Reading Literacy

Jana Doležalová
Author: PhDr. Jana Doležalová, Ph.D.

The text was created in the cooperation with: Bc. Lucie Hůlková

Title: Reading Literacy

Year and place of publication: 2014, Hradec Králové

Publication: first

Reviewed by: Mgr. Kateřina Juklová, Ph.D.

This publication is not for sale.
Background Information about the Subject

**Name:** Reading Literacy  
Type of Subject: optional

Number of Direct Training Hours: Lecture: 1 hour; seminar: 1 hour

When the Subject Is Recommended to be Taught: 4. year, 8th term

Prerequisites: none

**Subject Objectives and Content:** correspond to the objectives and content of this study text. The objectives and content are described in the Introduction, objectives of individual chapters and Appendix 1.

**Rules for Communicating with the Instructor:** By email and based on pre-agreed consultations. Individual papers will be continuously checked via the internet. To participate in an assessment test and to access assessment dates, students will register via the Faculty Information System (STAG) where these dates will be specified.

**Summary**

This study text deals with reading literacy. It defines this term and tracks the historical changes of this phenomenon and its current importance. It also characterises the factors which form literacy and the level of reading literacy in the Czech school conditions. It also addresses reading comprehension, learning from texts, interest in reading and the means of their development. It points to the links between the formulation of questions and assignments in relation to a text and to their impact on thought processes, creativity of readers, functionality and quality of reading literacy. The final part describes assessment and evaluation of learners with respect to reading literacy, as well as methodology of research targeting this phenomenon.

**Objectives**

- To provide information about the essence of reading literacy, factors and means affecting reading literacy with regard to the current educational requirements and to the results of international research projects focused on reading literacy of learners and students.
- To guide readers to active, well-considered and functional application of educational means of developing
a) own reading literacy;
b) teaching skills aimed at developing reading literacy of learners during future instruction.

- To arouse readers’ interest in this issue and adopt a positive attitude to it.
Meaning of the Icons in the Text

Objectives
A list of objectives to be accomplished after studying the text and fulfilling the relevant questions and assignments is provided at the beginning of each chapter.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)
A list of important terms and main points that the student should not omit when studying the topic.

Subject Application in Practice
The practical applicability of the topic will be verified in questions and assignments. A note contains less important or specifying information.

Introductory Questions and Assignments
They induce recollection of knowledge and experience with the topic to be discussed in the particular chapter.

Review Questions
Verifying to what extent the student has understood the text and the issue and remembers fundamental and important information.

Summary
A summary of the topic.

Literature
Used in the text and to complement and further one’s knowledge. A summary of reference sources about reading literacy is provided at the end of the text. Individual chapters are accompanied only with a list of the basic and recommended sources referencing to the chapter’s topic.
1 Introduction

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will have an insight into the objectives, content and structure of this study text.
- You will realise your own knowledge about literacy and what you need to know about it.
- You will understand the importance of reading literacy as such and as a subject of study and of the approach to this study text.

Terms to Remember

- pre-concepts
- constructivism
- reading literacy
- forms of communication

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. Before you start reading this text, try to answer the questions below. Write down your answers to be able to compare them with the text or to get back to them.

- Where have you read about literacy and reading literacy? Where have you heard about it and what do you know about it?
- What would you need to know about reading literacy?
- Look at the contents of this study text and go through it. What has drawn your attention?
This chapter will explain why this discipline is included among the subjects for future teachers and why we are submitting this study text.

1. We regard reading literacy as a type of communication enabling to exchange information, make remote contacts, as well as to preserve thought for the future times to come. It is a means of communication and human cultivation; a means of human education and awareness. Reading fills one’s leisure time and is a way of relaxation. The importance of reading literacy in our society is growing as private, professional and public life depends on information. The current concept of instruction must be adjusted accordingly.

2. In addition to the requirements specified above, student-teachers also need a high level of reading and information literacy to manage the requirements imposed by their academic studies. Moreover, they will need information and experience for their future teaching in practice when their task will be to develop reading literacy of their students.

3. Despite being of major importance for our society, the actual concept of reading literacy is not contained in any educational document such as the Framework Educational Programmes for Basic Education although the particular reading skills of learners are part of the expected outcomes (education outcomes) of subjects and key competencies and their quality is a requirement for their performance. Reading skills (meaning overall reading literacy) are an important and only means to attain these outcomes. The modern approach to teaching requires a very good level of reading literacy, in particular in the application of activating teaching methods and cooperative forms of work. This is another good reason to learn about reading literacy and develop the related knowledge and skills.

4. Even though reading literacy is an indispensable means and outcome of education, there is no didactic and comprehensive compilation on this issue. There is no concept for the development of literacy of older learners, and there is no elaboration on theoretical foundations or levels of application.

5. The methodology for reading development and foundations of reading literacy has been compiled for the first stage of basic school, but not for learners at higher levels of education, with the exception of the Czech language and foreign language teaching. Not even methodological handbooks for individual subjects or actual literature sources pay attention to reading skills or reading literacy even if it is a major cultivation agent and means of education.

6. Future teachers (again, except for those teaching the Czech language and foreign languages) are not trained in this issue even though they will work with texts during lessons.
And there is also one more reason why to study this issue. In the light of the long-term dissatisfactory results of reading literacy of our learners and students in international research projects, we are convinced that there is a need to provide an active reaction. Important measures include education of teachers which may improve the situation regarding reading literacy of students.

Who is the addressee of this study text?
Although reading literacy should be a skill of all members of our society, this study text is primarily intended for teachers and in particular student-teachers of various teaching qualifications. Its aim is to help them explain reading literacy and create the respective teaching competences, as well as to develop their own study skills.

Concept and structure of this study text
This study text should serve in support of a newly introduced optional subject of study.

Since it is interesting and necessary to know the historic context of the phenomenon under the study, the first part of this text will focus on a variety of perceptions of literacy and their reflection in teaching over the past centuries, primarily in the territory currently covering what is now the Czech Republic. Reading literacy will also be characterised from the current knowledge perspective. The text will describe its essence and the mostly influencing factors. Major attention will be devoted to the explanation of the basic reading literacy processes, corresponding skills and means of its development in the teaching practice. A brief outline will be given on the evaluation of reading literacy and methodology of the reading literacy research.

In this study text, the concept of reading literacy is based on the common ground used in international research targeting reading literacy. It builds on the theory of working with information and cognitive psychology.

Questions and assignments at the end of each chapter are inspired by a few basic prerequisites:

- According to the theory of pre-concepts and constructivism, a learner ought to be guided to work through the current knowledge and experience (pre-concepts) so that the cognition is further specified, enriched and solid thanks to the understanding and activity acquisition. Also the readers of this study text will be guided to describe their own ideas and experience with the phenomena studied. We assume that with the subsequent study of texts and performance of activities, the readers will supplement and refine their
knowledge and skills or amend them or create anew amid their own reading skills, and improve the level of teaching skills in order to develop reading literacy of future learners.

- Through activities (guided by the ideas of constructivism), knowledge is acquired on a more solid basis and the quality of the skills created is higher. We also assume that the activities of active acquisition of curriculum will not only allow for a deeper understanding of the importance of reading literacy but also create positive attitudes to this issue.

- Since reading literacy is a form of communication, the assignments will not only focus on reading but also on text remembering and comprehension. They will also target written expression (speaking and listening to a lesser extent) because individual forms of communication have an impact on each other. We want to use this synergy to build a higher quality of reading literacy of the readers.

- In addition to reading literacy, we will also develop information literacy because they are related to each other and both are necessary during learning processes and problem-solving and addressing of various tasks.

The concept of this subject of study will help students understand the basic sources of information about reading literacy, as well as the selected issues adapted to education of teachers of various qualifications. The aim is also to create a basic structure of knowledge, reading skills and teaching competences for the development of reading literacy of learners (see Appendix 1). It should also develop awareness of the weight and meaningfulness of this issue and arouse or deepen interest in it.
Literature

On Constructivism and Active Teaching:

2 Literacy from Historical Perspective

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will have an insight into how literacy has changed over time in the society’s historical development, in particular in the territory of what is now the Czech Republic.
- You will be able to explain the historical development of reading literacy models.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- literacy
- socioeconomic conditions
- alphabetisation of society
- reading literacy
- literacy models
- base literacy
- literacy as a socio-cultural phenomenon
- e-literacy
- literacy as processing of information

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. What does it mean to be literate?
2. What are the situations in which we need to be literate?
3. Have you ever met an illiterate person? Where? In what way was this person’s illiteracy manifested? What is your estimate of the chances this person has to be integrated in the society? How does this person perceive this situation – what do you think?
4. Why is literacy important? Why should we learn about it?
5. Is it a constant phenomenon or does it vary over time? Why?
6. Do you agree with this quotation? Say why.

'Reading spoils sight. Only the illiterate have the right view of the world.' Gabriel Laub

2.1 Literacy in Flux

Literacy represents a complex of knowledge, skills and attitudes to working with text and mathematic information. It has never had the same content. People have never been required the same literacy skills as now. And not in all classes. Originally, literacy represented just the minimum level of skills – reading, writing and counting. The set has changed over time along with the development and changed conditions of socio-cultural and economic life during the course of the society’s historical development. Even now the content of literacy and its quality and coverage among inhabitants differ a lot depending on whether they live in economically developed countries or developing countries.

Literacy of inhabitants reflects but also influences economic, social and cultural conditions of a society. This is why the economically developed states support schools and education. But they even make contributions to campaigns aimed at removing illiteracy in economically underdeveloped regions in order to help the locals and the whole countries in their self-reliance.

The content of literacy has expanded during the course of the historical development depending on the needs of a society. Hence, literacy has been categorised into relatively separate areas. The designation of this phenomenon and the respective areas has also changed accordingly. In order to understand the changes of literacy and the relating context, we will now focus only on the historical development of literacy:

- from the perspective of this phenomenon’s concept;
- from the perspective of changes in its designation;
- and from the perspective of teaching reading.

2.2 Literacy Models

The so-called literacy models show how literacy, its importance, objectives, content and theoretical foundations have been perceived. They imply not only the development of its concept in the past, but also now.

P. Gavora defines four literacy models. The first literacy model, base literacy, is when the reader decodes just the basic meaning of the written text. The second literacy model is based on the processing of text information. The third
model regards literacy as a socio-cultural phenomenon where literacy activities are performed according to the needs of the given social group. E-literacy, i.e. the fourth literacy model, is characterised by work with information, processing, use and evaluation of information and by skills related to computer work (Gavora, 2002).


2.3 Development of the Term 'Literacy'

Changes in the designation of literacy and the related phenomena can also be seen in an analysis of the following terms: literacy, illiteracy, illiterate person, or related terms (reading, writing) in educational or general dictionaries over the period of more than 100 years which contained these terms. This analysis shows how experts at that time reflected upon this phenomenon; it reflects the main problems in the area at that time and shows how the content of literacy and its designation has changed over the course of history. For instance, the term ‘analphabet’ (illiterate person) is not contained in modern dictionaries of education unlike in previous centuries as this is no longer a 'basic' problem.

2.4 Development of Literacy Concept in Bohemia and Moravia

By studying the development of the literacy concept, we will understand not only the relations of this phenomenon to the changed social and economic conditions, but we will also better understand the reasoning and approaches of teachers to this phenomenon.

The problem of literacy is closely related to the implementation of the ‘trivium’. In modern history, the so-called Terezian reforms (see the law in ‘Pedagogická encyklopedie’ (Encyclopaedia of Education) of 1938) can be regarded as a serious base of education. One of the first comprehensive concepts was created at that time by J. Felbiger (1724-1788) and his ‘Kniha metodní’ (Book of Methodology). It contains advice and procedures on how to learn reading and writing. The development of the school system is closely related to alphabetisation of the population which reacts to the economic growth and labour requirements of the time. At the same time, we can see the cultural boom among broad population classes and national consciousness.

The territory of what is now the Czech Republic was not so underdeveloped at the times of John Huss (see the well-known statement by E. S. Piccolomini about
Czech women and their skills in reading the Bible) or John Amos Comenius in respect of literacy as other parts of the world. Illiteracy was not a typical phenomenon at the times of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (see the statistical figures in the dictionaries of that time - see the reference sources; 'Pedagogická encyklopedie' (Encyclopaedia of Education), 2010), Velký sociologický slovník (Maříková, Petrusek a Vodáková, 1996).

Also subsequent concepts such as that of K. S. Amerling (1807 – 1884) consistently insisted on the implementation of the basic stage (which is crucial for literacy), in particular on the more complex approach to this issue (he published 160 sheets of visual aids).

We should not forget about the training of teachers to implement the 'trivium' provided by G. A. Lindner (1828 – 1888). Many other personalities were also involved in the development of literacy in the then Bohemia and Moravia. They included authors of the methods of initial reading and writing, authors of ABC books and reading books and many other innovators (see the history of pedagogy, history of initial reading and writing, e.g. A.Vinšálek, 1982, K. Santlerová, 1995).

Subject Application in Practice

1. Imagine various professions or social statuses of people in the Middle Ages and now, e.g. a farmer, a stonemason, an astronomer, a chemist (alchemist). What are the similarities and differences in the requirements regarding their life skills at that time and now? What role does literacy play? Use your considerations to draw conclusions about literacy. Explain the mechanism of interaction between societal conditions and literacy.

2. Search older and modern statistical yearbooks to find data about the literacy and illiteracy status of inhabitants of various countries. Where can we find the highest number of the illiterate? Why do we have to help these countries remove illiteracy? Give other reasons than those described in the text.

3. How is the need for literacy acquisition reflected in the subjects of your teaching qualifications? Has literacy always been of the same importance for your field? Does your field require constantly the same literacy skills?

Review Questions

1. What is ‘literacy’?
2. How has the approach to and concept of literacy evolved in our country over the past centuries?

3. What factors affect literacy and how are they manifested?

**Summary**

Literacy is active and functional acquisition of the skills to read, write and count. It is a complex phenomenon which varies depending on the socioeconomic conditions of the society.

**Literature**

**On Literacy, Functional Literacy:**

**On History of Initial Reading and Writing:**

3. **Reading Literacy Characteristics**

*Kniha je základem poznání, učitelem věků, vládcem království ducha.*

Seneca

**Objectives**

After studying this chapter:

- You will be able to explain the essence of reading literacy.
- You will clarify other related terms: functional literacy, reading and text.
- You will put reading literacy in the context with other literacy areas.
- You will name and describe exogenous and endogenous factors of reading literacy.
You will be able to explain the development of reading literacy in relation to the ontogenetic human evolution. You will give specific examples.

**Terms to Remember (Key Words)**

- reading literacy
- reading
- text
- functional literacy
- endogenous factors
- exogenous factors
- ontogenetic development
- aspects of reading literacy

**Introductory Questions and Assignments**

1. For what purposes do you use the reading and writing skills?
2. Is it enough to understand the texts we work with?
3. Give your own definition of reading literacy.
4. Try to characterise the difference between reading and reading literacy.

**3.1 Essence of Reading Literacy**

Reading literacy has been singled out of the overall literacy complex and represents a part of lingual competencies. This chapter will define its essence and the related terms.

**Reading literacy** is important from many aspects. It has become a means for further training and acquisition of the necessary information; it facilitates one’s integration within the social and economic life of the society and is a source of pleasure in leisure time. All in all, reading literacy impacts on the value, social and economic conditions of life in the society through educational outcomes. It enables continuity and development of the nation’s cultural heritage.
Reading is considered to be a source of the human’s wide-ranging cultivation. It enriches intellectual, skill-based and emotional features of humans. It satisfies the human need for beauty and helps recover vigour in leisure time.

Reading literacy influences individuals and is important for the entire society. Hence, it is of vital importance that interest in reading and books is promoted at a sufficiently high-quality level. Cultivation of reading literacy and care for good conditions of its development in school facilities requires the knowledge of this complicated phenomenon.

Definition of reading literacy:

‘Reading literacy is a complex of an individual’s knowledge and skills enabling one to use written texts commonly present in the life practice (e.g. train schedules, instructions for using a washing machine, newspaper editorials, etc.). It encompasses not only reading skills, i.e. the ability to read and understand texts, but also the skills to look for and analyse information contained in the text, to reproduce the content of the text, etc.’ (Průcha-Walterová-Mareš, 1998, p. 40).

Working papers for international research PISA and the report on this research have widened the initial reading literacy definition with the processes of thinking about content: ‘Reading literacy is … defined as understanding, using and reflecting on written texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential and to participate in society’ (Straková, 2002, p. 10). This definition places emphasis on thinking (reflection) when working with texts. This is a shift from the traditional literacy concept. This definition also enables to include artistic texts among the texts with which the reader comes in contact.

