

# Extensive Reading and Writing



Writing Journals  
and Book Reviews

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In this module you will look at the following:

- *what a journal is*
- *why people keep journals*
- *what sort of things people write about*
- *fast writing*
- *why, where, when and how people read*
- *what things people read*
- *different types of books: non-fiction and fiction*
- *what you like to read*
- *techniques for better reading*
- *how to read faster*
- *what's in a book review*
- *a book review by a learner*
- *how to write book reviews*

# What is Extensive Reading and Writing?

a. Look up 'extensive' in the dictionary. Write down the definition.

b. Can you guess what extensive reading is? What about extensive writing?

c. What do you think are the benefits of extensive reading and writing?

extensive reading	extensive writing

## 1. What is a journal?

### DISCUSSION

- a. Do you know the words 'journal' or 'diary'?
- Do you write in a journal?
- Have you ever kept a journal?
- In what language?
- How often do/did you write?
- What do/did you write about?



### ACTIVITY

- b. Interview three learners, and complete the chart.

	Learner 1	Learner 2	Learner 3
Have you ever kept a journal?			
Do you keep a journal now?			
What language do/did/would you write your journal in?			
How often do/did/would you write?			
What do/did/would you write about?			
Why do/did/would you keep a journal?			
What do/did/would you like and dislike about keeping a journal?			

## 2. Looking at journal entries

### EXERCISE

a. Look at the journal entry, and answer these questions:

- 1) What is it about?  
Make a list of topics.
- 2) Is it interesting to read? Why/why not?
- 3) Who do you think this person is?  
What do you know about this person?
- 4) Are there any grammar or spelling mistakes in this journal entry?  
Is this important? Why/why not?

**Tuesday, August 3**

Now we have an English class in our hospital and I am one of the trainee in this class. I would like to attend this class to improve my English.

Now I can say that we have a good teacher who are teaching us very clear and simple. But after it will be difficult or not I am not sure.

Even I know this class will useful for me, but sometimes I afraid to talk in front of the people. Because my English pronunciation is very bad. So I have to practice more and more in this class and our teacher can help this kind of thing. To improve our English.

### EXERCISE

b. Work in groups. Read the five journal entries on pages 4 and 5, and complete the chart.

	What is it about?	What do you know about the writer?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

**1** This week I worked at office and make data entry. Also put some case report Pathology from new arrive of some mobile Health clinic report in to the computer with chart to show rate of disease by thousands per month. I studied my course but very difficult to fill and answer the question. So before how can I do, I need you helping and you suggestion to continue this program.

To improve my English cost I need a teacher to teach me and to do study I need one facilitator or coordinator to guide and advice me for to do it. From then I want to get more English. Also believe and hope this program if effective for me I will improve my English.

**2**

*Seven days ago my grandmother suddenly had to go to the hospital. Because she had get a stomachache at night when I wasn't at home. Then I took him to the hospital and I had to take care her. I almost spent my time for her and took care her at night. I just slept 2 hours and the other 22 hours I had not slept. But as soon as she get better and on the 7 of August, in 2002 she had come back to home. So that I was very pleased when I saw her. Unless she goes to the hospital, otherwise she will die. Although she is feeling nice at the moment. But she still has a stomachache a bit. I hope that she will be better as soon.*

**3**

My name is Shwe Oo. I am 46 years old now. But I feel that I still like I am about 30 years old. I make joke. I was born in Pathein of Delta area in Myanmar. Most of the people in the village and town are Kayin.

When I was young my parents with me had change at least seven place to live. And also I had change 4 school for study. I have finished high school in Myanmar in 1974. In the school I am strong in Mathematic and Science (also English a little).

Since 1982 I chosed to work in the medical service. I worked in many places in Myanmar, but always I want to go back to my home town. Since that time I start still far away with English book and English Language. I was engaged with English only when I write the name for the medicine and disease and medical data.

Now I am interested in malaria, TB and HIV prevention. I want to education for people about this. I have a plan to have programme in this prevention.

