

THE
READING PROFESSORTM
USER GUIDE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREFACE

The Reading Professor is a software program, developed for use on your Epson QX-10, that will enable you to increase your reading speed while improving your comprehension.

Designed as a developmental reading program for secondary level students, adults, and professionals, The Reading Professor will assist you in strengthening the reading skills you already have. To accomplish this, a series of 10 lessons is presented that provides you with specific techniques for eliminating old faulty reading habits, and developing new skills for improving speed and comprehension.

The Reading Professor has been tested in several university studies and was demonstrated to be an effective and highly successful learning program. The speed reading techniques used in this course are the result of research, field testing, and the coordinated efforts of computer and education experts. Rationale statements for each lesson clearly establish the purpose of the tasks in them. These statements are located in Appendix A.

Because there is a preplanned lesson sequence, you will feel comfortable using The Reading Professor as an individual user as well as under the supervision of a teacher. Your individual needs are addressed in a variety of ways by the The Reading Professor. For example, on occasion within a lesson, you (not the program) may decide if you need further practice. Another way that The Reading Professor accommodates your individual needs is by providing you with choices concerning character size, column width, and spacing of lines; you simply choose those with which you are most comfortable. Also you may choose at any time to reinforce a particular technique by practicing an exercise without being required to work through the lesson content again. Both the lessons and the library of passages contain selections representing a myriad of topics, which allows you exposure to less familiar subjects.

Most important, The Reading Professor monitors your understanding of the material. Comprehension questions follow all passages, those controlled by a predetermined rate of speed as well as those presented by the tachistoscope. At all times you remain aware of your performance; results are displayed immediately upon completion of activities and entered on your individual and/or class profile. Visible gains will give you confidence in your reading ability.

The Reading Professor is not limited to one-time use; you will observe noticeable signs of improvement in your reading skills by returning to it periodically. The Reading Professor is significant in offering a well planned self-instruction reading course that you will enjoy and find beneficial to your personal growth.

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CONTENTS OF THE PACKAGE

The Reading Professor package contains the following items:

- The Reading Professor User Guide
- Program diskette
- Passage and Profile diskette
- Owner registration card

This User Guide is an instructional and reference manual for The Reading Professor. It will guide you through the basic steps for operating the program.

The return of the owner registration card ensures your eligibility for any updates, replacement diskettes, or announcements.

NOTE: The Reading Professor is protected under copyright law. Copying of any portion of the disks is against federal regulations. The user cannot legally make a back-up disk of the program. If there are any problems with the purchased disk, return it to the dealer or distributor within 90 days for a free replacement disk. After 90 days, contact:

Acorn Publishing Company
1335 West 134th Street
Gardena, CA 90247

Acorn Publishing will replace the disk for a nominal charge.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

THE READING PROFESSOR: AN OVERVIEW

Welcome to The Reading Professor, the speed reading course designed to increase your reading speed while improving your comprehension.

The Reading Professor is different from most speed reading courses. It not only combines speed and comprehension improvement, but it also contains certain special features that make it ideal for individual use, including exercises that can be used independently and individual profile reports that enable you to monitor your progress.

By working through the ten, 20-minute lessons in the course, you can expect to increase your reading rate up to 800 to 900 words per minute (rates as high as 2,500 wpm can be monitored by the computer). Your reading speed will vary, however, depending on the type of material you are reading and your purpose in reading it. For this reason, The Reading Professor is designed to give you the skills necessary to read at many different rates. You will learn how to reach your potential reading rate for everything from light fiction to technical material, while at the same time maintaining good comprehension.

The computer will keep an individual student profile for you showing your reading and comprehension rates. This student profile will enable you to keep track of your progress during the course, and to proceed at your own pace. Not only does the computer automatically record your reading rate on your profile, it can also automatically adjust the lessons and exercises to that rate.

The Reading Professor will not outlive its usefulness to you. Once you have completed the program, it can serve as a daily or weekly exercise routine, or as a refresher course.

The Reading Professor is sensitive to your needs and interests. Because you play an active part in the learning process, you will learn more and retain more of what you have learned. You will find using The Reading Professor an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience.

HANDLING THE DISKS

- Do not touch the magnetic surface of the diskette—the areas that show through the holes of the disk package. The oils on your fingers could damage the data on the diskette. Handle disks by their protective jackets, keep them in their protective envelopes when they are not in use, and keep them stored in The Reading Professor package.
- Do not bend or fold the diskette. This might damage the magnetic coating and the data on the diskette.
- Never force a diskette into the disk drive.
- Keep diskettes away from magnetic fields generated by electric typewriters, television sets, fans, speaker magnets, and telephones.
- Store your diskettes at room temperature. The optimum temperature range is 50-90 degrees Fahrenheit.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Three notable features of The Reading Professor enhance the learning process. These are:

- Positive Feedback
- Active Learning
- Reading Interest Sensitivity

The combination of these features makes The Reading Professor a unique and valuable learning experience.

