



# **Read It As You Would Write It**

**By Paul Harris**

# **Mastering Superior Reading and Examination Study Skills**

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*“To my wife, Barbara, who always felt the world would be a much better place if we each took the time to really listen to what others are saying.”*

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## Introduction

Good, fundamental reading and examination study skills are the firm foundation by which you can gain a working understanding of the **intellectual** as well as **emotional skills** required to excel as a student, professional or other contributing member of society. The ability to examine, comprehend and effectively report on a given subject under scrutiny is a tool that will serve you well in your personal and professional life.

Part I of this report describes a superior study technique that many of the very best students in our nation's finest colleges and universities use to score consistently high on virtually any test. These are techniques that anyone of sound mind and flexibility can master quickly.

Parts II and III of this report explain a speed-reading technique I developed that could be useful with helping anyone to quickly scan and understand the gist of most technical or any other literature. The speed-reading, or what I sometimes refer to as 'ease-reading,' technique is so simple and straightforward that just about any literate teenager or adult can use it effectively. Although the focus is on medical and other technical text, the technique can be successfully applied to the reading of any literary passages - nonfiction or fiction.

Try these useful speed-reading and advanced examination study techniques and watch your reading comprehension and enjoyment grow significantly.

Please note the words Author and Writer are used interchangeably throughout the report.

## Part I

### **How to Score High on any Test Legitimately**

Following is a basic, easy-to-follow guideline that can help make your study time pleasant and informative. There are a few identifiable components that you should find quite helpful in navigating your way successfully to the desired end of your studies: **clarity and comprehension.**

Each section that follows can be likened to building a house. To set a firm foundation for building we must first dig down to bedrock and begin clearing a desired area to lay the foundation. After that is accomplished we mix the proper ratio of ingredients together for the concrete. Then we set the mixture into place. Finally we allow sufficient time for the mixture to harden. Once a firm foundation has been set we can then move on to the next step and so forth.

The art of studying for any examination can be successfully mastered in a similar fashion. Each step leads quite naturally to the next step. This modular approach to study will allow anyone serious about mastering a subject to get a firm grasp on what exactly the author of the reading material was attempting to convey to her readers.

## **Make Friends with the Author**

The key to consistently scoring high on tests is to **mentally make friends with the Author of the study material prior to beginning your studies**. Have an informative **fireside chat** with her to hear about all of the wonderful things she wants to tell you. After all, she is an expert on the subject at hand and deserves your full attention and your imagination. She will be discussing ideas and concepts that may be new and may even rub you the wrong way, but she deserves to be heard and understood.

**All that she is asking of you is to hear her out and make a sincere attempt to understand why her ideas are important.** While you are having your friendly chat with the Author, prior to actually beginning your studies, picture clearly in mind important points she will bring to your attention. Notice how she introduces a concept and then develops it into its component parts - each part leading to yet another important ingredient in the banquet she has prepared for you.

Try to **feel the Author's passion** - the driving force behind her story. Allow her passion to become your own, for the time being. See her ideas creatively unfold before your mind. Hear her characters or related elements of her story speaking to one another - really listen to them. Open your mind to a new and exciting experience - the Author's world. Resolve that before your studies are done you will get to know something about what is important to this interesting new acquaintance of yours. Experience her world as you did your own when just a tot - with open-minded curiosity and delicious anticipation.

Communication is a magical thing to behold and experience. What we conjure mentally and relay to others by way of speech, bodily postures, innuendo, silence.... is a miraculous undertaking. The way one person can share her thoughts and consequently a portion of her life with another person is part of the marvelous mystery underlying our desire to ever reach out and share our lives and experiences with those with whom we share this planet. We all have a genuine need to share ourselves with our fellows. Allow the Author the time it takes to tell her story completely in order that you do not miss out on anything important that she had to say.

When studying for a test, as in reading purely for enjoyment, there must be a meeting of the minds. The Author has the responsibility of presenting her case in such a way where your interest and comprehension will remain strong throughout the entire length of her tale. To you is given the task of hearing her out and feeling her passion to discover why she felt her message was important enough to share with others such as yourself. If the two of you together can create a friendly, open atmosphere where this scenario can take place.... bingo!

Each of us has a story to tell. The most difficult part about story telling is finding a receptive and hopefully sympathetic audience. Give the Author the same courtesy you would wish for yourself. **Hear her out completely.** Get to the bottom of the matter. And, like any reporter worth his salt, at the end of the day be sure your comprehension of her story is such that you can clearly and confidently give a convincing synopsis to others about what exactly she had to say that was so important to convey to her Readers.

