

I Reading techniques

<i>noun</i>	<i>adjective</i>	<i>person</i>	<i>verb</i>	<i>adverb</i>
	psychological			
science				
	free			

- e) Look at the following words and find what the root of each of them is. Then build as many words as you can from that root.
- presumably
 - uncovering
 - followers
 - observation

Inference – further hints

One useful exercise involves giving the class a short passage to read and asking them to underline all the words they do not understand. Then the whole class can consider each of these words and see how much they can guess about them. The following steps can be taken to help the students during the exercise:

- look at what can be guessed from the word itself. (Is it a noun, a verb, an adjective? Can its form help?)
- look at the context. (Is the word repeated anywhere else? Is there any contrast or analogy that can help you derive the meaning of the word?)
- try to make a guess even if it is a vague one.

1.2 Understanding relations within the sentence

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To help the students to recognize the structure of complex sentences.

Skills involved: Understanding relations within the sentence.

Why? In order to read efficiently and not to stumble on every word it will be essential for the students to grasp the structure of the sentences they read at once. They should therefore be taught to discriminate quickly between what is essential (subject – verb – object, i.e. the ‘core’ of the sentence) and the padding (i.e. modifiers, relative clauses, oppositions, etc.) which, in each sentence, only introduces some further details or qualifies the idea.

Sensitizing

Read the following sentences and underline the subject and the main verb of each of them.

'One team that performed more than two hundred operations found that nearly half the patients underwent a change of personality. In one publicized case in England a young salesman with an apparent compulsion to gamble was arrested for larceny.'

Exercise 2

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why? } Same as for exercise 1.

The sentences that follow are all from *Time*. Read them and answer the questions that follow.

- 1 Mostly because of inflation, but also because taxes have been creeping upward, the actual buying power that people have been getting from the money in their paychecks has declined by nearly 4% over the past twelve months.

Match subjects and verbs.

taxes	have been creeping upward
buying power	have been getting
people	has declined

- 2 One index of how financially pressed Americans feel is the popularity of grocery coupons, those little pieces of paper snipped from product labels or newspaper ads that housewives have long used to save nickels and dimes at the check-out counter.

What is the subject of 'feel'?

What is the subject of 'is'?

What noun phrase does 'that' refer to?

- a) newspaper ads
b) product labels
c) pieces of paper
d) popularity
- 3 Magazine writers, or the authors of books about current affairs, often find themselves gratefully surprised by how much remains unexplored and untold about major events that the day press and television once swarmed all over, then abandoned.

Find the subjects in the first column that match the verbs in the second column.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| a) Magazine writers | A) find |
| b) books | B) remains |
| c) current affairs | C) swarmed |
| d) how much | D) abandoned |
| e) major events | |
| f) the day press and television | |

.....A B C D

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- 4 One of the major reasons photo collecting has flowered only recently was the realization that a photograph, unlike a painting or a drawing, can be reproduced forever, as long as the negative exists.

What is the subject of 'was'?

What is the subject of 'can'?

- a) a photograph
- b) the realization
- c) a painting
- d) a drawing

Exercise 3

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 1 but the students are asked
Skills involved: } to divide the sentences of a text into sense groups
Why? } so as to grasp the structure of the sentences more quickly.

Divide the following sentences into sense groups.

Here is a possible way of doing it.

You must excuse/a letter from somebody/you may this morning/not even remember./It is the lonely young man/with the black face/beside the door/to whom/you were so kind/last night./I have only just returned/from Cambridge,/to Calcutta,/and know no one here./It was a real ordeal/to find myself/at Government House,/at such a large party,/all alone in the world.

(From *Letters of an Indian Judge to an English Gentlewoman* (Futura, 1970))

1.3 Linking sentences and ideas

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To prepare the students to recognize the relations within sentences or between sentences.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text.

Why? Although this exercise mainly deals with semantic relations within the text, it can be useful to prepare the students to look out for some of the relations that can exist between different parts of a text.

The following text contains six mistakes. Can you find what they are and what words should appear instead?

American serviceman Andrew Nelson wanted to take his cat Felix home with her to San Francisco so he asked Trans World Airlines to quote him a price to carry Felix with him as hand luggage.

Sensitizing

T. W. A. wanted to know Felix's height 'from tip of nose to base of tail, width across shoulders while in a standing position, and his length from base of paw to top of head (not ears) whilst standing and looking straight ahead.'

Mr Nelson loves Felix, but not that much, so he asked B.O.A.C. for a quotation. They told him he could calculate this cost by following these simple rules:

1. Measure the dog's crate in inches and divide the result by 427.
2. Weigh Felix in his crate.
3. The charge is the higher of (1) or (2) above at the appropriate rate, to the minimum charge of £10.40.
4. To this figure add the U.K. handling charge of £2.75, and the American handling charge, which is about the same.

