



The Next Step
Reading Skills for Adults
Book 14015

New Brunswick teachers and administrators are constantly searching for new and meaningful learning materials for use by their students. Adult upgrading teachers and coordinators encounter unique challenges in this task. The content, cost, or availability of instructional materials often makes available resources inappropriate or impossible options. Many teachers meet this challenge by creating their own materials.

The development of new partnerships and the availability of new technologies, however, have lessened the burden. Over the past decade partnerships between government agencies, educational institutions, literacy teachers, and others have resulted in the creation of a variety of meaningful and practical materials relevant to New Brunswick. New technologies and their availability in classrooms have facilitated the sharing and use of these materials.

Under the direction of New Brunswick Literacy Coordinators, it was determined that enhancements to both the curriculum and the available instructional materials were required. Several projects have been completed to create instructional materials to support this new curriculum. This project continues this work.

Specifically, the focus of this project is to revise, update, and enhance existing grade-leveled academic learning packages. The result is grade-leveled materials that match the new curriculum, adhere to clear language principles, and allow for better communication of student progress. Additionally, the grade-leveled materials better reflect the experience of New Brunswick adult upgrading students.

Many organizations and individuals have contributed to this project. They include: Jerry Hicks , Literacy Coordinator NBCC-Moncton, National Literacy Secretariat, National Adult Literacy Adult Database, New Brunswick Literacy Coordinators and Community Academic Services Program teachers NBCC-Moncton Curriculum Office, NBCC-Moncton Print Room Staff, and Academic Services Department Head.

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Concept Map - Reading Skills



Reading Comprehension Skills

Introduction

People read books, poems, newspaper, magazines, essays, reports, and more. They read for a variety of reasons. Some read because it is part of their job. Other people read for entertainment. Both types of reading can be fun and productive if you understand and remember what you read.

There are strategies and skills which you can use to help you understand and remember. This book will give you practice using the seven basic reading skills. Hints or strategies on how to use each skill will be presented. Reading is a skill. Read often. Read a variety of material. Practice your skills and you will find that reading will become easier and more enjoyable.

Reading to Understand

You will understand more and remember more if you get ready to read. Physically, you can get ready by:

- sitting at a desk or table
- sitting straight
- finding a well-lit area
- reading where physical distractions are minimal
- getting paper and a pen

Mentally, you can get ready by:

- starting with a positive attitude
- knowing why you are reading
- knowing how you need to read

What is my purpose for reading?

The main reason people read is to learn new information. You need to be clear of your purpose for reading. Decide why you are reading. Examples of different reasons for reading include:

- to learn new facts
- to have new experiences
- to learn another person's thoughts or feelings
- to be entertained
- to find the main idea
- to be able to summarize the information later
- to be able to retell the information
- to improve reading speed
- to increase vocabulary
- to be able to criticize the ideas
- to determine if ideas are logical.

You may have more than one purpose for reading. Your purpose for reading will influence "how you decide to read".

How do I need to read?

You should decide how you will read before reading the literature. We have already explained that part of this decision is based on why you want to read. Other factors include: your reading skill, the type of literature, your familiarity with the type of literature, the writer's style, and your knowledge of vocabulary.

Depending on your purpose, ability, and reading material, you may need to read slowly or quickly. For example, you may need to read a poem slowly, reread the poem, and look up new words in a dictionary. If you wanted to know last night's hockey scores, you could scan the sports section quickly, skipping over information. Following a reading process will help you decide how you need to read.

Introduction to the "Reading Process"

So you know why you are reading, what you want from the experience, and generally how you need to read. Now it is time to look more specifically at how you read. Reading is a process, which is similar to the writing process.

The reading process has three parts. They are the pre-reading step, the reading step, and the post-reading step. Each step requires you to use a different reading skill. Start the pre-reading step for this section by looking at the diagram on the next page, looking at bolded titles, and quickly reading the first sentence of a few paragraphs. After you have finished the pre-reading step, begin reading the section more slowly and carefully.

The Reading Process

(SQ3R Method)

Pre-Reading

1. Survey

 ***to predict the Main idea***

2. Question

 ***to Direct Reading***

Reading

3. Read

 ***to Remember / to Understand***

Post-reading

4. Recite

 ***to Check Memory / to Check Understanding***

5. Review

 ***to Remember / to Understand***

What is pre-reading?

Pre-reading means getting ready physically and mentally. This means clarifying your purpose, clarifying the information you want, clarifying how you need to read, thinking about what you know already, surveying the material, asking specific questions, and predicting the answers to you questions.

1. Survey



What is surveying?

Surveying means reading and thinking actively. It means quickly looking for clues about the message and information in the literature. It helps you identify words or ideas which will require more of your time and attention.

How do I survey?

Quickly read the following parts of what you are about to read: **titles, sub-titles, headings, table of contents, outlines, pictures, first sentences, last sentences, first paragraphs, last paragraphs.** Guess at the writer's main idea. Look for words or ideas which are new to you. Look up new words in a dictionary. During this step, you will also want make a list of questions.

2. Question



Why do I need to ask questions?

Asking and answering questions helps you to understand and remember. It directs your reading. It is easier to find something if you know what your are looking for in the first place. Asking questions will help you use the information. A teacher or boss will probably ask you some of the questions you ask yourself.

What questions do I ask?

The questions you decide to ask depends on your purpose and the way you read. Some common questions include:

- What is the theme or main idea?
- What is the writer's purpose for writing?
- What facts or details prove the main idea?
- Do I know the meanings of new words?
- How are the facts and details organized?
- Is the writing logical?
- What is the plot?
- What is the setting?
- Who are the characters?
- What did you think or feel about the reading?

3. Reading



What is reading?

Reading is the process of perceiving symbols, decoding symbols, obtaining meaning from symbols, and remembering the meaning.

What affects a person's reading ability?

Reading is a form of communication which uses your previous knowledge and experience to make sense out of written communication. Some of the more common factors which affect a person's ability to read include:

- *Vision*
- *Attitude*
- *Knowledge of how letters are associated with sound*
- *Personal vocabulary*
- *Mastery of basic reading skills*
- *Knowledge of sentence structure*
- *Knowledge of paragraph structure*
- *Personal life experiences*
- *Experience reading a particular type of literature*
- *Ability to read silently without moving lips*

Why do I need to read actively and critically?

People who read actively and critically are better able to use the information they obtain from reading because they learn how the facts are related, and how facts are related to knowledge they already have. They detect faulty or illogical statements, and they understand and remember more.

How do I read?

During the reading process, you can use a number of basic skills to help you understand what you read. Some basic reading skill include:

- *Finding the **main idea***
- *Finding **facts** and **details***
- *Finding **sequences** and **patterns***
- *Using **context clues***
- *Making **inferences***
- *Making **logical conclusions***
- *Sorting **facts** from **opinions***

Each skill will be explained in detail in the next section. Reading actively and critically will not only help you understand what you read but it will also help you remember what you read.

What is post-reading?

Post-reading means using the information you read. The two activities involved are reciting and reviewing.

4. Recite

What is reciting?

Reciting is checking your understanding and memory of the information. You may discover that you need to reread a section to clarify some information.



How do I use reciting

Examples of reciting strategies include: rephrasing, drawing, outlining, writing a summary, or telling another person about the information. You should recite new information after reading small sections. Try to recite new material several times, and use different methods of reciting.

5. Review

What is reviewing?

Reviewing is similar to reciting. People review to ensure that they are able to remember the information they have learned. This is particularly important before a test.

Reviewing may be done by reading your notes, comments, highlights, survey questions, survey answers, titles, and summaries.



The Reading Process

(SQ3R Method)

1. Survey



2. Question



3. Read



4. Recite



5. Review



Basic Reading Comprehension Skills

Mastering the basic reading skills will help you understand and remember the events and information you read. All of the basic skills work together. For example, it is difficult to find the main idea if you do not also find details or use context clues. Although the basic skills are presented one at a time for clarity, they all work together.



The Main Idea

One of the main goals for reading is to discover the main idea. Main ideas sometimes are called the theme, thesis, or moral. The main idea is the writer's message. Sometimes the main idea is clearly stated, as in expository writing. Other times the main idea is not clearly stated.

