

# Odisha State Open University

## Reading

Hours: 120

Credits:

### Proficiency descriptors

The participants will be able to:

- read level appropriate texts critically
- discuss texts and interact on reading texts effectively
- put forth reading points in grammatically correct, coherent and effective presentation, and writing
- develop an awareness of the rhetorical and cultural conventions of English usage through reading

### Unit 1

Hours: ??

- Getting the main idea/s from reading texts; skimming through reading texts and determine two or more main ideas or themes
- Getting the subordinate (supporting/secondary) details from reading texts; scanning through reading texts to understand and explain how key details support the main ideas or themes
- Understanding text structures (Reading texts to have these structures: sequencing, comparing and contrasting, relating cause and effect, problems and problem solving)
- Noticing and discussing rhetorical and cultural aspects depicted in texts
- Drawing inferences
- Learning the structure of paragraphs and cohesive devices used in reading texts

### Unit 2

Hours: ??

- Framing opinions and judgments on text themes, issues, characters and narrative techniques
- Discussing and summarize text points and make a presentation
- Developing professional vocabulary
- Learning the uses of a dictionary: spelling, grammar and usage

## Reading

### Block 1

#### BASIC READING SKILLS

##### What is reading?

Reading is a complete process of making meaning. The process of reading starts from a motivation or willingness to read. When we want to read, we try to understand what the written/ printed texts tell us. We need to recognize and understand the important ideas and words, and read with some amount of fluency.

Many times, we do not read because we have a feeling that we cannot understand a new text. This happens when we come across a new text or if a text has not been explained by the teacher in class. We also feel that we may not understand each word. So, we do not take up a text to read. We may not understand every detail in a text. No one does. It is all right to be able to understand what a text generally talks about, what the main ideas are in that text, what descriptions and examples are given and how the text has developed. It is also important how easily we can read to get the above mentioned points.

##### Activity 1

Read the two paragraphs above again.

- i. Which points/ideas in the first graph match with which points/ideas in the second paragraph?
- ii. Now, write down the steps involved in the process of reading.

You would have noticed that paragraph 1 matches with paragraph 2 in this manner:

Paragraph 1	Paragraph 2
Motivation/willingness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• . ... we do not read because we have a feeling that we cannot understand a new text. This happens when we come across a new text or if a text has not been explained by the teacher in class.</li><li>• We also feel that we may not understand each word. So, we do not take up a text to read.</li></ul>
what the written/ printed texts tell us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ... to understand what a text generally</li></ul>

need to recognize and understand the important ideas and words	talks about... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...what the main ideas are in that text...</li> </ul>
to recognize and understand the important ... words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we may not understand each word (No one does)</li> </ul>
... read with some amount of fluency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how easily we can read to get the above mentioned points.</li> </ul>

## Activity 2

**Now, write down the important requirements in the process of reading, and what are not so important.**

In this, block, we will discuss all the important aspects of good reading, and how we can develop these to become fluent readers.

### Reading

We will discuss each of the points raised already. First of all, we'll discuss how to motivate ourselves to read. Then, we will focus on how we may develop our reading.

#### a. Motivation to read

We have to first understand *why* we don't like to read. Only with that understanding, we can motivate ourselves to read.

## Activity 3

### 1. Tick the reasons that are true for you.

I don't like to read because:

- i. I have to remember a lot of things.
- ii. I have answer questions in class and in tests of what I remember.
- iii. I can't understand many English words.
- iv. I think I can't understand a text in English. My teacher should explain everything to me.
- v. I have to reads English texts that I don't like but those are there in the textbook.

### 2. Now, tick again the reasons that are true for you.

I like to read:

- i. in my mother tongue (MT)
- ii. when I don't have to read and remember a lot of answers; for example, simple stories from outside the textbooks
- iii. what I can understand
- iv. what my friends write in phone messages because I like to know those things

With little reading, we lose our patience with books, and want to read even less. If we don't understand texts well, we stop liking them. Also, when we are forced to read and remember prescribed texts to write exam answers, we generally don't like to read those.