## Before You Open the Book

- **Define your goals**, the end result of your studies, and **write them out**. Think about them before you sit down daily to study.
- **Set a goal** for each study session. Such as I'll read 30 pages tonight.
- Find a relatively quiet, **secluded area to study**. Avoid your bed due to the tendency to over-relax.
- Have a fairly strong but indirect **white or yellow light**. Use this location and lighting arrangement every study session.
- Pick a time of day or evening to set aside for study. Be sure to **study every day at the selected time**.
- Tell yourself that the testing process is just a means to an end. Don't make it into something more than it is. It's just a **means to a desired end**.
- Order the affairs of your day so that you'll **have time** for your daily study session.
- Studies have shown that people who consistently do well on exams usually have a **strong desire to excel** and succeed in life.
- If your study time is planned within 2 hours after lunch or dinner, be sure to eat lightly until after your study session. You want a sufficient amount of blood available for reading **comprehension**.
- When your study time approaches **avoid** getting involved with any activity you know will extend into your pre-established study time.

## Getting to Know the Author

**Before** you begin reading study material in depth, **flip through the material quickly** to get an idea of the task before you. **Isolate main or key ideas** or concepts that come to mind. Look for chapter summaries, bold headings, sub-headings, tables, charts, graphs, and illustrations before beginning serious reading. Note major themes, minor themes and any details you come across while skimming the pages. Don't spend more than **10 or 15 minutes** doing this.

Now decide how much studying you will get done with each session. **Break down each session into a manageable unit of achievement.** You'll accomplish more, on average, with each session and you should have better comprehension and retention.

The more familiar you are with a subject before you begin to study it, the better your comprehension will be. This is also why the best students will invariably **browse through** the table of contents, index, scan any headings and sub-headings and chapter summaries of the text to **gain a degree of familiarity** with its concepts **before** sitting down to serious study sessions.

## It's Study Time

- **Avoid worrying** about anything when you sit down to study – it can lead to mental paralysis.
- Your goal in reading should be to **understand** the material and get your questions answered, **not to memorize** a series of words on a page. When the mind is interactively involved with the study material, when you are virtually seeing the concepts presented in the material, you can excel on the exam.
- Read as fast as possible where you can clearly understand major idea sets.
- Read with your fingers leading the way for increased focus, comprehension and speed. This is where the **Three Touch Line Scan** technique, as explained in this report, is quite effective. The key is to steadily build a constant **series of images** in mind, all of which add to the one central picture you will be creating with every reading study session. We learn by seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking, doing, etc. Of those, the power of **controlled imagination** will by far out weigh all other learning tools when it comes down to understanding what you have read. Your mind must be able to “see” what it conceives if it is to somehow understand it.
- When taking notes use a **yellow legal or letter size pad**. The color yellow tends to stimulate areas of the mind related to reading comprehension and attentive study.
- The ideal noise level or type of noise is what is known as “**white noise.**” This is a low, steady background sound such as instrumental music, steady traffic noise, or a fan. These kinds of sounds can actually help you **maintain focus** and concentration.

- Hold the reading material **15 to 20 inches** from your eyes. This will **reduce eye fatigue** and allow you to actually read at a quicker pace without losing comprehension.
- Every study hour take a **5 or 10-minute break**. This will refresh you and help you maintain concentration when you continue studying.
- **Read the study material with your fingers.** Underline each sentence from left to right as you move your hand along. Reread difficult passages when necessary. This practice will ensure you don't stare at words too long, your thoughts don't drift and you don't back track on sentences already read. Use the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system for highly technical or **difficult** text.
- Remember to read toward the goal of **comprehension** - not to memorize words.
- Avoid the tendency to question passages or concepts you may not agree with. You can criticize later. Just read through and **finish the material** for the study session. Read to comprehend what is written not to "make it acceptable for memorization." Put a pencil check on the page margin near areas that you need to review later.
- Write down notes, thoughts after finishing each page. At the end of a study session **review all notes**, filling in as required, and get a clear concept of the important points you read. This way there is no need to try recalling everything you read. Your mind can remain loose and clear to think with clarity and focus.
- **Stay loose**, clear headed and **focused**. Comprehension is an **interdependent process** where your understanding of what you read on page two depends on what you read on page one.

- The notes you take should **summarize** what you read **“in your own words.”**  
Resist the common mistake of trying to recreate what you read – Recreation is an attempt of memorize. Remember to **strive for comprehension not memorization.**

## Other Helpful Suggestions

Successful study can only be accomplished if you're **consistent**. No excuses. Make your study time **productive**.

An inadequate self-image can lead to laziness, poor memory, and lack of concentration. If for example, your goal is to eventually become a Physician, **practice visualizing yourself** confidently delivering care to hundreds of appreciative patients. You really **must see this in mind** before it can become a reality for you.