How do I find main ideas?

You can find main ideas by:

- reading the first and last sentence of a paragraph
- reading the first and last paragraph carefully
- looking for repeated words, phrases, or ideas
- making inferences based on the facts presented
- determining the sequence or organization of facts and events
- determining how facts are related

Practice Exercise 1 A

Main Idea

A.

- Scan the paragraph quickly.
- Predict the main idea.
- Read the paragraph carefully.
- Underline words or phrases related to the main idea.

"Farmers in Prince Edward Island grow potatoes as their main crop in the red soil of the province. Their potatoes are so good that other people across Canada buy them to use as seed potatoes. All the way around the island fishermen catch lobsters. The lobsters are then taken to canneries in the province or they are shipped on ice to the large cities of Canada and the United States. People everywhere are willing to pay a high price for a good meal of lobster from the Maritimes.

Adapted from, *Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3A Main Idea*

Practice Exercise 1 B

Main Idea

B. Answer the questions.

1. Was your prediction about the main idea correct?

2. Where did you find clues about the main idea?

3. Summarize the main idea in one sentence.

4. Write a title for the paragraph.

Facts and Details

The first sentence of a serious newspaper article is called the lead. Reporters usually place the important facts here.

What are facts and details?

Reporters discover the facts of a story by asking **who, what, where, when, why,** and **how.** The answers to these questions are called facts.



Newspaper and magazine writers rely on facts to support their statements. Facts and details can include information such as examples, reasons, statistics, causes, and effects, characters, events, descriptions. Recognizing facts and details are important.

Finding facts is important when the main idea is not stated. You will need to use facts to make inferences. Missing details or misreading details may lead to an incorrect assumption about the main idea.

How do I find facts and details?

Ask questions like **who, what, where, when, why,** and **how.** Once you find a fact evaluate its sources and value. For example, a writer might state that the average yearly family income for Canadian families is one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. If the writer based this idea on statistics from a one community the facts and statement are useless. They don't apply to the average Canadian.

What can I do to remember facts and details?

You will remember facts and details if you underline, highlight, or note facts and details as you read. Try to produce a mental image as you read. Add detail to the mental image as you learn new facts or details. Organizing the facts or details you discover will help. You might try making lists, drawing diagrams, or using concept maps.

Practice Exercise 2 A

Facts and Details

A.

- Scan the recipe quickly.
- Read the recipe carefully.
- Visualize the details.

Rich Pastry Pie Crust

Ingredients:

1 lb. shortening	2 tbsp. vinegar
1 egg	½ tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. baking powder	5 cups flour
1 tbsp. sugar	

Method:

1. *In a one-cup measuring cup beat the egg lightly. Stir in the vinegar and vanilla. Fill with water to the 3/4 mark on the cup.*
2. *Sift the baking powder, sugar, and flour.*
3. *Cut the shortening into the flour with two knives or a pastry blender. The mixture should have the consistency of lumps the size of small peas.*
4. *Pour the liquid over the dry ingredients and stir with a fork until the mixture comes away from the sides of the bowl.*
5. *Form into two balls and chill several hours before rolling.*

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3B Recalling Details

Practice Exercise 2 B

Facts and Details

B. Answer the questions.

1. What is made with the recipe?

2. What ingredient is added after sifting the flour?

3. How much water is added to the egg, vanilla, and vinegar?

4. How long are the dry and the liquid ingredients stirred?

5. How much flour is used?

6. How many balls are created from the recipe?

Sequencing

Any time you do a task, you follow a sequence of steps. To make macaroni and cheese, you need to boil water, cook the pasta, add milk, add butter, add the cheese mix, and simmer.



What is sequencing?

Writers typically arrange sentences, paragraphs, and ideas in one of several common patterns. Recognizing these different patterns allows you to predict what will happen next and to visualize the events and details. Recognizing sequences will also help you infer main ideas when they are not stated.

How do I find sequences?

The first step in finding sequences is recognizing facts and details. The next step is to discover how the facts and details are related. Writers commonly indicate relationships and sequences in two ways. The first way is simply to write sentences in the correct sequence. For example, a person that writes computer manuals would write a sentence explaining the first step. The next sentence explains the second step, and so on. The writer may or may not number, letter, or highlight the order of the sentences.

The second way writers show sequence or order is to use transition words. Transition words show relationships between facts and details. Once you know which words to look for, you can scan the materials for these transition words. A writer might use the words "first", "next", or "lastly" to indicate the sequence of events. Look at the table. It gives a few examples of transition words for common organization patterns.

Sequence	Transition words
<p>Spatial order (near to far)</p> <p>Chronological order (first to last)</p> <p>Logical order (first step to last step)</p> <p>Specificity order (general to specific)</p> <p>Familiarity order (known to unknown)</p> <p>Comparative order (alternating similarities)</p> <p>Importance order (least important to most important)</p> <p>Cause and effect order (alternating cause and effect) (all causes then all effects) (one cause and related effect at a time)</p>	<p><i>on, in, above, below, beside, near</i></p> <p><i>before, next, after, meanwhile, until</i></p> <p><i>first, second, third, next, lastly, finally</i></p> <p><i>in general, specifically, typically</i></p> <p><i>commonly, usually, infrequently, unusually</i></p> <p><i>on the other hand, on the contrary</i></p> <p><i>the main, the central, the basic, the least</i></p> <p><i>because, since, consequently</i></p>

Practice Exercise 3 A

Sequencing

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details.
- Remember the sequence of events.

Moving Day

It was horrible. I wondered if we would ever get settled again. The dishes were all packed in barrels just using sheets and blankets for padding. Then we packed all the clothes in suitcases and boxes. Before taking the furniture apart for loading we crammed all the stuff from the basement into boxes and marked each so it would be easier to handle on arrival.

Finally, all the boxes were full, and we began taking down the pictures and dismantling the tables and beds. These we stacked in the living room to be loaded into the truck. We moved out the stove and refrigerator and taped the doors so they wouldn't open.

Then the big truck came and the men loaded all the boxes, furniture, and appliances. They handled it all easily with their carts and straps and ramps.

Later, with all our possessions gone to our new home, we washed, waxed, and vacuumed the whole house. It looked lonely and empty when we left, but it was clean.

We all felt a little sad to leave the place.

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3C Sequence of Events



Practice Exercise 3 B

Sequencing

B. Number these events. The first event has been numbered.

- ___ 1 The dishes were packed.
- ___ The big truck came.
- ___ We felt sad to leave.
- ___ We took down the pictures.
- ___ We packed all the clothes.
- ___ We washed, waxed, and vacuumed the floors.

Context Clues

Some behaviours are acceptable in one place, yet they are not acceptable in others. For example, it might be okay to wear torn blue jeans at home, but it may not be appropriate to wear the same clothing at the office. Understanding rules and recognizing the clues that tell you how to behave is referred to as getting the "Big Picture" or understanding the context.

What are context clues?

To understand what you read, you need to understand the context of what you are reading. Factors which create the context include: the writer's personality, the writer's style, the writer's social standing, and the writer's purpose. This information guides you in interpreting the writer's message.

The second group of context clues help you make inferences, and helps you guess the meanings of new words. Writers may define new words or ideas by giving definitions, explaining, clarifying, supporting giving examples, or repeating important ideas to emphasise the main idea.

Where do I find context clues?

Look for context clues in the following places:

- between commas
- between brackets
- in definitions
- in examples
- in footnotes marked by asterisks (*) or numbers (12)
- by comparisons beginning with "like" or "as"

Practice Exercise 4 A

Context Clues

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details.
- Predict what words are used to fill in the blanks.

Are The Proverbs True?

There is no doubt that, in your life, you have heard a few _____ about the weather. Who has not heard the old saying "Red sky at night, sailor's delight, _____ in the morning, sailors take warning"? Sayings or proverbs like this are fun, but are they true?

The "red sky at night..." proverb is probably _____ more than it is wrong. At sunset, the rays of sunlight are _____ or bent by the atmosphere. If there are clouds present, the red colour of the sky is hidden from view. If there are not any clouds, the sky in the west takes on a reddish colour. Since most weather systems move from _____ to east across the country, a lack of clouds in the west is a good _____ that the weather the next day will be fair.