4

*I would like to tell about the toddy trees which I remember always when I was in childhood in Myanmar. We owned a land which was full of Toddy trees. It was one km length and 2 km wide. It belonged to my grandpa and grandma. When they were getting old, they gave it to my parents.*

*The toddy trees used to grow along the seaside and the sea rushed to the shore every day. Many different kind of birds were seen there and we could get a lot of seafood and also there were many poisonous snakes that we were afraid. However, the people who stayed there liked to eat snakes like their curries.*

*The toddy branches really look like coconut palm trees. But it is not too high just as coconut trees. The toddy trees have no stems. The toddy branches are directly from the ground or mud. The fruits are quite different between these two trees. The toddy tree fruits are more smaller and also they look different shapes. Farther more, the lower parts of toddy trees are covered with water or mud always.*

*We can make many things from the toddy trees. The leaves are for roofs. The leaves are made many kind of toys for children too. We can make a drink just as beer. We can eat the fruits and the branches are made for fences and rafts.*

*Generally, the toddy trees are useful in our areas and it makes money too.*

5

*Last month I studied about Cambodia. It was very interesting when I read it. This lesson was taught by Teacher Elizabeth. If you look at Cambodia the situation was very confused. A lot of people in Cambodia complained with the government. If you were an educated person they'll kill you. If you wear a pair of glasses, if your hand was soft and if you speak English and French they will kill you exactly. There has been many kinds of corruption in Cambodia. The policemen collected the tax from the beggars. To tell the truth, everything in Cambodia was unfair and very bad. These are all about that I have learnt.*

#### DISCUSSION

c. In groups, discuss each journal entry. Are they interesting? Why/why not?

## DISCUSSION

d. Read journal entries 6 and 7. Are they interesting? Why/why not?

**6** Saturday:  
6:00 – 8:00  
Woke up, washed face, made breakfast  
9:00 – 12:15  
Attended student committee meeting  
12:30 – 1:30  
Had lunch  
1:30 – 4:30  
Attended student committee meeting  
5:00 – 7:00  
Made dinner, had a shower, visited a friend  
7:00 – 9:00  
Read a magazine  
9:00 – 10:00  
Listened to radio  
10:30  
Slept

**7** This week I work some in the office on Saturday I met my teacher at 1:00pm and introduced, asked some questions about how I studied English also my job now.  
Today I went to English class and studies how to speak to each other and some adjectives. We wrote some exercises and read some reading.

## ACTIVITY

e. Compare these parts of journal entries 5 and 7.

*Last month I studied about Cambodia. It was very interesting when I read it. This lesson was taught by Teacher Elizabeth. If you look at the Cambodia the situation was very confused. A lot of people in Cambodian complained with the government. If you were an educated person they'll kill you.*

*Today I went to English class and studies how to speak to each other and some adjectives. We wrote some exercises and read some reading.*

How are they similar? How are they different?



### 3. Writing a journal entry

#### BRAINSTORM

- a. What can you write about in a journal? Make a list of topics.

#### ACTIVITY

##### b. Fast Writing

- 1) Write about this topic in five minutes:  
*What do you like to do in your free time?*
- 2) How many words did you write? Count them.  
Who wrote the most words?
- 3) Work in pairs. Exchange writing with your partner.  
Read your partner's writing. Are there many mistakes?  
Can you understand it?  
Tell the class what your partner wrote.



#### ACTIVITY

- c. Write about this topic in three minutes:  
*What's your favourite place?*  
How many words did you write? Count them.

#### ACTIVITY

- d. Write about this topic in two minutes: *What problems do you have at the moment?*  
How many words did you write? Count them.

#### ACTIVITY

- e. Write about this topic in one minute: *What did you learn in your last English class?*  
How many words did you write? Count them.

#### DISCUSSION

- f. Read what these learners say about their writing. Discuss in groups. Is it the same for you?

1. I can write and give people to understand but usually I know that my writing is confusing for other people.
2. I can write as much as I can if I can understand the topic but it takes time for me because I need to think of vocabulary and grammar.
3. I can write not bad if the idea is clear to me. But I can't write very well if the issue is really difficult.
4. I usually write in simple sentences. Sometimes I put higher sentence to make it interesting.
5. I can write almost everything I want to write in English but I can't use big words, just simple words.



## ACTIVITY

### g. Who and What?

1. Your teacher will give you a topic, and a piece of paper.  
Spend ten minutes writing as much as you can about this topic.  
**Don't** write the topic or your name on the front of the paper!  
Give your writing to the teacher. The teacher will put it on the wall.

2. Work in groups. Identify: Who wrote each piece of writing?  
What was their topic?



## DISCUSSION

- h. Discuss these questions in groups.

1. How often should language learners write journals?  
*Every day? Once a week? Once a month? As often as they like?*
2. How much should language learners write in each journal entry?  
*A paragraph? Half a page? A page? As much as they want?*
3. What should language learners write about?  
*Should the teacher give learners a topic?*  
*Should learners decide what they want to write about?*

Compare your ideas with other groups, and ask what your teacher thinks.

