

Student name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

FOCUS


Speed-reading

The faster you read, the more time you save, therefore allowing you to read more. Try these techniques and see if they improve your reading speed. But remember to always monitor how your comprehension of a text is affected by how fast you read.

- 1 Before reading the whole text, read any headings and the first and last sentences. This will give you an idea of the main themes, allowing you to predict the content.
- 2 As you read, try not to 'hear' each word in your head as this will slow you down. Occupy your mouth with something else like chewing gum or humming. Alternatively, listen to music as you read.
- 3 Don't focus on one word at a time. Try relaxing your face and moving the text slightly further from your eyes. This should allow you to focus on groups of words at a time instead of individual words.
- 4 Force yourself to read more quickly by pulling a piece of card down the text as you read, covering the lines you have already read. This will stop you from going back to reread sections. The speed at which you move the card will determine how fast you read.

In *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 5, you learn about speed-reading strategies in Unit 12. This **Worksheet** gives you the opportunity to practise different strategies.

Practice

- 1  You have 20 seconds. Look at the picture, read the heading, and read the first and last sentence of the text. Then cover the text and discuss with a partner what you learnt about it.



Cyberbullying is a serious problem that needs serious action.

According to the Cyberbullying Research Centre, one in four teenagers say they have been bullied more than once in their lifetime. Sadly, 40% of those who are bullied never tell anyone about what is happening. Too often, parents and schools are unaware of the bullying until the situation reaches crisis point.

Bullying, especially if it takes place over long periods of time, can have a long-lasting impact on mental health. In study after study, cyberbullying has been linked to depression and anxiety. We have all seen horrific press reports of youngsters who have been so traumatized by cyberbullying that they have committed suicide as a direct result of the abuse.

Enough is enough. It's time to protect our children from cyberbullies. I believe we need tough laws to deal with the worst cases, and schools that will take tough action against online abusers. But our schools also need to teach young people why it's wrong to bully, how it hurts other people and what they can do to stop it. Clearly, if we want lasting change, we need to fix society's cyberbullying problem before the bullying happens.

- 2 Read the whole text in Exercise 1, but use your finger to follow the words. Do not go back and reread anything, and try to avoid moving your mouth. How right were you in your assessment in Exercise 1?

3 Read part of a transcript from C21 English for the 21st Century, Level 4, and time how long it takes you to find the following:

- The three basic ideas behind mindfulness.
- The main benefits of mindfulness.

Today, there are mindfulness sessions in many workplaces, and it's even practised in some schools with children as young as five. But what does it involve? It can be summarized in three main ideas. Firstly, being mindful means living in the present moment, not regretting the past or worrying about the future. In other words, being aware of now. Secondly, with mindfulness you notice the thoughts going through your mind. You don't judge these thoughts as bad or wrong, you simply notice them. Thirdly, you pay attention to everything you are experiencing. You actually taste the food you eat, you feel how your body moves as you walk, run or swim.

So, what are the benefits of mindfulness? Well, there are many. It improves concentration and it reduces stress and depression. It has even been shown to boost the immune system. In other words, mindfulness can help us fight diseases and infections.

Admittedly, there have been some criticisms of mindfulness. Nothing is perfect. Some people have found that concentrating on their thoughts has not always been positive. After all, not all thoughts are nice, and sometimes they can be painful; they can make people uncomfortable. Then there are the people who find mindfulness too difficult. As with any skill, learning can be frustrating, especially at the beginning of the process.

4 Read the text below as quickly as you can. Use a piece of card or the edge of a book to cover each line as you read it. Then, with the text fully covered, see how well you can complete the table of information.

The Greek War of Independence

The Greek War of Independence lasted approximately ten years from 1821 to 1831. It was a war fought by the Greeks to gain their independence from the Ottoman Empire, and it culminated in the Treaty of Constantinople in 1832 with the formation of Greece as a free country. Britain and Russia officially joined in the struggle and, because Greece had such a glorious past, there were many sympathizers from

abroad who were prepared to publicize, finance or even fight in the war. Together with France, Britain and Russia appointed a Bavarian prince to be the head of state in the newly founded country. The boundaries were fixed by the treaty mentioned above. Over the course of the next 100 or so years, these boundaries were gradually refined until Greece occupied the area it does today, with the last group of islands becoming officially Greek again in 1947.

Dates of the War of Independence:	a _____
Who the Greeks were fighting:	b _____
Date of the Treaty of Constantinople:	c _____
Three countries that helped Greece:	d _____
Three ways foreigners helped in the war:	e _____
Origin of the new head of state:	f _____
Most recent change to the Greek border:	g _____

Reflect

5 Based on the exercises you have done in this Worksheet, mark the following 1–6 according to how well they suit your speed-reading style (1 = the most suitable; 6 = unsuitable).

- using photos, headings, etc., as clues to predict content ☐
- reading the first and last sentence of a long paragraph or text to understand gist ☐
- skimming or scanning a text to build up a mind map or get the main information ☐
- using a finger/pen/pencil to follow the words and not going back to reread anything ☐
- covering up text as you read so you don't go back and reread ☐
- consciously not moving your mouth as you read ☐