This definition includes both the constructive aspect of reading (to understand and use written speech as required by society) and its functional aspect (it serves as a tool of cognition, enables functioning in society, an individual’s and societal development). And so, it means not only the mere reading and comprehension of texts but also the functional use of the written information for one’s own purposes. It also counts on the reader’s active role in comprehension and in the work with texts. The established term ‘reading literacy’ is set to distinguish the new quality of reading from the traditional perception of reading as an elementary skill. Reading forms a basis for working with text information, i.e. for the fundamental activity within reading literacy.

It must be emphasised that it is formed by all four forms of communication: reading, writing, speaking and listening, which should be applied especially when developing functional and reading literacy. They affect one another and if evoked frequently and intentionally, they can increase the quality of reading literacy.
Three Aspects of Reading Literacy

The first international research project, PISA, defined literacy in mathematics and science as part over overall literacy (Straková, 2002, p. 10) through three common aspects: procedures, content, situation type.

The **procedures** (activities) applied by students when solving an assignment and working with texts are represented by five activity types:

1) general comprehension
2) acquisition of information
3) creation of interpretation
4) assessment of text content
5) assessment of text form.

The **content** on which the procedures are applied encompasses a variety of text types encountered during everyday life. There are two text groups:

1) continuous texts: narration, presentation, description, polemic texts and instructions;
2) non-continuous texts: forms, adverts, graphs and charts, tables, figures and maps

The **situations** where knowledge and skills are to be applied are represented by four text categories reflecting the purpose behind their production: personal, public, work-related, educational texts. (for details, see Straková, 2002, pp. 10-11.)

Many of these aspects were also applied in the reading literacy survey, RLS (Straková and Tomášek, 1995), but some were newly integrated within PISA. As for procedures, they included, for instance, the assessment of content and form; in content, there were polemic texts and adverts; while the working area was included as a new situation.

If students want to be successful in everyday life, they should be taught and trained in these skills using a variety of different texts. The results of international surveys have shown that many of these aspects are not applied in the local teaching practice and this is also why our students have failed. We must monitor whether the situation is changing for better.

But not even the definition of the basic reading literacy parts is final; they have been amended several times in recent research.
Reading literacy is regarded as a condition of educational activities throughout the entire school attendance and further (lifelong) learning. It is necessary for everyday, private, civil and professional life, which is why it is important that it is formed in the best quality as possible. This will depend on the method and quality of teaching reading and developing reading literacy in various subjects using a variety of different texts, as well as on the teacher’s preparedness in this area.

3.2 Reading Literacy and the Related Terms

3.2.1 Functional and Reading Literacy

Functional literacy is the competence of persons to search, deduce, evaluate and creatively use information in a continuous (coherent) text; to search and use information from a document (non-continuous (incoherent), yet rich in information) and to work with figures contained in text sources for the purpose of being engaged in all spheres of life of society.

Functional literacy (or functional illiteracy) has become a phenomenon of modern times. It has been brought to public notice through implementation of SIALS, a project surveying functional literacy of adults. For details, see Matějů, 1998.

The term ‘reading literacy’ became more widespread in the Czech Republic in the 1990s when the country started participating in large-scale reading literacy research projects. The definition of this term remained ambiguous in respect of the newly used term, functional literacy. The publication ‘Funkční gramotnost – proměny a faktory ve vztazích a souvislostech’ (Functional Literacy – Changes and Factors in Relations and Contexts) (Doležalová, 2005) compared the two terms from various aspects with the following result:

1) The research projects examining reading and functional literacy are based on the theory of information analysis and on cognitive psychology.

2) An analysis of definitions of reading and functional literacy showed the functionality of the respective literacy skills in both phenomena. Still, reading literacy is a narrower term focusing on the work with written texts and it is a component of functional literacy.

3) A comparison of the components (domains) and aspects of functional and reading literacy has shown that functional literacy was different in the
mathematical domain. Concord can be found in the literary and document component.

4) Age-related and ontogenetic aspect of comparing reading and functional literacy: Children acquired reading literacy during the course of a learning process, in particular during the first stage at basic school. Reading literacy is formed throughout the entire period of mandatory school attendance, i.e. until the 15th year of age. Delimitation of reading literacy by age and completed basic education is only formal. Literacy continues to develop both in quality and scope but its quality can also be devalued.

People will have to acquire an increasing number of skills with regard to the growing and changing requirements for human knowledge for a man to be able to work in modern society. The volume of requirements is expected to broaden, which is why (functional) literacy will be further categorised into new segments. See Scheme 1.

**Scheme 1: Mutual Literacy Relations**
3.2.2 Reading Literacy and Reading

The terms ‘reading’, ‘reading skill’, ‘reading process’, etc. had been mostly used until the mid-1990s. The term ‘reading literacy’ is a newer phenomenon.

The terms 'reading' and 'reading literacy' are sometimes confused. Therefore, we will first examine the essence of the term 'reading' in order to clarify the relation between 'reading' and 'reading literacy'. Are these terms interchangeable or are they in a subordinate-superior relation?

Reading is a specific human activity that must be learned (Pardel, 1966, p. 62, Šupšáková, 1991, p. 11). All authors concerned with the reading issue characterise reading as a type of a speech activity or as an act of communication. Most often it is characterised as a mental process invoking thought activities through analytical-synthetic activities and based on an optic reflection of words (freely according to Hartl and Hartlová, 2000, p. 95).

Reading is also generally explained as decoding of graphic signs and understanding the meaning of the words (e.g. Vášová and Černá, 1986, p. 32) or as an understanding of printed and written speech (Fabiánková-Havel-Novotná, 1999, p. 32, Toman, 1991, p. 10). Pedagogický slovník (Dictionary of Education) has a similar definition of reading, saying it is a type of a speech activity controlled by the written word. The reading skill consists in the identification of signs (written word) and understanding of the meaning of the text (Průcha-Walterová-Mareš, 1995, p. 40).

Hence, reading ‘... presumes the knowledge of graphic signs of words (letters for individual sounds), the skill to transform them swiftly into spoken language and create adequate ideas about the content read ... When reading, a reader thinks about the content and adopts an attitude to it!’(Toman, 1991, p.10). Křivánek, Z. and Wildová, R. (1998) and other authors (see the list of reference sources) have similar definitions of reading. These characteristics are already overlapping with the term 'reading literacy'.

The following characteristics are defined with respect to reading (reading performance). The qualitative parameters include accuracy, fluency, distinctiveness and comprehension. The quantitative elements include the speed of reading. Techniques include accuracy, fluency and distinctiveness.

Reading also forms part of the subject of the Czech language (mother tongue).
Now we will take a deeper look at the reading process and text comprehension for they are no easy issues.

In conclusion, it can be said that reading is the basic reading literacy process from which other continuing processes devolve. Still, the term ‘reading’ is in some cases used in the same sense as ‘reading literacy’.

### 3.3 Factors Shaping Reading Literacy

Reading literacy is influenced by a wide range of factors. Now let us focus on the most influential ones.

Reading processes and results and in particular comprehension of the text read are influenced not only by the **reader** alone and the reader’s abilities, skills, motivation and experience, but also by **contexts** and the **text** alone (Rosenblatt, 1978).

#### 3.3.1 Exogenous Factors of Reading Literacy

The impact of exogenous agents on reading literacy differs in intensity but all of them definitely affect the reader, to a greater or to a lesser extent, in each phase of one’s life. The reader is influenced by material, geographic and demographic conditions, but especially by the social background.

It is the **family**, its emotional ties and immediate contacts which have an impact on an individual since birth. It affects the child with the language of its communication and the stimulating nature of the environment the child lives in. The quality of reading literacy of children reflects the social, economic and cultural conditions of the family, its interests and values. Education of parents has a strong impact on the quality of the child’s reading literacy. (see V. Tamášová In Gavora, 2008)

The **school** affects the quality of reading literacy of its students through educational objectives, content and didactic means (methods, organisational forms of work, texts).

The **teacher’s personality** is a particularly important aspect. With his/her attitudes to texts, with skills and persuasion about the need to integrate work with texts in the lessons, the teacher of any subject can exercise a major influence in the students’ reading literacy. The competent formation of the students’ literacy skills by the teacher throughout the entire period of school attendance is of crucial importance, and so is the intentional and integrated induction of all forms of...
communication in students – speaking, listening, reading, writing and thinking. The teacher must be both willing and ready to develop reading literacy in students.

A targeted focus of all school employees on reading literacy is of major help, too.

In addition to social factors, material factors also play an important role in the school conditions. It has been proved that school libraries working as study and information centres are important factors for the successful development of reading literacy.

**Society** – the local environment and the macro-environment also have an impact on the development of reading literacy (and its existence at all), in particular through culture and the literary tradition. Good conditions in this field are shaping the endowment of the region with cultural institutions, availability of print and digital media, respect of and attitudes to literature but also economic support of school and other institutions. Only in such society can reading literacy be at a good level and reading become a natural and delightful activity.

### 3.3.2 Endogenous Factors of Reading Literacy

The endogenous factors in reading literacy include the reader’s qualities and predispositions, whether innate or acquired. The mental prerequisites for reading literacy include:

- anatomic and physiological background for the origin and development reading skills (reading literacy), sensory and mental functions;
- interest, motivation for reading, attitudes to control reading literacy;
- imagination, concentration;
- volitional qualities and the reader’s attitudes to reading and texts;
- experience garnered in respect of reading or information literacy;
- the reader’s life experience and knowledge of the topic.

**Text**

The text is a continuous record (written or printed) of symbols, signs, numbers, letters, words, or its sound, played or animated version. It has content, form, author, purpose and addressee (Mihálechová In Gavora, 2008, p. 10). Texts are characterised by a communication intent, cohesion and coherence (for details, see Gavora, 1992).
There are many different types of texts such as artistic or factual texts. Each genre is specific as to the form, linguistic means and content. All of this is reflected in its difficulty, which affects understanding of the text. Contact with a variety of genres has an impact on broadened experience with texts. The decisive factors motivating reading and quality of comprehension include the length, density, difficulty and appearance of texts.

Books are regarded as the basic means increasing reading literacy. But there are also other factors coming in. For instance, it is the purpose and way of working with texts; the time devoted to texts during lessons (and in leisure time); the way in which pupils are motivated to read. If children read whole books and read them often and with pleasure, they display satisfactory to excellent reading results. They are motivated both by the topic of the book and its form.

A textbook is the most typical educational text. Textbooks are specific educational texts whose content and form is aimed to help pupils acquire the curriculum, learn from the text and motivate and affect other parts of the personality. Their main function is instructional and educational. The communication intent helping achieve the teaching objectives is the key characteristic of an educational text. In a textbook, the information is arranged in a logical and transparent manner and supplemented with illustrations (for details about textbooks, see reference sources).

Contemporary instruction reflects the current trends and theories about reading literacy and uses a variety of text types and genres. In addition to fiction, reading literacy and motivation are also developed and boosted by authentic texts (Gavora, 1992; Vykoukalová, 2013). They are represented by documents reflecting everyday life reality. Their impact on skills and attitudes is achieved through the application of purposeful and functional activities adequate to the age. Books supplementing additional information (e.g., dictionaries) help broaden and deepen one’s knowledge and text comprehension. Moreover, all types of texts are helpful in attracting pupils’ interest in a certain field of study. The time spent reading and frequency of contacts with literature leads to high-quality reading literacy (Garbe, 2008).

Work with information technologies is highly attractive for children and youth. These media offer easy and fast access to an unlimited amount of varied information. The information is accompanied by pictures and sounds and is therefore more impressive and motivating. Teachers can have ambiguous attitudes to such information for the following reasons:

The credibility of information sources and value of the text content may be questionable. The negative aspects also include the addictive nature of easy access to information and direction to attractive and exciting, yet often superficial information. B. Brdička (2003) points both to the positive influence of the internet on pupils and the rigours in this respect.
But we cannot ignore the media development; the multimedia development must be taken into account (in particular its audio-visual component) and included in the teaching practice. Yet, students must be prepared for its specifics. It is necessary to shape the respective knowledge, skills and attitudes and create their mutual harmony (Trávníček, 2008, and similarly Čuřín, 2011). With appropriate methods applied in instruction, they can successfully develop both the student knowledge within the subject taught, but also reading literacy.

One must also be aware of the fact that films do not stimulate imagination in the same way as reading but the fast sequence of action scenes is on the other hand attractive. If computers are used for other than learning or reading purposes, they detract time from reading the books. Research results have shown that if children watch television more than two hours a day, they display worse reading literacy results. Although computer work may bring entertainment and edification, it sometimes causes lack of concentration. There is also a risk that computers offer ready-made information which children do not reach through their own efforts, which may bring problems in certain life situations.

The factors affecting reading literacy may be summarised in the scheme below:

**Scheme 2: Important Factors Affecting Reading Literacy**

Stimulation by social conditions  
Influence by internal conditions reflecting the reader’s personality  
(motivation, skills, etc.)

School  
Family  
Reading literacy  
Reader  
Text  
Quality of texts, genre and frequency of contact

*Obor: Učitelství – společný základ dvouoborých studií*
These factors have an effect in a certain context only and regularly work as an entire complex of intermingling circumstances (Taxová, 1985). This must be taken into account if we want to effectively shape reading literacy and if we arrange conditions in a class and at school accordingly, as well as when designing preventive and remedial measures or creating programmes for developing reading literacy. The context also plays an important role in the preparation of research targeting reading literacy and in interpretation of its results.

I. Kramplová and E. Potužníková state interesting and concrete relations between the conditions and the positive results of reading literacy of pupils in their inspiring text which is also illuminating for the educational and instructional activities at our schools (Kramplová and Potužníková, 2005). Information about reading literacy related to the social conditions can also be found in the text by I. Gabal and L. Helšusová (2002).

### 3.4 Developmental Aspect of Reading Literacy

Literacy develops during the course of human life in several stages. The model we provide below categorises reading literacy in stages during the entire course of life. It corresponds to the human ontogenetic development and to the unique characters typical of individual age, to the ways of writing acquisition and also to the concept of lifelong learning. We have named it as a model of overlapping stages in the development of reading literacy. It has the following characteristics:

- It represents a continuum in the literacy development where a lower developmental stage includes elements (knowledge and skills) of a higher stage and prepares its foundations.
- Functional literacy applicable in everyday life situations is being shaped from the very first stages.

We can differentiate five stages in the development of reading literacy:

**Stage 1: Spontaneous Literacy**

Children spontaneously display the first attempts to make a record or read a certain statement at preschool age. To do this, they choose their own strategies, means and manners of communication to imitate adults. This type of literacy expression is denoted as emergent literacy (Gavora, 2008, Mareš, 2013, Pasa, Ragano and Fijalkow, 2006, Teale and Sulzby, 1989, Wild, 2010, Zápotočná, 2001).
These expressions were described in the developmental models in the 1980s to 1990s (Günther, 1986, Scheerer–Neumann, 1998, Valtin, 1993 – see In Speck-Hamdan, 2001).

2. Stage 2: Elementary Reading Literacy

Children acquire the fundamentals of literacy during instruction at school. Initially, it is only elementary literacy. Reading skills (and hence, reading literacy) are only limited and non-automated. The aim is to acquire the written code. The speed of acquisition and the manner of the functional use of the literacy skills depends on the teaching method of initial reading and writing. Where it is successful, teachers continue the children’s skills acquired at preschool age and the reading method primarily develops the process of comprehension.

3. Stage 3: Basic Reading Literacy

At this stage we can see the beginnings of the functional use of the literacy skills, i.e. this stage is denoted as basic literacy. It encompasses the acquisition of the skill to read and write with comprehension. This skill is outperformed during school attendance and develops into functional literacy.

Basic reading literacy is typical for the second and third year of reading instruction. This is why children in the third grade could start using reading as a tool for cognition, the so-called ‘study reading’. Other subjects can also significantly contribute to the functionality of reading.

4. Stage 4: Developed Basic Reading Literacy

Developed basic literacy requires a higher level of thought activities for more sophisticated text operations, as well as richer personal experience. This is a quality built during the mandatory school attendance at the basic school. The reading and writing skills are shaped and become automated, and so are the skills related to text content analyses and deeper interpretations. Students build up an ability to work with text information, a skill to draw conclusions from the text content and evaluate both the content and form (Straková, 2002, p. 11). Thinking about texts and problems and their creative analysis is equally important, too. The quality changes into full-fledged reading literacy (developed reading literacy) at the moment when a student is able to functionally use the reading skills to solve a variety of tasks and situations. The transition period to developed reading literacy is highly individual.

5. Stage 5: Functional Literacy
Reading literacy is expected to enable to perform everyday activities after the basic school completion at 15 years of age. It becomes part of overall functional literacy.

