

READING:
FOOD FOR
THOUGHT

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MUST YOU MAKE A MEAL OF IT?

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**“Some books are to be tasted,
others to be swallowed,
and some few to be chewed or digested.”**

A careful choice of menu is vital. It's all too easy to suffer from mental indigestion, to choke on heavy or inedible fare, or to risk malnutrition from an inadequate diet of junk food.

Think of **WHAT** you might read on a typical day:

**the back of the cereal box; newspaper
headlines and sports pages; a card or
letter from a friend;
a telephone directory;
a biology text book;
an encyclopaedia;
a magazine;
the biography of a famous person;
a chapter on the formation of rocks;
teletext;
a pamphlet on health and safety;
a thriller or detective story...**

Think also of **WHY** and **HOW** you read:

If the letter is very special, you may keep it in your pocket (close to your heart?) and re-read it at intervals throughout the day. You may just skim through the magazine in a spare moment, or be so absorbed that you are tempted to read it under the desk.

* **KEEP A RECORD** of all the reading you actually do for study or relaxation in one particular day or week. Sort your list into three sections:

things that you tasted, merely **skimmed** or dipped into;
those that you **swallowed** whole, possible at one sitting;
and those which needed to be carefully **chewed and digested**.

If you are asked to talk or write about your reading, your mind may go blank. You know what you like or dislike, but how can you put it into words, or persuade others to see things as you do? One of the best ways to cope with these problems is to develop strategies for **active reading**. Think first about where you read. Sit comfortably but in a position that will help you keep alert. Make sure the light is adequate. Take a short break at least every half hour and do something totally different. Always read with a pen or pencil in your hand; keep a notebook handy and use it as you read.

KEEP A READING LOG:

jot down your immediate reactions to what you read.
start a new page for each section or chapter of the book.
write in very brief notes, well spaced out.

NOTE DOWN ANY QUESTIONS THAT OCCUR AS YOU READ:

what does X mean?
is this true?
didn't he say that earlier on page Y?
have we met this character before? etc.

...AND ANY REACTIONS YOU HAVE:

this contradicts the drawing on the front cover. she's
used the same word ten times in two paragraphs. I
can't make head or tail of section 4.
the diagram doesn't relate to the writing on page 9.
yes, I agree completely with that point. etc.

What kind of book do you need: starter, appetiser, snack, or four-course meal?

Don't judge a book for a purpose for which it is not intended: a train timetable won't tell you about bus routes, an infant's comic won't give the latest chart hits.

Wayne took a book out of the library because he read on the cover: 'HOW to HUG'. Only when he got it home did he find it was volume VII of an encyclopaedia.

WHAT YOU SELECT SHOULD BE RELEVANT TO YOUR NEEDS.

An A level text book won't give you basic information.

Don't choose a picture book for in-depth analysis.

If an unsuitable book is the only one you can find, see if you can get anything from it to keep you going.

LEARN TO SKIM AND SEARCH READ:

Skim reading is what you do when looking up a phone number: just glance at words and pages until you reach the bit you need.

Search reading is the next step in the same process: when you reach the right area of text, slow down and look for the key word you want.

*** WORK IN GROUPS WITH A RANGE OF READING MATERIAL:**

Everyone will need a copy. Each one chooses a page to read in detail, then asks the others to skim read that page for one particular item. See who can do it fastest.

SHOPPING AROUND

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You wouldn't get far if you ordered veal cutlets in a vegetarian restaurant or asked for pâté de fois gras in the school tuck shop.

Learn where to look for information of a particular kind.

*** FIND OUT HOW BOOKS ARE ORGANISED IN YOUR LIBRARY.**

Some books are housed in the **Reference** section. List the books you would expect to find in this section. Then check in the library itself. Which ones have you missed? What other reference material is available besides books? Many libraries now have reference material on CD ROM. Find out if your school or local library has this facility. If so, what material is available? How can you access it?

*** LIST THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF REFERENCE MATERIAL IN CONVENTIONAL FORMS AND THOSE IN TECHNOLOGICAL FORMS.**

NON-FICTION BOOKS

If your library is catalogued under the Dewey system, some topics will appear under several headings and will be shelved in different places.

*** FIND AND LIST SEVERAL REFERENCE NUMBERS FOR EACH OF THESE TOPICS:**

| Topic | Dewey Reference Number |
|-----------|------------------------|
| BOATS | |
| CHILDREN, | |
| CHURCHES | |
| DOGS | |
| WAR. | |

*** Find books with those numbers.** Compare the information they give. Which would count as a snack and which as a square meal? Why are the books shelved in these different sections?

