

Speed Reading Excellence

A Fresh, Easy, Fast and Unique Approach
To Significantly Increase Your
Reading Speed,
Comprehension & Recall

Mazen Kilani



Copyright © 2003 Kilani Excellence

Table of Contents

Module I: Speed Reading Program Introduction

- Chapter 1: Reading as a Holistic Experience
- Chapter 2: Amazing Readers Habits
- Chapter 3: Memory is Reading's Best Friend
- Chapter 4: Exercises Methodology
- Chapter 5: Exercises Framework
- Chapter 6: Speed Reading Tools

Module II: Speed Reading Techniques

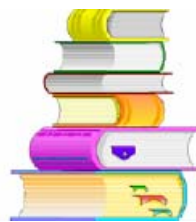
- Chapter 7: Eyes, Hands & Brains
- Chapter 8: Reading Backwards Naturally
- Chapter 9: Double Vision Going Forward
- Chapter 10: Turns & Slides
- Chapter 11: Gliders, Broomsticks & Binoculars
- Chapter 12: Advancing Your Techniques

Module III: Comprehension & Recall

- Chapter 13: Comprehension in the Fast Lane
- Chapter 14: Paragraphs Are Reading's Currency
- Chapter 15: Vocabulary Your Secret Weapon

Module IV: Real-World Workouts

- Chapter 16: Workout 1: Forward Underline Technique
- Chapter 17: Workout 2: Turns, Slides & Double Forward
- Chapter 18: Workout 3: Paragraph & Page Overview Techniques



No part of this e-book may be used or reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system without written permission of the author.

Module I: Speed Reading Introduction

Chapter 1

Reading as a Holistic Experience

Welcome

Welcome to Speed Reading Excellence. You are about to start a journey of discovery and learning that is unique, exciting and will have a significant impact on the enjoyment of your literary and textual world.

Approach

Reading Excellence is a holistic approach to reading, emphasizing of the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts. Reading is, generally, to examine and understand the meaning of textual characters, symbols, words and sentences. The Reading Excellence programme focuses on the whole textual reading experience and the interdependence of all its parts.

Our Textual World

Text can be written, printed, displayed or exhibited. Written text is usually by hand on a physical medium, as in writing an essay or note on a paper. Printed text is usually in physical hard-copy material, as in books, newspapers and magazines. Displayed text is usually in soft-copy form on a screen, as in a computer monitor, a PDA (Pocket PC, Palm) or a mobile phone. Exhibited text is usually in physical form on signs, billboards, large advertisements using different medium (neon, lights, etc.)

The Reading Experience

There are usually 4 parties to a reading experience: The reader, the reading material, the reading activity and the environment. Enhancing the reading experience means optimising each party to it. The reader will read more effectively (doing the right things) and efficiently (doing things right). The reading material will be prepared and structured to facilitate ease, enjoyment and achieving the purpose of reading. The reading activity will maximise the interaction between the reader and the reading material. The environment will be set to provide the reader the best surroundings for comfort, comprehension and concentration.

The basic characteristics of each party of the reading experience are:

The Reader

The reader's reading habits would have normally been formed from early school days. Depending on how your primary schooling addressed early reading, you most probably have forgotten when was the last time you actually examined your reading habits, or even considered whether your reading speed is 'average' or below/above average. Most often than not, your comprehension and/or recall of the reading material has not been tested or measured.

The reader will also establish the purpose of reading, or have the purpose imposed on him/her. Naturally, reading for pleasure or enjoyment has a different focus than reading for exams, preparing summaries or analysing writing styles.

Reading during your favourite time of day, when your mind is sharp and alert, is obviously an advantage. Your general health, eyesight, posture, ability to concentrate and avoid interruptions and distractions will also benefit your reading.

The Reading Material

The reading material reflects the writers/authors style, experience and mastery of language. Therefore, the material may either be enhanced or worsened by the writer's ability, difficulty level of the vocabulary, the complexity of the language and the structuring (or lack thereof) of the sentences and paragraphs. All these factors will impact the reader's comprehension, retention and subsequent recall of the reading material.

The Environment

The environment of the reading experience encompasses the place, the time and the reader. Reading in a noisy, public place may not contribute to concentration as well as a quiet, private setting. Proper lighting, neat surroundings and ergonomic chair/desk/sofa will enhance the reading experience further.

The Reading Activity

Reading effectively is to achieve the purpose of reading. The reading activity itself is a process that can be sub-divided into four main parts (that can also be sub-divided):

1. *Examination*, when you identify or recognise the textual words or characters. An example is looking at the word 'dog' and immediately identifying it as a word you have seen before
2. *Comprehension*, when you grasp the meaning of a word or group of words, usually by relating it to a previous experience or frame of reference. An example is reading that 'the dog was barking' and visualising the situation.
3. *Storage*, when you consciously record, in your memory, a fact or pointer to a fact mentally in order to remember it for future reference. An example is reading about Kilani Centre products and services and using the word 'Key' as a keyword to help you remember the fact.
4. *Recall*, when you retrieve, from your memory, what you wanted to remember of the reading material.

