

READING TIPS TO STRENGTHEN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF FRESHMEN

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Abstract: *This article is aimed at providing some methods and strategies to do reading comprehension exercises effectively as well as some suggestions to improve reading skills of freshmen*

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Reading has a key role among four main skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading) in language learning. Without this skill which can even help to improve the others, students cannot move to higher levels. So especially for freshmen, developing strong reading skills is crucial for both academic success and overall language acquisition. As Rumulhart states, “Reading, whether in first or second language context, involves the reader, the text and the interaction between the reader and the text”. Actually, majority of students feel nervous about reading comprehension and when they read long articles or books they do not understand the meaning and the main aim of the authors. So it is essential to use specific strategies in order to enhance its effectiveness.

In today’s world, (thanks to modern technologies) teachers can use several effective strategies and tips that can implement to support freshmen in strengthening their language skills during the lessons.

First and foremost tip that teachers should do in reading lessons is to choose diverse reading materials that match their interests and reading abilities. This makes reading more fun and helps them understand what they read, because they get eager to get information about the topic.

Second one is active reading strategy such as annotation and summarization. Active reading is a crucial skill for students of all levels, especially freshmen transitioning to the demands of college coursework. It involves moving beyond passive absorption of information and actively engaging with the text to enhance comprehension, retention, and critical thinking. In this strategy there is three main phase:

1. Before reading: Students should preview the text (skim through headings, subheadings, and conclusions to get a general overview of the topic and structure). Then, activating prior knowledge (teachers should ask what students already know about the subject).

2. During Reading: Annotating (highlighting, circling key points and important vocabularies or main ideas). After that, students should ask questions to each other (engaging in a dialogue with the text by asking each other who, what, where, when, why, and how questions). Then teachers let students make connections with their own experiences, prior knowledge, and other texts they have ever read. And they can monitor comprehension (teacher should check their understanding by summarizing what they have read and identifying any confusing points)

3. After Reading: Students should be asked to summarize (they may write a concise summary of the main ideas and supporting details). In next step they analyze and evaluate (teachers should ask their critical thoughts about the information presented, identify biases, and form their own conclusions) At the end discussing process (students and teacher share their thoughts and insights with each other).

Thirdly, Using integration of multimedia resources such as audio recordings and online discussions, alongside traditional reading assignments, provides additional support for freshmen language learners. These resources offer alternative modes of engagement and cater to diverse learning preferences. Take audio recordings as examples, listening to audiobooks while following

along with the text can improve comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency or educational podcasts on various topics can expose students to different accents, speaking styles, and vocabulary in an engaging format. Additionally, Visual Resources such as interactive e-books and graphic novels or comics can offer features like embedded dictionaries, annotations, and text highlighting to facilitate vocabulary development and engage reluctant readers and help them visualize the story.

By strategically incorporating multimedia resources, educators can provide freshmen with a diverse and engaging learning experience that strengthens their reading skills and fosters a lifelong love of reading.

In conclusion, teachers play a vital role in helping freshmen students become strong readers and language learners. By using these reading tips, they can help freshmen become better readers. Let's create a classroom where learning is exciting, books are friends, and language is a superpower. Together, we will help freshmen reach new heights in reading and understanding

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