If you're having trouble keeping your mind on the study material consider if you're involved in too many outside activities, watching too much television, partying too much, emotionally unsettled due to problems in your love life. **Identify and isolate the problem** and quickly eliminate it. In other words, what are you really thinking about when your mind should be on your study material?

While studying for your exam **associate with upbeat, positive thinking, optimistic people**. Your mind will tend to follow their lead and this attitude will help you to study more efficiently.

Have faith in your ability to comprehend and internalize your studies and to subsequently do well with the exam. At the end of a long study session **reward yourself** with something you would value and enjoy such as a good meal, dessert, an enjoyable movie, a warm bath, spending time with a loved one, etc. Be sure to reward yourself within a few days of the study session for the reward to have a positive, reinforcing psychological impact.

If you take a vacation while studying for your exam, **take any relevant study material along** and be sure to study at the appointed time every night even if it can only be for half an hour or less. The mind likes **repetition and familiarity**. Much like a tennis player practicing for a big match on center court at Wimbledon, think of your

exam as your big match and you must exercise the same level of discipline as a tennis pro to excel. **We tend to do in life as we practice and prepare.**

I have often found it helpful to inhale the vapors of the **Essential Oil of basil or lemon** prior to taking any exam or before sitting down for an extended reading session where **focus** is vital. Both Essential Oils seem to be quite effective for stimulating those areas of the brain associated with attentiveness, imagery and comprehension. These products can be purchased at most healthy food stores.

Studying for any test is tantamount to practicing the way in which you will respond to any questions or circumstances presented to you on a particular exam. As you know, the purpose of any test is to gauge your comprehension of some field of study.

Bear in mind that memory will only tell you what **words** a Writer used to compose the text - **not the meaning** she was conveying. The best use of memory for study is to **memorize the notes you took in your own words.** That represents **your comprehension** of the subject matter. **Study well** and you'll do well on your exams.

Studying anything in depth to gain a working understanding of how the principles of the subject matter can somehow be employed in one's life for the benefit of oneself or one's fellows is a **serious undertaking.** Treat it as such but **don't be intimidated** by it.

## Part II

### **How to Speed-Read any Medical, Technical or Other Scientific Literature**

How would you like to double your current rate of reading speed and comprehension? If that interests you I'll need the next few minutes of your time to show you exactly how it can be done. No expensive, fancy reports to buy or any hidden agendas. I only need your attention and willingness to learn something new and potentially of great utility for you.

There is an effective, relatively foolproof method I've used over the years for speed-reading and comprehending medical, scientific or any other technical literature. I call it the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system. I'm not personally aware of anyone of any notoriety who utilizes this specific speed-reading technique for any medical, scientific or any other technical literature. However, before you're done with this report, I'll prove to you that it works.

During the early 90's I suffered from an acute inner ear infection that produced rather bizarre symptoms. One of which was an inability to remain focused on any single line of thought for very long. Regardless of how deliberately I adhered to the study techniques mentioned in the '**How to Score High on any Test Legitimately**' report, after completing a study session I noticed that I was unable to clearly and accurately re-create strong mental images of what I'd just read. When I spoke with my ENT Doc about this in Southern California he suspected my problems were linked to the inner ear complications.

Determined to correct this situation I started experimenting with the manner by which I absorbed, analyzed, cataloged and filed away any new incoming data. I would literally sit for hours selecting random chapters from novels and technical books alike and read each body of text. I tried reading at a snail's pace and then alternately speed-reading by

scanning each line of text with a smooth left to right motion of a finger. It didn't matter. It was all still a blur to me. Never the less, I kept at it until, after a period of time, I was able to read medical and other scientific text with a fair degree of focus and comprehension. But I was literally forcing myself to read and wasn't enjoying it at all. I knew something was missing.

Purely by accident I discovered a speed-reading technique for **TECHNICAL LITERATURE** that, to this day, is still superior to any other techniques I've personally used or heard about. Here's what happened. Late one night I was reading a medical publication entitled '**Gray's Anatomy – The Classic Collector's Edition.**' I was tired and doing my best to keep my mind focused on the passage I was reading entitled: 'Articulations of the Lower Extremities.' My uninspired, disinterested gaze drifted down to the subheading, 'Hip-joint.' I zipped through the first paragraph, without clearly seeing or understanding a single word or phrase.

Mentally exhausted and disgusted that I wasn't really absorbing anything of value, beginning with the second paragraph dealing with the 'Capsular Ligament,' I started **tapping at each line of text with my index finger** – one row at a time. To my absolute amazement I could **CLEARLY SEE EACH WORD** where my finger touched. I also noticed I was simultaneously able to see words and short phrases that straddled each word I "touched."

