attention, the radio operators missed a very important warning message.



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Practice

Part I

Below is a passage from “Jackie Robinson: Justice at Last,” by Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Robinson’s first season was difficult. Fans threatened to kill him; players tried to hurt him. The St. Louis Cardinals said they would strike if he took the field. And because of laws separating the races in certain states, he often couldn’t eat or sleep in the same places as his teammates.

1. What statement best expresses the main idea of this passage?

2. Is the main idea implied or stated?

3. Identify at least three supporting details in this passage. Write the details in the spaces provided.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



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Part II

Below is a passage from “The All-American Slurp” by Lensey Namioka. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

But by the time we had been in this country for three months, our family was definitely making progress toward becoming Americanized. I remember my parents’ first PTA meeting. Father wore a neat suit and tie, and Mother put on her first pair of high heels. She stumbled only once. They met my homeroom teacher and beamed as she told them that I would make the honor roll soon at the rate I was going. Of course Chinese etiquette forced Father to say that I was a very stupid girl and Mother to protest that the teacher was showing favoritism toward me. But I could tell they were both very proud.

1. What statement best expresses the main idea of this passage?

2. Is the main idea implied or stated? _____

3. Identify three supporting details in this passage. Write the details in the spaces provided.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



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Part III

Below is a passage from “The Drive-In Movies” by Gary Soto. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

For our family, moviegoing was rare. But if our mom, tired from a week of candling eggs,¹ woke up happy on a Saturday morning, there was a chance we might later scramble to our blue Chevy and beat nightfall to the Starlight Drive-In. My brother and sister knew this. I knew this. So on Saturday we tried to be good. We sat in the cool shadows of the TV with the volume low and watched cartoons, a prelude of what was to come.

1. **candling eggs:** Examining eggs for freshness by placing them in front of a candle.

1. What statement best expresses the main idea of this passage?

2. Is the main idea implied or stated? _____

3. Identify three supporting details in this passage. Write the details in the spaces provided.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



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MAKE INFERENCES

Introduction

Writers don't always describe everything that is happening. It is up to the reader to figure out why characters may be acting or feeling a certain way. When readers draw these types of conclusions they are **making inferences**. Often, making inferences requires readers to "read between the lines." Your own experiences and prior knowledge about people, places, ideas, and events will help you to make inferences or reasonable guesses as you read. In addition, use whatever textual clues there are in order to draw certain conclusions. These inferences will help you to understand the selection better and to identify what the author is trying to communicate.

Keep this equation in mind to understand how to make inferences.

Textual Clues + What You Know = Inference

Model

Read the passage below from "The Wounded Wolf" by Jean Craighead George. Then look at the chart to see how certain inferences were made.

Young Roko glances down the valley. He droops his head and stiffens his tail to signal to his pack that he is badly hurt. Winds wail. A frigid blast picks up long shawls of snow and drapes them between young Roko and his pack. And so his message is not read.

A raven scouting Toklat Ridge sees Roko's signal. "Kong, kong, kong," he bells—death is coming to the ridge; there will be flesh and bone for all. His voice rolls out across the valley. It penetrates the rocky crags where the Toklat ravens rest. One by one they hear and spread their wings. They beat their way to Toklat Ridge. They alight upon the snow and walk behind the wounded wolf.

Textual Clues	+	What You Know	=	Inference
Winds wail; frigid blast picks up long shawls of snow; Roko's message not read		It is difficult for injured animals to recover in severe weather, especially if they are alone		Roko may not recover
Death is coming; there will be flesh and bone for all; ravens walk behind the wounded wolf		Ravens are scavengers who will eat an animal's carcass		Ravens may eat Roko's body if he dies



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Practice

Below is another passage from "The Wounded Wolf" by Jean Craighead George. As you read it, look for clues that help you make inferences about what is happening. Then answer the questions that follow.