## 4. Introduction to Reading

### BRAINSTORM

**a. What do you read?** Work in groups. Make a list of all the things you can read.

*books, newspapers...*

### DISCUSSION

**b. Where do you read? When do you read? How do you read?**

Do you read outside or inside? At night? In the early mornings? Under a tree?  
In the bathroom? Lying down? Sitting at a table?



If I am really interested, I read at night when it is silent.

- A 10th standard student

I like to read in the park. I lie on the grass for hours and hours with a good novel.

- A teacher from New Zealand

### DISCUSSION

**c. When did you learn to read? Who taught you to read?**

**How many languages can you read?**

I can read 4 languages: Myanmar, Kachin, English and Chinese. I can read Kachin because it is my first language. Myanmar I learned at school. My grandmother and many teachers taught me English. I also learned Chinese at school.

- A first year university student



### EXERCISE

**d. How often do you read? Do you like to read?**

Do you read every night? Or only for schoolwork? Do you read for fun? Why/why not?

Read these opinions. Do these people like reading in English?

Rank their opinions on the chart. 1 is done already.

1. Because we are bored to read and it is noisy... it makes us miserable and angry and not interested in the book we read.

- A high school student

2. It depends on the story and our reading skills. If you understand the story, it makes you feel emotion.

- An English major university student

3. It is easier to read what teachers give us to read than to read a newspaper or novel.

- A university student from Thailand

4. I only read English because I need to. At work I have to read instructions. That's enough for me!

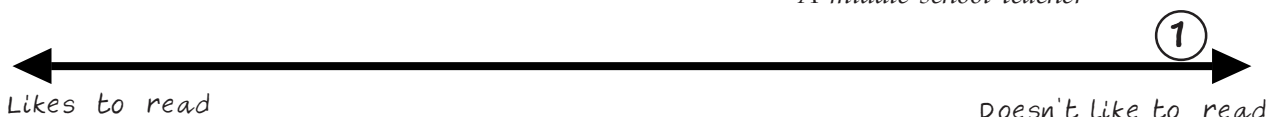
- An engineer from France

5. I enjoy reading - it's my hobby. I often read books in other languages, too. I like action stories in English. This improves my English a lot.

- A university student from Egypt

6. I read novels sometime and understand. But what is difficult for me is I don't know about the culture.

- A middle school teacher



**ACTIVITY****e. Questionnaire**

Copy the questionnaire onto a piece of paper. Answer the questions.

DON'T write your name on the questionnaire! Your teacher will give you a number.

Write the number on the questionnaire, and put it on the wall.

Can you identify other learners' questionnaires? Who wrote what?

<b>Reading Questionnaire Number _____</b>	
<b>1.</b> Where do you read?	
<b>2.</b> When do you read?	
<b>3.</b> How often do you read?	
<b>4.</b> Where do you get books?	
<b>5.</b> What languages can you read?	
<b>6.</b> When did you learn to read?	
<b>7.</b> Who taught you to read?	
<b>8.</b> What are you reading now?	
<b>9.</b> What's your favourite book?	
<b>10.</b> Who's your favourite writer?	
<b>11.</b> Do you like to read?	

**BRAINSTORM**

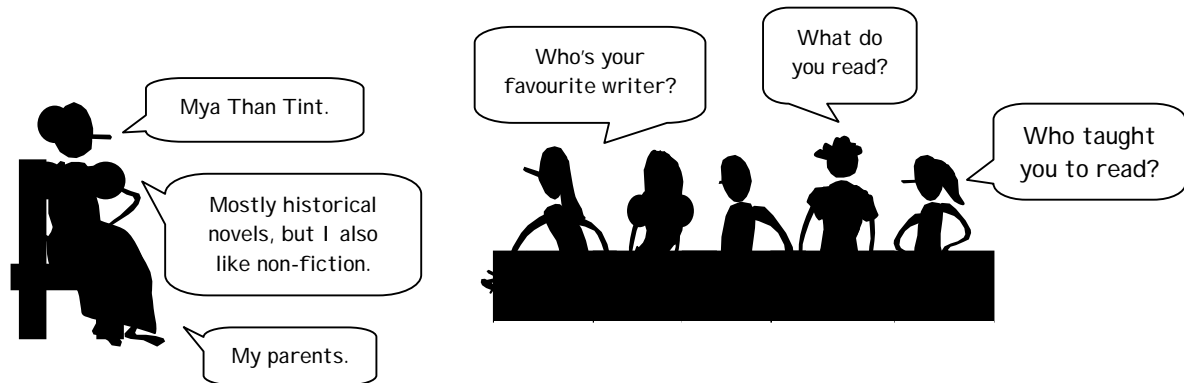
**f. Why do you read?** Work in groups. Make a list of all the reasons people read.