The time categorisation of individual stages is rather hypothetical. This diversification is fairly unreliable with regard to individual specifics and conditions of education, but it is important to have certain categories from the didactical perspective. The categorisation is important for the planning of objectives, content and didactic means in educational and instructional activities and for the assessment and evaluation of educational outcomes. It optimises the choice of didactical means for the sake of individualisation and differentiation of instruction.

3.5 Reading Stages

Reading literacy also has an emotional and attitudinal level. It is manifested in the interest in reading for delight during leisure time. The relation to reading has specific developmental treats. The developmental stages in the relation to reading correspond to age uniqueness of children at individual stages of school attendance (see a separate chapter).

Application Tasks
1. What has affected your reading skills and your relation to reading during the course of your life? Which factors prevailed?

2. Find out about the reading literacy components defined in international reading literacy surveys carried out in recent years.

Review Questions
1. What does ‘reading literacy’ mean?

2. Characterise the relation between reading literacy and functional literacy.

3. What basic processes does reading literacy involve?

4. Explain the effects of various forms of communication on the quality of reading literacy.
5. Why cannot all people have the same level of reading literacy? (Use your knowledge about the factors of reading and functional literacy).

6. Characterise the development of reading literacy from the ontogenetic perspective.

**Summary**

Using the information described above, we can say that reading literacy differentiates from functional literacy in the quality and scope of the skills required and defined by age.

Reading literacy is a broader and more complex phenomenon than reading. It covers a set of skills when working with text information where reading is the basis and starting activity for subsequent operations with information. Reading literacy also requires additional thought processes, abilities and skills supplementing reading and writing with certain instrumentality. The terms ‘reading’ and ‘reading literacy’ are not always used consistently now, not even in the existing curricular documents. The term ‘reading’ here means ‘broader knowledge and skills’.

We regard reading as an essential tool of reading literacy. Reading is one of the basic skills within reading literacy.

The concept of reading denoting three aspects of the reading process, i.e. the semantic, technical and critically-creative aspect, is very close to reading literacy (Kapica, 1996, p. 17-18).

Family, school, teacher, text and endogenous factors of the reader are the main factors affecting reading literacy. Reading literacy is a complicated phenomenon affected by a variety of factors. This is why this term has no unambiguous definition.

**Literature**

**On Initial Reading and Writing:**


**On Reading:**


**On Textbooks:**
Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will gain an insight into reading skills and competences.
- You will explain the process of reading comprehension.
- You will know the relation between instruction, instructional methods and the development of reading skills.
- You will be able to characterise reading strategies and instructional strategies.
- You evaluate positive and negative aspects of selected reading models.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- motivation
- perception
- metacognition
- types of reading
- reading comprehension
- ‘bottom-up’ model
- ‘top-down’ model
- interactive model
- teaching concept
- constructivism
- teaching strategy
- active work with text

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. What mental processes are applied during reading? What mental processes are needed for additional work with texts? Why?
2. What method did your teachers use most frequently in working with texts?
3. What helps you understand text better?

As reading is an important component of reading literacy, we will discuss other aspects and characteristics of this skill in more detail to gain a deeper insight into this sensorimotor skill. This is vitally important for your teaching practice.
4.1 Pedagogical-Psychological Foundations of the Reading Process

As stated above, reading is defined as a process starting with a visual impulse. A written or printed word (symbol) stimulates activities of the sight analyser which transmits a signal to the respective centre in the central nervous system. The following processes normally take place during reading (also sometimes denoted as ‘text reception’): They start with motivation, continue with perception, remembering and recalling and end with metacognition.

**Motivation** guides the reader toward targeted and concentrated text search and reading, etc. It calls forth volitional efforts to cope with the text and energises the reader to overcome obstacles while reading. The reader starts reading based on the cognitive, social or performance needs. In addition, the reader may be stimulated by the text layout or visual aspect (Mareš, 2013). We will discuss motivation later on.

When **perceiving** the text, the reader conducts analytical and synthetic activities when the word is decomposed into vocals (syllables) which are re-chained into the word. The sound form of vocals, syllables and words is then gradually retrieved from memory, as well as the relevant text content. **Memory** is also applied when reading other text sections when the reader recalls meanings together with the relevant words and contextualises them in sentences and bigger units. All of this helps understand the content and meaning of the text read. If the text is read out loud, the sound expression of the text comes in (kinaesthetic). The reader’s eyes move from the left to the right when reading; eye jumps rotate with fixation, but the reader is unaware of these eye movements. The reader stops and gets back to the parts which are difficult to read; or the reader (if experienced and advanced) stops at important words or sentences which were not understood quite well. The reading speed slows down at such moments.

The basic **brain functions** must be coordinated for reading: analytical and synthetic activities of ears and eyes; acoustic and visual differentiation activities; spatial orientation (in particular right-left) and orientation of temporal, sight and hearing memory; sense for rhythm; ability to combine individual components; thinking and motor and sensory coordination. The nervous system, mainly the grey matter, must be mature to a certain extent, i.e. the act of identifying written speech and understanding requires certain intellectual and speech maturity. One also needs to use **imagination** and have the **ability to understand and handle with symbols**. Written speech naturally develops on the basis of spoken speech and hence, the reader needs to have a good and active vocabulary and sufficient **experience**, knowledge and ideas to ‘disclose’ the text content.
This brief explanation of the sophisticated mental activity primarily relates to beginning readers. Advanced readers have already automated and reduced individual stages of the process described above. They even skip words or lines when reading. They can also do without the sound aspect. They will understand the text without this acoustic facet unlike the beginners. Both the authors of brochures about initial reading and about speed-reading point to this aspect which differs beginning readers from those more advanced (see the list of references).

**Metacognition** means observing one’s own learning processes; at any rate our own processes while reading in respect to understanding, reflecting on and evaluating the text.

O. Zápotočná points to recent changes in the **approach to reading**. According to Zápotočná, readers generally tend to wider understanding of what they read while in the traditional sense, there was only ‘one and right understanding’ of the meaning. The factors related to the understanding of what is read have been recently expanded and become more subjective. Reading is understood as a process of dynamic interaction and communication between the author’s representation (text) and the reader’s actively construed interpretation of the meaning (the way the reader understands the text) which is characterised by a high degree of multiple meanings and subjectivism as it is the result of a variety of influences from the socio-cultural environment forming this knowledge, experience, as well as attitudes, conviction and expectations (Zápotočná, 1998, p. 142). Z. Křivánek and R. Wildová share this view, speaking about the reconstruction of the text content according to the degree of the reader's maturity, knowledge and experience, according to the development of thinking and imagination (Křivánek and Wildová, 1998, p. 18).

There is a difference between reading **out loud** engaging the acoustic aspect of speech and **silent reading**, i.e. reading for one’s self without any acoustic expression (and hence, it is also faster). The beginning readers cannot understand the text content without reading out loud. Once they automate sight percepts, eye movements and other mental processes, the readers no longer need to read out loud. They can read silently and understand the text. Interestingly enough, trained readers can better understand the text content when reading silently than when reading out loud. The same also applies to pupils who are not good at reading out loud. Both teachers and parents should be aware of this and provide more space to silent reading in higher grades when the reader can better reflect on the text content.

If reading is functional, i.e. used to obtain and analyse certain information, it becomes a tool for cognition in all areas of education. And it is also vice versa – induced reading in various educational areas supports both reading and reading literacy (Doležalová and Najvarová, 2011, p. 40).
The differences in the reading concepts lie in the different approaches to reading, in particular in the ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ models. A similar approach is taken by O. Zápotočná (2001).

Under the first model, ‘bottom-up’, reading of words is primarily determined by the basic levels of the reading process at the decoding level, i.e. it depends on the phonological and visually perceptive abilities and knowledge of the alphabet code. Only these processes are taken into account in the first contact with the text and other stages gradually come in only once the visual information is analysed. They include understanding of the word, sentence, larger units up to the understanding of the entire text context.

Research projects based on this theory mostly unveil the processes of word identification and sequential steps in reading. Concrete reading instruction then seeks to precisely adhere to this sequence in methodological procedures. This may also result in the drilling of a certain stage taken out of context which has not been coped with yet. Weaknesses of this model include underestimation of the understanding of the meaning of words from the very beginning of established contact with the text and too exaggerated emphasis on the reading ‘technique’. According to this theory, writing production can only develop once the reader masters decoding (word identification – identification of letters in a word or the whole word and its correct reading). Both activities are regarded as an absolutely natural product of a mastered reading technique.

The upper, i.e. the highest levels of the information process reading system which control the information flow at all lower levels are decisive for the other model (‘top-down’), with Goodman and Smith being its main representatives. This means that even identification (decoding) of words is primarily influenced by the higher levels of the reading process, i.e. the context, the reader’s current knowledge and experience, expectations, conviction and values (In Zápotočná, 2001, p. 292). Setting hypotheses, expectations or prognoses are central to the reading process. The reader, using own knowledge and experience, expects and anticipates what will follow or infers the relevant hypotheses from the context. During reading, the hypotheses are either upheld or refuted. This process results in new information which is being integrated in the reader’s knowledge structure. This provides understanding of the text being read. The new information also affects the selection and further processing of information.

Smith considers reading to be a creative and constructive activity or ‘thinking stimulated by the written language’. Prognostication is here a crucial moment being a tool of selection, providing a goal for reading and bringing potential meanings. The meaning depends, to a certain extent, on the subject (reader) as it lies in the deep language structures of the user, in the intentions of the speaker or writer, in the interpretations by the listener or reader. The listener or reader must provide their
meaning, as well. They bring this meaning through their own expectations and predictions. This means that next to sounds and the printed text, there are also other factors affecting its understanding, including the personal, social and cultural environment. Understanding can therefore never be deduced from the surface structures, e.g. through a mere decoding of the script and its transformation into speech. Mechanical exercises of these activities are just a negligible part of the process of learning to read. Instead, they can rather hinder understanding of the text and the essence of reading. Long-term training of this transformation at the surface level may only block access to the deep structures of the meaning and discourage the reader in the natural activity to bring and create meanings forever (for details, see Smith, 1996 In Zápotočná, 2001, p. 292-294).

Using this model, research focuses on higher cognitive processes and contextual factors which affect understanding. They study social interactions in reading lessons. They use qualitative research methods and ethnographic procedures. Remedies do not consist in the training of particular skills but in the focus on the context, on the meanings and comprehension. This also forms the basis of the reading instruction and its methods. They stimulate to active and meaningful activities with the content. If this model is used, the following reading procedure is applied:

1. The reader evokes own ideas about the topic and realises the context between the previous knowledge and expectations and creation of prerequisites;
2. The reader evaluates the expectations and prerequisites using the text;
3. The reader re-integrates the new knowledge within the known context and the current knowledge structures.

Pupils are guided towards conscious and systematic application of reading comprehension strategies. Writing (text production) is regarded as part of the complex of language competences. This is why it is important if the text production is always defined within a meaningful context.

The current dynamic interactive models are seeking a compromise between the two aforementioned extremities. They are inspiring in many cases. The authors believe that there are multiple processes and reading levels involved simultaneously and that they are interactively connected. Information in both directions and from any level can affect each other in any sequence. This results in the probable text interpretation (Zápotočná, 2001).

The reading models are discussed here as their respective application in instruction affects the pupils’ skills and reactions when working with texts. This can
also influence the educational outcome and results of international reading literacy surveys.

4.2 Reading Comprehension

The ability to understand a written text is one of the most important elements of the learning process and reading literacy. It enables the reader to grasp the meaning of what is being read and understand the author’s intentions, which is the main purpose of reading, after all. Comprehension is a key condition for the aesthetic appreciation of a text, for text study and any other type of usage of written information.

Comprehension is an individual process taking place inside the reader’s mind and each reader creates his/her own content depending on personal experience (John and Lenski, 2005, Gavora 1992). The process is described as active construction of the content of the text read (Gavora, 2003, Zápotočná, 1998).

Gavora defines text comprehension as ‘a method of conscious acquisition of information from a text’ relying on one’s text handling competence, i.e. a set of knowledge and skills involved in strategies and operations that are necessary for the perception, understanding and processing (including reproduction) of text (Gavora, 1984, p. 88). Unfortunately, pupils and students in our schools are left to their own intuition and devices to develop such text handling competences (Průcha, 1987, p. 41).

There are many factors that play a role in text comprehension and they are of two kinds:

- the characteristics of the text itself (e.g. difficulty, length and cohesion of the text, intertextuality, concentration of text information, frequency of specialist or foreign words, length of sentences, etc.),


To achieve reading comprehension, a reader must make connections between what he/she already knows (old information) and what he/she reads in the text (new information). Comprehension is one of the means to developing a positive attitude to reading in general.

According to most of our authors, reading comprehension is a process whereby the individual first decodes the letters on the page and then mentally processes the content in order to understand and better remember (for example in
learning) or otherwise apply the written message. In learning from a text, the crucial tasks for the reader include decoding the text, finding key terms, understanding and linking them together (Maňák and Švec, 2003). The reader must understand the meaning of individual words, phrases and sentences, the relationship between sentences and even entire paragraphs. He/she is helped in this effort by the relevant mental processes, skills and experience, the neural system as well as by the properties of the text itself, as mentioned earlier.

What may complicate text comprehension is the fact that the reader must often find or infer additional information that is not directly contained in the text. A deep understanding of a text is a necessary condition if one wants to evaluate its content and form.

There is an interesting link between reading techniques and comprehension. According to J. Toman, they are in a dialectical relationship (1991). In other words, a more efficient reading technique (in terms of correct reading as well as fluency and speed) improves text comprehension. By the same token, comprehension leads to improvements in one’s reading technique. However, P. Gavora notes that reading speed and fluency are not always a sign of the quality of processing of written information (Gavora, 2002, p. 173).

When teaching the very basic reading skills to small children it is very difficult to keep a right balance between the reading technique and comprehension. However, if too much preference is given to reading techniques in the long run, text comprehension may suffer in consequence, which may lower students’ motivation to read. If teachers at higher levels of the educational system evaluate the reading skills of their students solely based on the quality of their reading aloud (technique) without considering to what extent the students understand and think about the text, it may give the impression of an unsatisfactory, unacceptable situation in this educational area.

### 4.2.1 Comprehension, Text and the Age of the Reader

Reading comprehension is greatly influenced by the literary genre and other characteristics of the text. People find it easier to understand a text that tells a story or describes something than a text of explanatory, technical or speculative nature. Technical texts contain many specialist terms that must be correctly understood. They also often contain long complex sentences that require a lot of focus and attention. The narrative nature of a story helps with understanding because we create an image in our minds of what is going on and gradually form an understanding. Complete, exact understanding is sometimes even not necessary.
The logical construction and progression of the text is also important as is its total length and the reader’s greater or lesser familiarity with the topic.

Text comprehension also depends on the reader’s age. The more reading, life and literary experience one has, the better one is able to keep attention on the text and exert the mental effort to get a better and deeper understanding of a text. That is precisely why children’s books consist of short texts that use simple, clear expressions and ample illustrations. They are printed in large fonts (to ensure the text is legible and understandable).

### 4.2.2 Comprehension and Metacognitive Processes

Researchers specialising in the mental processes involved in reading note the role of metacognitive processes. They are important both for text comprehension and for active learning and come to play in three phases of text consumption:

- **before reading** – in planning and acquainting oneself with the topic,
- **during reading** – by checking whether the reader understands what is read, including the implied connections, etc.,
- **after reading** – for example, in evaluation of what was read and of one’s understanding of the key information.

Together, these processes ensure that the reader does not learn by mere memorisation alone.

If a reader-student is to employ metacognitive processes, he/she must understand the learning process, the best learning strategies as well as the problems that may potentially occur within the process. He/she must also know how to regulate, monitor, check and evaluate the process and later regulate his/her activities (Gavora et al., 2008).

Gavora recommends a number of strategies that a reader may use if he/she fails to understand a text: the reader can stop and think about the topic, go back and reread several lines, read other parts of the text, go on and hope to understand the unclear passage later. The reader could also consult dictionaries, encyclopaedias or other texts for new words or ask someone for an explanation.

### 4.3 Teaching and Reading Literacy

The level of reading literacy achieved by pupils depends on the teacher’s approach to reading classes. Success requires the following pre-conditions:
- The teaching objectives include development of reader competences, fostering of pupils’ interest in books, development of reading strategies and the skills necessary for learning from texts. The pupils are involved in the definition of the objectives and know what will be expected of them.

- Teaching (learning) strategies focus on text-based work, first and foremost on the ability to understand a written text, to use it in class and course work.

