

Key points

There is no ideal reading speed. Skill in reading slowly is just as important as skill in reading quickly. To manage your reading effectively you need to:

- pitch your reading *speed* according to your purpose and the degree of challenge presented by the text
- set yourself *targets* (number of pages per session)
- *monitor* your progress and keep adjusting your strategy.

5.5 Reading actively

To be able to *make* sense of what you are reading, you need to read actively. One method that can help is to use a pen:

5.5.1 Underlining and highlighting

Activity 5.2

Did you underline or highlight any words as you read the Layard article? If not, go back over the first three paragraphs and use a biro or a highlighter pen to mark important words. Try not to mark too many words; pick out just enough, so that you still get the main points if you read *only* those words.

My selection

I chose to underline rather than highlight. You can see my underlining for paragraph 3 in Box 5.9. Does it look anything like yours? Why do you think I used double underlining in several places?

BOX 5.9 TEXT UNDERLINED WHILE READING PARAGRAPH 3 OF LAYARD

It is true that, within any particular society at any particular moment, rich people are on average happier than poorer ones. For example, 41 per cent of people in the top quarter of incomes are 'very happy', compared with only 26 per cent of those in the bottom quarter of incomes. The problem is that, over the years, the proportions in each group who are very happy have not changed at all although the real incomes in each group have risen hugely. This is true of all the main western countries.