*– to find out what is happening in the world*

## ACTIVITY

### g. Interview

1. Ask your teacher these questions. Think of some more questions about reading.



2. Work in pairs. Interview your partner about her/his reading habits.

## 5. Choosing a Book

### BRAINSTORM

#### a. Types of book

1. Work in groups. How many types of book can you think of? Make a list.

biography  
love story

2. Classify these into *fiction* and *non-fiction*.



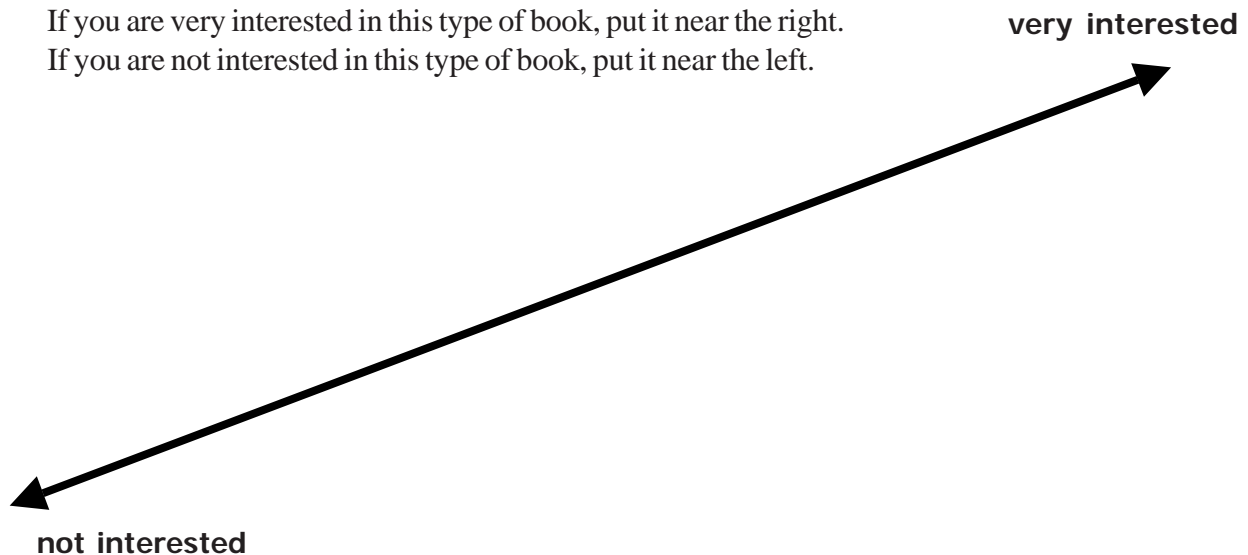
### ACTIVITY

#### b. What do you like reading?

Look at your list above. Rank the books in order of interest.

If you are very interested in this type of book, put it near the right.

If you are not interested in this type of book, put it near the left.



## EXERCISE

### c. Match the books.

1. On pages 12 and 13, there are 17 book covers. What are the titles of these books?
2. What types of books are these?
3. Here are five short descriptions of books. Match the books with the descriptions.
4. Which books do you want to read?