Positive Feedback

Every time you complete a test, the computer graphs a visual display of your score and your overall progress. Because the computer's response is immediate, it has more impact on you than would a written evaluation of your progress. This feedback guides your efforts and tells you if you need to work harder. The computer might suggest that you repeat a lesson if your score is below a certain level, or you can choose to repeat a lesson if you feel that you did not sufficiently understand the lesson material.

Active Learning

Active learning also helps to guide your efforts. The computer records your progress throughout the course and actually acts as a prompter to make you try a bit harder. It does this only within a lesson by increasing the movement of the tachistoscope, or scanner, as you read a passage, forcing you to read faster.

Reading Interest Sensitivity

The Reading Professor allows you to choose your own material from a "library" of reading selections representing different areas of interest. These selections were chosen on the basis of literary merit and their general interest to the sophisticated reader. You might even be inclined later to try out your newly acquired reading skills by reading these books and magazines in the original.

GETTING STARTED

Starting the Program

Place the "Program Diskette" into the left disk drive and place the "Passage and Profile" diskette into the right disk drive. Close both drives by pressing the buttons marked "PUSH". If the drive light does not come on after several seconds, press the reset button located beneath the right disk drive.

The program will display an introductory screen and prompt you for your name. Enter your name (up to eight characters) and press the RETURN key.

Creating Profile Reports

After you enter your name, the program will give you the option of creating a profile report if none exists. The profile report contains a history of your activities in The Reading Professor, including your reading rate and comprehension (see Chapter 4, Profile Reports, for details). The program will search for a profile stored under your name. If no profile is found, the program will ask you to check to make sure that you entered your name correctly, and give you the option of correcting it if necessary. If no profile is found stored under your correct name, the program will ask you if you wish to create a new profile. You can use the program without creating a profile by answering no. Otherwise, answer yes and a new profile will be created.

Throughout the course, your profile will automatically record your activities. Frequent printouts of your profile report will enable you to see how you are progressing.

THE MAIN MENU

Once a profile record has been created for you, the program will proceed to the main menu:

```
*****
*
*                               The Reading Professor
*                               © Executive Systems, Inc.
*
*-----
*                               1) Lessons
*                               2) Exercises
*                               3) Profile
*
*-----
*                               E-EXIT from The Reading Professor
*
*                               ENTER OPTION >>>
*
*****
```

The main menu (shown above) lists the options in the program. If you have already used The Reading Professor, you may want to resume where you left off, or to practice a particular exercise (see Chapter 3 for a description of the exercises). If this is your first experience using The Reading Professor, it is important that you begin with Lesson 1, as it contains some essential introductory material.

CHAPTER 2

LESSONS

This chapter describes how to perform the lessons in The Reading Professor course. It describes the general format of the lessons, and contains a summary of each lesson.

Once you have created a profile record you may begin the lessons. To perform a lesson, select option 1 (Lessons) from the main menu. The Reading Professor will check your profile to determine the last lesson that you completed, and will then prompt you with the next lesson in the course. Enter "Y" to proceed to that lesson. Enter "N" if you wish to repeat a previous lesson (the computer will tell you which lessons you may repeat). If you have not completed any of the lessons, entering "N" will return you to the main menu.

LESSON FORMAT

Each lesson contains lesson text, exercises, and two timed reading/comprehension checks.

Beginning Reading/Comprehension Check

All lessons begin with a reading/comprehension check. After you have begun a lesson, a brief message will be displayed to remind you to prepare for a timed reading. The passage to be read will then appear on the screen and continue to the end without interruption. Whenever you come to the bottom of the screen, you must press the RETURN key to continue the passage on the next screen. Comprehension questions follow the passage. The computer will automatically time your reading, record your rate in words per minute, and record your comprehension score in your profile file. In addition, your rate and score will be visually displayed to you.

Lesson Text

After you complete the first reading/comprehension check, the lesson text will appear. This text previews the contents of the lesson, explains one of the speed reading techniques, and gives instructions for the exercise in that lesson. You can control the screen-by-screen movement of the text by using the RETURN key and, in some cases, the "P" key (previous page). The only time you may not control screen movement is during timed readings and comprehension checks.