The hours pass. The wind slams snow on Toklat Ridge. Massive clouds blot out the sun. In their gloom Roko sees the deathwatch move in closer. Suddenly he hears the musk-oxen thundering into their circle. The ice cracks as the grizzly leaves. The ravens burst into the air. ...The snowy owl flaps to the top of the shelter rock. And Kiglo rounds the knoll.

In his mouth he carries meat. He drops it close to Roko's head and wags his tail excitedly. Roko licks Kiglo's chin to honor him. Then Kiglo puts his mouth around Roko's nose. This gesture says "I am your leader." And by mouthing Roko, he binds him and all the wolves together.

The wounded wolf wags his tail. Kiglo trots away.

Already Roko's wound feels better. He gulps the food and feels his strength return. He shatters bone, flesh, and gristle and shakes the scraps out on the snow...

- 1. What inference can you make about the way the other animals treat the wolf Kiglo?

What clues helped you make this inference?

- 2. What inference can you make about the relationship between the two wolves, Roko and Kiglo?

What clues helped you make this inference?

- 3. What inference can you make about what is likely to happen to Roko?

What clues helped you make this inference?



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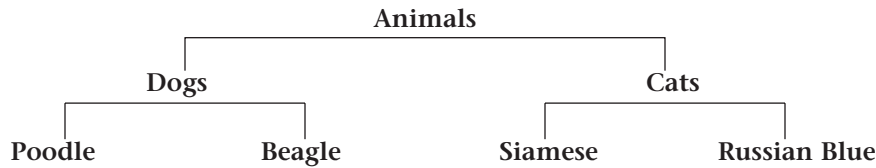
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CLASSIFY/CATEGORIZE

Introduction

When you **classify** or **categorize**, you arrange things into classes or groups according to a system. For example, dogs and cats are both classified as animals, but each can be further classified into different types of dogs or cats.

This chart may help clarify the relationship of the things to be classified and their division into groups.



In much of your reading, you will come upon examples of classification. Classifying is a technique that writers use to organize a passage. Writers help readers understand a point they are making by classifying ideas or things into a group. While you are reading, look for examples of this technique. Notice how classifying helps you recognize similarities and differences in a subject and helps explain an idea by providing specific examples or details.

Model

Read the following passage from “How the Internet Works” by Kerry Cochrane.

So a computer at the University of Iowa with the IP address **128.255.40.201** also has the alphabetical address **panda.uiowa.edu**, which is easier to remember. The first part of this address, **panda**, is the name of the host computer. The rest of this address, **uiowa.edu**, is called a domain name, because each part of the name refers to a domain.

In the passage above, Kerry Cochrane classifies/categorizes information about Internet addresses.

Type of Internet Address		Parts of Internet Address	
IP address	128.255.40.201	first part	host computer
alphabetical address	panda.uiowa.edu	rest of address	domain name



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Practice

Below is a passage from "The Strange Geometry of Stonehenge" by Katherine B. Shippen. Read the passage and answer the questions below.

With the passing of time, winds and storms have blown down the lintels. Some of them still lie on the ground. The stones of the circle inside the first are somewhat smaller and of a different kind. They are called "bluestones."

Inside the bluestone circle there are sarsen stones again, and here they are arranged in a big horseshoe. The stones of the horseshoe have been put up in pairs, each pair topped by a stone lintel. Each group forms a trilithon.

The trilithons are graduated in size; the tallest one, which stands opposite the opening of the horseshoe, is more than 22 feet high, with a lintel 16 feet long and 4 feet thick. Only two trilithons are standing today; originally there were probably eleven.

Finally, inside the horseshoe there are more bluestones, but only a few of them. Enough remain, however, to show that they were once arranged in an oval pattern.

- 1. What kinds of things is the writer classifying/categorizing in this passage?

- 2. What three shapes or patterns does the writer mention in this passage? How do these categories help you to understand what Stonehenge looks like?

3. Challenge!

Choose an interest of yours such as a sport you play or a hobby you like. Write a paragraph that classifies your activities to show how important this special interest is to you.



