

Unit 03: Intensive Reading (Homework)

In this unit we will examine intensive reading in some detail. You will see that the intensive study of reading texts can increase learners' control of reading strategies and knowledge of language features. It can also improve their comprehension and standardized exam scores.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you should be (better) able to

- discuss several important principles for reading materials design,
- make use of different reading tasks and techniques, and
- plan a top-down intensive reading lesson.

Textbook reading

Nation, P. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading & writing*. Routledge. [chapter 3, pp. 25–43]

Supplementary reading

N/A



Homework: As you read through the learning material, complete the prompts below (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, provide specific details/examples—Do NOT copy word-for-word directly from the source material).

Refer to the **reading(s)** above and the **study material** below.

1. Provide the correct **term** for each definition below.

Term	Definition
	Reading through a text quickly, trying to get the main idea of what the text is about. After such reading the reader is unlikely to have noticed details but should be able to say in a general way what the text is about.
	A question that forces the reader to consider what is not explicitly stated in the text, e.g., working out the main idea of the text, looking at the organization of the text, determining the writer's attitude to the topic.
	In this approach, a text is used to teach strategies that learners need to unlock writers' meanings and attitudes.

+ Read pages 2–4 below and complete activities **before** class. See answer key in **Appendix 1**.

1. Ways of Using Reading Texts: TALO, TAVI, TASP, and TASE

One of the benefits of the internet (and more recently **generative AI**) has been the accessibility of so many English texts for teachers to use with their learners. But how should teachers use texts? How have they used them in the past? Here we will revisit TALO and TAVI and examine two additional approaches: **TASP** and **TASE**.

- **TASP:** Text as a springboard for production
- **TASE:** Text as a source of enjoyment

One hundred years ago, a teacher would bring a text, usually literary, into class and would translate it word for word and sentence by sentence for students, drawing attention to similarities and differences between English and the students' first language. This was part of the **grammar translation method**.

Fifty years ago, teachers were also using texts. These texts were different from the literary texts mentioned above. For a start, they were most often presented in a **dialog**:

"Is this a pen?" > "Yes, this is a pen." > "Is that a pen?" > "No, that is a pencil."

The text above was written specifically to highlight a language point (in this case, the verb *to be* and the difference between *this* and *that*—i.e., "deixis"). Students would read the text silently, then repeat parts of the dialog after the teacher before practicing it together in pairs. This is the **Audiolingual method**.

Nowadays, teachers use texts in many more interesting ways. The **Communicative Approach** to language teaching prefers authentic texts. In this approach, the teacher focuses much more on the **meaning** of the text. Students are urged not "to try and understand every word," but to understand the overall meaning and content, not just the language.

1.1 TALO: Text as a linguistic object

Recall that a **TALO** text is used for **language** work, specifically grammar or vocabulary, for example,

- "Underline all the examples of 'X' in the text" (e.g., irregular past tense verbs).
- "Find all the words in the text related to 'X'" (e.g., words that are topically linked).
- "Say why the passive voice was used in sentences 3, 6, and 10."

Note: TALO texts are common in the grammar translation method and the Audiolingual method.

1.2 TAVI: Text as a vehicle for information

Recall that a **TAVI** text is used to teach **strategies** for unlocking meaning, for example,

- predicting the content of the text (before you read).
- marking things in the text that you knew/didn't know before reading.
- answering different types of comprehension questions related to the text.

Note: TAVI texts are preferred in the Communicative Approach.

1.3 TASP: Text as a springboard for production

A **TASP** text is used as a **lead in** to another task—usually a **speaking** or **writing** task. Using a text in this way may involve some TALO use at first, especially when the text is used as a model to help learners construct their own text. However, this approach also involves using the text purely as **stimulus** for discussion, role-play, or other speaking/writing activity.