Exercises

Because they help to reinforce the techniques discussed in the lesson text, the exercises either follow or are contained in the text and are performed automatically as part of a lesson. Most of the exercises use passages from the library. These passages are selected at random by the computer. (NOTE: Only exercises performed independent of the lessons in EXERCISE mode, allow you to choose the reading material. See Chapter 3, Exercises.)

Ending Reading/Comprehension Check

Each lesson ends with a timed reading/comprehension check. After a short summary of the lesson material and a timed reading reminder, the passage will appear and continue to the end without interruption. Remember to press the RETURN key each time you reach the bottom of the screen. Comprehension questions follow the passage. Your recorded time and comprehension score will be put on your profile record as well as visually displayed to you. You may take additional timed reading/comprehension checks at any time during the course by selecting exercise mode from the main menu. The results will be recorded in the same manner.

Exiting During a Lesson

If for any reason you wish to exit from a lesson, press the STOP key on your keyboard. The program returns you to the main menu. Please note that when you exit from a lesson in this manner, none of the work done in the lesson will be recorded on your profile, nor will the lesson itself be recorded as completed. When you return to the program, you must repeat that lesson.

LESSON CONTENT

Lesson 1

ELIMINATION OF FAULTY HABITS

The purpose of Lesson 1 is to allow you to identify and eliminate ineffective reading habits, some of which you may not even be aware. These faulty habits include:

- Finger pointing
- Vocalizing
- Subvocalizing (e.g., moving of the lips, erratic breathing, etc.)

A variety of simple but effective techniques will be presented to help you combat these habits. For example, vocalization can be countered simply by placing your fingers lightly on your lips while reading. This lesson is critical to the program because, until you effectively reduce habits of vocalization and subvocalization, your reading rate will remain at approximately your rate of speech.

Lessons 2-3

VISION EXPANSION

Lessons 2 and 3 are designed to enable you to expand your peripheral vision so that you can take in more words at a glance. Slow readers usually read one word at a time. When the eyes stop and fixate on each word, a large amount of time is required. Frequently, comprehension is adversely affected because words are being processed as though they appeared in isolation. By increasing the width of your recognition span you make it necessary to fixate fewer times per line. Consequently, your speed increases and your comprehension improves.

Lesson 4

REGRESSION

Regression is defined as the backward movement of the eyes when reading, and this problem may have many causes. Frequently, regressive movements occur when words are not recognized upon first encounter, or when the meanings of words are not immediately recognized. In such cases, attempting to train the eye movements will be of limited value: inaccuracies in word recognition and word meaning should be eliminated prior to undertaking eye movement exercises. However, many readers tend to regress excessively even when their word recognition and comprehension are adequate. Lesson 4 contains exercises with the tachistoscope (the timed scanner on your screen) that enable you to overcome this unnecessary eye movement.

Lesson 5

ESTABLISHING A RHYTHM PATTERN

Lessons 2 and 3 enable you to increase your recognition span with isolated phrases of controlled widths. But this is only the beginning. Lesson 5 shows you how to transfer your newly acquired skill to lines of print that are more like those found in books. Rapid readers develop a rhythm in their eye movements so that they require fewer than three fixations per line (regular lines of print), and recognize four to seven words during each fixation. The purpose of the Scales exercise in Lesson 5 is to help you establish typical patterns for your eye movement. What begins as a conscious effort to make a given number of fixations per line will develop into a consistent rhythm.

Lesson 6

PHRASE RECOGNITION

Reading is not just a matter of efficient eye movements; the mind participates in the reading process as well. Therefore, meaningful phrases, or thought units, are a major concern because they give your understanding a chance to keep up with your eyes.

In Lesson 6, you will apply the eye movements practiced in the previous lessons to reading the meaningful phrases flashed on the screen during the Phrase exercise.

Lesson 7

COMPREHENSION SKILLS

Because rapid reading can only be an advantage if you understand what you have read, Lesson 7 has been included to help you improve your comprehension. Comprehension skills can be improved considerably when you develop an awareness of the structural elements of a piece of writing. You will be introduced to the concepts of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence. Several exercises ask you to select the most appropriate title, match subtitles with paragraphs, and identify the sentence that does not belong in the paragraph.

Lesson 8

STUDY SKILLS

Lesson 8, Study Skills, focuses on the technique of prereading. Prereading is a necessary skill for all speed readers. It involves obtaining a condensed view of organization and content of nonfiction material before it is read, and thus increasing overall reading effectiveness. Prereading actually saves time because it indicates to you whether an item deserves a more thorough reading, and tells you the author's style, his major points, and his conclusion. To use prereading, you simply read the title of the selection, name of the author, date of publication, place of publication, the first paragraph, and the summarizing paragraphs. You can evaluate your ability to preread by responding to questions which appear at the end of each exercise.