As I continued reading as such, scanning each line of text effortlessly, I noticed it didn't seem to matter if I picked up my pace or not. As long as I scanned each line with a three point touch – allowing the words and phrases to simply flow in at their own speed – I could see and comprehend what the Writer was conveying. By the time I quickly read down to the section on the 'Ilio-femoral Ligament' I realized I had a clear picture of what was read in the previous chapter.

## Looking into the Writer's Mind

The key was this newly discovered ability to really **SEE** certain words and phrases along each scanned line of text and to consequently **FORM A QUICK BUT CLEAR MENTAL IMAGE** of the subject matter covered. It was as if I were the Writer composing the text! I thought to myself, 'this can't possibly be this easy.' So, I experimented further. I scanned through a handful of passages randomly selected throughout the book and found the results to be the same. The **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system worked like a charm.

My experiment proved conclusively that this speed-reading technique allowed me to **QUICKLY READ AN ENTIRE LINE OF TECHNICAL TEXT** with clarity and comprehension. As a consequence of that extremely productive study session I made the following important observations:

- It helped tremendously to initially scan the table of contents, the index, major headings, subheadings and any chapter summaries before starting to line-read a given technical book or magazine
- I was rapidly and effortlessly **SEEING AND ABSORBING** those words and phrases where my finger took me – in effect **HIGHLIGHTING** them
- Bordering words and phrases were **incidentally scanned** – which added to each line of text's overall 'comprehension value'
- **My eyes didn't feel tired** even after scanning multiple pages of text using this technique – my finger was doing 90% of the work
- The **notes I took for each page were focused and clear**, with major and minor concepts clearly set out in relational patterns – **IN MY OWN WORDS**

- I could clearly **SEE** what the **Writer was trying to re-create** for me in print
- The more I read using the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system the more I wanted to continue reading – obviously I'd found a way to **ENJOY** my reading assignment

## Learning to go with the Flow

My theory on the effectiveness of this powerful reading technique can best be demonstrated by an examination of the process of communication that takes place when you watch a show you normally enjoy on television. There is usually so much going on at any given moment that it's unwise to get 'stuck' on any thing a character might say or do. If you do get stuck in the action or dialogue chances are you'll miss something else imbedded in the scene that was of importance to comprehension of that passage of the drama.

As you must know from watching your favorite shows, the best viewing technique is to sort of go with the flow of the dialogue and action so as to keep pace with the overall development of the plot. When your mind is openly communicative and 'pliable' in this way it tends to unconsciously 'stamp' certain portions of the dialogue and action as events of singular value to the story. It will do this subconsciously as each scene unfolds without any deliberate effort on your part.

Think about how effortlessly you're able to re-create the drama of one of your favorite shows – scene by scene – when discussing an episode with someone you know. It's astounding how, after only one viewing of the show, you can almost perfectly reproduce actual scenes, including the dialogue. Any Psychologist worth her salt will tell you that your mind was able to clearly **SEE AND COMPREHEND** what was happening from scene to scene and you were enjoying what you were viewing.

The show's Director was able to initially capture your attention - to the exclusion of most other things happening around you – and then guide you effortlessly through an interesting plot with multiple, successive benchmarks of empathic reflection and theme/plot comprehension. When you finished watching the show you briefly reflected – **IN YOUR OWN WORDS** - on what had just passed before your eyes and, consequently, it was vividly set in mind.

When asked about your take on the episode you could quickly and easily recount the basic action of major scenes, recalling any ‘signature’ dialogue or action and any related activity with each, telling what your synopsis of the show had been. What happened was you were able to see the forest without getting too hung up on the trees – **you got the overall picture and the major action and dialogue along the way!**

Your mind has the ability to work the same way when you’re reading. Although the printed word stimulus is all visual **YOUR IMAGINATION** fills in the blank spaces as the text unfolds – provided you don’t get too hung up on any one word or phrase and that you keep reading with a steady pace. With any incoming data your mind seeks familiarity, association and comprehension for ease of future reference and potential utilization. The more familiar you are with basic themes of a given technical publication’s subject matter the easier it is for you to make quick, relevant mental associations with much of the subject matter and to ultimately **COMPREHEND** what you have read. It works in Hollywood and I’m telling you it can work for you when reading any technical literature.

The mind seems to work best in an environment where it can clearly see what’s going on, where it can associate with what’s happening in one way or another and where it can comprehend the overall picture. Polished Speakers know how this works. They know that if the audience gets too hung up on a single word, phrase or idea, they will not subsequently clearly hear, follow or comprehend much of what the Speaker says from that point forward. For this reason the best Speakers will **HIGHLIGHT** and **ENLIVEN** their speeches with certain words and phrases and bodily gestures that allow the audience to **keep moving along** with the **PACE** of the delivery.