Look for some of these ingredients in choosing a non-fiction book:

DATE OF PUBLICATION -

Is the information up to date? if not, does it matter?

LIST OF CONTENTS -

Just chapter headings? or some brief indication of actual contents of chapters?

INDEX -

How comprehensive is it? Does it distinguish between major and minor entries on a topic? illustrations and text?

APPENDICES -

Are there any, and if so, what? How useful are they?

GLOSSARY -

To explain technical terms used in the text?

BIBLIOGRAPHY -

Does it give a list of further reading?

If so, does this give brief notes on each reference, or just titles and authors?

ILLUSTRATIONS -

Few or none?

Any diagrams, tables, graphs, maps, where relevant?

Just pretty pictures that look good but tell you little?

Are illustrations related clearly to the text?

LAYOUT -

Use of headings and subheadings?

Unbroken pages of print?

Lots of very bitty paragraphs?

What size print?

NON-FICTION: CONTENTS

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A wise reader will examine the contents, not judge a book by its cover.

*** ANALYSE AND COMPARE THE INGREDIENTS OF 3 BOOKS ON THE SAME SUBJECT:**

| | BOOK 1 | BOOK 2 | BOOK 3 |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| TITLE DATE | | | |
| CONTENTS LIST | | | |
| INDEX | | | |
| DIAGRAMS etc. | | | |
| PICTURES | | | |
| LAYOUT | | | |
| SUBHEADINGS | | | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | | |
| OTHER APPENDICES | | | |
| OVERALL RATING (1-10) | | | |

More than a superficial tasting is required to evaluate a book. Does it provide substantial nourishment or poor nutritional value? Are the contents fresh, or just stale left-overs?

POINTS TO LOOK FOR IN EVALUATING NON-FICTION BOOKS:

*** TYPE OF BOOK.**

Decide what differences you would expect to find in:

Information and reference books;

Glossy pictorial presentations (so-called 'coffee table books' - why?);

A travel guide for a specific region;

A personal account of a journey or expedition.

*** TARGET AUDIENCE - LEVEL AND AGE-RANGE.**

This can vary from basic information for young children to complex material for experts in the field;

Sometimes a book aimed at a younger age group may provide the background information you want or can be a useful introduction to further studies.

*** COVERAGE - RANGE AND DEPTH.**

Does it give an overview of the entire topic or focus on just one aspect of it?

Does a book on ecology, for example, give comprehensive coverage, or look in depth at just one area such as the greenhouse effect or loss of wetland habitats for wildlife?

Which of these is more useful for your needs?

Skim read several different non-fiction books and write brief notes on **type, target audience and coverage of material.**

Look beyond the packaging at the structure and presentation of material. Many non-fiction books consist of chapters or articles by different authors. There may be an editor who writes the introduction and arranges the material.

***EXAMINE A BOOK WITH MORE THAN ONE AUTHOR :**

What part is played by the editor?

Is it written in essay form as a book to read through, or in separate self-contained sections for reference?

Are there overlaps between contributions or big gaps of coverage of the topic?

Are there cross-references (perhaps in the index) between one entry and another?

Do too many cooks spoil the broth?

***SOME TRAVEL BOOKS AND BIOGRAPHIES:**

may be entirely narrative, telling a story;

the structure may be chronological - in time order or topographical - in place order, or arranged under themes.

*** SELECT FROM THE LIBRARY ONE BIOGRAPHY AND ONE TRAVEL BOOK.**

Without reading every page in detail, write notes on their structure.

LOOK AT SEVERAL AUTOBIOGRAPHIES.

Did the person whose name is on the cover actually write the book? If not, who did? Why?

*What is
a ghost writer?
Someone
who writes
only when
the spirit
moves.*

In the hands of a bad cook, even the best ingredients can become inedible. Books, too, can be so garbled in presentation that otherwise tasty contents are spoiled.

Technical books do not have to be indigestible. Terms can be explained in a glossary; sentences can be well structured and varied; paragraphs well planned and coherent.

*** TAKE ANY PAGE FROM A NON-FICTION BOOK:**

look in some detail at the language used;

how many sentences in a paragraph?

How many words in a sentence?

Do sentences all follow a similar pattern?

Are technical words explained?

Does the writer use unnecessary jargon?

Does s/he use long words where shorter ones would do?

How interesting is it?