- As three aspects of reading are generally recognised: motivation, cognition and social skills, the teacher must use class work methods and forms that support
  
  o intensive interaction between the text and the reader, between the teacher and the pupil and among pupils themselves,
  o positive motivation,
  o pupils’ active involvement in text-based work,
  o high level of cooperation and communication,
  o frequent encounters with written text and enough time to work with texts (Garbe, 2008...),
  o evaluation of learning results that takes into consideration reading techniques and comprehension, reflection, creative use of text information and assessment of the context and form of a text by the reader. Self-evaluation should also be encouraged.

All this is crucial if learners are to acquire a deeper text comprehension as well as for their motivation and development of complex skills needed for text-based work.

As life conditions change and scientific understanding advances, the concept of education (its objectives, content and tools) and the concept of a student change, too. Text-based work, for centuries the hallmark of education, should be given an even greater priority because it helps prepare students for real-life situations. It also corresponds to the competence model of education, which emphasises interconnectedness between the content and means of education on the one hand and real life on the other in order to develop student’s life skills. In a constructivism-based concept of education, active learning by students (active cognitive processes) takes centre stage with each student creating (constructing) his/her own understanding. The student is involved in the definition of educational

In this approach to education, the pupil performs tasks as part of class work (problem solving, situations and projects) that require him/her to look up the necessary information and be actively engaged in acquiring new knowledge. Text-based work, therefore, plays an important role and good reading skills are of fundamental importance. In order to achieve educational success, the teacher must put students in close contact with text, help them learn how to learn, how to use a text, how to respond to problems. Such training leads students to greater self-reliance and responsibility for own work. It also increases the overall efficiency of learning.

Application Tasks

1. Find the most difficult part of this chapter from the perspective of comprehension. Why do you think that this is the most difficult part?
2. Reformulate this part into a simpler language which a layman can understand.
3. What can be the causes of slow reading of pupils?

Review Questions

1. Why is it better to induce silent reading in the lessons at the second stage of the basic school and in secondary schools?
2. Why is it impossible for all students to have the same understanding of one and the same text?
3. Use your own words to explain individual reading models.
4. What is your understanding of the following quotations?

*The reading of a fine book is an uninterrupted dialogue in which the book speaks and our soul replies.*  
André Maurois

*A book is a mirror: if an ape looks into it an apostle is hardly likely to look out.*  
Georg Christoph Lichtenberg
When a book and a head collide and a hollow sound is heard, must it always have come from the book?

Georg Christoph Lichtenberg


5. To what concepts and findings about reading literacy do these quotes relate?
6. Characterise the concept of instruction which enables to achieve positive reading literacy outcomes of pupils. Justify your words and give examples.

Summary

Based on the findings specified above, a summary can be drawn that reading literacy is a complex of knowledge and skills forming a basis for lifelong and functional work with text information. With its character and requirements for an individual’s knowledge and skills, it is different from the ‘mere’ (basic and elementary) reading comprehension.

There are various models explaining reading comprehension and pushing though different approaches to the development of reading. The interactive model seems to be the most appropriate one.

The understanding of the text being read is influenced by many factors such as the reader’s qualities, the text and approach to instruction. We find the constructivist approach to teaching as offering the best conditions for the development of understanding of a text and other reading skills and attitudes.

Literature

On Anatomy and Physiological Essence of Reading:

On Psychological Foundations of Reading:

**On Definition of Reading and Comprehension:**

**On Speed-reading:**

**On Constructivism:**

---

**5 Reading Skills and Strategies**

**Objectives**

After studying this chapter:

- You will be able to distinguish reading skills, reading strategies and information strategies.
- You will know reading strategies and be able to use them in different stages of instruction.

**Terms to Remember (Key Words)**

- reading skills
- reading
Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. Say which reading skills your basic school teachers developed in you.

5.1 Reading Skills

Good reading literacy and successful text comprehension is closely linked to reading skills and reading strategies. We will discuss these in greater detail because they are a prerequisite for efficient work with a text and, more importantly, for text comprehension.

Unlike mere reading in the sense of mechanical decoding (identification and reproduction of letters and words), reading literacy requires another, deeper mental processing of text information. This includes operations such as drawing of conclusions, summary of information that are both explicitly stated and implied in the text, evaluation of the utility and truthfulness of such information, critical reflection on the content and form of the text, or formulation of one’s opinion on or attitude towards the text, etc. The process employs constructive and functional activities. It is different from ‘simple’ memorisation of the text.

All key personality elements contribute to one’s reading literacy. Cognition is responsible for processing knowledge relating to reading and literature. Skills also play a role, such as sensorimotor skills, i.e. reading and writing, but also a variety of mental operations that take place when working with a text, e.g. strategies for better understanding of the text, mental operations with the text at different mental levels, e.g. understanding the content of the text, drawing conclusions and making mental links, evaluation of textual information. The emotional side of one’s personality influences attitudes, experiences and interest in books and reading. It is crucial for successful development of reading literacy.

The following table gives an overview of personality elements and elements of reading literacy.

Table 1: Relationship between Elements of Reading Literacy and the Reader’s Personality
Reading skills represent particular, specific tasks performed in all phases of one’s work with a text. They allow the reader to read and understand a written text and use it in other operations. When working with a text, the reader uses various types of skills, primarily motor and psychomotor skills (reading) and cognitive skills (understanding, reflection, conclusions and evaluation).

The skills become automatic by repetition of the relevant activities. The reader performs the tasks faster and with greater confidence while saving energy and time, which in turn allows him/her to deal with more difficult challenges. Reading skills must be learnt, which requires guidance by a teacher or another experienced person.

In order to deal successfully with various types of texts and literary genres, it is recommended to nurture the following reading skills.

Skills necessary for the use of narrative texts:

- text comprehension,
- anticipation of further development of a story,
- comparison of the narrated events with own experience,
- comparison among different texts,
- definition of the key idea or message of the text,
- generalisation and conclusions drawn from the text,
- formal description of the text in terms of style and structure.

(Krampeová and Potužníková, 2005, p. 68 – adapted.)
Skills necessary for the use of explanatory texts:
- fast reading of an instructive text,
- followed by a slower reading with an effort to understand the text,
- search for the meaning of key words,
- schematic analysis of the content of the text
- recapitulation and practice of what was learnt.
  (details for example in Maňák and Švec, 2003)

Skills necessary for the use of documents (information-rich, non-continuous text, e.g. maps, tables, charts):
- searching for information in the document, if necessary inferring missing information,
- evaluation of information,
- application of the information in tasks or problem solving.

5.2 Reading Strategies

In general, strategies are processes intentionally applied in order to achieve a certain goal. The concept of ‘strategy’ applies to a higher category of processes that consist of several sub-processes that follow in a logical order with view of a specific goal (Grzesik, 2005, Mareš, 1998). Skills are primarily automatic phenomena and the individual is not even aware that he/she is using them when dealing with text information. Strategies are the more efficient and developmentally more advanced if they become automatic (Grzesik, 2005).

Reading strategies are processes that allow the reader to identify key information contained in a text, to get a deeper understanding of the text and the connection between different pieces of text information. A reader will be more likely to comprehend a text if he/she has strategies that help the structuring of the text and reflect on the information contained therein. This helps in memorising the text better and retrieving information from memory (Grzesik, 2005, Gavora, 2008). In other words, reading strategies help the reader learn from a text.
Reading strategies are a great help in study, allowing readers to learn on their own simply by reading, and are the basis of lifelong learning.

They increase students’ self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities (Gavora, 2008), which in turn increases reading literacy.

There are different reading strategies depending on the reader’s objective. The differences lie in the order of processes, the level of abstraction of different categories, the type of text, etc. Reading strategies are applied in all phases of a reader’s work with the text and are typically used upon reflection in order to plan, manage and control further activities. Their use is adapted to the particular situation.

There is no universally accepted definition of a reading strategy. Definition is difficult because it is not clear in what way strategies differ from other processes and because they are applied as part of longer segments of behaviour. The third reason for this lack of clarity is the fact that experts disagree on the degree of strategy intentionality and the participation of the reader’s consciousness in strategy deployment (Grzesik, 2005).

In her paper, V. Najvarová (2008) describes the following types of relationship between reading skills and reading strategies:

- When a reader’s reading skills fail him/her when faced with a more complex text, the reader starts employing reading strategies in an effort to understand the text.
- Reading skills and reading strategies differ in the level of their intentionality and automatic use.
- Skills and strategies may serve the same purpose and may lead to the same result (Afflerbach, Pearson and Paris 2007).

She also notes that over time strategic reading, i.e. laborious reading with a lot of effort exerted at the use of strategies employed to grasp the meaning of a text, may evolve into a smooth, automated activity (i.e. it evolves into a reading skill). ‘Strategic reading allows the reader to have the strategy that is being used under control and to monitor its efficiency. A strategic reader has the ability to flexibly adapt to new situations that may arise during text reading’ (Kucer, 2005, p. 131). Reading skills do not require the reader’s conscious control and effort. They are used automatically, by custom, and the reader spends no time thinking about them, which means that skill-driven reading is faster and requires less energy from the reader (Najvarová, 2008, pp. 68-70). To summarise, strategic reading has the following characteristics: greater reader awareness, more intentionality in their use, controlled effort to understand, awareness of increasing automatic nature of the strategy and application when faced with a more complex text. Skill-driven reading shows opposite characteristics (Najvarová, 2008).
**Metacognitive** skills are a typical and important part of reading strategies (Gavora, 2002, 2008, Škoda and Doulík, 2011). They stand above all other processes. They allow the reader to think about his/her own learning process, reading and text comprehension. Metacognitive processes and strategies help him/her verify whether and how well did he/she understands the text. Good readers try to understand what happens before, during and after reading.

5.2.1 Reading Strategies at Different Stages of Reading

Most authors usually classify reading strategies into three groups: strategies used **before** reading, **during** reading and **after** reading. This classification makes didactic sense because, as was already mentioned, it fosters a more active and deeper understanding and memorisation of new information. We, therefore, support its widespread deployment in schools and will now devote a chapter to it.

The overview that follows gives the characteristics of and **logic behind the different phases of text work** and we will also describe the different **activities that take place during these basic stages**. (This chapter draws on the work of P. Gavora, 2008).

1. **Before reading**

   In this stage, the main objective is to motivate the reader to read the text and activate the existing knowledge structure concerning the topic in order to understand and remember the text better.

   **Activities:** explain the reason why the text should be read; get the reader interested in the text; activate existing knowledge about the topic (draw attention to the basic themes or ideas) to facilitate integration of new and old information.

2. **During reading**

   During reading, the reader continues to exert effort to understand and remember the text and achieve the goals defined before reading. The reader’s attention must be kept focused on the text throughout the work, which dictates the procedure and form of text-based work. Different types of reading are possible (out loud or silent reading, listening – someone else is reading the text out loud, fast or slow reading, complete or by paragraphs) and there can be different activities and work organisation (individual or group work). The choice of approach will, of course, depend on other circumstances, too – the length of the text or the purpose of reading.

   **Activities:** find and clarify new words (interpretation, synonyms, paraphrase, giving examples, inferring the meaning or searching for it in a dictionary, or the teacher
may explain the words before or during reading). Comprehension processes were briefly described in chapter 4.2.2 on text comprehension.

3. After reading

The purpose of this phase is to deepen the understanding of the text and remember new information.

**Activities:** look up information according to the teacher’s instructions or as needed to complete the task. The information may be included in the text or it may have to be inferred from clues in the text, which is the more difficult version. Another task may be identification of key information – information of a more general nature, bearing on the topic of the text. And, finally, the reader may be asked to give a summary of the text. This is a difficult task, because it requires a processing of a wide range of information into a short, pertinent statement. Summarisation is important because it lays the foundation for memorisation (for details, see P. Gavora et al., 2008, pp. 93-100).

**5.3 Information Strategies**

Information strategies are closely linked to reading strategies and the indispensable skills need when using a text and, most importantly, when learning from texts. Information strategies are conscious processes and skills that people use when working with additional sources of information (dictionaries, encyclopaedias) and indices, library systems and such (Vališová and Bureš, 2011). A definition used in the ICILS 2013 study states that information strategies are ‘a vast set of general and transferrable knowledge and skills that can be used to search or, create, process and share information in an individual’s activities at home, at work and in the society’ (ICILS 2013).

A reader acquires these strategies as he/she tries to navigate through a book using the table of contents, as he/she uses indices, checks information (those already known to the reader or those learnt from other authors) or searches for additional, necessary or missing pieces of information in dictionaries and encyclopaedias, be it in printed or electronic form.

Both types of strategies (information and reading) deserve our attention for the reasons that were have already discussed but mainly in order to prevent a mechanical memorisation of data. These strategies help students develop the ability to evaluate and verify information from different sources of varying quality and reliability. Information strategies are crucial for the performance of classroom tasks as well as for dealing with real-life situations where we need to look up some facts.
Students develop many reading strategies by trial and error during independent work. To increase efficiency of this process, students must be actively taught various reading and information strategies. It is desirable to actively and systematically create, regulate and control situations where students are forced to use these strategies. Students achieve better results if they receive guidance and are lead to use these strategies, if they are given enough time to improve them and if teachers lead them by example. The objective is to equip student with self-regulating processes – strategies that employ metacognitive processes primarily when learning from texts.

**Application Tasks**

1. Go through methodical brochures related to the subjects of your teaching qualifications to see whether they contain any recommendations for work with texts and for the development of reading skills, reading and information strategies.

2. Find a text which can be used in your lessons and devise an elaborated procedure for activities of both pupils and you as a teacher ensuring understanding and self-regulation of learners in all stages of your work with the text.

**Review Questions**

1. What is the difference between reading skills and reading strategies?
2. Why should learners be taught reading and information strategies?
3. Are the text specifics reflected in the reading skills applied? Say why.
4. Will there be any difference in the opportunities for the development of reading skills and reading and information strategies in different subjects taught at basic and secondary schools? Submit evidence.

5. Give examples of reading, information and metacognition strategies relative to individual stages of work with the text. Provide additional examples from other sources of reference.

Summary

Reading skills, reading and information strategies as well as metacognitive procedures are used to cope with work with texts and for its deep understanding.

Reading skills are particular operations (activities) applied in the work with a text. They are difficult to distinguish from reading strategies but they are in fact elaborated procedures through which the reader reaches the essential information in the text, understands the text more deeply as well as any relations and context of the information contained in the text. They are applied in all stages of work with the text, i.e. before, during and after reading, and reading strategies are categorised accordingly.

One also needs to master information strategies to obtain and search information in a variety of information sources.

Metacognitive skills prove to be of vital importance when working with a text as they lead the reader to reflect on the entire learning process (metacognition) and the text and to verify that the reader understands the text. They are used to evaluate the strategies applied so far and to plan the application of other strategies for the purposes of a deeper understanding of the text and its acquisition.

All of these strategies must be learned.

Literature

On Reading and Information Strategies:
6 Learning from Texts

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will explain the foundations of the process of learning from texts and its determinants.
- You will know and be able to apply the selected strategies of learning from texts.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- learning from texts
- strategies of learning from texts

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. Please complete the questionnaire in Appendix 3. You will see the strategies which you most frequently use when learning from texts, whether you use them in all stages of your work with texts or in only some of them. It will show you the whole range of strategies, conditions and determinants of learning from texts. Evaluate your findings – which strategies are efficient and which not; which procedures must be eliminated or reinforced, which must be newly acquired, which conditions need to be changed, etc.

6.1 Characteristics of Learning from Texts

Work with texts can have different missions in instruction. It can serve to broaden, deepen or specify the curriculum, to look for information to solve a problem, to arouse interest in a certain topic, in reading books, to induce emotions and to learn, too.
Learning from texts is an intentional activity of the reader performed to understand a written or printed communication and integrate the information obtained in one's own knowledge.

Learning from texts can be successful if the learner is motivated (chiefly by internal needs) and has acquired effective reading and information strategies and learning strategies. The strategy of learning from texts is closely linked to reading strategies and sometimes no difference is even made between them.

The general learning strategies also apply to learning from texts. The level and degree of learning are conditioned by induced intellectual abilities, creativity and motivation, concentration, will and emotional engagement (Mihálik, 1989, Mareš, 2001).

6.2 Mental Processes When Learning from Texts

There are various theories, models and concepts on the way the processes of learning from texts and understanding texts take place. This chapter will give only a few ideas.

J. Průcha (1987) describes the general theory of learning from texts. He understands this process as a process of communication between a learning subject and the subject of learning within the text. The moments depicted in the scheme below affect each other during interaction between the subject (reader) and the text taking place during the learning process.

Scheme 3: Reader and Text Characteristics Affecting the Outcome of Learning from Texts

1. cognitive competence
2. language competence
3. interest, characteristics

1. text content structure
2. language
3. stimulation

Čtenář - učící se subjekt

Text - osvojova-ný obsah textu

Obor: Učitelství – společný základ dvouoborých studií
motivation
nature, wordiness, presentation
attractiveness,
construction,...