Lesson 9

ADVANCED VISUAL EXPANSION

In addition to developing the ability to see wider spans of letters (Lessons 2 and 3), you have the opportunity in Lesson 9 to practice recognizing larger areas of print. This is another ability important for rapid reading.

Lesson 10

SKIMMING VERSUS SPEED READING

People often mistake speed reading for skimming, another reading technique that can save a great deal of time. Skimming must not become a substitute for regular reading habits because its purposes differ dramatically from reading for ideas and details. As you attempt to increase your reading rate, it is important that you remain aware of the difference between speed reading and skimming. For this reason, a lesson on skimming has been included in The Reading Professor.

REPEATING A LESSON

Previously studied lessons may be repeated in order to review important points, or to retake reading/comprehension checks or exercises for an improved score. When the computer asks if you want to begin the next lesson, press "N". The computer will then allow you to select a previous lesson for review. The new reading scores will be recorded as additional exercise work.

CHAPTER 3

EXERCISES

This chapter describes how to perform the exercises in The Reading Professor course. It describes the general format of the exercises, followed by a summary description of each one. The Reading Professor exercises apply the principles for improving your reading speed and comprehension that were discussed in Chapter 2. You may perform these exercises either as a part of the lessons, or independently. To perform an exercise independently, select option 2 (Exercises) from the main menu.

A list of the exercises will appear on the screen:

THE READING PROFESSOR EXERCISES

- 1) Timed Reading
- 2) Tachistoscope
- 3) Ladders
- 4) Stretching
- 5) Scales
- 6) Phrases
- 7) Depths

D-Descriptions of Exercises
E-EXIT to Main Menu

ENTER OPTION >>>

If you are not yet familiar with the exercises, select 'D' to receive a brief description of them. Read the descriptions as necessary, then press the RETURN key to restore the exercise menu, from which you can make your selection.

EXERCISE FORMAT

Exercises 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7 are performed with a reading passage. If you choose one of these exercises, a list of passages arranged according to title and number of words will appear on the screen. (NOTE: You are allowed to choose the reading material yourself only when exercises are performed independently of the lessons, as in this case. Exercises within lessons do not allow you to choose your own reading material). Exercises 4 and 6 test your recognition of isolated characters and phrases, and so do not use the reading passages.

The next screen displays a list of exercise variables that you may assign values to, according to how you want the material to appear on the screen. These include character size, page width, page height, etc. (see EXERCISE VARIABLES in this chapter).

Press "S" to start the exercise. The passage or other material, depending on which exercise you chose, appears on the screen and the exercise begins and continues to the end without interruption.

If you find that the reading rate you chose is too fast or too slow, you may adjust the speed of the exercise by using the arrow keys on your keyboard (See INCREASING AND DECREASING READING RATES in this chapter).

Comprehension questions follow the passage. The exercise is timed and your performance is automatically recorded in your profile file. In addition, the screen will display your score and a statistical comparison of all previous work so that you can see immediately how you are progressing.

If for any reason you wish to exit the program during an exercise, press the STOP key on your keyboard. The program will return you to the main menu. It is important to be aware that this exercise will not be recorded on your profile.

EXERCISE CONTENT

The following is an explanation of each exercise:

1. Timed Reading

The format of this exercise is similar to the reading/comprehension checks within the lessons, except that here you may choose the reading material and set the character size, page width and height, and spacing. The text will be displayed one page at a time, requiring you to press the RETURN key when you come to the bottom of the screen. Comprehension questions will follow the passage. Your reading rate and comprehension score will be automatically recorded on your profile file. In addition, the computer will display your rate, score, and a comprehensive reading rate that includes all previously recorded rates.

2. Tachistoscope

The tachistoscope is a device that controls the amount of exposure to visual stimuli. The window-like tachistoscope moves across and down the screen of material at a fixed rate, highlighting one to five words at a time. This method teaches you to recognize phrases and ideas instead of single words. When you are able to recognize more material at a glance, both your reading speed and your comprehension will improve.

The tachistoscope exercise allows you to alter the presentation of the reading material by setting character size, page width and height, spacing, background and curtain options, and words per minute. After you have entered the tachistoscope exercise mode, the program will allow you to modify these five variables. If you do not wish to assign any values, the computer will automatically assume predetermined values.

After you have selected the options you want, the passage will appear on the screen and the tachistoscope will begin to scan the passage. It will continue to the end without interruption, and the computer will automatically advance the material on the screen. There is NO need to press the RETURN key. Comprehension questions will follow the passage. The computer will record your tachistoscopic rate and comprehension score on your profile file.

