Reading Skills
Tip 1: Read for Gist

- **Gist** = the main ideas
- Read the text a first time. Don't stop. Read to understand the main ideas, and don't look up new words. You'll be surprised that you can usually understand the general idea of the story.
Tip 2: Use Context

- Context refers to words and situations that are around a word you don't understand. Look at the example sentence:

  - *I went to the schlumping to buy some chitla for dinner.*
  - What's 'schlumping'? - it must be a store because you bought something there.
  - What's 'chitla'? - It must be food because you are going to eat it for dinner.
Tip 3: Use Your Own Language

- One of the best tips on improving reading is to think about how you read in your own language. Start by thinking about how you read different documents. How do you read the newspaper?

- How do you read novels? How do you read train schedules? and so on. Taking time to think about this will help give you clues on how to read in English - even if you don't understand every single word.
Ask yourself this question: *Do I read every word in my own language when I am reading a schedule, summary, or other outlining document?*

The answer is most definitely: No! Reading in English is like reading in your native language. This means that it is not always necessary to read and understand each and every word in English. Remember that reading skills in your [native language](#) and English are basically the same.
Tip 4: Understand Different Reading Skills

Here is a quick overview of the four types of reading skills used in every language:

- **Skimming** - used to understand the "gist" or main idea
- **Scanning** - used to find a particular piece of information
- **Extensive reading** - used for pleasure and general understanding
- **Intensive reading** - accurate reading for detailed understanding
Skimming

- Skimming - used to understand the "gist" or main idea

Examples of Skimming:
- The Newspaper (quickly to get the general news of the day)
- Magazines (quickly to discover which articles you would like to read in more detail)
- Business and Travel Brochures (quickly to get informed)
Scanning

- Scanning - used to find a particular piece of information

Examples of Scanning
- The "What's on TV" section of your newspaper.
- A train / airplane schedule
- A conference guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOUTHBOUND TO MIAMI AIRPORT - WEEKDAYS PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Train No.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangonia Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Palm Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pompano Beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hialeah Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami Airport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extensive Reading

- Extensive reading - used for pleasure and general understanding

Examples of Extensive Reading
- The latest marketing strategy book
- A novel you read before going to bed
- Magazine articles that interest you
Intensive Reading

- **Intensive reading** - accurate reading for detailed understanding

**Examples of Intensive Reading**
- A bookkeeping report
- An insurance claim
- A contract
Useful Links

- News based - reading exercises for all levels
  - http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/

- British Council – reading exercises for all levels
  - http://learnenglish.teens.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading-skills-practice

- Video - Reading Comprehension in English
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMIQy7yPlkI

- Video - Reading skills that work - for tests and in class
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgqLyAfUsZE