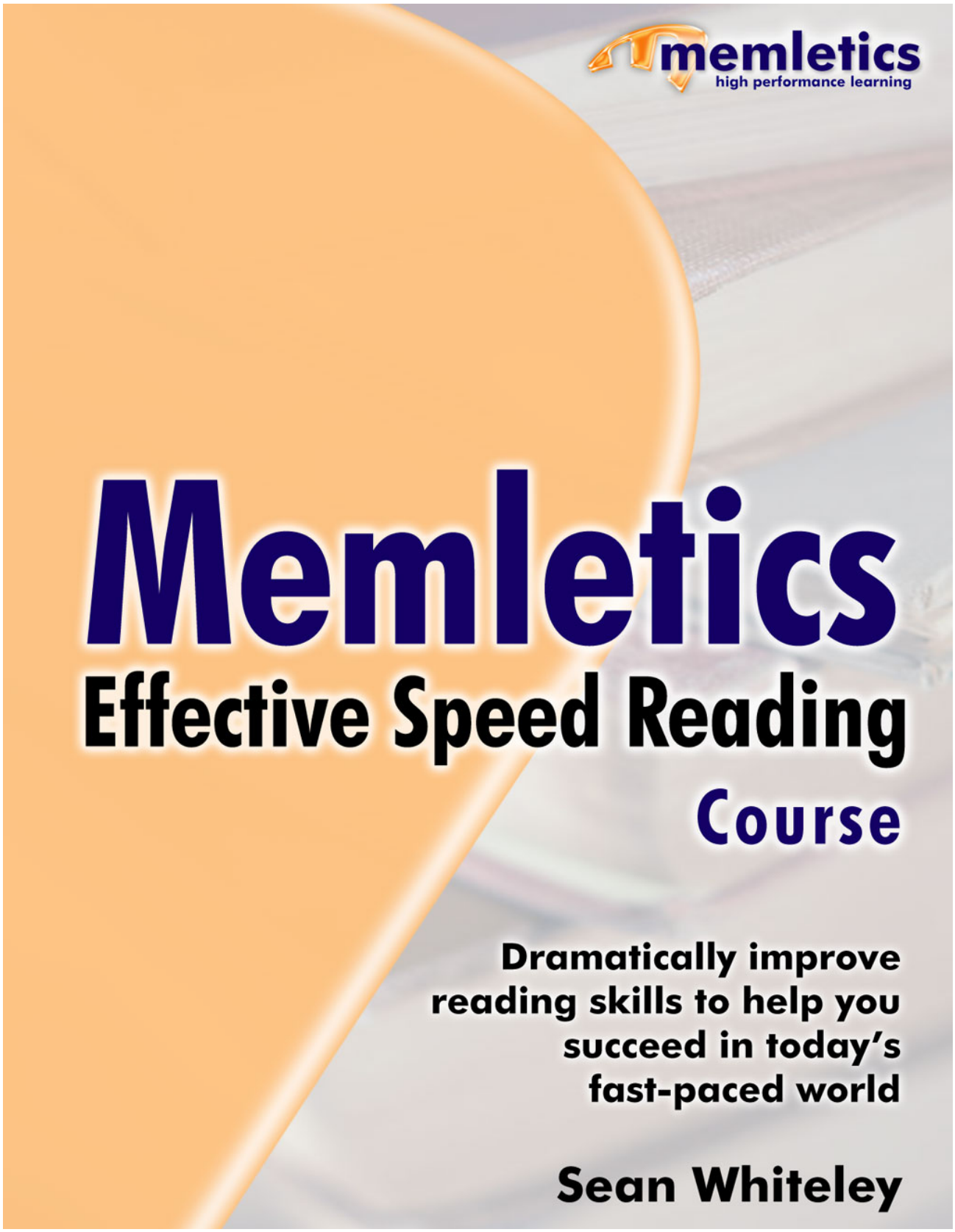
memletics
high performance learning
Memletics
Effective Speed Reading
Course
Dramatically improve
reading skills to help you
succeed in today's
fast-paced world
Sean Whiteley

Memletics® Effective Speed Reading Course (version 1.0.)

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Memletics® Effective Speed Reading Course

Sean Whiteley

SERIAL NUMBER: RQD2-K1JD-258A-VX6A

memletics
high performance learning

Contents

Module 1

Introducing Memletics® Effective Speed Reading

Let's set the record straight. This section discusses some hype and facts about speed reading. We then look at the second part of speed reading that's often ignored – comprehension. We consider some common misconceptions about speed reading before getting into the six parts of effective reading. Lastly, we kick off your reading improvement course by measuring your current reading speed.

An entire industry is willing to teach you speed reading using many methods, from books and tapes to mechanical machines and software. Some programs claim to be able to teach anywhere from 2,000 to 25,000 words per minute (for example, PhotoReading, I-reading, image streaming, and Mind-Accelerator).

There is only one person known who can read at similar speeds with high comprehension, and he didn't learn the ability from any course! His name is Kim Peek. Kim was born in 1951 without a corpus callosum, nerves that connect the left and right side of the brain. While he has some problems with motor co-ordination, his brain has developed some unique abilities. These have given him the title of a megasavant, and he is the only one in the world. Kim was also the basis for the character Raymond, in the Movie *Rainman* (1988, played by Dustin Hoffman).

Kim can speed read two pages at the same time, one with each eye. He can recall, and quote from, over 7,600 books he has read since age three. Most books he has only read once. Unfortunately, no-one knows how Kim does this, even after much research. As no-one knows how Kim's abilities work, no-one has been able to teach it to others. Others have been born with the same brain condition, however they have not developed the same ability, nor has surgery had the same effect.

The design of our eyes and nervous system means there are physical limits to reading speed. Your eyes do not move smoothly across each line of words. Rather, they make small jumps, or "fixations". The maximum number of physical fixations the eye can do is about 300 a minute. In good readers the distance between each fixation is about an inch. This means they see and register, on average, three words each fixation.

This is one reason why experts estimate the maximum reading speed for most people is 900 words a minute without skipping words. Anything above that means you are likely skimming or skipping words. No matter how good the skim reading technique is, as soon as you start skipping words your comprehension suffers. I suggest you treat with great skepticism any program or course that advertises reading speeds above 1,000 words a minute with full comprehension.

If you believe you have good reading speed already, it may because you skip words without realizing it. You may find your core reading speed is slower than average, but you make up for it by skipping words. This habit reduces your comprehension. The techniques in the fluency chapter will help you increase your core reading speed while maintaining comprehension.

Some people will tell you that you need machines, software, or expensive training to learn to read faster. Not true. Each of these has their own issues. For example, often these systems set a fixed pace. You will see in this book you need to vary your pace as you read. Other systems don't translate skills well from computer to paper (consider that most of what we read is still on paper). The techniques below are just as effective, if not more, than most of these tools. I have not yet found a properly conducted study showing that such devices are any more effective than the simple techniques taught in this book.

Lastly, some people will tell you that reading speeds of anywhere from 2,000 to 25,000 words a minute are possible. They will tell you "your natural ability is within your reach." These people might be selling you some system that "regular scientists don't understand yet." They will happily charge you $200 to $800 to learn what they know.

Companies that have made millions selling these systems seem unwilling to spend any of that on reliable studies to show their systems work. Start exercising your critical thinking skills now and ask "*why?*" For example, a quick search on a major research journals database found 368 research articles on reading speed. There was none, however, on "PhotoReading", "image streaming" and other similar topics.

Lastly, look at the results from the 2003 Speed Reading World Championships, held in the UK:

Position	Entrant	Raw WPM	Compre-hension	Effective WPM
1st	Anne L. Jones	2284	56.30%	**1285**
2nd	Andrew Havery	1108	56.30%	**623**
3rd	Henry Hopking	1330	45.80%	**610**

Which method does Anne Jones teach? The same simple regulator technique I teach you in this book. If systems such as PhotoReading work, why don't we see much higher results in these types of events?

Remember the Memletics principle of "there are no silver bullets." Personal development comes from time and effort. Make sure you spend that effort on techniques that work.

More common speed reading myths

Before we get into too much detail, let's look at some more common speed reading myths:

- **If I read faster, my comprehension will drop.** Not necessarily true. Slow readers often have comprehension problems because they forget the start of

sentences and paragraphs before they finish them. You can easily increase your core reading speed, without skipping words, and still preserve (or improve) comprehension.

- **I need to read all of a book.** Not true. Books are a way of capturing and transferring someone's ideas and knowledge. Books are inefficient at doing this, however they are easy to make available to a wide audience. Often publishers force authors to bulk out sections with "fluff" because it will help sell more copies. While the author may know their topic well, they might not know how to express their thoughts well in written form. In addition, the author's reasons for writing might not be the same as your reasons for reading. Keep these in mind while you search for your gems. If you're not finding what you need to make your time investment worthwhile, have the courage to skip sections, chapters or even entire books!
- **I already read well. There's no point trying to improve my reading speed.** Not true. Research shows that speed reading training and drills do improve eye movements, resulting in higher speeds while comprehension remains steady. Even if you are a good reader, some of the drills provided in this course will still help you increase your reading speed.

Reading for comprehension and speed

To comprehend what you read, you need to read the words. Skim reading, or skipping some words, *does* help with the learning process, and helps locate important information quickly. However, your comprehension suffers.

The good news is you can improve your normal reading speed while keeping up comprehension. You can do this without software, machines, hypnotherapy, music, image streaming or PhotoReading. The minimum equipment needed is your finger! Educational research and leading speed-reading coaches point out you can learn to read faster using simple techniques, drills and practice. You do not need to spend anywhere from $50 to hundreds of dollars. You might want to consider a course if you have significant trouble with reading or trouble applying yourself. If you are already reading this book, you have the information and existing skills needed to increase your reading speed.

Speed reading courses attract people because they often advertise that you can learn faster simply by learning to read faster. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Books have varying degrees of useful information in them. If you want to learn and remember what you read, you need to extract "raw material." Think of it like mining for diamonds. You have to sort through much raw material (rock) to find the gems.

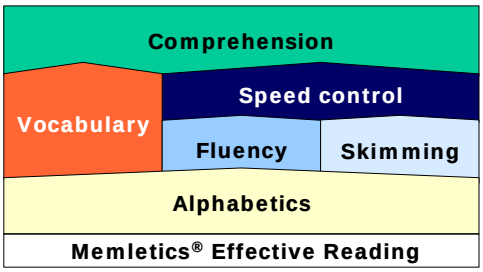
Unfortunately, many people stop here, believing that reading a book is enough to learn it. To learn a book well, you then need to take on those raw gems through a learning process. You need to explore the material turn what you've found into knowledge that's relevant to you. You need to work out how you are going to keep that information. You need to reinforce what you've learnt to store that information for the long term. Each of these steps helps you "lock in" what you've read.

This course will help you read faster. The Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual (separate book) describes the learning process in much more detail. See the

appendices if you would like an overview of the Memletics Accelerated Learning System.

Six parts to effective reading

There are six parts in the Memletics® Effective Reading System. The parts are:



- **Alphabetics.** Recognize letters and words accurately.
- **Vocabulary.** Understand the meaning of words in context.
- **Fluency.** Read words and sentences quickly.
- **Skimming.** Select what to read while reading.
- **Speed control.** Vary speed according to content and purpose.
- **Comprehension.** Understand the meaning of what you are reading.

These six parts work together to help you understand what you read. If you are deficient in any one of these areas, it affects the others. If you only try to improve one, while ignoring the others, you'll receive less benefit. You get the best benefits from improving them all together.

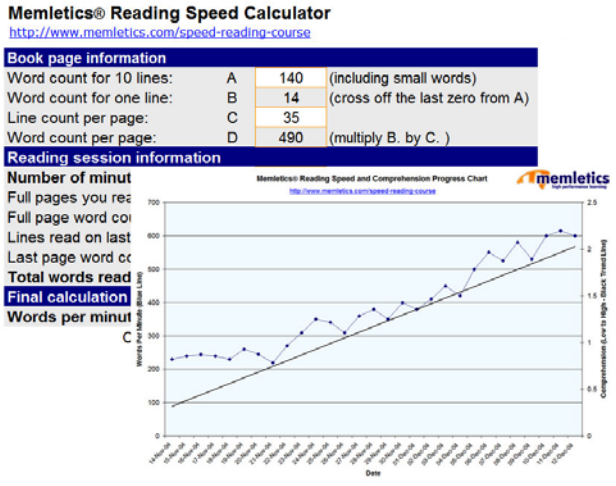
This course contains modules to help you improve your skills in each of these areas. I recommend you start with Alphabetics and work your way through in the same order I've presented them.

Additional course materials

We've also included some materials to help you during the course. Before reading any further, go to page 85 and review the course guide. The guide has a suggested program for improving your reading speed over four weeks. It takes roughly 10 to 20 minutes a day, although the last week may take longer. If you haven't already, print this out and use it during the next four weeks (or from whenever you start your reading improvement effort).

If you feel you already have good reading skills, adjust the course timeframes as you see fit. Similarly, if your current reading skills are poor, you may want to lengthen the course or spend more time on the exercises each day.

If you have Microsoft Excel (2000/XP or later), you might also like use our reading speed test and progress tracking spreadsheet. This makes it easier to calculate your reading speed, as well as provides a



Test and Tracking Spreadsheet

table and graph to track your progress. To obtain the spreadsheet, see the instructions in the course guide on page 85.

Check your current reading speed

The first exercise in the course guide (page 85) is to calculate your current reading speed. I recommend you do this now, before you read ahead, so you can see the improvement you get from this course. Use either the test in the course guide or the spreadsheet-based test described above to calculate your reading speed.

Once you have completed the reading speed test, compare yourself to the general population using the table below. Use the check boxes on the right to mark where you are now and where you'd like to be at the end of this course.

Speed	Comments	Current	Target
1 - 100 wpm	**Very basic reading speed.** You might be learning to read, or English may be your second language. You find it hard to comprehend what you are reading at this speed.	☐	☐
100 - 200 wpm	**Basic reading speed.** Below average reading speed for adults, or average reading speed for readers between 6-12 years old. Low comprehension.	☐	☐
200 - 250 wpm	**Average adult reading speed.** Most adults stay at the speed for much of their lives. Your comprehension is average, probably more than half of what you read.	☐	☐
250 - 350 wpm	**Slightly above average reading speed.** Common with average college students or enthusiastic readers. You easily comprehend more than half of what you read.	☐	☐
350 - 500 wpm	**Strong reading speed.** You enjoy reading and have relatively high comprehension.	☐	☐
500 - 800 wpm	**Excellent reading speed.** This is a good target reading speed for most people. You can keep this speed without doing regular speed drills. Comprehension is high – 75% and above.	☐	☐
800 – 1,000 wpm	**Outstanding reading speed.** Your comprehension is approaching maximum. You've likely done a top-quality speed reading course and regularly practice speed drills.	☐	☐

1000 – 1200 wpm	**World Champion Reading speed.** If you are able to read at this speed with high comprehension, you should probably be competing in the world championships. While this speed is achievable, the effort to get this level may not be necessary for your learning goals.	☐	☐
1200+ wpm	**Unlikely reading speed.** It's unlikely you can read at this speed with good comprehension. It's likely you are skimming or skipping words, phrases and sentences.	☐	☐

Summary

In this introduction you've seen some common speed reading myths. We've also discussed comprehension and that speed reading is just one part of learning faster. You've seen the six parts of the Memletics Effective Reading System. We introduced the additional course materials available to you, and tested your current reading speed.

In the following first module for the course, covering Alphabetics, you will gain some knowledge on how we read. We'll also test your eyesight and look at how you can optimize your computer screen.

Important notice

This book is for informational purposes only. It's your sole responsibility to decide the usefulness, applicability, completeness and correctness of the content in this book. By reading this book you agree to the "Memletics Terms of Use" described in the front of this book. If you do not accept this, don't read the book.

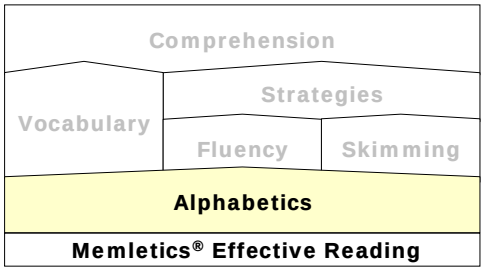
What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:
http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 2

Optimize your Alphabetics

Alphabetics refers to how we recognize and translate writing into concepts in our mind. Most people reading this chapter will have acceptable skills in this area, so we don't discuss ways to improve core Alphabetics. We do however look at ways you can improve your recognition of text. We first do some tests to check your eyesight, and then look at how you can optimize viewing of both printed and on screen text.

Alphabetics refers to the way we translate written characters into sounds, words, and meanings in our mind. This skill is the one of the first you develop when you start reading. There are two parts to this skill:



- Recognizing characters as letters and sounds that make up words.
- Translating words and symbols into the correct representation in your mind.

As you build your reading skills, your mind starts to change from seeing individual letters in words to seeing just the words themselves. After a while, it seems the order of letters within the words doesn't matter that much. Try reading the following example:

> Do we raed ltteres or wrods? Can you udestannrd tsehe snetncees? Rsercaeh at Crbidmgae Urvnitesiy fnuod taht we can slitl raed wrdos eevn wehn the ltteres are mxied up. As lnog as the frsit and lsat lrtetes are the smae, we can slitl raed the sncetnee. Tihs sohws taht aeftr we hvae lnreat the bcisas of riadneg, we srtat sneeig wrdos as a wlohe, rehtar tahn a cctiolleon of lrtetes.

The lesson from this exercise is that your brain converts a combination of letters into a symbol. It's able to recognize those symbols even when the basic letters are not in the right order. This is one part of how the brain learns to read faster. Reading more and reading a wider range of material helps ingrain more of those symbols in your mind, which then increases your reading speed.

As you are already reading this book, is likely that your skill in this area is enough. Regular reading of various material will help your brain do these

translations with less effort. Techniques are unlikely to help improve this specific skill. It just takes time and repeated exposure to the words themselves.

What you can do though is make sure your eyes and brain have the best chance of recognizing words quickly. In this module we look at a few ways of doing this, including:

- **Check and protect your eyesight.** Do three tests to detect some common eye issues, and find out how to protect your eyes.
- **Optimize printed text.** Find out the best way to print text for ease of reading.
- **Optimize your computer screen.** Set up your computer screen for ideal onscreen reading.

Check and protect your eyesight

In this section, we have several eye tests along with some information on how to protect your eyesight. You can do these tests by reviewing them on the computer or printing them out. If you are viewing on screen, make sure your screen resolution is at least 800 by 600. If you are printing them out, make sure your printer resolution is at least 300 dots per inch. Choose whichever device has the highest resolution.

If you already have glasses you use for reading, make sure you use these during the tests. You might like to try the tests without glasses after you've done them with glasses first.

These tests are for educational use only and by no means replace specialist advice. A pass or fail in any of these tests does not represent any form of diagnosis. You should see a specialist if you have any concern about your eyesight.

Practice covering each eye

All three tests need you to cover one eye while testing the other. Use a separate sheet of paper to cover each eye. Practice placing it over one eye at a time. Do not close one eye while doing the test. This can affect the other eye because many people squint when they close one eye!

Test one – near sight test instructions

This first test checks for Hyperopia, or long-sightedness. Hyperopia results from light focusing behind the retina (the back of the eye) rather than right on it. This causes blurred vision. This condition affects about 10% of the population above 40, however many people have this condition without knowing it.

Prepare for the test

To do this test, you need the test itself, a ruler, two more pieces of paper, and a pen or pencil. If possible, have somebody help you with the test. They will use one sheet of paper to write down the letters and words as you read them.

Make sure you have enough light while doing the test. If you are doing the test on screen, minimize any glare or reflections. Be sure not to look at the words before starting the test.

Calibrate the test

First, you need to make sure your eyes are the right distance away from the test. Follow these instructions depending on the viewing method you've chosen.

- If you are doing the test on screen, you need to adjust the zoom setting in Adobe Acrobat. Use the options on the toolbar, or look under the Tools > Zoom menu. Adjust it so the calibration line at the top is 6 in. (15.3 cm).
- If you have printed it out, measure the calibration line and check it is 4 in. (10.2 cm). If not, try setting the "page scaling" option in Adobe Acrobat 6 print options to "none", or see your printer manual for options for scaling. If no success, adjust the distance in the next step. If the line is longer, hold the paper slightly further away. If it's shorter, hold the paper closer.

Remember, the test is only a guide so don't worry if it's not exact.

Measure the distance between your eyes and the test

If you are doing the test on screen, change pages so you can't see the test. Position your head so it's 24 inches (60 cm) from the screen. For the paper test, turn it over so you are looking at the back of the page. Position the paper so it's 16 inches (40 cm) from your eyes.

As you do the test, make sure you do not move your head or the paper forward or backwards.

Do the test

Go back to the test on screen, or flip the paper over so you can see the test. Each test, between the dark lines, has three lines of text. Read the first with your right eye covered, the middle with both eyes, and the last with your left eye covered. If someone is helping you, read aloud so they can write down what you see. If you are doing the test yourself, write down what you see. Start at the top with the larger text so you get comfortable with the material.

Be sure to read out all words, letters and symbols, including punctuation marks. If you can't recognize a word, letter or symbol, read out "can't see" or write an x.

Stop the test when you cannot read any lines with your left, right and both eyes. Your eyes may be different so be sure to continue until you can't read any lines.

Check your results

Go over what you've written and compare it to the original test. Mark each error with a different color pen. Count the number of errors for each line. Then work out, for each eye, which was the line number you could read with less than four errors on the line.

Write your answer here:

Left Eye: _____ Both Eyes: _____ Right Eye: _____

Analyze your results

Here's what the lines match to:

Line	Vision Scale	Visual Effectiveness
1	20/100	50%
2	20/70	65%
3	20/50	75%
4	20/40	85%
5	20/30	90%
6	20/20	100%

You may benefit from having your vision corrected if you scored less than 20/20 or 100% for one or both eyes. Scoring less than 20/20 may suggest Hyperopia (long-sightedness) or another vision problem. Glasses or contact lenses can correct Hyperopia can in most cases. See your specialist.

Remember, this test does not replace the need for regular vision testing.