When we read more, we like to read even more. We understand texts better. Since we understand better, we love to read more often. The best way to motivate yourself to read is to start reading interesting books with topics that you like, both in your MT and in English. The topics could be on sports and sportspersons, films, music and art, travel, fascinating places, environment, birds, animals and the plant world, hobbies, adventure and so on. Instead of always reading the prescribed texts and books, you can read something that interests you. A lot of likable and engaging texts for all types of interests are available for free in the internet.

#### **Activity 4**

**i. Tick your interests here:**

- sports and sportspersons
- travel
- adventure
- film
- art, music, dance
- places of interest
- environment

**ii. There are many websites where you can find texts of your interest to read. Find out two such sites and texts. Read the texts to see how you feel about them.**

**iii. Share your experiences of reading with your friends in your cellphone/Facebook chats. Tell them about the sites, what you read there and what you liked.**

Reading is a lifelong companion and gives us such pleasure that cannot be compared with any other.

## **b. Background knowledge**

Reading a text appeals to us if we can connect ourselves with the text. For example, if you are into sports, you'd like to read about sports and sportspersons. So you would with travel, films, adventure or art. First of all, decide your areas of interest; then search for texts that you'd like to read. You'll then find how much you enjoy reading.

Background knowledge helps a lot in text comprehension. Let me share an experience of my own problem in understanding a point in a simple English poem:

### **Bed in Summer**

**In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light.  
In summer quite the other way,  
I have to go to bed by day.**

**I have to go to bed and see  
The birds still hopping on the tree,  
Or hear the grown-up people's feet**

**Still going past me in the street.**

**And does it not seem hard to you,  
When all the sky is clear and blue,  
And I should like so much to play,  
To have to go to bed by day?**

*Robert Louis Stevenson*



I could not understand why the child had to go to bed 'by day', and how the child sees people and birds from her/his bed in a summer night. For me in east of India, before eight o'clock in the night, it is completely dark. I did not have the background knowledge that in England, darkness comes quite late in summer. Until ten o'clock, complete daylight is there, and a child can see things happening outside her/his window from the bed. Without this knowledge, comprehension became difficult for me.

### **Activity 5**

**Read the two short texts. List the problems in each that make comprehension difficult for you.**

**a.** My little horse must think it queer

To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake

To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

**b.** There are about 8 million illegal immigrants in the 27-nation European Union. Almost a million were turned back at EU borders in 2006. Some of the new EU immigration rules approved by the European Parliament are these:

- EU nations may detain illegal immigrants for up to 18 months to decrease flight risk while deportation is being processed.
- Expelled immigrants who do not cooperate or are deemed a threat may face a re-entry ban up to five years.
- Illegal immigrants must be placed in specialized detention centers, and not in prisons.
- Illegal immigrants must be given access to free legal advice, and children and families with children should only be detained as a last resort.

EU governments have two years to implement the new rules.

**List the background problems in understanding the two texts above:**

Background knowledge is developed through a general awareness of what is happening around us. You can easily develop such awareness by reading newspapers in your MT and in English. Watching news on TV and other programmes on sports, travel, nature, and so on will help widen your background knowledge. You'll feel confident with such awareness to read new texts.

### **c. Unfamiliar words**

Many texts contain words that you may not know the meaning of. As you struggle to get the meaning of each of these words, you may feel uninterested to carry on with reading. A lot of unfamiliar words in a text make reading difficult.

See a sample text:

*Deliberate upon some excellent models for learning vocabulary that explicate idioms and usage. Some of these models promote word consciousness through mnemonic strategies.*

The number of unfamiliar words is too high here for comprehension to happen.

On the other hand, in many texts that you choose to read or texts prescribed in a course, so many unfamiliar words will never occur. Such words will be very few in number. You can guess the meanings of these words from the context.

#### **Activity 6**

##### **i. See these sample exercises for guessing meaning from the context.**

a. There has been no rain for the last two months. The farmlands have become completely arid.