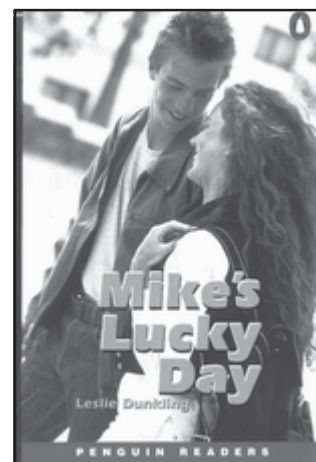
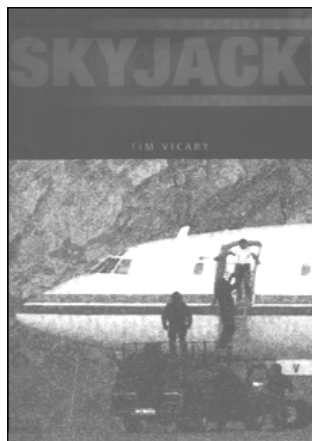
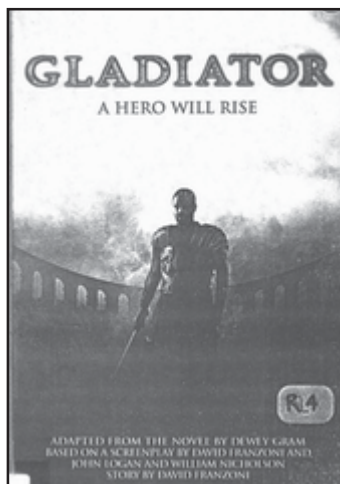
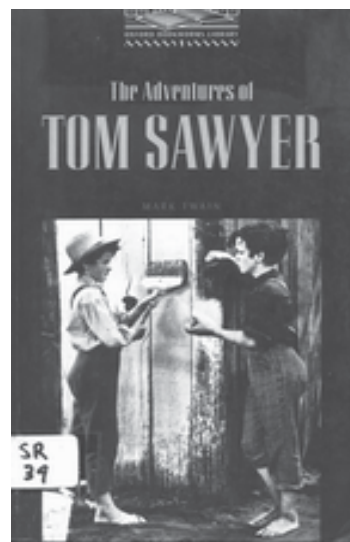
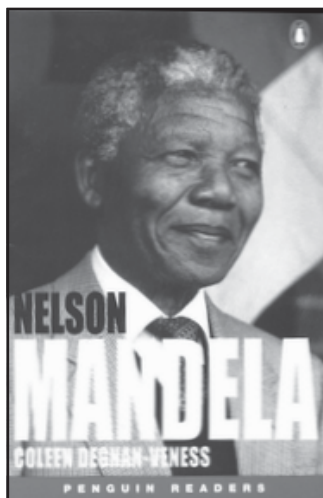
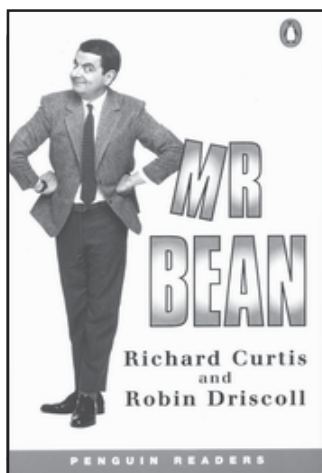
1. Some terrorists hijack a plane. The Prime Minister must decide what to do. But the Prime Minister is a person, with a family. What can you do, if someone is pointing a gun at your family? The terrorists are waiting.

2. He works as a driver. She works in her father's shop. They like each other very much, and they want to go to the cinema together. Will they succeed?