The same sort of explanation holds true for the second part of the proverb, "red in the morning, sailors take warning." If the sky is reddish in colour in the morning, in the east, it can mean the clear sky has _____ by an approaching system of low pressure out of the west. As you know, an approaching low pressure system means we can expect overcast conditions or rain.

Adapted from, Intermediate Academic Upgrading Science Learning Packages

Practice Exercise 4 B

Context Clues

Use context clues to help you pick the word for each blank. Write the correct word beside each number.

refracted	indication	red
proverbs	pushed	west
right		

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Inferences

You arrive home to discover your door open, glass on the floor, and your alarm ringing. Chances are someone has broken into your house.



What are inferences?

Inferences are guesses, or assumptions, which are based on facts or details. Writers will often leave out facts or details and expect you to infer the missing information. Writers may leave out details because they are minor details and most readers would infer the details. Writers may also leave out details as a way of forcing you to read carefully and slowly. Mystery novels often require its readers to make inferences.

How do I make inferences?

Before you can make an inference you need information. As you read, pay attention to the facts and details. If a character has behaved a specific way in a many situations, you can assume that they are likely to behave in the same way in the future. If a writer says that the road is slippery, water is dripping from a character's head, and the sky is dark, it is reasonable to infer that it is raining.

Practice Exercise 5 A

Inferences

A.

1. Scan the story quickly

- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details
- Underline the "most important" facts or details.

Flies are an awful nuisance. On their sticky feet and hairy bodies, houseflies carry millions of germs which spread wherever they go. Given a chance, they walk on our food, make our windows dirty, and annoy us with their buzzing. When the weather gets cool, they come into the house through any hole they can find.

Have you ever had a fly insist on landing on your nose no matter how wildly you slap at it? Or walk on your face when you are trying to go to sleep? Some people just can't stand to have flies buzzing around their heads or walking on their bare skin. No wonder we swat and kill them whenever we can.

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 4B Making Inferences

Practice Exercise 5 B

Inferences

B. Answer the questions.

1. List four details that tell you that flies are a nuisance.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Logical Conclusions

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

If you drive your car recklessly past a police station during the day time, it is logical to assume that you might receive a speeding ticket or be arrested.

What are logical conclusions?

The process of gathering information, organizing information and evaluating the information to come to a conclusion is called **logical thinking**. It is important for readers to evaluate a writer's statements and conclusions for one-sided or biased presentation of facts.

What are bias and slant?

Recognizing slanted or biased arguments will prevent you from making illogical conclusions, and possibly making poor choices. Advertisers often present the positive aspects of their products without mentioning the negative aspects. It is up to you to research both the positive and the negative aspects of their products.

Readers also need to be aware of their biases. If they don't, they risk leaving out important facts in their decision making process. You can avoid making illogical conclusions by recognizing the different types of illogical thinking as well as some of the characteristics of slanted or biased writing.

Some writers produce slanted or biased work because they are not aware of their thinking; they choose words or phrases carelessly, or they require more practice to improve their writing skills. Try to use direct, unbiased language in your writing.

What is faulty thinking?

"Faulty thinking" may be based in part on slanted or biased arguments or unreliable facts. The rules used to form logical conclusions may also be faulty or wrong. Read the definitions of different types of "faulty thinking". "Faulty conclusions" have been *italicised*.

1. **Hasty Generalizations** are made when few facts are known or the facts are not evaluated for their usefulness. Hasty generalizations lead to incorrect conclusions about events.

Example I saw Cindy leaving the boss's office. *She must be in trouble.*

2. **Mistaking the Cause** is done when all possible causes are not evaluated. It leads to incorrect conclusions about cause and effect relationships.

Example I wrote a letter to the government suggesting they call an election. *They called an election. It must have been the result of my letter.*

3. **False Analogies** are made when things with few similarities are compared. Conclusions based on this type of comparison are illogical and unsupportable.

Example Being a lawyer is like being a poet. They both use language carefully, and they usually have something they want to say. *Lawyers would make great poets.*

Reading Comprehension #14015

4. **Begging the Question** involves making assumptions or skipping steps to solve a problem. Conclusions are not supported by facts.

Example David started as manager of the sales department on Monday. The sales report on Friday said that the sales department has lost many clients. *It must be David's fault. He should be fired.*

5. **Name Calling** involves drawing attention away from facts and details. Instead, emphasis is placed on criticizing a person. Emotion, slant, and bias often support name-calling.

Example That crazy foreigner is stupid. The fast talking guy has a freaky accent. *No one should give him a job.*

6. **Jumping on the Bandwagon** means assuming that the statements said to be held by a group of people must be correct without evaluating the facts or details.

Example All of Betty's friends said that her rock band was the best band they heard at the talent show. *We should hire them to play at the prom dance because they must be good.*

7. **Appeal to Authority** encourages readers to accept the opinions expressed by "experts". Testimonials about isolated experiences or opinions are used in place of detailed and balanced presentations of facts.

Example Sheila Roberts, world champion figure skater, uses Super White Teeth Whitener. Look at her teeth shine. *You can be like Sheila if you buy Super White Teeth Whitener, the number 1 teeth whitener.*

Study the tables on the following pages. They offer some tips on how to avoid "faulty thinking".

Faulty Thinking	Do not	Do
1. Hasty Generalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Make general statements about isolated eventsb. Use all, none, some, most, everyone to describe isolated events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Make general statements frequent and common eventsb. Use all, none, some, most, everyone to describe frequent and common events
2. Mistaking the Cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Assume a cause and effect relationshipb. Assume a cause and effect relationship based on one observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Evaluate all possible causes of an effectb. Determine cause and effect relationships based on many observations
3. False Analogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Make comparisons between things with few similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Make comparisons between things with many similarities
4. Ignoring the Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Only answer part of the total question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Answer all parts of the question
5. Begging the Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Assume or leave out important facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Prove and include all needed facts
6. Name Calling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Criticize the person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Evaluate the facts and the details
7. Misusing Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Use averages to prove or support a pointb. Compare unrelated statisticsc. Use statistics based on small sample sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Use specific statistics to prove or support a pointb. Compare related statisticsc. Use statistics based on large sample sizes
8. Bandwagon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Assume what "everyone else" believes is true	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Evaluate statistics and arguments for yourself

Faulty Thinking	Do not	Do
9. Appeal to Authority	a. Assume famous people are "experts" b. Assume famous people make logical conclusions	a. Evaluate facts and arguments for yourself b. Evaluate the reliability of an "expert"

How do I make logical conclusions?

Logical conclusions are made from two types of thinking. Working on a puzzle is similar to the first type of thinking. When you connect the pieces of a puzzle together, you end up with a picture. Likewise, when you add the facts or details together, you get an answer or conclusion to a question or a problem. You get the "big picture". This type of thinking is called **inductive reasoning**.

The second type of thinking is called **deductive thinking**. Deductive thinking involves taking the "whole", a finished puzzle for example, and dividing it into its pieces. This allows a person to answer a question or to solve a problem about a specific part of a puzzle.

Practice Exercise 6 A
Slanted and Biased Language

A. Rewrite these sentences. Eliminate or change the bolded words.

1. New Brunswick's **spine tingling** roadside scenery made the ten hour drive an **awesome** experience.

2. The **class clown** was sent to the principal's office again.

3. The **greedy vultures** met with the accident victim to discuss legal action.

4. The **Saints** at the coffee shop always have hot coffee waiting for me.

5. The **resourceful person** explained to the policeman how he had **borrowed** the stranger's car to go on a job interview.

6. The **butchers** showed off their new fur coats at the fashion show.

7. The **money grabbing** scientist reported that he had discovered a new drug.

8. The **wise guy** asked for a refund because his steak was burnt.

9. The **perfectionist** thoroughly checked the report for spelling mistakes.

10. A small amount of the **beneficial** chemical leaked into the water supply.

Practice Exercise 7 A

Cause and Effect

- A. Decide whether there is a cause and effect relationship. If there is a relationship state the cause and the effect.