Sample **TASP** activities:

- do a role play based on the text
- debate the points of view presented in the text
- write a response to the text (e.g., a letter-to-the-editor of a newspaper)

1.4 TASE: Text as source of enjoyment

A **TASE** text is used as a source of learning and enjoyment. As a source of learning, reading can reinforce previously learned grammar and vocabulary, and it can help learners learn new words and grammar (incidentally). As a goal in its own right, reading can be a source of enjoyment and a way of gaining knowledge of the world.

Sample **TASE** activities:

- reading the text with no set task
- re-enacting a dialog from the text
- choosing a story to read outside the class

Note: Both TASP and TASE texts fit well in the **Communicative Approach**.



Activity 1: Work alone. Complete the summary by filling in the blanks with the acronyms above (e.g., **TALO**).

Teaching Reading in the 21st Century

How can reading teachers get the most out of a text in the 21st century? One way is to combine the different uses. A text-based reading lesson from start to finish might look something like this:

1. Choose (or use an **AI tool** to write) an interesting and motivating text for your students. Do this with the information content in mind, not just language []. Set activities that will help students process the information and understand the text.
2. Look for language features that are worth studying intensively (e.g., grammar, vocabulary) in the text and design activities to clarify meaning/use and form [].
3. Design an engaging task for students to do after reading [].
4. Encourage students to read outside of class for pleasure as homework [].

2. Using an AI Tool to Create a Text

Do AI tools like **ChatGPT** understand TALO, TAVI, TASP, and TASE? Yes, they do!

PROMPT

>> Write a [50] word [text] on the topic of [football, Son Heung-min]. The target learners are [A1] level [young] EFL learners. I want to use this text for [TALO] study purposes.

Son Heung-min is a football player from South Korea. He plays for Tottenham Hotspur in England. Son is very fast and scores many goals. He is also the captain of South Korea's national team. Many people like to watch him because he is a hard worker and a great player.

FOLLOW UP questions/commands

>> Create an exercise to practice a key language feature [grammar]. Provide answers and instructions for students, but do not write a full lesson plan.



Activity 2: Work alone. Use an AI tool ([ChatGPT](#)) to write a text. Use the prompt below.

PROMPT

>> Write a [100] word [story] on the topic of [overcoming a fear]. The target learners are [B1] level [young adult] EFL learners. I want to use this text for [TASP] study purposes.

FOLLOW UP questions/commands

>> Suggest a TASP activity [speaking] to follow this text. Do not write a full lesson plan.

Unit 03: Intensive Reading (Activities & Tasks)

