Reading to Learning – Strategies to Build Reading Skills for the GED® Test

A Workshop from GED Testing Service
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Session Objectives

• Discuss issues that students have with reading
  • Reading Rate
  • Vocabulary
  • Basic Comprehension
  • Analysis

• Review strategies and activities to help students improve their reading skills

• Share ideas and resources

So...How Can You “Build” a Better Reader and GED® Test Passer?
Some Advice

- Spend time observing students as they read
- Build reading rate
- Build vocabulary
- Teach before, during, and after reading skills
- Teach students how to use inference skills
- Provide opportunities for more reading practice in different content areas
- Show them the joy of reading

Building a Better Reader

INSTRUCTION + Model + Skills and Strategies + PRACTICE = CONFIDENCE + SKILL
Before Diving In…

A short reminder about the importance of *reading skills*…

Reading…
- Is fundamental
- Is essential for developing or enhancing higher order thinking skills (e.g. critical thinking, problem solving, and reasoning)
- Is at the heart of all content—without reading skills, content cannot be accessed or learned
- Provides the necessary framework that enables learning

Proficient Readers (and Writers) Can…

- Read complex text
- Identify text structure
- Look for key words and phrases
- Unpack the prompt
- Develop a claim or argument
- Find the evidence that supports that claim or argument
- Analyze and evaluate the evidence
- Explain how the evidence is connected to the claim or argument

This holds true across all content areas
Overview of RLA Test

- Content - Integrated reading and writing
  - Close reading
  - Clear writing
  - Editing and understanding the use of standard written English in context
- Source texts – 75% nonfiction; 25% fiction
- Passage length – 400-900 words
- Range of text complexity, including texts at the college- and career-ready level
- Technology-enhanced items and extended response

Advice

Spend Time Observing
The Complexity of Reading

Reading is like driving a car, except...

Readers must
• Build the car (develop the mechanical systems for identifying words)
• Maintain the car (fuel it with print, fix up problems along the way and make sure it runs smoothly)
• And, most importantly, drive the car (which requires us to be motivated, strategic and mindful of the route we’re taking)

Marilyn Adams, Ph.D., Brown University

Check to See if Students are...

• Rereading the text repeatedly
• Reading less text than their peers
• Using their fingers to point at words as they read
• Sub-vocalize words as they read
• Unable to answer basic questions about what they read
Advice

Increase Reading Rate

Do You Know Your Reading Rate?

There are many theories of reading. Some regard reading as a skill which relies heavily on our visual perception and ability to recognize words, letter shapes, and sound patterns as we do. Other theories regard reading much like looking at a picture, where we need to get the whole message and the big picture, like the overall theme of a book. Still others believe that reading is a series of simple memory tasks, each singularly important.

Reading instruction often focuses on either of these - words, letters, sounds. Most people respond to this type of teaching. They search for items between the lines and they make new discoveries to old knowledge. They search for relationships and link old knowledge with new. So, there are many things which go into a reader's habits when reading occurs.

People who fail to progress in reading do not approach it this way. This skill which they have to hurry up may have not brought order to the complexity of the tool and they have often become passive in their confusion.

This confusion derives from looking back at what they read, which usually results in three things - regressive, vocalization, and facilty barriers.

Regression returns to material. Have you ever had the experience of thinking you were reading and suddenly realized you haven't taken a word in for ages? Usually we go back and re-read what we missed. We spend as much as a third of our time going back. The second problem most readers have involved vocalization, that is, they read the material and then repeat it as they are reading. Voice keeps the words, or voice that breath. Some very slow readers read it aloud. A common reaction for this is to place a pen or pencil between the teeth so, talking becomes rather difficult, or chasing an eye over words. The third problem some readers experience involves reading in every word. The brain only processes the images from the eye when the eye is actually stopped for that spell second when it freezes on a word. This means that your brain processes these images by reading them other information to make meaning. The more words you take in when you read, the more information your brain can assimilate. Slow readers often find themselves reading slowly, reading word by word in an unnecessary way. Reading dynamically, in word groups, or dimensionally, means the page using a point - you have finer and faster flashes. This has the potential to increase your comprehension and reading rate at the same time.