Example *The power and lights went out, so Betty lit some candles.*

Answer: *Logical relationship: Yes*
 Effect(What happened): Betty lit candles
 Cause(Why): power and lights went out

1. Jim spilled some gasoline near the tomatoes in the garden, and they died.

Logical relationship: _____
Effect (What happened): _____
Cause: (Why) _____

2. Kara took a cab to the movies on Saturday night, and Jennifer walked to the library on Saturday night.

Logical relationship: _____
Effect (What happened): _____
Cause: (Why) _____

3. A stranger donated four thousand dollars to the food bank, so they were able to remain open for three more months.

Logical relationship: _____
Effect (What happened): _____
Cause: (Why) _____

Practice Exercise 8 A

Faulty Thinking

- A. Write "logical thinking" beside logical statements. Write "faulty thinking" beside faulty statements.

Example

I am not going to move my car just because that bossy, loudmouth police officer tells me to do it.

***Name Calling,
Ignoring the Question***

1. I saw William standing outside the tattoo parlour on Main Street. He must have a tattoo.
2. Melissa explained to the judge that it wasn't really stealing when she took the five hundred dollars from the cash register last month, because she left an I.O.U. note.
3. Everyone should take a ten percent wage cut because the company president said the company's profits were ten percent lower than expected.
4. We should go bungee jumping to celebrate our anniversary because I know two couples who did that.
5. That lazy, coffee-drinking government employee sits all day. That person wouldn't know how to do an honest day's work.
6. Janet's softball team won their first home game, and they lost their first away game. They will probably win every home game, and they will probably lose every away game.

Fact vs. Opinion?

Read these sentences. Try to guess which sentences are facts and which sentences are opinions. Two Canadian provinces are islands. Atlantic Canada's beaches are the best in the world.



What are facts and opinions?

Facts are true statements which are provable. Facts are provable when the original source of the information can be found and the source of the information is reliable. The statement "Two Canadian provinces are islands" is a fact because it can be proved by checking a map.

Opinions are based on personal values and beliefs. The statement "Atlantic Canada has the best beaches in the world" is an opinion. It is not provable. It is a belief or a preference.

How do I separate facts from opinion?

Writers may try to support opinions with biased or slanted presentation of facts. Watch for connotative language, words with a basic meaning and a value judgement. Sometimes writers will use examples or stories which are based on faulty thinking. Try to recognize the different types of faulty thinking.

Facts are usually supported by examples or statistics. You should look for evidence that the examples and statistics used support the main idea are reliable and accurate. Reliable and accurate examples state the original source of information, use of examples or statistics from several sources, use of current examples and statistics, and clear indication of the relationship between the supporting material and the main idea.

Practice Exercise 9 A

Facts vs. Opinions

A. Read each statement. Write "F" for facts beside factual statements.
Write "O" for opinion beside opinions.

1. Canadians celebrate Thanks Giving Day two weeks earlier than Americans do.
2. You should also disconnect the power supply before using a screwdriver to fix a DVD player.
3. Petunias and geraniums should never be planted in a flowerbed together, because they do not look good together.
4. Stephen King is the best writer of this century.
5. It rained last Tuesday night.
6. Campbellton is approximately one hundred and fourteen kilometres from Bathurst.
7. The bakery located at the end of my street makes the best bread.
8. The human kidney's main function is to clean the blood.
9. Luke and Denise would make a nice couple.
10. Paula, my sister, usually puts extra salt on her food.

Vocabulary

What is vocabulary?

A vocabulary list is simply a list of words. Everyone has a personal vocabulary list. A personal vocabulary list is the list of words which you know how to use. Knowing how to use a word means more than recognizing it as you read. To truly be able to use a word, you need to understand its meanings, its uses, its pronunciation and its spelling.

Reading new material will become easier as you increase the number of words you can recognize, understand, say, and spell. **Reading, writing, and talking** are activities which you

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can use on a daily basis to help you learn new words and learn new ways of using them. Try to increase your personal vocabulary list by reading about a variety of topics.

In this section you will learn some strategies for learning new words. The most basic strategy is to use a dictionary. In addition to giving the **meaning** for a word, a dictionary contains information about how to **say** a word, how to **spell** a word, how to **use** a word, and how to **divide** a word into its parts. Learning basic reading strategies will reduce the amount of time you will need to use a dictionary.

The general sequence of steps for learning a new word is on the following page. Study the process carefully.

Try some of these strategies:

- Guess.
- Check a dictionary.
- Read aloud.
- Check for more than one meaning.
- Check for words with similar meanings.
- Practice writing the word.
- Use a trick to help you remember.
- Keep a list.
- Practice writing and speaking new words.

When basic strategies do not help you discover the meaning of a new word or phrase, as with idioms or homonyms, the best strategy is to consult a good dictionary. Some common homonyms and idioms are presented here.

Homonyms and Idioms

Homonyms and idioms can be confusing. The words "two", "to", and "too" sound the same, but they have different spellings, meanings, and uses. The word "two" refers to the number 2. The word "to" is used as a preposition, and the word "too" is used to replace the word also. These words are called homonyms. Dictionaries may list homonyms for words that are frequently confused.

Idioms are phrases. They have specific meanings that are often different from the meanings of the individual words. For example, the idiom "a chip off the old block" means that a child is similar to his or her parent. It has nothing to do with a piece of a wood block. Looking in the dictionary is the best way to discover their meaning.

Homonyms

cereal (*food*)

lain (*rested*)

steal (*take*)

cite (*name*)

lead (*material*)

stationary (*unmoving*)

coarse (*thick*)

main (*most important*)

tail (*animal part*)

colonel (*officer*)

miner (*one who mines*)

their (*belonging to them*)

complement (*complete*)

need (*wanting*)

threw (*pitched*)

serial (*ongoing story*)

lane (*narrow road*)

steel (*metal*)

site (*location*)

led (*was ahead of*)

stationery (*paper*)

course (*route*)

mane (*growth of hair*)

tale (*story*)

kernel (*grain*)

minor (*less important*)

there (*a place*)

compliment (*praise*)

knead (*work with hands*)

through (*into, finished*)

Practice Exercise 10 A, B, C

Homonyms

A. What is a homonym? Write a complete definition and give one example.

B. Pick the word that best completes the sentences.

1. Kate always eats (cereal, serial) for breakfast.
2. My grandfather planted these sugar maples on both sides of the (lain, lane) about sixty years ago.
3. Try to (steal, steel) third base on the next pitch.
4. This (cite, site) will be used to build a memorial park.
5. The mother duck (lead, led) her ducklings across the street to the pond.
6. Please remain (stationary, stationery) until the plane comes to a complete stop.
7. I have enrolled in the truck driving (coarse, course) in Miramichi.
8. Be sure to brush your horse's (main, mane).
9. Have you heard the (tail, tale) of Davy Crocket?
10. All that was left in the bottom of the bowl was unpopped (colonels, kernels) of popcorn.

C. Write one sentence with each word. Use the word correctly.

1. minor _____
2. there _____
3. complement _____
4. knead _____
5. through _____

Idioms

“take by storm”

“hit the nail on the head”

“bite the bullet”

“take the bit in one’s teeth”

“a bone to pick”

“biting the hand that feeds one”

“a bolt from the blue”

“brainwash”

“to break the ice”

“burn the candle at both ends”

Meaning

to make a forceful presence

to be correct

to begin a difficult task in spite of personal impact

to initiate a task oneself

an argument or problem with another

hurting those who help you

an unexpected event

to change another’s beliefs

to start discussion in a social setting

to work hard without sleep

Practice Exercise 11 A, B

Word Structure

A. What is an idiom? Write a complete definition and give one example.

B. Match each idiom with the best meaning. Write the correct letter beside the number.

Idiom	Meaning
1. — "take by storm"	a. to start a hard task
2. — "hit the nail on the head"	b. to disagree with another person
3. — "burn the candle at both ends"	c. to be correct
4. — "take the bit in one's teeth"	d. to work hard without sleep
5. — "a bone to pick"	e. to make a forceful presence
	f. to start a task by oneself

How can word structure help?

The main part of any word is called the "root word". The meaning of many root words can be changed simply by adding or removing parts of words. These parts of words are called **prefixes** and **suffixes**. Prefixes are added to the beginning of a root word, while suffixes are added to the end of a root word. Look at how the root word relate can be changed.