*** COMPARE THE PAGE YOU HAVE EXAMINED WITH ANOTHER PAGE TAKEN FROM A SIMILAR BOOK:**

Which is easier to read?

Why?

Which is more informative?

*** LOOK AT THE LANGUAGE OF A BOOK WITH MORE THAN ONE AUTHOR:**

compare two or three entries, each by a different author;

look at vocabulary;

length of sentences;

length of paragraphs;

Is the level of language the same in each entry?

If the language is very different, does it matter?

Fiction, of course, tells lies: by definition it is made up rather than real. So does non-fiction - fact - tell the truth? Not necessarily!

THE WAY FACTS ARE PRESENTED COLOURS THE WAY WE REACT TO THEM.

*** SPACE AND EMPHASIS GIVEN TO DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE SUBJECT.**

This can be clearly seen by comparing the way a controversial issue is presented in two newspapers of differing views:

Front page or inside page?

Size of headlines?

Order in which information is presented?

The same variation can also be seen in books and magazines.

*** FALSE REASONING.**

By use of false assertions or false comparisons, statements that are illogical are made to sound convincing:

Football supporters are hooligans.

Bob is a football supporter.

Therefore Bob is a hooligan.

Compare that with this:

Dogs are four-legged animals.

My cat has four legs.

Therefore my cat is a dog.

Make sure you get a balanced and healthy diet. Look out for examples of these distortions and adulterations of fact in your own reading.

There are many ways in which information may be misleading:

Use of facts and figures;
diagrams and statistics.

Are all available facts given, or only a selection of those most in keeping with the argument? Do diagrams or graphs used for comparison have the same scales and base lines? Or do they start from different points?

***OBJECTIVITY OR BIAS IN ARGUMENTS.**

Sometimes OPINIONS may be presented as if they were facts:

**Girls work harder than boys. Girls
are more emotional than boys. Girls
are weaker than boys.**

Examine the **Evidence** given to support facts or opinions.

Interpretation of facts may be presented as the **only** one possible:

**Paul was in the kitchen when the window was broken,
therefore Paul broke the window.**

(Was anyone else in the room? Was the window broken from inside or from outside?)

***LANGUAGE USED.**

The words used to state a case or describe an argument may in themselves suggest attitudes, feelings or opinions:

“Hayley stole my pen!”
“No, I didn’t. I only borrowed it.”
“You’re far too bossy!”
“No, I’m not, I’m merely self-assertive.”

Some people see fiction as the junk food of reading. Solid nourishment comes from facts; fiction provides the nibbles, the bouts of self-indulgence. If your fiction diet consists solely of comics, sickly romances, or sick horror stories, then over-indulgence may well lead to nausea. But there is a wide range of wholesome fare available to suit all tastes.

Libraries present non-fiction under category headings, and fiction in alphabetical order according to the writer's surname. Much fiction defies classification, dealing with all aspects of people's life, thought and behaviour, and with ideas and themes that encompass the whole of experience. Many of the 'classics', traditional and modern, are books of this sort.

There are also many recognised categories or GENRES of fiction:

Crime fiction;
Romance; Spy
stories; War
stories;
Fantasy;
Historical fiction.

*** WHAT ARE THE COMMON INGREDIENTS FOR BOOKS IN EACH OF THESE GENRES?**

*** CAN YOU ADD OTHER GENRES TO THE LIST GIVEN?**

*** LOOK IN YOUR LIBRARY AND COMPILE YOUR OWN LISTS OF BOOKS AND AUTHORS FOR EACH OF THESE DIFFERENT GENRES. TRY TO FIND BOTH CONTEMPORARY AND CLASSICAL WRITERS IN EACH GENRE.**

*** TASTE SOME DIFFERENT GENRES TO SEE WHICH YOU LIKE BEST.**

How can you tell if you are going to find a book palatable and satisfying? One way is to look at the ingredients, and the other is to suck it and see.

INGREDIENTS:

Author

You may have heard of the writer, read other books by him or her, read reviews, been recommended by friends.

Title and cover

Does it catch your eye? Why? What expectations does it suggest?

Blurb

Information on the flyleaf or back of the book may arouse your interest; but remember that this is written to persuade you.

Genre

You may have read books of a similar type that you liked.

SUCK IT AND SEE:

Read the first page or the first chapter. Decide if you want to read on. Ask yourself some of these questions, or ones appropriate to the genre:

Do you want to know what happens next?

What impression do you get of the characters?

Is the setting interesting or convincing?

Is the language readable ?

What do you see as the target audience?