We can guess the meaning of *arid* from the context to mean *dry* due to rain for two months.

b. There is a colossal waste of electricity in our houses. We don't switch off lights, fans, music systems and other electrical appliances when not required.

*colossal* here means *huge*.

Can you guess the meaning of *appliances* from the context?

Notice that in Text b., you can still understand the text as a whole even if you don't understand the meanings of *colossal* and *appliances*. To know all word meanings in a text is not required to understand the text.

### Activity 7

i. Read the text below and underline the words that you think you don't know the meaning of.

In most places in Britain, racism is not a part of ordinary life. Most people do not judge other people by the colour of their skin. Violent forms of racism have been rejected by the British public. Black and white communities live peacefully side by side in most British cities. There are no visible conflicts among them. Still, Britain's black people have many forms of intolerance to manage. For example, rough treatment of the black people by some white police officers as shown in a BBC documentary.

ii. Try to guess the meanings of the words you underlined from the context. Write them here:

iii. Now, check the meanings of the same words from a dictionary to match with the meanings you have written.

### d. Difficult/unfamiliar concepts

Many texts may not contain unfamiliar words but the idea/s presented could be difficult. This can make comprehension difficult although you understand the words used.

*In physics, a particle describes a very small quantity of matter. Physicists have discovered a particle at the world's largest atom smasher, and have named it, Higgs Boson. This particle was discovered when physicists made protons, found at the center of atoms, move at near light-speed around a 27-km underground ring beneath Switzerland and France. Physicists believe this newly discovered particle can explain how other particles get their mass.*

You probably would not come across any unfamiliar words in this text. Yet, you may find difficulties in understanding the text as a whole. That is because the concept or the idea could be unfamiliar to you.

Developing background knowledge through reading, as suggested under b. above, can help in understanding concepts with less difficulty.

### e. Use of complex sentences

Sometimes, texts may contain long and complex sentences. Such sentences generally hamper comprehension. Read the sentences below and see if the length and the complex structure interfere in understanding the text.

*A complex sentence has one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses, the words and clauses of which are suitably joined by conjunctions such as 'since, until, after, although, because etc'.*

One way of making sense of such sentences is to *paraphrase* them. The above sentence can be paraphrased this way:

*A complex sentence has one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses. The words and clauses of such a sentence are suitably joined by conjunctions. Some of the conjunctions are 'since, until, after, although, because'.*

Paraphrasing makes comprehension of a text easy.

#### **Activity 8**

Read the following complex sentences. Paraphrase them for better comprehension.

- i. Sani became impatient when her doubles partner dropped the ball in the tennis match for which they lost a point.
- ii. My pet dog lies on its back and roles on the floor when someone tickles her although it is a funny way to loll.

The following are the useful reading strategies summarised:

- Read outside your course books for the fun of reading. Do not always read for exams.
- Your general awareness and background knowledge help in understanding texts better.
- Make sure to know why you are reading a text and what you will do with the text after reading.
- You need not understand every word of a text. Understanding key words is important to get the ideas a text contains.
- Paraphrasing long and complex sentences help in comprehension.

## Reading purposes and manners of reading

We read for different purposes and, therefore, we read differently.

### Activity 9

Think how you read the following types of texts. Then, tick according to your reading.

Text types	Very carefully	Carefully	Casually
the manual of the new cell phone you bought			
news items in newspapers			
film reviews			
exam questions			
chats with friends			
Textbooks			
sports news			
job advertisements			

**You'd have noticed that you don't read every type of text with equal attention or time. Rather, you read differently for different purposes.**

## Reading comprehension

Comprehension or understanding a text is the main purpose of reading. When we read a text, we understand what the text is about, ie. the *topic*, what the main idea/s are, what the supporting details and examples are, and what the conclusion happens to be. We will discuss the process of text comprehension by discussing all these points.

### Locating the main idea in a text

As discussed, reading is for different purposes. We read to get the main idea of a text, the secondary ideas, and the additional details and examples for each idea.