Prefix
un-

Root Word
touch

Suffix
-able

untouchable

Knowing the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation of frequently used prefixes and suffixes will allow you to discover meanings, to say words correctly, and to spell many new words correctly. One of the easiest ways of making an antonym, a word with the opposite meaning, is to add a prefix. Some common antonym forming prefixes include: **-de, -die, -in, -im, -il,** and **-re.** Study the meaning and spelling of prefixes and suffixes on the following pages.

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Prefixes	
a-	outside, beyond
ab-	away, from, off
hyper-	above, beyond
hypo-	under, beneath
intra-	within
non-	not
over-	excessive
mid-	middle
ac-	to, toward, near
co-	with, together

Suffixes	
-sion	act or state of
-tion	act or state of
-sis	action or process
-ty	quality or condition
-ward	in the direction of
-ly	like
-ed	to happen in the past
-ing	in the act of
-ar	like
-y	quality or state of being

Practice Exercise 12 A, B

Word Structure

Fill in the blanks. You may need to change the spelling of the root word. Check a dictionary if needed.

Prefix	Root word	New word
a	moral	amoral
ab	normal	abnormal
hyper	extend	hyperextend
hypo	tension	hypotension
intra	mural	intramural
non	toxic	non-toxic
over	estimate	overestimate
mid	size	midsize
ac	count	account
co	operate	cooperate

Root word	Suffix	New word
discuss	sion	
complete	tion	completion
analyze		analysis
royal		royalty
north	ward	
simple	ly	
edge	ed	edged
run		running
beg		beggar
	y	putty

How can context clues help?

Writers often leave clues for readers to find. These clues help readers understand the meaning of new words or concepts. Using these clues will give you a general idea about the meaning of new words. Looking in the dictionary is still the best way to discover the exact meaning and use of a word.

Writers will leave clues in specific parts of sentences and paragraphs. Look for context clues in the following places:

1. ***Immediately after a new word***

Writers often rename a person, a thing, or an idea. This information is found between commas. Read these examples.

*The municipal government, **local town council**, has a different role than the provincial government.*

2. ***Before or after a new word***

Phrases or clauses contain extra information. They are separated from the main part of a sentence by punctuation.

*I prefer to grow perennial plants **plants which grow year after year**.*

3. ***In the following sentence***

Writers may give a definition for a new wording in a following sentence. Look at the example.

*The Transcript Building is well known to many Monctonians. **The historic building once housed the staff of the Transcript newspaper.***

Practice Exercise 13 A

Context Clues

- A. Read the paragraph. Use context clues to write a general definition for each underlined word. Use a dictionary to write an exact definition.

A pulley is a simple machine used for lifting heavy loads. Elevators and construction cranes use pulleys. They move heavy groups of people or supplies easily. Pulleys used to move heavier loads require longer chains, ropes, or belts.

Adapted from the "Intermediate Academic Upgrading-Science" learning packages; IA U-S 4.1

1. pulley

- a. General definition —

- b. Specific definition —

2. loads

- a. General definition —

- b. Specific definition —

How can phonics help?

The letters in words are organized to give each word its unique structure. Most of the time the organization of letters in words follow regular patterns. Recognizing these patterns will help you to pronounce new words. Being able to break words into their sound parts takes practice.

Words can be divided into smaller parts or groups of letters based on the sound they make. All words have at least one vowel (a, e, i, o, u, or y), so they have at least one syllable. Many words with more than one vowel have more than one syllable.

A syllable is part of a word with at least one vowel sound. If a vowel is silent, it usually does not count as a syllable. Look at the word "modest". The dot separates the word into two syllables. The "o" makes a vowel sound and the "e" makes a vowel sound.

modest

mod * est

There are six basic guidelines to dividing words into syllables. Although the guidelines are useful, there are always exceptions to the guidelines. Consult a good dictionary when in doubt. Look at the following tables. **V** means vowel. **C** means a consonant (a letter that is not a vowel). "r" means the letter "r", while "le" means the letters "le"

Guidelines for Dividing Words Into Syllables

Pattern	Example	Divided Words	Syllables
VC•CV	murder whisper	mur•der whis•per	2 2
prefix• root	undo preview	un•do pre•view	2 2
or			
root•suffix	worker	work•er	2
V•CV (Sometimes before a consonant, consonant blend, or digraph if the first vowel is long)	reply hotel	re•ply ho•tel	2 2
or			
VC•V (Sometimes after a consonant, consonant blend, or consonant digraph if the first vowel is short)	modest polish	mod•est pol•ish	2 2
VR•	forest sterile	for•est ster•ile	2 2
C•Cle	twinkle marble	twin•kle mar•ble	2 2

Practice Exercise 14 A

Syllables

A. Read each word aloud three times. Break the word into syllables. Write the dictionary way of breaking the word into syllables.

Syllables

Word	Guess	Dictionary
abduct	_____	_____
hyperextend	_____	_____
overreaction	_____	_____
midterm	_____	_____
utility	_____	_____
southward	_____	_____
lovely	_____	_____
liar	_____	_____
silly	_____	_____

Reading Literature

Literature refers to books, letters, reports, articles, essays, poems, short stories, novels, and biographies which:

- *Represent high quality writing*
- *Talk about familiar human problems*
- *Highlight truths about the "human experience"*
- *Clarifies our position in the world*

Some types of literature are easier to read than others. The reading difficulty of a book, poem, or essay depends on your ability to use the basic reading skills, your previous experience reading a specific type of literature, your familiarity with the vocabulary, your familiarity with the writer's style, your familiarity with literary devices and your attitude.

Reading quality literature, even if it is a challenge at first, will improve your reading skills, increase your vocabulary, improve your thinking skills, and improve your writing skills. Reading

carefully and evaluating the literature of skilled writers will guide you in developing your own writing style

As you study this section on reading literature, pay attention to the differences between the types of literature. Read carefully to find differences in how each type of literature is structured, how words are used, the author's message, the effectiveness of the type of literature in communicating the author's message. You will also find similarities. Literature from a specific time in history, region, or culture will often have similarities in topic, style, structure, or other aspects of literature.

Figures of Speech and Literary Devices

Writers use figures of speech and literary devices to make their writing more interesting, more concise, more musical, and more emotional. Some of the more commonly used forms of figures of speech and literary devices are mentioned here.

Metaphor

Metaphors are comparisons between two things. The words "like" or "as" are not used. Writers use metaphors to create a detailed image for the reader. Readers are able to get vivid mental images without having to read a long description.

the years roll by

Similes

Similes are comparisons between two things. The words like or "as" are used. Writers use similes to create a detailed image for the reader. Readers are able to get vivid mental images without having to read a long description.

*"I wondered lonely as a cloud."
William Woodsworth*

*"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee."
Mohammed Ali*

Poetry

What is poetry?

Writers often use poetry to express personal, emotional, philosophical, or historic ideas or themes. Poetry can differ from prose in several ways. Poetry may have some or all of the following characteristics:

- *Rhythm*
- *Rhyme*
- *Literary devices*
- *Unusual word or sentence patterns*
- *Capital letters for each new line*

Most poetry has some structure, and it is important to learn some vocabulary about the structure of poems. Lines of poetry (also called a verse) are grouped together into stanzas. Several lines of poetry may be needed to create the equivalent of a sentence. Each line of a poem is usually capitalized. Stanzas are roughly equivalent to paragraphs in prose.

What is rhythm?

When we speak, we tend to emphasize some parts of words more than other parts. We are putting more energy into making some syllables. Rhythm refers to the pattern of stressed syllables and unstressed syllables, and it is sometimes referred to as "meter".

Dictionaries are valuable. In addition to revealing the meanings of new words, dictionaries can be used to discover how words are broken into syllables, how the syllables are stressed, and how words are pronounced. Dictionaries use marks called "accents" to indicate stressed and unstressed syllables.

What is rhyme?

Rhyme is not the same as rhythm. Rhyme refers to patterns of common sounds, while rhythm refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. There are different types of rhyme. The most common type of rhyme involves patterns of similar sounds at the end of a line. The pattern of rhyming sounds in a poem is called the "rhyme scheme". Rhyme schemes are indicated with letters. The letter A is written beside the first line. All lines of the poem that rhyme with the first line also receive the letter A. The next line not rhyming with the first line is given the letter B. All sentences rhyming with this line are also given the letter B. The process continues until all of the lines receive a letter. Look at the example below.