It was all too much for Mr Nelson. He put Felix in a basket and carried him aboard the boat as hand luggage. Free.

(From C. Ward, *How to complain* (Secker and Warburg, 1974))

Linking sentences and ideas: Reference

Exercise 2

Specific aim: To train the students to recognize and understand reference.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text through reference.

Why? One common way of linking structurally-independent sentences in order to get a meaningful text is to use words such as this, that, it, etc. which refer to something already mentioned (anaphora) or to something which is going to be mentioned (cataphora). Failure to understand such anaphoric links will probably lead to a serious misunderstanding of the text. This exercise will be useful to help the students perceive these links through a careful study of the text.

In the following passage all the italicized words refer to something mentioned before, or after, in the text. Read the passage carefully and complete the table underneath.

The idea of evolution (*which* is gradual change) was not a new *one*. The Greeks had thought of *it*, so had Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles, and also the Frenchman, Lamarck. *It* is one thing to have an idea; we can all of us guess and sometimes make a lucky guess. *It* is quite another thing to produce a proof of the correctness of that idea. Darwin thought he had *that* proof in *his* notebooks. *He* saw that all animals had a struggle to survive. *Those* which were best at surviving *their* environment passed on

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the good qualities which had helped *them* to *their* descendants. *This* was called 'the survival of the fittest'. For example, in a cold climate, *those* who have the warmest fur will live. Darwin believed that *this* necessity for an animal to deal with *its* environment explained the immense variety of creatures.

(From A. M. Newth: *Britain and the World* (Penguin, 1966))

	refers to something		what it refers to:
	before	after	
which	x		<i>the idea of evolution</i>
one	x		<i>idea</i>
it	x		<i>the idea of evolution</i>
It		x	<i>to have an idea</i>

Now go on!

It			
that			
his			
He			
Those			
their			
them			
their			
This			
those			
this			
its			

Exercise 3

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 1 but the students are now
Skills involved: } asked to use underlining and circling to visualize
Why? } the relations in and between the sentences.

In the following paragraph, the use of reference has been made clear by arrows.

The idea of evolution (which is gradual change) was not a new one. The Greeks had thought of it, so had Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles, and also the Frenchman, Lamarck. It is one thing to have an idea; we can all of us guess and sometimes make a lucky guess.

Sensitizing

Can you now do the same thing with the rest of the passage?

It is quite another thing to produce a proof of the correctness of that idea. Darwin thought he had **that** proof in **his** notebooks. **He** saw that all animals had a struggle to survive. **Those** which were best at surviving **their** environment passed on the good qualities which had helped **them** to **their** descendants. **This** was called 'the survival of the fittest'. For example, in a cold climate, **those** who have the warmest fur will live. Darwin believed that **this** necessity for an animal to deal with **its** environment explained the immense variety of creatures.

Reference – further hints

Similar types of exercises could be done using other cohesion devices such as nominalizations, verbal or clausal substitution or comparisons.

It is also important to remember that anaphora and cataphora can also work at the level of the paragraph, of the chapter, or even of the whole book (e.g. announcing the ending of a novel). Exercises could also be devised to deal with this aspect of reference.

Linking sentences and ideas: Link-words

Exercise 1

Specific aim: To train the students to understand the value of link-words.

Skills involved: Understanding relations between parts of a text through the use of logical connectors.

Why? It is extremely important to be able to recognize connective words. Not only are they essential to the understanding of the ideas and facts mentioned in the passage, but they also indicate the rhetorical value (e.g. reinforcing, explaining) of what follows.

In the following text, a number of link-words have been italicized. Replace them by other link-words, or rewrite the sentences, making sure the meaning remains the same.

Botany Bay

'Australia became prosperous *because of* the wickedness of England,' someone said. What was meant by this?

Simply that in the beginning Australia was a place to which convicts were sent. It was expensive to keep them in prison *so* the government was anxious to be rid of them. Before 1783 we had shipped convicts to the American colonies. *But* the United States of America after 1783 did not

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want any more of these unruly immigrants. For a year or two they were kept in disused rotting ships on the Thames, *until* the suggestion was made that Australia, 12,000 miles away, would be an excellent country to harbour them. Captain Cook had sailed round the Coast and discovered a place he called Botany Bay *because* the flowers there were so wonderful, and this was chosen for a convict settlement.

