

ENGLISH

Ways to improve reading skills

It is not necessary to carry out all the activities contained in this unit. Please see *Teachers' Notes* for explanations, additional activities, and tips and suggestions.

Theme	Ways to improve reading skills	
All students: Activities that are suitable for Learning Support, Language Support and the Mainstream Subject Class include:	Keywords	3
	Vocabulary File	4-6
	Activating Students' Existing Knowledge	7
	Completing Sentences	13
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	Preparing a talk	15-16
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Learning support and Language support: Activities suitable for students receiving Learning or Language Support include:	Working with words	8
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Language support: Additional activities for Language Support:	Grammar points	17-18
Levels for Language Support	A1 – B1 The language level of each activity is indicated in an information box.	
Learning focus	Using textbooks and accessing content and learning activities of the English curriculum.	
Acknowledgement	The <i>English Language Support Programme</i> acknowledges the permission of Gill and Macmillan to reproduce excerpts from <i>Less Stress More Success – English Revision for the Junior Certificate</i> by Larry Cotter.	

Note: The categorisation of activities is indicative only and should not prevent teachers from using any activities that are considered suitable for a particular group of students.

Making the best use of these units

Learning Record

A copy of the Learning Record should be distributed to each learning support and language support student.

Students should:

1. Write the subject and topic on the record.
2. Tick off/date the different statements as they complete activities.
3. Keep the record in their files along with the work produced for this unit.
4. Use this material to support mainstream subject learning.

Introduction of a topic or activity should ensure that students understand **what** they are doing and **why**. Many students will have some difficulty in understanding both the language in the activity and the instructions/purpose for carrying out the activity.

You can create your **personal teaching resource** by printing these units in full and filing them by subject in a large ring binder.

Encourage students to:

- Bring the relevant **subject textbooks** to learning/language support class. It does not matter if they have different textbooks as the activities in these units refer to vocabulary and other items that will be found in all subject textbooks. These units are based on curriculum materials.
- Take some **responsibility for their own learning** programmes by:



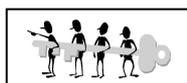
Developing a **personal dictionary** for different subjects, topics, and other categories of language, on an on-going basis. This prompt is a reminder.



Recording what they have learnt on the **Learning Record**, which should be distributed at the start of each unit.



Keeping their own **files** with good examples of the work produced for different subjects and topics. This file will be an invaluable **learning resource** in supporting mainstream learning.



Indicates that answers may be found at the end of the unit.

Don't forget that many of the activities in these units are also suitable as **homework** tasks or for **self-study**.

Keywords

The list of keywords for this unit is as follows:

Nouns

autobiography
biography
books
description
email
enjoyment
entertainment
event/events
example
information
line of thought
magazine
memoir
newspaper
passage
pleasure
reader/readers
sense
sentences
spelling
style
summary
textbook
theme
train of thought
understanding
vocabulary
words

Verbs

to absorb
to be
to begin
to complete
to create
to develop
to explore
to have an idea

to help
to improve
to introduce
to skim
to need something
to pass
to read
to reread
to remember
to take in
to think
to write
to rewrite
to summarise
to try
to underline
to understand

must
will

Adjectives

accurate
brief
casual
clear
common
complex
essential
excited
formal
informal
loud
personal
quick

Adverbs

accurately
clearly
quickly

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Vocabulary file 1

Word	Meaning	Note or example*
autobiography		
biography		
description		
entertainment		
pleasure		
memoir		
example		

* You may wish to write a sentence or phrase, make a note of the page in your textbook where this word appears or, if English is not your first language, provide a translation into your language.



Get your teacher to check this, then file it in your folder so you can use it in the future.

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Vocabulary file 2

Word	Meaning	Note or example
magazine		
sense		
style		
summary		
theme		
understanding		
to absorb		



Get your teacher to check this, then file it in your folder so you can use it in the future.

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Vocabulary file 3

Word	Meaning	Note or example
to create		
to improve		
to underline		
accurately		
clearly		
quickly		
complex		



Get your teacher to check this, then file it in your folder so you can use it in the future.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
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Language Level: All
Type of activity: Whole class
Suggested time: 10 minutes

Activating students' existing knowledge

Use a spidergram to activate students' ideas and knowledge on the key points in this chapter. See **Teachers' Notes** for suggestions.