Test one – near sight test

Calibration line –
4 in. (10.2 cm) on paper. View at 16 in. (40 cm)
6 in. (15.3 cm) on screen. View at 24 in. (60 cm)

1	L	V X K A FROG PEANUT CLOCK A D K Z
	B	D A ? T PEN MIDDLE FLOW N 3 X
	R	I D . EVERY ZAP ALMOST H D E Q !
2	L	K V B D NOW NEWS WHO D A U Q
	B	V D 2 U DUCK RED FIRST Q 9 D
	R	Q A F K STILL ZIT FRY TENT E S J
3	L	H E O CARD LETTER PIG S E W A
	B	D 2 Q P WOULD FAIL TIME N J ;
	R	R T D MOVE TEAR CLEAR K L W
4	L	H R 4 I THE STORY HELP HAVE U : Z M
	B	4 K D V GUY ONE INFECT AGE % H Y E
	R	Q A D J THEY HE LOT WAS AT 6 ; D E
5	L	R U I P PELT GET THING WARN G D Q 5
	B	A C F J THEIR STATE HAD END K L ; Q
	R	A D C B TEST KIT MAY SIT DUAL T Y I L
6	L	C S Z E THIS BOOK YEAR MARKET Q M E D
	B	Q Z X SOLD AND THEM HEART J H F G
	R	B V E U RED HAVE SIX SECRET I P 4 D

Test two – astigmatism test instructions

Astigmatism results from irregularity in the shape of some parts of the eye, and results in some blurring of vision. It's often, but not always, associated with other vision problems like short or long-sightedness. Astigmatism is the most common vision problem in adults. It affects children as well (a recent study found 28% of children had this condition). Many people are unaware they have this condition.

Prepare for the test

For the paper version of this test, you will need tape or other adhesive to place the test on a window or wall. You can do this test on your own comfortably.

Measure the distance between your eyes and the test

If you are using the test on screen, use the same zoom level as test 1 above. If not all of group 1 fits, adjust the zoom so the group is taking up the screen. Move your head so it's about 3 feet (1 meter) from the screen.

For the paper test, stick the test to a window or well-lit wall, at eye level. Place a mark on the floor that's 3 feet (1 meter) from the wall. Stand with your toes on that line.

The astigmatism test depends less on distance, so there's no need to be exact.

Do the test

Look at each pattern group with the left eye, both eyes, then the right eye.

For the large pattern, look first for the line that looks the darkest without any blurring. Then compare the other lines. Write down the line numbers if you see:

- Lines looking lighter than the others do (i.e. not heavy black).
- Grayish or blurred edges on the line.
- Extra "shadows" of some lines.

If all the lines look the same, don't write down any line numbers.

For the smaller patterns, write down the pattern number if you see:

- One pattern looking lighter than the other does.

Group 1 example

Examples of what you are looking for

Someone with astigmatism may see the tests like the examples on the right.

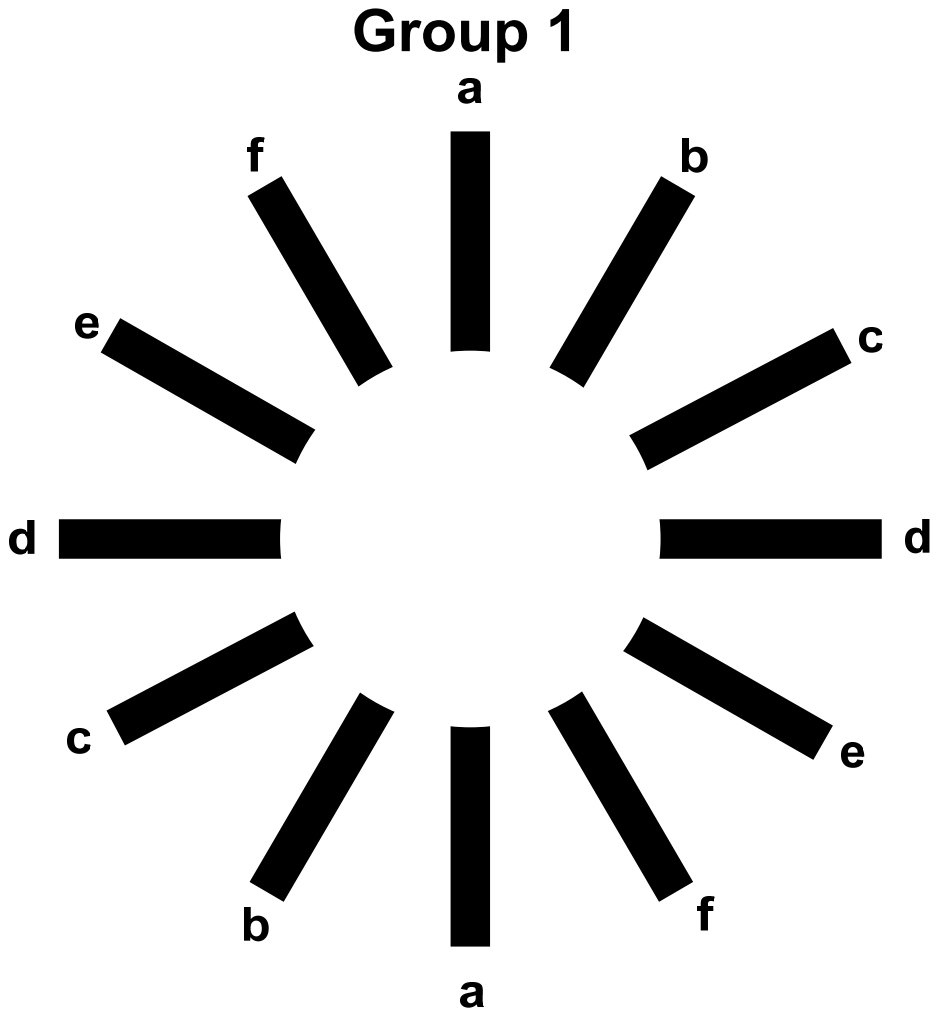
Group 2 example

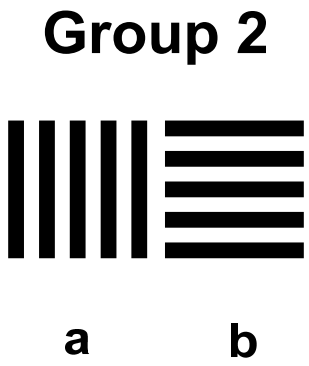
Analyze your results

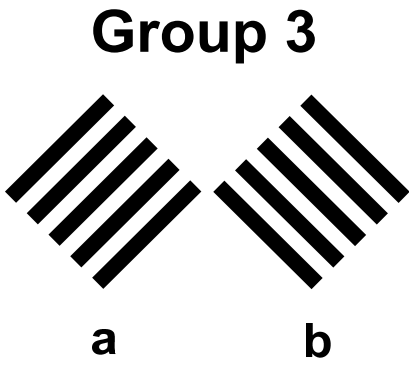
If you have written down any line or pattern numbers, this may indicate Astigmatism. Glasses or contact lenses can usually correct Astigmatism. See your specialist.

Remember, this test does not replace the need for regular vision testing.

Test two – astigmatism test







Test three – macular degeneration test instructions

Macular degeneration covers several conditions affecting the retina. These become more common for people over 40, however these can also occur at younger ages. Certain groups are more at risk, for example if there is family history, you have diabetes, you smoke, or you are of African-American descent. If you are in any of these risk groups, you should have your eyes checked more frequently than the general population.

In the United States, age-related macular degeneration is the most common cause of vision loss for those 50 or older. The risk increases with age.

Prepare for the test

Apart from the test itself, there is nothing to do to prepare for this test.

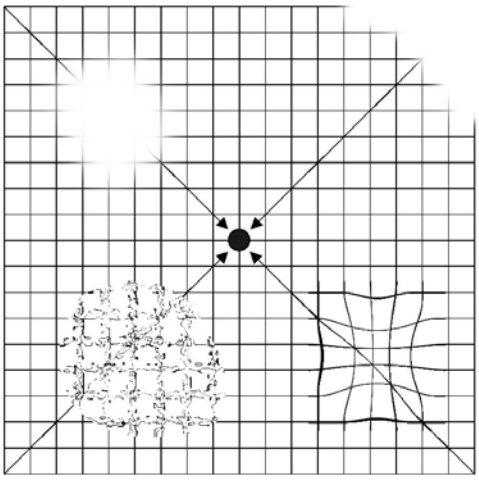
Measure the distance between your eyes and the test

If you are using the test on screen, use the same zoom level as test 1 above. For the paper test, also use the same distance as test 1. Position the paper so it's 16 inches (40 centimeters) from your eyes. Make sure you do not move your head or the paper forward or backwards.

Do the test

Look at the grid with the left eye then the right eye. There is no need to do this test with both eyes.

Cover one eye. Position the central dot in front of the eye you are testing, at the distance described above. While continuing to look only at the central dot, use your peripheral vision to check the other parts of the chart.



Examples of what you are looking for

Look for any signs of irregularity in the grid. See the diagram on the right for some examples of what you might see if you have a vision problem.

Analyze your results

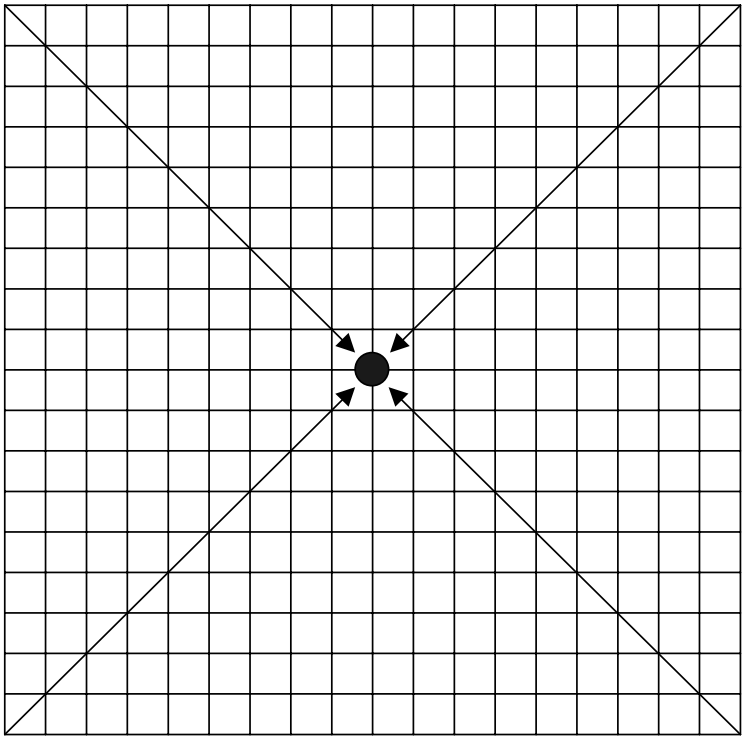
If your eye is working correctly, you should see the centre black dot, the four corners and the four sides of the grid. The lines should appear straight and unbroken.

Inability to see the centre dot, holes or blurry spots, or lines appearing wavy, fuzzy, distorted or broken may suggest a problem. See your specialist as soon as possible, especially if this is a new finding for you or if you notice changes over a short period. Some of these issues may threaten your vision if not treated quickly.

If you are over 40, it's a good idea to keep this vision test in a convenient location to check every few months.

ⓘ Remember, this test does not replace the need for regular vision testing.

Test three – macular degeneration test



Symptoms that might suggest problems

Other symptoms during or after reading can suggest you need to get your eyes checked. These include eyestrain, headaches, fatigue, watery or uncomfortable eyes, excessive blinking, and trouble seeing long distances after reading.

Further symptoms that may suggest eye problems include:

- Your eyes have trouble adjusting to dark rooms.
- You have high sensitivity to light or glare, with excessive squinting or blinking.
- The color of your iris changes.
- You have pain reoccurring in or around your eyes.
- Your eyelids are red or swollen.
- You have double vision, or see spots and ghostlike images.
- A dark spot obscures your central vision.
- You have dry eyes which itch or burn.

The following symptoms may suggest you should seek emergency medical attention:

- You have a sudden loss of vision in one eye.
- You have a sudden hazy or blurred vision.
- You have flashes of light or dark spots.
- You get halos or rainbows around light.
- You get a curtain-like blotting out of vision.
- You lose peripheral (side) vision.

Tips for protecting your eyesight

Your eyesight is important. Here are some ways you can protect your eyesight.

- **Take frequent breaks.** Take frequent breaks during up close work. Follow the 20/20/20 guideline. For every 20 minutes of up close work, spend at least 20 seconds looking at something more than 20 feet (6 meters) away. Every hour get up and move around.
- **Get your eyes checked regularly.** See a specialist regularly to have your eyesight checked. Once every 18 months is a good target, more if you are over 40 or in higher risk groups (e.g. there is family history, you have diabetes, you smoke, or you are of African-American descent). Ask your specialist to make sure your prescription lenses are not stronger or weaker than necessary. Recent research suggests both can cause further problems.
- **Eat well.** Scientists have proven that a diet high in fruit and vegetables (especially green vegetables) reduces the risk of macular generation. Avoid highly refined foods, especially for children.
- **Stay fit and healthy.** Exercise regularly as this helps keep good blood flow to the eyes. Studies have also shown that children who play sport have a lower incidence of eye problems.
- **Don't smoke.** Simple.

To print or read on screen?

A few years ago, it was safe to say the readability of text on screen was significantly less than printed text. Technological progress over the last few years though has helped monitors catch up. Modern equipment, properly configured, easily matches the readability of printed text.

The most important factor of readability for screen and printed text is resolution. If you have a large, high-resolution screen (at least 17" or greater size, 1024x768x16K colors), but a poor quality printer (e.g. dot matrix or low quality inkjet), reading on screen is your best choice. If you have less capable screen but a good 600+ DPI (dots per inch) inkjet or laser printer, then printing might be a better choice.

If you have both, the question of whether to print depends on other issues:

- **Portability.** Printed material is easier to carry around, for example to read on the bus or train, or other parts of the house. Tablet PCs are still taking time to catch on.
- **Marking.** It's often easier to mark and highlight printed matter. Some ebook tools provide this feature, however it's easy to lose your annotations.
- **Searching.** Electronic versions are easier to do keyword searches of the material and your notes.
- **Comfort.** Reading in a comfortable chair is often easier than sitting in front of a PC.
- **Cost.** It's cheaper to read on screen.

Regardless of which format you choose, follow the guidelines below to optimize how you use these formats.

Optimize printed text

Most of the time, you won't have control over how printed text appears, for example in books, magazines, reports, etc. The best you can do is make sure you have good light while reading, you read with material squarely facing you, at a comfortable distance (around 16 inches or 40cm).

If you do have control over the material you are printing out, you might want to consider these guidelines. The same applies if you are designing material for others to print and use.

- **Typeface or font:.** While there is still debate on this topic, the prevailing guidance suggests "serif" fonts (Times New Roman, Times, Georgia etc) are better for printed readability. The name of this font is Georgia.
- **Type size:** 10-12 point, depending on the font. This font is 10.5pt and expanded by 0.4 pt. Fonts larger than 12 points have little impact and may negatively affect readability.
- **Line spacing:** Studies show that more line spacing increases readability. The line spacing for this text is 14pt, with 1.5pt before and after each paragraph.
- **Line width:** The ideal line width is around 12 words a line. Sometimes two columns may be better.

- **Margins:** If your printouts will be lying flat (i.e. not hard bound), then large margins don't affect readability. Margins are useful for bound books. The binding often curves the paper and text near the inside border. This reduces readability.
- **Draft versus normal printing modes:** While draft mode might save time and ink, lighter text reduces readability.

Optimize your computer monitor

More people are using computers for longer hours these days. If you are one of them, spend some time learning how you can best configure your monitor and PC for on-screen reading. In this section we cover several steps, including:

- Choose between LCD and CRT monitors.
- Use your monitor correctly.
- Adjust monitor settings for the best view.
- Maximize screen resolution, refresh rate and DPI.
- Try various font settings.
- Experiment to find the best settings for you.
- Test settings with commonly used applications.

If you believe you already have good settings for your monitor, you might want to look at the images on the right. The image on top is from a standard monitor using "default" configuration settings (1024x768) without any extra settings. The image on the bottom uses the same hardware with optimized settings. The resolution is 1600x1200, with 150% DPI and ClearType set on. Can you see the difference?

Many people will go for years using the default settings on their computer, without knowing can do so much more!

Default settings – 1024x768

Optimized settings – 1600x1200

Choose between LCD and CRT monitors

LCD (liquid crystal display) monitors have enjoyed great popularity over the past few years. This has helped drive the price down as well. While LCD monitors are good for general use, CRT (cathode ray tube) monitors have been around longer and better suit some specific applications. Be sure to consider these when choosing a new monitor.

Let's look at some benefits of both, before considering which applications suit one or the other.

LCD benefits over CRT monitors

LCD's are usually brighter than CRTs, sometimes by up to two times more. The image clarity at the LCD native resolution is sharper, crisper and is flicker free. They do not suffer from screen distortion, while some CRTs do. In addition, the

stated screen size is the actual screen size. A 17" LCD monitor has 17" viewable, whereas a 17" CRT may only have 16.2" viewable.

LCD's take up less desk space and weigh less than CRTs. They also consume less power, sometimes up to half the power of CRTs monitors in use. This can lead to a lower cost over time.

CRT benefits over LCD monitors

There are several benefits CRT monitors have over LCD's. Depending on how you use your computer, these could be important.

LCD's pixels are slower to respond than on CRT monitors however, they are getting better. This is still an issue when you are viewing high motion images, for example watching videos or playing action-orientated games. CRTs are also viewable from wider angles, whereas LCD monitors become darker and "washed out" when viewing at an angle.

CRTs have better color reproduction than LCD's. While a casual user may not notice the difference, graphic designers will probably find this a significant limitation. In addition, the contrast ratio on CRTs is much better. Blacks look black, whereas many LCD monitors display black as dark grey.

CRTs can display many resolutions without any problems. LCD monitors can only display one native resolution with clarity. If you try running other resolutions on an LCD monitor, you get a lower image quality. CRT monitors do not suffer from "dead pixels," pixels that might be permanently bright or dark. You can't fix a dead pixel, and most of the time you can't return your LCD monitor unless it has several dead pixels. These can distract you.

Lastly, CRT monitors cost less to buy "up front." You can get a CRT monitor 1-2 inches larger than an LCD monitor for the same price.

Application suggestions

This table provides some suggestions based on how you use your computer:

Application	Suggestion
Create multimedia presentations, web pages, documents or 3D graphics, over long periods.	LCD
Watch digital videos, home movies, streaming images.	CRT
General business, home or home office use.	Either
Play action games.	CRT
Do graphic design, computer aided design, or have other high graphic needs.	CRT

Overall

Good LCD monitors provide better readability of online text for the same size screen. However, a larger CRT screen is often better than a smaller LCD screen. If

you have specific application needs, or if price is an issue, a larger CRT monitor might be a better choice.

Use your monitor correctly

Regardless of which monitor type you choose, there are some general guidelines you should follow.

Place the monitor directly in front of you, about an arms length away, and tilted slightly upward towards you. Position the top of the screen at eye level or slightly higher. If you have a large monitor, sit further back. Place it higher so your eyes are about 2-3 inches below the top of the viewing area. If you have bifocals, you might want to place the monitor lower so you can see through the bottom part of your glasses without straining.

Be careful with glare and brightness. Windows and lights are the most common source. To check, turn your monitor off and look for any reflections. Adjust your monitor brightness so it is about equal in brightness to the area behind it (assuming your workplace has enough light). If your workplace has natural lighting, you may need to adjust the brightness throughout the day.

Adjust your monitor settings for the best view

Learn how to adjust the settings on your monitor. Modern displays have digital controls to help you adjust brightness, contrast, screen size and other settings. It's usually better to have higher contrast and lower brightness, however this will depend on your workplace.

A common problem is people who have bought large CRT monitors do not know how to size the screen image. The result is unused screen space around the display image, wasting perhaps half to one inch of monitor size! See your monitor manual, or ask someone to help, if you're not sure.

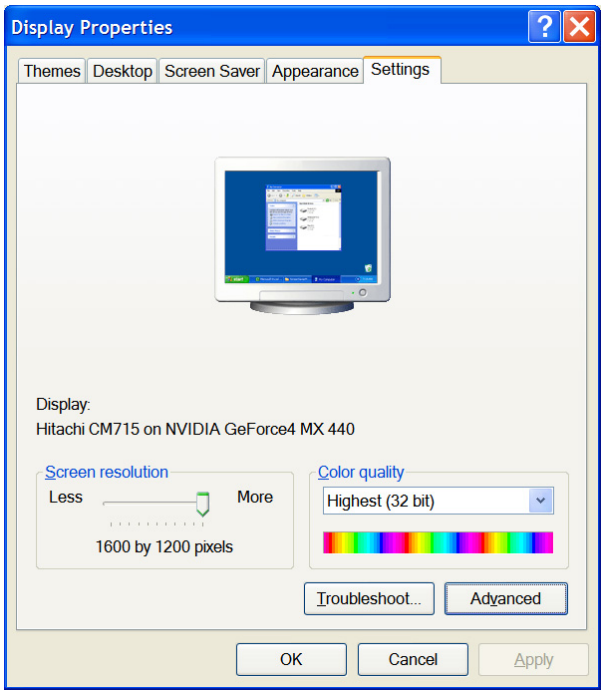
Increase screen resolution, refresh rate and DPI settings

Firstly, let's understand what screen resolution, refresh rate and DPI mean. The image on your computer screen comprises of thousands of tiny pixels. The resolution refers to how many pixels make up your viewing area. A resolution of 1024x768 means there are 1,024 pixels across your monitor, and 768 pixels down. The refresh rate refers to how many times the image on the screen refreshes. Numbers from 50-120 hertz are common here. Lastly, the DPI setting refers to "Dots Per Inch." Some operating systems allow you to set higher DPI settings when you have higher resolutions. This increases the size of screen elements so they are easier to see.

The settings and display quality your overall machine supports depends on the features of your computer and your monitor. You may need to work with someone knowledgeable to follow these instructions.

Note: These instructions are specific to Windows XP. Windows 2000 and 95 have similar settings but may differ. Again, consult your documentation or ask someone knowledgeable if you have problems.