The example shown below illustrates how the tachistoscope will highlight a phrase in a passage.

Sample:

Odysseus was gazing intently at this wondrous sight when he heard a sharp cry, and, looking back he saw six of his men, the stoutest of the crew, dangling high in the air, firmly clutched in the **six sharklike jaws** of Scylla. There they hung for a moment, like fishes just caught by the angler's hook; the next instant they were dragged into the black mouth of the cavern, calling with their last breath on their leader's name. This was the most pitiful thing that Odysseus had ever beheld, in all his long years of travel on the sea.

3. Ladders

Ladders requires you to increase your peripheral vision. The exercise consists of connected text that is formatted in accordance with the exercise variables that you specify (i.e., character size, page width and height, spacing, background and curtain options, and words per minute). The exercise will require you to control eye movement by directing you to fixate your eyes only once on the center word of each line. Upon completion of each passage, comprehension questions are asked.

Sample:

Odysseus	was	gazing
intently	at	this
wondrous	sight	when
he	heard	a
sharp	cry,	and,

4. Stretching

In Stretching, random letters are presented in horizontal lines. The variables that you may set for this exercise are character size and page width.

You are directed to focus your eyes upon the center letter of each line and, without moving your eyes to the left or to the right, read the center letter, the left letter, and then the right letter. Type the letters in order from left to right.

If you wish to change any of the letters you typed, use the back arrow key and re-enter the letter(s). Be aware, however, that the back arrow key will erase every letter it passes over so that you may have to re-enter letters you did not want to change. When you are ready to continue, press RETURN.

Sample:

C	G	A
K	D	F

5. Scales

In this exercise, The Reading Professor limits you to two fixations per line and progressively increases the width of each fixation from one word to about six words. The variables that you may set are character size, page width and height, spacing, background and curtain options, and words per minute.

The Scales exercise will present you with text that is formatted in two half-lines, one on the right side and one on the left side of the screen. When practicing Scales, you fixate once on the middle of the half-line that appears on the left side of the screen. Next, you will set your eyes in the center of the half-line that is seen on the right side of the screen. As you move down the screen, these half-lines get larger, forcing you to fixate on more words. Comprehension questions follow the selection.

Sample:

Odysseus	was gazing
intently	at this
wondrous	sight when
he heard	a sharp cry,
and, looking	back he saw
six of his men,	the stoutest
of the crew,	dangling high
in the air, firmly	clutched in the
six sharklike jaws of Scylla. There	

6. Phrases

In this exercise, meaningful phrases are flashed in the center of the screen one at a time. Character size is the only variable you may set. Periodically, a set of four questions follows a phrase. You will select the question that corresponds to the information presented in the most recent phrase.

Sample:

on the beach
"
"
"
to my mother
"
"
"
after the storm
"
"
"
John's car
"
"
"

Which question best refers to the previous phrase?

1. Who gave you the present?
2. How did Tom get to the beach?
3. When is your vacation?

7. Depths

This exercise displays simultaneously two lines of print. Your focal point should be between the center letters of the two lines. Because connected text, as opposed to random phrases, is utilized in Depths, your understanding is measured at the end of each passage.

The variables you may set for this exercise are character size, page width and height, background and curtain options, and words per minute.

Sample:

Odysseus was gazing intently at this wondrous sight
when he heard a sharp cry, and, looking back he saw six

of his men, the stoutest of the crew, dangling high in
the air, firmly clutched in the six sharklike jaws of

**Scylla. There they hung for a moment, like fishes just
caught by the angler's hook; the next instant they were**

dragged into the black mouth of the cavern, calling
with their last breath on their leader's name. This was
the most pitiful thing that Odysseus had ever beheld,
in all his long years of travel on the sea.

EXERCISE VARIABLES

Exercise variables determine how material appears on the screen. You may set these variables only for exercises that are performed independently of the lessons. Shown below is the screen that enables you to specify exercise variables for a given exercise.

```
*****
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*                                     *
*-----*
* 1) Character Size       5) Background 
* 2) Page Width       6) Top Curtain 
* 3) Page Height     7) Bottom Curtain 
* 4) Spacing       8) Words Per Minute 
*-----*
*                                     *
* I — Instructions
* S — Start Exercise
* E — Exit to Exercise Menu
*
* Enter Option >>>
*
*****
```

The following is an explanation of the different variables you might use:

Character Size

Characters may be single- or double-sized for easier reading. Select Option 1 for single size or Option 2 for double size.

Page Width

Page width may be varied from 20 to 80 characters (40 if double-sized characters are used). For comparison, standard newspaper column width is 27 to 32 characters; standard paperback book column width is 50 to 55 characters.