Possible key terms for the spidergram:

Entertainment

Reading

Books

- Invite newcomer students to provide key words in their own languages.
- Encourage dictionary use.
- Encourage all students to organise their vocabulary into relevant categories (e.g. meaning, nouns, keywords, verbs etc.).



All students should record vocabulary and terms from the spidergram in their personal dictionaries.

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Language Level: A1
Type of activity: Pairs or individual
Suggested time: 30 minutes

Working with words



1.
 - a) phrase
 - b) email
 - c) example
 - d) think



2.
 - a) grammar
 - b) newspaper
 - c) description of a man
 - d) textbook

Singular and plural

Write the singular or plural of these nouns. Be careful about spelling!

Singular	Plural
book	
	passages
	stories
memoir	
summary	
	schools
man	
enjoyment	

Check your textbook or dictionary carefully for spellings

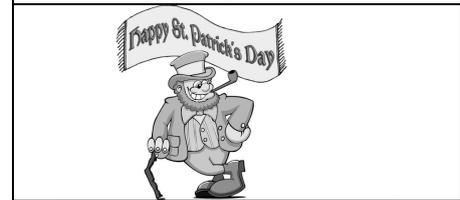
Language Level: A1
Type of activity: Pairs or individual
Suggested time: 30 minutes

Picture Sentences - Tick the correct answer

1. a) This is an audience.
 b) This is a novel.
 c) This is a newspaper.



2. a) This is an event.
 b) This is a debate.
 c) This is a poem.



3. a) These are spellings.
 b) These are CDs.
 c) These are chairs.

duck	cock
jack	rock
back	stock
clock	block
shack	speck
lick	deck
kick	crack
trick	quack

Asking questions ? ? ?

Change some of the sentences above into questions.

Is this _____ ?

Is this _____ ?

Is this _____ ?

Are these _____ ?

Are these _____ ?

Are these _____ ?

Now write your own questions about an event:



What words do
 you know for
 asking
 questions?

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Language Level: A1 / A2
Type of activity: Pairs or individual
Suggested time: 20 minutes



Odd One Out

Circle the word which does not fit with the other words in each line.

Example: *apple orange banana taxi*

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------|--------|-----------|----------|
| 1. | quickly | water | briefly | clearly |
| 2. | biography | book | newspaper | photo |
| 3. | sun | father | parents | children |
| 4. | books | radio | readers | passage |

Four of these words refer to people. Can you find the four words?

Write as many words as you can for the different members of a family:

Language Level: A2 / B1
Type of activity: Individual
Suggested time: 40 minutes

English keywords

Fill in the missing letters of the keywords listed below.
On the line beside each word, write whether the word is a noun, an adjective or a verb.

1. des_ri__ng _____

2. und_rs__nd _____

3. u_de__ine _____

4. _lea__re _____

Write one paragraph about a person that you know. Use as many adjectives as you can.



Check that all the adjectives you used are in your personal dictionary.

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Language Level: A1 / A2
Type of activity: Pairs or individual
Suggested time: 20 minutes



Unscramble the letters

1. This is a short piece of a story AGSEPSA

Answer _____

2. When you give the main points of a story EURMSSMAI

Answer _____

3. This is the story of another person's life IYOGBRHAP

Answer _____

4. Another way of saying 'to finish something' OCLMTPEE

Answer _____

Look at each word as you write the answer.

Is your spelling correct?

Can you pronounce the word?

Do you know what the word means?

Have you got this word in your personal dictionary?



Solve the secret code

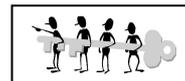
English=	A	E	G	I	D	M	N	R	S	T
Code=	B	X	Y	F	C	G	S	Q	R	O

Example: (code) YBGX = GAME (English)

QXBCFSY FR MQXBO =

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Language Level: A2 / B1
Type of activity: Pairs or individual
Suggested time: 30 minutes



Completing text

Fill in the blanks in these sentences. Use words from the Word Box.

Sometimes we read quickly, because we just want to get information. We want this type of reading _____ to be laid out accurately and clearly, so that, as _____ as possible, we can get the information we need.

Other reading passages are much more complex. In this case, we might have to _____ to follow the line of thought. We reread to take in and _____ what we skimmed over the first time. A good example to _____ of is reading a poem.

Word Box:

think reread quickly understand passage

Write a **NEW** sentence containing each of the 5 keywords from above:

think _____

reread _____

quickly _____

understand _____

passage _____

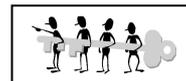


Are all these words in your personal dictionary?



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Language Level: A2 / B1
Type of activity: Individual
Suggested time: 30 minutes



Multiple choice

(Read the text below and choose the best answers)

There are many reasons why we read: for enjoyment, for information, for entertainment, to help us pass examinations, to enhance our store of knowledge, to learn about events, to be informed about what is happening in the world, or just for the pleasure of a story.

Think about all the things you may have read in the last week: a set of instructions, a letter, emails, an official form, school textbooks, a novel, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, recipes, cinema listings.

Make a list of your own showing what you have read in the last week.

1. Why do we read?

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a) for no reason | b) to pass the time |
| c) for many reasons | d) to forget |

2. What can reading do for our store of knowledge?

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| a). decrease it | b) nothing |
| c). write to it | d) enhance it |

3. What items might you have read in the last week?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| a) a music manuscript | b) recipes |
| c) the side of a cereal box | d) all of a, b, c |

4. Should you read for the pleasure of a story?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a) Yes | b) No |
|--------|-------|

5. Should you make a list of what you have read in the past seven days?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a) Yes | b) No |
|--------|-------|

Now go on, make that list!

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Language Level: A2 / B1
Type of activity: Pairs / small groups
Suggested time: 40 minutes