4. situation (objective, time)
communicativeness (scope, typographic form, ergonomic aspects)

communication and interaction

Balanced characteristics on both parts result in successful outcomes of learning from texts (for details, see Průcha, 1987, pp. 10 – 16).

The theories on learning from texts have also largely contributed to the issue of understanding a text.

Selected propositions of these theories:
1. The starting point of the schemes, scripts or frameworks is in the proposition that a subject's 'knowledge' is stored in his/her memory as a complex of mutually connected findings. It can develop when the reader understands and processes the new findings.

2. Schemes (frameworks, scripts) are non-linguistic knowledge structures in memory taking the shape of a 'picture' related to the known reality (facts, situations, actions) or in the form of certain scenarios. They are activated during reading. They produce expectations about the potential development of the text content, which regulates understanding of the text (Note: This moment is used in asking questions and formulating assignments before or during reading see Chapter 7).

3. According to the theory of inferences and elaborations, understanding is based on the operation (elaboration) where the new information from the text is compared to the information which the reader has about the given topic and where the text information is related to the reader’s own knowledge structure. In these operations, the reader uses a variety of creative thought processes (inferences) such as deduction, conclusions, questions, doubts, in order to understand the content and meaning of the text. These operations are highly significant when learning from texts.
4. The said operations depend not only on the actual text content, but also on the conditions of the didactic situation. The types of learning objectives are of particular importance.

5. The influence of questions asked before reading a text regarding the accuracy and completeness of text understanding and the fact that learners are able to ask questions themselves and perform other operations after certain training. This helps disclose problem situations in reading and learning from texts and find the meaning of the text for the reader alone, which is very important for understanding the text (for details on learning from texts theories, see Průcha, 1987).

6.3 Strategies of Learning

Simple training of study reading and the respective reading strategies can start in about the third grade at the basic school in a variety of subjects so that the second basic school stage can continue a certain level of reading skills and experience. However, some authors recommend starting in the fifth grade, with narration (literary texts) used in lower grades and presentations texts introduced only together with the development of reading skills. The development of these skills must have a certain concept, it must be guided in the long term, and be systematic and active.

Effective learning strategies guide the learner to active acquisition of the text content, to attentive reading focused on understanding the text as well as to look for essential information and the respective relations and to make a summary of the text. Both understanding and long-term remembering is achieved with the contribution of the graphical layout of the content, training and application in practice. Self-regulation processes are applied, also including metacognition and self-control (on strategies, see also Chapter 5).

Scientific publications and brochures on effective learning give examples of learning methods and strategies. Authors often recommend:

- to estimate the meaning of unknown words;
- to formulate questions (by learners);
- to make a concept map or story map;
- to summarise the text.

The following methods are less known: ‘What have I learned’, ‘3-2-1 procedure’ or ‘5_4_3_2_1 procedure’, ‘Look-Ask-Read-Answer-Repeat’, ‘Read-Imagine-Paraphrase-Slow Down/Speed Up’, ‘Train and Tree’ (see Gavora, 2008).
J. Manniová (In Gavora et al., 2008) refers to the following methods: SQ3R (according to M. di Carli), Clustering, Production of Categories, etc.

**Application Tasks**

1. Work according to the following instructions:
   a) Your task is to learn the content of this chapter. Use the procedure that you apply most often when learning from texts.
   b) Write down individual stages of your learning process.
   c) Compare it to the following procedure: First: skimming the text; Second: Slow reading with comprehension, searching and highlighting (making notes, etc.) key words, graphic layout of the text content (schemes, pictures, maps, networks, etc.), and revision and training of essential findings.
   c) Which stage of those described above was not present in your learning? If it was the stage of the graphical layout of the text content or summary, do it now.

2. Find other strategies in the reference sources and describe them.

3. Deduce conditions and skills of effective learning from texts.

**Review Questions**

1. Characterise learning from texts using Scheme 3. What conditions contribute to successful learning from texts and vice versa? How to react to a failure in learning?
2. Why is the level and degree of learning from texts conditioned by creativity and motivation, concentration, will and emotional engagement?
4. Give the reasons why not all learning strategies have the same efficiency.

**Summary**

There is an interaction taking place between the reader and the text during learning from texts. For a successful course and outcome of learning from texts, it is important that the content and the linguistic structure of the text are in balance with cognitive and linguistic skills of the reader, motivational characteristics and other conditions. Scientific literature and popularising brochures describe various methods of learning from texts and conditions of effective learning.

**Literature**

**On Mental Didactics – Learning Issues:**

**On Learning from Texts:**
7 Questions and Assignments to Texts – Means of Developing Reading Literacy

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will distinguish questions and assignments to a text depending on the level of the thought activity induced.
- You will be able to formulate questions and assignments to a text for various levels of thought activities and various educational and instructional goals.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- questions and assignments
- typology of questions and assignments
- formulation of questions and assignments

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. Read the newspaper article extracts below:

GO and REGION TOUR – Trade Fairs for Travellers Full of Experiences and Flavours

'We Czechs have the reputation of keen travellers and we like to set out both to relax and learn new things or live interesting experiences. But there is one thing that all of our trips have in common. Whatever we are seeking and whether we go for a short trip or to the other side of the world, we always need high-quality information.”
(Zdroj: In Metro, commercial supplement, No. 5, 10 January 2014, p. 7)

Czechs – Big Scratchers. Scratch Cards Sell Like Hot Cakes.

'Although scratch cards play an almost negligible role when compared to betting, betting companies cannot complain about any lack of interest. It is the opposite. 'In 2013 we saw an 80% rise in sales compared to 2012,' says Václav Friedmann of Sazka, adding that the main interest in scratch cards comes before Christmas.
when people buy them as presents. Other companies have also confirmed growing interest in this type of hazard."

(Zdroj: Tomáš BELICA ‘Češi, velcí stírači. Losy jdou na dračku’ (Czechs – Big Scratchers - Scratch Cards Sell Like Hot Cakes). In Metro, No. 5, 10 January 2014, p. 6.)

Questions and assignments to the above articles:
1. Formulate several questions to both articles.
2. Compare your questions and assignments to the following questions and assignments:
   a) What reputation do the Czechs have and what kind of reputation can they shortly gain?
   b) What areas would you mention if you were to write about in what area the Czechs are the best in or famous for?
   c) Evaluate appropriateness and purpose of the headlines.
   d) What would you do were you given a holiday voucher at the very last moment?
   e) Is the information contained in the articles credible? Say why.
   f) These texts were printed on opposite pages in the newspaper. Don’t they contradict each other? Say why.
   g) Do you also think that the Czechs are a nation of travellers? Submit your arguments.

2. In what way are these questions and assignments different from yours?
3. Which question do you find interesting?
4. Which questions or assignments do you find difficult? In what respect?
5. Which question is less common in the school practice (you have not encountered it)?
6. An answer to which question can be evaluated easily and fast?

7.1 Formulation of Questions and Assignments to Texts

If reading literacy is not mere reading comprehension but includes more sophisticated thought operations, it requires long-term training. It has been established that teachers ask up to several dozens of questions during a lesson. This means that they are likely to focus on remembering the curriculum. Similar situations also emerge when working with texts in different subjects (if work with texts is
included at all). This situation does not contribute to reading literacy or to the development of the cognitive component of students’ personality. A possible explanation is that they are easy to answer, i.e. not time-consuming, which is good in a situation when teachers should explain large amounts of curriculum. Moreover, answers to the questions focusing on memory can be easily and fast evaluated.

The activity of the respective processes is related to a suitable type of questions and assignments. The way how questions and assignments are articulated has an impact on whether the person answering the question will have to think about it to a larger or lesser extent. In other words, whether the question should stimulate lower or higher levels of thought activities.

### 7.2 Typology of Questions and Assignments

Questions and assignments are categorised from various aspects. By using the respective overviews, we become more confident when creating questions and assignments of varied difficulty and furthermore, we can resist their stereotype.

When studying the following text and sample questions, please note

- that the question or assignment must be clear and comprehensible, but not focused on a clear-cut answer;
- that the questions can be articulated as closed or open questions; that it is suitable to require arguments if only one-word answers are given.

#### 7.2.1 Application of Bloom’s Taxonomy

When articulating questions and assignments, one can draw inspiration from Bloom’s taxonomy, originally designated for the formulation of cognitive teaching objectives (see Appendix 3). If we use the verbs collected for various levels of thought activities, we can get the foundations for questions and assignments of varied difficulty.

**Examples of questions and assignments to individual levels of thought activities:**

The questions and assignments below will relate to this study text.

**1. Memory**

a) Define the term ‘reading literacy’.

b) Name the basic factors influencing reading literacy.
c) Explain the difference between reading literacy and information literacy.

2. Comprehension
a) Complete the following sentence:
   Reading literacy is important for ......................... In the countries where
   the government ........................., the reading literacy results of both students
   and adults are .........................

b) Explain why reading literacy should be developed.

c) How come that the students guided towards production of questions to texts
   have better reading literacy results?

d) Estimate the skills with which reading literacy will be enriched in the future

   .

e) What does ‘reader’s biography’ mean? Check it in dictionaries.

f) Draw the scheme of the text in the previous Chapter

g) What are the probable causes for girls having better reading literacy results
   than boys?

3. Application
a) Collect various types of authentic texts helping you develop
   reading literacy of students in the subjects of your teaching qualifications.
   Design interesting, problem-solving and entertaining assignments to these
   texts.

b) Design each activity at two or three different levels of difficulty.

c) Specify the relation between reading literacy and information literacy.

d) Draft a proposal in what way and situation you will develop reading literacy in
   your subject

   .

4. Analysis
a) Analyse the conditions and possibilities of the reading literacy development in
   your subject. Submit your arguments.
   Use various aspects of this analysis (e.g. temporal, content-related, material,
   etc.) and propose additional aspects.
b) Specify the stimulating nature of selected textbooks for the development of reading literacy in learners. Determine the evaluation criteria in advance.

c) Analyse your current situation in reading literacy. Focus on your abilities, skills and interest in reading and literature, influences and requirements of your environment.

5. Synthesis

a) Use the analysis of the stimulating nature of textbooks for reading literacy and draw conclusions for the development of reading literacy in instruction related to your field of study.

b) Propose how to improve conditions at schools for the benefit of reading literacy.

c) Write a motivation letter to your students to win them for working with texts.

d) Summarise the most important findings about reading literacy you have obtained so far.

e) Use the analysis of your reading skills and attitudes to reading literacy to draw conclusions for your future self-development in reading literacy taking into account your future teaching profession.

6. Evaluation

a) Evaluate and justify which of the said typologies of questions and assignments you find as best applicable in the school practice.

b) Evaluate the benefits of this study text for your cognition, experience and skills with reading literacy. What do you lack in this text? What would help you in even more efficient learning?

c) Evaluate and justify your reading literacy development plans at school, in your teaching, in your self-development, etc.

d) Support the idea of national events promoting the development of reading literacy and reading in children and youth.

e) Defend the position that comprehensive measures related to skills and attitudes of students and the conditions they live in are necessary for the development of reading literacy.

f) What is the meaning hidden behind the following quotations?

*The books mean to people the same as the pinions to the birds.* (John Ruskin)
or

Beware the man who has read only one book. (Denis Diderot)

Please note: Classification to the respective level of thought activities always depends on the context. For instance, if the text contains an evaluation of a certain person, phenomenon, story, form, etc., then the student’s answers regarding evaluation will only reflect memory or understanding. The situation will be different if we want the students to give us their own evaluating assessment. Hence, everything depends on the circumstances where the question is asked.

7.2.2 Scaling of Questions and Assignments According to P. Gavora

P. Gavora (2008) has another typology of questions and assignment that can be used in the school practice. He offers the following overview of thought operations which may be induced through questions:

1. memory,
2. a) lower-level deduction,
   b) higher-level deduction,
3. evaluating assessment.

Example of questions and assignments No. 1:

Text:
‘I also made a mistake when I was guided by compassion and caused damage in consequence. To accommodate the wish from my Czech friend who came to my village with a group (I accompanied them as a guide), I bought shoes to a boy from the poorest family who had to face many wrongs. Although Eloy immediately hid the shoes (and is likely to never wear the valuable gift not to damage it), the whole village knows that he has nice shoes. Other boys stopped playing with him and were ‘angry at him’. The school principal told me later that his father had not come to the mandatory public work in the village because his son had shoes and now was apparently part of the ‘cream’.

Memory: Why did the village boys stop playing with Eloy?
Lower-level deduction: Why does the author of the text say ‘my’ village?
Higher-level deduction: What conclusions can we draw from the villagers’ reaction to the gift for the poor boy?
Evaluating assessment: Do you also think it is a mistake that the author brought shoes to the poor boy? Justify your opinion.

Example of questions and assignments No. 2:
Text:
The following text and picture were depicted on the back cover of a book:

Do you want to learn yourself more?
Do you want to be better in understanding the people with whom you meet in your life as friends or enemies?

Working on one’s personality development means to come to know both good and bad qualities. Handwriting is one of the ways to come to know one’s self and others as it reflects a true picture of your personality as a mirror reflecting your face.

Learn to read it!
Use it for your own benefit!

PICTURE OF A WRITING HAND

Source: Zuzana Dobiášová Grafologie pro každého. (Graphology for Everyone).

Memory: What does the author think that will help you come to know yourself better? What can we learn through handwriting?

Lower-level deduction: Explain: ... handwriting ... true picture of your personality ... or handwriting ... as a mirror reflecting your face.

Higher-level deduction: What is the purpose of this text?

Evaluating assessment: Evaluate whether this text has a suitable concept to meet its purpose. Submit your arguments.

7.2.3 Overview of Assignments According to V. Vykoukalová
The overview used by V. Vykoukalová (2013) is also inspiring.
(She uses and elaborates on the VUP overview, 2010).

Examples:
Assignments developing **understanding of texts** require the learners to:

a) seek explicit information in the text (e.g. characters, environment, relations in circumstances, etc.);

b) determine accuracy of a statement related to the explicitly stated information;

c) recognise the main idea of the text;

d) briefly retell the text content;

e) explain the meaning of key words, etc.

She points out that various **assignments focusing on understanding** play a very important role, e.g.

- question – answer;
- to choose from the text only such information which pertain to a determined phenomenon only;
- to draw up a story line from brief sentences;
- to add appropriate words in the text (own words or from a selection);
- to delete words from the text which do not logically fit in the text;
- to confirm or reject a statement;
- to comment on statements from the text.

In order to develop **deduction**, the pupils are required in their assignments to, e.g.

a) deduce how the situation has changed through the change in the main actors’ attitudes;

b) find hidden meanings on the basis of instructive mentions;

c) recognise relations, causes and consequences;

d) compare the newly acquired information with the previous experience;

e) oppose an erroneous or incorrect opinion and justify and defend one’s own opinion.

**Examples of deduction assignments:**

- Propose how the story line would develop if there were a changed environment, person, character of the person, change in the person’s interest, etc. (in other words: ‘What would happen if …?’ – *author’s note*);
- identify words/sentences indirectly pointing to a certain phenomenon or character;
- make various comparisons (and text comparisons);
- make a selection from multiple answers and justify the selection;
- add speaker in front of the text (depending on the character of speech, word content, etc.);
- draw conclusions, summaries, hidden thoughts, missions (author’s note).

According to V. Vykoukalová, the skill to **apply information** implies the application of reading literacy which is demonstrated at various levels and with a practical use in life situations. In addition to understanding the explicitly and implicitly communicated information and evaluating the formal aspect of the text, assignments also require imagination, fantasy and creativity.

According to V. Vykoukalová, **assignments** focus on:

a) demonstration of practical skills during orientation in common text types and analysis of their information;

b) and independent production of texts for a variety of purposes.

**Examples of application assignments:**

- To transform the information provided in a graphic or another format, i.e. to draw a map, plan, a simple object, to put parts together, to create a simple work;
- To find and use in practice (even in a simulated way) the information about time, number, distance, weight, etc.;
- To produce simple text structures (invitation, announcement, description, etc.);
- To produce simple types of brief structures (a table with results, a list, etc.);
- To perform practical activities based on text instructions, etc.

The said assignments also include **evaluation.** It could also be listed separately. Specific assignments would include (according to the author of this study text):

a) To assess pros/cons; fairness/unfairness; efficiency/inefficiency of a certain solution;

b) To assess information selected on the basis of certain criteria.
V. Vykoukalová also gives assignment types for individual reading literacy levels. We will present only the assignment for metacognition as this important part of literacy has not been discussed in this text yet.