Reading Excellence Modules

Here is a complete list of Speed Reading Excellence module and chapters.

1. Introduction

This module is your entry point to the Speed Reading Excellence programme. The module covers the holistic nature of reading, the different habits of average and amazing readers, the exact steps to increase reading speeds, and the exercises and practice sessions methodology, framework and tools. The module is your entry point and ‘warm up’ exercise before undertaking any of the high speed multi-dimensional reading techniques, to gain optimum advantage of the chapter exercises and workouts.

<i>Module</i>	
	Speed Reading Introduction
<i>Chapter</i>	
1	Reading as a Holistic Experience
2	Amazing Readers
3	Memory is Reading’s Best Friend
4	Reading Exercises Methodology
5	Reading Exercises Framework
6	Reading Exercises Tools

2. Multi-Dimensional Reading Techniques

This module covers the essential techniques to increase speeds while reading.

- **Basic** linear reading; line by line in a ‘forward’ eye movement. A forward eye movement in reading English text is left to right along horizontal textual lines. Other languages, such as Arabic and Hebrew, have a forward eye movement from right to left. This module is recommended before trying any of the intermediate or advanced reading techniques involving backward, diagonal and vertical eye movements.
- **Intermediate** techniques to increase speeds while reading a group of lines in a ‘forward’ eye movement followed by a group of lines in a ‘backward’ eye movement. A backward eye movement in reading English text is right to left along horizontal textual lines. Other languages, such as Arabic and Hebrew, have a backward eye movement from left to right.
- **Advanced** techniques to increase speeds while reading a group of lines in a ‘forward diagonal’ eye movement followed by a group of lines in a ‘backward diagonal’ eye movement. The movements can be paragraph or page oriented.

<i>Module</i>	
	Speed Reading Techniques
<i>Chapter</i>	
7	Eyes, Hands & Brains
8	Reading Backwards Naturally
9	Double Vision Going Forward
10	Turns and Slides

11	Gliders, Broomsticks & Binoculars
12	Advancing Your Techniques

3. Comprehension, Retention and Recall

This module covers the essential techniques to increase your comprehension, retention and recall abilities while reading at high speeds. This module is recommended after completing the Introduction and the uni- (or bi-) directional reading techniques.

<i>Module</i>	
	Comprehension & Recall
<i>Chapter</i>	
13	Comprehension at High Speeds
14	Paragraphs are Reading Currency
15	Vocabulary: Your Secret Weapon

4. Workouts

This module covers the essential workouts (groups of exercises) for practicing high-speed reading, comprehension and recall techniques. This module is highly recommended after completing the corresponding chapters to ensure proper practice routines are established. EFFECTIVE speed reading must become a habit, a combination of knowledge, skill and desire, to ensure long-term benefits. Otherwise, you are more likely to revert to your 'old' reading habit and gradually lose your speed reading advantage.

<i>Module</i>		<i>Pre-Requisite Chapters</i>
IV	Workouts	
<i>Chapter</i>		
16	Workout 1	7
17	Workout 2	8+9
18	Workout 3	10+11

Chapter 2

Amazing Readers

Overview

This chapter covers two types of readers: average and amazing. The chapter will examine why 'average' readers are average and their reading habits. The focus will then shift to the techniques and habits of the amazing (high speed) readers.

The topics addressed are:

- ⊕ Average Readers
 - Why is average readers 'average'?
 - What else do we do while reading?
- ⊕ Amazing Readers
 - No magic
 - High speed reading is a habit
 - Increasing your reading speed
 - High speed reading is gradual
 - Setting your expectations
 - Skill levels: basic, intermediate, advanced, master

⊕ Average Readers

Why Are Average Readers 'Average'?

The average reading speed of an adult reader, where English is their first language, is 220 words per minute. Practically, this translates into approximately 2/3 of a printed page per minute. However, this is not the whole story. To appreciate why, we need to consider what exactly is 'reading', which is addressed in a later section.

So, how do we know what an 'average' reading speed is? The human eye can only 'see' printed or computer screen text if it is 'fixed' on it for at least a quarter of second. We have been trained since early school to read each word in a linear fashion along a printed line. So, we usually read 4 words per second (WPS); that is 240 words per minute (WPM).

However, we lose some of our reading speed due to other activities that we perform, consciously or subconsciously, while reading. These activities are detailed below, but they cost us around 10% of reading speed, on average, hence lowering our reading speed average from 240 WPM to 216 WPM (or, if rounded up, to 220 WPM). Obviously, the more time we spend on these activities, rather than reading, the slower we read.

What Else Do We Do While Reading?

Sub-vocalisation:

Sub-vocalisation is where you are 'mouthing' or saying the words to yourself as you read them. You may sub-vocalise loudly by uttering the words, silently by moving your lips or subconsciously in your mind. If you are going to sub-vocalise every word you read, then your maximum reading speed will be your maximum speaking speed, which is 150-200 words per minute.

Regression:

Regression is when you re-read some words consciously, mainly because you feel you did not understand the meaning, of the word or sentence, the first time you read them.