1. Teaching Procedures

When reading in everyday life or on an exam, we might need to read for

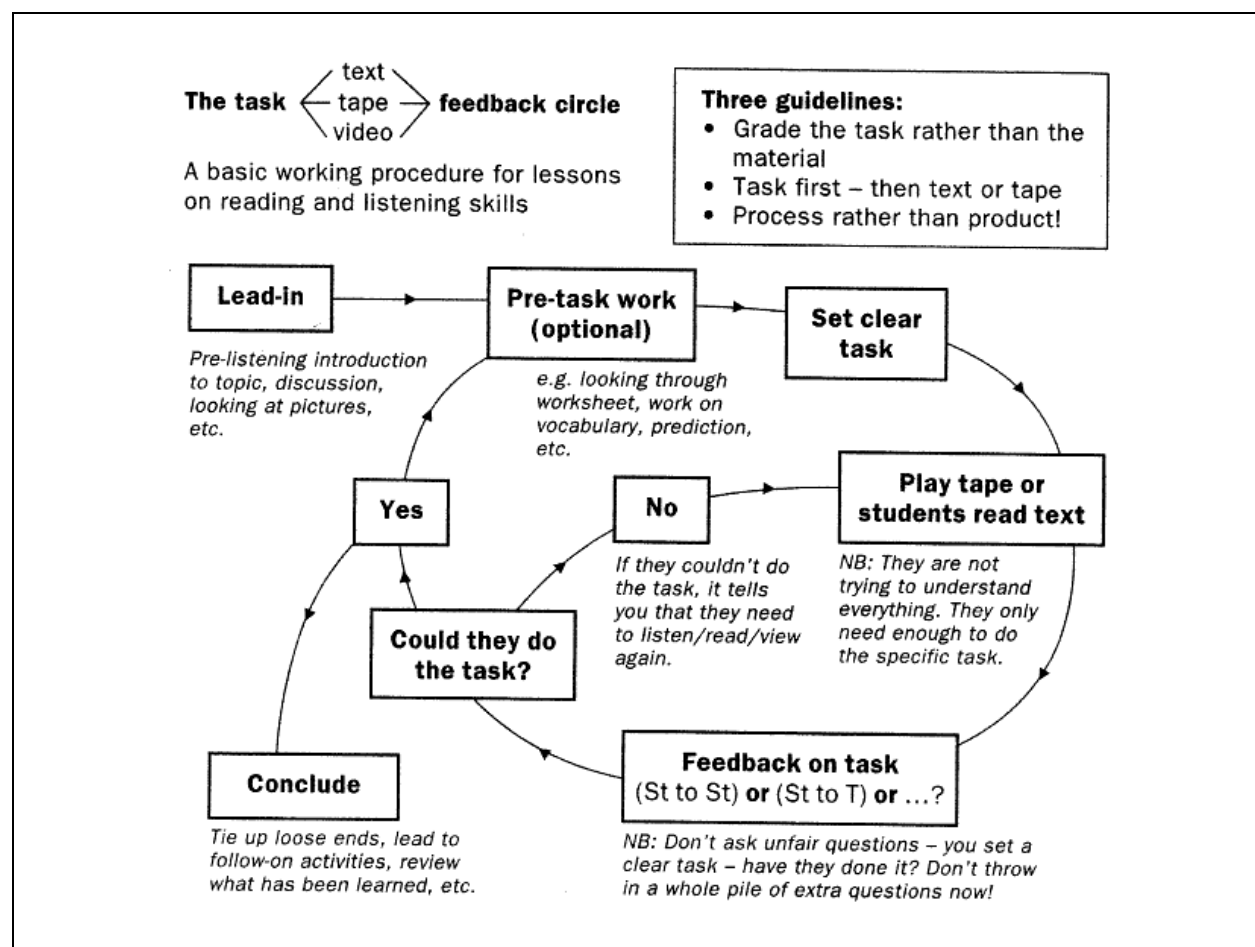
- **general understanding**, e.g., topic, main idea(s) (reading for **gis**_____).
- **complete understanding**, e.g., facts, definitions, viewpoints (reading for **det**_____).
- **small bits of information**, e.g., names, dates, numbers (reading for **spe**_____ information).

1.1 The task-feedback cycle

The **task-feedback cycle** below can help you plan reading lessons if you follow it around. Go around the circle as many times as your students need. Plan a sequence of activities from **general** tasks such as "Choose the best title for the text" to more **detailed** questions such as "Which sentence describes the author's opinion?" to **language-focused** study (e.g., "Find two words with *-ism* in the text").



Activity 1: Work with your partner(s). Discuss the **major stages** of the cycle and the **three guidelines**. When might a teacher set a **gist** reading task? When a **detailed** reading task?



1.2 A top-down reading procedure



Activity 2: Work alone. Watch a teacher deliver a **reading sequence**. Tick “✓” the stages you see.

Pre-text	1	Lead-in: Arouse interest in the topic (activate content schema); make a link between the topic and the students’ own lives/experiences (personalization).
	2	(Optional) Pre-teach vocabulary that might block students’ general understanding of the text, e.g., quickly match 3–5 words to definitions.
	3	(Optional) Predict the content from a picture, the title, some key words > get students to compose their own questions about the text.
Text	4	Reading for gist (“skimming”): Check predictions (from above), answer a simple question, insert content (e.g., sub-headings) back into the text. Tip: Set a time limit (e.g., 2 minutes).
	5	(Optional) Read to find specific information (“scanning”) such as names, dates, numbers. Use a menu, brochure, timetable. Tip: Set a time limit (e.g., 30 seconds).
	6	Reading for detail (“close reading”): Answer comprehension questions, fill in a graphic organizer, summarize different viewpoints. Work on test-taking strategies.
	7	(Optional) Focus on finer points of meaning in the text, e.g., inference, text form, evaluation.
	8	(Optional) Focus on the key language features of the genre (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, discourse) and/or skills (e.g., reading charts, test-taking strategies).
Post-text	9	Follow-on: Practice speaking , e.g., role-play, discussion, personalization (“Have you ever had a similar experience?”) or writing , e.g., write a letter in reply.
	10	Closing: Review what has been studied and what has been learned.