A skilled and Experienced Speaker ensures that the audience can clearly and effortlessly absorb central themes of the speech. The audience is inspired to keep up with the story line to ensure meaningful comprehension of the subject matter at the conclusion of the delivery. Just as you easily follow the story line and delivery of a skilled Orator with enjoyment, if you use my **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system to read

medical or any other highly technical literature, **you can measurably increase your reading speed and overall comprehension** of subject matter covered.

## Test Driving the Three Touch Line Scan Speed-reading System

Enough talk. Let's get right to it and have you see for yourself how effective the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system can be for you. Pick up any technical book or magazine in the room you are sitting in that has a minimum of mathematical equations appearing throughout the text.

Begin reading three separate paragraphs of the text using the following three different techniques:

1. Read the **first paragraph** with just your eyes moving across each line from left to right
2. Read the **second paragraph** while your finger moves smoothly and quickly under each word of every line from left to right
3. Read the **third paragraph** with a finger touching just underneath the beginning, middle and end of each line of text. Don't drag your finger across the line. Actually lift it up and tap it back down again - three times - as you move across each line of text. Allow your eyes to follow your finger, resting briefly and effortlessly on each word or cluster of words your finger taps under as you go from line to line. Each line of text should take no more than two seconds to scan. **Whether you use a finger, a pen or a pencil** does not matter in the least. The result should be the same.

When you're done reading the three paragraphs, using the three techniques outlined above, we'll take a look at what I suppose may have happened.

Please try it now!

## Dealing with Reader Intimidation

**The first technique** mentioned above is how most of us read. Our eyes move slowly across the page, fearful that we might miss a word or two of utmost importance in understanding what's being said. Often when we get to the end of a line we inadvertently wind up reading the first two or three words of the line of text we just finished! Such a tiring and needless waste of time.

This is what I call **Reader Intimidation**. We spend so much time trying to link multiple images together from line to line and attempting to determine the meaning of each word in a given line of text that we often begin to tire and subsequently 'drift' and lose sight of the goal of the study or reading session – to quickly gain a relatively clear picture of the **GIST** of what the text is talking about. You're **NOT** looking to figure out every word and cleverly worded sentence in the text. That's not your job.

Remember the Speaker trying to initially reach and then maintain communication with the audience? What the Speaker wants you to walk away with are concepts and ideas – be they new or familiar – that in some way will have some positive, motivating impact on your consciousness. The same applies to the written word. The Writer wants desperately for you to understand her work and think highly of the way she logically – or at the very least interestingly – presents her thoughts on a given subject. She is doing her literary best to **communicate** with you.

While I was typing this passage you're presently reading I was typing away at lightning speed - hunt and peck style - usually four or five words ahead of myself. I could barely get my fingers to keep up with the pace at which my mind was racing. It's natural for Writers to compose literature as such and it should be eminently natural for Readers to read in the same manner – always one step ahead. This attitude keeps the mind in a state of **open readiness and eager anticipation of new information** – for the complete length of the entire text!

What I'm telling you is to not take **ANY TEXT** too literally or what's worse – too seriously. I don't care what it is. Any text you read is someone's **INTERPRETATION** of his or her own study and observation on a particular theme or area of interest. What you're reading now is my comprehension and interpretation of a speed-reading system I feel can make a huge difference in your life and certainly lessen the time you may spend at present reviewing scientific or medical literature.

You should read my text the same way I'm asking you to read ANY text – with speed, poise, fearlessness and eager anticipation of each new paragraph, knowing that when your done you'll be able to describe the **GIST** of what I had in mind for the text – **IN YOUR OWN WORDS!**

I've written a few books in my life. I can honestly tell you that all any Writer wants is that you understand the **ESSENCE** of what she or he is trying to say. Although a bit of cleverly orchestrated mystery and intrigue is acceptable and even expected by most Readers, **its not up to you** to determine every idea, whim, hidden plot, or what have you that may or may not be stylishly buried somewhere in the text. Writers try very hard to eliminate or significantly lessen the frequency of such occurrences so as not to create frustration with their writing style.

Most Writers have a need to be heard and understood. Especially when dealing with esoteric scientific disciplines, they do make a concerted effort to simplify difficult concepts and theorems to make it more palatable to Readers who need the information but may not care for all the technical jargon or highflying complicated hypotheses that usually accompany such information. Writers are NOT trying to confuse you. **Don't look for ways to be confused!**

Read any technical text **quickly, without hesitation, pause briefly only to take short and concise notes, maintain your reading velocity** and know in your heart that the Writer really does want you to understand what's she's telling you in print. If enough

Readers like you and me don't understand what she's saying, she'll be looking for a job pronto.