First of all, we'll discuss why we should get the main idea of a text, and how.

#### *Why find out the main idea first*

When we describe our house to someone, how do we do it? We don't start from how many cupboards or chairs we have in which rooms. Nor do we start from describing doors and windows. We start from where our house is and how it looks from the outside. We describe the

important or the main facts about it, and then we give some details. We do so because understanding something is easy if we move from the main ideas to the details.

### **Activity 10**

**Read the two texts below and decide which one is better for comprehension. State why.**

i. He can run very fast. He has one leg a little shorter than the other but that does not bother him. He is good at dribbling and throws. He can shoot the ball into the hoop from a distance and can slam the ball. Suri is six feet four inches tall and is a basket ball player. He is a valuable player for his team.

ii. Suri is six feet four inches tall and is a basket ball player. He has one leg a little shorter than the other but that does not bother him. He can run very fast. He is good at dribbling and throws. He can shoot the ball into the hoop from a distance and can slam the ball. He is a valuable player for his team.

You'd have chosen the second one to be better. The second one tells us the main thing first, which is about the person. Then, the details about him as a player are given. Finally, we understand why he is a valuable player from all the details given beforehand.

In the first paragraph, some details come first and the main point comes later. This makes comprehension difficult.

When we read, it is important to first locate the main idea. Once we understand the main idea, details become easy to understand.

#### *How to locate the main idea in a text*

The main idea is the most important thought about the topic. It is usually placed in the first sentence of a text. Then, the author provides the details and/or examples. The next most common place for the main idea is in the last sentence of a paragraph. In this type of texts, the supporting pieces of information are placed first, and the main point comes in the last sentence of the text.

To find out the main idea, ask yourself this question: What is the most important or the most general idea said about the person, thing or topic in this text?

### **Activity 11**

**Read the passages below. Look for the topic and the main idea in each. Then, check your answers with the ones provided.**

i. Summer is a good time to spend at the beach in Puri. The temperature is much lower than other places in Odisha. The city is on a wonderful beach with light- colored, soft sand. The coastline goes on for a long way. People enjoy walking along it, and also swimming and having bath in the sea. Children like to play in the waves and enjoy camel rides on the sand. Many shops sell artifacts and handicraft items. It is a pleasant place for people and children of different ages.

In this passage:

- a. the topic is Puri beach (the first sentence)
- b. the main idea (what the writer is saying about the topic) is how summer is a wonderful time at Puri beach

ii. American scientists say musical training seems to improve communication skills. They found that developing musical skills and learning to speak involve the same process in the brain.

Prof Nina Kraus is a neurobiologist at Northwestern University in Illinois. Her study finds that musical training involves putting together different kinds of information. It involves listening to music, looking at musical notes, using an instrument and watching other musicians. According to Prof Kraus, the process is not much different from learning how to speak. Babies listen to others when they speak. They look at lip movements and use their own lips and other speech organs. They watch carefully how people speak. Most importantly, both musical training and learning to speak make us think about what we are doing.

In this passage:

- a. the topic is about musical training and learning to speak
- b. the main idea is a comparison between the two.

**Now, read the passages below and locate the topic and the main idea/s in each.**

#### **Passage 1**

World Environment Day (WED) is observed every year on 5 June to raise global awareness to take positive environmental action to protect nature. WED is the United Nations' most important day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. On WED, people plant trees. There are awareness rallies and marathons by students and famous people. TV and radio programmes broadcast various events from all over the world. NDTV launched 'Greenathon' in 2008 and served as India's first ever-nationwide campaign to save the environment. In 2010, Zee News launched 'My Earth, My Duty' campaign. On the occasion of the World Environment Day in June 2013, 'Earth Anthem' by poet-diplomat Abhay K was launched at a function organized by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations in New Delhi. It has been translated into eight languages including all official

languages of the United Nations, which are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

**Topic:**

**Main idea:**

## **Passage 2**

If you are looking for your next adventure, you can find it in international or national volunteer work.

