

Increase Your Reading Speed



"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

— Sir Francis Bacon, English philosopher

Pointing

When you were growing up, you were probably scolded or corrected when you pointed to an object or person in public. "It's rude to point," is a rule of etiquette taught by generations of parents, guardians, and teachers. Pointing is a very useful practice if your objective is to read quickly.

The pointing technique works like this:

- Find a tool that can act as a pointer (e.g. your finger, a pen, or highlighter)
- Open a book or magazine
- Move the pointer along each sentence of the page as though you were underlining each word
- Make sure that your pointer passes underneath each word as you read
- Continue practicing this method, gradually increasing the speed so that you read each word and sentence faster

For brailleists, this technique is certainly nothing new! Braille has utilized reading with fingertips for hundreds of years. For individuals who are trying this method for the first time, you may find this method distracting, but many readers find this method effective because the eye naturally follows movement of the pen or finger.

Covering

Imagine a full page of text printed with very small font. It is easy to imagine how difficult it would be to read such a page! Small font sizes can be hard for the eyes to focus on,

slowing down the pace of your reading. Some readers have a hard time focusing on words, regardless of the font size. The eyes may skip a sentence or jump around the page so that concentration, making reading a tedious and laborious task.

The covering method may help. Try these steps:

- Find a covering that is thick enough to cover the width of a page and several lines of text (e.g. a bookmark, sheet of paper, or index card)
- Open a book or magazine
- Take your covering and cover everything on the page except for the first line of text
- When you have finished reading the first line of text, move the covering downward
- Continue reading in this method until you reach the end of the page

Using a covering is intended to make reading easier by helping your eyes focus on a particular line of text while eliminating other elements on a page.

Being Quiet



As you read this, do you find yourself saying words or sentences out loud? Speaking words as you read may decrease your reading speed. By sounding out words that are read, your rate of comprehension is decreased. It takes longer to sound out words than to read them.

Practice reading without having to vocalize the what you read. Staying quiet as you read may require time and effort, especially if this is a comfortable habit for you. Give yourself time to adjust to the new style.

Improving Vision

When was the last time you visited the optometrist? Poor vision may contribute to a slow reading rate, as well as headaches and causing your eyes to squint. If you have not had an eye examination in over two years, you will probably benefit from a check-up.

In recent years there have been many advancements in optometry and lens production. Essilor's Crizal® lenses were developed to decrease glare and eyestrain, especially for users who read from a computer monitor for several hours each day.