Try your own tasting session for fiction. Go the fiction shelves of the library. Take at random three or four books you have not read. Spend five minutes on each book, looking at the ingredients and tasting the opening chapter.

*** WRITE BRIEF NOTES ON YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS.**

*** SHARE YOUR REACTIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP.**

If they have actually read the books you looked at, how far do they agree with your first impressions?
If they disagree - find out why!

*** CHOOSE ONE OF THE BOOKS YOU LOOKED AT, AND READ IT RIGHT THROUGH.**

Then go back and look at your original notes. How accurate were your first impressions?

Choose a book you have read where your first impressions were not fulfilled when you reached the end of the book.

Design your own book jacket with illustration and blurb, to give what you consider a more accurate first impression to another reader.

The place in which a novel is set is often central to its theme or plot. Many writers focus on a particular place. Sometimes this reflects the place where they have spent important parts of their lives:

Thomas Hardy -

his novels are set in Wessex, based on real places.

Arnold Bennet -

set a number of books in the Potteries in the Midlands.

John Steinbeck -

most of his novels focus on a Californian valley.

Paul Scott -

many novels set in India.

Bernard MacLaverty -

most of his writing based in Ireland.

OTHER WRITERS USE SPECIFIC SETTINGS AS THE FOCUS OF SOME NOVELS:

Graham Swift's *Waterland*;

George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*;

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*;

Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*;

Robert Westall's *The Wind Eye*.

Some genre fiction depends heavily on place: spy stories ghost stories school stories. The time setting can also be significant: science fiction historical novels war stories.

In all these, the setting is an integral part of the fiction, not mere background.

Find examples of the settings listed here - and others.

Look in detail at the setting of some of the novels you have read.

How important or relevant is the time setting? place setting? What difference would it make if the time or place were different?

The structure of a work of fiction can affect our response. Look for the following structural devices:

PROLOGUE

- before the main story

EPILOGUE

- after the main story

SEPARATE CHAPTERS

-long or short? The same length or different lengths?

CONTINUOUS NARRATIVE

- without chapter breaks

A TIME SPAN

- that covers years or only one day. That jumps from one time to another, compressing the intervening stages.

A CHRONOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

- starting at the beginning and going on to the end; starting in the middle or end and going back, perhaps with a flashback device

A THEMATIC RATHER THAN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

- where sections are linked by patterns or ideas

USE OF DOCUMENTARY OR OTHER MATERIAL

- letters, diaries, etc.

A COLLECTION OF SEPARATE OR LINKED SHORT STORIES.

Try to find examples of some of these different structures. Look in detail at the structure of some fiction you have read. What structural devices has the author used? What do you find interesting about them? What do you dislike about them? Why do you think the writer used them? How effective are they?

We are used to shifts of focus in films. Camera angles change; the lens zooms in on close-up or pans back to a panoramic view. Some shots are deliberately hard-edged, others soft. The angle from which a story is told can also be significant.

It may be seen through the eyes of one person, as if the author was writing an autobiographical narrative.

e.g. **L.P.Hartley**, *The Go-Between*.

The story may be narrated in the third person (he / she/ they) but we may only see it through the thoughts and feelings of one narrator:

e.g. **Susan Hill**, *The Albatross*

The story may unfold through different points of view, with different first-person narrators:

e.g. **Russell Hoban**, *Turtle Diary*

The narrator may have an all-seeing eye, so that we know the thoughts and feelings of many characters.

e.g. **William Golding**, *Lord of the Flies*

Further viewpoints may come from 'external' evidence, such as diaries, letters, newspaper reports and other documents:

e.g. **Bernard MacLaverly's** story, *Secrets*.

*** WRITE A SHORT STORY IN THREE OR FOUR VERSIONS, VARYING YOUR VIEWPOINT AS IN THE EXAMPLES GIVEN ABOVE.**

*** WHAT DIFFERENCES DO YOU NOTICE IN THE WAY YOU HAVE WRITTEN EACH VERSION?**

*** WHICH IS MORE EFFECTIVE IN PUTTING ACROSS THE IDEAS AND FEELINGS YOU WANT TO CONVEY?**

*** WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DRAWBACKS OF EACH TECHNIQUE IF YOU WANT TO SPRING A SURPRISE ON THE READER OR WANT TO CONTRAST TWO DIFFERENT REACTIONS TO THE SAME EVENT? WANT THE READER TO IDENTIFY CLOSELY WITH A CHARACTER?**

Ross based his review on the phone book: “Not much of a plot, but a fantastic cast of characters.” There are some books where plot is insignificant - but not to that extent!