Experienced student volunteers like me know how we change for the best through our work. Young volunteers like me come across other people and other communities where we offer voluntary work. We live and work alongside people in remote rural communities in different states of India, and sometimes in other countries. We learn from one another and share our traditions and customs. The communities where we work are not always the easiest to get to. Since these communities are so hard to reach, they lack health and other facilities. They need our support. Although volunteering is tough, we also enjoy a lot of things. We work in stunning natural environments; environments that you would not be permitted to get to as tourists. We don't earn a lot of money but we gain many friends. We travel a lot and learn skills that are priceless. Volunteering is not a holiday. It is an exploration of life.

**Topic:**

**Main idea:**

### **Locating supporting details and related examples, if any**

Text comprehension happens at two levels, i. in understanding the main ideas, and ii. in understanding the supporting details. We have already discussed how to understand and locate the main idea/s. We'll now discuss how to get the supporting details for a complete comprehension.

Along with the main idea, a text or a passage contains facts and details that support the main idea. These details also extend the main idea, and help us to get a better comprehension of it. The supporting details clarify, explain, describe, expand and illustrate the main idea.

*How to locate the supporting details in a text*

Read carefully which details help you to understand the main idea better. Raise the following questions in relation to the main idea: who, what when, why or how.

See these examples of main ideas and the questions that we may raise naturally:

Main idea: *Summer is a good time to spend at the beach in Puri.*

Questions: a. *Why* is summer a good time in Puri? b. *What* is the nature of 'good time'?

Main idea: *American scientists say musical training seems to improve communication skills.*

Questions: a. *What* is the relationship between musical training and communication skills? b. What are the similarities between the two?

*How* does this happen? *What* is the relationship between musical training and communication skills?

### **Activity 13**

**Read the two passages with these questions in mind. You'll get the supporting details as you try to find the answers.**

#### **Passage 1**

Summer is a good time to spend at the beach in Puri. The temperature is much lower than many places in Odisha. The city is on a wonderful beach with light-colored, soft sand. The coastline goes on for a long way. People enjoy walking along it, and also swimming and having bath in the sea. Children like to play in the waves and enjoy camel rides on the sand. Many shops sell artifacts and handicraft items. It is a pleasant place for people and children of different ages.

I go to Puri every summer as I enjoy the sea.

Questions: a. *Why* is summer a good time in Puri? b. *What* is the nature of 'good time'? c. Are there any examples?

Answers to the questions:

a. *Summer is a good time in Puri because of the sea and the lower temperature.*

b. *One can go for a long walk on the beach. Children can play with the waves and enjoy camel rides on the sand. One can buy artifacts and handicraft items.*

c. *Example: the last sentence*

These are the details that explain and illustrate the main idea.

## Passage 2

American scientists say musical training seems to improve communication skills. They found that developing musical skills and learning to speak involve the same process in the brain.

Prof Nina Kraus is a neurobiologist at Northwestern University in Illinois. Her study finds that musical training involves putting together different kinds of information. It involves listening to music, looking at musical notes, using an instrument and watching other musicians. According to Prof Kraus, the process is not much different from learning how to speak. Babies listen to others when they speak. They look at lip movements and use their own lips and other speech organs. They watch carefully how people speak. Most importantly, both musical training and learning to speak make us think about what we are doing.

Questions: a. *What* is the relationship between musical training and communication skills? b. *What* are the similarities between the two? c. Are there any examples?

Answers:

a. *Both involve similar processes to learn the skills. (details of the processes are provided in the passage).*

b. *Both involve involves putting together different kinds of information (details are provided in the passage).*

c. *no examples*

## Activity 14

- **Now, read to locate the main idea, and write it down.**
- **Then ask a few natural questions on the main idea. Locate the answers to get the details.**
- **Examples.**

i. On many mornings, it becomes normal for us not to have our breakfast. Getting up late is one of the main reasons for not having breakfast. However, taking just a few minutes to have breakfast can really make a difference to your day. Breakfast provides the body and brain with fuel after an overnight fast. Its name originates from breaking the fast during the night! Without breakfast you are effectively running on empty, like trying to start the car with no petrol! If you don't have time to eat before leaving the house, there are many early meal ideas that can be eaten when you travel or at work. For example, rice flakes, fruits, sprouts and salads are good quick options for breakfast.

