

PART 2: A Closer Look at Reading and Comprehension

Reading and Comprehension - This folder contains the basic reading material for each Section:

- Pre-Reading Activity
- Reading Passage
- Cloze Activity
- Comprehension Check

Pre-Reading Activities are provided for each Reading Passage. Instructors should use these, and any others questions they wish, to generate a discussion of students' experiences and beliefs relevant to the particular topic. The discussion is designed to activate students' prior knowledge, and to give them opportunities to use vocabulary terms in context. Some Sections include a Pre/Post-Reading Comprehension Check. Students will mark answers to questions on the "Pre" side of the worksheet *before* reading, based on their current knowledge. After reading, the students will mark their answers in the "Post" column and compare any changes in what they "know" after having read the passage.

Here are a few examples of typical Pre-Reading Questions:

Have you ever been part of a medical emergency? What happened? What did you do?
(Section 2)

You should wait for a health professional to ask you questions before telling them important things about your health. True or False? (Section 3)

Is it easy or difficult for you to make changes in your life? Explain your answer.
(Section 7)

Reading Passage

The Reading Passage represents the Core Lesson content for each Section. The passage generally incorporates most, if not all, of the Core Vocabulary terms for that Section. Core Vocabulary words appear in the passage in bold typeface. The Reading Passages are brief, didactic, non-fiction articles.

Instructors should follow this sequence when working on the Reading Passage sections.

1. **Reading and Discussion**– Have the students read the Reading Passage section silently. Ask them to circle any words they’re not sure of. After students have finished reading, lead a discussion of the passage. Ask students for their reactions, whether they have any personal experiences they can relate to the content of the passage, and whether they have any questions.
2. **Echo Reading** – If students are finding many unfamiliar words as they read silently, then have them practice echo reading. If only a few words were unfamiliar to students, you can skip this activity. Echo reading is a form of reading modeling where the instructor reads a line and the students echo the instructor’s model, reading the same line aloud and imitating intonation and phrasing. Echo reading builds reading fluency, and reading fluency leads to comprehension. Only use echo reading on a part of the Reading Passage section, not on the entire section. If the class has some students who read fluently, pair the fluent readers with less fluent readers to practice echo reading.
3. **Vocabulary Assistance** – Ask students if there are any vocabulary questions at this point. Ask other students in the class to provide definitions or explanations, then write the word and a definition with a sample sentence or two on the board. When warranted, do a Word Elaboration. (See the Instruction Guide chapter “A Closer Look at Vocabulary.”)
4. **Paired Reading** – Pair up the students. Have them take turns reading the Reading Passage section aloud to each other, each reading one paragraph at a time and helping each other when necessary.

***TIP:** When using Reading Passage selections or other longer reading passages, have students number the lines along the left margin—numbering every 5th line is usually sufficient. It will make it easier for instructors and students to refer to specific places within the text.*

Cloze Activity

Each of the Reading Passage sections has an accompanying cloze activity - an exercise in which learners use clues from context to supply words that have been deliberately removed from the text. The texts of the cloze passages are the same as or slightly modified from the Reading Passage sections, and the missing words will always be from the Core Vocabulary.

Word boxes are provided on the last page of each cloze activity. **Have students fold back the word box or cover it while they first attempt the cloze activity.** Remind students that the missing words are health-related vocabulary words that have appeared in the Reading Passage sections.

You may choose to have students do the cloze activities as a whole class, in pairs, or individually, depending on their reading ability. Allow students who are slower readers or who need assistance to work with a partner or a group until their reading skills are strong enough to do a cloze exercise on their own. You may also break the clozes into parts for lower-level students and provide abbreviated word boxes on the board.

As previously mentioned, for most native English speakers the Core Vocabulary word meanings are not particularly challenging. The challenging part for many students will likely be spelling. For example, in the very first Section the blanks require insertion of the following phrases: “diagnose your problems,” “nurse practitioner,” and “physician’s assistant.” Encourage students to “chunk” long words into their beats or syllables, and to try spelling one beat at a time (e.g. /prac/ - /ti/ - /tion/ - /er/). They can then look at the word box, “scoop” the words there into syllables, and compare their spelling to the correct spelling.

Comprehension Checks

All of the Sections provide a follow-up Comprehension Check activity based on the Reading Passage. These range from True-False activities to multiple choice quizzes, to questions requiring short written answers. One Comprehension Check activity requires students to fill in the main points of the Reading Passage using a simple graphic organizer.

Instructors can easily **create additional True-False activities** by simply extracting statements straight from the Reading Passage and occasionally turning them into false statements. The entire activity may be done orally. Make the statements and ask students to hold up an index card with either a ‘T’ or an ‘F’ to indicate their answer. Ask students to rephrase false statements to make them true.

Instructors can incorporate new (supplemental) vocabulary in their questions to give students practice hearing and using these words in context. Here are a few examples:

TRUE or FALSE?

- Making an appointment for a dental checkup is proactive health behavior. (T)
- If a cough lasts for a month it would be considered chronic. (T)
- If a patient is very drowsy a health professional might prescribe a sedative. (F)

PLEASE NOTE: All of the Comprehension Check activities can be conducted in a fun “game show” type of atmosphere, with students working alone, in pairs, or on bigger teams. The additional use of props such as music, microphones, or call-bells (which substitute for the buzzers found on TV game shows) can heighten the excitement and increase participation.