Page Height

Page height may be varied from 5 to 22 lines.

Spacing

Lines may be single- or double-spaced for easier reading. Select option 1 for single spacing or option 2 for double spacing.

Background

The background option allows you to select either a dim (faded) background text, or an invisible background text. With a dim background, the complete text will be visible at all times and the scanned phrases will be highlighted. Invisible mode displays only the scanned phrases—background text is not visible. Enter option 1 for dim background or option 2 for invisible background.

Top and Bottom Curtains

The curtain options allow you to blank out lines of text as the tachistoscope moves down the page. The top curtain trails behind as you read, blanking lines already read. The bottom curtain exposes lines ahead of where you are reading. Curtain values may be varied from 0 to 22.

Words Per Minute

You may specify a reading rate in the range 100-2500 words per minute.

Not all variables are used in every exercise. For example, the only variable used in the Phrases exercise is character size. The word "inapplicable" appears alongside those variables that cannot be set for a particular exercise. If you specify no new values for variables that are used in a particular exercise, the program will follow the most recent setting. The figure below shows a sample variable menu for the Timed Reading exercise.

```
*****
*
*                                     *
*               THE READING PROFESSOR *
*               EXERCISE VARIABLES    *
*                                     *
*-----*
* 1) Character Size       5) Background      inapplicable
* 2) Page Width          6) Top Curtain     inapplicable
* 3) Page Height         7) Bottom Curtain  inapplicable
* 4) Spacing             8) Words Per Minute inapplicable
*-----*
*
*      I — Instructions
*      S — Start Exercise
*      E — Exit to Exercise Menu
*
*      Enter Option >>>
*
*****
```

INCREASING AND DECREASING READING RATES

If you do not feel comfortable with a certain reading rate, either because it is too slow or too fast, you can adjust the rate during the exercise by using the arrow keys on your keyboard.

Pressing the up-arrow key will increase the reading rate, or speed of the exercise, by 10 percent. Pressing the down-arrow key will decrease the speed of the exercise by 10 percent.

For example, if you had set the reading rate at 400 words per minute and decided to increase the rate, pressing the up-arrow key would change the reading rate to 440 words per minute. If you decided to decrease the rate, pressing the down-arrow key would change the reading rate to 360 words per minute.

You can press the arrow keys as many times as necessary to reach a comfortable speed.

CHAPTER 4

PROFILE REPORTS

The Reading Professor provides you with Profile Reports that show the history of your activity in the program. Specifically, the report lists the date that you used the program, the activity performed, the passage used, your reading rate, comprehension score and rate, and a reading rate and comprehension summary. Reports may be generated in two forms: listing or graph. The listing displays the entire profile record while the graph represents reading improvement. These reports may be either printed or displayed on the terminal at any time during the program to view your progress (see **DISPLAYING AND PRINTING PROFILE REPORTS** in this chapter). Shown below is a sample Profile Listing Report:

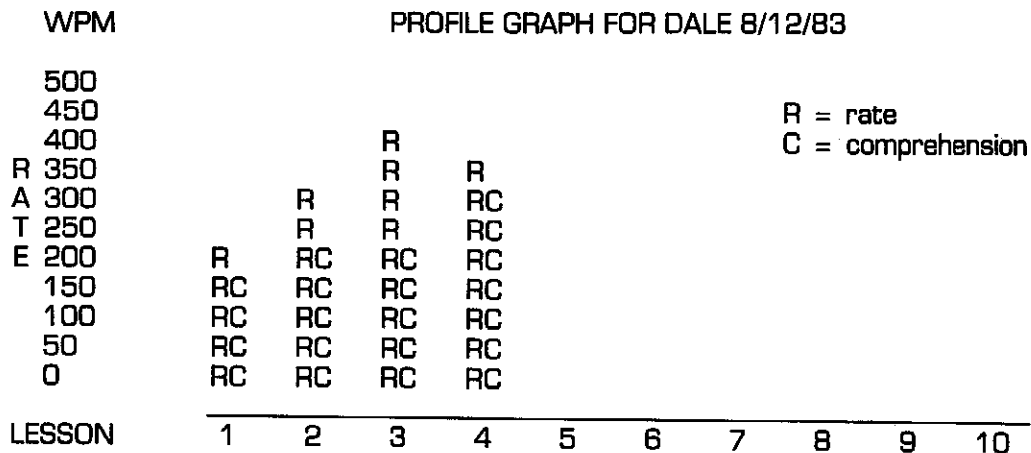
PROFILE LISTING FOR DALE 8/12/83

DATE	ACTIVITY	PASSAGE	READING RATE	COMPREHENSION SCORE	COMPREHENSION RATE
8/10/83	LESSON 1				
	Timed Reading	1	300	25%	75
8/10/83	Tachistoscope	3	340	25%	85
8/11/83	Ladders	9	300	100%	300
8/12/83	LESSON 2				
	Stretching	2	500	50%	250

