

IS SKIM READING THE ONLY WAY TO READ?

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Essential. Fundamental. Prerequisite skill. Crucial. Critical. These are just some of the many ways researchers and people in the academe describe the survival skill that is very often taken for granted by many school children nowadays, most especially in the presence of the COVID 19 pandemic- reading. It is undeniable, the role reading plays in our daily lives. Indeed, from being a privilege during ancient times, it has become a survival skill for everyday use, taken for granted.

Kenneth Goodman's (1967) so-called "Psycholinguistic Guessing Game" has gone beyond the definition of a simple guessing game of encoding and decoding meaning. Not that it has become more intricate. Reading, through the years, has been simplified for learners to be more effective readers. Strategies and techniques have been formulated through and through to help teachers teach the necessary skills, likewise, to help the learners learn and acquire the necessary skills to be effective readers.

The sad truth though is how reading, which was once a privilege, has become an everyday skill taken for granted. In the absence of the face to face classes, learners lacked the encouragement, and opportunities to be able to practice, for most of them already know how to read, and only need to develop their comprehension skills. Skim reading on social media is the only, if not the only kind of reading learners are saturated during the series of lockdowns and quarantines. The odds of finding a learner, in the intermediate, junior, and senior high school for this matter, who saturates himself with books, if not the learning modules, is so low.

Reading proficiency is a very crucial skill for achieving academic learning and success in school (Barnett, et. al.,2007). Skimming, though an important skill, cannot

suffice the academic and learning needs of a child. In-depth reading and other kinds of reading are also required in order to develop the necessary comprehension skills for skimming lacks the opportunities to grasp the complexity of the text, dive into the feelings, and appreciate beauty (Wolf, 2018). It is a challenge to provide such opportunities to learners in the distant learning modalities. Luckily, limited face-to-face classes have begun. The challenge now is how to help students depart from the reading routines they have developed during the quarantine.

Narcotic reading. Intensive reading. In-depth reading. There are many different ways in which learners can enjoy and develop their reading and comprehension skills. Skim reading is just one skill. Important as it is, as teachers, we cannot lay the future of this country on merely skim reading. In the opening and expansion of the limited face-to-face classes, teachers must devise ways how to rekindle learners' love and interest for reading. Actual reading.

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