Check your drivers

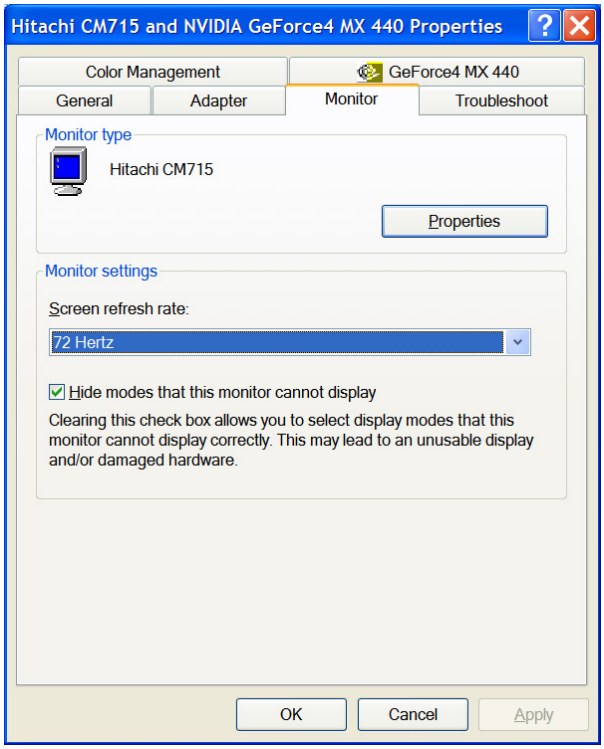


First, check your Windows drivers (configuration information) for your computer are correct. To get to your display settings in Windows XP, go to Start > Control Panel > Display, then click the "Settings" tab.

Referring to the image on the right, check the line after the "Display:" label. In the example it says "Hitachi CM715 on NVIDIA GeForce4 MX 440." The first setting refers to your monitor, the second refers to your graphics adapter (some hardware inside your computer). If either of these say "Generic" or don't refer to your hardware, check your drivers or ask someone for help.

Setting resolution and color quality

For CRT monitors you usually have a choice of screen resolution. You can see that in the diagram above the screen resolution is 1600 by 1200 pixels. **Make a note of your current settings before changing yours!** Move the slider across the far right to find the highest resolution of your computer. Sometimes you may need to set the color quality (on the right) to a lower setting to get the highest resolution. Make sure it's higher than 256 colors though. Hit Apply and see how your computer responds:



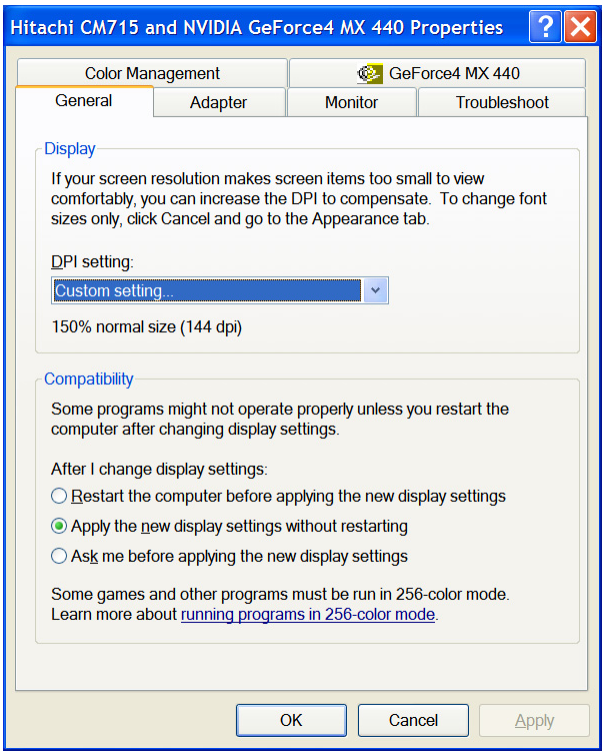
- If the screen goes black, wait 15 seconds and the image will return. Try the next resolution down. If you are unable to find a working resolution, click Cancel.
- If the screen refreshes but is out of shape, use the settings on the front of your monitor to reshape and resize the screen image.

You may like to experiment with

the resolution settings to get an image that doesn't appear flat or narrow (after adjusting your monitor). Usually these resolutions work best on CRT monitors of standard sizes: 1024x768, 1200x900, 1360x1020, and 1600x1200.

If the screen is now hard to read because the fonts are small, that's fine. We'll fix that in a moment.

For LCD monitors you only have one clear choice when it comes to resolution. Check your LCD monitor documentation for the "native" or "primary" display resolution, then check your settings to make sure they match.



Setting the refresh rate

Once you've resized your screen to the maximum resolution, check to make sure the image isn't flickering or shimmering. If so, your refresh rate may be too low. Click on the Advanced button in the dialog above, and then click the Monitor tab.

Make sure the checkbox titled "Hide modes this monitor cannot display" option is ON, otherwise you can damage your monitor (or worse, start a fire!).

Write down your current setting, then click the "Screen refresh rate" drop down box (that says 72 Hertz in this diagram). Choose the highest refresh rate that's available.

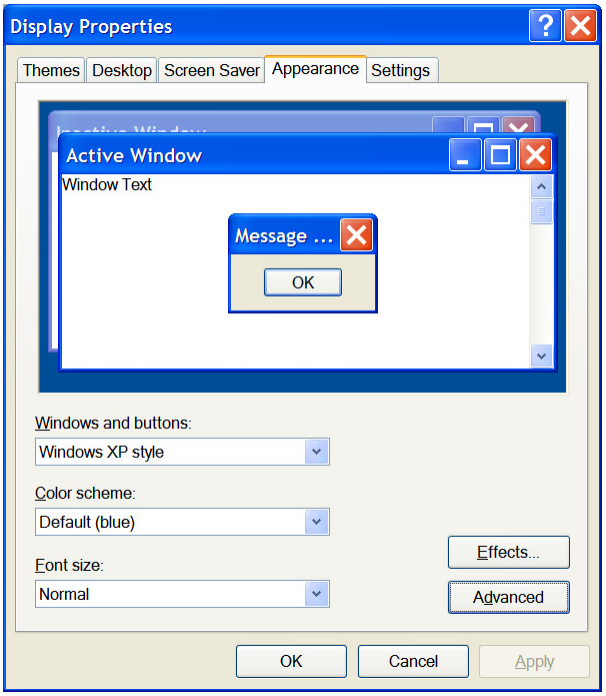
Click apply. You may need to resize your image again using your monitor settings.

Setting DPI and font size

If you have a recent model monitor and computer of good quality, it's likely you now have a high screen resolution set. You might find though the fonts, icons and other screen elements are too small. The next settings to change are as follows:

- If both the icons and text are too small for you, you need to change the DPI setting. Click on the "General" tab of the advanced settings dialog box, and you will see a dialog box like the ones on the right above. **Write down your current setting.** Set the DPI setting to a larger number. If your resolution is 1200x900 or 1360x1020 (or similar), try setting it to "Large Size (120DPI)." If your resolution is 1600x1200 or higher, try "Custom Size – 150% (144DPI)" or higher. Click OK and close all the display setting dialog boxes. Restart your computer and view the new display settings. Keep going through the rest of these instructions before trying alternative settings.

- If just the fonts are too small for you, you can set these to your preference as well. Go to the “Appearance” tab in the main display settings dialog box. It looks like the one on the right. Try setting the “Font size” setting to “Large Fonts” or “Extra Large fonts.” You can also set the font size for individual Windows objects by clicking the “Advanced” button in this dialog. Click apply. It may take a few moments to adjust these settings.



Again, before trying variations on these settings, continue to the end of this section to understand all the choices. When you do come back to try alternatives, I suggest you set the DPI setting first and the font size second.

Try extra font display settings

Microsoft has done much work to improve the readability of fonts on screen. Microsoft calls one of their recent advances “ClearType”. This technology can improve the readability of text on many displays. Microsoft Windows XP is the first operating system to have ClearType built in. Unfortunately, no previous Microsoft operating systems can support ClearType.

If you have Windows XP, you can turn it on two ways:

- Visit http://www.microsoft.com/typography/ClearTypeInfo.mspx and then click the link titled "ClearType Web interface." This is a better choice as it has some tuning settings you can try out.
- Click the “Effects” button on the Appearance tab of the main display settings dialog box. Make sure you select the checkbox by “Use the following method to smooth edges of font screens,” then select ClearType from the drop down box. Then click OK and apply the settings.

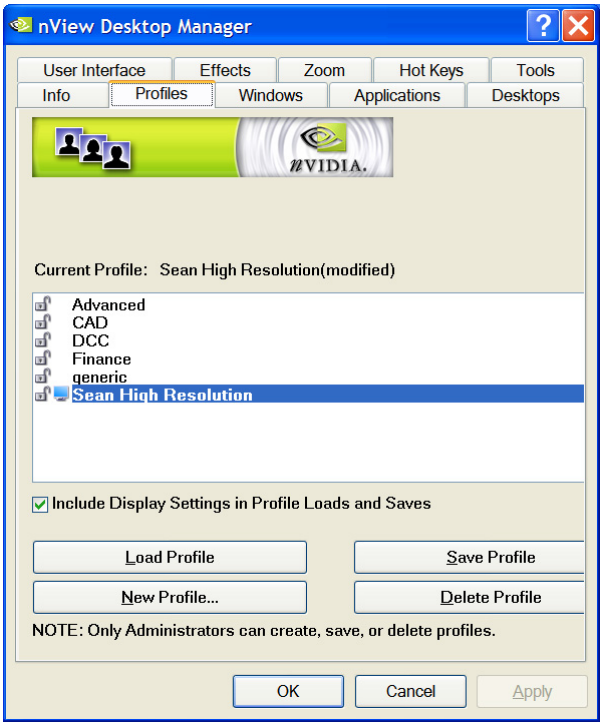
I’ve found that ClearType works well on many displays, but not all. On resolutions at 1024x768 or less, it may make text look slightly blurry. It works better when you have high color settings as well. You might like to try the other option in the font smoothing box – “Standard” – if ClearType isn’t working well for you.

Experiment to find the best settings for you

Everyone has their own preferences. Now that you know several key settings that control your display, feel free to try different combinations to get the best effect. You might like to start with the following table as a guideline depending on the maximum resolution you have.

Resolution	Colors	Refresh Rate	DPI	Font size	ClearType
1024x768	Min 16 bit	Min 72 Hertz	Normal	Normal or Large	Off/on
1200x900	Min 16 bit	Min 72 Hertz	Large size - 125%	Normal or Large	On
1360x1024	Min 16 bit	Min 72 Hertz	Large size – 125%	Normal or Large	On
1600x1200	Min 16 bit	Min 72 Hertz	Custom – 150%	Normal or Large	On

Compatibility with applications



You now need to check your existing applications to see how they perform under higher resolutions. Some applications have difficulty with higher resolutions or larger custom font sizes. I find that leaving the font size as "Normal" and adjusting the DPI has the least adverse impact on applications.

Sometimes, you may need to go looking for font settings specific to that application. For example, in Microsoft Outlook I increased the size of fonts in several views. Use the command View > Current View > Customize Current View, then click "Other Settings." Some web pages in Internet Explorer may also have difficulty with these settings. It's often not the browser's fault. Website designers don't always consider people with higher resolution screens.

You may need to make a tradeoff between the applications you use and the resolution you want. Another alternative might be to configure two user accounts in Windows XP with different display settings. In addition, check if your display drivers support multiple display profiles. For example, the base NVIDIA display driver includes a desktop manager that lets you switch between display profiles quickly. See the image above for an example.

Summary

Well done! That's the first module complete. Most of you should have found that the tests indicate your eyesight is fine for reading. I suspect though, for some, you might have found these tests uncovered a problem you were not aware of. I strongly encourage you to see someone quickly. For everyone, you've also seen some important information on symptoms that could indicate problems, and some tips on how to protect your eyesight for the rest of your life.

Next I went through some tips on how to optimize your computer screen for on-screen reading. You understand the differences between LCD and CRT monitors, and when one performs better than the other one. You also now have information on how to configure your monitor to get the best performance from the equipment you've purchased.

In the following module, we discuss how your vocabulary affects your reading speed. You'll also see some surprising information on how vocabulary influences success in your life. You'll learn how a simple device, that you probably already have, can make a big difference!

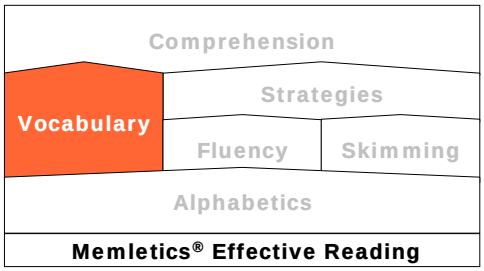
What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:

http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 3

Increase your vocabulary

Often ignored by many speed-reading courses, vocabulary holds many people back from fast reading speeds. You improve your vocabulary simply by increasing how many words you understand. By doing so, you also improve the likelihood of greater success in your life. Read on to learn how.



Your vocabulary is the collection of words you recognise and understand. The English language has the largest vocabulary of all languages – over 1,000,000 defined words. English-speaking adults use approximately 3,000 different words in everyday conversation, however on average know the meaning of around 50,000 words.

What is impressive is that a child between the ages of six and ten learns, on average, more than 5,000 new words on year. What is not so impressive is that the average adult learns, on average, 50 new words a year.

Why it is vocabulary important? It's important because the size of your vocabulary has a significant influence on your reading speed. The better your vocabulary, the faster you read. Many speed-reading courses don't provide much guidance on this topic. However, improving your vocabulary can have as much an impact on your reading speed as any of the other techniques. This is especially true when learning new topics.

Here is why. Every time you come across a word you don't know, your brain automatically focuses on it. Your brain tries reading the words around it to figure out the meaning. Even if you give up and move on, the next time you come across the word, the same thing happens. Every time you see a word you don't know, your fluency (speed) and comprehension suffer. When you are learning new topics, it's likely you will come across more words that are new. Your reading performance suffers even more if you don't take the time to find out their meanings.

If that isn't enough motivation for you to improve your vocabulary, here's another reason. Look at these test results from employees of over 40 large organizations in the USA. What do you think they represent?

Level	Average Result
Presidents, vice presidents	236
Managers	168
Superintendents	140
Overseers	114
Floor bosses	86

These are scores from a vocabulary test, out of a possible score of 272 points. It's clear that those in higher positions have command of more words. In another study, the only consistent factor across thousands of people was successful people scored high in vocabulary tests. Other studies link a strong vocabulary to strong scores in IQ tests.

Two top techniques for improving vocabulary

It's easy to improve your vocabulary without attending expensive courses or buying software. The best tool that can help you improve your vocabulary is probably already sitting on your bookshelf, dusty and unused. It's called a dictionary. If you don't have one, get one!

How to use your dictionary effectively

Each time you come across a word you don't know, or the way it's used is unfamiliar to you, follow these easy steps:

1. Spend a few seconds trying to work out the meaning from the context of the sentence, before progressing to the next step
2. Lightly underline the word, and put a small box in the margin with an 'n' next to it (for new word). Write the page number in the front of the book.
3. Make a decision: Do you need to know the meaning of this word now, or can you look it up later. If the word is important to the topic you are reading, look it up now. When you find it in the dictionary, also circle or highlight it. This will help you later. Write a small definition somewhere near the word in the book.
4. When you finish reading the book or chapter, go back through the page numbers and look up any words you didn't look up before.

Let's get some practice. Assume you haven't seen the word "discovery" when you read the following sentence:

Megan's discovery surprised the whole family!

Now go through the steps above. How long does it take you to find a pen and dictionary? What words come before and after "discovery"? Are there any new words you haven't seen on the same page of the dictionary?

If you need some motivation to do this, remember that every new word you look up might add $50 or more to your annual income one day!

Make them stick – use new word journal

A great way to make those new words stick in your memory is to keep your own "new word journal." Use a notepad, writing book or spreadsheet. Every time you come across a new word, also add the word and the definition to your journal. Review these occasionally. Even better, add entries to SuperMemo (software discussed in Memletics). These regular reviews help your memory and you'll surprise yourself with the words you once didn't know!

Here's a tip if you are learning a new topic or subject. Keep new words, jargon, symbols and acronyms specific to that topic in a separate part of your journal. Keep the journal nearby while you study so you can refer to the meanings easily.

Two extra steps you can take to lock in new words:

- **Substitute similar words.** When you learn a new word, take a moment and think of three similar words you know. Rephrase the sentence using one of these words, and then say the sentence again with the new word. Write the similar words into your new word journal.
- **Write your own sentences.** Create a new sentence using the word you've just learnt. Write it into your journal!

Again, keep in mind that every entry you make in your journal might be adding another $50 to your annual income one day.

Learn common prefixes and suffixes

Knowing common prefixes and suffixes can help you work out the meaning of a word without looking it up in the dictionary. Here are some common prefixes and suffixes. There are many others – ask a teacher or look on the Internet for more.

Prefix or suffix	Meaning	Examples
-able, -ible	capable of	portable, teachable
anti-	against, opposed	antisocial, antidote, anticlimax
-ar, -ary, -ory	relating to	auditory, similar, imaginary
bio-	life	biology, biography
co-, con-, com-	together, with	conspiracy, cooperate
de-	from, away	demote, depart
dys-	hard, ill, with difficulty	dysfunctional, dyslexia
ex-	out, from	express, exhale
geo-	Earth	geologist, geography
-gress	go, move	egress, progress,
hyper-	excessive, over, above, beyond	hyperthermic, hypersensitive
hypo-	under, below, beneath	hypothermic, hypodermic
-ic	having characteristics of	Linguistic
inter-	between	interstate, international
intra-	within	intrastate, intranet
-less	without	heartless, careless
-logy	study of	Biology
macro-	large	macroeconomics, macromolecule

micro-	small	microchip, microscope
-mit, -miss	send	transmit, dismiss, missile
non-	not	nonsense, nonetheless
omni-	all	omnipotent, omnipresent, omnivore
peri-	around	peripheral, perimeter, periscope,
-phon-	sound	phonetic, phonics, telephone
port-	carry	portable, portfolio
post-	after	postgraduate, postpone, posterior
pre-	before	preamble, preconceived, predict, preface
re-	back, again	redo, return, refund
-rupt	break	rupture, bankrupt, interrupt
-scope	view	microscope, telescope
semi-	half	semicircle, semester
spect-	see, look	spectacle, spectator
sub-	under	submarine, subversive
super-	over, above	supersonic
tele-	far	telephone, telepathy, telemetric
therm-	heat	thermal, thermometer, thermostat
trans-	across	transport, transmit, translate
un-	not, opposing, reverse	uncertain, unlawful, unbearable
under-	below, beneath	underground, underneath, underestimate

Some words are simple combinations of these prefixes and suffixes. Try looking up the parts of these words in the table above: Microscope, biology, telephone, telescope, periscope, and hypothermic. Pick one of these for a day and underline it every time you see it while reading.

Understand the history of words

Many of the words in the English language come from Latin, a language that's thousands of years old. Latin heavily influences the prefixes and suffixes table above. Here are some more examples of words with Latin roots:

Latin Word	Meaning	Examples
avis	bird	aviary, aviator, aviation
cumulare	to build up	accumulate, cumulative
dens, dentis	tooth	denture, dentist
flare, flatus	blow	deflate, inflate
gerere, gestum	to carry, to bear	digest, gesture, gestation
judex, judicare	judge	judge, judicious, prejudice
locare, locus	to place, place	allocate, dislocate, local
putare	to think, estimate	computer, reputation
vita	life	vitamin, vitality, vital

Good dictionaries often have information on the origins of each word you look up. Study them and you'll remember the word for longer. You might like to write the history into your word journal as well.

More tips for improving vocabulary

Here are some more tips to help you improve your vocabulary:

- **Increase your reading range.** This is a great way to find new words, develop your reading skills and have fun doing it. Read more widely on different topics. Read material that's higher than your current reading and vocabulary level. Don't worry if it's slow going – treat it as a development exercise.
- **Follow word trails.** Often when you look up a word, you find new words in the definition you don't understand. Mark them and then look them up as well. How far can you go?
- **Use online dictionaries.** If you are near a computer while reading, it's sometimes faster to find a word using an online dictionary, such as dictionary.com or Microsoft Encarta. A great feature of these tools is they often have a sound recording of the word. This can help you get the pronunciation right.
- **Try software, word a day services, vocabulary tests, courses and other tools.** Yes, these can help, but only do these after you've developed the discipline of looking up words you find in your normal reading. This is still more effective because the new words you come across relate more to your areas of interest or study. I suggest you only do these if you have a keen interest in improving your vocabulary, and be wary how you spend your money. Many good materials cost less than $15.

Summary

This module has helped you understand the role vocabulary plays in reading speed. You've seen that a strong vocabulary helps you read faster, and you've seen that your vocabulary also plays a role in how successful you are in life and work.

You've learned two top techniques for significantly improving your vocabulary. The first is to use a dictionary frequently, and the second is to keep a new word journal. You've seen how many words use common prefixes and suffixes, and that word history can often help you understand modern words.

In the following module, you'll learn how to improve your core reading speed, i.e. the speed you read individual words and phrases.

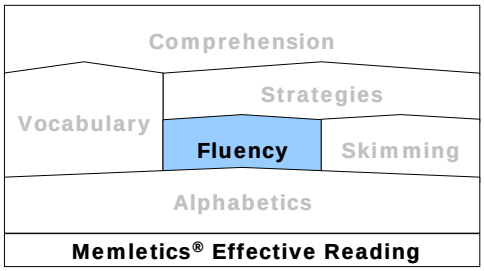
What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:

http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 4

Develop your fluency

Your fluency is a key part of reading effectiveness. Fluency develops with practice, however some simple techniques can help improve your overall reading speed. Speed-reading courses and instructors teach these techniques, in various forms, all over the world. You are now about to learn these yourself.



Fluency is the ability to read words and sentences quickly. In this section, we look at three ways of improving your fluency so you can read faster. These are:

- **Basic fluency.** Understand basic word and sentence construction.
- **Fluency support.** How to support fluency and fluency development.
- **Fluency development.** How to improve fluency.

Check your basic fluency skills

Most people reading this book will already have basic fluency skills. If you find reading a challenge though, you might want to do some work to improve your basic fluency skills. Here are some ways you can check and improve these skills:

- **Read aloud to yourself.** Take some time to read passages aloud. If you have difficulty with certain passages, practice them until they become fluent. Use two types of reading. During practice readings, work on passages you find difficult. During "live" readings, assume you are reading to an audience. Perhaps stand up as if you are presenting to a class, group, or audience. If you make a mistake, keep going! At the end, come back and practice those difficult passages again.
- **Read with others.** Read to parents, teachers, siblings or friends. Ask them to point out any problems they hear. Remember they are helping you, so keep an open mind! You might also ask them to read difficult passages with you. Perhaps ask them to record themselves reading on to a tape or a computer. You can then play it back later and read with it.
- **Use speech synthesis programs.** Speech synthesis software can take text from your computer and read it aloud. These are getting better over time. Some current versions have enough sophistication for you to read with and learn as

you go. You can also find free demonstrations on the Internet. Use these if you'd just like to check a sentence or two. Search for "text to speech demonstration" (without the quotes), AT&T Labs TTS, or RealSpeak.

- **Do some training.** If you still have difficulty reading, or are reading in a language other than your native language, you might like to try some expert training to develop your fluency skills.