**Assignment types developing metacognition:**

- Assignments stimulating selection of a suitable reading strategy;
- Assignments requiring text assessment from the addressee’s perspective;
- Assignments requiring text assessment from the perspective of form’s appropriateness;
- Assignments requiring text assessment from the perspective of the selected linguistic means.

(Vykoukalová, 2013)

The metacognitive activities also include the questions and assignments observing one’s own thought processes, feelings aroused by reading or the course and results of learning from texts, etc. Learners are guided to ask themselves questions like: Do I understand everything in the text? Which passage was an easy one to learn? Where do I see problems and why? Has a certain learning procedure or strategy worked to understand the text or learn it?, etc.

Similar contemplations can be used in the questions and assignments in teaching situations. We use some questions to draw attention, to motivate to reading, to imitate, to self-cognition and self-development; others are used to induce imagination, thinking and deeper understanding of the text or arouse activity, author production, to focus attention on essential moments and relations, etc. Some questions are diagnostic and aim to establish the level and depth of knowledge, lived experience, experience, attitudes and values; others induce metacognition. Formulation of questions during lessons is also adapted to stages of instruction or stages of work with texts (before reading, during work with the text, after finishing reading) and its purposes.

We should also not forget about formulating questions and assignments and their difficulty with respect to the texts such as maps, schemes, tables and charts.

**Application Tasks**
1. Think about the following questions about the aforementioned text on the cover of Zuzana Dobíšová’s book ‘Grafologie pro každého’ (Graphology for Everyone). (Prague: Ivo Železný, 2001. ISBN 80 237 3943 3) and try to categorise them.

a) What is your impression from the questions at the beginning of the text? Why are there any questions in the introduction to the text?
   What do they induce?
b) Why are there exclamation marks at the end of the text? What kind of feeling do they arouse in you?
c) Who communicates the content of the text?
d) Who is the target reader of this text?
e) Is it a scientific book? Why?
f) Write a text with a similar focus theme for a scientific book for the specialised public.
g) What is the purpose of this communication? (a course, a training course, a purchase of a book, etc.)
h) Would this text entice you to show interest in the topic of this publication? Would you be interested in reading the book? Why?
ch) Why is the text centred?
i) Why is there a picture with a writing hand underneath the text?
j) Is this a suitable picture selection or would you choose another one? Justify your answers.
k) Make a deduction about the field to be discussed by the book. Why do you think so?

2. a) Get a variety of authentic texts to develop reading literacy in students of the subjects of your teaching qualifications. At least one of them should be a document (a map, a scheme, charts or tables).
b) Design interesting, problem-solving and entertaining assignments to these texts.
c) Design each activity at two or three different levels of difficulty.

3. Propose questions and assignments for various stages of work with the text for different teaching intentions.

Review Questions

1. What is the difference between a question and an assignment?
2. In what way do questions and assignments affect the quality of reading literacy?
3. Which typology differentiating questions and assignments is closest to you and why? What does their selection consist in?
3. Will it be of any benefit for students if they are able to formulate questions and assignments to a text on their own? Why do you think so?
Summary

Questions and assignments guide the reader to understand and remember a text; but they also induce thinking about the text, analysing and using information from the text. They guide one to deduce new findings, to rework the text in a creative way and to evaluate its content and form.

Various overviews, e.g. the application of Bloom’s taxonomy and Gavora’s and Vykoukalová’s overviews, can also be used in support of formulating questions and assignments to texts in the teaching practice (in particular for learning from texts) for all levels of thought activities (edited overview of VUP, 2010).

8 Interest in Reading and Literature

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will know the agents affecting interest in reading.
- You will be able to integrate reading support elements in your subject.
- You will produce a reading development plan at a specific school.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- reading habits
- reading activities
- reading literacy factors
- factors of reading habits
- improving quality of reading literacy
- teacher
- student/pupil

Introductory Questions and Assignments
1. Think about the development of your approach to reading and books from your childhood to the present. Who or what was the most influential agent?
2. Is it still worth endeavouring to encourage a positive attitude to reading and literature in children now when they prefer computers to books? Why?

8.1 Factors of Interest in Reading and Literature

The interest in reading and literature is one of the important conditions for the quality of reader literacy and quality of life. It helps to improve reading skills, as it raises the frequency of contact with texts and brings pleasure to readers. If you are interested in literature, you may use it to be educated in your leisure time.

The terms reading and reading habits are narrowly related to this issue. Reading activity is (loosely acc. to J. Trávníček, 2010) an activity focusing on books. It is a planned activity that shows the value relationship to books and their selection. The relationship must be developed and maintained, primarily in childhood and while growing up.

Reading habit is the planned and targeted development of reading in childhood, with help from schools, libraries and other educational institutions (Trávníček, 2008, p. 35). Reading habit differs from reading activity in that it is always a voluntary activity, a hobby. Reading habit may thus be described as reading with interest (Trávníček, 2010). Literature, as an instrument of the child’s activity, adequate in compliance with other activities, creates immediate relations between literature and the reader thanks to specific communication. (for more details see Chaloupka, 1982.) We agree with J. Trávníček (2008, p. 19) that reading in this case is motivated somehow, by something or someone. In the ideal case, internal motivation to read is involved. In such case, the reader is attracted to reading and the book by the desire to read and the expected joy from reading, as the reading really brings the reader joy. The reader is happy to spend his/her free time reading. External motivation, represented by pressure from those around, has effect on children and youth. The pressure comes primarily from the school, through compulsory school reading, school papers, seminary theses etc.).

The interest in reading is influenced by many factors. When comparing the data from the following graph with previously known data on user literacy factors stated in previous chapters, we find out that they are virtually identical. Readers’ interest is formed by external cultural and social factors, as well as internal factors. This and other information is apparent from Scheme 4.
Scheme no.4: Factors influencing formation of interest in reading and literature

Reader’s personal prerequisites
- reader’s skills and experience
- age specifics
- gender differences

Family
- biolog. foundations
- social and cultural conditions (models, stimuli, family’s interest focus)
- parents’ education
- economic conditions. podm.

School
- material and psychosocial conditions
- approach to tuition (goals, content, methods)
- teacher (role model)

Municipality
- local library & other cult. institutions

Friends, peers and their interests,
- age phase characteristics

Wider society, its culture and traditions, social and economic conditions, media

Positive effects:
- deeper interest in reading, positive attitude to learning
- stimulation of personal cognitive and emotional components and skills
  → Improved semantics of reading, language skills atp.
The factors that influence the formation of interest in reading and literature are always displayed on the background of social and cultural, economic, demographic and ethnographic conditions in society and change depending on these conditions. The groups of factors are always identical though.

The scheme does not depict mutual links between the factors, but it should be noted that they affect each other as well.

When forming reading skills and reading habits, generally valid pedagogical and psychological knowledge about the rules of the reading process and its conditions and the impact of motivation on these processes must be taken into account.

**Interest in and attitude to reading and literature** have a significant impact on the quality of reading skills and development of reading habits and vice versa. By handling the reading technique and reading strategy with understanding and learning strategy, we know how to think about the text and deduce important information from it; we make contact with various texts more frequently, gain positive experience, which contributes to positive relation and interest in texts and reading. Work with text should thus be started during school attendance, not only in basic school, and in most school subjects. Even though the moments are often hard to detect, the teacher should recognise them, work with them and support them. They become the basis of reading habits and persistent interest in reading, thus helping deepen and expand the extent of the curriculum in various subjects.

How specifically to stimulate the interest and form students’ attitude to reading and literature at school? How to integrate the development tools into the teaching strategy?

The answer is important not only for the formation of the basic reading skills, but also for late re-education in reading and the development of talented and successful students. Both theory and practice confirm that this should occur through functional and meaningful activity that is pleasant for the students, or they view it as useful. Situations caused by problem and/or project teaching have been indicated before, as has been the definition of space for sharing the experience from reading and recommendation of suitable literature – both fiction and non-fiction. Creation of texts by students helps as well.
Foundations of the interest in books and reading are laid by parents and grandparents already at preschool age. If a family respects literature, has a library, the parents read and read also to their children and tell them stories, the children’s positive relation to reading and books grows. The parents naturally use literature and various texts, read and write and serve as a role model for the children, as well as guides on the path towards learning to read, and listen and share experiences from reading happily.

During its development, the child passes through phases that may be critical for the reading habits. The puberty is a kind of crossroads, when the child gives preference to other hobbies which are more attractive or felt that there are prerequisites for it, but there are also other reasons. It is becoming apparent that the relation to reading and literature is built up also thanks to other hobbies, even though in this case the children specialise in a selected type of literature. Classmates, friends and peers who like to read may also have a positive effect on reading habits. Teachers play an important role, too. If they talk about literature in an interesting way, recommend books or read from them, if they help find the meaning of the text, they can deepen or at least maintain the interest in books.

If we look at the results of various surveys and studies on reading habits, we find out that girls are more interested in reading and spend more time reading than boys. The link between reading and school results is not so clear, as it depends on the assessment criteria e.g. in the mother tongue (Czech) and literature. However, children that have problems with reading are usually less interested in reading.

### 8.2 Options for Improving Reading Literacy and Forming Reading Habits at Basic School

Changes aimed to boost the efficiency of educational processes should also be motivated by the newly defined goals for modern schools in educational documents which respond to the requirements of our era, and the guidelines and priorities of our government’s recent educational policies.

If we want to create, improve or innovate any process, we should change the whole system of components participating in the process. Partial changes are ineffective. The efficiency of systemic measures (i.e. complex changes) stems from influencing as many components as possible, with the overall effect multiplied by mutual interactions.

The reading literacy formation process, as well as the interest in reading and literature, is influenced by a wide range of factors. We may view them systematically. The conditions (external and internal) and factors and agents in the
process (student, teacher, parents, community, society) that mutually influence the quality of reading literacy and interest in reading, form the components of the system. The reality is even more complicated, though, as the system components themselves created independent systems and subsystems.

The system also has a wider environment (media, dominant lifestyle, society’s accepted values and traditions, the country’s economic situation and educational policy etc.) which have a secondary effect on the phenomenon observed.

The overview below attempts to depict the primary system and its basic components. The system is analysed didactically. We deal with the basic didactic categories and list their most substantial characteristics for increasing the efficiency and modernisation (innovation) of the reading habit and reading skill formation process. The categories and characteristics contribute towards the realisation of higher educational goals – the development of the student’s personality in the spirit of humanistic and democratic ideals. We view the system as open. It may be continually amended and finished in a creative way.

**Attempt at systemic approach to the development of reading literacy and interest in reading and literature (didactic criterion)**

1) **Premises and relevant equipment for the formation of the reading environment:**

   a) Classrooms, corridors etc.: equip the premises with libraries, establish literature corners, install exhibitions of students’ works, latest information on literature, samples of students’ papers...

   b) Conceive the school library

      - as a space where high-quality free time may be spent with a book and a place that supports reading for pleasure;

      - as the school’s (municipality’s) study and information centre;

      - as a service for teachers and students.

Note: Activities in the school library are still underappreciated in our country and experience with them is limited. It should therefore be noted that work in the school library helps form skills which the students need for their presence and their future, for their studies, as well as professional and private life. The work also enables students’ individual development and differentiated attitude.

2) **Educational and training process:**

   "Obor: Učitelství – společný základ dvouoborvých studií"
a) The goals and content of school subjects:
- integrate the development of reading skills, work with literature resources (and various information sources in general) into the goals for all school subjects (so-called functional goals);
- always remember all three components of the goals (cognitive, conative, emotive) for working with text.

b) Teaching content
- continue in the tradition of reading high-quality literature for children and youth;
- motivate the assumption of reading and learning strategies;
- in addition to reading, information and study skills, evoke experiences and form attitudes.

c) Teaching methods and organisational forms of work:
- to seek, adopt and competently use effective methods and organisational forms of work which enable:
  - optimal development of the students and individual approach (e.g. weekly plans, free lessons, school libraries, utilisation of texts of various length, difficulty, topics, etc.);
  - activate the student, support creative and evoke experience.
- use individual reading and various forms of reading for teaching.

Examples:
- methods of critical thinking and dramatic education, listening to ‘live word’ literature samples, reading and writing workshops, so-called free reading lessons, project methods, selection seminars, clubs and optional school subjects;
- various methods for learning from text (see above);
- cooperative organisational forms of work (cooperative education) that support universal communication, peer learning, social learning and other benefits;
- diagnostic and evaluation methods: changes in procedures and contents required also other methods and forms for evaluation. For instance, verbal evaluation is used, together with the so-called portfolio where students are guided to self-evaluation.

3) Teacher
- is open (to students, cooperation with other teachers, changes and new knowledge and findings, cooperation with parents, institutions);
- equipped with the competence to plan, organise and evaluate his/her educational work with texts (e.g. learning from texts, extent depends on the subject);
- is enthusiastic about reading, serves as a role model with his/her relation to reading.

4) Student

Students must be given the opportunity for individual development. Teachers have to respond to students’ requirements within the work with text with the aforementioned tools, motivate their activities and self-development, so that the students

- are open, active, curious, creative and self-reliant;
- assume lifelong interest in reading and education in general;
- are equipped with the skill of working with texts;

Creating reading skills, while simultaneously opening new and interesting opportunities for applying these skills, is effective.

5) School management

a) form the conditions for improving reading skills and developing reading habits:

- support and coordinate school projects and other campaigns aimed to improve the quality of learning to read and work with texts, support the student’s interest in reading and own creativity (e.g. Whole School Reads, International Children’s Book Day, publishing school magazines etc.)..
- form additional reading programmes:
  - include new voluntary subjects to support and/or deepen reading habits;
  - form interest literature and drama clubs (drama clubs, young writers’ clubs etc.);
  - support projects where work with text information is represented naturally
  - participate in events supporting reading and development of reading habits;
  - provide individual care to students with specific reading requirements;
  - educate teachers in reading literacy.
stimulate reading environment and equip the school with resources that support the development of reading habits and enable quality work with information – e.g. modern school library.

b) support out-of-school, in-school and national activities that deepen the interest in reading and literature:
c) open municipalities, institutions and organisations to cooperation with foundations, public libraries, writers;
d) support material and immaterial conditions for the development of reading and reading habits through grant projects;
e) cooperate with other nursery, basic and secondary schools.

6) Cooperation with family in various forms:
   a) advice, information, raising awareness among parents;
   b) mutual aid between family and school;
   c) organising events and campaigns together.

(for more specific samples, see V. Tamášová, 2008)

We are aware that the overview does not depict the dynamism of the relations between individual components of the system perfectly, but we are at least noting that the final effects multiply and deepen due to the long-term mutual interaction of the factors. One must also count with very influential functional effect of factors. Their substance is captured very concisely by Fulghum’s words: ‘Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you’ (R. Fulghum, 1992).

More information on reading habits will be provided in the following chapter.

Application Questions
1. Describe a specific situation of a selected pupil-student in respect of reading literacy and its impact on learning from texts.
2. Propose options to support reading habits in the subject of your teaching qualifications.
3. Propose measure to improve reading habits of pupils at a selected basic school.
Review Questions

1. What is the difference between reading and reading habits?
2. What factors can have no or even a negative impact on an individual’s reading habits even he/she does not live directly in a pathological environment? Use Scheme 4.
3. How are reading habits developed in other countries? Describe the situation if you have any specific experience or source of information.

Summary

Interest and motivation of learners for work with texts and reading is important both for personality development and cultivation and improvement of reading literacy. What is important for reading is the attitudinal and relational component which is primarily developed in childhood on a long-term basis. There are many factors and agents affecting interest in reading, in particular an individual’s personality, family and school and other cultural institutions and wider society. Reading habits should be supported on a complex basis. In education, this means that all elements of the didactic system of instruction are influenced, i.e. objectives and content of instruction, its means and conditions, under the teacher’s direct influence.
Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will have an insight into the way reading literacy is enshrined in educational documents.
- You gain an insight into other means for ensuring the development of reading literacy.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- educational documents
- methods for developing reading literacy
- teaching materials
- projects for developing reading literacy and reading habits

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. In what subjects at the basic and secondary school did you work with texts most often? Was it enough to develop your reading literacy?
2. In what reading supporting events did you participate as part of school instruction?

9.1 Reading Literacy in Educational Documents

In the approach to teaching outlined by the objectives set within the general educational programmes for basic and secondary schools, and given the requirement of full functionality of education, we must focus on reading literacy.

The Basic Education General Educational Programme (RVP ZV) lists selected reading skills as key competences and others among the anticipated outcome, primarily of language education. In many cases, the reading skill is an
unambiguous prerequisite towards their achievement. The requirements for reading skills are not defined compactly in RVP ZV. Still, the document is an important instrument for the achievement of foreseen outputs and key competences and future potential for lifelong education.