Stories without strong plots may depend on ideas, themes, relationships, mood and atmosphere. Plots are concerned not just with **what** happens, but **whether** it will happen, and if so **when** and **why**: with cause and effect, tension, suspense, intrigue.

SOME GENRES DEPEND ALMOST ENTIRELY ON PLOT:

**adventure stories,
thrillers,
spy stories,
crime fiction,**

Serials depend on ‘cliff hangers’ at the end of each episode. Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*, like most of his novels, was published in monthly instalments. Each section had to end at a point where the readers would come back for more. Can you identify the breaks for instalments in Dickens’ story?

The **pace** of a story is also related to the plot. Some books are so action-packed that they hardly let the reader pause for breath between one dramatic incident and the next. Others vary the pace, with quiet intervals between crises. One way to analyse the plot of a novel is to **draw up a graph**, and record visually high and low points of tension.

*** COMPARE IN SOME DETAIL THE PLOTS OF TWO BOOKS YOU HAVE READ.**

Are they simple or complex?
Well-constructed or muddled?
Action-packed or low-key?
Plausible or far-fetched?

What ingredients do we look for in successful characterisation? To what extent are main characters:

individual?
vivid?
well described?
credible?
interesting?
convincingly motivated?

Can you identify with some of the **characters**, share their hopes and fears and feelings? To what extent and in what way do the characters **change and develop** in the course of the story?

How far do **incidents in the plot** arise out of characters' actions, faults, etc. and how far are the characters just like puppets or cardboard cutouts, moved around at random?

What **relationships** do characters have with each other? Are these convincing? Integral to the plot or merely peripheral?

Are **minor characters** mere shadows or stereotypes, or are they sketched convincingly? Sometimes writers create stereotyped and unconvincing characters to achieve particular effects: e.g. **Evelyn Waugh** and **Charles Dickens** use many grotesque caricatures for comic satire.

Examine in some detail the characters in some novels you have read, looking for some of the ingredients listed above.

Which character(s) in which book;

can you most identify with?.
do you find most interesting?
do you most like or hate?
Why?

The style of a work of fiction - whether spicy and appetising, bland, or heavy and indigestible - can be very important. Some writers manipulate language for specific effects.

USE OF DIALECT

regional forms of language, often written phonetically, just as it sounds:

e.g. **D.H. Lawrence**, *Sons and Lovers*.

ARCHAIC LANGUAGE

an old form of language no longer in ordinary use:

e.g. **Alan Garner**, *The Owl Service*.

INVENTED OR ADAPTED LANGUAGE

created deliberately, usually closely linked to the ideas or setting:

e.g. **Russell Hoban**, *Riddley Walker*.

Authors also sometimes write in unconventional styles to indicate the way someone's mind works, often under stress.

In all novels language is important: details like **vocabulary**, **sentence** and **paragraph structure** will have their own effects.

* **Is the language repetitive, wordy, dull or brisk, lively, original?**

* **Does the writer use clichés (stale, over-used phrases)?**

* **Other ingredients to notice are:**

DIALOGUE - how much? is it convincing and lifelike?

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING - how much? Does it help to set the scene and/or evoke an atmosphere? Does it help you to picture characters or is it just padding?

Look closely at several pages from fiction by different writers. What similarities and differences do you notice in the use of language? What effects do you think the writers were aiming for? Which style do you prefer? Why?

Many works of fiction bring to life particular themes, values or ideas that arouse strong feelings. For this reason some societies have banned books regarded as dangerous.

Here are a few examples of particular issues raised in works of fiction:

Animal rights
Racial issues Poverty and
social justice Nuclear or
ecological disasters Political
ideas
The dangers of uncontrolled science
The position of women in society
Education
War and peace, etc.

*** LOOK FOR FICTION BOOKS BASED ON THESE AND OTHER THEMES.**

*** READ TWO BOOKS ON THE SAME THEME AND COMPARE THE VIEWS THEY PRESENT.**

Some books work at more than one level - as interesting stories, and as fables with an underlying message.

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is one example.

William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies* is another story which can be read at different levels - simply as an adventure story, or also as a parable about good and evil .

Some writers discuss their views in the novel, at times coming out of the framework of the fiction to talk directly to the reader. More often, the ideas are **implied** rather than stated.

As you read, try to be aware of the underlying ideas and values of the writer, as reflected in characters, relationships, and events.