2. Reading Strategies: Skimming and Scanning

Real-life purposes are not the only way of measuring the usefulness of classroom reading work. Often, we want to train students in specific reading strategies, things that will help their future reading, even if the immediate classroom work doesn't itself reflect a real-life purpose.

Str _____: Actions that a reader or listener deliberately selects (or is guided to use) to improve their reading or listening skills—for instance, “Quickly read the text to get the main idea.” These actions are **intentional** and aim to help the learner manage their efforts to interpret text, understand vocabulary, and make sense of the content.

Ski _____: Once an action has been repeated and mastered (about 20 times), it becomes something the learner can do **automatically**. These actions then become automatic processes that allow for quick and fluent understanding of a text. They typically happen naturally, without the learner consciously thinking about them.

Sub- _____: The term refers to **specific** abilities that **support** a larger ability, such as reading or writing. For instance, in reading, these include actions like making predictions, quickly finding the main idea, and locating specific information in a text.

2.1 Skimming

A common skimming task is asking a **simple** question like “Is the passage about the girl's memories of summer or winter?” Students try to answer this **quickly** by reading (parts of) the text without focusing on every word. This is why it's important to set a **time limit** (to prevent slow, careful reading).

The aim of **skimming instruction** is to train students to follow simple skimming **steps**:

Step _____. Read the first sentence of each following paragraph. These are often topic sentences.

Step 1 _____. Read the **title**. It's often a short summary of what's in the text.

Step _____. Read the last paragraph closely. It often summarizes the whole text.

Step _____. Read the first paragraph. It often includes questions that will be answered in the text.



Activity 3: Work with your partner(s). Discuss ways to practice skimming in class.

2.2 Scanning

A common scanning task is searching for **specific** information such as “What time does the train to London leave?” Students try to answer this **quickly** by reading (parts of) the text without focusing on every word. This is why it’s important to set a **time limit** (to prevent slow, careful reading).

The aim of **scanning instruction** is to train students to follow simple scanning **steps**:

Step ____. When you find a possible sentence, read it closely to extract the information.

Step __2__. Consider the type of information you need. Is it a name, date, number?

Step ____. Run your eyes across the text looking **only** for the kind of data you need.

Step ____. Have a question (or questions) to answer in mind **before** you start to read.



Activity 4: Work with your partner(s). What kinds of texts would be suitable to practice scanning?

Tip: See **Appendix 2** for other ways to practice skimming and scanning.

2.3 Other reading strategies

Below is a summary of the reading **sub-skills** taught in two reading coursebook series: *In Focus* (Cambridge) and *Inside Reading* (Oxford).

Pre-intermediate (A2–B1)	Intermediate (B1–B2)	Upper-intermediate (B2–C1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• skimming and scanning• identifying topic/main ideas• identifying opinions• finding supporting ideas• making inferences• distinguishing fact from opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• previewing and predicting• reference words: pronouns• identifying writer’s purpose• reading charts/graphs• summarizing and paraphrasing• highlighting and annotating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• summarizing• reference words: <i>this, that</i>• logical reasoning: recognizing comparison and contrast• recognizing bias• recognizing concluding statements

2.4 Comprehension questions

Type 1	Questions of literal comprehension	Answers are stated explicitly and can often be answered in the exact words of the text.
Type 2	Questions of synthesis	Answers involve reading different parts of the text and combining information that has been stated explicitly.
Type 3	Questions of inference	Answers involve “ reading between the lines ” for information not stated explicitly, e.g., working out the main idea of the text.
Type 4	Questions of text form	Answers teach students strategies for handling texts in general, e.g., understanding the role/location of topic sentences, cohesive devices (e.g., referencing, conjunction, lexical cohesion).
Type 5	Questions of evaluation	Answers require a judgement about the text in terms of the quality of the evidence or (dis)satisfaction with the text.
Type 6	Questions of appreciation	Answers involve applying ideas in the text to personal experience or comparing ideas in the text with ideas from outside the text.