According to the existing educational programmes (RVP ZV), the teaching of reading should focus on active formation of skills of work with text and deeper experience from reading. The procedures are, however, not stipulated in the documents, and it is thus all the more important for teachers to receive good information from other resources.

The situation in the first stage of basic schools is specific, as the pupils are only learning the basics of reading. Goals of reading are stipulated within mother tongue teaching. First they include learning the reading technique, reading comprehension, later forming the basics of study reading (towards the end of the first stage of the basic school). The goals also focus on the creation of the ability to evaluate texts and their content (!), taking stances and positions to the texts (!), evocation of experience from reading and formation of a relationship to reading. The goals cover not only the creation of the functional reading ability, but also the habit to use reading (and writing) as a tool for communication with other people. The goals do not leave out the motivation for the formed skills, either. Individual development specifics are accentuated.

Reading literacy should be developed further in the second stage of the basic school, as the development of reading literacy has not been completed yet in all students. More cognitively demanding activities of abstract nature are required within the work with texts, as well as the creation of links among pieces of information. Attention to reading literacy should be paid not only in language subjects, but also in all other subjects. Teachers in the second stage of basic schools should focus on the development of reading skills, so that students may use the skills for independent work at home.

The situation in educational documents for secondary professional schools and vocational schools is different. Reading literacy is defined separately among key competences and specific requirements for specific skills are determined. It is important for the teachers to be familiar with didactic tools for reading literacy and work with texts with clearly set goals and suitable methods.

9.2 Teaching Materials

Textbooks are used for teaching most often. If they are compiled well from the didactic point of view, e.g. the interpretative text is logically structured, with marked keywords and titles for paragraphs, the texts are supplemented with images
and illustrations, then they can contribute very significantly towards understanding of the text and learning and development of reading literacy. The understanding depends on how the textbook (interpretative) texts are supplemented with questions and assignments which lead to understanding the text, stimulate thinking about its content and possibly also to creative and functional utilisation of the text information. Our publishing houses offer a selection of textbooks for all subjects. Finding out whether and how the textbooks develop learning in the given field and reading literacy is beneficial.

Various types of texts should be used for teaching, primarily authentic texts, i.e. current newspaper, online and magazine articles, informative texts from various institutions etc.

### 9.3 Teaching Methods

The methods for working with texts, primarily understanding and learning from texts, should head towards the formation of reading literacy through the implementation of modern teaching principles. All activities should be aimed at achieving high-quality reading skills and forming children’s interest in reading. Huge importance is placed on the communication aspect of teaching in group (cooperative) forms. These cooperative forms should be used for teaching in various school subjects for work with text information. They will be used specifically for activation methods, e.g. the problem method, project method and others.

In the initial phase of teaching reading (i.e. in the 1st year and partially the 2nd year of basic school), specific methods for teaching how to read are used to adopt the basic reading skills. The analytic-synthetic method and the genetic method are most frequently used in our conditions.

In higher years, the methods of reading and working with texts are based on the purpose of the usage of the text. The methods are either aimed at artistic assumption of the text or learning from the text etc. Various types of reading, i.e. both out loud and silent, are used for the application of the methods, as well as various organisational forms (mass education, individual, individualised or cooperative education, as well as various combinations). As stated before, no methods are described in RVP ZV, they have to be sought in other literature and resources, such as methodical guidelines, publications on teaching methods, on the internet under the keyword reading literacy and/or in educational courses for teachers.

Over the past decade, dramatic education methods became increasingly popular in literature education. With the growing popularity of the RWCT (Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking) method in our country, methods leading to
critical thinking, understanding and teaching are increasingly frequently used. These include e.g. the managed reading method, the expert group method, the ‘teaching each other’ method or the pair reading method. The so-called reading workshop and writing workshop involve a complex of various methods and organisational forms of work. The aforementioned methods stimulate deeper understanding of the text, thinking about its content and learning from the text. They are also using the dynamism of group forms of work to achieve results of higher quality. See e.g. H. Grecmanová et al. (2000), H. Grecmanová and E. Urbanovská (2007), V. Vykoukalová (2013).

Students are activated and/or motivated to read also through didactic games, discussions, visits to theatrical performances and libraries, so-called free reading, creation and presentation of children’s books and class/school magazines, or, in the case of older students, discussions about the books read.

For many years, teachers in the first stage of basic schools attempt to integrate reading and writing skills into other teaching subjects where the skills would be used functionally and developed. Less attention is paid to this goal in the second stage of basic schools and in secondary schools.

9.4 Role of Experts in Reading

As school psychologists and special pedagogues are not represented substantially in our schools, teachers trained in work with dyslectic pupils are the main specialists for direct contact with pupils learning to read. Many of them are insufficiently qualified, though, and their education does not allow individualised and intensive care for children with specific learning dysfunctions. The situation is especially unfavourable in classes with too many students. The staff in pedagogical and psychological consultancies work with students who have reading problems, but only outside school hours. They diagnose learning development disorders and help the children overcome the problems.

Librarians from local and school libraries have a positive effect on children in terms of reading and reading habits. Their numbers have increased recently.

Experts also influence the teaching of reading and literature, as they hand over to teachers the information on reading and reading literacy in various trainings and courses. The creators and publishers of textbooks and other school aids, authors of professional publications etc. may also influence the development of students’ reading literacy. Only a handful of books on reading issues and formation of reading literacy are available in our country, unfortunately. No professional magazine focusing specifically on learning to read exists in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Reading Association (CzechRA) plays an indispensable role for raising the awareness in teachers.
9.5 Utilisation of Technologies

CD and DVD recordings of Czech and world literature are available for reading teaching. Reading teaching programmes exist for work with dyslectic students. Their utilisation depends on the endowment of schools with computers and relevant software. Interactive charts are popular, too. These tools are interactive, affect multiple senses, students work with them actively and with immediate feedback.

Online sneak previews and trailers of published books influence children’s interest in books for reading pleasure. Publishers attempt to win readers through filmed samples and staging of parts of the books, as internet and dynamic (action) audiovisual projection appeals to the potential readers.

9.6 Projects Supporting Reading Habits

The campaigns focus on the whole spectrum of target groups, from the smallest children to adolescents and youth.

- Celé Česko čte dětem (Every Czech Reads to Kids)
- Čtení pomáhá (Reading Helps)
- Noc s Andersenem (Night with Andersen)
- Studenti píší do novin (Students write the newspaper)

Events and campaigns such as author readings, writing poetry for the radio, as well as various educational paths motivated by characters and/or locations from books, writers’ lives etc., may be used for school trips and excursions.

Application Tasks

1. a) Analyse the key competences and expected outputs of the subject of your teaching qualifications and mark the target categories which relate to reading literacy.
   
   b) Do you think that pupils can manage these assignments? Why?
c) In what way will you work with them to achieve the goals you have set? This means what methods and means will be used when working with texts? How will you attract and win them for working with texts, for literature? Will these activities be time-consuming?

2. Find other sources of information about methods and means for developing reading literacy (reading skills, attitudes to texts, etc.) and inform others about them. What would you recommend most?

3. What projects in support of reading are used by the school in the place of your residence? What methods are applied to develop reading literacy? Do they have any special reading literacy and student reading development scheme in their school educational programme? What has drawn your attention?

4. Find how reading literacy is enshrined in educational documents and how it is developed in educational systems abroad.

Review Questions

1. What is the current position of reading literacy in the framework educational programmes and educational standards?
2. What means of reading literacy and reading development have lately emerged in educational practice?

Summary

In the Czech Republic, reading literacy is defined in the basic educational documents (framework educational plans) even though in not big detail and methodology. If we know the essence of reading literacy, it can be identified in the expected outcomes and key competences. There are not many publications on reading literacy in the Czech Republic.

A better quality of reading literacy is enhanced by all elements in instruction if they are applied in accordance with the principles of modern instruction and reading literacy and if other conditions are comprehensively adjusted accordingly. Effective methods include the RWCT project methods, drama education and project and problem instruction in a variety of organisational forms.

Several projects initiated by non-profit organisations have recently focused on the development of reading literacy, supported by volunteer and sponsors.

Literature
Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will be able to apply assessment methods to establish the status of various stages of reading literacy of students.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- assessment methods
- evaluation

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. What moments are in your opinion important to focus on when evaluating reading literacy of students?
2. In what ways is it possible to obtain information about reading literacy of students?
3. Is it in your opinion essential to deal with the level of the reading diaries of your students in their evaluation?

10.1 Assessment and Evaluation of Reading Literacy of Students

The assessment methods are the procedures through which we obtain background information to evaluate students in instruction. They also help both teachers and students explain the causes for the status established, i.e. to characterise the processes and outcome of educational and instructional activities. They can also be used to recognise the internal causes of the quality of teaching processes. The information obtained forms the basis for considerations on how to behave and what to do next in instructional activities. Evaluation then better meets the information, assessment and motivating function.

To be able to credibly and objectively evaluate the status, we must know the target categories. However, we still lack this in reading literacy at higher levels of school,
unlike the first stage of the basic school. Although the reading literacy scale is not elaborated in the subject-related methodologies for higher school levels, the reading literacy scale according to the PISA survey can be successfully applied. This scale describes the characteristics of reading skills by their respective levels from the weakest performance to the best results. The scales do not replace the requirements of individual years or age periods. They only show an individual’s position in the reading development (see Appendix 4).

Since there has been no systematic approach to the reading literacy development and its evaluation at the second stage of the basic school, practice focuses primarily on reading and easily noticeable phenomena such as loud reading techniques. Other essential characteristics of reading literacy are then not taken into account.

The manner how a teacher finds out whether the students’ reading literacy conditions and the quality for its formation are good is included in the assessment methods.

### 10.2 Reading Literacy Assessment Methods

The following basic methods are most often used for the assessment purposes in reading literacy:

- interview;
- questionnaire, poll;
- analysis of activity results (work with texts, individual reading);
- observation;
- tests.

Self-assessment methods and portfolio are among the newly introduced methods.

It is the entire personality which is involved in the shaping of psychomotor skills such as reading. Reading activates thought activities and brings about internal experiencing of the text content and its evaluation. Other factors within the reading process and the development of reading skills also include motivation and relations to reading, literature, interest in literature. The teacher obtains an objective picture about the overall level of the students’ reading literacy only if he/she tries to capture more comprehensive views of reading literacy, not only individual abilities and reading skills. It is also important to observe the processes and conditions under which reading literacy is shaped.

Table 1 gives a brief overview of the reading literacy phenomena under observation and suitable assessment methods.
Table 1: Examples of Application of Assessment Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomena under observation</th>
<th>Assessment methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characteristics 1:</td>
<td>listening and reading analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading technique</td>
<td>Analysis of written records (assignments prepared for the text, written answers, etc.), analysis of verbal expression (text reproduction), drama and art activities, analysis of reading focused on distinctness, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characteristics 2:</td>
<td>interview about what has been read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and thinking about the text content</td>
<td>observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application and creative utilisation of information from the text</td>
<td>reading tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal conditions 1:</td>
<td>observation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lived experience from reading</td>
<td>interview;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis of written records (diaries) or works of art produced as a result of the reading experience, etc.;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>analysis of self-reflective records;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>portfolio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal conditions 2:</td>
<td>interview;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivation, interest (in the topic, genre, etc.)</td>
<td>questionnaire, poll;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>portfolio;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>analysis of reading activities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>portfolio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal conditions 3:</td>
<td>analysis of medical and other documentation, activity results, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological prerequisites</td>
<td>observation (of student and activities induced by the teacher);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External conditions for the development of reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
literacy (school and family environment) - interview with the student, parents, instructress in after-school club, etc. about the conditions for the development of reading literacy; - questionnaire.

Processes

- interviews about the strategies applied.
- analysis of the record on the opportunities to learn during a lesson

The student must be more intensively drawn in active self-creation and guided to self-reflection as the basis for self-creation. And this must be assessed.

In reading, also methods through which the teacher assesses his/her own work are applied (self-assessment).

More detailed characteristics of assessment methods can be found in literature about educational assessment and publications on dyslexia.

### 10.2.1 Standardised and Non-standardised Reading Literacy Tests

Standardised tests are published in methodical brochures about reading assessment or in literature on dyslexia. These tests are not used in the common practice, only in pedagogical-psychological counselling centres.

At school, the tests contained in methodical brochures to the relevant textbooks are mostly used. However, the tests are not always contained in the textbooks as a rule. If teachers use tests, they most frequently use non-standardised tests, i.e. their own tests. They can be inspired by tests and assignments from international reading literacy tests (PISA, PIRLS). Reading literacy is also tested by Scio or Kalibro.

### 10.3 Evaluation of Reading Skills

The information obtained through assessment methods becomes a basis for evaluation of students and for planning further development, lessons, etc.

At the first stage at basic school, pupils are mostly evaluated with marks or verbally or in both forms. ‘Innovative’ teachers are inducing student self-evaluation.
and introducing a portfolio, which is more appropriate for individualisation in the learning and evaluation process together with verbal evaluation.

Teachers of other than linguistic subjects mostly do not include reading literacy in student evaluation in their subjects. However, more attention should be devoted to this due to the importance of reading literacy.

It would be good if students were informed about their reading literacy targets beforehand and if these targets were assessed on a continuous basis.

**Application Tasks**

1. Find other sources of information about assessment methods related to reading literacy (reading skills, attitudes to texts, etc.).
2. Create a questionnaire to find out the student interest in reading.

**Review Questions**

1. What and in what way can be assessed in reading literacy?
2. What is the function (mission) of student evaluation in reading literacy?

**Summary**

The assessment methods informing about the course and results of the shaping of reading literacy are essential for student evaluation in this area and are also important for student self-formation and teacher’s self-assessment. The most frequently used assessment methods include interview, questionnaire, analysis of activity results (work with texts, individual reading), observation, tests and portfolio.

**Literature**

**On Educational Assessment**
11 Reading Literacy Surveys

Objectives

After studying this chapter:

- You will gain an insight into the surveys detecting the level of reading literacy.

Terms to Remember (Key Words)

- international surveys
- PIRLS
- PISA
- questionnaires
- reading tests
- surveys of Czech experts

Introductory Questions and Assignments

1. Did you take part in any reading literacy survey during your school attendance? Can you recall the name of the survey? And the methods used?

2. Why is reading literacy explored both on an international and national basis?

11.1 International Reading Literacy Surveys

For us, important are the international comparative surveys which have been and are conducted on the initiative of the OECD since the 1990. (In the Czech Republic, they have been implemented by the employees of the Institute for Information in Education in Prague. Detailed information on the survey and its results can be found on the Institute’s website.)

There has always been a comprehensive approach to the planning of reading literacy surveys due to their sophistication and rich structure of determinants. Although J. Průcha criticised in 1987 that the issues of learning from texts are examined regardless of the motivating factors (Průcha, 1987), international reading
literacy surveys from 1994 (Straková and Tomášek, 1995) and PISA from 2000 (Straková, 2002) also include the student’s interest in reading.

As we can learn a lesson from these surveys’ methodology, we will now detail on some of them. The reading literacy status is identified through reading literacy tests and interest in reading is established through reading questionnaires. The then reading tests contained items identifying how students master:

- procedures – i.e. activities through which they solve various assignments focused on understanding, acquisition of information, production of interpretation, assessment of the text content and text form;
- content – represented by a variety of texts (continuous and non-continuous) and the respective induced range of reading activities;
- situation – represented texts by the purpose for which the text was written. (Straková, 2002)

According to the Reading Literacy Study (RLS, 1990-1991) which was carried out among nine-year-olds and 14-year-olds in the Czech Republic only in 1994 and published in 1995 (Straková and Tomášek, 1995), children’s abilities were tested in three domains: narration (a continuous text where the author narrates a story); presentation (a text serving to present facts and information) and document (the information is presented in a non-continuous text, e.g. in a chart, map, etc.). In the assignments following after the texts of various lengths and difficulty, students were to demonstrate the degree of understanding and ability to use the information in additional operations. The test items were therefore focused on the following text operations: reproduction, paraphrasing, deduction, search for information and subsequent analysis. They were also divided into five categories of difficulty to make reliable difference between good and bad readers.

Respondents were choosing from multiple possible answers after the texts; they produced their own answers only in a negligible number of cases. Their own constructed answers were not subject to evaluation.

The third-grade-goers were working with a test exercise book (with fifteen texts and 66 questions) for about 75 minutes. Before doing that, they had to complete a simple text for word recognition (90 seconds). In our opinion, the quantity of texts and assignments as well as the time given to complete all items was not adequate.

The test for the eighth-grade-goers contained 19 texts with 89 questions. They were working for 85 minutes.

Questionnaires for students focused on their background, relations to school, to mother tongue and reading lessons, reading interests and manner of spending leisure time.
The teacher’s questionnaire (mother tongue teachers) was related to the teacher’s personality, conditions of the tested class, teaching methods for teaching the mother tongue and reading, evaluation methods and opinions on tests.