*** IN WHAT WAYS IS 'THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD'?**

*** DO YOU THINK WORKS OF FICTION SHOULD EVER BE CENSORED? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

It is often easier to know how you feel about a book if you compare it with others of a similar kind; or on a similar theme. Comparisons between **related fiction and non-fiction books** can also be interesting. Comparing two or more non-fiction books on the same topic can make you more aware of attitudes and bias.

Areas of agreement and disagreement can help you form an independent opinion of the subject. Try this with a biography and an autobiography is the subjects's own view of himself the same as the way other people see him (or her)?

* Other suggestions for comparing texts:

Two different biographies about the same person;

Two or more travel books about the same place;

Two or three different diaries;

The experiences of different people who have undergone the same ordeal;

Two or three books of the same genre by different writers.

*** CHOOSE TWO DIFFERENT BOOKS WITH SOME COMMON GROUND WRITE BRIEF NOTES ON THEIR SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES.**

* Compare some of the following points:

the writer's intention;

attitudes, views and values;

style and language;

structure;

your own reactions.

* Which one do you prefer? Why?

One man's meat is another man's poison. Can you justify your tastes?

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF-

If you have kept a reading log, most of the answers should already be in your notes.

Did the book fulfil your expectations? (How? why? why not?)

What did you most enjoy about it?

What did you most dislike?

Would you read another book by the same author?

Would you recommend it to your friends?

What was the writer's aim?

How far do you think that aim has been achieved?

What have you noticed about ideas and attitudes, language, structure, setting, characters, relationships, pace, plot?

DO: BE HONEST- say what you really think and feel, not what you imagine you are expected to think and feel.

BE MODERATE- avoid excessive language; don't go over the top in either praise or blame.

GIVE EVIDENCE- back up your views with reasons, examples, quotations.

DON'T: MAKE SWEEPING GENERALISATIONS - base your views on evidence.

DON'T BE VAGUE- be precise and accurate, not woolly. Tell the story- except as far as you have to put your remarks in context.

DON'T GIVE AWAY ANY SECRETS OR SURPRISES- that could spoil the book for another reader. Just list points - decide what their **effect** or **significance** is. You can talk about your reading - to a friend, or in a small group; or to a wider audience.

*** THINK ABOUT THE AUDIENCE:**

Can they all see and hear you?

Have they read the book?

Have some of them have read it and some not?

Don't bore them by telling them things they know already, but don't leave out essential information.

How will you grab their attention?

How will you keep them interested?

*** THINK ABOUT THE EVIDENCE YOU WILL USE TO BACKUP YOUR COMMENTS.**

Will you read aloud extracts from the book?

If so - which sections will you choose to read? Why?

Make sure you introduce the reading extract, and comment on it briefly afterwards.

***WILL YOU USE ANY VISUAL AIDS?**

the book jacket? Charts or diagrams?

***THINK ABOUT THE QUESTIONS THE AUDIENCE MAY ASK -**

Ask yourself detailed questions first.

Find evidence to support your views.

Make sure you have a personal opinion about the book.

***PREPARE AND TAPE A 'RADIO PROGRAMME' -**

complete with sound effects, dramatised readings, background and biographical material, interview with the author etc.

*** TAKE PART IN A BOOK PANEL ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR READING.**

*** ROLE PLAY**

A committee advising the librarian on choice of new books, an argument between readers with opposing views, an interview with characters from a book, an inquiry into what happens in the book, a scene between characters going on from the ending of the book.

Written responses to reading can range from a simple poster or book jacket to a long essay. Some basic rules apply:

- Make sure language, tone and structure are appropriate;**
- Give the full title of the book and the name of the author;**
- Plan your work before you start;**
- Start a new paragraph for each section of the review;**
- Check presentation - spelling, punctuation, handwriting.**

Remember to use evidences to support what you say. Quotations should be enclosed in quotation marks. Titles should be underlined or enclosed in quotation marks.

SOME POSSIBLE APPROACHES:

- an article for a magazine aimed at a particular target audience;**
- a letter to a friend recommending the book or warning against it;**
- a report for a librarian, saying if this book should be included in the library;**
- a letter to the author giving your reactions to the book;**
- suggestions for a possible sequel;**
- suggestions for another book on a similar theme; compare a book you have read to a film version of that book; what did it leave out or put in?**
- were the characters on film the same as you imagined?**
- which did you prefer and why?**
- if YOU were to make a film version of a book you have read what points or scenes would you want to emphasise and why?**
- which bits would you leave out? Why?**
- how would you want the characters to be portrayed?**