Whatever you do, **PLEASE** don't read every single word of every line of a text. You will soon tire your eyes and you'll probably lose the **GIST** of the **MAIN THEME** and sub plots or lesser concepts the Writer was weaving throughout the text. And it's all there for you to discover if you know how to properly read a given piece of literature.

## The Problem with Popular Speed-reading Techniques

**The second technique** you used above to read one of the three paragraphs pretty much sums up how beginning speed Readers often read non-technical text with fair to moderate comprehension. The problem with this technique is that, although this is a popular way to lightly read through a work of fiction, its inappropriate for very technical literature. Line scanning speed Readers rarely form any **clearly defined** image in mind of what is going on from page to page as it relates to the over all picture. And this is with **NON-TECHNICAL TEXT!**

The eyes are usually moving so quickly over each line of text that nothing of any consequence “jumps out” at the Reader to aid with comprehension. Sure, you’ll pick up bits and pieces of information here and there and may even be able to brag to friends about how you read ‘Gone With The Wind’ in 30 minutes. You and I both know such a scenario will not cut the mustard for any serious reading of medical or other scientific literature.

There is one instance I can think of where this style of speed-reading can be helpful for technical reading. If you’re simply **reviewing** text with which you are quite **familiar** and where you’re only looking for a quick ‘**refresher session,**’ then this kind of fast, line scanning could be appropriate for you. Still, I recommend the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system. You’ll get more out of your refresher sessions.

## **Simplicity of the Three Touch Line Scan Speed-reading System**

**The third technique** - my **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system - should have allowed for a comfortably fast reading pace and increased comprehension of the gist of the text read. You'll recall that as you tapped quickly below each word you were actually able to SEE two or three other words simultaneously.

Those **word clusters** were scanned and analyzed by your mind for content relevance in the twinkling of an eye. They're all there in your mind right now - sort of like a living snap shot. You can access the concepts which arose as you were reading from line to line by simply calling forth one or two main images.

You'll find all of these lesser images will have been effortlessly aligned together in a comprehensive and easily understandable network of inter related data. All of which helps you with your over all comprehension of what you read. And all of this was done without any effort put forth to 'memorize' the text word for word. Without you raising a finger outside of simply scanning the text you were able to **piece together a fairly accurate picture** of what the Writer had in mind to accomplish with the text you read.

Each line of text you read, during the exercise above, using my **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system should have taken you no longer than two seconds to scan. If you scanned the text with the same open anticipation as you would watch your favorite television show or any PBS scientific presentation of an interesting topic, you should have gathered the **GIST** of each line of text and have a fairly clear picture of what the Writer was conveying to you.

If not, don't despair. It may take you more than one sitting to master the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system but if you'll practice a few minutes every day, you will become proficient enough to read the most difficult passages of medical or other scientific literature with the relative ease that you now read a novel.

Another way to view the effectiveness of the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system is to see it in light of the methods used to create the popular cartoons during the middle part of the Twentieth Century. Hollywood studios employed Artists to create a series of similar but progressively differing images of a cartoon scene that were then rapidly ‘flipped’ in sequence to render the impression of live action.

This is the same powerful principle you employ when reading any technical literature using the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system. The words and phrases scanned can literally **COME TO LIFE** in clear, well-defined and understandable imagery in mind.

You may ask what to do when you’re scanning a line and come upon one or more terms unfamiliar to you. **Don’t slow your reading pace!** Continuity of thought, mental imagery and a comfortably rapid reading velocity are essential for comprehension.

Is an apple tree that’s missing one or two choice apples any less of an apple tree? Certainly not. You’ll do just fine skipping over a few words and phrases here and there. Simply make a check mark on the page margin at the end of the line being scanned. You can return to it later - after your reading or study session is done - when reviewing your notes for that page.

Let me further console and assure you that most ‘new’ or important concepts will be revisited by the Writer at least a few times during the course of the entire text and probably in a number of ways to ensure you ‘get’ her or his meaning.

## Summary

By mastering this simple but powerful **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system you should be able to:

- Read any passage of a technical publication and really **SEE IMPORTANT WORDS AND PHRASES** that express major and minor concepts embedded in the text.
- See pivotal words and phrases throughout any passage of text in such a way that without effort will make a **STRONG MENTAL IMPRESSION**.
- Read **ANY** scientific, medical or technical text effortlessly and with **MUCH GREATER COMPREHENSION**.
- Take notes based upon what **YOU SEE AND UNDERSTAND**, not just repeating words and phrases the Writer used in the text
- **READ** with speed, clarity and enjoyment – there's no greater feeling when studying than to know you can master the subject matter at hand and clearly understand what's being portrayed in the text.
- **TAKE NOTES** that will unerringly recreate major and minor themes visited by the Writer throughout the text.
- Have the ability, if tested, to **EXPLAIN** the gist of the subject matter covered by the Writer in a comprehensive and convincing manner – **IN YOUR OWN WORDS**

I use the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system almost daily for medical and scientific literature I'm compelled to read in order to keep up with the hectic pace of the

health care industry. Give it a try. I'm confident it can help you get the most out of those rare leisurely moments that you somehow fit into your busy schedule for reading enjoyment and enrichment.