<i>There was a young woman of Glasgow</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Whose party proved quite a fiasco</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>At 9:30 about</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>The lights all went out,</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Through a lapse on the part of the Gas Co.</i>	<i>A</i>

Not all poems rhyme perfectly. Some poetry only has parts that rhyme. This is called "imperfect rhyme". Other poetry does not rhyme at all. This is called "free verse".

*A one-foot waterfall-
it too makes noises
and at night is cool.*

Issa (from Continent in Poverty)

How to read poetry?

Poetry can be a challenge to read. Poems can be interpreted several different ways. Also, poets often include a basic meaning called a literal meaning, as well as a secondary or hidden meaning. Reading poetry will be easier if you use the following guidelines.

- *Research the author.*
- *Read a poem aloud twice.*

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- *Read a poem aloud a third time for the main idea.*
- *Highlight important details.*
- *Highlight difficult or new words or phrases.*
- *Determine the point of view (narrator).*
- *Determine the intended audience.*
- *Find the rhyme scheme.*
- *Find and name the rhythm.*
- *Find figures of speech or literary devices.*
- *Evaluate the over all effectiveness of the poem.*

What types of poetry are there?

Narrative

Narrative poems tell stories. They may vary in style, use of rhyme, and rhythm. Epic poems tend to be longer poems with emphasis on the plot of the story. Epic poems often deal with adventures and heroes. The story centers around the hero's ability to reach a major achievement. The Ballad also tells a story and is a narrative poem.

Practice Exercise 15 A, B

Narrative Poetry

A. The first part and the last part of a long narrative poem follows. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading.

- Skim the title and poem quickly.
- Predict what the poem is about.
- Think of questions to answer while you read.
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping.
- Read the poem again carefully.
- Answer the questions.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the poem.

1. snarled

2. rueful

3. spilling

4. ether

5. affairs

OUT, OUT--

Robert Frost

The buzz-saw sarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
And from there those that lifted eyes could count
Five mountain ranges one behind the other
Under the sunset far into Vermont.
And the saw sarled and rattled, sarled and rattled,
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.
And nothing happened, day was all but done.
Call it a day, I wish they might have said
To please the boy by giving him the half hour
That a boy counts so much when saved from work.
His sister stood beside them in her apron
To tell them "Supper." "At the word, the saw,
As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,
Leaped out at the boy's hand, or seemed to leap--
He must have given the hand. However it was,
Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!
The boy's first outcry was a rueful laugh,
As he swung toward them holding up the hand
Half in appeal, but half as if to keep
The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all--
Since he was old enough to know, big boy
Doing a man's work, though a child at heart--
He saw all spoiled. "Don't let him cut my hand off--
The doctor, when he comes. Don't let him, sister!"
So. But the hand was gone already.
The doctor put him in the dark of ether.
He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.
And then--the watcher at his pulse took fright.
No one believed. They listened at his heart.
Little--less--nothing!--and that ended it.
No more to build on there. And they, since they
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

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Practice Exercise 15 C

Narrative Poetry

C. Answer the questions.

1. Write the rhyme scheme beside the following stanza.

____ The buzz-saw snarled and rattled in the yard
____ And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
____ Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
____ And from there those that lifted eyes could count

2. What is the main idea or theme of the poem?

3. Summarize the events in a paragraph.

4. What is the setting of the poem?

Limerick

Limericks are fun poems. Their main purpose is to entertain the reader. The topics are usually absurd. The poet often changes the spellings of words or uses pun, a play on words, to create the desired effect. The ending of a limerick often presents a twist. Limericks have a specific structure. The rhyme scheme is usually **AABBA**.

<i>A lady there was in Antigua</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Who said to her spouse 'What a pigua.'</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>He answered 'My queen</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Is it manners you mean ---</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Or do you refer to my figua?</i>	<i>A</i>

* All the above limericks are from Letts, John, *A Little Treasury of Limericks. Fair and Foul.* London, Pan Books, 1973.

<i>There was a young cashier of Calais</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Whose accounts when reviewed wouldn't</i> <i>talais. (tally)</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>But his chief smelled a rat</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>When he furnished a flat</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>And was seen every night at the Balais.</i> <i>(ballet)</i>	<i>A</i>

Edward Lear popularized the limerick form in his *Book of Nonsense* (1846).
His last line, however, was usually a variation of his first line.

Practice Exercise 16 A, B

Limericks

A. Use the reading process to guide you in reading the following limerick.

- Skim the title and poem quickly
- Predict what the poem is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping
- Read the poem again carefully
- Answer the questions

*There once was a student who said
I wish I had stayed home in bed
But how could I keep
My eyeballs asleep
With all these words in my head?*

Margaret Harriman

B. Answer the questions.

1. What is the rhyme scheme for this limerick?

2. Summarise the poem in a paragraph.

Short Stories

What are short stories?

Early forms of short stories include fables, myths, and legends. Tall tales and modern short stories have become a more common form of the short story. Short stories have been used to tell stories to entertain to pass on information, history, or traditions, or to provide moral lessons.

Each type of short story is unique. Common forms of modern short stories include, ghost stories, romance, science fiction, historical, and social or psychological stories. Compared to novels, modern short stories are limited to a single unified plot with few characters and limited description of the setting. Most short stories are less than 15000 words in length.

How to read short stories

When you read stories or poems, do the following:

- *Read the story once for fun.*
- *Read the story a second time.*
- *Highlight important details.*
- *Highlight difficult or new words or phrases.*
- *Determine who is telling the story (i.e. narrator).*
- *Find the major and minor characters.*
- *Determine the theme or moral.*
- *Determine the types of conflict. (others, self nature, fate)*

The plots of short stories usually involve one or two main characters working toward the resolution of a single conflict. The events often take place in one place or time. A theme of a short story usually offers observation about human nature. Effective short stories are written by authors who are able to use words and literary devices to make the plots and characters seem real.

What literary devices are used in short stories?

Writers use literary devices to create a special effect and to reduce the length of their writing. Foreshadowing, for example, can help create a mood of suspense as well as prepare the reader for the next event. There are many different types of literary devices available to writers. The most common types are discussed below.

Irony is created when there is a discrepancy between an expected outcome and an actual outcome. It would be ironic that a person purposely tries to get fired and ends up with a promotion.

Foreshadowing hints at the future. Writers leave clues that can help you predict the outcome of a story. A character might say she has a bad feeling, for example.

Mystery keeps readers interested in reading a story. It is created by presenting incomplete observations, using foreshadowing, or using 1st person narration.

Stereotyping creates flat characters. Specific and generalized traits are attributed to a character or characters. These characteristics may be either negative or positive.

Understatement is used to highlight important events by purposely down playing the importance or significance of the event.

Humour is used to entertain a reader. It may also serve as a distraction from more serious events. Writers may use jokes, irony, dialogue, satire, or hyperbole to create humour.

When you find a literary device, try to determine why the writer used it and decide if it was used effectively.

What types of short stories are there?

Traditional forms of short narratives are still popular today. Fables, myths, legends, and tales continue to delight readers. Writers have added the modern short story, tall tales, science fiction, and horror stories to the material available to readers. Each form has the typical elements of a narrative—plot, character, setting, and narrator.

Although they all have similar elements, they also have differences.

Fables

Fables come from the oral tradition of story telling. Local tribes created and passed on fables as a form of moral education. Many fable directly state the moral it communicates at the end of its story. Animals with human qualities serve as characters. Each character symbolizes a specific aspect of human nature. The message being communicated was more important than character development, setting development or plot development.

Myths

Myths were written to explain how creation came about and how people should lead "moral" lives. Myths, too, have their origins in oral story telling. The characters are normally gods or goddesses. Although the characters have special abilities, they still behave as humans with both negative and positive characteristics.

Greek authors have written many of the myths that still exist today. These writers, most of whose names are unknown, appealed to people's emotions by placing the characters in fantastic situations.