READING RATE INCREASE/DECREASE SUMMARY

	RAW RATE	COMPREHENSION
AVERAGE PER LESSON	30%	150%
TOTAL AFTER 2 LESSONS	60%	300%

The figure below shows a sample Profile Graph report:



READING RATE INCREASE/DECREASE SUMMARY

	RAW RATE	COMPREHENSION
AVERAGE PER LESSON	12%	8%
TOTAL AFTER 4 LESSONS	50%	35%

DISPLAYING AND PRINTING PROFILE REPORTS

To print the profile report, select Profile (3) from the main menu. The computer will ask you if you want a listing or a graph of the profile report. Whichever you choose, a "screen" or "printer" option will appear.

If you want to view the profile report on the screen, select the "screen" option. If you want to print the profile report, select the "printer" option.

ERASING PROFILE REPORTS

If your disk gets too full, you may be able to free needed storage space by erasing some unused or outdated profile reports. In the CP/M operating system, the general command for erasing files is ERA. You will need to specify the disk drive, file name, and extension in the command. Profile report files will be named in the format:

name.PRO

Where:

name = The name that you entered when starting the program (refer back to Chapter 1, GETTING STARTED).

PRO = The extension to the filename, signifying that the file is a PROfile.

For example, from CP/M (signified by the "A>" prompt), you would type the following command to erase a file named John:

ERA B:JOHN.PRO

After it has erased the file, the program returns to the "A>" prompt, awaiting your next command.



APPENDIX A

SPEED READING RATIONALE

With a plethora of printed material in our environment today, it is essential for us to develop good reading habits. More and more career opportunities require reading skills above a functional level of literacy. In this fast-paced world of advanced technology, a literate adult peruses more reading material in a week than his great-grandfather probably covered in a year (Harris & Sipay, 1980). Attempting to meet the increased reading demands placed upon us over the years, we have sought out a variety of means for improving the rate at which we process printed material. As a result, "speed reading" courses of many kinds have become popular.

It is common practice for teachers to ask beginning readers to carefully enunciate each word. Correct pronunciation, expression, and appropriate volume are stressed as important characteristics of oral reading. And they do require time. In fact, considerably more time is required to read a passage orally than the eye needs to span the same material. What results is an eye-voice span which is "the distance that the eye is ahead of the voice" (Levin & Addis, 1979, p. 1). During the oral reading act, the eye accommodates the voice by slowing its pace and fixating longer on words. Because the eye remains active, it wanders and regresses while it waits for the voice. Consequently, eye movements are developed that will eventually be disadvantageous for mature, rapid, silent reading which is characterized by a minimal number of fixations and regressions, and by fixations that are very brief.

When students are initially instructed to read silently, their oral and silent reading eye movements are very similar. This is due to the mouthing of words, whispering, and lip movement without audible sounds. After much practice, students will learn to read "silently" with no external movement or sound. However, their "silent" reading may very likely be accompanied by inner speech. That is, subvocalization occurs so that the reader "hears" words pronounced inside his head.

Buswell (1922) measured the eye movements of students at different grade levels while they read silently. Developmental changes were noted. The first, fifth, and eleventh-grade subjects' performance indicated that as a child gains skill in silent reading, fixations become shorter in duration and there are fewer fixations and regressions. Buswell's findings have been confirmed in more recent research (Pomerantz, 1971). When learning environments which provide for ample opportunities in reading at independent and instructional levels have been established, students should experience a natural decrease in subvocalization without teacher intervention. According to Harris and Sipay (1980), subvocal reading definitely diminishes, but does not totally disappear. Inner speech still remains for some words.

Although our silent reading rate developmentally improves with practice, we oftentimes wonder how fast we should be able to read, especially when we hear claims that some people can read at rates as fast as 12,000 words per minute. The median rates of reading for Grades 2 through 9 and Grade 12 as determined by several standardized reading tests revealed that the median for Grade 12 was no higher than that for Grade 9. The rate of 250 wpm may be taken as a rough estimate

of the normal rate of reading for high school students reading material of average difficulty (Harris & Sipay, 1980). Pauk (1964) reported that university students were able to increase their reading rate from 250 wpm to approximately 500 wpm without loss in comprehension. Another university study (Brown, 1976) indicated that students improved from an average of 252 wpm with 63 percent comprehension to 1548 wpm with 62 percent comprehension. These widely varying results between research findings are common. Until similar reading material is used to obtain norms and averages, we might expect to continue finding such marked differences between reported reading rates.