Support your fluency

Now that we've checked your basic fluency skills, let's look at some ways to support fluency. It's probably been a while since you learnt to read, so some of these you may have simply forgotten over time. You can easily do these straight away, whereas the topics we discuss after these points will take more time to develop.

- **Get in good Memletic State.** Make sure you are comfortable and relaxed. Remove distractions, and check you have good light and ventilation. See the Memletic State chapter in the Memletics Manual for more help here.
- **Position the book.** Have the book squarely in front of you, preferably lying flat. If necessary, help the book stay open by opening it near the front and pushing it flat. Work through the book 20-40 pages at a time and push it flat each time. Take care not to damage the book.
- **Keep your head still.** Use your eyes to move across the page. You may turn your head from side to side to read each page.
- **Don't vocalize.** Do not read the words aloud (unless it's for some other reason). One of the first key steps to improve your reading speed is to ensure you are not reading each word individually. Firstly, this means keeping your voice quiet while you read. However, you also need to check you are not moving your lips or voice box. If you are, you limit your reading speed to how fast you can talk (which is far slower than the mind can think). An easy way to check your voice box is still is to put your hand on it while you read. If you feel any movement, you are still vocalizing. Focus on reading without moving your voice box or lips.
- **Don't regress.** Average readers often go back over the same material without realizing it, sometimes more than 30 times on a single page. This is different to when you deliberately go back to review something you didn't understand (which is acceptable). Regressing is a habit from when you first started learning to read. You went back over the text to make sure you read it correctly. Once you develop core readings skills, you don't need to do this but the habit often remains. To break this habit, read with a small piece of card or paper, and run it down the page *above* the current line you are reading. This will hide the text you've read and prevent regressing. Practice for a few minutes each day for a week, then as needed after that. The techniques below will also help with this.

Develop your fluency

Now it's time to look at some ways to improve your fluency. These exercises and techniques take time to work, however even with 10-15 minutes a day of practice you will start seeing differences within a week. These exercises help do two things:

- **Improve your eye movements.** Recall from the introduction your eyes do not smoothly progress across each line of words. They make small jumps, or "fixations". Good reader's eyes jump about one inch between each fixation, however slower readers "fix" on each word (and parts of the word). The exercises below will help your eyes jump to the right place each time, and not remain too long on particular words. Note: It's not a matter of learning to make two or three fixations on each line. Some lines need more fixations because they have uncommon words on them, whereas others may have common words that need fewer fixations. Your eyes will learn to adjust with practice.
- **Reduce subvocalization.** You may recall from above I discussed vocalizing – or reading words aloud. Subvocalizing is pronouncing the words in your head. This is another limit that slows down reading, however you will always subvocalize to a certain extent. Some speed reading references tell you to stop doing this, however they don't provide guidance on how! You can reduce subvocalization simply by doing the drills and exercise below. You don't give your brain enough time to vocalize each word, and it learns to adapt.

Learn the Regulator Technique

The primary technique you can use to improve your reading speed is the **regulator technique.** This is a simple yet very effective way to learn to read books and other written material faster. It works best because you can use it on your own material, at your own pace, in your own time. Many of the other "bells and whistles" of speed reading courses are there to make them seem different from their competition.

Leading speed-reading coaches teach this technique worldwide. Rick Ostrov, author of Power Reading (a top ranked book on speed reading at Amazon.com), says that the regulator technique "is the best method for increasing reading speed and effectiveness." Charles Van Doren, author of "How to Read a Book" (another top seller at Amazon.com), says "...it is not necessary to employ any device more sophisticated than your own hand."

Here's how to learn the regulator technique:

Stage 1: Apply the regulator

Run your finger, pencil or pen (capped) along underneath the line you are reading. If you are reading on the computer screen, use your mouse. Your finger, pencil, pen or mouse is your "regulator." When you finish that line, you move your regulator down to the next line and do the same again. Keep your eyes above the regulator, however make sure you read the words and not watch your regulator! Keep your eyes loosely focused, rather than peering hard at each word. In this first stage, just get comfortable having the regulator there. Don't try to pick up your speed. Slow down if the passage becomes harder to read in places.

Aim to spend at least 10-15 minutes a day using this technique. Do it for all reading from now on, including what you are reading now! If you find it's

distracting you from an important reading assignment, go back to your normal reading practice during the assignment. Restart using the regulator after that.

You may find that even in stage 1, your reading speed increases. The increase might not be drastic, but enough to make the exercise worthwhile. How? It helps your pace while reducing regression over words lines and sentences you've already read.

Which regulator should you use – finger, pencil or pen? It's up to you, however if you reading to learn, I suggest using a pen or pencil. You can underline, tick or mark important passages as well as mark new words straight away.

Adults: You might find it embarrassing to use this exercise in front of others, for fear of looking like you are learning to read. Simply explain you are doing a speed-reading course and most people will usually want to know more!

Stage 2: Shorten the regulator's distance

Now that you're comfortable using the regulator, the next stage is to shorten how far the regulator travels across each line. You might have already started doing this if you found it hard to keep the regulator up to the same pace as your reading.

Aim to cover the middle half to two-thirds of each line. Start part the way in, and don't go all the way to the end. Make sure you still read each word though, and again don't try to push yourself just yet. Make sure you are still reading the words and understanding what you are reading. Go back and test yourself if necessary.

Again, aim to spend 10 to 15 minutes a day for another 2 to 3 days, at least, doing this. In the next stage we'll start increasing the speed of the regulator, so for now keep up your regular pace.

Stage 3: Do speed drills

Now it's time to start increasing the speed of your regulator. Below you will find some speed drills to use. Start with the basic drills for a week, then the intermediate drills for a week, then the advanced drills for a week. Aim to do one of these exercises every day for 10-15 minutes. If you want to gain more speed, do two or more each day. For example, do one in the morning and one in the evening (keep in mind the principles of repetition from Memletics– space them out).

Instead of simply speeding up your regulator, you will see the drills involve going back over to your material at a faster pace. This helps "train your brain" to speed up your reading while still keeping up comprehension.

An important point here is to keep your drills and normal reading separate for now. The reading material you use for your practice and drills should not come from subjects or topics you are learning now. Find a book that has many similar pages (preferably without diagrams or pictures), with good line spacing and text size. It should be reasonably easy for you to read and understand at your current level. This will be your "drill book."

During the drills, you focus on improving speed first and keeping up comprehension second. When you are reading to learn, comprehension comes first. The speed drills will also increase your speed during your normal reading.

Here are the drills to use over the coming weeks:

- **Basic speed drill 1 (15 mins).** Go to a section in your chosen drill book that you haven't read before. Mark your starting point then start reading at your

normal pace. Don't try to speed up during this first read. At the end of 10 minutes, mark your finish point. Now go back to your starting point and reread what you just read. This time, aim to "read" the same amount of material in 5 minutes. Use your regulator to make sure your eyes move over every word of every line, but just do it faster. Keep up an even pace so you finish within five minutes. If you go over, just redo the exercise at a faster pace next time.

Register as many words as you can during the fast section. For this drill don't worry if you don't register all of them. At the end of the exercise, write in your course booklet. You only need to do this once a day, however feel free to do it a few times a day for maximum impact.

- **Basic speed drill 2 (20 mins).** This drill is essentially the same as basic speed drill 1, with one small addition. At the end of your 10-minute read, write some simple notes that describe what you read. Use a notepad or some other spare paper. Take about one to two minutes. Then do the five-minute read. After that, spend another minute adding a few more notes to your list.
- **Intermediate speed drill 1 (15 mins).** This is similar to basic speed drill 1. After completing the five-minute read, reread the material in *two* minutes. Make sure you read every line, but keep up the pace.

  This is also a good time to start using speed paths from stage 4 below. Choose one of the speed paths and use it during this drill. For instance, run your regulator down the page, not across every line.
- **Intermediate speed drill 2 (20 mins).** Same as intermediate speed drill 1, however add the review task. After each ten, five and two minute read, spend a minute writing some simple notes.
- **Advanced speed drill 1 (25 minutes).** Mark a starting spot and start reading at your normal pace. After five minutes, stop and mark the ending spot. Count the number of pages and multiply this by three – this is your target page count. If you read a page and a half, then your target page count is about four and a half pages. Mark a starting spot in *new* material, count your target pages forward and mark your end spot. Start reading and aim to finish *first time* in 12 minutes. You will need to read slightly faster. At the end, spend one minute writing some notes on what you read. Then, reread the material in 6 minutes. Add to your notes.
- **Advanced speed drill 1 (40 mins).** Do advanced speed drill one with these differences. Multiply your target page count by 5, complete the first reading in 20 minutes, and the second reading in 10 minutes.

Stage 4: Choose your speed path

As your speed increases, you may find your regulator has trouble keeping up with your eyes. You can now choose a speed path for your regulator that suits you. Instead of moving your regulator across underneath each line, try moving it in one of the following paths. Down the middle of the page, down the margin, in a large S or Z pattern down the page, or several Z's down the page. For online reading, try running the mouse down the middle or side of the text. Combine your experimentation with more speed drills for 10-15 minutes a day for a week.

Previously you were using your regulator to keep your place on each line. Now you are using your regulator to keep your place on the page. You still read each line though.

No one path is better than the others are. Choose one you find most comfortable. You might also try changing your regulator depending on which reading mode you are in (e.g. fast or slow). For example, you might go back to the line-by-line pattern while reading complex or important passages.

Using the regulator technique

Using the regulator technique with the speed drills over four weeks can dramatically improve fluency. After you've completed the four-week course, commit to doing a few speed drills each month. This will preserve and even further improve your overall fluency. Even experienced readers will find the exercises helpful.

A question you may have is "Do I ever stop using the regulator?" The answer is "it's up to you." Many people continue to use the regulator technique for all their reading. You might like to stop when you read for leisure, or if you feel you read well without it. Start using it again if you feel your speed slowing, while reading important material, or if your concentration is lacking.

Summary

In this module, you've discovered how to improve your fluency. You've checked your basic fluency skills, and learned ways support your current fluency. The main part of this module though focused on how to develop and improve your fluency.

You've learned a simple and effective technique for developing fluency – the regulator technique. You've seen how to apply the regulator technique and then how to do the speed drills needed to pick up your pace. You've also learned some speed paths that help you as you increase your reading speed.

Don't let the simplicity of the regulator technique fool you. Take the time to do the speed drills and you will see a dramatic increase in your reading speed.

While you work on developing your fluency, you can continue with developing more skills that improve your reading speed. The next module teaches you how to skim read. Skim reading is another important technique for effective reading, however you need to know the right time to use it. Read on to find out more.

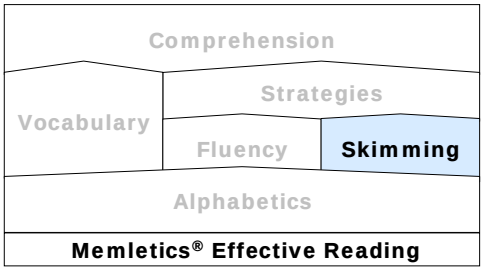
What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:

http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 5

Learn to skim read

Skim reading is a valuable technique for overviewing, previewing, and reviewing information at both the general and specific levels. It's useful for reading structured text in which there are organizing clues and for reading unstructured text in which there are no organizing clues. In this chapter, you'll learn how to use skimming techniques in each situation so you'll be able to read both complex and simple content at a faster, more efficient rate, and at a deeper level of understanding.



Skim reading is an essential technique for you to use in both general reading and speed reading. It differs from "fluent" reading in which you read every word in an article or book with the purpose of fully understanding the information in those publications. Skimming has the purpose of allowing you to locate information in order to overview, preview or review key concepts. The benefit of skim reading is that it allows you to rapidly assess the importance of material in relation to your reading purpose and then to focus effectively on key facts, concepts, and information needed to achieve that purpose. In other words, you can learn information very quickly and efficiently and improve your learning process.

Note: Don't use skim reading alone with material you need to know in depth. In such a case, read the information carefully and at a slower rate. Use skimming before and after reading at your standard reading speed to gain a better understanding of material.

This chapter provides specific guidelines on how to use the skimming technique. The guidelines are:

- Skim reading *structured* content
- Skim reading *unstructured* content
- Skim reading on the computer

Each of these guidelines defines the techniques of skim reading and provides directions on how to apply those techniques appropriately. Study each guideline closely. Then, at the end of the chapter, complete the exercises. These will help you reinforce learning of the content in this chapter.

Skim reading structured content

Structured content is information that has organizing elements such as tables of contents, headings, bullets, and other organizing clues in the text. Textbooks, business books and technical manuals usually contain structured content.

Skim reading provides a high-level view of such structured information in two ways. First, with this technique, you can get a preview or overview of new material so you can decide how you want to approach it in terms of reading strategies. (It's also useful in finding key ideas in new material.) Second, it's useful for reviewing material you've already studied. The benefit of skimming is that it helps you with the learning process and also aids in locating important information quickly.

Specifically, skim reading structured content involves searching for the main ideas in an article or text by looking for organizational "clues". In other words, an author organizes his or her material in specific ways that can help you discover the main points quickly and easily. The clues can include the following:

- Front and back cover
- Table of contents
- Major and second level headings.
- All headings in bold and italics and diagrams
- The first and last lines of paragraphs
- Summaries
- Other organizers (numbers, days, dates or times, proper names, etc.)

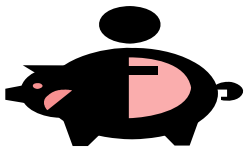
Let's look at each of these "clues" in turn to see how they can help you when you scan read them for information.

Front and back covers

Book covers can provide great summaries of the content. By nature, covers are designed to convey maximum information in the least amount of space. By reading these, you can get a quick understanding of the author's main ideas which, in turn, helps you decide if the book does or doesn't meet your goals on a particular subject.

For example, let's assume that you have an interest in learning how to save money, budget, and reduce credit card debt. You also want an easy guide to these subjects because you're not interested in a lot of theory; you just want the most practical guide possible. So, you go to the library or bookstore and pick up the following book. *(Note: this book doesn't really exist; we've created it solely for this chapter to illustrate the techniques.)*

The Practical Person's Guide to Saving Money



A smart, easy guide to keeping money in your pocket

By scanning the text on the front cover, you can pick out words that fit the purpose of finding a book that fits your needs—"practical", "guide", "saving", "smart", "easy". The text on the front cover is promising so now you look at the back cover of our imaginary book to get a little more detail on the content.

The Practical Person's Guide to Saving Money

Ready to get serious about getting control of your finances? We'll show what to do in the following areas:

- **Create an effective budget.**
- **Save money painlessly.**
- **Get control of your credit card debt.**
- **Plan for the future.**

...and Much, much more

The back cover text shows you that the book will explain how to create an effective budget, help you save money, and get control of credit card debt. So, based on your skimming of the text on the two covers, you can be reasonably sure that the book will give you the answers you need, and it's worth your while to check this book out from the library or buy it from a bookstore.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents gives you the author's organization of his or her subject matter. The table provides a general understanding of what that author feels is important to understand and remember. You can build on that organizational information to "read smart"; that is, concentrate your reading on the areas that will give you the most information in the least amount of time. Below, we've provide you with a partial sample of the Table of Content for our imaginary book.

Table of Contents

As you can see above, the Table of Contents gives you very specific clues as to what's included in each of the chapters. For example, Chapter 1 will show you how to analyze your spending habits, track expenses, and provides sample budgets for you to use in your household.

Index

The index provides an alphabetical summary of the facts, people, and places that are most important in a book's content. For example, an important event, person or date will have many references in the index. That tells you that the author considers those items very important. These will need your full attention when you read that information. By skim reading this section, you'll have a better understanding of the vital elements of the text. For example, below is an excerpt from the index of the imaginary book.

The partial listing under the "C" category shows the information available concerning credit cards. By skimming it, you discover that there's quite a bit of information available on the hidden dangers of credit cards, how to find cheaper interest rates for those cards, and other important subjects relating to credit card usage.

The presence of an index can also be a good indicator of the quality of the book. If there is no index, you might want to consider using other references if possible.

Major and second level headings

Major and second level headings in a text provide you with specific clues regarding important ideas contained within an article or book. By skim reading these headings, you gain a deeper level of understanding of the content. Below is an excerpt from the chapter on reducing and eliminating debt.

> **Cut up (almost) all those cards!**
>
> **Credit card addiction is a way of life for many people!** It's important for you to remember that millions of people have fallen into the trap of paying for purchases on credit cards. The trap is paying minimum amounts on debts with 18% or more interest rates. Debt keeps building and building! It's time to take control of your addiction by following the six steps outlined below.
>
> **Step 1: Figure out a budget—right now!** Set limits on your spending. It's a great way to keep debt under control.
>
> **Step 2: Limit yourself to one lower-interest credit card.** One credit card is all you really need. Keeping more than one is just an invitation to keep on spending.
>
> **Step 3** ...

It's clear from the bold-faced major heading that the author considered cutting up credit cards very important. From that heading and the following bold faced second-level headings, it's easy for you to determine that the information in this section is designed to show you how to reduce debt by taking some very specific steps.

All text in bold or italics, diagrams

As you saw in the excerpt above, the mere fact that the author has chosen to bold-face or italicize information tells you this information is important and needs to be understood. Visual displays, such as diagrams, charts, and other graphics, are also important because they provide visual explanation of essential information. Our imaginary chapter on reducing and eliminating debt doesn't have any diagrams in it. However, a real book on credit and debt might include a sample credit report from a major credit-reporting agency. This is easier and quicker to digest then paragraphs of text describing the contents.

First and last sentences of paragraphs

Often, the first sentence of a paragraph states the main idea of that paragraph while the last sentence often provides a quick restatement of that same idea. So you can read these lines to pick up the information you need. It's important to remember that this technique is valuable but doesn't work for every author. Some writers write clearly while others bury information in complex sentence structure

and make it difficult for the reader to pick out and understand key concepts. In such cases, it will call for a closer read than is provided by skim reading. Below, read the first and last sentences from a paragraph in our imaginary book and see how they provide a good idea of the main thrust of the information in this passage.

> One of the great problems with credit card debt is called interest. What is interest? It's the money you pay lenders for the privilege of borrowing money from them. From the lenders' point of view, you're an investment on which they earn money (interest). Credit card companies are lenders, and when you borrow money from them (i.e. use their cards), they can charge you interest ranging anywhere from 9 to 21% interest or more, depending on economic conditions. This rate is called the Annual Percentage Rate (APR), and, combined with the compound interest charge, it can cause your debt to grow like a virulent cancer.

By skim reading the first and last lines of the above paragraph, you can pick out the main point—credit card interest can seriously damage financial well-being.

Summaries

Summaries at the end of articles, chapters, and books give you an information-packed "snapshot" of the key ideas in the content. Quickly reading a summary is a great way to understand and review concepts considered important by the author. For example, look at the summary created for our imaginary book.

> **Summary**
>
> In this chapter, you saw that credit card or other debt can become a crushing burden on your financial house unless you take charge of your finances. You also saw that the first step in reducing or eliminating debt is to set up a household budget so you can carefully control expenditures. In addition, you learned that a fast way to pile up debt is through addiction to credit card spending. I gave you six steps for getting control of that addiction. The best advice I can give you at this point is: follow those six steps immediately! Take action right now. The only thing you have to lose is stress!

A quick read of the summary tells you that the author believes there are two main ways out of debt—setting up a budget and getting rid of credit card addiction. So, you know promptly the main ideas presented in this chapter by the author.

Other organizers

Other organizers include numbers, days, dates or times, proper names, and any other specific "clues' which indicate that the author considers this information important. For example, assume the author prominently listed a resource in our fictional chapter on reducing and eliminating debt. This fictional resource is called "The International Foundation for Consumer Credit", and the author lists this organization's address, phone number, and web site link. Because the author has listed all this contact information, he or she has let you know that this knowledge is vital for you to know.

Skim reading unstructured content

Unstructured content is text that has few headings, bullets and other organizing clues. Biographies, novels, and some business books are examples of unstructured content. Even though this material doesn't have as many organizational clues as structured content has, you can still use skim reading to gain a high-level view of the material.

When skim reading unstructured content, your objective is to read quickly and absorb the gist of the author's messages and key ideas. You don't really focus on any particular elements. In essence, you train yourself to skip words, phrases and sentences that are less likely to have key points. Instead, you focus on those parts of the page that are more likely to have key points.

To learn to skim read unstructured content, use the speed drills from the previous chapter, but gradually increase your pace so you only spend about 5-7 seconds skimming each page for an average size paperback. Use more time for larger pages or smaller print. Use less time for smaller pages or larger text. Run your eyes over the page from top to bottom. Focus near the start and end of paragraphs, but pick out relatively random phrases within paragraphs as well. Turn pages at regular intervals to keep up speed. Don't use the regulator technique while skimming. In this case, the "regulator" is the act of turning the pages.

It's important to remember that most articles, books and other materials have *some* structure. This means you can switch between techniques used for structured and unstructured content. So, be flexible in use of the techniques. For example, you might pick up an inspirational business book written by a corporate executive. The main topic is the "power of concentrated focus". Because the book is loosely organized (the author is a better executive than a writer), you first skim read it as unstructured material. In the process of skim reading it quickly, assume you discover potentially useful information. At that point, you switch to skim reading that information as structured material in order to determine its worth in relation to your reading purpose.

Skim reading on a computer monitor

Research suggests that people skim read information more slowly on computers compared to paper. However, the same research also suggests that understanding of the information is greater. You can see that there is a tradeoff in this situation. It may be that you have to work harder to develop good skim reading skills when using a computer. Here are some tips to help you improve those skills:

- **Use full screen mode:** Use the full screen mode if possible to minimize scrolling. It'll reduce both "finger fatigue" and eye fatigue. Both Adobe Acrobat and Microsoft Word provide full screen views.
- **Minimize mouse usage:** Try to minimize use of a mouse or alternate it with other regulator devices (pencil or pen, for example). Overuse of this device can lead to repetitive strain injury (RSI) and cause pain in the wrist, arm or shoulder.
- **Print it out.** Text on paper is often easier to skim read than on computer.

For more tips on optimizing your computer screen for reading, see the Alphabetics module in this course. A well configured screen will assist in skim reading.

Skim reading exercises

Below are some exercises for you. These will help you learn the skim reading technique.

Structured reading exercise

Find a structured text for this exercise. It could be a textbook, business book or any other structured material. Skim read the text using the techniques outlined in this chapter for structured text. Specifically, skim read by looking at clues such as front and back covers, tables of contents, index, headings and other organizers. Practice picking up these clues using a regulator – i.e. point to each of these items using your finger or pen. Try these exercises:

Structured skim reading drill 1

Follow these steps:

- Set a countdown timer for 2 minutes, plus 2 seconds per page.
- Start reading the structured content in this order: Covers, table of contents, index, first and second level headings. Focus on getting your eyes to the right places. Don't worry too much about content yet.
- Aim to finish within the time you allotted.

