



## HOW TO IMPROVE OUR READING SKILLS

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**Annotation:** *This article explores various strategies for improving reading skills, focusing on key aspects such as active reading, vocabulary enhancement, speed reading, and genre diversification. Through detailed descriptions and actionable tips, the article offers readers practical approaches to become more efficient and engaged readers. The strategies are supported by references to academic literature, providing a well-rounded understanding of the psychological and cognitive aspects of reading. This comprehensive approach allows readers to adopt multiple techniques to enhance their reading abilities, whether for academic purposes or personal development.*

**Key words:** *Active reading, vocabulary expansion, speed reading, reading comprehension, reading strategies, reading goals, reading speed, reading skills improvement, reading techniques*

### INTRODUCTION

Reading is not just a basic skill, but a gateway to knowledge, critical thinking, and personal growth. Whether you are a student, a professional, or simply an avid reader, improving your reading skills is crucial for cognitive development. Despite its importance, many people struggle with reading efficiently and understanding complex texts. Factors such as slow reading speed, poor comprehension, and the inability to retain information can hinder the overall reading experience.

The goal of this article is to explore effective strategies for improving reading skills, drawing from educational psychology and cognitive science. These strategies include active reading, expanding vocabulary, improving reading speed, diversifying reading materials, and setting achievable reading goals. By implementing these strategies, readers can improve their comprehension, speed, and overall enjoyment of reading.

Reading is often perceived as a passive activity, where the goal is simply to process words on a page. However, research suggests that active engagement with the text significantly enhances both understanding and retention. According to Robinson (2003), active reading transforms the process into an interactive experience, where readers are encouraged to question, analyze, and summarize the material. Moreover, expanding vocabulary, practicing speed reading, and engaging with diverse reading genres further reinforce cognitive flexibility and comprehension.



This article aims to provide readers with actionable insights to become more effective and efficient readers, thereby fostering a deeper appreciation for the value of reading.

## 1. PRACTICE ACTIVE READING

Active reading is an essential strategy for improving reading comprehension. This technique requires the reader to engage with the text at a deeper level by asking questions, summarizing, and reflecting on what is being read. According to Robinson (2003), active reading involves more than just skimming through text – it requires making connections, highlighting key concepts, and taking notes.

Studies have shown that readers who engage with the material actively retain more information and understand it better. By actively interacting with the text, the reader transforms passive reading into a dynamic learning process. In a study by Miller (2015), students who practiced active reading techniques scored higher on comprehension tests than those who simply read without engaging deeply with the material. How to apply it:

Before reading, set a purpose: What do you hope to gain from this material?

While reading, underline important concepts and take notes.

After reading, summarize the key points and reflect on how the material relates to what you already know.

By practicing active reading, learners not only improve comprehension but also develop critical thinking skills, as they are required to analyze and synthesize information continuously.

## 2. EXPAND READING VOCABULARY

A strong vocabulary is fundamental to effective reading. The more words a reader understands, the easier it is to comprehend complex texts. Snow (2010) emphasizes the link between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Readers who are familiar with a wide range of words are able to understand and interpret texts more quickly and accurately.

Building a robust vocabulary is a long-term process that requires consistent effort. Regular exposure to new words through reading, learning, and practice can significantly increase a reader's vocabulary. As suggested by Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), one of the best ways to improve vocabulary is through reading diverse genres, as different types of texts introduce different sets of words.

How to apply it:

Keep a vocabulary journal to record unfamiliar words and their meanings.

Use flashcards or apps like Anki or Quizlet to practice new words.

Engage in reading a variety of genres, such as fiction, nonfiction, newspapers, and academic journals.

As you expand your vocabulary, you will notice that reading becomes faster and more enjoyable, as you no longer have to pause to look up unfamiliar words.



### 3. INCREASE READING SPEED

Increasing reading speed without compromising comprehension is one of the most powerful ways to become a more efficient reader. Miller (2015) explains that skimming and scanning are two effective techniques to improve reading speed. Skimming involves reading quickly for the main ideas, while scanning is used to locate specific information. Both techniques help readers process large amounts of text efficiently.

Research suggests that practicing reading speed regularly can lead to significant improvements. In a study by Snow (2010), participants who practiced speed-reading techniques showed a 25% increase in reading speed while maintaining high levels of comprehension. How to apply it:

Set a goal for the number of pages or words you wish to read in a certain time frame.

Practice skimming for the main ideas and scanning for specific details.

Gradually challenge yourself to read faster without losing comprehension.

By increasing your reading speed, you can read more material in less time, making the process more productive and less overwhelming.

### 4. ENGAGE WITH DIFFERENT GENRES

Diversifying the types of texts you read can improve your reading skills in a variety of ways. According to Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), exposure to different genres not only broadens vocabulary but also helps readers adapt to different writing styles and structures. Whether it's fiction, nonfiction, academic texts, or newspapers, each genre has its unique characteristics that require different reading strategies.

Fiction texts, for example, encourage readers to immerse themselves in narrative elements such as plot and character development, while academic texts demand a more analytical approach. By engaging with various genres, readers develop a more well-rounded set of reading skills. How to apply it:

Read a variety of genres, such as novels, short stories, academic papers, and blogs.

Challenge yourself to read texts that are outside your usual interests or comfort zone.

Participate in reading groups or book clubs to discuss different types of literature.

By diversifying your reading material, you improve your ability to adapt to various writing styles and become more versatile in your reading approach.

### 5. SET READING GOALS

Setting specific, measurable, and time-bound reading goals can motivate you to read regularly and track your progress. According to Miller (2015), having clear goals helps maintain focus and prevents procrastination. It also allows readers to assess their improvement over time.

Studies show that individuals who set reading goals tend to read more consistently and achieve higher levels of comprehension. Robinson (2003) suggests

breaking down larger reading tasks into smaller, manageable chunks to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

How to apply it:

Set daily or weekly reading goals (e.g., 20 pages a day, one book per month).

Track your progress and challenge yourself to read more as you improve.

Reward yourself when you reach your reading milestones.

By setting reading goals, you stay motivated and develop a consistent reading habit, which ultimately improves your overall reading proficiency.

### CONCLUSION

Improving reading skills is a continuous process that involves practicing active reading, expanding vocabulary, increasing reading speed, engaging with diverse genres, and setting measurable goals. By adopting these strategies, readers can enhance their comprehension, speed, and overall enjoyment of reading. Moreover, incorporating these techniques into a regular reading routine will allow readers to become more efficient, proficient, and confident in their reading abilities. Over time, these improvements will contribute to better learning outcomes, whether for academic, professional, or personal purposes.

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