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COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Introduction

As you read, look for the writer's use of comparisons and contrasts. A writer uses **comparison** to show how things are similar and uses **contrast** to show how things are different. While reading, look for clue words that may help you recognize a comparison or contrast. Clue words and phrases that may signal a comparison are *like*, *similar to*, and *in the same way*. Words and phrases that may signal a contrast are *but*, *different from*, and *however*.

Model

Read the passage below from "How the Internet Works" by Kerry Cochrane. Look for the comparisons and contrasts and compare them to the ones below.

When you drop a letter into a mailbox, it gets collected and sorted with hundreds of other pieces of mail. Your local post office sorts and routes the mail according to its destination and then sends it on to the next post office. Information is sorted and routed on the Internet in the same way. Computers on the Internet called routers, or packet switchers, read the IP [Internet Protocol] addresses on each packet of information, and direct the packets to their destination. The information can be sent from one computer to another on phone lines, by satellite networks, on fiber-optic cables, or even through radio transmissions.

Comparison

- Post offices sort and route mail.
- Computers called routers or packet switchers sort and route information on the Internet.

These statements show how the Internet is similar to the postal service.

Contrast

- Information on the Internet can be sent from one computer to another by phone lines, by satellite networks, on fiber-optic cables, or through radio transmissions.

This statement shows how the Internet is different from the postal service.



Practice

- Below is another passage from “How the Internet Works” by Kerry Cochrane. Read the passage and answer the question below.

In the domain name **uiowa.edu**...the domain **edu** tells you that the host computer is run by an educational institution, because **edu** is the domain attached to all United States educational sites. ...

In the United States, there are six domains that are used at the end of domain names, and each one refers to the type of site that’s running the computer.

Countries outside the United States do not use these domains. Instead, they have two-letter country domains at the end of their names, such as **nz** for New Zealand, **br** for Brazil, or **ca** for Canada.

- How do the domains used at the end of domain names in the United States differ from the ones used in foreign countries?

- Circle the clue words that help you recognize comparisons and contrasts.
 - The Internet is like the postal service in many ways.
 - IP addresses are made up of numbers, but numbers can be hard to remember and use.
 - Internet addresses may seem complicated at first; however, they make sense when you know how they work.
 - IP addresses have separate parts separated by periods; in the same way, alphabetical addresses have several parts separated by periods.

C. Challenge!

Research living conditions in another country of your choice. List five comparisons and five contrasts to living in your country.

Compare	Contrast
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



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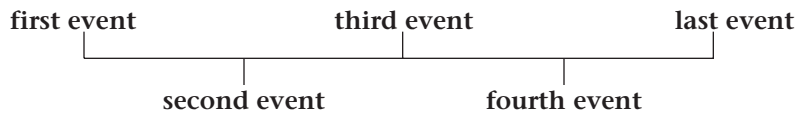
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FOLLOW A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Introduction

The **sequence of events** in a passage is the chronological, or time, order of those events.

While you read, in order to help you follow the sequence of events, you may want to make a timeline. A timeline not only enables you to follow the series of events but also to see the pattern of events that is developing. To make a timeline, draw a horizontal line. Draw a short vertical line for each important event in the sequence. At each vertical line, write a few words describing the event.



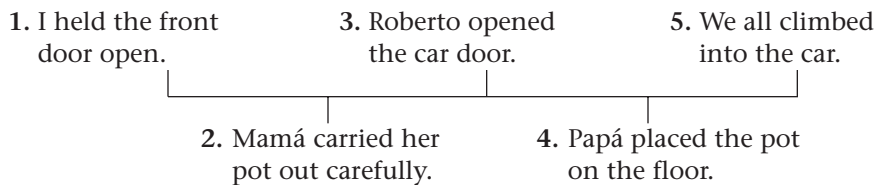
Helpful Hint: Look for clue words that may signal a sequence, such as *first, second, next, then, when, after, finally, and last.*

Model

Make a timeline for the events in this passage from “The Circuit” by Francisco Jiménez. When you have finished working, compare your timeline to the one below.