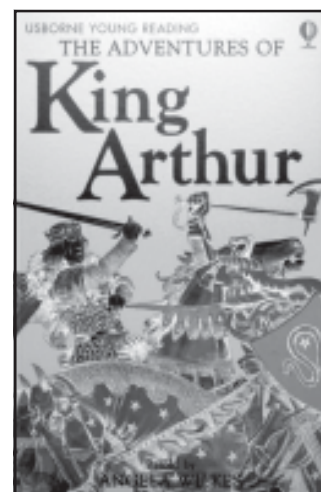
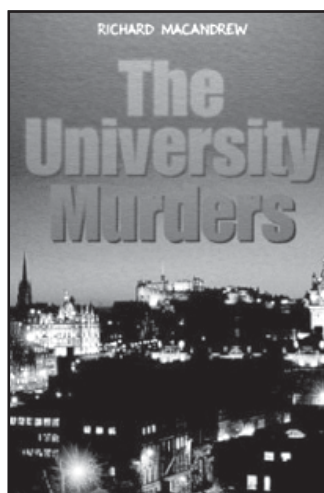
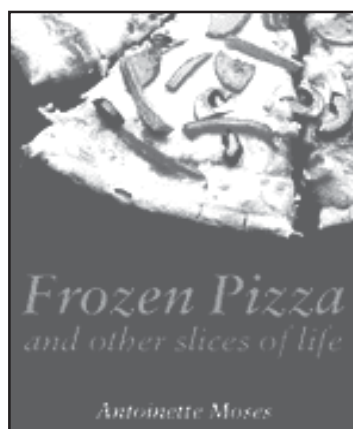
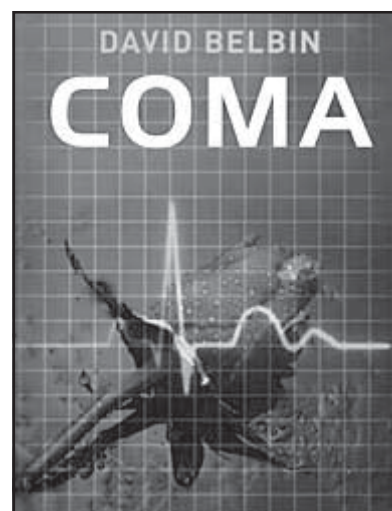
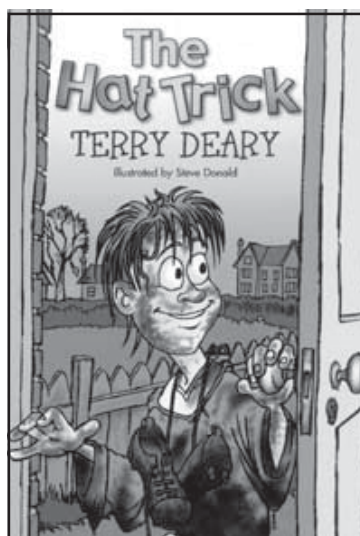
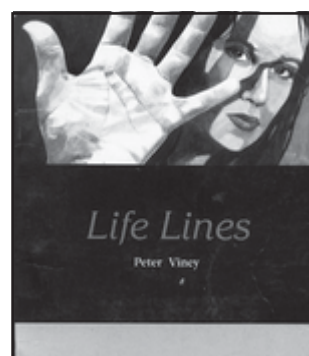
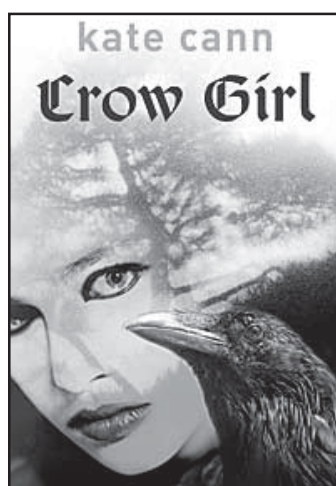
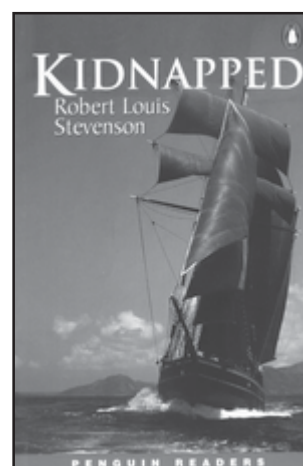
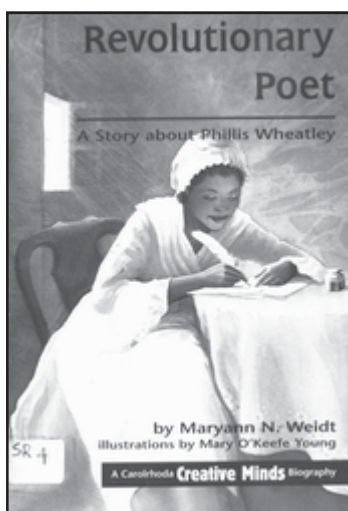
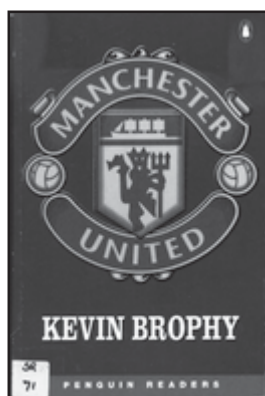
3. The true story of a brave woman in the early days of the USA. Americans wanted independence. They didn't want to be a British colony. Phyllis wrote about this, but the British did not like her writing.

4. Katrina Kirby is a young detective. Somebody has murdered Sir Michael Grey. Who did it? His wife? His friend? His secretary? His housekeeper? His wife's brother? Katrina must find out.

5. The most famous football team in the world. Here is the story of the games, the fans and the great players like David Beckham and Eric Cantona.









## 6. Reading a Book

### EXERCISE

#### a. How do you read?

Here are two texts. Which text do you have to read carefully?



Dear Mu Mu,

How are you? I hope your family is well. Is your mother still working in her shop? What about your brother's headaches? Is he better now?

I have a new sister. Her name is Fleur, which means 'flower' in our language. She is very small, and cries a lot. Now our house is very crowded!

I hope you can visit us soon. Good luck with your exams!

Love, Marie

#### Scholarship Examinations

Do you want to apply for a scholarship to study at Central International University?

Entrance exams will be on March 31, at No. 3 High School. All applicants must bring a pen and writing paper. No other books are allowed.

Science, History, Geography: 10 am  
English, Burmese, Maths: 2pm

Contact Daw Win for more information on 543-987 or dawwinciu@mm.edu

With the examination notice, it is important to understand all the information.

With the letter, you only need to know the main points. There are two main types of reading:

*reading for gist* and *reading for detail*

When you read for gist, you don't need to understand every word.

If you focus on each word, it will take you a very long time to read it!