## Part III

# Simplified Advanced Technique for Speed-reading Medical and Other Technical Literature

Following is an in-depth analysis of how to gain the most from the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system. Hopefully this will shine a brighter light on this important topic.

To truly gain the most from a technical speed-reading session it's important that you understand the **two mindsets** present during any study session - yours and that of the Writer. Your goal is to gather enough useful data from the literature that will render a clear picture of the **essence** of what the Writer is attempting to convey in writing.

Conversely, but not antagonistically, when composing the text, the Writer's main objective was to find the **best combinations of words** to accurately portray a clear picture of what she wanted to convey to you.

On the surface this may take on the appearance of a sale being made - the Writer selling a set of ideas to you. Underneath it all there is actually something much more urgent and essential that absolutely must take place. It's imperative that you, the Reader, quickly and efficiently find a way to think and feel as did the Writer when she wrote the literature.

This may not be as difficult as it sounds. The Writer is certainly aware of this and will usually go to great lengths to ensure this will happen. A good technical Writer will compose text in such a way where, from the opening bell, you can form quick, **readily identifiable images** and mental associations. What you don't pick up during the reading of one passage – possibly due to unfamiliarity with the subject matter - you can usually

pick up further down the line in a different passage of text where the same concept is presented in a manner that you can comprehend much more readily.

A technical Writer naturally expects that as you progressively read each section of her literature in the order of presentation your comprehension of what she is saying will improve - page by page. Always remember that if you can read her literature with the same passion, conceptual imagery and anticipation with which she wrote it, you're way ahead of the game.

## Communicating with the Author

The process of communication is **highly subjective**. In order for the Writer to realize her goal of optimum transference of concepts and associated imagery to you, a bit of **alchemy** must take place. Her fervent wish is for you to be able to ‘tune in’ to her particular wavelength of how she views and expresses her thoughts and feelings about a particular subject matter.

Put another way, the Writer wants Readers of her literature to ‘see’ the especially interesting **perspective** she has on the subject under discussion. Her concept of the **ideal Reader** - someone who can gain the most from reading her literature - is a person who can magically **anticipate** what she is doing from one frame of text to another.

If all proceeds as she planned, with each new line of text read, you’ll be steadily creating a collective series of related imagery that will accurately capture the essence of what **she saw in mind** when writing the literature. Bingo! We have a meeting of the minds. You’ve both accomplished your ultimate goals for the reading session. You, in effect, read the literature with the same sense of purpose, anticipation and confidence with which the Writer wrote it.

When I was typing this report you’re reading now the words were **jumping** out of the images I had in mind and onto the page. Although I was aware of each word as it was being typed, I was always one step ahead of what I was writing - anticipating each new sequence of imagery. The flow was **smooth and easy**. With the same effortless focus you maintain while viewing your favorite television show, keep your reading smooth and easy.

You control the reading session, not the Writer. The Writer’s literature must serve **you**. It must serve a decided purpose - a satisfactory transmission and sharing of information.

## Keeping in Stride with the Flow of Information

I'm saying that you **must** develop the knack for **keeping up** with the Writer of any text. You cannot possibly do this if you are reading each line **word for word**. No Writer of any consequence would have such an inflated ego to expect you to do as such.

For you to follow the Writer's pace of **sequential image construction** you must be able to view the text as you would **watch a television show**. Don't get too caught up in the dialogue. Go with the flow of the action.

**Keep up** with the **pace** of what's happening in the literature. If you look for **too much detail** - digging for hidden meanings in words and slick sounding phrases - you're liable to miss the **grand picture** of what's really going on **conceptually**.

No need to try and read between the lines. A good piece of medical or other technical literature will **tell the whole story** right there in front of your eyes. Most of what takes place in mind while speed-reading happens instantaneously at a subconscious level.

Even though we read and readily recognize certain words and word clusters, the actual stringing together of images, according to grades of familiarity, takes place without any conscious effort. Actually, the more involved the conscious, analytical mind becomes in the process of speed-reading, the less you'll gain conceptually from the reading session. This is a fact.

Big picture concepts are simply theorems churned out by the abstract faculty of mind. It is the conscious mind's way of coming up with a best guess scenario when you want to 'get a handle' on something. **Logical thinking** will show you **how** something was done - the nuts and bolts of it. The **abstract faculty** of mind will reveal **why** it was done - the grand conceptual purpose behind it.