I held the front door open as Mamá carefully carried out her pot by both handles, making sure not to spill the cooked beans. When she got to the car, Papá reached out to help her with it. Roberto opened the rear car door and Papá gently placed it on the floor behind the front seat. All of us then climbed in.

Timeline





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Practice

1. Timeline

Make a timeline for this passage from “The Circuit” by Francisco Jiménez. The horizontal line has already been drawn for you.

Mr. Lema, the sixth-grade teacher, greeted me and assigned me a desk. He then introduced me to the class. I was so nervous and scared at that moment when everyone’s eyes were on me that I wished I were with Papá and Roberto picking cotton. After taking roll, Mr. Lema gave the class the assignment for the first hour. “The first thing we have to do this morning is finish reading the story we began yesterday,” he said enthusiastically. He walked up to me, handed me an English book, and asked me to read.

2. Questions

Use your timeline to answer the following questions.

- What is the first event?
- What does Mr. Lema say to the class?
- What is the conclusion?



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USE VISUAL AND GRAPHIC CLUES

Introduction

When you read, you can learn all kinds of information. Some information, however, does not come from words. **Visual and graphic aids** are pictorial representations that also help you learn about a subject. Visual and graphic sources of information include the following:

diagrams	lists	maps	charts
illustrations	scale drawings	schedules	tables
timelines	graphs	cartoons	outlines

One kind of visual or graphic aid that you may encounter is a table. Tables are charts that show information in columns. Each column has a heading that identifies the type of information. Study the table below.

State	Nickname	Population (1997)	Area (square miles)	Capital
California	Golden State	32,268,301	158,869	Sacramento
Florida	Sunshine State	14,653,945	59,928	Tallahassee
Georgia	Peach State	7,486,242	58,977	Atlanta
Kentucky	Bluegrass State	3,908,124	40,411	Frankfort
Maine	Pine Tree State	1,242,051	33,741	Augusta
Missouri	Show Me State	5,402,058	69,709	Jefferson City

Which state on the chart has the smallest population? Which state has the largest area? Of which state is Frankfort the capital?



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Practice

Read the schedule below and then answer the questions that follow.

New York to Boston		Boston to New York	
Departures	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals
*6:30 A.M.	9:32 A.M.	*6:00 A.M.	9:14 A.M.
8:40 A.M.	12:30 A.M.	8:15 A.M.	12:20 A.M.
11:15 A.M.	3:05 P.M.	10:45 A.M.	2:40 P.M.
*2:40 P.M.	5:50 P.M.	*2:00 P.M.	5:15 P.M.
5:30 P.M.	8:35 P.M.	5:45 P.M.	9:00 P.M.
*Express service			

- Which is the last express train of the day from New York to Boston?

- If you must be in Boston by 11 A.M., which train must you take from New York?

- When would you arrive in New York if you left Boston on the 10:45 A.M. train?

- How long is the trip to New York if you take the 5:45 P.M. train from Boston?



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ADJUST READING RATE

Introduction

Every day you read a variety of different materials, from TV guides to newspaper headlines to the instructions on a test at school. You read some materials more quickly than others. The speed at which you read is called your **reading rate**.

You adjust your reading rate depending on what you are reading and what your purpose is for reading. For example, when you read a story for entertainment, you probably read fairly quickly. On the other hand, when you read a textbook or a magazine article to learn important information, you read more slowly and carefully.

Which of the following—a science fiction tale, a chapter about the history of a foreign country, or a letter from a friend—do you think you would read most quickly? Most slowly? Choosing the appropriate reading rate will help you get the most out of what you read. Before you begin to read, follow these steps to determine which reading rate is right for you:

1. First, consider your purpose for reading.
2. Then, look at the selection to find out how difficult it is to read.
3. Finally, decide whether you should read the selection at a faster, average, or slower rate.

