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Preface

Intended Audience: University or college students studying English as a foreign language at the Advanced 1 or exit level in BA programs.

Purpose: To help students acquire the necessary skills for reading academic texts in English at the tertiary level.

The Authors: Experienced teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) who have been working in the field for many years. In addition, we have taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL), at all levels. The three of us are (bilingual) native speakers of English with advanced academic degrees.

Why we wrote this book: To fill a perceived need for a textbook aimed specifically at our students, who are:

- ◆ Learners of English as a foreign language at the tertiary level
- ◆ Living and studying in a non-English speaking environment
- ◆ Obligated to read academic texts in English for their B.A.

To the best of our knowledge, British and American textbooks focus on ESL (English as a Second Language, i.e. for students who live in an English speaking country) so those textbooks are not suitable for our students. On the other hand, books published here in Israel for the university level generally concentrate on long texts, yet do not focus enough on skills needed to deal with such texts.

We therefore decided to write a book that would fulfill both the needs of our students and those who teach them. This book is based on extensive use in the classroom. *ACES* has been piloted by a number of teachers and many of their comments have been incorporated. Although *ACES* reflects our styles of teaching, we hope it is flexible enough to be used by instructors with different pedagogical approaches who can pick and choose the topics best suited to them.

Rationale: Explanations are kept short and immediately followed by examples and short exercises that target the skill to maximize learning while giving students a clear plan of action. This book is **not** intended to be a comprehensive grammar book, but rather a 'user-friendly' guide to reading comprehension in English.

Summary Vocabulary Exercise

The vocabulary words in the above short passages give a brief overview of much of what the course will teach. For example, making words negative by adding a prefix: unavoidable (III B), inaccurate (VI B) or synonyms such as target and goal (V A) or wide and broad (VII A).

Write the letter of the explanation in the box next to the word.

	1) acquire	A	consequence/ actually will happen
	2) attitude	B	decide
	3) deficiency	C	get
	4) determine	D	grow up/become adult
	5) expect	E	identify/ familiar with
	6) implication	F	lack
	7) mature	G	remember
	8) recall	H	subject
	9) recognition	I	think will happen
	10) topic	J	what you think about something

*Jaques: All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.*

[infant, schoolboy, teenager, young man, middle aged, old man, senility & death]

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

(As You Like It Act 2, scene 7, 139–143)



Education is a journey, not a race.

Different Ways of Reading (How Do You Read?)

How do you read - what do you physically do? Do you start at the beginning and read every word? How do you read the telephone book, movie page, etc.? Clearly, you move your eyes quickly over the page until you find a word or words that you are looking for (searching for specific details). This is sometimes called "**scanning**." How do you read the newspaper? Most likely you read the headlines and maybe secondary headlines to see if the story interests you. How do you look for articles that you might need for your seminar paper or oral presentation? You probably read title(s) and the abstract. This is often called "**skimming**."

In academic reading, it is beneficial to read in a special way. First, you want to get a general impression of the text. Only after that do you want more details. This general reading is frequently called "**global reading**". This type of reading is done much faster than normal reading. People read this way when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. Use this technique when you want to see if an article may be of interest to you. We will discuss global reading in greater detail later on, when we incorporate skimming and scanning as part of an overall global reading strategy.

This general understanding may be enough for your purposes. However, if you need a deeper understanding of the text (like in this course!) you have to continue with another technique which is called "**critical reading**". This is when you want to compare, evaluate, criticize, and contrast ideas presented in an article. In other words, this is the hard part - where you have to think!

Making your way through a complicated text can be compared to looking for something underwater. If you lost a ring in a pool, you probably would not dive straight in. You would swim along the surface until you see the ring and then go underwater to retrieve it. In a similar way, when looking for something specific, use subtitles, first sentences and other clues to help you find the best place to "dive in" and grab that information.

The technique you choose depends on your purpose in reading. To be an efficient reader you must learn to use different approaches for different purposes.

Exercise 1: Write **global / scan / skim /critical** for how you should read each item.

1. To answer close reading questions on a test _____
2. Background text for a lecture in class _____
3. A train timetable (schedule) _____
4. Final paper for a course _____
5. List of sites after a Google search on-line _____
6. To find an article you want to read in a newspaper _____
7. To get general info from that article in the newspaper _____
8. To decide if you agree with the ideas presented in that article _____

How to Approach a New Text

There are many approaches you should be aware of and whatever works best for you is what you should use. However, if the strategy you are accustomed to using doesn't work (perhaps the reason you are taking this English course!), **do not continue with that strategy**. Be open and try a new strategy even if, at first, it is difficult for you. You should be aware that different types of articles may require different strategies.

The goal is to get as much information as possible as quickly and easily as possible. It **is** possible to learn something about a text before you actually read it. When you read articles for your own academic purposes such as writing a seminar paper, you read somewhat differently than when you are reading an article in order to answer questions. After dealing with a text, you should be able to briefly tell someone who has **not** read the article what it is about (i.e. main idea, major points, and conclusion). In other words, you should be able to summarize the article.

Step 1: Look at the title. It can usually tell us a lot about the text.

Example 1:

By Watching What Animals Eat, Experts May Find New Medicines for People

➤ This is the title of an article. From the title, we immediately see that this text will deal with animals and medicine (for people). We also see that it is by watching the animals and what they eat that perhaps researchers will find the new medicines.

Step 2: Look to see if there are any sentences directly under the title. These are sometimes called subtitles or captions.

Example 2:

Time in Our Hands

Most people in industrialized societies feel time-pressured. The problem isn't how much time we have, but rather how we use it.

➤ It is unclear what the title means exactly. The subtitle clarifies and narrows down the meaning of a somewhat ambiguous title. From the subtitle, we understand that the article will discuss how individuals in the developed world use time. (In this case it even gives us the main idea of the article.)

Step 3: Look at the abstract (if there is one). It is a short paragraph in italics which appears after the title and before the text. Abstracts usually give the main idea of the text, the major points, and the conclusion. Sometimes the author's opinion is also included.