### EXERCISE

#### b. Guessing from context

##### 1. Read this text quickly. How much do you understand?

We live in a large hytgzp beside the river. I live with my parents, my grandfather and my three ckwalses. My two older ckwalses sleep in my bedroom, but my younger ckwalse sleeps with my parents in their kowsge room. Every morning, before fjovip, I go to the chicken house and qidmfpt the eggs. I don't like qidmfpting eggs, because I am afraid of the chickens.

There is one huge chicken with a gyamish beak, and small, horrible eyes. She always puxpexs at me loudly, and I am afraid she might msssmpt me. Last year she almost msssmpted me, but I ran away and climbed an uopppo. My grandfather said that he will niniborz her soon, and we can eat delicious chicken curry!

##### 2. Work in groups. Can you guess the meanings of these 'words'?

*hytgzp, ckwalse, kowsge, fjovip, qidmfpt, gyamish, puxpex, msssmpt, uopppo, niniborz*

### DISCUSSION

#### c. Is each word important?

Work in groups. Look at the words in **b 2**.

Is it important to understand the exact meanings of these words?

**EXERCISE****d. Reading fast**

1. Read this text in 40 seconds.

Tin Tin was sitting in his 8th standard English class. It was a hot afternoon, and he was feeling sleepy. It was a grammar lesson and Tin Tin was bored. He hated grammar. He wanted to leave school and work. He wanted to be a gardener. Tin Tin loved flowers and trees. Tin Tin looked out of the window. He looked at the trees and flowers. Then he started day-dreaming.

After 10 minutes the teacher stopped talking. She asked the students to do a grammar exercise in their books. The students took out their exercise books and started writing.

The teacher looked at Tin Tin. He wasn't writing.

The teacher asked, "Why aren't you writing, Tin Tin?"

Tin Tin stopped dreaming and said, "What, Miss?"

2. Cover the text, and answer these questions.

1. Does Tin Tin like grammar?

2. Does he like school?

3. What job does he want?

4. What did the teacher want the learners to do?

5. Was Tin Tin doing the exercises?

**EXERCISE****e. Reading slowly**

1. Read this text in 3 minutes.

"Wake up, Tin Tin!" the teacher said. "Why aren't you writing?"

Tin Tin thought for a moment and replied, "I no have pencil."

The teacher looked at Tin Tin and said, "'I no have pencil?' That is wrong. You mean, 'I don't have a pencil.'"

Tin Tin didn't understand the teacher. He said, "Sorry, Miss."

The teacher said in an angry voice, "I DON'T HAVE a pencil. You DON'T HAVE a pencil. She DOESN'T HAVE a pencil. He DOESN'T HAVE a pencil. It DOESN'T HAVE a pencil. We DON'T HAVE a pencil. They DON'T HAVE a pencil. Now, Tin Tin. Do you understand?"

Tin Tin looked at the teacher for a moment, and then he said, "Oh dear! What happened to all the pencils?"

2. Cover the text, and answer these questions.

1. Why wasn't Tin Tin writing?

2. Was the teacher happy?

3. Did Tin Tin understand the teacher's speaking?

4. Is Tin Tin good at grammar?

5. Why did Tin Tin think the pencils were not there?

**DISCUSSION****f. Which was easier?**

Compare the slow and fast reading. Which was easier?

## 7. Looking at Book Reviews



### EXERCISE

#### a. Useful words and phrases

These words and phrases are all things you need for a review of a story book.

Match these words and phrases with the definitions.

title	the writer of the book
author	where and when the story happens
main characters	what happens in the story
setting	the name of the book
plot	what you think about the book
reader's opinion	the main point of the book
message/meaning of the book	the main people in the story

### EXERCISE

#### b. Identify the parts

Here is a book review. Identify the *title*, *author(s)*, *main character*, *setting*, *plot*, *reader's opinion* and *message/meaning of the book*.

*title* — *The Wells of Pandi Warra* by John Milne and Stephen Andrews

The Wells of Pandi Warra is the story of a small village in the middle of the African Desert. The village is a long way from the big city, so it is very isolated. The main character is Motta, a young boy from the village. When refugees arrive in the village, Motta helps them. But unfortunately, there are problems with the village water supply. The book tells the story of how Motta solves these problems.

I liked this book because it was exciting, and I learned about another culture. It is relevant to the situation here. People must try to understand each other, and learn about other people's situations. That way everyone can work together to solve problems.

#### Fiction and non-fiction reviews

If you are reviewing a *non-fiction* book, the information might be a little different. There might not be any *main characters*, or a *plot*. Instead, you might have a *situation* or *topic*. For example, if you are reading a book on endangered animals in Asia, the *topic* is endangered animals, and the *situation* is that they are dying, and people are trying to rescue them. Also, there might not be any *message/meaning*, as some non-fiction books are just facts. However, there may be a *main point* or *main idea*, such as that we should help protect endangered animals.