Structured skim reading drill 2

Follow the same steps as for skim reading drill 1, however also skim read the introduction, all headings, all bolded text, plus the first sentence of each paragraph. Give yourself 4 minutes plus 3 seconds per page.

Unstructured reading exercise

Find an unstructured text for this exercise. It could be a novel or a biography of a famous person you've always wanted to know more about. It should have large sections of text with few headings and other organizing features.

Unstructured skim reading drill 1

Follow these steps. If you come across any organizing features during this exercise (for example headings, bold text, diagrams), just skip over them for now.

- Pick a starting page, mark it, read for ten minutes at your normal pace, and mark where you finished.

- Count the pages you've read during that time.
- Starting from where you finished, count out three times the number of pages you read. If you read 4 pages in 10 minutes, count 12 pages ahead.
- Aim to skim read that number of pages in next ten minutes.
- Write down a few points on what you read.
- Optional: Reread the material at a slower pace to see where you might have picked up more key points.

Unstructured skim reading drill 2

Follow the same steps as for the drill above, except count out five times that many pages. Aim to skim read that number in ten minutes.

Keep following these steps, but increase your number of target pages. Keep this up over several days until you reach approximately 5-7 seconds per page. Remember, the aim is to develop your skim reading skills. The focus is on speed while picking as much information possible during a fixed time per page.

Combined skim reading exercise

Now that you've practiced skim reading structured and unstructured text, it's now time to bring these together.

Combined skim reading drill 1

Find a book that has a good combination of both structured and unstructured text and try the following exercise.

- Pick one chapter from your book that's of average size and count the pages. Allow yourself 4 minutes plus 7 seconds for each page in that chapter. Set a countdown timer if possible.
- Skim read the covers, table of contents, index, and introduction.
- Proceed to your chosen chapter and skim read the headings, bolded text, and unstructured text in one read. Aim to finish within the time you set.
- Write some notes about what you've read.
- Reread the chapter at a slower pace, noting any important points you missed.

Repeat the drill using different chapters over a few days.

Summary

This module taught you the skim reading technique. You've learned that when reading *structured* material in which there *are* organizing clues, you use skimming to get a "bird's eye" view of structured information or to review information you've already studied. When reading *unstructured* material with few headings, bullets, or other organizing clues, your purpose is to absorb the gist of the author's messages and key ideas.

Whether skim reading structured or unstructured material, remember that the key idea is speed. You force yourself to keep up the pace. Read front and back, introductions, and summaries at your standard reading speed, but then pick up the pace while reading the content pages. Remember to spend no longer than 5-7 seconds per page, adjusting for the size of the page and print.

When you need to spend a lot of time reading new material, it helps to think about the approach you will use. The next module teaches you how to develop specific strategies to help you read and understand new material faster.

What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:
http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 6

Use reading strategies

It's essential to apply reading strategies to the information you read. Applying the correct strategy will give you maximum understanding of information in less time and with less effort. In this section, we'll explain different reading strategies and show you how to adjust reading rate according to your purpose in reading and the difficulty of the material. By the time you complete this section and thoroughly practice the principles outlined in it, you'll be able to read and comprehend material much more quickly and efficiently.

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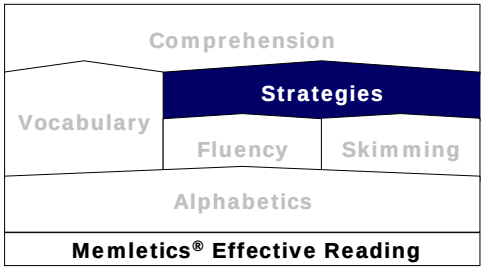


To be an effective reader, you can't approach information in a haphazard manner. You need to tackle it with a *specific* strategy in mind. A defined strategy will improve your comprehension, increase reading speed, and save time. In this chapter, we've provided you with three major guidelines on choosing strategies and applying them effectively. These guidelines include:

- Analyze your objectives and material.
- Use reading paths and reading modes.
- Vary speed when reading.

Each of these guidelines contains specific information on how to apply strategies. Study each guideline closely. Then, at the end of the chapter, complete the exercises. These contains drills which will help you reinforce learning of the content in this chapter.

Analyze your objectives and material

Whenever you approach material you want to read, you should take a strategic view. Ask yourself specific questions in these areas:

Ask questions about your objectives

Whenever you pick up an article or book to study it, you should first make sure you're on the right track in terms of reading the information in those publications. You don't want your goals derailed by reading material that has little or no relationship to your overall goals. It's a waste of time and energy. So, keep focus

right from the start by asking yourself the following questions about your objectives.

- What's my purpose in reading this material? Is the purpose *directly* related to my overall goals?
- How well does this material link to my overall learning goals?
- Specifically, what do I want to get from the material I'm reading?
- How much do I already know about this topic?
- How well do I need to learn and memorize it?

Ask questions about your material

Next, ask questions about the material you're reading. To ask those questions, use a combination of fast reading and skim reading to gather this information.

- What do I already know about this subject?
- How difficult is this material for me to understand?
- How well structured is the material? How is it organized?
- How has the author organized the chapters? Are the chapters interrelated or independent? Do I need to read the chapters in order, or can you read them in order?
- Does the introduction or foreword match my objectives?
- Are there summaries, reviews, tests and exercises?
- Is there an index? Will I need to create my own?
- Is there a glossary? Can I use this as a starting point for my "new word list?"
- What do I know about the author? Is the author likely to present factual or biased information?
- Are there other books or materials I need before reading? While reading?
- Do I own the material? Can I write in it?

Decide your strategy

Based upon the answers to the above questions, you can determine the best methods of approaching the material; that is, you can decide if you need to skip it, skim it, read it once, or if you need to read it several times using different speeds each time. Depending on how you answer these questions, you'll accelerate or slow down your reading speed. For example, if you decide your purpose in reading a text is to thoroughly understand the difficult and unfamiliar ideas in it, then you will decrease your reading speed to achieve that purpose. If, on the other hand, you're reading familiar, easy material, then you'll increase your reading speed because it's not necessary to go into great depth on material you already know. Below we provide you with specific situations in which to increase or decrease reading speed.

Use reading paths and reading modes

For material you need to learn and memorize well, you need to make several passes through your reading material. A "reading path" is how you move through the material to maximise your understanding of it. A "reading mode" is a speed you use on a particular pass. You can improve your understanding by making several passes through the material at higher speeds, then slowing down as you

"drill down" into the material. At the end, you can then review the material at higher speeds again.

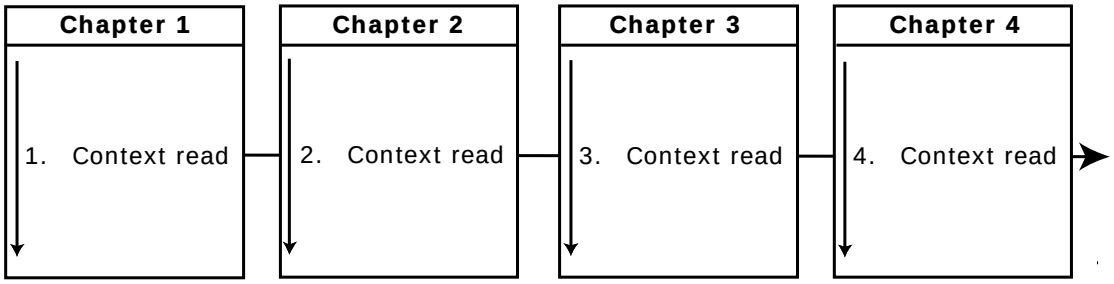
First we will look at reading paths. The “context read,” “fast skim,” “context skim” items you will see below are the reading modes. I discuss these after reading paths.

Use Reading Paths

Think of a reading path as a strategy or overall plan for approaching material you want to learn. There are three general reading paths you can travel. The path you choose will vary according to the material, structure and topic of the material you’re reading. The following diagrams explain each path and when to use it.

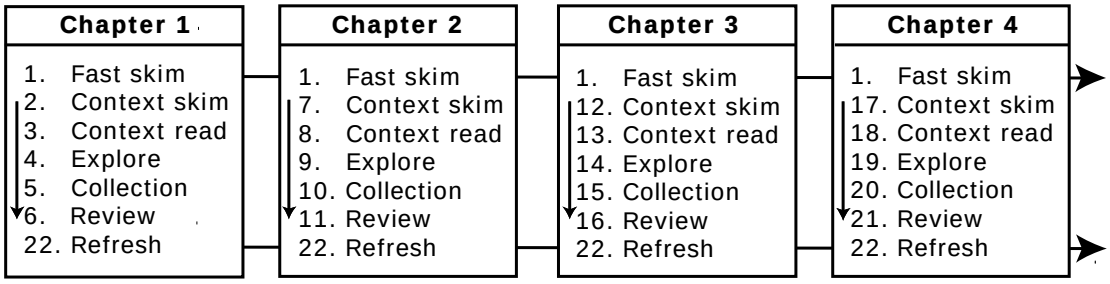
The Straight Through Path

As you can see below, you read straight through the text without skimming when you use the straight through path. Use this path when you’re reading for enjoyment (novels, short stories, etc.) or to build a general understanding without needing to memorize the material.



The Downwards Path

Use the downwards reading path to study material in which the chapters are loosely related. Because the chapters are relatively independent, the most effective way of reading the material is to get an overview by fast skimming, then drilling down within each individual chapter.



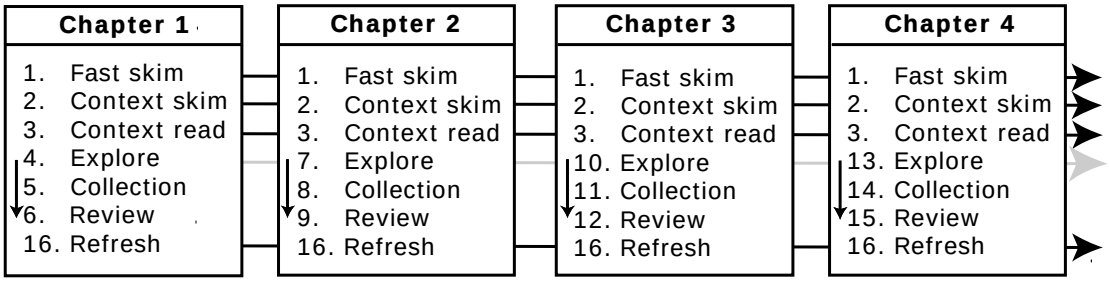
This method allows you to judge the quality of the content as it relates to your overall reading objectives. It helps prevent wasted time on information that’s not related to those objectives and keeps you focused on essential content.

The Crossways Path

Use the crossways path when the chapters are tightly related. For example, if you need knowledge of earlier chapters to make sense of later chapters, you should use

this technique. The crossways path means skim read to deeper levels across the entire book before reading each chapter in detail.

As shown in the flowchart below, you fast skim, context skim, and context read across all the chapters first. You then explore, collect and review each chapter at time. You might also choose to do the chapters in a different order, based on your initial readings.



Using this path gives you a better understanding of the relationships between topics. Like the downwards path, it also allows you to get a good sense of the content and make choices about what information you need to concentrate on.

Use Reading Modes

As we said earlier, a reading mode is a tactic to use when you're reading information. Tactics help you carry out your reading strategy. Each tactic has a specific purpose as shown in the chart below. You use reading modes to start reading material at a high level. You then "drill down" to understand material in more detail. At the end of your reading session, you do review skims to help consolidate and check what you've read. Longer term, you use refresh skims to help you retain what you've learned, perhaps over weeks or months.

You choose which reading modes you need to use based on your overall strategy and the reading path you've chosen. You don't necessarily need to use all of the modes. For example, for a simple reading with easy content, you might just need to use fast skim and context skims to get a good understanding of the information. Alternatively, if you're reading a complex college text on, say, advanced physics, then you'll need to build a solid understanding by using all the modes.

Reading Mode	Purpose
Overview	As the name suggests, use this mode to get an overall idea of what the content is about and how it's organized. Overview the following areas: Title, back cover/inside jacket, about the author, preface, introduction, table of contents, book reviews on Amazon.com, etc.
Fast Skim	Fast skim content to move down a level from the Overview mode. This mode will give you a more specific sense of the content within the book or article you want to read. Fast skim the following areas: chapter headings, chapter introduction, summaries, section headings, etc.

Context Skim	Context skimming "drills down" to an even more detailed level than fast skimming because you'll look at the specific structure of the information. Context skim the following areas: all headings, key paragraph lines (first, last), pivotal words, italics, bold, key lines, diagrams, bullet point lists, etc.
Context Read	Read straight through the material at your fluent reading speed. Highlight and look up any unknown words as you progress.
Exploration Read	The purpose of an Exploration Read is to understand and highlight key points, concepts and ideas. Use exploration techniques in the rest of the comprehension chapter. This mode involves a slower, more thorough read, which may involve going back over material until you completely understand it. You might also use exploration techniques outlined in the next chapter.
Collection/Extraction Read	The purpose of this mode is to pull out information and create review notes or type material into SuperMemo (a software program discussed in the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual). It also helps you work out what you need to memorize, and then memorize it.
Review Read and Skim	Use this mode soon after reading to check your understanding of the information and your memory of it. Fast read or skim read sections when using this mode. Look for your highlights, notes, comments, etc.
Refresh Skim	Just as the name suggests, sometime after a reading (e.g., weeks or even months later, skim read to refresh your memory on key points etc. You should review your notes and highlight key information. This mode should be faster than the Review Read mode.

Tip: When to use reading and regulator techniques

As shown in the above chart, use fluent reading and skim reading techniques based on the mode you are using. In addition to these techniques, you can apply different regulator paths to reading modes. For example, use the S or Z regulator paths for the fast skim, context skim, review read/skim (i.e., fast reading) modes. During context read and for exploration read, use the line-by-line regulator for more detailed reading.

Vary your speed when you read

The best way to think of controlling your reading speed is to compare the process to driving a car. Just as you have to vary your speed when driving to match the

road condition, so you have to adjust your reading speed to match the material you're reading. In other words, when you encounter material that's difficult to understand and it's an uphill battle to understand it, you'll need to shift your "reading gear" into low to get more power. When it's simpler material and easy going, then you'll shift into a higher gear to drive faster and more efficiently through the content.

A mark of effective readers is their ability to adjust reading speed to the nature of the material they're reading. This improves understanding of the material and makes the overall reading process much easier. To help you vary your reading speed appropriately, we've provided both general and specific guidelines for your study.

You may want to *decrease* your speed in the following situations:

- **Unfamiliar words.** For example, assume you run into the word "lethargy" (a feeling of tiredness, drowsiness, or lack of energy) and happen not to know its meaning. First, you can slow down and try to understand it from the way it's used in the sentence or paragraph. Second, you can read on and return to it later. *(Suggestion: underline the word so you can find it again easily.)*
- **A long and involved sentence and paragraph structure.** Slow down so you can untangle the structure and get an accurate idea of what the author is saying. Not every author is a good, clear writer so you may need to work at uncovering the meaning in a particular passage.
- **Unfamiliar or abstract ideas.** Some ideas are difficult to understand with a quick reading. In such cases, slow down to look for examples or illustrations which explain them more clearly. If these tactics don't work, find someone who will help you understand. In any case, demand that the idea make sense to you. And never give up until you do understand the idea because it'll make reading the material following it that much easier to understand.
- **Detailed, technical material.** By its nature, technical material demands that you slow down to read and understand it. Technical material often includes complicated directions, abstract principles, diagrams and other content in which you might not have much background.
- **Content you really want to remember.** To memorize content, you need to study it carefully, so speed is not the key in this situation. Instead, you need to emphasize organization and recitation—read the material out loud to fix it in your mind.

You may want to *increase* your speed in the following situations.

- **Simple material with few ideas new to you.** Make the best use of your time by concentrating on any unfamiliar ideas while moving rapidly over familiar materials.
- **Unnecessary examples and illustrations.** If examples and illustrations clarify ideas you already know, why waste your time? Skip over them quickly.
- **Broad, generalized ideas.** Usually, these ideas can be understood quickly even when you use scan techniques.

Tip: Look for pivotal words and phrases

A "pivotal" word or phrase can give you quick clues as to important points in the material. Typical pivotal words and phrases are shown in the chart below. Read

the chart, you'll see examples of pivotal words and phrases and how they can help you read and learn more quickly and effectively.

Pivotal Word and Phrases	What to do
In summary...In conclusion...Summarizing...In brief...Summing up, etc.	Pick these out if you are skimming – they can give you a quick overview of large sections of text.
First, second, next, last, etc.	When you come across these, skip ahead and find the matching words (firstly, secondly, lastly). It will help you understand the relationships.
For example (e.g.)...Such as... For instance...Like, etc.	These expand on a point. If you already understand the point, pick up your reading speed. If it's not clear yet, slow down. It might be important because the author has gone to the trouble of providing examples.
In other words...To repeat...Again, etc.	Similar to the line above, you can skip these if you understand the proceeding text: otherwise take care – the author is highlighting important points.

Examples

Let's look at some examples to highlight these pivotal words. In the following passage on the Coriolis Effect, think about whether you would increase or decrease your reading speed.

> The Coriolis Effect is the apparent acceleration of a moving body on or near the Earth as a result of the Earth's rotation. An object on the Earth's surface moves faster at the equator than it does away from the equator. An object near the equator is moving through a 25,000-mile (40,000-kilometer) circle in 24 hours. But, away from the equator, it travels in a smaller circle in the same 24-hour period. The Coriolis Effect alters the paths of any projectile or moving object on Earth – eg bullets, aeroplanes etc.

This is technical material. If you're unfamiliar with it, you should decrease your reading speed to understand any complicated directions, abstract principles, and other content in which you might not have much background.

In the following passage on the natural rate of employment, I've used certain pivotal words. See if you can pick out those words and then think about the best method for reading this passage.

> How is the natural rate of unemployment determined? The basic answer is that people keep changing their minds! First, consumers change their minds. The recent trend toward eating more vegetables and less meat means jobs are lost in the meat

> industry while jobs are gained in the vegetable industry. Second, employers change their minds. If they find some workers are not as productive as they hoped to be, they often fire them. Third, employees change their minds. They may find that they're not getting the wages and benefits they want and quit. All those events lead to job turnover.

The pivotal words are "first...second...third". When you run into "first" skip ahead and find the matching words "second" and "third" to help you understand the context of the points.

In the following paragraph on bad habits, the pivotal word is "For example". How should you vary your reading speed in this example and why?

> Be aware of old habits that may be diverting you from your focus on goals for success. For example, a bad habit might be watching too much television. If you're spending three hours a night watching reality shows, then you're not dealing with your own reality! Those 180 minutes are wasted time. Do the math. If you spend three hours a night five days a week watching "Survivor" and other programs, that's fifteen hours a week taken away from your march toward success. Multiply that fifteen hours times 52 weeks, and you've wasted 780 hours in a year. So, obviously, this amount of television watching is hindering you from achieving success—or at least delaying your journey on the road to that success. Kick that habit! Take a hard look at your life and see how you can devote your energies to more productive activities—activities that will bring you more health, wealth, and success.

When a pivotal word like "for example" occurs, it expands on a point. If you already understand the point, then pick up your reading speed. If it's not clear yet, slow down. It might be important because the author has gone to the trouble of providing examples.

Reading strategy exercises

Now that you've learnt ways to read and skim read faster, it's now time to bring both skills together. Find a book that has a good mix of structured and unstructured text, and try the following drills.

Downwards path drill

We're not going to set a specific time target for this drill. Rather, just keep track of the time taken and number of pages covered. Aim to improve your "time per page" over successive drills. Pick two chapters and follow these steps.

- Read the book covers, table of contents, and introduction. Scan the index.
- Start the timer.

- Fast skim both of your chosen chapters, one after the other – just looking at headings.
- Skim read the first chapter.
- Read the first chapter.
- Skim the first chapter again, re-reading any sections you found difficult.
- Write some notes on the first chapter.
- Skim read the second chapter.
- Read the second chapter.
- Skim the second chapter again, re-reading any sections you found difficult.
- Write some notes on the second chapter.
- Stop the timer and note the time and the number of pages.

After you've done the drill, review the material once more and see if you missed any key points. Repeat the drill a few days later using two new chapters.

Crossways path drill

Again, we're not going to set a specific time target for this drill. Just keep track of the time taken and number of pages, and aim to improve your "time per page" over successive drills. Pick two chapters and follow these steps.

- Read the book covers, table of contents, index and introduction.
- Start the timer.
- Fast skim both of your chosen chapters, one after the other – just looking at headings.
- Skim read the first chapter.
- Skim read the second chapter.
- Read the first chapter.
- Read the second chapter.
- Skim the first chapter again, re-reading any sections you found difficult.
- Write some notes on the first chapter.
- Skim the second chapter again, re-reading any sections you found difficult.
- Write some notes on the second chapter.
- Stop the timer and note the time and the number of pages.

After you've done the drill, review the material once more and see if you missed any key points. Repeat the drill a few days later using two new chapters.

Summary

This module taught you how to develop a strategy for reading any new material. You've seen how to analyze your objectives and materials by asking various questions. You've seen three reading paths, and you know when to use them. These paths are the straight through path, the downwards path and crossways path. You've also seen several reading modes, such as the fast skim mode, the context read mode and the refresh skim mode, and again when to use each.

We also discussed when and how to vary your reading speed while you read, and you've learnt to be on the lookout for pivotal words and phrases. Lastly, you've seen some exercises to bring together your improved reading speed, skim reading skills and reading strategies. These help you practice all three.

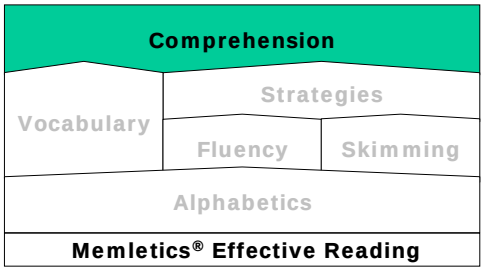
You've nearly finished reading this course. The last module, Improve your Comprehension, follows. This module will teach you how to improve your concentration and attention, how to collect the right material for learning, and how to explore material to increase your comprehension.

What did you think of this module? Do you have some suggestions? Let us know your thoughts using our online survey at:
http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Module 7

Improve your comprehension

Comprehension is usually the ultimate goal of reading. You want to understand and learn what the author is communicating. More than previous parts though, how well you comprehend material depends on many varied factors. If you want to learn and remember the material, you also have more work to do to retain it for the long term. This last main module provides you with tools and techniques to help you start on that path.