Similar to what takes place while you watch television, when speed-reading, you **must allow** your abstract mind to quickly, smoothly and effortlessly piece together an **ongoing believable picture** from all that you are scanning. It must be able to perform this natural

function without undue interference from the conscious mind attempting to **analyze every detail** that it chances upon while you are speed-reading.

The Writer of any technical literature **does** want you to fully understand and comprehend the **gist** of the text. In rare instances - such as mathematical or scientific formulas - you'll be required to memorize verbatim what you've read in certain isolated sections of the text. However, for the great majority of any technical literature you'll ever read, your **basic comprehension** of the subject being treated is much more important to the Writer than rote memorization of the text.

With the **gist** of the foregoing fresh in mind, the following suggestions should enhance the quality of your medical or other technical speed-reading sessions:

- **Always**, quickly **scan** through the table of contents, chapter summaries, the index, appendix, bold or italicized words, headings and subheadings throughout the entire text - or at least the chapter you're about to read -BEFORE you begin speed-reading with the **Three Touch Line Scan** system.
- Pay particular attention to the **first and last paragraphs of each chapter** and each chapter's subheading sections. Allow three seconds to scan each line of these paragraphs. The first and last paragraphs are often where central concepts and idea sets are introduced and then summarized.
- If comprehension seems to lag during the reading of any passage **take an extra second** to scan each line and let your eye 'rest' on each word touched for the brief instant your finger or pen 'touches' under a word or cluster of words. **Why not try it now** to test what I'm suggesting? You can just about see an entire line of text this way without tiring your eyes.

- Try using a **four touch line scan** technique for especially long lines of text where the subject matter is highly technical.
- Place a pen or pencil mark at the end of any lines of text that seem ‘fuzzy’ in your mind. **Maintain** your reading velocity as best you can and proceed to the next line of text. You can always **come back** at the END of that study session and speed-read those fuzzy lines again. By then your mind will feel challenged to complete the task of comprehending the line or lines of text to be reread. The second time around should be a breeze for you.
- While you’re speed-reading, effortlessly imagine someone saying aloud the words and word clusters being scanned. It’s often helpful to mentally **see and hear** this person talking to you, just as if you were listening to a skilled Speaker. Conversely, you can mentally hear your own voice speaking the words and phrases aloud as you are scanning text. The point is to ‘humanize and animate’ the act of reading - **bring the text to life** with action, sound, color, people, animals, buildings, places, whatever - in order to enhance your comprehension of the text.
- Practice the **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system at least once daily for three minutes per session. Allow your eyes to get in the habit of quickly scanning lines of text in this quite natural way. In time technical speed-reading will be second nature to you.

## Using the Camera in Your Brain

Bear in mind that where the finger or pen **touches down** on a line of text the mind takes a **snap shot** of the word or cluster of words in focus. The **smoother** your speed-reading pace the quicker and clearer the images will become as you proceed with your reading of the text. The fluid medium of consciousness will enable these individual snap shots to combine quickly as an ongoing animated sequence of related imagery.

The end result is what every Writer strives for - an understanding and hopefully, sympathetic audience that really enjoyed the literature.

To clearly demonstrate the importance of understanding and utilizing this **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system, as a closing thought I want you to try an experiment. Take ten seconds to visually scan the room you're sitting in now.

Did your eyes move smoothly along as would a motion picture camera? I'll bet good money they did not. My guess is that your eyes rested or focused momentarily on certain points along the walls, your desk, the floor, books and other objects as you scanned the room.

Instead of your eyes being fixed and unmoving while scanning the room, your eyes were 'hopping' from one object to another and so forth. As you looked around the room your eyes took a series of split second snapshots that gave you a visual perception of the room's environment.

This is the natural way our eyes prefer to take in visual stimuli - in split second snapshot fashion. Scanning text should be done in such a way where you take full advantage of the **natural tendencies** of eye movement while reading.

## Go Thee Forth and Read Anew

The act of reading is an **aggressive** pursuit wherein the eyes must initiate the necessary action required to effortlessly bring the text to life. The **Three Touch Line Scan** speed-reading system allows you to scan a large amount of text efficiently and without too great an expenditure of time or energy.

As the experiment with scanning your room revealed, when absorbing visual stimuli the eyes prefer to skip quickly and effortlessly from one visual stimulus to the next. This seems to work hand in glove with the image recognition faculty of mind.

Allow this same, natural **touch and go** tendency of the eyes to prevail while speed-reading any technical or medical literature. The rewards will be many.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to be derived is that you can begin to view the reading of any technical, medical, or virtually any printed literature, as a pleasant, informative **fireside chat** you will have between yourself and the Writer of the text.

**Read it as you would write it - smooth and easy!**

Happy Trails.