

Glossary on “Communication Skills”

Reading for gist/Skimming

Reading quickly to get a general understanding of a written text, eg reading a description of a city to find out if it sounds like somewhere you'd like to visit.

Reading for specific information/Scanning

Searching for a particular piece of information in a written text, eg reading a description of a city only to find out which country it's in.

Reading/listening for detail

Reading or listening more carefully so that you get a full understanding of the text, eg reading a description of a city to find out everything about it.

Listening for gist

Getting a general understanding of something you hear, eg listening to the weather forecast and deciding you might need to take an umbrella when you go out.

Listening for specific information

Listening for a particular piece of information, eg listening to the weather forecast to find out what the temperature will be tomorrow.

Inferring meaning

Making guesses about what is not stated explicitly in a text, eg listening or reading a conversation and deciding that the people are brother and sister without them saying so.

Coherence

Organising ideas in a logical way when speaking or writing so that the listener or reader can follow our ideas.

Cohesion

Joining sentences together using words like and, but and because so our language flows more easily.

Interactive strategies

Strategies we use when we are speaking, eg showing you are listening to other people by saying things like, mmmm or uh-uh or oh!

Turn taking

An interactive strategy which is about knowing when you can join in a conversation and signalling when you think someone else should speak.

Fluency

For speaking; this is speaking without a lot of hesitation and too many long pauses. For writing; this means you can write without stopping for a long time to think about what to write.