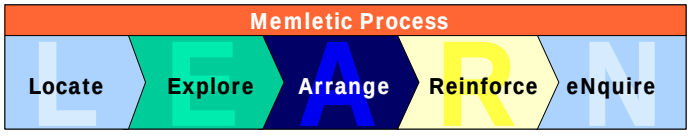


The previous sections of this course have focused on improving your reading speed. In this section, we take a closer look at the last part to *effective* reading – comprehension.

How well you comprehend a book depends on many factors. Some of those include:

- Your reading level and vocabulary.
- Your previous understanding of the topic.
- How long it takes you to read the material.
- Your concentration levels.
- Your "world knowledge."
- Your learning and memory skills.
- Your motivation.
- ... and more.

Unfortunately, no one simple technique will help you improve your comprehension of a book. You may remember in the introduction I mentioned that you should treat reading a book as a content collection exercise. If you are reading a book to learn a new topic well, you need to take several more steps. The Memletic Process, described in the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual, consists of five main steps:



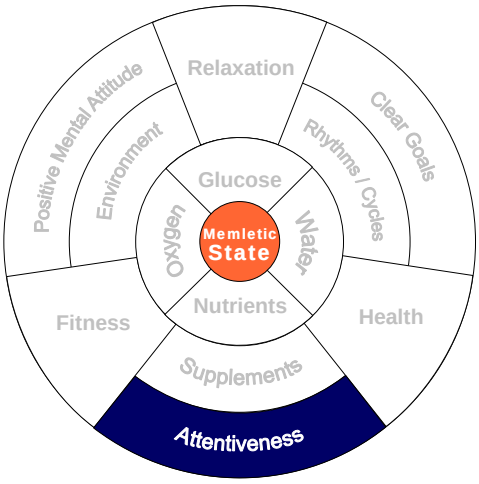
Reading a book mainly falls in the Locate step of this process. Some well-written books will also help you explore the content, so you can improve your understanding. Once you have this understanding though, it won't last. That's why you need to Arrange the material for memorization, Reinforce it using memory techniques, then review your progress using the eNquire step.

The Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual provides details on all these steps and more. I've included a summary of the entire manual in the next chapter.

In this section, I've provided three complete extracts from the manual related to comprehension. These are on Attention and Concentration from the State chapter, and the Locate and Explore steps from the Memletic Process chapter.

As you can see, learning to read effectively is just one part of effective *learning*. I couldn't hope to cover all the ways to improve comprehension through better learning skills in this chapter. The Memletics Manual is 220 pages of material devoted to just that. The following material is the most relevant from that book. If your goal is to improve your overall learning performance, I strongly suggest you read the Memletics Manual with this course.

Improve your attention and concentration



This is a complimentary extract from the State Chapter of the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual. Attentiveness is one part of sixteen parts of Memletic State - the best state for learning.

Attention and concentration are fundamental to learning and memorizing. If you don't pay attention when you see a new fact, it's unlikely it even makes it into your memory. If it isn't in there, you don't have much chance of recalling it.

Nearly all the other good state principles influence your attention and concentration. For example, a distracting environment affects your concentration. Not eating well or failing to follow natural body rhythms also negatively impacts concentration. You may also find it hard to concentrate if you don't believe the material you are studying contributes to your overall goals.

If you find your concentration wandering or staying attentive is difficult, scan through the state layers and see if there is an obvious problem somewhere.

You may also want to try some specific concentration techniques during study, or try some longer-term exercises to improve your overall concentration. Let's look at these two in more detail.

Concentration techniques during study

Some specific techniques can help you stay focused on your material. These include:

- **"Be here now."** Every time you find yourself distracted, say "Be Here Now." Say it aloud if possible, otherwise just repeat it in your mind. Then bring your attention back to your task. In the beginning, you may find that you do this a lot. Over time, you gain more focus and your mind stays where you want it.
- **The spider approach.** If you hold a vibrating tuning fork next to a spider web, the spider usually comes to see what's happening, thinking it may be an insect.

Do it a few times and the spider eventually chooses to ignore the distraction. You too can train yourself to ignore distractions. The sensations from your ears and eyes are simply sensations you can choose whether to react to or not.

- **Paragraph marking.** If you are reading a book or article, tick each paragraph as you read it. Use a pencil in case you want to re-read parts of it later.
- **Keep a distraction log**. Every time you find yourself distracted, draw a tick or write the current time on a separate piece of paper. This is your *distraction log*. Initially the number of distractions may surprise you. By highlighting your distractions, you can begin to control and reduce them.
- **Write down distractions.** If something important comes up as a distraction, simply write it down so you can deal with it later. Better yet, set a *distraction time*. Agree with yourself to take a break and deal with those distractions at that time.
- **Switch topics.** Rather than spending a long time on one particular topic, switch between various unrelated topics if possible. The brain loves variety and rewards you with better concentration.
- **Make it interactive.** If studying with others, plan some time to get together and discuss the material you are learning. Even if you are not at the same stage in the course, simply agree to spend ten minutes listening to one another talk about their current study topic.

Longer-term improvement of concentration

The previous techniques are good for keeping up concentration while you study. Some longer-term techniques can improve your overall concentration as well. These include:

- **Games.** The old card game of "Concentration" is still effective in improving concentration. If you have not come across it, the basic idea is to lay down a set of playing cards in a grid, all face-down. You then turn over a pair of cards. If they match number and color (if using playing cards), then you take them out of the grid. If they don't match, you place them back face down and pick another pair. Better concentration, through practice, results in a shorter time to clear the grid. You can also play with a friend for competition. The one with the most pairs at the end of the game wins!

  Many expensive software packages claiming to improve concentration still use this principle in many guises, often with pictures instead of playing cards. There are also free computer games, based on Concentration, available on the Internet. Using these and some notes in a spreadsheet to track progress can be just as effective as the more expensive packages.
- **Meditation.** Meditation is an effective way of improving your concentration. See my comments in "Mental Relaxation" for more comments on meditation.
- **Other exercises.** Many other exercises can help you increase your concentration. From simply staring at a fixed point or candle, to martial arts, these can all help improve your overall concentration.

Environment and concentration

When possible, choose a place for learning that is relatively free from external distractions. This helps attention and concentration. Let family, friends, or

colleagues know that you are studying and would prefer no interruptions for a while. Use a *do not disturb* sign—but don't overuse it!

Be aware of unwanted noise in your environment, including noise from overhead lights or electrical equipment. Consider using light background music to mask this noise if you are unable to control it.

Also, be aware of visual distractions, even if they are only in your peripheral vision. For example, while in a library sit facing a wall in a secluded area, rather than near a passageway or door.

Even in the best-planned environment, you may still have interruptions. Train yourself to pause for a moment before responding to an interruption. During that pause make a note, mentally or on paper, of where you are. It's then easier to regain your concentration when you return. How do you train yourself? An idea is to ask someone to help you. Role-play the interruption and your action!

Locate and use content from multiple sources

This is a complimentary extract from the Process Chapter of the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual. Attentiveness is one part of sixteen parts of Memletic State - the optimum state for learning.

The locate step involves gathering the content you need for learning. Sometimes this may be easy. The course may prescribe texts and materials for you. At other times you may be learning something that few others have, so you have to forge your own way. You may be somewhere in the middle, with some texts prescribed for you and some further research to do.

Let's look at some typical content sources, as well as some general tips for locating content.

Content sources

There are many sources of content for learning. You may find some materials already well organized, for example well-written books or course manuals. You may also find unstructured content. For example, content may be inside someone else's head. It's your job to locate this content and prepare it for the next stage of the learning process.

Some common sources for content include:

- **Books, texts and manuals.** Books are still the most common source for content. Look beyond the standard references though. What other references may be useful? Where can you get them? Which should you buy yourself, versus which should you borrow? I recommend you buy at least the core set of texts or references. You should then have no hesitation to write notes or highlight text in them.
- **Instructors or lecturers.** Often you gain content from a knowledgeable person. You may have one-to-one access to an instructor. For other courses, you may need to spend time in lectures. Either way, make sure your note taking skills are good and you have a system for organizing and referencing them later (some tips are on page 71).

- **The Internet.** Over the past decade, the Internet has made more and more information available to us. Often you can find further information related to your training topics. Be mindful of the source though. Not everything you find is legitimate.
- **Computer-Based Training.** Computer-based training courses, or CBTs, have become more popular recently. However, many are ineffective. Sitting in front of the computer doing a CBT is not usually enough to learn the content well. You still need to go through the process of exploring, arranging, reinforcing and reviewing. After doing many CBTs myself, I recommend using them mainly as a source of content. Treat them like a lecture or book, and write your own notes. After completing the CBT, continue with the Memletic Process to explore, reinforce and memorize the content. It's also easier to refer to your notes later, rather than trying to restart the course to find what you are looking for.
- **Other students.** Often you can gain good content by talking to other students. They may have helpful references you haven't come across. They also have tips and techniques they've learned from different sources. Share some of your own experiences as well.
- **Others already in the field.** Those who've already learned what you are learning often have useful information. Don't just limit yourself to those immediately around you either. Biographies of famous people from your field may also hold many lessons. Some of these stay in your mind longer because of the emotional content.
- **Video.** The prevalence and availability of domestic video cameras and PC editing software make it easy to capture your own learning content on video. It's a great way to help you visualize and review the skills you are learning.
- **Other references.** Be sure to have a good dictionary so you can quickly check unfamiliar terms. An encyclopedia can also provide related or extra information on a topic not covered well in your training material.

What to look for while searching for content

Later in this chapter, I introduce you to two ways to classify content by the way you use it. Once you understand these two ways, you start to realize that many books and courses out there contain little practical content. This is especially true of many self-help and business books. They contain supporting facts, ideas and principles, rather than practical content. Of the ones that do, even fewer contain specific steps or ideas on how to learn that content.

I want to give you a feel for what information you may find while gathering content for training purposes. I'm going to give you some examples of the content you may find in a book on presentation skills, specifically on making eye contact during a presentation. In some of these books, you may find this information:

> **Example A: The *why it's important* book**
>
> Good eye contact with the audience is important. It helps the presenter connect with the audience. It also helps the presenter gauge the audience's reaction to the material. The presenter appears more confident and "in control."

That's interesting information. What does good eye contact mean though? It doesn't tell you! I've read some books that go on for pages about why some particular skill is important, citing many examples and research. A better presentation book gives you specific details about what good eye contact means:

Example B: The *here's how to do it* book

To develop good eye contact, you first have to stop reading your presentations word for word. It's difficult to keep good eye contact while you are reading directly from notes. See [some other part of the book] to learn how to do this.

Once you have your notes under control, you then need to get your eyes up and looking at the audience. It's not just a matter of looking at the back of the room. You need to search out individuals and make eye contact with them.

Hold their attention for two to three seconds, and then move to someone else or back to your notes for the next point. Spread your attention to various parts of the audience. Be sure not to focus in one part of the room, or on one individual, for too long either. This alienates others or makes the individual feel uncomfortable.

If you are presenting to a much larger audience, sometimes it's difficult to make eye contact with a single individual. The audience may seem more of a blur, especially up the back and in low light conditions. Don't avoid these areas, as there are still people there. Hold your focus in a particular area for a few seconds, before moving to another.

Can you see the difference between these two examples? Example A doesn't tell you much about what the skill is, whereas example B does. I'd have even more respect for a presentation book that then went further with information like this:

Example C: The *here's how to learn it* book.

Here are some suggestions on how you can learn to make eye contact in your own presentations:

Practice reading a point from your notes and then physically looking up. Put together some meaningless points, and then stand up in your kitchen or other room and practice. Put a mark at the end of each line, for example an up arrow like ↑, to remind you to look up. When you do look up, look at different parts of the room. If you are in the kitchen, visualize the microwave, stove, sink and refrigerator as members of your audience. Make your point directly to one of these audience members, and then move on to the next point.

Better yet, if you have access to computer image projection equipment, get a picture of an audience from the speaker's perspective and project it on the wall. Stand facing the screen and practice making eye contact with your captive audience.

Before your next presentation, ask a friend or colleague who will be in the audience to help you out. Have them stand behind the audience and give you gestures to remind you to look around.

They may also give you signals to slow down your speaking, stop fidgeting, or to relax your posture. Also, ask them to give you some comments and suggestions after the presentation.

Consider whether the content you find is more like example A, B or C above. Are you getting the "why it's important," "here's how to do it," or "here's how to learn it"? This doesn't just apply to books either. Some training courses and presentations also focus on "why it is important," rather than covering practical and useful information you can use to build your skills. Memorizing ten points about why good eye contact is important doesn't necessarily help you improve your own eye contact.

Keep these three examples in mind while you locate content for learning. If the content you find is like example A, you need to find more information to understand what "making eye contact" involves. If it's example B, that's fine. You then use Memletics to learn the material. If it's example C, they are giving you a shortcut!

Specific content collection tips

Two important skills to use during the locate step are note taking and highlighting. Often people have trouble with these skills, so let's look at some specific tips on how to do these well. In addition, you should organize what you collect to make it easier to use in the next steps of the process.

Intelligent note taking

Intelligent note taking may range from writing comments in textbooks or review notes after lessons, right through to heavy-duty note taking during fast-paced lectures. Here are a few points on how to take intelligent notes:

- **Don't write everything down.** Listen for the main points and summarize where possible. While listening to a lecturer, listen for changes in tone, inflection and other cues to decide what's important. This can also suggest when the topic changes. If you are learning with an instructor or with a smaller group of people, ask the instructor or lecturer to outline the lesson first. This helps your context during the lesson.
- **Leave white space.** Leave space to fill in more notes later, especially in the margin. One note taking system (Cornell) involves writing summary points in the margin for each paragraph of notes. This is a good way to organize and review your notes.
- **Scribble in your own books.** Write, mark and highlight key points in your own textbooks and references. Some people feel you should not write in or mark printed books. If you are one of these people, I suggest you buy a cheap book and scribble all over and through it. Do what you need to do to break this limiting belief. If writing or highlighting sections in a book makes it easier to learn, go right ahead!
- **Use alternative formats.** Alternative formats include Mind Maps and diagrams. I cover mind maps in more detail in the next section. Use diagrams if you can draw them quickly enough.

Intelligent highlighting and marking

Many people mistake highlighting for learning. Some study guides recommend you don't do it all, because so many people do it poorly and it can give a false sense of accomplishment.

I believe highlighting is an important and useful skill. Treat it as a content collection technique though. Collect the key points, ideas and definitions for use in the next steps—exploring and learning what you've collected.

Here are some specific tips for intelligent highlighting:

- **Only mark the key points.** You can usually find these at the start or end of a paragraph, but not always. Even when marking a key point, only mark at maximum three or four words within that point (if possible).
- **Highlight after you read.** Make sure you read the entire paragraph, or even page, before you go back and highlight the key points.
- **Only highlight the defined word, not the whole sentence.** Use a normal pen and put brackets around the word's definition if you would like to separate them.
- **Mark unusual, uncommon or questionable items.** Perhaps use a different color. Make a point somewhere to come back to it if needed.
- **Try different colors.** Try using different color highlighters for different points. This may work for some people and not others. Don't go too far though. Use a maximum of three colors! If you plan to photocopy or scan notes later, only use a light-colored highlighter. Yellow appears the best. Other colors can come out black!
- **Still write notes.** When you are highlighting, keep a normal pen handy as well. For example, write some notes in the margins on why you've highlighted particular points.
- **Transfer to other notes or a mind map.** If a point is important, don't just highlight it. Transfer it to your main notes or to a mind map (described soon) for your topic. One of my study techniques involves highlighting while I read the material, then transferring the main points to a mind map afterwards.

Use highlighting sparingly otherwise the unmarked text may stand out more. Take care that you don't finish with a book full of colored paper! I know of one flight instructor who hands out a summary of her lessons on bright yellow paper. This saves those with questionable highlighting skills the trouble of creating the notes themselves.

Just to reiterate. Highlighting is a content collection exercise. Don't mistake highlighting for learning.

Organizing content

I believe it's better to have more information available than the minimum you need to complete your course. To make this work, you need to organize your content well.

While you locate and collect information, keep a summary or index of the material you find, where you found it, and when. Also, *rate* the quality and relevance of the content. Use the A, B, and C categories from above if this helps. This extra information helps you when you explore the topics in the next step.

Occasionally check your summary against an overall training plan, and look for areas where you have weaknesses or gaps. If you find yourself chasing some curious reference that probably won't add much value to your training, take a step back. It's better to have all topics covered to a good level, rather than spending significant amounts of time looking for too much detail in one particular topic.

Explore content to comprehend it

This is a complimentary extract from the Process Chapter of the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual. The Explore step is one of five steps of the Memletic Process. It provides general exploration techniques plus techniques that suit your personal learning styles. If you don't know your personal learning styles, try the free Memletics Learning Styles Inventory at:

http://www.learning-styles-online.com

The next step in the learning process is to *explore* your topic and the material you've collected. Your goal is to *understand* the topic, rather than just rote learn it. A fundamental learning principle underlies exploration. If you learn something in more depth up front, you remember it for longer.

Learning material by rote sometimes appears easier. You *could* learn some topics faster by rote compared to trying to understand the details behind the topic. However, this typically results in slower overall learning for two reasons.

Firstly, if you forget part of the topic learned by rote, you have little to help you recall it. If you understand the underlying ideas, it's more likely you can rebuild parts of the topic in your mind. Consider a mathematical formula. If you only rote learn it, you may forget whether to add or subtract some item in the formula. If you understand the theory behind the formula, it's more likely you can work out whether to add or subtract.

Secondly, it's less likely you can apply a topic in a slightly different way if you only rote learn it. If you learn the details behind a topic, you have more opportunity to work out what you need to change to apply the topic differently. For example, understanding some details behind aircraft navigation makes it easier to apply the same knowledge to maritime navigation.

You can explore at many levels. When you first start your training, you explore the overall course content and understand how each lower level module contributes to the overall objectives. As you progress, you then explore each part in more detail. Both the high and low-level details form part of your understanding of a topic.

Many techniques and tools can help you explore your content. In this section, we first look at some general techniques you can apply to any exploration activity. Then I present more techniques grouped (roughly) into the most relevant Memletic Style. We are yet to cover these styles in detail, so you may want to review the basics of each style in the Overview chapter. In summary, the styles are Visual, Aural, Verbal, Physical, Logical, Social and Solitary learning styles.

Here is a summary of the exploration techniques described in this section:

General exploration

- High altitude view
- Deeper level
- Branch wider
- Abstractions
- Bottom up

Physical exploration

- Walk about
- Get hands-on
- Role-playing
- Index cards & Post-It notes
- Tick it off

- Questions[3]

Visual exploration

- Diagrams, graphs, and sketches
- Mind maps
- Systems diagrams
- Visualization

Aural exploration

- Sound focus
- Record sounds

Verbal exploration

- Lectures and discussions
- Dramatic reading
- Express and summarize aloud
- Write and rewrite
- Write articles
- Write summaries
- Record

Logical exploration

- Logic analysis—OSAID
- Logic trees
- Play with numbers

Social exploration

- Group learning
- Study buddy
- Opposite view
- Role-play
- Involve others

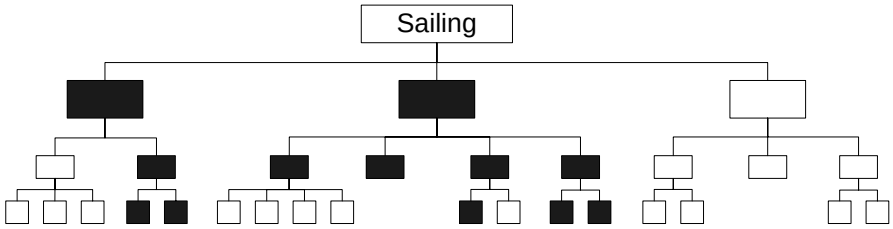
Solitary exploration

- Reaction notes
- Learning journal or log
- People exploration
- Make up your own mind

How far should you go when exploring your material? It depends on your objectives. If you want to know a particular topic well, you may want to explore it in more detail than a course mandates. Don't go too far though. If you find yourself analyzing the behavior of electrons in water molecules, and how that contributes to a landscape photograph, you have probably gone too far!

General exploration techniques

I use a topic pyramid to help me understand general exploration techniques. Let me expand on this idea. Think of the knowledge you need for your course or topic as a pyramid, with the goal at the top. Branching down and out from there are major topics, subtopics, sub-sub-topics (and so on) that you need to know. Look at the example in this diagram:



Each of the dark boxes shows a compulsory topic for a beginners sailing course. The white boxes show topics that you don't need to know to complete that sailing course. You can imagine each of the lower level boxes continuing to break down into more and more detail. This pyramid goes right down to basic chunks of knowledge, such as individual facts, skills and behaviors. We'll use this example as we go through the general exploration techniques.

General techniques that can help you explore a wide range of content include high-level views, going a level deeper, going wider, abstracting, and a bottom up approach. In addition, you can use the Five Ws technique to help you with these techniques. Let's look at these in more detail.

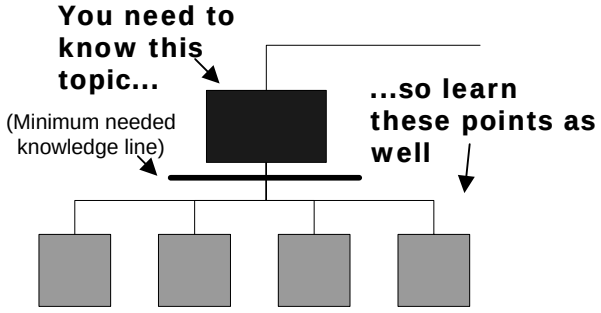
Get a high altitude view

Before you start a topic or lesson, begin by getting a high-level view of where it fits into your current learning objective. This is "getting the big picture" or the "forty thousand foot view." Using the topic pyramid above, this technique involves looking at the whole pyramid from a high level. Also, look at the topic of focus for your current lesson. This helps you decide what to concentrate on during the lesson, and it helps you discard what you don't need to know.

You can get this view before beginning a book or training manual. Flip through the major sections. Review the chapter titles. Read each chapter's introduction. Think about which chapters are more relevant, and which chapters contain secondary information. If your course lacks this organization, you may want to consider creating your own topic pyramid.

Go a level deeper

At some point down each branch of the pyramid, imagine a line drawn across. This marks the minimum needed knowledge for your course or topic. I suggest you go one pyramid level lower than this line. For example, understand and learn a few key points underneath a compulsory topic, even if these are not compulsory.

