

NON-STOP READING – A STRATEGY FOR ESL STUDENTS

When reading in any language, it is a good idea to practice reading without stopping. This means to start reading and not stop to check words or re-read sections again. You simply read and keep going, without worrying about all of the meaning.

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WHY READ NON-STOP?

- **YOU LEARN FROM THE CONTEXT:** The surrounding sentences and the ways the paragraphs are structured will give you clues about the meaning of topics discussed, even if you do not understand every word. If you keep on reading, you often find that you develop a sense of what is being talked about.
- **YOU READ MORE IN THE SAME AMOUNT OF TIME:** this will make your studying more effective and more productive.
- **IT WILL IMPROVE YOUR WRITTEN GRAMMAR - TO WRITE WELL, YOU NEED TO READ A LOT:** It is difficult to get used to the language patterns and ways in which ideas are expressed in English if you stop to check every word.
- **READING FASTER MAKES IT EASIER TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU HAVE READ.** Many people think that you have to read slowly to understand, but this is not true! If you read faster you can build your understanding of the subject better because you are seeing the ideas in relation to the whole text rather trying to understand one sentence at a time.

HOW TO LEARN TO READ NON-STOP:

- First of all, try this on reading material which is not important - not study reading. Select an easy novel or a magazine.
- Try reading for ten minutes non-stop. Try this several times during a week or two. Once you get used to this amount of reading, try gradually increasing the number of minutes you spend reading non-stop. You could set a timer to help yourself keep track of the time.
- When you don't understand a word, just continue. If it is important it will probably be repeated. Each time you see it you will get more clues about what it means. If you really want, you can look it up, but only after you have finished reading.
- When you have finished reading, tell yourself out loud all that you remember of what you read. Putting it into words will help you connect the ideas and help your understanding.
- When you are used to reading non-stop you can try it on study reading material. Use it as the "reading" stage of your study reading approach (See handout on PQRST).