Reading is like any other skill we learn. For example, when we first learn to walk, we tend to move slowly. But with much practice the more confident and stronger we become, the easier and faster we are able to walk. I'm not suggesting you can walk as fast as a horse, but it is possible to walk a few miles faster. Similarly, control the pace so as to avoid falling over. Sometimes we can increase the speed at which we walk, other times we can progressively reduce the speed; when we realize that we can't, we can slow to a crawl. When we learn to speak fast, we use the same technique. When we read the newspaper, we might fly through at 1000 words per minute. A magazine or journal articles might require us to read at about 500 words per minute, while a highly technical report and drawings may require that we read at about 300 words per minute. Speed reading is a tool. It is your choice how you use it.

This passage on reading is from "Speed Reading: How to read faster and more effectively" a book produced by Student Services at the Sunshine Coast University College, Queensland, Australia.
Reading Rate and Fluency

What is the difference?

*Reading fluency* – the speed and ease with which one reads connected text aloud with accuracy, speed, and appropriate phrasing

*Reading rate* – how quickly you read with understanding

Reading Rate Problems

Accurate word pronunciation but slow reading results in:

- Reading less text than peers and having less time to remember, review, or comprehend the text
- Expending more cognitive energy trying to identify individual words
- Increasing inability to retain text in memory
- Failing to integrate various parts of the text
How Fast Should My Students Read?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade equivalent</th>
<th>Standard words per minute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Carver (1990). A standard word is six letter spaces including punctuation and spacing.

Doesn’t Reading Rate Depend on the Text?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Materials</th>
<th>Purpose for Reading</th>
<th>Desired Level of Comprehension</th>
<th>Appropriate Rate of Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poetry, legal document, argumentative writing</td>
<td>Analyze, criticize, evaluate</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Under 200 wpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks, research documents</td>
<td>High comprehension recall for exams, writing research reports, following directions</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>200-300 wpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novels, paperbacks, newspapers, magazines</td>
<td>Entertainment, enjoyment, general information</td>
<td>60-80%</td>
<td>300-500 wpm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference materials, catalogs, magazines, non-fiction</td>
<td>Overview of material, locating specific facts, reviewing of previously read material</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
<td>&gt;500 wpm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://orelt.col.org/module/unit/2-reading-silently-understanding-and-speed

Open Sources for English Language Teaching Portal
Determining Reading Rate

A student’s reading rate may be calculated by dividing the number of words read correctly by the total amount of reading time.

Example: Count out 100 words in a passage and then time the student as he or she reads the passage.

If a student reads 92 words correctly in 1.5 minutes, the student has a reading rate of 61 words per minute (wpm). A standard word is six letter spaces including punctuation and spacing.

Building Reading Rate - WARF

- **Widen your eye span**
  
  If you read word by word, chances are you will read slower than if you were to read larger sections of text at a time.

- **Avoid Skip Backs**
  
  When people read, they frequently look back to make sure they understood what they read. Don't do this. Just read along, and the comprehension will come to you.

- **Read silently**
  
  Studies show that the majority of people can read two to three times faster silently as opposed to reading orally. Quiet

- **Flex your rate**
  
  When you are driving, you have to slow down at the curves. The same is true of reading. When there are topics that are difficult to understand, you should slow your rate of reading.
Timed Reading Resources

Jamestown Education
- Print only
- GLE 4-13
- 7 books in series

Strategies for Reading Rate

- Speed drills/rapid word recognition chart
- Repeated readings
- Taped books/tape-assisted reading
- Timed readings
- Oral reading
- Chunking
Advice

Build Vocabulary

Building Vocabulary

Vocabulary falls into four categories:

1. Listening: the words we understand when we hear them.
2. Speaking: the words we use when talking.
3. Reading: the words we understand when we read.
4. Writing: the words we use when writing.
Word Meaning - Vocabulary

1. I never saw or heard the word before.
2. I've heard it, but I don’t know what it means.
3. I recognize it in context – it has something to do with…
4. I know it and I can tell you what it means. (In other words, I can use the word.)