The following guidelines may help you adjust your reading rate to suit your purpose and the type of material you are going to read:

- When you read to learn information or when you read difficult selections that contain unfamiliar words and ideas, read slowly and carefully.
- Read more quickly when you read for entertainment or when you read fairly easy selections about subjects with which you are familiar.

Reading Tips

- Two strategies that will help you read more quickly and efficiently are skimming and scanning. **Skim** a selection to get a general impression about the topic. Do not read every word but look at the selection quickly, noticing the title, headings, words in boldface or italic type, and visual and graphic clues. Skimming a selection before you read will help you determine which reading rate to use.
- **Scan** a selection to find specific information, such as dates and important facts. Read quickly, moving your eyes over the page to locate key words that will help you find the information that you want.
- When you want to learn information and remember details, do a close reading. Read the entire selection slowly word for word.



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Practice

Below is a passage from “The Children’s Hour” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Before you read, skim the passage to determine which reading rate you will use. Consider why you are reading this passage and how difficult it is for you to read. Then read the passage, using the reading rate that you selected, and answer the questions below.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day’s occupations,¹
That is known as the Children’s Hour.

5 I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

10 From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
15 They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

1. **occupations:** Tasks or other activities.

1. What reading rate—faster, average, or slower—did you select for reading this passage?

2. Why did you choose this reading rate?

3. Challenge!

Find three different types of selections that you are likely to read. (For example, you might consider a newspaper article, a poem, a train schedule, an instruction manual for a computer, a short story, or another type of selection.) Skim each selection you choose, and decide at what rate you would read it—a faster rate, an average rate, or a slower rate. On a separate sheet of paper, explain why you chose the rate you did for each selection.



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ACTIVE READING: ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

What you know before you open a book may decide how you react to it. Using the knowledge you already have about a particular subject can make what you read easier to understand.

In most cases, the subject of an article or story will become clear to you once you have read the first paragraph or two of a piece of writing. At that point, you may want to stop and ask yourself what you already know about the subject.

Reading Tip

Activate prior knowledge by asking yourself the following questions:

1. What is the subject of this piece of writing?
2. What do I already know about this subject?
3. Have I ever read about this subject before? If so, what specific details did I learn about it?

Model

Read the passage below from “The Drive-In Movies” by Gary Soto. Identify the subject of the passage. Then quickly list a few things you know about it on a sheet of paper. Compare your answers to the sample list below.

I then mowed the lawn, which was still beaded with dew and noisy with bees hovering over clover. This job was less dull because as I pushed the mower over the shaggy lawn, I could see it looked tidier. My brother and sister watched from the window. Their faces were fat with cereal, a third helping. I made a face at them when they asked me how come I was working. Rick pointed to part of the lawn. “You missed some over there.” I ignored him and kept my attention on the windmill of grassy blades.

While I was emptying the catcher, a bee stung the bottom of my foot. I danced on one leg and was ready to cry when Mother showed her face at the window. I sat down on the grass and examined my foot: the stinger was pulsating. I pulled it out quickly, ran water over the sting and packed it with mud, Grandmother’s remedy.

Subject: Mowing the lawn and getting stung by a bee

1. What I already know:

- Many kids, including me, have to do chores around the home.
- Sometimes brothers and sisters tease each other.
- Bee stings are very painful. Sometimes they are dangerous, if a person is allergic.

2. What I’ve read about this subject before:

- I read an instruction manual for a first aid kit. The manual said to use a pair of tweezers to pull out a bee’s stinger.



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Practice

Below is a passage from “The Loch Ness Monster” by George Laycock. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow it.

These stories were told and retold. Word of Nessie spread around the world. This did a marvelous thing for Scotland. Tourists began to visit Loch Ness, hoping for a glimpse of the elusive lake monster. Tourism can be good for a country’s economy. Nessie, real or not, became the most valuable animal in all Scotland.