The questionnaires for school principals were asking about the school conditions, school equipment, level of cooperation with parents, manner of teaching reading, priorities in the principal’s work (Straková and Tomášek, 1995, p. 7-17).

In the PISA 2000 survey, the test items were structured. The assignments concerned an initial text, chart or picture, i.e. students dealt with only one topic for a longer period of time. The basic material included authentic newspaper and magazine articles, internet texts, advertising leaflets, etc., which was different from the previous survey.

Questions to the texts were divided into three groups:
1. students could choose an answer;
2. they were to write a brief answer (one to several words);
3. they produced a longer answer.

Their constructed sentences were subject to evaluation unlike in the previous survey. Each student had 120 minutes to work with the test.

The PISA survey also used questionnaires for students and school principals. With students, they focused on the social and cultural climate in family, conditions and course of instruction and their relations to school and the tested subjects. The focus was similar to the previous survey. A special questionnaire surveyed self-evaluation and study strategies. They were also completing an optional questionnaire focused on information technologies.

The school principals were answering questions about the school characteristics, about the teaching staff, educational and material problems, criteria for admitting and evaluating students, distribution of powers at the school.

The students (15-year-olds) had 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire; school principals were given 30 minutes.

The surveys were obviously large both in their scope and complexity. The evaluation of the PISA reading literacy text is interesting. Three particular scales were used to present the results:
1. ability to obtain information from the text;
2. ability to interpret the text;
3. ability to assess the content and form of the text read and contextualise it with the knowledge from other sources.

The entire scale characterised reading literacy as a whole.
Each scale was divided in five competence levels which were defined in detail through the definition of characteristic skills for work with texts. They expressed the level of the ability to use reading skills to obtain information and to further self-education (Straková, 2002, p. 10-21).

The research materials for functional literacy of adults (SIALS) had a similar structure (for details, see Matějů, 1998).

The research methods in the following PISA 2003, PISA 2006 and PIRLS surveys remained unchanged; they only specified the focus of questions and assignments to texts.

11.2 Reading Literacy Surveys by Czech Experts

Surveys carried out by the employees of faculties of education and other scientific sites focus on particular reading literacy skills and are more deep-cutting. They seek relations and links among reading literacy factors, pros and cons of the processes shaping this key competence.

Reading skills, in particular text understanding, deduction and text evaluation, were surveyed by M. Novotná; V. Najvarová and J. Doležalová focused on reading strategies; V. Vykoukalová was concerned with text activities (assignments) while R. Wildová addressed the issue of initial reading and writing (see the list of reference sources).

I. Gabal, L. Helšusová, K. Homolová, O. Chaloupka, L. Lederbuchová, R. Metelková-Svobodová and J.Trávníček focused their research activities on reading habits.

But reading literacy surveys need not be conducted with quantitative methods only. Qualitative methods can be applied, as well. For instance, the narrative reading research method was used by Garbe (2008) and J. Doležalová (2013).

Information on the research methods which can be applied when exploring reading literacy can be found in literature on research in education (and also on procedures during research). Valuable information on research in this area is also contained in various conference proceedings and internet databases.

Application Tasks

1. Find out the differences in the focus of the most recent PISA and PIRLS surveys compared to the original studies.
2. What tendencies do you find in the reading literacy results of our students in repeated international surveys? What measures would you propose for the coming period?

3. How and what would you identify in a selected school if you were to propose measures to improve reading literacy of students?

4. Articulate a question related to reading literacy which you are interested in. Then propose a target of an empirical survey and an adequate research method. Find out if any such research has already been carried out to obtain new information on your topic or inspiration to improve your research instrument. Carry out an empirical survey in your teaching practice; evaluate the results and comment on them. Summarise your research.

Review Questions

1. Why are international reading literacy surveys supported by the OECD carried out?

2. What is the concept behind international reading literacy surveys?

3. What research methods can you use in your common teaching practice when surveying reading literacy?

Summary

Reading literacy of students has been recently explored in extensive comparative surveys. They use reading literacy tests and questionnaire-based surveys among students, teachers and school principals to encompass the issue under research to the widest possible extent.

The surveys carried out in the Czech Republic have a smaller scope and are specialised in a certain area of reading literacy. They use quantitative and qualitative research methods adequate to the respective problem.

Literature

On Educational Research
On Qualitative Research:
On Reading Literacy and Reading Surveys
List of Appendices:

APPENDIX 1: Overview of Subject Objectives and Relevant Teaching Competences ........................................ 80

APPENDIX 2 ......................................................................................................................... 81
Learning from Texts Strategies and Information Strategies (QUESTIONNAIRE)

APPENDIX 3 ......................................................................................................................... 82
Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning Objectives for Cognitive Area - Verbs

APPENDIX 4 ......................................................................................................................... 84
Questionnaire - Self-reflection in the Creation of Professional Competences for the Development of Reading Literacy in Students

APPENDIX 5
Reading Literacy Scale by PISA
Appendix 1: Overview of Subject Objectives and Relevant Teaching Competences

Appendix 2: Learning from Texts Strategies and Information Strategies

In the sentences below, check the number on the scale which mostly reflects your opinions and experience: 1- I strongly agree; 2 – I agree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree; 4 - I disagree; 5 – I strongly disagree.

In some sentences, you will be asked to check the most frequent or most accurate answer.

1. I have no problems with learning from texts. 1 2 3
   4 5

2. I learn from texts
   a. in order to be successful at my exams. 1 2 3 4
      5
   b. because I am interested in the topic (curriculum). 1 2 3
      4 5
   c. because I must learn. 1 2 3 4 5
   d. because I want to know more than others. 1 2 3
      4 5
   e. Other, specify …………………………………………………………………………

3. When learning from texts, I seek to ...
   a. learn all information in the text word-by-word. 1 2 3
      4 5
   b. learn the important information. 1 2 3 4
      5
   c. understand the context of information within the text. 1 2 3 4
      5
   d. Other, specify …………………………………………………………………………

4. Before starting learning from texts (reading texts):
   a. when I learn from a book, I go through it, browse through it and become familiar with its content.
      1 2 3 4 5
   b. before I start reading, I think about what I know about the topic and what I am interested in.
      1 2 3 4 5
5. In what way do I read when I learn from texts?
   a. I read the text only once.  1 2 3 4 5
   b. First, I read the whole text and then in parts.  1 2 3 4 5
   c. When I read a paragraph by paragraph, I think about their main thoughts.  1 2 3 4 5
   d. I make a text summary after finishing reading.  1 2 3 4 5
   e. Other activities, specify ……………………………………………………………..

6. While reading, I write down …
   a. new information.  1 2 3 4 5
   b. what I find important.  1 2 3 4 5
   c. what I am interested in.  1 2 3 4 5
   d. what is highlighted.  1 2 3 4 5
   e. what I do not understand.  1 2 3 4 5
   f. with what I do not agree.  1 2 3 4 5
   g. my own ideas coming during reading.  1 2 3 4 5
   h. Other activities, specify …………………………………………………………………

7. To better remember and understand the text, …
   a. I underline or highlight important information in colour.  1 2 3 4 5
   b. I make marginal notes.  1 2 3 4 5
   c. I write notes from the text.  1 2 3 4 5
   d. I relate new knowledge to the old one.  1 2 3 4 5
   e. I think about using the new knowledge.  1 2 3 4 5
   f. Other, specify …………………………………………………………………………

8. When I make notes from the text, …
   a. I copy whole sentences.  1 2 3 4 5
   b. I write down brief notes.  1 2 3 4 5
c. I write only key words. 1 2 3 4 5
d. I copy almost everything, but use my own words. 1 2 3 4 5
e. I use abbreviations and symbols. 1 2 3 4 5
f. I use another method (specify): ............................................................

9. If I do not understand something in the text, ...
   a. I look for explanations in other books (other printed texts, dictionaries, encyclopaedias). 1 2 3 4 5
   b. I look for explanations on the internet. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. I ask the teacher. 1 2 3 4 5
d. I consult my mates, friends. 1 2 3 4 5
e. I ask my parents. 1 2 3 4 5
f. I do not continue the reading and learning; I quit. 1 2 3 4 5
g. I use another method (specify): ............................................................

10. After having read the text from which I learn, ...
    a. I process the new findings in a graphic way (tables, charts, thought maps, pictures) 1 2 3 4 5
    b. I process the new findings in summaries. 1 2 3 4 5
c. I make an oral summary of the text content. 1 2 3 4 5
d. I make a written summary of the text content. 1 2 3 4 5
e. I relate the new knowledge to the old one. 1 2 3 4 5
f. I adapt the knowledge from the text on my own. 1 2 3 4 5
g. I use another method (specify): ............................................................

11. When repeating the content of the text, ...
    a. I read the text once again. 1 2 3 4 5
    b. I say the content of the text for myself using my own words. 1 2 3 4 5
c. I write an overview of the background information ‘by heart’.  

1 2 3 4 5

d. I solve questions and assignments in the textbook.  

1 2 3 4 5

e. I compare information from various sources.  

1 2 3 4 5

f. I no longer repeat the content of the text for myself.  

1 2 3 4 5

g. I use another method (specify): …………………………………………………

12. I repeat the text in order to ...

a. check that I know everything word by word.  

1 2 3 4 5

b. check that I understand essential information.  

1 2 3 4 5

c. be successful in the exam.  

4 5 1 2 3

d. For other reasons:…………………………………………………………………………..

NOW CHECK THE ANSWERS WHICH BEST REFLECT YOUR SITUATION.

13. I can recall information from the text ...

a. by its position in the page.  
b. by colour highlights.  
c. based on mechanical memory processing.  
d. with mnemonics (e.g. I use a comparison to another phenomenon, etc.).  
e. by practical use.  
f. by logical context in the text.  
g. I use another method (specify): …………………………………………………

14. If I cannot recall certain information from the text during revision ...

a. I look it up in the text.  
b. I try to guess what was written in the text.  
c. I deduce the information from ‘my memory’ based on the logical context.  
d. I devise my own theory.  
e. When I cannot remember, I leave it as it is and continue the revision.  
f. I use another method (specify): …………………………………………………
15. I learn well from the text if …
   a. I learn with someone else.
   b. there is absolute silence around me.
   c. my favourite music is on.
   d. I read the text out loud.
   e. I walk while learning (reading).
   f. I know the issue from lectures beforehand.
   g. I alternate learning and sports.
   h. I have enough time.
   ch. I learn something interesting.
   i. I am concentrated.
   j. I am not hungry or thirsty.
   k. Other circumstances (specify): …………………………………………………………

16. A text is difficult for me to learn from if it is …
   a. complicated
   b. incomprehensible
   c. boring
   d. long
   e. Other circumstances (specify): …………………………………………………………

17. I have problems learning from a text because
   a. I have problems with reading and understanding the text.
   b. I cannot learn from the text.
   c. I cannot make myself learn
   d. I am afraid of the exam.
   e. Other reasons, specify: …………………………………………………………………

18. The method of how I should learn from a text was mediated to me primarily by …
   a. basic school teachers.
   b. secondary school teachers.
   c. university teachers.
   d. parents.
   e. classmates, friends.
   f. Other persons, say who………………………………………………………………

19. I learned the method how I should learn …
   a. from brochures.
b. from websites.
c. I thought of it myself.
d. Other options, specify .................................................................

NOW, AGAIN, MARK THE DEGREE OF YOUR AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT ON THE NUMBER LINE

20. My experience with learning from a text:
   a. Speed-reading helps me when learning from a text. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. I use an index when learning from a text. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. I use references to additional sources when learning from a text. 1 2 3 4 5
   d. I use websites when learning or making assignments. 1 2 3 4 5
   e. I do not verify information from online sources at all. 1 2 3 4 5
   f. I use a computer catalogue to search literature sources. 1 2 3 4 5
   g. I often learn from a difficult text. 1 2 3 4 5
   h. I often learn something interesting from a text. 1 2 3 4 5
   ch. Other options, specify ...........................................................................

21. I use the following way to make notes from the teacher’s presentation:
   a. I write down only the important things. 1 2 3 4 5
   b. I write down almost everything, but using my own words. 1 2 3 4 5
   c. I write down definitions and examples. 1 2 3 4 5
   d. I write down whole sentences. 1 2 3 4 5
   e. I make brief notes. 1 2 3 4 5

Univerzita Hradec Králové
Pedagogická fakulta

Obor: Učitelství – společný základ dvouoborových studií

102
f. I use abbreviations and symbols.  

g. I wrote down into a schema (prepared by the teacher in advance).  

h. I copy the teacher’s notes in a presentation or on the blackboard.  

ch. I do not write down anything.  

i. Other options, specify …………………………………………………………………………

Please write your own notes and explanations on the above issues and your answers: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Appendix 3:

Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning Objectives for Cognitive Area - Verbs

We use these verbs to formulate instructional objectives for the cognitive area but they can also be used to formulate questions or assignments.

1. Memory
To define, to add, to write, to repeat, to denominate, to explain, to describe, to ascribe, to arrange, to choose, to determine

2. Understanding/Comprehension
To prove, to re-formulate, to illustrate (or to transform into another form of communication), to clarify, to estimate, to correct, to translate, to transfer, to express with own words (in another form), to explain, to calculate, to check, to measure

3. Application
To demonstrate, To discuss, to interpret data, to outline, to design, to plan, to use, to prove, to solve, to relate, to arrange, to quantify, to test

4. Analysis
To analyse, To decide, to differentiate, to classify, to specify

5. Synthesis
To categorise, to classify, to combine, to write communication, to design, to organise, to re-organise, to summarise, to generalise

6. Evaluation
To argue, to defend, to appreciate, to oppose, to support (opinions), to compare, to assess, to criticise, to verify, to compare to the standard (benchmark), to choose, to state pros and cons, to justify, to evaluate.

Appendix 4:

Questionnaire: Self-reflection in the Creation of Professional Competences for the Development of Reading Literacy in Students

Check where appropriate: I am      male     female
Fill out: Year of study__________ Teaching qualifications__________

1. Has this text and fulfilment of its tasks been of any benefit for my knowledge about reading literacy alone? (Check where appropriate.)

- Definitely yes      -yes      -rather yes      -rather no      -no      -
definitely not

In what way? How?

2. Has all of this been of any benefit for my knowledge and skills to develop reading literacy in my future students? (Check where appropriate.)

- Definitely yes      -yes      -rather yes      -rather no      -no      -definitely not

In what way? How?

3. What was the most important thing I learned about reading literacy and its development?

4. Check what you have learned by studying the text about reading literacy and performing the assignments:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>I definitely know what reading literacy is.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>I have learned about my own reading skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>I know how to motivate students when working with texts and how to offer them texts in an interesting way.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>I can activate students for working with texts.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>I can guide students to think about a text.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>I know when and how to induce written expression or literary production in students.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>I know how to give space to students for their verbal communication.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>I can find out that students have understood the text.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>I can find out that they have thought about the text.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>I can bring about situations where students independently look for information, evaluate information and use it when solving tasks.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>I can evaluate the texts prepared by students.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>I know diverse methods of learning from texts.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>I can choose key words from the text.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>I can write notes from a text.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>I can process text information into graphic.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>I know the position of reading literacy in the Framework Educational Programme (‘RVP’) and the relations to other parts of this document.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>I can integrate the reading literacy development in the subjects of my qualifications.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>I can find suitable texts to develop reading literacy of students in the subjects of my qualifications.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>I can write an explanatory text of various degrees of difficulty.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>I can evaluate the school’s conditions for the development of reading literacy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What else do I need to learn and know about developing reading literacy?
6. What is my overall opinion on my own teaching competences for the development of reading literacy of students?

7. What else do I need to learn and improve in to have good reading literacy?
Give any other of your thoughts on the development of reading literacy which you may have.
### Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM/CONCEPT</th>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading; engaged</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading characteristics:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- quantitative and qualitative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Understanding/comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- fluency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- accuracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- speed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading habits</td>
<td>3, 8, 9, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading skills</td>
<td>3, 5, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stages of the development of</td>
<td>2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reading literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reading habits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors of</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reading literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>3, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- analytical-synthetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- global</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>3, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- functional literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reading literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- emerging literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inference

Coherence

Competences
- reading
- literacy
- key – of students
  of teachers

Book
- classical
- e-books

Reading methods
- methods aimed to create initial reading and writing
- methods aimed to improve the quality of reading literacy
- methods aimed to develop text understanding
- methods aimed to develop reading

Research methods
- narrative method
- questionnaire
  - reading literacy test

Reading models

Psychological foundations of reading

Theories of learning from texts

Text
- text qualities
- text types