How many words does a typical native speaker know?

a. 5,000
b. 10,000
c. 20,000
d. 40,000
Word Meaning - Vocabulary

What level of reading vocabulary is fun, challenging, or frustrating for students?

- 98% of words are fun
- 95% of words are challenging
- <90% of words are frustrating

Tiered Vocabulary

Tier 3
Domain-specific academic vocabulary

Tier 2
High-utility academic vocabulary found in many content texts, cross-curricular terms

Tier 1
Everyday words, familiar to most students primarily learned through conversation
**Resource for the Classroom**

Sample Word Family - interpret

- interpretation
- interpretations
- interpretative
- interpreting
- interpretive
- interprets
- misinterpret
- misinterpretation
- misinterpretations
- misinterpreting
- misinterprets
- reinterpret
- reinterpreted
- reinterprets
- reinterpreting
- reinterprets
- reinterpretation
- reinterpretations

**Activities to Improve Vocabulary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word List</th>
<th>What I think it means</th>
<th>Revised Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drought</td>
<td>Little or no rain over a period of time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coup</td>
<td>Take over of government by the military</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**K (Key Idea)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I (Information)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little or no rain over a period of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take over of government by the military</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**M (Memory Clue)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memory Clue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Activities to Improve Vocabulary

**Heteronyms (A Different "nym")**

A heteronym is a word that has a different sound and different meanings, but the same spelling. All of the heteronyms on the list contain more than one syllable. In Column I, write each heteronym with the accent indicating the meaning that you have chosen. In Column II write a phrase containing the word you have chosen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heteronym</th>
<th>Column I</th>
<th>Column II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invalid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>converse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>address</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Advice

**Teach Before, During, and After Reading Strategies**
Research to Practice

Before Reading
- Look at title
- Review headings and subheadings
- Identify structure
- Activate prior knowledge
- Determine Purpose

During Reading
- Ask Question
- Make connections based on what they already know
- Use signal words
- Use context to identify unfamiliar words
- Reread and make notes

After Reading
- Summarize
- Ask clarifying questions
- Evaluate what has been read
- Discuss with the group

Before Reading - TIPP It!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIPP?</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>What do the titles/subheadings and layout tell me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Skim this to get the main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph</td>
<td>Read the first line of paragraphs/text boxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>What do the diagrams, photos, and graphs show me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Can you come up with any questions?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During Reading – Get the Signal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuation</th>
<th>Change of Direction</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Illustration</td>
<td>Emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause, Condition,</td>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>Compare/Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Fuzz</td>
<td>Nonword Emphasis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the Book</th>
<th>In My Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right There</td>
<td>Author and You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answer is easily found in the text. The exact words for the questions and answers are located in the same sentence.</td>
<td>The answer is not in the text. The reader combines previous knowledge with text information to create a response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think and Search</td>
<td>On My Own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The answer is in the text, but requires gathering information from different places in the selection.</td>
<td>The answer is not in the text. The reader uses previous experience to respond.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advice

Build Inference Skills

Inference

- Making Connections
- Background Knowledge (schema)
- Predictions
- Drawing Conclusions
- Analysis of Text: Interpretation/Judgment
- Imagination/Visualization

Background Knowledge (schema)

Making Connections

Drawing Conclusions

Analysis of Text: Interpretation/Judgment

Imagination/Visualization
“To infer is to create new knowledge from existing knowledge.”

Start with What Students Know

BODY LANGUAGE
Inferences

Proficient readers can “read between the lines” and draw deeper understanding and appreciation for what is being read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Inferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation or Pastime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause-Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling-Attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies for Making Inferences

• **Step 1:** Gather clues and read “between the lines.”

• **Step 2:** Reach conclusions based on **evidence** and **reasoning** (Ask: Does it make sense?)
### Move from Simple to Complex

**Inference = Finding the Clues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From <strong>Simple</strong> to <strong>Complex</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures/Advertisements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What Can You Infer?

- Images of fireworks and a chart showing crude oil prices since the end of World War II.

*Source: [BP Oil Price Data](https://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/energy-economics/oil-price-data.html)*
What Can You Infer?