But the lecturer who was to tell us about the Loch Ness monster that night in Oxford, Ohio, had brought scientific methods to the search for Nessie, and people were eager to hear his message. All the seats were filled and students stood around the walls and sat in the aisles to listen to the story Robert H. Rines had to tell.

Dr. Rines, president of the Boston Academy of Applied Science, led his first scientific expedition to Loch Ness in 1970. He took along modern sonar equipment and used this to “see” into the murky depths. Sonar works by sending high-intensity sound impulses into the water and measuring the echoes sent back as the sound waves bounce off the bottom or off objects between it and the bottom. It can reveal the depth of objects in the water, their size, and whether or not they are moving. That summer the sonar equipment showed the researchers important facts. There were large moving objects in the loch. Also there were abundant fish to feed monsters.

1. Have you ever seen pictures of Scotland or heard stories about the Loch Ness monster? Explain below.

2. Have you ever been to a lecture or watched a television program about scientific exploration? Explain below.

3. The writer says that many tourists started to visit Scotland and that the lecturer in Oxford, Ohio, had a large audience. Why do you think people are eager to hear stories about looking for monsters like Nessie? Explain below.



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ACTIVE READING: KWL

Introduction

KWL is a strategy that you can use to organize your thoughts before and after you read a selection. KWL stands for what you **know**, what you **want to know**, and what you **learn**.

Although organizing your ideas this way may seem basic, KWL is a helpful way to think about and remember information. It gets you thinking about a topic before you read it, and it encourages you to ask questions and to find answers to these questions through your reading. A chart like the one below will help you to use the KWL strategy.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
K (What You Know)	W (What You Want to Know)	L (What You Learn)

Model

The passage below is from “The All-American Slurp” by Lensey Namioka. By knowing the topic or by reading the first sentence or two, you can complete the first two steps in the KWL strategy. Then, as you read, jot down what you learn. Read the passage and then look at the KWL chart below to see how one reader used this technique.

The first time our family was invited out to dinner in America, we disgraced ourselves while eating celery. We had emigrated to this country from China, and during our early days here we had a hard time with American table manners.

In China we never ate celery raw, or any other kind of vegetable raw. We always had to disinfect the vegetables in boiling water first. When we were presented with our first relish tray, the raw celery caught us unprepared.

We had been invited to dinner by our neighbors, the Gleasons. After arriving at the house, we shook hands with our hosts and packed ourselves into a sofa. As our family of four sat stiffly in a row, my younger brother and I stole glances at our parents for a clue as to what to do next.

K What you Know	W What you Want to Know	L What you Learn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes time for new arrivals to the United States to feel at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to know what kinds of problems the writer’s family had. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family never ate raw vegetables in China.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family was invited to dinner by their neighbors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the family handle American table manners? 	



NAME _____ DATE _____

Practice

The passage below is from "Restoring the Circle: Native American Literature as a Means of Preserving Cultural Traditions," by Joseph Bruchac. It is about the reasons that some Native Americans have had for becoming writers. From that information, write down **what you know** and **what you want to know**. Then read the passage and complete the section in the chart for **what you learn**.

Many Native Americans chose to become writers because they wanted to restore the circle through more accurate portrayals of themselves and their people. In many cases, too, they hoped to restore a sense of pride in their own heritage. Because of inaccurate and unpleasant ways Native Americans have been portrayed in books by non-Indian authors, Native children have sometimes felt ashamed of themselves and decided that it would be better for them to forget their own cultures and try to be "just like everyone else." Today, because of the writing of such Native American authors as Michael Dorris or Linda Hogan, young Native people can read stories and poems in which Native Americans are presented as fully-rounded characters from accurately described tribal traditions. As portrayed by Native American authors, Indians are sometimes good, sometimes not so good, but no longer one-dimensional stereotypes.

K What you Know	W What you Want to Know	L What you Learn