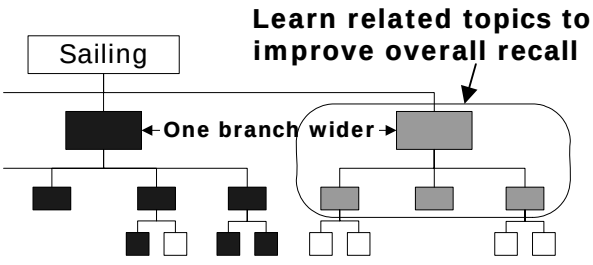


Let's look at our pyramid example. The black box is a compulsory topic. The shaded boxes are topics you don't *need* to know. If you learn the key points from these grey boxes, you will remember the compulsory topic better.

While this may initially take longer, it usually needs less overall time and results in better recall. For example, you could spend thirty minutes trying to rote-learn a particular topic or chunk of content. Alternatively, you could spend fifteen minutes finding a few key points underneath that topic, and ten minutes summarizing those. Not only do you improve your understanding, you also remember it better as well. Over the following weeks you would likely spend less time reviewing that topic, compared to if you just tried to rote learn it.

Go one branch wider

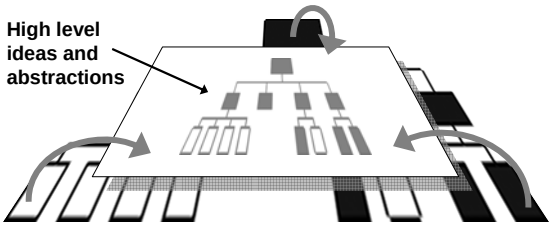
Continuing the pyramid analogy above, widen out your pyramid by understanding topics related to your course but not compulsory. Looking again at our pyramid example, we see the main branch to the right of the core sailing topics is not compulsory. If you spend some time learning some key points from this branch, you will likely improve your overall understanding and retention of the compulsory topics.



For example, one particular branch may be the history of your topic. What impact has your topic of focus had on society? Who were some of the early pioneers, and what did they contribute to where you are today? You could also look up related jobs or industries.

While this information may not be compulsory to complete a course, it aids your learning and understanding of core topics.

Understand higher level abstractions



Abstraction involves looking at some facts or ideas and drawing out some higher-level observations from those. You may note that you can apply a particular technique or approach in a different context or area. For example, you could abstract the general principle of asking questions while selling, and then apply those same principles to increase your persuasion in other areas.

At the end of each lesson, see if you can abstract the top three ideas from that lesson. See if you can apply those ideas to other subjects or topics.

Bottom up approach

Sometimes a particular idea is difficult to grasp fully until you understand the lower level details. You need to learn those lower level details first, before bringing together that understanding into a coherent picture.

Some people may prefer this bottom up approach rather than top down. Issues can arise when an instructor or author teaches one way while you prefer the other. If this is the case, you may need to restructure your material to suit your preference. Alternatively, you could try accepting that both ways can be effective in learning a topic. If you typically prefer a top down approach, try resisting that preference and start at the bottom. If you prefer a bottom up approach, make an effort to understand the high-level organization first.

Questions questions questions—how to expand your pyramid

If you are not sure how to expand your pyramid, try the Five Ws technique. Later in this chapter I discuss the Five Whys technique. This involves asking “why” five times in a row to help discover underlying causes of problems. The Five W’s technique uses a similar approach to help you expand your pyramid.

To use the technique, state a fact, idea or principle from your topic. Now ask a question about that statement beginning with one of the W words. The five W words are Who, What, Why, Where and When. If you know the answer, keep going with more questions. When you hit questions you don’t know the answer to, write them down for further research. Ask another question starting with ‘W’, and repeat this until you have at least five new questions you can research.

For example, pilots study meteorology as part of their training. Five questions you could ask about weather forecasting are: “Who does the forecasts?” “Why are they sometimes wrong?” “What do they do to prepare forecasts?” “Where do they do it?” “When (how often) do they do it?” Answering these questions broadens your

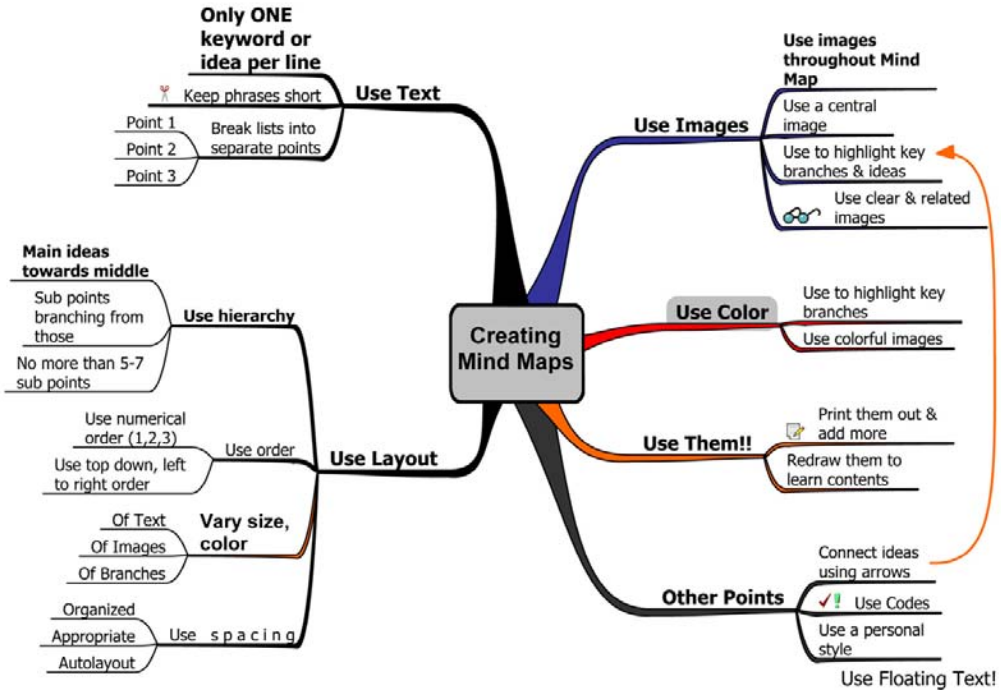
understanding of the forecast. You may then understand, for example, why the forecast is sometimes different to the weather on the day.

A way to remember these words is the phrase "A hen wearing a hat said 'Hi-di-ho I'm here!' " Add a W to the front of each of the words starting with H and you get the five W's.

Visual style exploration

Most learning materials rely on printed text to provide information. As a visual learner, find ways to represent information visually. Here are some ways you can do this:

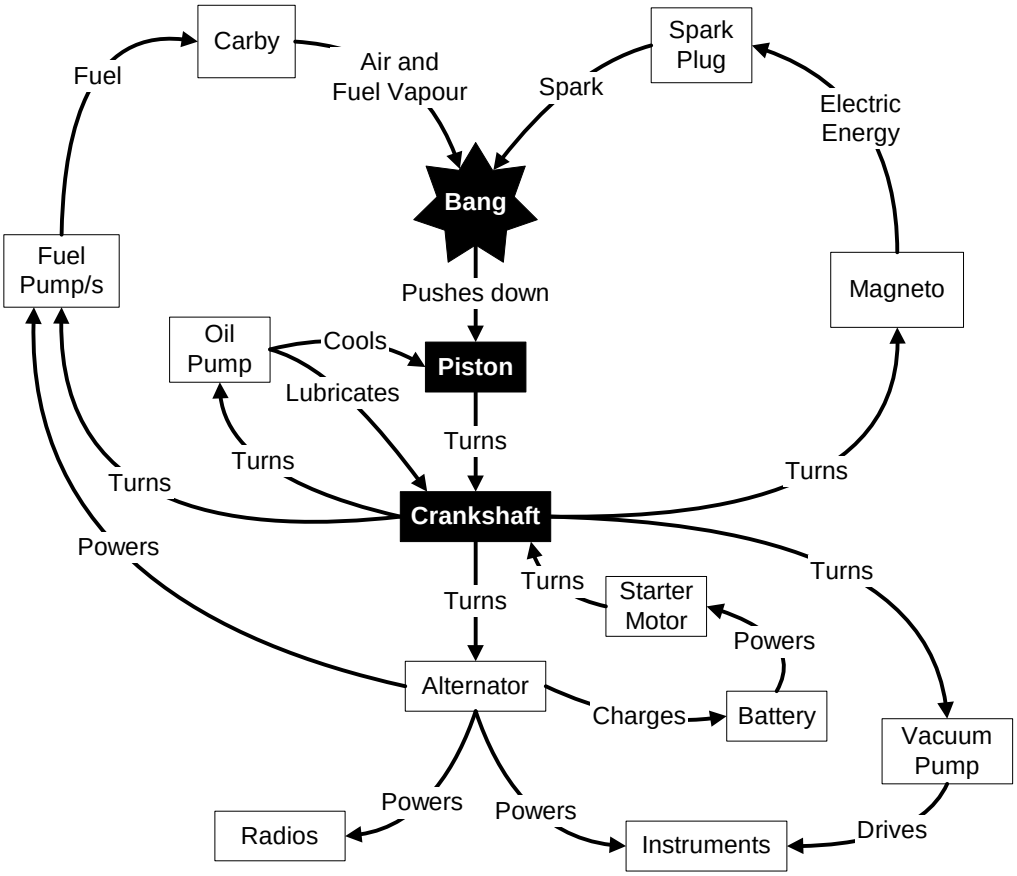
- **Use diagrams, graphs and sketches.** If you can't find good diagrams, graphs and sketches that represent the key messages in your topics, create them yourself. Just start drawing, even if you don't think you draw well. In addition, easily accessible spreadsheet programs now allow you to create graphs for all kinds of data.
- **Use Mind Maps®.** Organize topics and ideas using a drawing technique called mind mapping. This helps you visualize and understand the hierarchy and linkages between topics. Tony Buzan, in some of his books, describes this technique in detail. In addition, some software programs can help you easily create mind maps. The software I use is "Mind Manager" from MindJet. Rather than describe mind maps in detail, I'll let my mind map below do it for me.



- **Use systems diagrams.** Systems diagrams are another diagramming technique you can use to help understand a dynamic system, such as an engine, body, yacht or network. The traditional way of dissecting something into separate parts, to understand their roles, often makes it harder to understand the system. For example, it's hard to understand the workings of the human body by simply looking at the individual parts. Similarly, understanding how a yacht

stays in equilibrium under full sail is hard if you only look at the sail, rudder, keel and hull individually.

The linkages between multiple parts are usually what make these dynamic systems work. These linkages may not be visible when the system is lying in bits on the floor, or in separate topics in your mind. Systems diagrams help show and explain those linkages. The diagram below is an example of a systems diagram. It shows how various parts of an aircraft engine work together.



- **Use visualization.** Use the visualization techniques outlined in the Memletic Techniques chapter to help understand various topics. If you can visualize a topic clearly and precisely, you should have a good understanding of it. If some areas appear grey or fuzzy, this suggests you still have some further work to do to understand it fully.

Aural style exploration

Aural exploration involves exploring the sounds and rhythms present in your learning topic. Unless you're studying a music-based topic, there may not be many musical or rhythmic areas to explore. Here are a few ideas though:

- **Focus on sound.** Pay particular attention to sounds in your environment. In an aircraft, examples may include the engine, gyros, wind sound (more at higher speeds, and lack of it at lower speeds). On a yacht, examples may include the sound of wind in the rigging, the hum of the tension in the shrouds, the sound of the water gurgling past. All these can give you extra perspectives in your training.

- **Record sounds on to a tape or computer.** If it's possible, try to record sounds from your topic on to a tape or computer. Make use of these recordings when you use techniques such as visualization and simulation.

Verbal style exploration

Exploration using the verbal style involves using spoken and written words. This could be via attending lectures, engaging in discussion, writing articles, rewriting topics, talking and summarizing aloud, and more. Let's look at some more details:

- **Attend lectures or engage in discussions.** Find ways to involve more listening in you content collection and exploration. Attend a class, lecture, or study group. If possible, engage in discussion with your lecturer or instructor, and ask them to explain topics in more detail.
- **Read dramatically.** When reading important material, try reading it out loud and dramatically. Act as if you were on stage in a play or similar production. Say the important points with volume and strength. Skip over less important information more quickly and quietly.
- **Talk yourself through material and summarize aloud.** As you read, pause after each paragraph and read aloud the key points from that paragraph. Also, summarize each lesson aloud.
- **Reword and rewrite learning material.** Rewrite important sections of your training material. Think about how you would write that section if you were writing your own instruction book or manual.
- **Write an article.** A powerful way to learn a topic is to write an article on it. Do some further research, think about your audience, look through your content and then express the core ideas in your own words. Why not send it to a related magazine as a "student's view on topic X?"
- **Write summaries.** Write your own summaries of each lesson or topic. Review them periodically as you progress, and keep them for future reference.
- **Record notes on to a tape or computer.** Record lectures, discussions or readings on to tape or on to a computer (for example via an MP3 player or recorder). Copy important parts and put them together into a summary recording.

Physical style exploration

Exploring with the physical style involves finding ways to incorporate movement and touch into your training. Get up and move around while learning. Try walking around while reading or listening. Go further and get your hands on physical expressions of the topics you are learning. Use role-playing. Try using index cards to arrange topics physically, or tick off items as you read them. Here are those points in more depth:

- **Walk about while reading or listening.** If possible, get up and walk around while reading or listening to content. Stop and pause on important points, and keep walking when reading less important material. Another idea is to simulate procedures while walking around a room. For example, for flight training try "flying" circuits, forced landings, instrument approaches and other procedures by walking around your living room. If you are learning to sail, perhaps try

tacking and docking in a similar way. Have your notes with you and read out what you are doing at the time.

- **Get hands on.** If you are learning about physical objects or topics, find ways to get your hands on them. For example, if you are learning about how an engine works, get outside and open the front of a car or aircraft. Touch each of the parts. Some schools also have old parts around so you can see the internal workings, so ask around. If you have an old engine, for example from a worn-out lawn mower or chain-saw, pull it apart. Note likenesses and differences between that engine and the engine you are studying.

  Another example: If you are learning about the weather, keep your own weather station for a while. Observe and write down rainfall, cloud, wind, temperature, and barometric pressure daily.
- **Use role-playing.** If you are in a group, why not try some role-playing exercises that involve physical activity. Instead of reading about the rules controlling right of way when approaching another aircraft or boat, for example, get up and do a few examples with other students.
- **Use index cards & Post-it notes.** Write the key facts and ideas on index cards, and then physically sort them in different ways. Alternatively, write snippets of information on post-it notes and stick them to a wall according to relationships with other ideas. This is almost like physically building a mind map on the wall.
- **Tick it off.** While you read, tick off or mark each paragraph as you read and understand it. This helps you concentrate as well as involves movement.

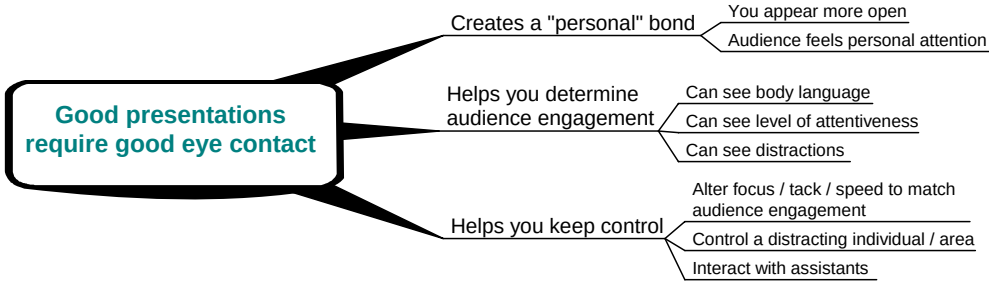
Logical style exploration

You can explore content from a logical perspective by using the OSAID model to analyze logic further. You can visualize logic using a logic tree, and you may want to look in more detail at the mathematics behind your topics. Let's explore these further:

- **Analyze the logic.** Look at the logic within your learning material. Don't always accept that your material is correct. Much material is still only the expressed beliefs of the author. Use the following OSAID model to probe the author's logic, as well as your own logic. OSAID is a mnemonic for:
  - **Objective reasoning.** Does the author base an argument on facts? Questions: How do you know they are facts? Could they be opinions or assumptions?
  - **Subjective reasoning.** Does the author base an argument on personal opinions or the opinions of others? Questions: Do you believe the source? How reliable is it?
  - **Assumptive reasoning.** Does the author base an argument on assumptions? Questions: Whose assumptions? What if these are wrong?
  - **Inductive reasoning.** Does the author provide a reasonable conclusion by noting some specific cases? Questions: Can you think of cases that disprove the conclusion?
  - **Deductive reasoning.** Does the author provide a specific conclusion based on principles accepted to be true? Questions: Are the principles correct? Is it a logical step from the principles to the conclusion?

These questions can help you test the underlying logic of your learning material, rather than just accepting everything at "face value."

- **Create a logic tree.** A logic tree is a diagram that starts with a key statement, and then branches out with further logic or points that support that statement. If you want to go further with this, find more information on using deductive or inductive reasoning. Find why it's important that each branch is MECE (mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive). See the diagram below for an example of a logic tree.



- **Play with numbers.** If you are more mathematically minded, explore some topics by numbers. For example, use a spreadsheet program to graph mathematical formulas or information from your training.

Social style exploration

Social style exploration techniques involve learning with other people. The discussion, debate and agreement helps you better understand a particular topic. Here are some ideas:

- **Learn with a group.** This is the basic technique of learning socially. Join a class or study group for your topic of study. If none exists, consider creating one. Suggest class discussions or debates on particular topics of interest.
- **Work with a *study buddy*.** If you can't find or create a group, try to find someone at a similar point in their training. Work together through material and exercises, comparing and contrasting answers and viewpoints.
- **Play the opposite view.** In a group or "study buddy" setting, try taking the opposite viewpoint or opinion on various topics. Play the "devils advocate." Let the others know you are going to challenge them with an opposing view, and ask them to do the same at other times. This challenges yourself and others to defend the topic of focus, leading to better understanding.
- **Role-play.** I've already discussed role-playing with a physical activity focus, however you can also use role-playing as a social learning technique. Role-playing in this way works well for activities that involve communication between two or more people.
- **Involve others.** Find ways to involve those around you in your learning. If you live at home with your parents, involve them by asking them their opinions on various topics. Try explaining to them some of the ideas you've learned. If you have children, how can you involve them in your training and learning? Sometimes children have a way of revealing your lack of understanding in a particular area by their own technique—the barrage of "why" questions.

Solitary style exploration

Solitary style exploration involves learning mainly on your own. Solitary exploration also involves understanding your own views and emotions on particular topics. You can extend this to try to understand other people's motivation behind their work. Here are some techniques to try:

- **Note your own reactions.** Keep track of your own reactions, opinions and emotions as you progress through your course. Do you find it interesting, exciting, boring or dull? How do you feel when something finally makes sense, versus when you are struggling to understand an idea? Emotions play a big role in understanding and remembering material, so don't ignore this valuable part of learning.
- **Keep a journal or learning log.** While you are studying, keep a journal or log of your activities. Take particular attention to your reactions to various topics as outlined above. Through history, some of the greatest contributors to society and science wrote down their inner thoughts, emotions, hopes and ambitions. They used diaries, journals, letters, poems, essays and articles to capture and explore their lives. These include people such as Newton, Jefferson, Bach, Edison, da Vinci, and more. Some researchers believe their scribbling and writing helped them achieve their success.
- **Explore the people.** Ask your instructor or lecturer what motivates them to teach what they do. Explore the people behind your topics, both current and past. What can you find out about their lives, motivation, concerns and other achievements? Try reading biographies or do some research on the Internet.
- **Make up your own mind.** Much of what you read is an expression of beliefs of other people. Those people are not always right. Try keeping an attitude of "I choose to believe that for now." Keep an open and independent mind.

Summary

Congratulations on making it to the end of this course. You now have the information, tool and exercises you need to dramatically increase your reading speed. However, all your effort so far will be in vain if you don't do the exercises! Practice is essential in any activity to achieve proficiency. So, practice selecting and applying the exercises, techniques and strategies until they become second nature to you. Your practice will reward you with faster reading speed and better comprehension of any material you read. In due course, your new skills will help you reach your overall goals sooner.

As always, if you have any thoughts on how we can improve Memletics and its products and services, please don't hesitate to contact us using the website, or do the survey below. We value your input, including both testimonials and suggestions for improvement!

The URL for the survey is:

http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Memletics® Effective Speed Reading Course Guide

Your details

Name: _____

Date started course: _____

Your course goals: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your instructor/teacher: _____

What you need for this course

- **A printout of these notes.** Even if you are doing this course online, it's worthwhile printing out these pages.
- **A test and drill book.** The reading material you use for your tests and drills should not come from subjects or topics you are currently learning. Choose a book that has many similar pages (preferably without diagrams or pictures), with good line spacing and text size. It should be reasonably easy for you to read and understand at your current level. Fiction and non-fiction are both OK.
- **Some way to keep time.** A watch or stopwatch, preferably with a countdown alarm. An alarm clock is another option, however you will need to start exactly 10 minutes before alarm time.
- **A pen or pencil.**
- **A calculator (optional).** A calculator will help with the speed test calculations.
- **An open mind and a desire to read faster!**

Additional materials

ⓘ You can obtain a printable PDF version of this course guide, along with an Excel spreadsheet to help you with test calculations and progress tracking. Download them from your download manager for your order. Log into the store and follow the instructions after the green text titled "Electronic Product Collection." Click to go to the store: http://www.memletics.com/store

Initial reading test

Pick a starting page in your test book. Make sure you haven't read the text before or not for a long time. If possible, set an alarm for 10 minutes time. Read for 10 minutes *at your normal pace.* When 10 minutes is up, mark your finishing line on the page in the book. Then fill out the following information. For the summary, write down a few short notes on the main points of the section you read.

Date: _____

Name of book: _____

Started reading on page: _____

Finished reading on page: _____

Summary of what you read: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Speed calculations

Fill out the following data to calculate how many Word Per Minute (WPM) you read. The first section is data for the book itself:

Word count for 10 lines: A _____ (including small words)

Word count for one line: B _____ (cross off the last zero from A)

Line count per page: C _____

Word count per page: D _____ (multiply B. by C.)

The next section calculates how many words you read:

Full pages you read: E _____

Full page word count: F _____ (multiply D. by E.)

Lines read on last page: G _____ (complete lines)

Last page word count: H _____ (multiply G. by B.)

Total words read I _____ (add F. and H.)

