

READING SKILLS

Worksheet

Strategies for effective reading



READING TIP

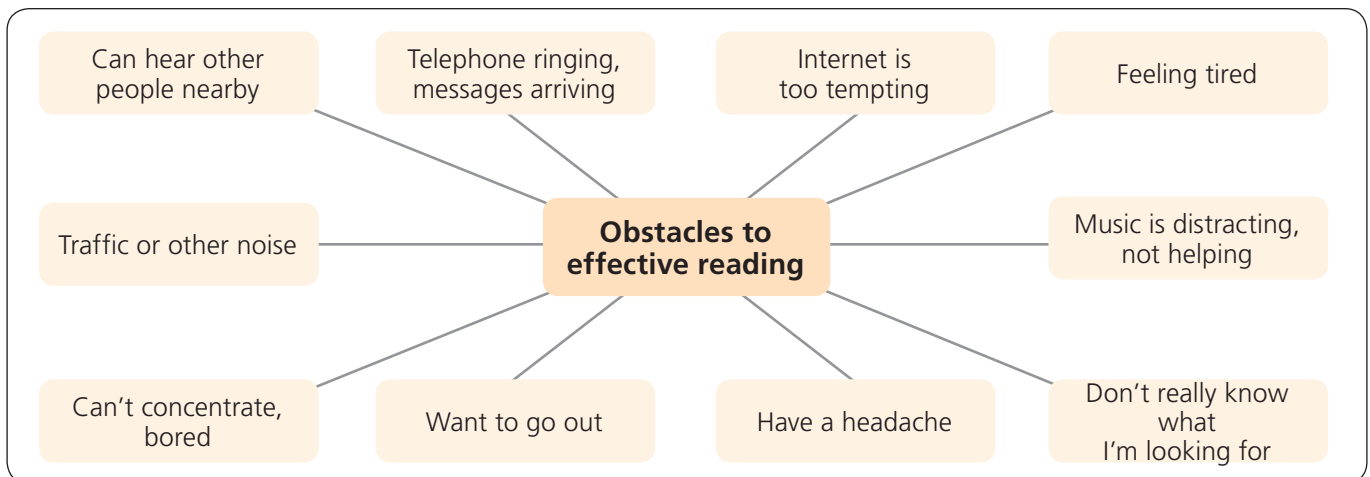
STUDY SKILLS: Read texts effectively

To get the best out of reading, be clear about what you hope to gain from the text, what specific information you want from the text (statistics, facts, dates, etc.). Start by skim-reading the article then read it word by word.

This Reading Worksheet is about how to read effectively. Here, you will have the opportunity to practise the different strategies.

Practice

1 Look at the mind map below. Discuss which of the things have happened to you when you are supposed to be studying.



Now imagine that after every obstacle in the mind map, it says **Solution:** _____
What can you suggest? List as many possible solutions as you can.

e.g. If the problem is that you can hear other people nearby, you could ask them to be quiet, or you (or they) could move to another room. Alternatively you could put headphones on.

2 Tick the things you have to do regularly when you read as part of your studies.

- a Decide whether a book is worth reading.
- b Find the writer's main points.
- c Follow and understand a difficult argument.
- d Decide whether an article is worth reading.
- e Locate any references to studies, statistics or surveys.
- f Understand why the writer chose to use a specific word or phrase.
- g Look for mistakes or false/unsubstantiated statements.

3 Match the boxes you ticked to the strategies you need in order to do them effectively. Compare your answers with a partner.

- Use titles and other information to predict the content.
- Skim or speed-read to get a general idea what it's about.
- Scan a text for specific information.
- Read closely.

e.g. *I regularly have to decide whether a book is worth reading, and for that I need to skim or speed-read.*

4 Look at the heading and the photographs. Predict what you expect to read about.

Is it wrong to digitally edit photos?

Digital editing has become a routine practice in photography. It has been part of photography since the beginning. Software available today allows amateur and professional photographers to alter images in a variety of ways. These include correcting background lighting, removing unwanted details and changing the way people look. Photoshop is the most used image editing software and is considered an industry standard.

Editing photos isn't new. One of the earliest examples of photo manipulation is a portrait of Abraham Lincoln from the 1860s. It is actually a photo of President Lincoln's head on the body of Senator John C. Calhoun. Unlike today, photographers 150 years ago only had very basic technology. Photos were altered by hand, using paint, ink and scissors.

Over the past 30 years, there have been many controversial cases of digital manipulation. The first one of note was the infamous pyramid cover on a *National Geographic* magazine in 1982. The magazine had a horizontal photo of the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt but wanted to put it on a vertical cover. So the photo was altered by moving the pyramids closer together, creating a visual 'lie'. The resulting negative publicity damaged the magazine's credibility. This was the first in a long list of misleading images that serious news magazines and papers have continued to publish over the years.

In June 1994, a photograph of the famous black American footballer OJ Simpson appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine soon after his arrest for murder. The photograph caused a scandal. Critics accused the magazine of digitally altering the original photograph to change its meaning. They claimed that by darkening the photo, the magazine had made Simpson look more sinister and like a criminal. The magazine quickly withdrew the image from the cover and replaced it with the original unaltered photograph.

The fashion industry has also been criticized for its heavy use of digital manipulation. Many images in fashion adverts and magazines have been digitally altered to achieve the ideal body shape or to create impossibly smooth skin. One criticism of this type of digital editing is that it creates impossible standards of beauty. Many celebrities are unhappy about the extent of photo manipulation, including actress Kate Winslet. In 2003, she became the first to take action against a magazine for digitally altering her body to make it unrealistically thin without her permission.



5 Skim the text to check your answer to Exercise 4. Spend up to a minute (but no more).

6 Scan the text to find the significance of the photographs. Again, you shouldn't need more than a minute for this.

7 Now read more closely to find answers to the following:

- a When did digital editing become routine? _____
- b Which software is the most commonly used? _____
- c How were photos altered in the old days? _____
- d What was wrong with the photo of the pyramids? _____

Reflect

8 Think about the strategies you have discussed on this Worksheet. Number the following according to how much they can help you (with number 1 as the most useful).

- a Adjust the light in your room, or move the desk nearer a window.
- b Stop listening to music while studying.
- c Do more skimming and scanning.
- d Reward myself after a period of intensive reading.
- e Practise using the photos/headings/titles to predict contents.
- f Take more notes, or highlight/underline texts more.
- g Change the time I read (e.g. get up earlier to read in the mornings).
- h Switch off my phone, and avoid social media.
- i Select texts quickly; read for detail more slowly.
- j Have shorter reading sessions with clearer objectives.