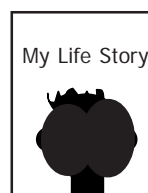
# EXERCISE

## d. 'My Life Story'

Imagine a book with the title 'My Life Story'.

What and who are the *author*, *main character*, *setting* and *plot*?

Complete the chart.



author	main characters	setting	plot

What do you think the meaning/message of your life story is?

# ACTIVITY

## e. Texts around the room

Your teacher will put four book reviews around the room.

Use the information from these reviews to complete the chart.

title	author	main characters	setting	plot	meaning/ message	opinion
Nelson Mandela						
Life Lines						
K's First case						
Island of Blue Dolphins						

## f. A book review by a learner

This review was written by a 3rd year student at a pre-university training course.

Read it quickly. In groups, discuss this review. Is it a good review, or not?

Last week I read a book about the „diligente. story. It was written by „Daniel Defoe“. I want to tell you elventuality of the book, by briefly.

The charater in this story was called Robinson Crusoe. Robinson was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family. His hobby was to go to the sea. but his father was begged him not to do it.

One day he left quietly to the sea with his friends without asked his father. After a few day they faced a fearful storm. The wind and waves threw their ship. The ship was badly broken and they were all thrown into the water.

But he was not die by good fortune. A great wave took him and carried him on towards the shore. It left him on the land. He had to stay on the land by solitary life for ten years.

He was trying to look for the way out and built a boat. And then he was sailing with his boat. He was sailing on the sea about 10 days. Finally he had arrived at home.

So we don't have to be depression and in everytime we have to look for achievement for any part of our life.



## 8. Writing a Book Review

### ACTIVITY

#### a. Short story review

1. This story is from the book 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer' by Mark Twain. Read it quickly.



Saturday was a beautiful day. It was summer and the sun was hot and there were flowers in all the gardens. It was a day for everybody to be happy. Tom came out of his house with a brush and a big pot of white paint in his hand. He looked at the fence; it was three meters high and thirty meters long. He put his brush in the paint and painted some of the fence. He did it again. Then he stopped and looked at the fence, put down his brush and sat down. There were hours of work in front of him and he was the unhappiest boy in the village.

After ten minutes Tom had an idea, a wonderful idea. He took up the brush again and began to work. He saw his friend Joe Harper in the street, but he didn't look at him. Joe had an apple in his hand. He came up to Tom and looked at the fence.

'I *am* sorry, Tom.'

Tom said nothing. The paint brush moved up and down. 'Working for your aunt?' said Joe. 'I'm going down to the river. I'm sorry you can't come with me.'

Tom put down his brush. 'You call this work?' he said.

'Painting a fence?' said Joe. 'Of course it's work!'

'Perhaps it is and perhaps it isn't. But I like it,' said Tom.

'I can go to the river any day. I can't paint a fence very often.'

Joe watched Tom for about five minutes. Tom painted very slowly and carefully. He often stopped, moved back from the fence and looked at his work with a smile. Joe began to get very interested, and said:

'Tom, can I paint a little?'

Tom thought a second. 'I'm sorry, Joe. You see, my aunt wants me to do it because I'm good at painting. My brother Sid wanted to paint, too, but she said no.'

'Oh, please, Tom, just a little. I'm good at painting too. Hey, do you want some of my apple?'

'No, Joe, I can't –'

'OK, you can have *all* my apple!'

Tom gave Joe a brush. He did not smile, but for first time that day he was a very happy boy. He sat down and ate Joe's apple. More friends came to laugh at Tom, but soon they all wanted to paint, too. By the afternoon Tom had three balls, and old knife, a cat with one eye, an old blue bottle, and a lot of other exciting things. He was the richest boy in the village, and the fence – all thirty meters of it – was a beautiful white. He went back to the house.

'Aunt Polly! Can I go and play now?'

Aunt Polly came out of the house to look. When she saw the beautiful white fence, she was very pleased. She took Tom into the house and gave him an apple.

'Well, you can go and play. But don't come home late.'

Tom quickly took a second apple and ran off.





### EXERCISE

2. Work in pairs. Write the information about this story.

Title:

Author:

Main characters:

Setting:

Plot:

Your opinion:

Message/meaning of the story:

3. Write a review of this story.

### BRAINSTORM

#### b. Step by step

What steps are involved in writing a book review? Make a list.

1. Choose a book.



### ASSIGNMENT

#### c. Write a book review



Good luck!