- **Main idea:**
- **Natural questions on the main idea:**

- **Answers to the questions to get the details:**

- **Examples:**

## **Passage 2**

We are on our way to living in a world without cash or checkbooks. This trend began with the use of credit and debit cards, also called 'plastic money'. Now, banks want people to use cards more for purchases and payment of bills. The costs of purchases made with debit cards are deducted from the holder's bank account. Payments made through a credit card added up and sent to the user as a monthly bill.

The trend of not using cash has moved further to internet payments. People can even make transactions using their mobile phones. We can use Paytm Wallet in our phones to pay for recharges, bills, bus, train and movie tickets, and online shopping from hundreds of websites. We can also send and receive money to and from other people. The world is truly moving towards being cashless.

- **Main idea:**
- **Natural questions on the main idea:**
  
- **Answers to the questions to get the details:**
- **Examples:**

## **Reading strategy to locate the topic, the main idea and the supporting details**

### **Skimming**

Skimming is a strategy for speed reading. All good readers use this strategy to read more in less time. You can use this to look *only* for the general or main ideas in different types of texts except in stories and poems. Skimming means to 'glide over something quickly.

#### *Why skim*

In reading, it means to read quickly to get the topic and the main idea. You don't need to go through every detail of a text but read only what is important to your purpose. Skimming also helps you to look for important details in addition to the main ideas.

#### *How to skim I*

In skimming, we don't read everything in a text but what we are looking for. We leave out what we are not looking for. If you are reading a chapter in your textbook, you should read the first paragraph to understand what the whole of the text is going to be about.

You can also read the first sentence of each paragraph and find out what the paragraph is about. If you do not get the main idea in the first sentence, then you may want to skim more. The sentence that contains the main idea is called the *topic sentence*.

### **Activity 12**

**Go back to Activity 11.**

**Skim through each passage to locate the topic sentence and the main idea. Write the topic sentences below.**

i. Passage: World Environment Day

Topic sentence:

ii. Passage: Student volunteering

Topic sentence:

How long did you take to find the topic sentence?

How long did you take to find the main idea?

**Now, skim through the two passages below. Find out the topic sentence and the main idea quickly for each. DO NOT read everything in detail.**

#### **Passage 1**

The ability to communicate effectively is essential in education, career and relationships. Before you can develop your communication skills, you should have a clear understanding of what communication really is. Communication is the process of sending your messages to a receiver through speaking, writing or using nonverbal signals, such as smiling or frowning, or posing aggressively or in a friendly manner. Here are some steps and tips to help you develop good communication skills. Developing good communication skills begins with simple interactions with different people, young and elderly, with a positive attitude. You need to practice speaking to people every day in social, educational and professional settings. Writing letters, memos and reports develop your written communication skills. Use a positive attitude in all types of communication. New skills take time to become a habit with you, but the more you use your communication skills, you refine the skills and open up opportunities for yourself.

## **Passage 2**

Gender equality is a universal human rights issue. It indicates that boys and girls, men and women must have equal rights in everything in life. The United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* seeks to create equality in law and in society for all human beings. According to the UN declaration, everyone must have the same right to health, education, jobs, political involvement, equality in society, and so on. Girls should be treated as equal to boys in classrooms and playgrounds. At work places, women should receive similar treatment as men, along with equal pay.

Since women are one half of all human beings, it is only natural this half is treated the same as the other half, the men. Countries, where this equality is not available, tend to remain poor in education, health and economy. The only way to improve such poor conditions is to create an equal society with equal opportunities and rights for every individual.