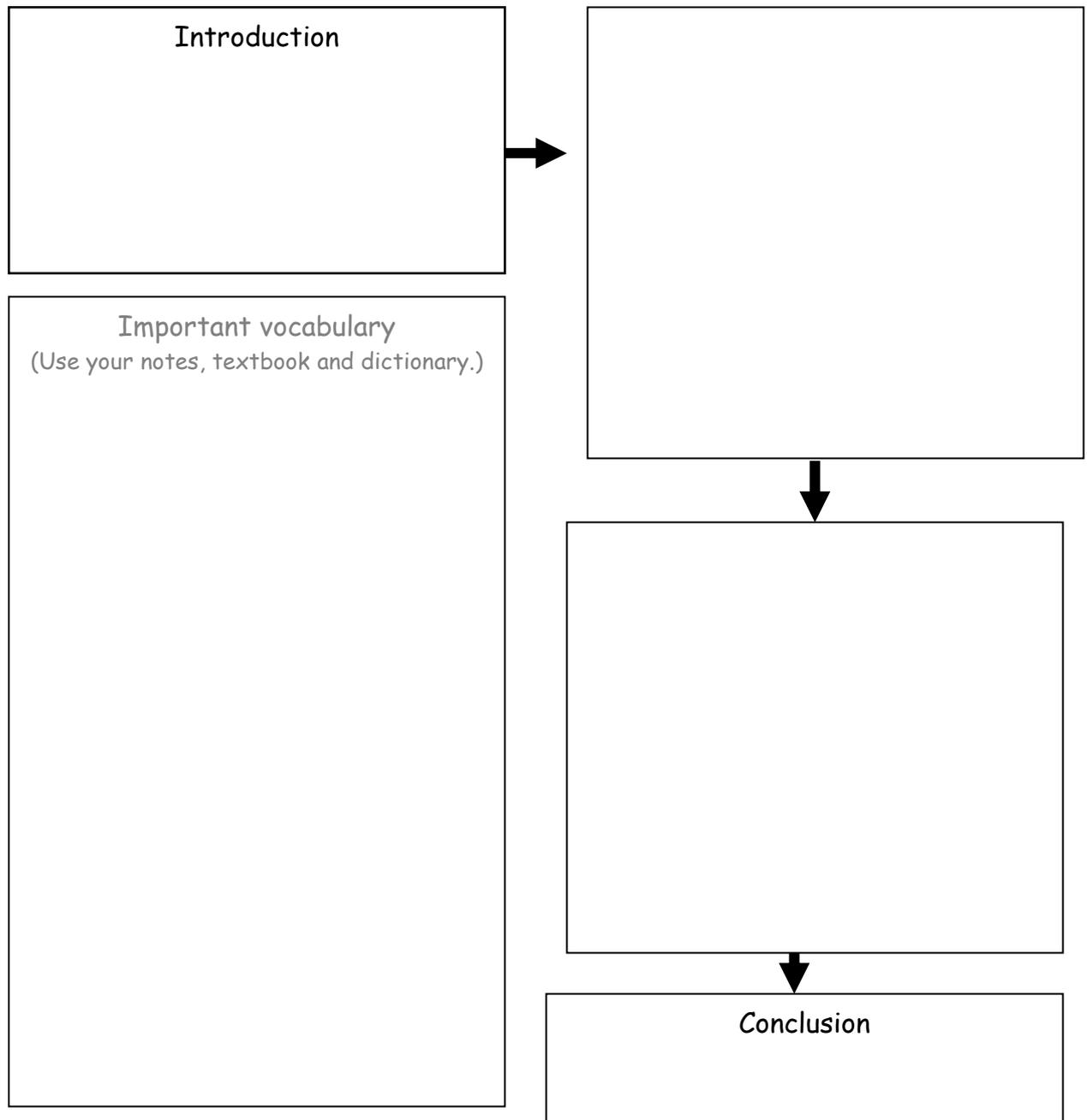
Preparing a talk

You must give a talk to the other people in your class. You may choose the topic for your talk:

Either **What I like to Read** or **The things that people read every day**.

Use all the information that you have collected in these exercises. You should also use your textbook.

With your partner you should use this chart to make notes on what you are going to say:



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Language Level: All
Type of activity: Individual
Suggested time: 30

Grammar points

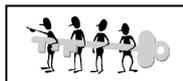
In this Unit, we came across the following verbs:

- to improve
- to try
- to describe

Look up these words up in your dictionary.

The very *to try* is an irregular verb. Write the different forms here:

Verb	Present tense	Past tense
to try	I	I



Verb Hunt

Circle the 10 verbs in these columns. Score 4 points for each correct answer. Who will score the highest? Perhaps you will. Good luck!

exciting

books

underline

briefly

magazine

understand

give

rewrite

iceberg

reading

gale

pier

father

introduce

about

create

clearly

add

describing

parents

think

Score: _____points

Language Level: All
Type of activity: Individual
Suggested time: 30 minutes

Grammar points

In this Unit, we came across the following prepositions. Find these words in your textbook and check their meanings in your dictionary.

A1 level: write the words in a phrase using the textbook

A2/B1 levels: put the words into a short sentence

about _____

out _____

in _____

under _____

on _____

between _____

to _____

from _____

 Get your teacher to check your work then file it in your folder in the *English* section.


Have you ticked
this activity on your
Learning Record?

Alphaboxes

Using your textbook, find **one** word beginning with each of the letters of the alphabet. Write the word in the relevant box. You could also write the word in your own language.

a	b	c
d	e	f
g	h	i
j	k	l
m	n	o
p	q	r
s	t	u
v	w	xyz

Do you understand all these words?



Get your teacher to check this, then file it in your folder so you can use it in the future.

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Play Snap

Make Snap cards with 2 sets of the same keywords. See *Notes for teachers* for ideas about how to use the cards.



underline	underline
summarise	summarise
exciting	exciting

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rewrite	rewrite
read	read
holiday	holiday

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absorb	absorb
pleasure	pleasure
describe	describe

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understand	understand
try	try
improve	improve

Answer key

Odd One Out = water, photo, sun, radio (*you can't read the radio!*)

Letter Scramble = passage, summarise, biography, complete

Secret Code = reading is great

Completing Text =

Sometimes we read quickly, because we just want to get information. We want this type of reading passage to be laid out accurately and clearly, so that, as quickly as possible, we can get the information we need.

Other reading passages are much more complex. In this case, we might have to reread to follow the line of thought. We reread to take in and understand what we skimmed over the first time. A good example to think of is reading a poem.

(Less Stress More Success – English Revision for the Junior Certificate, page 25)

Multiple Choice = c, d, can be any of a-d, a

Grammar Points = underline, understand, give, rewrite, reading (*to read*), introduce, create, add, describing (*to describe*), think

