

Teacher's notes

Strategies for effective reading

Warm up

Remind students of the work they have already done on effective reading (CB Unit 6A).

- Ask them to look at the mind map on the **Worksheet** and tell you which of the things they have experienced. Encourage as many students as possible to participate. If a lot of students mention a number of these obstacles, ask them if it's possible that we sometimes find excuses not to study.
- Ask students to suggest solutions for each obstacle. They may well mention some of the things that are going to be covered in the **Worksheet**.
- Ask students to tick the boxes that apply to them. Give any help needed with explaining the points.
- Refer students to the four strategies listed (which are also on the **Factsheet**). Explain that the other strategy listed on the **Factsheet** (being clear about your objectives) is more specific to each student and their studies.
- Go through the example sentence and point to the relevant places where each idea is taken from.

Using the Factsheet

There are three possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the **Factsheet** before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the **Worksheet**. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the **Factsheet** and answer any questions
- 2 Give students the **Factsheet** at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.
- 3 Focus on the **Worksheet** in the lesson, then give students the **Factsheet** at the end of the lesson, so they can take it home and keep it as a reference or revision tool.

Theory to practice

Encourage students to be aware of the timing here. This will help them realize how little time they need to find certain information. The four questions each equate to one of the strategies listed on the **Factsheet**. When students have finished, make sure they are aware that they have practised the following:

Question 1: Predicting

Question 2: Skimming

Question 3: Scanning

Question 4: Reading for detail

Possible answers

- 1 Ways to improve your memory.
- 2 Students' own answers.
- 3
 - Using new information when you speak or write
 - Doing word puzzles or games
- 4 Highlighting; underlining; copying; using new information when you speak or write; doing word puzzles or games; knowing you will be asked to teach it to someone else; using the information soon after learning it.

Using the Worksheet

Practice

- 1 **Look at the heading and the photographs. Predict what you expect to read about.**
 - Point out that students are going to practise the strategy of predicting using a text from *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 4. Don't enter into long discussions here because students should get used to quickly using the context in order to help them predict the content. Even if their predictions are wrong, they will have successfully prepared their minds for the next stage.
 - Elicit an answer similar to: *Digital editing of photos and the ethics behind it.*
 - You might like to point out that not all texts will fulfil the promise of their headings, but using the information to predict the content is a vital strategy to begin with.

2 Skim the text to check your answer to Exercise 1. Spend up to a minute (but no more).

- Explain that this second exercise practises the strategy of skimming. Be strict about the timing and don't allow more than a minute for students to check.
- Their answers will vary depending on what they answered to Exercise 1, but they will now have a very general idea of what the text is about.

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

- Explain the task. Give students exactly one minute to find the reference to the photographs. Tell them that this is the strategy of scanning.

Answer

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.

4 Now read more closely to find answers to the following.

- This is practising the strategy of closer reading for detail, so allow students as long as they need for this – they should be encouraged to take their time over these questions.
- When everyone is ready, elicit suggestions.

Answers

- a It has been part of photography since the beginning.
- b Photoshop.
- c By hand, using paint, ink and scissors.
- d The photo was altered by moving the pyramids closer together, creating a visual 'lie'.

Reflect

5 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).

- Go through the list and make sure students understand that these points can all help with effective reading, though some are more useful than others.
- Explain that we are all different and we all have different needs, strengths and weaknesses. That is why there are no right or wrong answers to this task.
- Encourage students to compare their answers with others, and then to discuss the importance of each one.
- Remind students that they can save a lot of time if they know what they are looking for. This makes it easy to look at titles/headings (especially longer ones) and decide at a glance if they are likely to find what they need. The contents pages, index, headings, diagrams and illustrations all help in deciding how useful a resource might be.
- Some students might need reminding of different ways to mark a text so that they don't lose vital information once they find it. Ask them about their use of pen/pencil/highlighter on texts. Get them to share techniques. For texts which they don't want to mark, ask them what they do (elicit or prompt with Post-it notes, slips of paper inside the pages of a book, photocopies, separate notes on a piece of paper, voice recorders, etc.).
- Writing key questions about a text often helps to bring students' concentration into focus. Ask your class if anyone has ever tried this. How about writing a brief summary – do your students think this is a good idea?
- Good conditions are important, including comfortable seating, the right temperature and adequate lighting. The right time of day and the use of music are very personal to each individual. Just remind your students to be honest with themselves and to ask questions like *Am I really reading effectively at this moment or am I too distracted?* or *What have I achieved in the last hour?* or *Was I more productive in the morning or the afternoon yesterday?* For some students, this strategy – of self-examination – might be the most effective of all.