Activity 5: Work alone. Identify each **type** of **comprehension question** below.

Last week, Joon-ho's wife, Eun-jung, had an accident. Joon-ho's youngest child, Hyun-woo, was at home when it happened. He was playing with his Lego blocks. Joon-ho had given them to him the week before for his third birthday.

Suddenly Hyun-woo heard his mother calling, “Help! Help!” He ran to the kitchen. His mother had burned herself with some hot cooking oil. She was crying with pain and the pan was on fire.

Joon-ho had gone to work. Both his other children were unable to help. Hyun-woo was too small to help his mother, and she was too shaken to call for help herself. So he ran to the neighbor's apartment and asked her to come and help his mother. She put out the fire and then took Hyun-woo's mother to the hospital.

When Joon-ho came home, Eun-jung told him what had happened. He was very proud of his son. “When you are a man, you will be just like your father,” he said.

Comprehension Questions

1. What was Hyun-woo doing when the accident happened? **Type:** ____
2. How many children did Joon-ho have? **Type:** ____
3. Which people were in the house when the accident happened? **Type:** ____
4. What emotions would you have felt if you'd been the mother? **Type:** ____
5. How effectively did the writer convey Hyun-woo's achievement? **Type:** ____
6. Which words in the text refer to the same person in the boxes? **Type:** ____

2.4.1 Problems with question types 1–3

1. They are **dif**_____ for teachers to create (although nowadays AI tools can mitigate this).
2. They prioritize the **pro**_____ of reading (getting the correct answers) over the process of reading.
3. They may help students better understand “**today’s**” text, but they don’t prepare students very much for “**tom**_____” texts.

As a result, teaching **strategies** and **key language features** might be a better investment of time, for example,

- guessing the meaning of new words from context
- coherence (e.g., conjunction relationships)
- **cohesion** (e.g., pronoun referencing)
- grammar structures and words

Tip: See “**RAW Project—Reading Lesson (Model)**” on the class website for an example.

3. Text Analysis: Comprehension Questions



Activity 6: Work alone. Look at the text below and the **comprehension questions** on the next page. Complete the table.

READING TEXT

Cittaslow: Life in the Slow Lane

Cittaslow — the Slow City Movement — started in March 1986 with the opening of the first McDonald's in Italy. After this opening, the people of Rome, who are proud of their national cuisine, started a protest against fast-food. This was the beginning of the 'Slow Food Movement'. It advocates the view that eating is not just satisfying hunger. The experience of eating should also be a fair and enjoyable one, from initial production all the way to the presentation of food on the table.

Thirteen years later, Cittaslow was established in Orvieto, Italy by applying the 'Slow Food philosophy' to cities. Cittaslow means 'Slow City' and values local foods, small shops, unique cultural traditions, quality of life, fair use of resources, participatory democracy and the environment.



Today, there are approximately 150 slow cities around the world.

So how can a city or town apply to become a Cittaslow? There are many criteria to be fulfilled. First, the population of the town needs to be under 50,000. Obviously, a large metropolis cannot become a slow city. Secondly, people should use local products. Slow cities do not transport their food and products from the other side of the country. Of course, it is not enough to eat locally-grown foods; these should be organic



too. Thirdly, traditional architecture should be protected. In other words, people should look after old and traditional buildings. Next, traditional arts and crafts should be encouraged. These should be displayed and sold in small shops. Another criterion is that pollution should be prevented and air quality should be improved. This is done through reducing traffic and using alternative energy sources. Last but not least, slow cities should of course encourage slow food restaurants!