Back-skipping:

Back-skipping is when you re-read some of the words subconsciously, mainly because your eyes are accustomed to this reading behaviour. You may not even notice that this is how you are reading. A simple test is to ask someone to observe your eyes closely as you read (and maybe compare to the related Flash movie).

Finger Pointing:

Some readers still use their finger to read, a habit from early schooling days. This is NOT a bad habit, unless it slows the natural movement of the eyes across the page line. This can happen either by extending the fixation time on some words or obstructing some reading material by thick fingers (and hands).

Turning Pages:

Turning pages takes time. Most average readers turn the right page, in an English language book, once they reached the end (or bottom) of the page. This takes time as the fingers of the left hand, usually, fumbles trying to grip the edge of the right page, from the top or bottom of the page, and turn it.

Wandering Eyes:

Your eyes may sometimes 'wander' around the page, or off it, mainly due to a temporary lack of concentration. This could be because of distractions in your environment or your mind. Time is lost while you are trying to find where you left off and return to your linear reading.

Memorising:

If your purpose of reading is to recall some information later from the reading material, then you may be 'pausing' at some points to memorise an important fact or quote. Naturally, you will slow down your reading as your mind is 'cataloguing' the words for future recall.

Pondering:

If you encounter a new idea, quote or a word, you may pause to ponder its significance or meaning. This assessment will take time and may distract you, though temporarily, from the train of thought or rhythm of the reading material.

Other Things:

This is a 'bucket' for all other things you do while reading not mentioned above explicitly! This bucket can contain drinking coffee/tea/beverages, eating, exercising, talking to others, getting distracted by external events, and all other factors that can impact your reading speed, assuming you are trying to concentrate on an important reading material (versus casual or leisure reading).

So, can you overcome the average reader habits to become a fast reader?

⊕ Amazing Readers**No Magic**

There are no magic tricks or secret formulae that can teach you to read at high speeds, with same or better comprehension, retention and recall. Speed readers reach their objectives by diligent practice of advanced reading techniques. This practice gradually makes reading at high speeds a habit.

High Speed Reading is a Habit

Stephen Covey, in his classic *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, defines a habit as a combination of knowledge, skill and desire. Knowledge is the 'what/why', skill is the 'how' and desire is the 'want'. If you are reading this far, I can assume you have the desire. The Speed Reading Excellence programme will provide you the knowledge of what needs to be done and guide you through acquiring and developing the skill of how to read faster and more effectively and efficiently.

Increasing Your Reading Speed

Achieving high reading speeds is developing the following abilities into a new habit:

1. Eliminate Bad Reading Habits (e.g. regression, sub-vocalisation)
2. Use Reading Accelerators Efficiently (e.g. hand, pointer)
3. Master Mechanical Movements (e.g. turning pages, scrolling)
4. Increase Horizontal Vision Span (see more line words per eye fixation)
5. Increase Vertical Vision Span (see more lines per eye fixation)
6. Optimise Eye Movements in All Directions (forward, backward, diagonal)
7. Optimise Concentration and Comprehension (understand better what you read)
8. Optimise Retention and Recall (remember more of what you read)
9. Apply Preparation Techniques (e.g. skimming, scanning, preview)
10. Understand Writing Styles (e.g. fiction and non-fiction)
11. Understand Writing Structures (e.g. paragraphs)
12. Improve Vocabulary

High Speed Reading is Gradual

Your high speed reading targets must be realistic and you should aim to achieve them gradually. The simple fact is that you will not, with all good intentions, increase your reading speeds ten fold by attending a course, reading a book or going through all the Speed Reading Excellence programme modules in one day. This is the equivalent of expecting a Schwarzenegger physique after a day at the Gym.

Setting Your Expectations

It is very important that you have the right expectations of how fast you can read. As a guide, and knowing that everybody is unique in their abilities and willingness to practice, you can hope to achieve the following high speed reading levels:

1. Basic Level: up to 500 words per minute
2. Intermediate up to 1,200 words per minute
3. Advanced Level: up to 2,400 words per minute
4. Master Level: above 2,400+ words per minute

Basic Level Skills

To achieve Basic Level, you need to acquire the following skills:

- Eliminate Bad Reading Habits (e.g. regression, sub-vocalisation)
- Increase Horizontal Vision Span (see more line words per eye fixation)
- Increase Vertical Vision Span (see more lines per eye fixation)
- Use Reading Accelerators Efficiently (e.g. hand, pointer)
- Master Mechanical Movements (e.g. turning pages, scrolling)

Intermediate Level Skills

To achieve Intermediate Level, you need to acquire all Basic Level skills and the following:

- Optimise Eye Movements in All Directions (forward, backward, diagonal)
- Optimise Concentration and Comprehension (understand better what you read)
- Optimise Retention and Recall (remember more of what you read)

Advanced Level Skills

To achieve Advanced Level, you need to acquire all Intermediate Level skills and the following:

- Apply Preparation Techniques (e.g. skimming, scanning, preview)
- Understand Writing Styles (e.g. fiction and non-fiction)
- Understand Writing Structures (e.g. paragraphs)
- Improve Vocabulary

Master Level Skills

To achieve Master Level, you need to practice to perfection all skills mentioned above, as well as develop your own unique style.