

English – Reading and Writing Skills

BAE 3205



School of Agriculture & Rural Development
Bangladesh Open University

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How to Study This Book

“English – Reading and Writing skills”, this course book is written specially for the students of the B.Ag.Ed. programme of the School of Agriculture and Rural Development. The book is designed to help the students learn and acquire the skills of reading & writing. In distance education system there is no full-time presence of a teacher. The book is written in such a manner that you will never feel isolated or feel the absence of the teacher. Therefore, the style of presenting the lessons of the book is different from other conventional text books. As you are to study and learn by yourself so, before starting a lesson it is best to know some of the salient features of this course book. This will help you understand the lessons better.

Format of the book

The book has seven units, each unit having several lessons. Though the lessons in a unit are on various practices in a language skill, they are built on one another containing important language activities. The first four units have been written by Raihana Shams, Associate Professor, National Curriculum and Textbook Board, and the second three units by M. S. Hoque, Bangladesh Open University.

Introduction to the units

The first four units of the book deal with one theme, **i.e. developing students’ reading skills** and the remaining three units are given to another theme, **i.e. developing students’ writing skills**.

As the book aims to improve students’ language proficiency, almost each lesson asks students to do practical tasks. That is why practical tasks have not been put separately at the end of the units.

An introduction to developing the reading skills briefly outlines how the skills could be developed. In the same way, an introduction to developing the writing skills briefly explains how the writing skills could be developed.


Objectives of the lessons and self-assessment

Every lesson has at the beginning its specific objectives. The content of the lesson – both thematic and linguistic – has been presented in such a way that the students find the practice and production activities in the lesson easy, keeping in mind the lesson objectives. However, to see to what extent the objectives of a lesson are achieved usually self-assessment questions have been given at the end.


Icons


Your lesson plan is guided by icons indicating read and note, objectives, the text, look at the picture, questions, activity, answers key etc. Looking at the

icons you immediately know what you are suppose to do. Given below is the list of icons used in this book.


 = Read and note

 = Objectives

 = The Text

 = Look at the picture/Example

 = Activity

 = Questions/fill in the blanks/true-false/matching

 = Answer Key

While you are going through a lesson you will find activities. You are to complete those exercises as instructed. These are meant to help you developing your skill. From the objectives and gist given, you will know easily what is there in the lesson and what is the lesson all about. After you have completed the activities, you can check your answers with the answer key given.

Test and Review

There is a test and review lesson at the end of each unit. This section helps you to assess yourself about the whole unit. The good number of activities and solutions will increase your understanding of the learning materials. Please follow the instructions carefully to have maximum benefit. Attend tutorial classes to get assistance from your tutors. BOU is always there to help you out.

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Introduction to Developing Reading Skills

We read something to obtain some information. Every reading text, e.g. a textbook passage, a magazine article, a newspaper ad, a road sign, a letter, etc., has a message for the reader. And the reader's aim is to get the right message as quickly as possible.

To realise this goal, you as a reader should note the following things:

1. **You should have a reason for reading.** Ask yourself, "Why am I going to read it?" before you start reading anything. You have gone to a restaurant, for example, for dinner. So you need to read the menu for ordering your meal. You are reading this book, because you may need to understand agricultural matters in English from a textbook, a booklet, a brochure, etc. So you need to understand English words and expressions used for describing some topics/subjects of agriculture. You may also need this proficiency if you teach agriculture in a school.
2. **Do not stop and look at every word when you read – read several words at a time. In other words, read in chunks.** If you look at and read every word you will be a very slow reader; and in paying attention to each word you are likely to miss out the most important point in reading, i.e. the message, the information contained in groups of words used in context, not in words used in isolation. Therefore, consider reading passages as a whole, rather than as a series of items and structures.
3. **When you are reading for information, you should read silently.** Reading aloud does not help students to develop their reading skills, though it can help them to practise pronunciation.

Twenty lessons under the first four units are written for developing the reading skills at various levels of difficulty. For example, the beginning lessons are built on reading instructions which are followed by lessons on more difficult reading tasks based on descriptions, reports and charts, process and technology.