Now you can calculate your words per minute by dividing by 10 (because you read for 10 minutes).

Words per minute J _____ (divide I by 10).

Compare your reading speed to the table on page 11. How well would you rate your reading speed?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ Poor

Comprehension check

Now let's do a simple test of how well you understood what you read during your reading test. Read your summary notes then answer these questions:

Did you understand what the author was saying?

_____

Did you understand the main ideas?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts?

_____

Now reread your test pages thoroughly.

Was your understanding as good as you thought earlier?

_____

Did you remember the main ideas correctly?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts correctly?

_____

Did you have difficulty remembering the material while summarizing, but felt you understood it while you were reading it?

_____

How well would you rate your comprehension during this reading?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ Poor

Overall results

What do you feel needs the most improvement?

☐ Speed ☐ Comprehension ☐ Both

How much time are you willing to commit to improving your reading?

_____

Remember: Learning comes from doing!

Week One

Objectives for this week

- ☐ **Eye tests.** If you haven't already done so, do the eye tests on page 14.
- ☐ **Vocabulary exercises.** Do the exercise outlined on page 34, and start a new word journal.
- ☐ **Fluency development.** Start using the regulator technique. See the regulator technique description on page 41. Do stage 1 for the first 3 days, then stage 2 for the last 4 days. Aim to spend at least 15 minutes a day, however continue using the regulator technique for all reading from now on.

Daily log

Keep track of your daily activities using the form below.

Day 1:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 2:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 3:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 4:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 5:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 6:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 7:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Week Two

Objectives for this week

- ☐ **Computer monitor setup.** If you have a computer screen, experiment with the settings to get the best display. See page 24.
- ☐ **Fluency development**. Start the regulator speed drills. See the regulator technique description on page 41. Focus on stage 3 and the basic speed drills. Aim to spend at least 15 minutes a day.
- ☐ **Skim reading**. Spend some time this week doing the skim reading exercises on page 52. Do the structured skim reading drill 1 and the unstructured skim reading drill 1. Do each drill 3 times during the week.

Daily log

Keep track of your daily activities using the form below.

Day 1:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 2:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 3:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 4:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 5:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 6:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 7:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Mid course review

You are now halfway through your course. Let's do a midcourse review to check your progress.

Reading test

Pick a starting page in your test book, preferably the same one you used for your first reading test. Read for 10 minutes *at a comfortable pace.* When 10 minutes is up, mark your finishing line on the page in the book. Fill out the following information.

Date: _____

Started reading on page: _____

Finished reading on page: _____

Summary of what you read: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Speed calculations

Fill out the following data to calculate how many Word Per Minute (WPM) you read. The first section is data for the book itself:

Word count for 10 lines: A _____ (including small words)

Word count for one line: B _____ (cross off the last zero from A)

Line count per page: C _____

Word count per page: D _____ (multiply B. by C.)

The next section calculates how many words you read:

Full pages you read: E _____

Full page word count: F _____ (multiply D. by E.)

Lines read on last page: G _____ (complete lines)

Last page word count: H _____ (multiply G. by B.)

Total words read I _____ (add F. and H.)

Now you can calculate your words per minute by dividing by 10 (because you read for 10 minutes).

Words per minute J _____ (divide I by 10).

Comprehension check

Let's repeat the comprehension test to see how well you understood what you read during your reading test. Read your summary notes then answer these questions:

Did you understand what the author was saying?

_____

Did you understand the main ideas?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts?

_____

Now reread your test pages thoroughly.

Was your understanding as good as you thought earlier?

_____

Did you remember the main ideas correctly?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts correctly?

_____

Did you have difficulty remembering the material while summarizing, but felt you understood it while you were reading it?

_____

Overall midpoint review

Speed from initial test: _____ (2 weeks ago)

Speed from this test: _____ (today)

Change: _____ (better/worse)

How well would you rate your reading speed improvement?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ None

How well would you rate your comprehension *improvement* for this reading?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ Poor

What are you doing well so far:

_____

_____

What do you need to improve on?

_____

_____

Have you been meeting your time commitments?

_____

_____

Remember: Learning comes from doing!

Week 3

Objectives for this week

- ☐ **Fluency development.** Continue the speed drills and learn the speed paths. See the regulator technique description on page 41. Focus on stage 3 and 4 and the intermediate speed drills. Aim to spend at least 15-20 minutes a day.
- ☐ **Skim reading**. Spend some time this week doing the skim reading exercises on page 52. Do the structured skim reading drill 2, the unstructured skim reading drill 2, and the combined skim reading drill 1. Do each drill 3 times during the week.

Daily log

Keep track of your daily activities using the form below.

Day 1:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 2:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 3:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 4:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 5:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 6:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 7:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Week 4

Objectives for this week

- ☐ **Fluency development**. This week bring what you've learnt together and push yourself faster, while keeping up comprehension. See the regulator technique description on page 41. Focus on the advanced speed drills. Aim to spend at least 20-30 minutes a day.
- ☐ **Reading strategies**. Do the reading strategy exercises on page 62. Do the downwards path drill and crossways path drill at least 3 times during the week.
- ☐ **Extra credit.** Try some of the speed drills on different material to what you've been using.

Daily log

Keep track of your daily activities using the form below.

Day 1:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 2:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 3:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 4:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 5:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 6:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Day 7:

Name of book: _____

Time spent: _____

Final Review

Congratulations on completing this speed reading course! Let's do a final review to see how far you've come over the past 4 weeks.

Reading test

Pick a starting page in your test book, preferably the same one you used for your first reading test. Read for 10 minutes *at a comfortable pace.* When 10 minutes is up, mark your finishing line on the page in the book. Fill out the following information.

Date: _____

Started reading on page: _____

Finished reading on page: _____

Summary of what you read: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Speed calculations

Fill out the following data to calculate how many Word Per Minute (WPM) you read. The first section is data for the book itself:

Word count for 10 lines: A _____ (including small words)

Word count for one line: B _____ (cross off the last zero from A)

Line count per page: C _____

Word count per page: D _____ (multiply B. by C.)

The next section calculates how many words you read:

Full pages you read: E _____

Full page word count: F _____ (multiply D. by E.)

Lines read on last page: G _____ (complete lines)

Last page word count: H _____ (multiply G. by B.)

Total words read I _____ (add F. and H.)

Now you can calculate your words per minute by dividing by 10 (because you read for 10 minutes).

Words per minute J _____ (divide I by 10).

Comprehension check

Let's repeat the comprehension test to see how well you understood what you read during your reading test. Read your summary notes then answer these questions:

Did you understand what the author was saying?

_____

Did you understand the main ideas?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts?

_____

Now reread your test pages thoroughly.

Was your understanding as good as you thought earlier?

_____

Did you remember the main ideas correctly?

_____

Did you remember the basic facts correctly?

_____

Did you have difficulty remembering the material while summarizing, but felt you understood it while you were reading it?

_____

Overall final review

Speed from initial test: _____ (4 weeks ago)

Speed from mid-point test: _____ (2 weeks ago)

Change: _____ (better/worse)

Speed from this test: _____ (today)

Change: _____ (better/worse)

How well would you rate your reading speed improvement?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ None

How well would you rate your comprehension *improvement* for this reading?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ OK ☐ Not so good ☐ Poor

What did you do well during this course:

_____

_____

Do you need to redo any part of the course?

_____

_____

Did you meet your time commitments?

_____

_____

Regardless of whether you've completed this course successfully, please provide feedback via our online survey.
Go to this URL:
http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

Appendices

An introduction the Memletics Accelerated Learning System

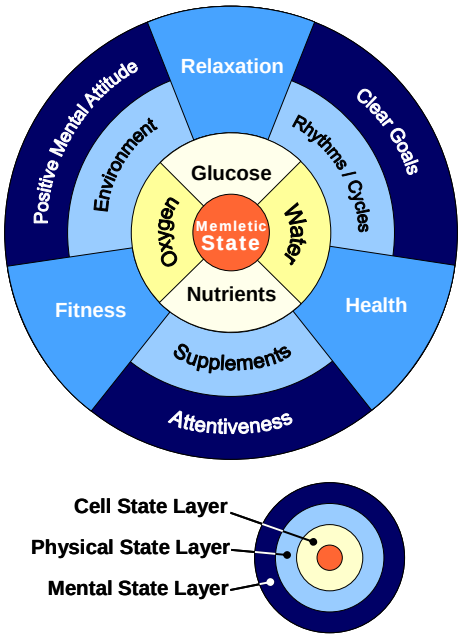
Memletics draws together much of what we know about effective learning into an easy-to-apply system. This chapter provides you with an overview before you start learning about the individual parts of Memletics. This helps you learn Memletics faster. Having this overview also helps you understand links between the different parts of Memletics. You will soon begin to see the power of Memletics comes from both the individual parts and the whole system.

This appendix outlines the five parts of Memletics. These parts are the Memletic State, Memletic Process, Memletic Techniques, Memletic Styles and Memletic Approach:

- **The Memletic State.** How to make sure your brain cells, physical systems and mental systems are in the best state for learning.
- **The Memletic Process**. The steps you take to LEARN the knowledge needed for your goal.
- **The Memletic Techniques.** These techniques improve the speed and quality of your learning.
- **The Memletic Styles**. Use your stronger and secondary learning preferences to improve your overall learning.
- **The Memletic Approach.** Manage the overall learning journey by prior planning and then tracking along the way.

Don't worry too much about the details of each part at this point. In this chapter, I just provide an overview of each part of Memletics. This is because there are many interrelationships between the five parts of the system. Having a broad understanding first helps you recognize those linkages as they arise.

Memletic State is the right state for learning



Memletic State helps you ensure your cell state, physical state and mental state are in good condition for learning. It's harder to learn if your cells, body and mind do not perform well.

Cell state refers to the state of the cells, primarily neurons, which make up the brain. Physical state involves the different bodily systems that support life, such as breathing, blood circulation, sleep and general bodily health. Mental state involves mental processes that predominately occur in the mind, such as motivation, concentration, awareness and attitude.

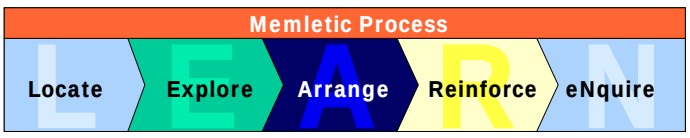
Good learning state supports the building of the networks of neurons for the *material you learn*. At the same time, positive learning experiences build neural networks that improve *how you learn*.

What is "good condition?" Let's look at some examples:

- **Cell state.** The brain is a cell-based system and relies on essential materials such as oxygen, water, food and nutrients. These materials are essential for the proper functioning of neurons and other key brain cells. Good cell state requires a good supply of all these during learning.
- **Physical state:** Your physical environment has a big impact on your body, so fresh air, right temperature, good light and correct furniture are important. Controlling your breathing and stress helps good state, as does getting enough rest and sleep. Longer term, good diet and exercise also have positive effects. Some dietary supplements can also increase brain performance.
- **Mental state**: Clearly defined goals and defined steps for achieving those goals are essential for motivation. Attention and concentration are critical for learning. Longer term, good mental health and "mental exercise" also improve your overall learning.

There are also some negative impacts on state. For example, excess stress and tension are enemies of good state.

Memletic Process—the steps to LEARN



The Memletic Process provides steps to follow when learning new material. You use this process at varying levels of detail throughout your learning. For example, you first use this process at a high level to understand the overall organization of your material. You then repeat the process at lower levels of detail until you are learning individual chunks of knowledge,

such as a particular skill or fact. This approach provides a repeatable process you can refine to improve your overall learning performance.

The diagram above shows the five activities of the Memletic Process. These are:

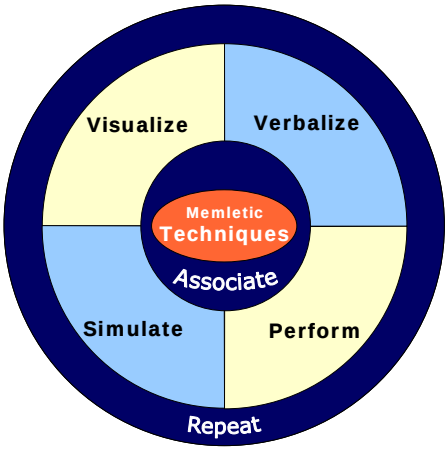
- **Locate.** Firstly, you find and prepare content for your learning goal. This may involve using standard books and manuals, however it could also involve getting notes from lectures, one-on-one tutoring sessions, the Internet and other references.
- **Explore.** Here you work through and understand your content. There are some general principles to follow, such as learning to a level deeper than needed. There are also some approaches relevant to particular learning styles that you may want to try.
- **Arrange.** Next, you select which material you want to memorize, and prepare it for memorization. You select Memletic Techniques based on the type of knowledge you want to learn. This book has over twenty different techniques you can apply to various forms of content. You then prepare your content for use with those techniques.
- **Reinforce.** You then use those techniques to reinforce knowledge, skills and behaviors. Further reinforcing techniques help you lock in that material for the long term.
- **eNquire.** Lastly, you review both how well you learned your content, as well how well you applied Memletics along the way.

Notice how the first letters of these steps spell out LEARN (eNquire starts with the 'N' sound).

Don't feel like you have to stick rigidly to these activities. They sometimes overlap. For example, when you explore content you start to form ideas on the techniques to use to memorize it. You start to reinforce material when you explore and arrange it. You may need to rearrange some material during the reinforcing process, as it may not be suitable for the particular technique you chose. Your mind naturally connects topics, associates information and does its own reviews as you progress. Letting it do so helps the whole memorizing process.

Memletic Techniques lock in knowledge

You mainly use the Memletic Techniques during the reinforcing activity of the Memletic Process. The techniques are the primary methods of reinforcing the knowledge you need to remember for the long term.



You can use many techniques in your learning activities. I've grouped these into six main categories, based on the underlying principles of how the techniques work.

These categories are:

- **Associate.** Associate new knowledge with knowledge that's already in your memory. These techniques are great for facts and procedures.

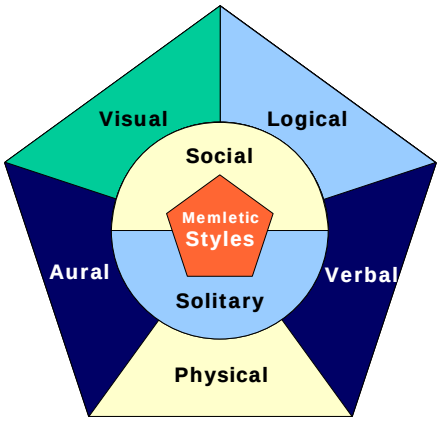
- **Visualize.** Use your "mind's eye" to recreate sensory abilities, experiences, ideas and views in your mind. Visualization can be creative, for example for experiences that have not happened yet. You can use it to rehearse new procedures and skills, and as well use it to strengthen other techniques.
- **Verbalize.** Your internal self-talk influences your behavior. Using verbal techniques such as assertions (or affirmations), scripting and a "mental firewall" you can alter your internal self-talk to align with your learning objectives.
- **Simulate.** Simulation reinforces a behavior or skill using external tools. Basic simulation can involve just cardboard cutouts or household items, while PC based simulation is becoming more and more advanced. Role-playing is also another form of simulation.
- **Perform.** There are specific techniques to improve skill performance. Some of these techniques involve understanding the theory behind learning and performing skills. Other Perform techniques help change existing behaviors, as well as improve performance of already learned skills.
- **Repeat.** While Memletics aims to reduce rote repetition, rote learning is still a common and sometimes useful technique. Flashcards are also useful, however some newer software can significantly improve the way you learn and retain new material.

I've listed the techniques in each of these categories in the following table:

Associate	General association	Peg events
	First letter mnemonics	Mental journey or story
	Acrostic mnemonics	Roman Rooms
	Linked lists	Chunking
	Peg words	
Visualize	General visualization	Mental rehearsal
	Creative visualization	Strengthening techniques
Verbalize	General verbalization	Mental firewall
	Assertions	Scripting
Simulate	Basic simulation	Advanced simulation
	PC simulation	Role-playing
Perform	Three stage skill learning	Shunt
	Part task training	Anchoring
	Performance variation	Modeling
	Overlearning	
Repeat	Rote learning	Scheduled review
	Flashcards	Programmed repetition

As well as the techniques, I also discuss some common reasons why techniques may not work as well as you expect at the end of the techniques chapter.

Memletic Styles personalize your learning



The Memletic Styles recognize that each of us prefers to learn in different ways. There are many variations on this theme and different ways to describe these preferences, however the Memletic Styles uses the seven shown in the diagram as its basis. These seven Learning Styles are:

- **Visual.** You use pictures, images, visualization, and spatial arrangements.
- **Aural**. You use voice, sounds and music.
- **Verbal.** You use words and writing.
- **Physical.** You use your body, hands, and sense of touch.
- **Logical.** You use logic, reasoning and systems.
- **Social.** You prefer to learn with groups or other people.
- **Solitary.** You prefer to work alone and use self-study.

All of these styles are effective learning styles. Your favored use of particular styles does not make you a more or less effective learner. Current school approaches tend to focus on only two of these. This bias may have influenced how you view your own learning abilities.

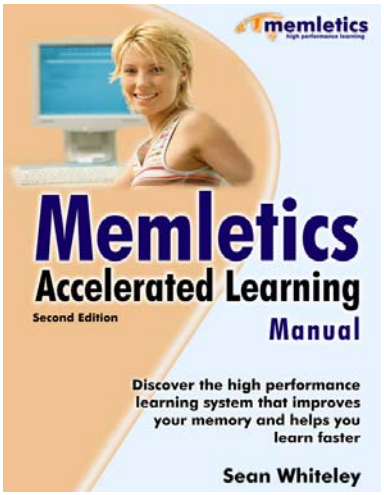
Memletic Approach—the path to your goals

The Memletic Approach is a series of tasks that you can use to approach and manage any learning journey. The time you spend in this activity varies according to the length and importance of your goals.

The four tasks of the Memletic Approach are:

- **Target.** Choose and clarify your goal. Targeting your goal involves understanding your reasons, exploring your goal and setting your objectives.
- **Plan.** Decide your approach. Do prior research, plan your course map, and work out time and cost estimates.
- **Track.** Track your progress. This involves regularly (but not too regularly) checking your progress and adjusting where necessary.
- **Do it.** Enjoy it for life. This one is self-explanatory!

Learn more about Memletics



If you'd like to learn more about the Memletics Accelerated Learning System, visit the home page for the Memletics Manual at

www.memletics.com/manual/default.asp

This manual is the core reference for Memletics – there are no other materials describing Memletics in depth.

Also on the Memletics website, you'll find:

- **Memletics Statistics**. See some interesting statistics on Memletics users.
- **Instructor-led training**. Learn about upcoming instructor-led training for Memletics.
- **Testimonials**. Don't just take our word for it. See some comments from readers and reviewers of Memletics.
- **Resources**. See some of the additional resources that are available to Memletics Members.
- **Accelerated Learning Research Projects**. Find out about some of our current research projects, including information on Memletics VR (Virtual Reality).

You can also learn more **about us**.

Discount code for the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual

We're happy to provide you with a 20% discount off the Memletics Manual. To obtain the discount:

1. Go to the Manual home page at **www.memletics.com/manual/default.asp**
2. Page down to the bottom and click "Continue" under the format of the manual you'd like. You can also select your region for international pricing.
3. On the order form, be sure to log in first! Use the link at the top to log in as an existing user.
4. Enter the discount code SPDRDC in the discount code field (in the payment part of the order form).
5. Complete your order normally. As long as you provide the discount code above you'll receive the discount (check the order total on the order verify page).

Memletics for organizations & businesses

Representatives of organizations and businesses may be interested in the following programs:

- **Volume license program.** This program is ideal for organizations that want to provide the Memletics products to many students or employees.
- **Partner certification program.** For individuals and training organizations wanting to conduct training specifically on Memletics, or create new products or services based on the Memletics content.

- **Affiliate program.** If you would like to receive rewards for referring visitors to our sites, the affiliate program is for you.
- **Reseller program.** If you would like to resell Memletics, for example as reference with your existing training program, you can obtain the Manual at a discount.

For more information on these programs, please visit
www.memletics.com/support/programs.asp

Other sites we run

Feel free to visit these sites as well:

- **www.learning-styles-online.com** – Discover your personal learning styles, graphically! Thousands of people have done this test.
- **www.accelerated-learning-online.com** – General information on accelerated learning plus thousands of research article abstracts.
- **www.find-health-articles.com** – This site helps everyone discover medical research information more easily.

You can also influence the contents of this section by doing the survey at:
http://www.memletics.com/surveys/speed-reading

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W

Memletics will help you improve your reading speed

One of the key messages we received from past Memletics user surveys was that people want to know how to read faster. In the usual Memletics spirit, what started as a short supplement has turned into this complete course on effective speed reading.

We've looked at good speed reading courses, analyzed educational research and filtered the hype to create this new course. We've applied the Memletics principle of "no silver bullets." In short, this course gives you the information you need to significantly improve your reading speed **and** comprehension.

Inside you'll find detailed information, steps and exercises to improve your alphabetics, vocabulary, and fluency. The course teaches you specific strategies for approaching different types of reading material. We've also included some complimentary material from the Memletics Accelerated Learning Manual, which will help you learn what you read as well.

Want more? This course contains material you won't find in any other speed reading course:

- **Test your eyes for reading.** We've included three eye tests that can indicate vision problems that directly affect reading.
- **Optimize printed text.** Learn the optimum settings for printing out text to read on paper.
- **Optimize computer monitors.** Is your computer monitor configured properly? The course contains detailed instructions, with screenshots, showing how to optimize your monitor for on-screen reading (XP/Win2000).

The course includes a 4-week plan you can use to self-guide your learning, as well as access to an Excel-based spreadsheet to test and track your progress (on website).

About Memletics

Memletics is an Accelerated Learning System that helps people reach their learning goals faster. Over 33,000 people in more than 120 countries have used Memletics-based training materials to help themselves learn faster and remember more. Now Memletics helps you read faster as well. Start today!

Testimonials:

"Your book is one of the few that I have read that really makes sense. I have tried Evelyn Woods Reading Dynamics, Eye Q, and I have read numerous books on speed reading. Most of these books and methods promise speeds that are impossible to achieve."
--**Mark,** from West Virginia, USA,

"It is the best speed reading course I have come across."
-- **Marie**, from Australia

About the author

Sean Whiteley is an author, IT manager and pilot. He has been researching and using accelerated learning techniques for the past ten years. He's worked with his team to bring you this latest course on effective speed reading.

Visit the Memletics website at
http://www.memletics.com

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