Practice Exercise 17 A, B

Fables

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly.
- Predict what the story is about.
- Think of questions to answer while you read.
- Read the story once without stopping.
- Read the story again carefully.
- Answer the questions.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. passel

2. solemnly

3. enough

Brer Fox Meets Mister Trouble

Brer Rabbit met Brer Fox one morning on the big road.

"How are you, Brer Rabbit?" asked Brer Fox.

"I'm not feeling too good, Brer Fox," answered Brer Rabbit. "Trouble's been visiting me."

"What do you mean, Trouble? Who 's he, and what's he like?" asked Brer Fox.

"Brer Fox, you mean you 've never met Mister Trouble? Well, right over in that barn is where Mister Trouble stays."

Brer Fox crawled under the fence and went over to the barn. He stood up on his hind legs in front of the door and yelled as loud as he could, "Wahoo! Mister Trouble!"

And then Mister Trouble came bursting out of that barn door in the form of a passel of hound dogs such as Brer Fox had never seen in all his born days! Poor old Brer Fox hardly got two jumps ahead of those hounds before they were on top of him. He was a bobtailed fox from that day to this.

Brer Rabbit just stood there a-looking at poor old Brer Fox. And then he said solemnly "Never go looking for Trouble, Brer Fox. He'll find you soon enough."

Practice Exercise 17 C

Fables

C. Answer the following questions.

1. What human qualities does Brer Rabbit display?

2. What is the moral or theme of this fable? Do you agree with it?

Practice Exercise 18 A, B

Myths

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly.
- Predict what the story is about.
- Think of questions to answer while you read.
- Read the story once without stopping.
- Read the story again carefully.
- Answer the questions.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. lay

2. makings

3. gored

4. marksman

5. vain

All Because of a Girl (Excerpt)

by Peter Connolly

The Oath

The oath had been sworn and would have to be kept. There seemed to be no way out of it. Much had changed since Odysseus had made that promise. He was now king of Ithaca and married, with a baby son.

The rocky island of Ithaca lay off the west coast of Greece. Its densely wooded hills were alive with deer and other game, which Odysseus loved to hunt. At that very time he was training a new dog which he had called Argus after the mythical hero with a hundred eyes who saw all and missed nothing. Argus was hardly more than a puppy but he had the makings of a great hunting dog.

Odysseus' passion for hunting once almost cost him his life. Some years earlier he had been savagely gored by a wild boar, and the wound had left a ragged scar above his knee. But this had not put him off. He was a superb marksman and would sometimes display his skill by shooting an arrow through a line of twelve axes without hitting one of them.

He was also a great storyteller. He loved to hold an audience spellbound. Some might call him a liar but his friends knew him better than that. He just liked to improve a story, and if sometimes the truth became a little lost — well, that was just unfortunate.

Odysseus was a thick-set man, about thirty years old. His wife, Penelope, was hardly more than half his age. Before Odysseus brought her back to Ithaca he built a bedroom for them both around the trunk of an olive tree, which he had trimmed and smoothed down. The trunk formed the head of a richly decorated bed, which he had made with his own hands. This room was their secret place which no-one else was allowed to enter.

To return to that oath — that stupid promise made so long ago; it had all happened because of a girl — Helen, the most beautiful girl in Greece. Every young man had dreamed of marrying Helen. Odysseus had been no exception. He had gone to Sparta to declare his love but he was not surprised when Helen's father chose Menelaus, the king of Sparta, to be Helen's husband. After all, Menelaus' brother, Agamemnon, was king of Mycenae, and the most powerful ruler in Greece.

But the real cause of all the trouble to come was Hera, the queen of the gods, and two other goddesses, Athena and Aphrodite. They were very vain and had a furious quarrel over which of them was the most beautiful. Finally they decided to let a man settle their argument. Their judge was to be Paris, son of the King of Troy.

Now Paris hoped that if he chose Aphrodite, the goddess of love, she would make Helen fall in love with him. And this is what happened. Helen eloped with Paris and took a lot of her husband's treasure with her. By the time Menelaus discovered the loss, the two lovers had disappeared.

At the time of Helen's betrothal, many of the suitors had protested that their love was greater than that of Menelaus. To avoid any trouble, Helen's father had insisted that they all swear an oath that if any one took Helen away from Menelaus, the others would unite to get her back. But the trouble was, nobody knew where she had gone.

Years passed. Then a few months before our story begins, Paris returned to Troy, bringing the beautiful Helen with him. This was the news that was now worrying Odysseus. The oath had been sworn, and now he and the other disappointed suitors were being called upon to honour it.

Practice Exercise 18 C
Myths

C. Answer the questions.

1. List the characteristics of a myth found in the story?

2. Write a paragraph summarizing the events of the story.

3. Predict what will happen next. Explain your answer.

Legends

Unlike myths and fables, legends have human characters. As with myths the characters often have special abilities or strengths. They use these characteristics to solve a problem or to win a challenge. The characters or events of legends are based on some fact. Many popular legends originated from Greek literature where characters were thrust into heroic battles or adventurous quests.

As with most narratives, legends have characters, plots, and settings. Legends tend to have more characters and greater plot development than do myths and fables. The language used to describe characters and events is direct, yet it is also more descriptive and lofty. Many of today's tales come from the legend tradition.

Tales and Tall Tales

Tales are similar to legends. Human characters encounter unique situations. Many tales have moral lessons that are stated directly or indirectly. Fairytales are included in this category of narratives. They often begin with phrases such as, "Once upon a time..."

Tales, like legends, have human characters performing super human acts. Tall tales are a more recent form of legend. They were developed in North America during rapid growth and settlement by immigrants. These stories entertained workers, and they were a unifying force showing people's pride in their work and their nationalities. The characters are often presented as being much bigger than the average person. The characters or events of many tall tales are based on some fact.

Practice Exercise 19 A, B

Legends

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. enchanted

2. spectacles

3. console

4. plait

Sedna, The Sea Goddess

Virginia Haviland

The Petrels, proud birds that they are, live on the highest parts of the cliffs. From their peaks they swirl out like snowflakes, looking down on the rolling noisiness of Razor Bills who build their nests halfway up, and the Gulls and the little Kittiwakes who are content to nest at the bottom.

Once, long, long ago, there was a Petrel who was so proud that he could find no mate that pleased him among his own kind, so he decided that he would marry a human being.

With a little magic, the Petrel gave himself a human form. Then, wanting to look his best, he got some fine seal skins and made a beautiful parka. Now he looked very handsome, but his eyes were still the eyes of a bird, so he made some spectacles from thin pieces of walrus tusk. These spectacles had only narrow slits to look through, and hid the Petrel's eyes completely.

In this disguise, he went out in his kayak to find a wife.

In a skin-covered tent beside the sea there lived a beautiful girl named Sedna, who had many brothers but no sisters, and her father was a widower. Many men had come to her to ask her to marry them — men from her own tribe and other tribes but Sedna refused to marry. She was as proud in her way as the Petrel and could find no man who pleased her.

Then the Petrel came, appearing as a handsome stranger in a beautiful sealskin parka. Instead of bringing his kayak up onto the beach, he stayed in it at the edge of the surf and called out to Sedna to come to him. This interested Sedna, as no other suitor had done such a thing, but she would not go to him.

Then he began to sing to her.

*"Come to me,
Come into the land of the birds
Where there is never hunger,
Where my tent is made of beautiful skins.
You will have a necklace of ivory
And sleep in the skins of bears.
Your lamps will be always filled with oil
And your pot with meat."*

The song was so beautiful that Sedna could not refuse. She packed her belongings in a sealskin bag; she stepped out of the tent and she walked down across the beach and got into the stranger's kayak. They sailed out over the sea, away from Sedna's home and her father and her brothers.

The Petrel made a home for Sedna on the rocky cliff. Every day he caught fish for her, telling her that they were young seals, and for a while Sedna was happy, because the Petrel had enchanted her. But one day the Petrel's spectacles fell off and for the first time Sedna looked into her husband's eyes. In that moment the spell was broken. She realized all at once that she was married to a bird, and she saw that her home was a nest on a barren cliff. For the first time she felt the sting of the sea spray and the lashing winds.

Sedna wept with grief and despair, and the Petrel, although he loved her, could not console her.