Not to be overlooked are the physiological and psychological limits of reading speed. Evidence indicates that we are capable of reading about 800 to 1,000 wpm (Carver, 1972). Tinker (1958) concluded that rates faster than 800 wpm are based on skimming, not genuine reading in which most of the words are perceived. Spache (1962) concurred. His calculations of 800 to 900 wpm as the fastest rate possible were based on the assumption that 10-word lines are read with an average of 3 fixations per line in approximately .25 seconds. Spache also included very brief times for saccades (movement of the eyes as the gaze moves from one fixation to another) is established by the time it takes the brain to make sense out of every new input. Reading rate cannot be accelerated by simply moving the eyes along faster. It can be improved, however, by the number of words, or amount of meaning, that can be identified in a single fixation.

A perceptual span of between 21 and 31 characters (letters or spaces) has been recorded for a single fixation with up to 15 characters on each side of the point of fixation (de Buurman, Roersma & Gerrison, 1981; McConkie & Rayner, 1975). This seems to point out a relationship between length of perceptual span and amount of meaning. After forming three groups of eight graduate students each, Baumann and Schneider (1979) found the average results of the top group to be the following: from a single 40 msec tachistoscopic exposure, they could identify 5.6 random letters, 13.7 letters in unrelated words, and 18.2 letters in words that were in context. Krueger (1975) has summarized several other studies showing that familiar letters, words, and other visual configurations are identified more rapidly and accurately than less familiar ones.

The role that meaning plays in reading is critical. We must recognize that to read rapidly is an advantage only if the material is understood. Therefore, our goal should be the improvement of reading comprehension, not merely the improvement of reading rate.

Occasionally, readers experience comprehension difficulties when they select an inappropriate rate of reading for a particular passage. This is especially true of individuals who employ the reading habits that are effective in recreational reading to materials that demand careful study. An extremely interesting observation was noted by McDonald (1965). After studying over 6,000 readers at elementary, secondary, college and adult levels, he found that more than 90 percent of them tended to maintain a characteristic approach and a relatively invariant rate with all the types of reading tested. This finding held true even when instructions for differentiation of purpose were provided and in spite of variations in difficulty, style, and content of

the materials. The concept of reading flexibility cannot be discarded by those who are giving serious thought to speed reading techniques.

In recognition of the fact that readers should learn to vary their reading rates in accordance with their predetermined purposes for reading rates in accordance with their predetermined purposes for reading and the nature of the reading material, it is logical that no one rate of reading is appropriate in all situations. Four major rates of reading have been distinguished (Yoakam, 1955), and some of their appropriate applications follow.

1. Normal rate

- a. Work-type: to find answers to specific questions; to note details; to solve a problem; to grasp relation of details to main ideas; to read material of average difficulty.
- b. Recreational: to appreciate beauty of literary style; to keep up with current events; to read with the intention of later retelling the story.

2. Careful rate

- a. Work-type: to master content including details; to evaluate material; to get details in sequence, as in following directions; to outline, summarize, or paraphrase; to analyze author's presentation; to solve a problem.
- b. Recreational: to read material with an unusual vocabulary or style; to read poetry; to read with the intent of memorizing; to judge literary values.

3. Rapid reading

- a. Work-type: to review familiar material; to get the main idea or central thought; to get information for temporary use.
- b. Recreational: to read narrative material primarily for the plot; to read informational material for pleasure or relaxation; to reread familiar material.

4. Skimming rate

- a. Work-type: to find a reference; to locate new material; to answer a specific question; to get the general idea of a selection.
- b. Recreational: to go through a book or magazine to get a general idea of the contents; to review a familiar story.

Rate norms for these four different kinds of reading rates have not been established. According to Harris and Sipay (1980), a superior adult reader should be able to read light fiction or easy nonfiction at a rate of at least 400 wpm. For more careful reading a realistic rate may be only two-thirds as fast as an individual's most rapid reading. Less than one-third of a reader's rapid rate may be desirable for very careful reading.

Before readers attempt to accelerate their reading, they should eliminate any faulty habits that interfere with the fluency of their reading. Such habits include excessive word analysis, slowness in word recognition, word-by-word reading, limited

perceptual span, lip movements and subvocal reading, finger pointing, difficulty with the return sweep, and regressions. Once readers have begun to eliminate these interfering habits, they are prepared for practice directly related to accelerating their reading. A tachistoscope, a controlled reader, and motivational reading can be utilized for this purpose.

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