

# Well Read

A decorative sunburst graphic with rays emanating from the top right corner, partially overlapping the number 4.

# 4

SKILLS AND STRATEGIES FOR READING

Mindy Pasternak | Elisaveta Wrangell

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# Notes to the Teacher

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Welcome to *Well Read*, a four-level series that teaches and reinforces crucial reading skills and vocabulary strategies step-by-step through a wide range of authentic texts that are meant to engage students' (and teachers') interest. *Well Read 4* is intended for students at the high-intermediate to low-advanced level.

Each of the eight chapters in the book revolves around a central theme, but every text in a chapter approaches the theme from a different angle or level of formality. This provides multiple insights into the subject matter, while at the same time developing reading skills. Thus, students will be able to approach the theme with increasing fluency.

*Well Read* is designed so that all the activities, including reading, are broken up into smaller pieces, and each has specific goals so that all students, regardless of their individual level, can participate and succeed. The activities in the book support the approach that students do *not* have to understand every word of a text in order to understand its basic themes. Vocabulary strategies in each chapter allow students to feel more comfortable guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words or phrases based on their context.

## Chapter Introduction

The opening page introduces the chapter's theme. Questions and photographs are designed to activate the students' prior knowledge, as well as stimulate some limited discussion before the previewing, reading, and post-reading activities.

## Getting Started

This activity precedes each text or graphic component. It is designed to help students focus in on a more specific topic through reflection and discussion. It also introduces a small number of critical vocabulary words or phrases.

## Active Previewing

*Active Previewing* asks students to read only brief and selected parts of the text, and then answer very simple questions that focus on this material. This activity encourages the notion that students do not have to understand each and every word of what they are reading. There is a strong emphasis on how to preview a wide range of genres, both academic and non-academic, including—but not limited to—newspaper articles, online texts, magazine articles, textbook articles, tables, charts, graphs, timelines, and graphics.

## Reading and Recalling

The first reading activity asks students to read and recall. This approach is less daunting than being presented with an entire text, and it also allows the students to retain more. Recalling encourages students to be accountable for the material they read. While students build their short-term memories, they begin to process information more quickly and holistically. Perfect recall is never the goal.

## Understanding the Text

After each text, students are presented with a two-part reading comprehension activity. The first part checks the students'

comprehension of the most basic ideas expressed in the text, whereas the second part challenges the students to recall other key ideas and information.

## Reading Skills

Among other essential skills, students are introduced to *Topic*, *Main Idea*, and *Supporting Details* in separate chapters, which allows them to practice and master each of these skills before progressing to the next. Earlier chapters present choices in a multiple choice fashion, whereas subsequent chapters require the students to write their own interpretations. The ability to think critically about the information that is presented in the text is a crucial part of being an active reader. Students are first taught to distinguish between facts and opinions, and later, inferences. In the final chapters of the textbook, students will be asked to find facts and opinions and to make inferences of their own.

## Vocabulary Strategies

Students first learn that they can understand the general idea of a text without understanding every word; however, skipping words is not always an option, thus students are introduced to different strategies throughout the book that can help them determine the meanings of new vocabulary without using their dictionaries. All vocabulary activities use examples from the texts themselves, yet the vocabulary strategies taught can be applied universally to reading that students do outside class. Developing these strategies will allow students to become more autonomous readers.

## Discussing the Issues

Every text ends with a series of questions that encourage students to express their opinions and ideas about the general subject discussed in the text. The questions are designed to be communicative in that they strike upon compelling issues raised in the text.

## Putting It On Paper

Reading and writing are two skills that inherently go together. The writing activity complements the chapter texts, yet it is also designed to stand independently should the teacher decide not to read all of the chapter texts. Each *Putting It On Paper* activity offers two writing prompts; the teacher can allow students to choose between the prompts or can select one prompt for all students to use.

## Taking It Online

Each *Taking It Online* activity guides the students through the steps necessary for conducting online research, based on the theme of the chapter. Teachers might opt to prescreen a select number of websites in advance, thus directing the students to more reliable and useful sites. *Taking It Online* finishes with a follow-up activity that enables the students to take their research one step further, in pairs or groups.

An Answer Key, a PowerPoint® Teaching Tool, and an ExamView Pro® Test Generator with customizable tests and quizzes are also available with each level of *Well Read* in the *Well Read Instructor's Pack*.

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## READING SKILL



## VOCABULARY STRATEGY



## GRAPHICS

- Previewing Online Articles, Magazine Articles, and Academic Texts
- Scanning

- Understanding the Topic
- Previewing Newspaper Articles

- Understanding the Main Idea

- Understanding Supporting Details

- Reading Critically—Fact and Opinion

- Reading Critically—Making Inferences

- Skimming

- Reviewing Reading Skills

- Skipping Words and Phrases

- Understanding Vocabulary in Context—Synonyms
- Understanding Subject and Object Pronouns

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- Understanding Diagrams

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