Reading Comprehension #14015

In the meantime, Sedna's father and brothers had grown more and more lonely with no woman to cook their meat and sew their clothing and keep the oil burning in their lamps. They set out in their boat in the direction that the stranger had taken Sedna.

When they came to the cliff where Sedna lived, the Petrel was away hunting, and Sedna was alone. When she saw her family, she went running down to them, weeping, and in a rush told them all that had happened to her. Her brothers immediately lifted her into the boat and they began paddling as rapidly as possible back toward their own coast

They had not been gone long when the Petrel returned to the nest. He looked everywhere for Sedna, and he called for her, his cry a long and lonely sound of the sea. Other Petrels answered him; they told him where Sedna had gone. Spreading his wings, he soared out over the sea and was soon flying over the boat that was carrying Sedna back to her home. This made the brothers nervous, and they paddled faster. As they skimmed over the water, the Petrel became angry. He began to beat his wings against the wind, making it whirl and shriek, and making the waves leap higher and higher. In minutes the sea was black with storm, and the waves so wild that the boat was in danger of turning over. Then Sedna's brothers and father realized that the Petrel was such a powerful spirit that even the sea was angry because his bride was being taken from him. They decided that they must sacrifice Sedna to the sea in order to save their own lives. They picked her up and threw her into the icy water.

Sedna, blue with cold, came up to the surface and grabbed at that the side of the boat with fingers that were turning to ice. Her brothers, out of their minds with fear, hit at her hands with a paddle, and her fingertips broke off like icicles and fell back into the sea, where they turned into seals and swam away. Coming up again, Sedna tried once more to catch hold of the boat, and again her brothers hit at her hands with the paddle. The second joints of her fingers, breaking off and falling into the water, turned into ojuk, ground seals. Two more times Sedna attempted to take hold of the boat, and each time her terrified brothers hit her hands, and the third joints of her fingers turned into walruses and the thumbs became whales. Then Sedna sank to the bottom of the sea. The storm died down, and the brothers finally brought their boat to land, but a great wave followed them and drowned all of them.

Sedna became a powerful spirit, in control of the sea creatures who sprang from her fingers. Sometimes she sends storms and wrecks kayaks. The people fear her, and hold ceremonies in her honour, and on especially serious occasions — as when she causes famines by keeping the seals from being caught by the hunters — the angakok, or conjurer, goes on a spirit journey to Sedna 's home at the bottom of the sea to arrange her hair.

Sedna wears her hair in two braids, each as thick as an arm, but since she has no fingers, she cannot plait her own hair, and this is the service she appreciates most of all. So when the angakok comes to her and arranges her hair for her, she is so grateful that she sends some of the seals and other animals to the hunters so that they may have food.

Haviland, Virginia. The Faber Book of North American Legends, London, Faber and Faber, 1979, pp 60-64

Practice Exercise 19 C

Legends

C. Answer the questions.

1. Place the events in the correct order. Write the correct number beside each letter.

- a. ___ The Petrel looked for a human wife.
- b. ___ The Petrel drops his glasses and the spell is broken.
- c. ___ The Petrel changed into a human.
- d. ___ Sedna's family rescues her.
- e. ___ The Petrel brought Sedna to his nest.
- f. ___ Sedna becomes a powerful spirit.

2. Write **T** beside true statements, and write **F** beside false statements.

- a. ___ Petrels live in the biggest nests.
- b. ___ Sedna's father sold her to the Petrel.
- c. ___ Sedna's thumbs turn into whales.
- d. ___ The wind knocked Sedna from the boat.
- e. ___ Sedna likes to have her teeth brushed.
- f. ___ The petrel sang to Sedna the first time they met.

Practice Exercise 20 A

Tales

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly.
- Predict what the story is about.
- Think of questions to answer while you read.
- Read the story once without stopping.
- Read the story again carefully.

The Vanishing Hitchhiker

Told by Pauline Caughtry and Cyndi Burns

Joel Harris was driving home one night from a business trip, and as he was driving it began to rain. To make matters worse he was very tired, and as he was driving along he noticed a flash of white, and as he got closer he realized that it was a young girl in a white party dress. She was wet and she was crying, so he stopped to ask her if she wanted a ride, and when he did she said thank you, she'd love one, so she got in the back seat. He offered her his jacket because she was shivering and when he got to the place where she had told him to stop at, he turned around to ask if this was the right place, and she was gone.

He realized that she must have jumped out of the car when he got to the house, and ran in. So he went up to the door and knocked on it. An old lady answered the door and asked what he wanted. Joel asked, "Do you have a daughter named Linda?" The lady answered, "Yes, but she died ten years ago in a car accident on her way home from a party." So Joel told her the story of how he picked Linda up on the freeway and drove her home. He expected the lady to call him crazy or mad, but instead she just said: "I know. It happened many times before. It seems she is trying to get home. Her grave is in Oakville Cemetery a couple of miles up the road." So Joel got into his car and went down to the cemetery. When he looked around he finally found Linda's tombstone, and lying neatly folded on top of her tombstone was Joel's jacket.

Practice Exercise 20 B

Tales

B. Answer the questions.

1. What characteristics of a tale are present in this story?

2. Write a paragraph summarizing the events of the story.

Journalism

What is journalism?

Journalism refers to the writing of material specifically for the purpose of being published in a newspaper, magazine, or similar type of reading material. Newspapers and magazines are really businesses. Newspaper and magazines are expected to publish factual and objective stories. This means providing details about the who, what, where, when, why, and how. This not always the case.

How to read newspapers and periodicals

As a reader, you need to keep this in mind because it may influence the content, value, or message a newspaper or magazine contains. For example, if several banks regularly purchase a lot of advertising space in a newspaper, the newspaper may contain more articles on about financial issues, place stories about the banks on the first or second page, and include stories which portray the banks in the more positive way. The best way to discover if a newspaper does this is to read the paper over a period of time. Check to see who the advertisers are, whether related stories are covered frequently, and where the stories are placed. You may want to compare newspapers to see if there are differences.

Even if advertiser influence is minimal, writers often write biased or slanted articles consciously or unconsciously. If a writer feels strongly about a topic, he or she may write a slanted article to convince you to think or act a specific way. Use your basic reading skills to read critically. This means:

- Sorting facts from opinions
- Recognizing facts
- Making logical conclusions
- Finding main ideas
- Recognizing faulty thinking
- Recognizing bias

What types of journalism are there?

Newspapers and magazines (periodicals) are the most common types of publications. Despite their differences, they have many similarities. Look at the tables outlining the parts, content, and purpose of each section.

Magazines		
Part	Content	Purpose
Front Page	Title and highlights	Interest
Table of Contents	Lists contents	Assist reader
Editorial	Editorial Letters to the editor	Persuade Inform Entertain
Feature Articles	Longer high interest articles	Entertain Inform
Columns	Shorter, regular expository or persuasive articles	Entertain Inform Persuade
Ads	Paid ads	Sell Persuade

Newspapers		
Part	Content	Purpose
1. Masthead	Name of newspaper Editorial information Subscription information	Identify newspaper Contact information
2. Index	Listing of parts	Assist readers
3. Front Page	Important news Human interest stories	Capture attention
4. Editorial Page	Editorial Letters to the editor Political cartoons Opinion columns	Persuade Inform Entertain
5. Section: Sports	News Scores Profiles Schedules	Entertain Inform
6. Section: Finance & Business	Stock Market report Business news Profiles Projections	Inform Entertain
7. Section: Classified	Paid Ads Obituaries Announcements	Sell Inform
8. Section: Arts & Leisure	Schedules & reviews Advice Columns Comics Fashion Health Travel	Entertain Inform
9. Section: Weather	Forecasts Related articles	Inform
10. Advertisements	Paid ads	
11. Other	Other news articles	Sell Persuade Entertain and Inform

Practice Exercise 21 A, B

Newspaper Article

A. Find a newspaper article which interests you.

B. Answer the questions.

1. Name the newspaper.

2. Write the title of the article. Is the title appropriate?

3. Summarize the story in a paragraph.

4. Does the article use biased language or a slanted approach? Give examples.

Practice Exercise 21 B

Newspaper Article

5. Does the story deserve the attention the newspaper has given it? Why or why not?

6. What are your thoughts and feelings about the article?