### *How to skim II*

This is the next step in skimming. At the end of each topic sentence, move your eyes quickly through the rest of the text. As you move your eyes, look for important points or information, such as supporting details, events. Continue to read until you are near the end. Since the last sentence or paragraph generally contains a conclusion or summary, read that part carefully.

Skimming for main idea and important details does not create a complete comprehension of a text. Complete comprehension occurs when you read a text in detail.

### *When to skim*

Skimming is done at a fast speed with a focus on getting the main idea and the important details, but not all the details. Therefore, you should not skim for all reading purposes. Skimming is useful to

- determine two or more main ideas or themes
- to understand how some details support the main ideas or themes.

## **Scanning**

Like skimming, scanning is a quick reading strategy. In scanning, we look for only the information we need and ignore all other details. For example, you are on the railway platform looking at the display board for the train you'll travel by. You won't read every detail but scan through all trains to locate your train.

We use scanning to locate quickly specific information, supporting details or examples that we need to find. We scan with to get answers to such questions that we have in mind about a text. We go through a text very quickly only to find the answer to those questions. We ignore any other information not related to our question/s.

#### *How to scan*

- i. Write down the specific information that you are looking for. It could be a particular word or phrase, or an idea, thought or example.
- ii. Think in advance how the answer will appear in a text, and what clues may help you locate the answer. For example, if you were looking for a certain date, you would quickly read the paragraph looking only for numbers ignoring all other details.
- iii. Use headings and subheadings that will help you identify which sections might contain the information you are looking for.

#### **Activity 13**

**Read the text below.**

**What is the main idea?**

**Try to find the following points in the text quickly.**

- **How many national parks and sanctuaries are there in India?**
- **What percentage of all birds and reptiles are available in India?**
- **What is the conclusion?**

The wildlife of India comprises a mix of species of different types of organisms. Apart from a handful of the major farm animals such as cows, buffaloes, goats, poultry, and camels, India has an amazingly wide variety of animals native to the country. It is home to Bengal tigers, Indian lions, deer, pythons, wolves, foxes, bears, crocodiles, wild dogs, monkeys, snakes, varieties of bison and the Asian elephant. The region's rich and diverse wildlife is preserved in more than 120 national parks, 18 Bio-reserves and 500 wildlife sanctuaries across the country. India has some of the most bio-diverse regions of the world and has three of the world's 35 biodiversity treasure-houses. These are the Western Ghats, the Eastern Himalayas and Indo-Burma region. India is home to about 60-70% of the world's biodiversity. It is home to about 7.6% of all mammals, 12.6% of birds, 6.2% of reptiles, and 6.0% of flowering plant species.

Since India is home to a number of rare and threatened animal species, wildlife management in the country is essential to preserve these species.

Did you notice that you can locate specific information without reading everything in a passage? You just have to understand the question or know what information you are searching. Then, learn the strategy to look for the answer only to that question. You need not read every detail. This is scanning to get specific information.

All skills improve with practice. The same happens with reading. The more you read, the better will be your reading ability. Try to use different reading speed for different types of texts.

### **Assignment**

**Read the text below.**

**i. Find the main idea.**

**ii. Write down the supporting details.**

Scientists are afraid that a combination of sewage, salty sea wind, air pollution, sun and sand are likely to destroy the huge statue of the Sun God in Egypt. This statue with the body of a lion and the face of human being is 5000 years old. It is now so damaged that it would be difficult to save it. Additionally, the statue has been dug out several times for different reasons.

However, the latest problems are much more serious in nature. There are no proper drains in the neighbourhood of the statue, and the underground drain under the statue are blocked. All the water that goes beneath the statue remains under it as there is no drainage. The water seeps into the stature along with tiny particles of salt. Both damage the statue. Air pollution from the growing number of vehicles is also harming the statue a lot. The poisonous gases in the air crumble the stone into pieces. Thirdly, the weather is extremely hot during the day and cold at night. Such extreme temperatures create cracks in the stone. Severe sand storms also damage the statue. Finally, tourists visiting the statue everyday cause a lot of harm to it.