A certain Captain Phillip was given charge of the first group to go there in 1788. *After* five months' sailing they arrived at Botany Bay, *but* Captain Phillip decided it was not suitable and went farther on and landed at what is now called Sydney Harbour. The term Botany Bay was *nevertheless* used for this colony.

The government had shown little imagination in beginning this venture. Captain Phillip begged for more supplies. He needed seeds, farm implements and food. *Instead* he was sent more convicts. *After* four years of unrewarding labour Captain Phillip retired because of ill-health. (Adapted from A. M. Newth: *Britain and the World* (Penguin, 1966))

Exercise 2

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why?

} Same as for exercise 1 but the students are asked to classify the link-words according to their function. This kind of exercise is useful to train the students to recognize the rhetorical value of the sentence by simply looking at the connector that is used.

Look at the text called *Botany Bay* and classify the italicized link-words according to their function:

Cause:.....

Consequence:.....

Time sequence:.....

Concession:.....

Opposition:.....

The exercise would obviously be more difficult but also more interesting if one used a text offering a greater variety of link-words which would not have been indicated beforehand.

Exercise 3

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why?

} Same as for exercise 1 but this time the link-words have been taken out and the students are made to choose between four possibilities in order to complete each blank. This will lead them to look at the context carefully in order to find out the function of the missing link-word as well as what is grammatically correct.

Sensitizing

Read the following text and select the most appropriate link-words from the list given below.

A colour consultant from Toronto explained to the Inter-Society Colour Council meeting in New York an ingenious scheme which a client company had conceived for increasing the sale of potato peelers. He began by pointing out a puzzling fact. 1 potato peelers 'never wear out', enough are sold in two years in his country to put one in every home. What happens to them? He gave this answer. 'Investigation reveals that they get thrown away with the potato peelings.' One of his colleagues, he added, had then come up with a dazzling plan for helping along this throw-away process. He proposed that their company paint their peelers 'as much like a potato peeling as possible.' 2 a potato-coloured peeler wouldn't have much eye-appeal on the sales counter. They decided to solve that by displaying the peeler on a colourful card. Once the housewife got the peeler home and removed the bright card, the chances that she would lose the peeler were excellent. . . .

In some cases the consumers have no choice but to be waste makers 3 the way products are sold to them. Many paste pots come with brushes built into the cover, and the brushes fail by a half-inch to reach the bottom. 4 millions of 'empty' paste jars are thrown away with a few spoonfuls of paste still in them. 5, millions of 'used' tubes of lipstick are thrown away with a half-inch of lipstick remaining in the tube. (From Vance Packard: *The Waste Makers* (Pelican, 1961))

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 a) because | 4 a) similarly |
| b) although | b) for example |
| c) for example | c) however |
| d) since | d) thus (= in this way) |
| 2 a) in addition | 5 a) likewise (= similarly) |
| b) on the contrary | b) on the contrary |
| c) in this way | c) yet |
| d) however | d) for instance |
| 3 a) in spite of | |
| b) because of | |
| c) as | |
| d) in addition to | |

Exercise 4

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 3 but it is slightly more
Skills involved: } difficult since only a jumbled list of link-words is
Why? } provided.

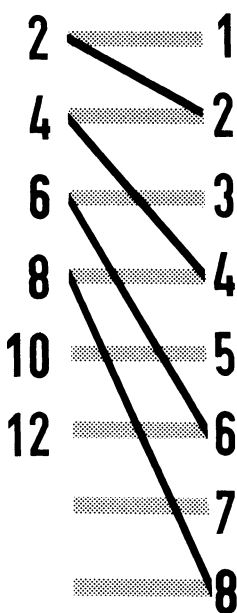
Read the following passage and fill in the blanks with the appropriate

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words, from among the following: *therefore, thus, yet, first, but, then*. All these words have to be used but some of them may be used twice!

Numerical infinity had been causing trouble from the time of Zeno and his paradoxes. If we recall the race between Achilles and the tortoise, we might put one of the puzzling aspects of this contest as follows: for every place Achilles has been at, there is a place that the tortoise has occupied. The two runners have at any time assumed an equal number of stations. obviously Achilles covers more ground. This seems to run counter the common sense notion that the whole is greater than the part. when we deal with infinite collections this is no longer so. , to take a simple example, the series of positive numbers, which is an infinite collection, has in it odd and even numbers. Take away all the odd numbers, and you might think that what is left is half of what you begin with. there remain as many even numbers as there were numbers altogether at the start. This somewhat startling conclusion is quite easily demonstrated. , we write down the series of natural numbers, and , alongside it, a series resulting from it by doubling each member in turn. For every number in the first series there is a corresponding entry in the second. There is, as mathematicians put it, a one-one correspondence between them. The two series have the same number in terms. In the case of infinite collections, , a part contains as many terms as the whole. This is the property that Cantor used to define an infinite collection.