? QUESTIONS

1. How did the Slow Food Movement start?
2. How is eating defined by the Slow Food Movement?
3. Explain the relationship between the Slow Food and Slow City Movements.
4. Define the Slow City Movement in one sentence.

Slow City is a movement which ...

5. List the six criteria mentioned in paragraph 3 to become a Cittaslow.

-
-
-
-
-
-

6. Look at paragraph 3 again. What is the main idea of this paragraph?
7. How do you know that this is the main idea?
8. Do you think your hometown can become a Cittaslow one day? Answer by referring to the criteria in the text.

Question	Type
1–2	1 (answers are explicitly expressed in the text)
3	
4	1 (answer is explicitly expressed, but does involve some paraphrase)
5	
6	3 (working out the main idea of the text)
7	
8	



Activity 7: Work alone. Look at the coursebook material below and answer the questions (Reading with Writing, Oxford).

UNITS
1 and 2

Reading Check

A Read and listen. 8

How to Make Yarn Art

Step 1: Get ready
What's this? It's yarn art. You can make yarn art. You need a paper plate, a pencil, glue, crayons, yarn, and a paper clip.

Step 2: Make
Draw a picture on your plate. Draw an animal with your pencil. Put yarn on your animal with glue. Color your plate with crayons. Write your name.

Step 3: Hang
Put a paper clip at the top of the plate. Hang your picture on the wall or in the window.

Remember!
Read the **title**. What's the topic? Read the **headings**. What are the parts of the story?

B Look at the title. What is the topic of the text? Choose ✓ or ✗.

1. Making art with crayons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Making art with yarn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Drawing animals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

C Look at the headings. What do they show? Choose ✓ or ✗.

1. What you will need for each step	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. The steps to make art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Animals to make	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

D Choose the correct answer.

1. What do you need?	<u>glue</u>	pens
2. What do you color the plate with?	colored pencils	crayons
3. When do you make the picture?	Step 1	Step 2
4. What do you draw on the plate?	a place	an animal
5. What do you put at the top of the plate?	a paper clip	yarn
6. Where can you hang the plate?	on the wall	on the door

E Complete the sentences. You will not use every word.

glue	paper clip	window	picture
calendar	clock	yarn	pencil sharpener

- Make a picture of an animal on a paper plate.
- Put on the animal.
- Put on the yarn.
- After you color the picture, put a at the top.
- Hang the picture in a .
- The pencil doesn't write. She needs a .

- Does the material follow a **top-down** or **bottom-up** approach? What is the **genre** of the text?
a. top-down b. bottom-up | a. a set of instructions b. a story
- What reading **sub-skill** is practiced in **B** and **C**?
a. skimming b. reading for detail
- What reading **sub-skill** is practiced in **D**?
a. skimming b. reading for detail
- What is the focus of **E**?
a. meaning (general points)
b. meaning (finer points)
c. key language features
- Which **language processes** are targeted in the material?
a. genre b. phrases c. words d. letters



Activity 8: Work with your partner(s). Write **three comprehension questions** (multiple-choice) for the text below.

<p>WORKBOOK UNIT 1</p> <p>Read READING GOAL: Read the Title</p> <p>Remember! The title gives the topic of the text.</p> <p>A Can you find the title? Underline it.</p> <p>All About Piñatas This is a picture of a piñata. Piñatas are from Mexico. They are in the United States. They are all around the world.</p> <p>People make piñatas with paper and glue. They have many shapes. They are circles, stars, and animals.</p> <p>The piñatas have candy inside them. Some piñatas have crayons and small toys.</p> <p>Children have piñatas at parties. They are fun! The piñata breaks. Everyone gets candy!</p> <p>B Read the text. Then choose the correct answer.</p>	<p>This is a picture of a piñata. Piñata's are from Mexico. They are in the United States. They are all around the world. People make piñatas with paper and glue. They have many shapes. They are circles, stars, and animals. The piñata's have candy inside them. Some piñata's have crayons and small toys. Children have piñata's at parties. They are fun! The piñata breaks. Everyone gets candy!</p>
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Comprehension Questions

1.	a.	b.	c.
2.	a.	b.	c.
3.	a.	b.	c.

b) Compare your questions with questions generated by an **AI tool**.