Inference = Finding the Clues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Simple to</th>
<th>Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures/Advertisements</td>
<td>Longer, more intricate passages – fiction/mysteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics</td>
<td>Longer, more intricate passages – nonfiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Short paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short paragraphs</td>
<td>Longer, more intricate passages – fiction/mysteries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teach Inference from Simple to Complex
What can you infer?

1. A character in a story has a diaper in her hand, spit-up on her shirt, and a bottle warming on the counter.
2. A person has a briefcase, is on a plane, and is late for a meeting.
3. A detective enter the house, which has been ransacked. He sees blood on the floor, and it leads out the back door.
4. Your friend walks past you without smiling. Her head is hanging down. She wipes a tear from her eye and looks at her phone.

What can you infer?

*Screech!* Karen stomped on the gas pedal the moment the light turned green. She looked over her left shoulder and zigged past a semi-truck. She zoomed ahead and looked over her right shoulder and then zagged past a motorbike. She glanced at the clock on the console and darted into the parking lot. Whipping into a parking spot, she grabbed her suitcase and ran through the lot, up the escalator, and into the terminal. Her heavy suitcase was bumping and bouncing the whole way. Just as she entered the terminal, she heard an announcement over the loudspeaker, "Final boarding call for flight 205 to JFK..." Karen looked at her ticket and then at the line to get through the security checkpoint, which wrapped around several turnstiles and slithered like a lethargic snake. Karen sighed and then slowly walked to the customer service desk.
Example: It Says – I Say – And So

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>It Says</th>
<th>I Say</th>
<th>And So</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the question.</td>
<td>Find information from the text to help answer each question – paraphrase or quote answers from text.</td>
<td>Consider what you know about the information.</td>
<td>Put together the information from the text with what you know, then answer the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why are forest fires on the increase in the Black Hills of South Dakota?</td>
<td>For the last several years, precipitation amounts--snowfall has decreased.</td>
<td>Less snowfall could mean dry conditions throughout the Black Hills</td>
<td>Dry conditions resulting from a decrease in precipitation may lead to conditions that might make fires more likely to occur.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember - Inference is Process-Driven

The alchemy of inference:
• Using active reading skills (beyond the basics)
• Engaging with the text and/or information presented
  • Questioning
  • Thinking critically
  • Making connections

Students need to be reminded that an inference is not a wild guess!
Advice

Provide opportunities for practice.

Check Your Reading Speed

Free Reading Speed Test
Test your reading speed and comprehension.

http://www.freereadingtest.com/
Build Vocabulary

Welcome to Vocabulary.com. The most intelligent way to improve vocabulary.

Have some words you need to learn?
Whatever you’re learning or teaching, Vocabulary.com can help.

Quiz coming up?
Answer the word you want to learn and click the “Start learning” button. We’ll work with you until you know them cold.

Teaching a book or article in class?
Use any of 120 pages of text into the box and we’ll create a learning activity you can assign to your students; it’s like magic.

https://www.vocabulary.com/

Need Resources for Source Texts?

Science & Math
Endangered Species: The snow leopard
Fly, Gail, Common Core Learning, adapted by Newsela staff

The snow leopard, or ounce, has a beautiful coat of long, pale gray fur with white underbelly. Its coat is patterned with solid black spots on its head and legs and dark gray rosettes on the rest of its body. Although it is called a leopard, it is most closely related to the tiger.

Sports industry gears up for virtual reality revolution
By James Phillips, Associated Press

From training with Major League Baseball pitchers to home-junting never before seen on Fi, technology’s potential to revolutionize sport was the hot topic as industry leaders met in London, England, in early October.

Newsela https://newsela.com/
In the summer of 1995, a bakery opened in Montreal, Canada and began to serve warm, New York-style bagels. Other cities across the world had been thrilled when New York bagel fans finally came to town, but the Montrealers were outraged. Bagelled, the new shop, wore out of business and closed its doors in less than a year.
Show Students the Joy and Value of Reading

“The more you read, the more things you know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

-Dr. Seuss

https://ged.com

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Concerns?

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