(From Bertrand Russell: *The Wisdom of the West* (Macdonald, 1959))



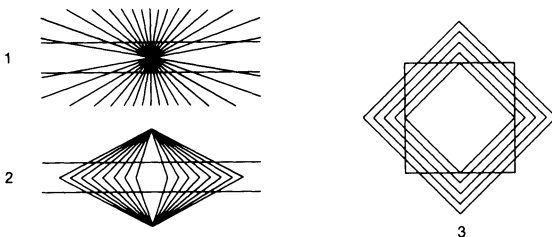
One of Cantor's paradoxes: there are as many even numbers as there are numbers

Sensitizing

Exercise 5

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 3 but now no link-words are
Skills involved: } suggested and the students must fill in the blanks
Why? } with the connectors they think most appropriate.

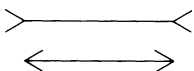
Read the following text and fill in the blanks with the link-words which seem most appropriate to you.



Optical illusions

..... the fact that the lines in figures 1 and 2 look discontinuous, they are parallel. As for the square in figure 3, it is perfectly straight it may look distorted. It is these optical designs are very rare that the eye is not used to them and that the brain is unable to evaluate these patterns properly.

Here is a further example. Which of these two horizontal bars is the longer?



Most people think it is the top one. And, both are exactly the same length., the illusion may be carried one step further: if you touch these bars with your fingers, you will still have the feeling that one bar is longer than the other, if you know what the reality is.

Exercise 6

Specific aim: } Same as for exercise 1 but the students are only
Skills involved: } given a succession of sentences which they must
Why? } connect and often rewrite in order to produce a
coherent text.

In the following passage, most of the connective words are missing. Rewrite the text, adding link-words where necessary. Be careful! Many

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structures will have to be changed and you will probably not keep the same number of sentences. Here are some of the link-words you may find useful:

Then	However	The only result
And	But	Although
When	Yet	So
That's how	Instead	

Television was invented by John Logie Baird. When he was young he built an aeroplane. He tried to fly in it. It crashed down below. Baird was fortunate not to be killed. It did not discourage him. When he was older he tried to make diamonds from coal. There was an enormous explosion. He was not injured. He became a business man. His business failed. He thought of working at television. His family advised him not to. He did not listen to them. He rented an attic. He bought the apparatus he needed. He started working. He worked for a long time. He was not successful. One day he saw a picture on his screen. He rushed out to get someone he could 'televisé'. He found an office boy. He took him back to his room. No image of the boy appeared on his screen. The boy, terrified, had put his head down. He put it up again. His picture appeared on the screen. Television had been discovered.

Exercise 7

Specific aim:
Skills involved:
Why?

} Same as for exercise 6.

The following passage is an extract from a story called *Murder Mystery 1* which was produced in nineteen seconds by a computer in 1973. As you can see all the sentences are simple sentences and no use is made of link-words or reference between different sentences. Can you rewrite this short passage to make it look more natural? This will mean adding or removing words and putting some of the sentences together.

The butler announced tea.

Everyone went to the garden. The butler served tea. The day was cool. The sky was cloudy. The garden was nice. The flowers were pretty. Marion complimented Lady Buxley.

Ronald talked with Marion.

Tea time was over.

Everyone went to the parlor.

The cook went to the kitchen. Maggie prepared dinner.

Dr Hume asked Edward to play tennis. Edward agreed. Lord Edward went to the tennis court with Dr Hume. They played tennis. Dr Hume was the good player. Edward played tennis well.

The butler announced dinner.

Sensitizing

Dr Bartholomew Hume stopped playing tennis. Edward stopped playing tennis.

Everyone went to the dining room. Everyone sat down. The butler served the food. Supper started.

Marion talked with Florence. Florence argued with Marion. Marion said that Florence was idiotic.

Florence talked with Lady Buxley.

Supper was over. The men went to the parlor. The men smoked fat smelly stogies. The men drank sherry. The women went to the drawing room. The women gossiping drank coffee.

Everyone went to the parlor.

Marion talked with Jane.

James went to the library. James read the good paperback. Edward asked Ronald to play tennis. Ronald agreed. Ronald went to the tennis court with Lord Edward. They played tennis.

John suggested the game of bridge. Lady Buxley agreed. Dr Bartholomew Hume agreed. Jane agreed. They played bridge.

The servants went to bed. Everyone went to bed.

(From *Murder Mystery 1* produced by Univac 1108, first presented at the International Conference on Computers in the Humanities, Minneapolis, July 1973)