>> Write [3] [A2 level] comprehension questions for the text below. Provide the correct answers. Include one of each type:

- a question of literal comprehension
- a question of inference
- a questions of appreciation



Further reading

1. Refer to Richards (2015), *Key Issues* [ch. 14, Reading], for a discussion of reading procedures, strategies, and skills.
2. Refer to Day (1993), *New Ways in Teaching Reading*, for sub-skills practice activities.
3. See how the principles described in this unit have been applied in the following coursebooks ("Further reading" folder):
 - *Inside Reading*, Oxford (**B1–C1**)
 - *In Focus*, Cambridge (**B1–B2**)
 - EAP for the 21st Century Learner, OneStopEnglish.com (**B1**)
 - *Face-to-Face*, Cambridge (**B1**)
 - *Reading with Writing*, Oxford (**A2**)

Appendix 1: Answer key.

Key Terms: skimming, inference question, TAVI

Activity 1

TAVI, TALO, TASP, TASE

Activity 2

Emma was always afraid of swimming. She loved the beach, but she never went into the water. One summer, her friends invited her to a swimming lesson. At first, she was nervous and didn't want to go, but she decided to try. The swimming instructor was patient and kind. Slowly, Emma learned to float and kick. After a few lessons, she felt more confident. One day, she swam across the pool without stopping! Emma was proud of herself. She realized that facing her fear made her stronger. Now, she enjoys swimming with her friends and even looks forward to the beach.

After reading the story, ask students to discuss a fear they have overcome in pairs or small groups. Encourage them to share what the fear was, how they felt, and what steps they took to overcome it, using key vocabulary from the text like "nervous," "confident," and "proud." After the discussion, they can present their stories to the class. This activity encourages personal connection and stimulates language production in speaking.

Activity 8

B Read the text. Then choose the correct answer.

1. Where are piñatas from?
☒ a. Mexico ☐ b. the United States ☐ c. around the world
2. What do people use to make piñatas?
☐ a. stars and circles ☐ b. crayons and toys ☐ c. paper and glue
3. What is in a piñata?
☐ a. animals and circles ☐ b. candy and toys ☐ c. paper and glue
4. What's the topic of the text?
☐ a. parties ☐ b. piñatas ☐ c. people

Appendix 2: Ways to practice skimming and scanning.

Ways to practice skimming
Matching: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Show four headlines/titles, three of which would be suitable for a set of three texts.2. Set a short time limit (2 minutes) to match the headlines/titles to the texts.3. Hand out the texts and have students confirm their choices.
Topic sentences: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prepare a text by removing the first sentence of each paragraph (except the first and last paragraph).2. Hand out the text and the topic sentences separately and get students to match the topic sentences to the paragraphs.
Raising awareness of text structure and where to look for information: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Find a text (or adapt one) that has a clear structure with “signposts” such as <i>First, Second, In summary</i>, etc. and also a clear thesis statement that announces the topic and the writer’s main idea.2. Cut the text up into paragraphs and get the students to work together (with a time limit) to put the paragraphs in the correct order.

Ways to practice scanning
Descriptive texts: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Find a text that describes a person and contains data such as names, numbers, places, and dates.2. Hand out the text face down to the students.3. Show questions one at a time such as “Where was he born?” or “When did she die?” and get the students in a race to turn over the text after each question to find the answers.
Narrative texts: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prepare a short story or diary entry.2. Proceed as above, but this time the questions refer to the sequence of events in the story such as “What happened after he left the army?” or “Where did she go when she left her hometown?”
Information texts: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hand out something like a movie listings website.2. Set questions as above, but this time focus on the sorts of information your students might realistically need: movie times, prices, venues, etc.