BASIC READING RATE INSTRUCTION SHEET

I. Purpose of Assignment

A. To provide an opportunity for you to practice skills and techniques learned in class.

B. To provide the structure within which you can further project self-analysis, goal-setting, and self-discipline.

C. To help you develop a problem-solving approach applicable to life pursuits based on an understanding of yourself, your mode of operation, and the methods by which you can best control or improve your progress.

II. Preparatory Steps

A. Select a book to be used throughout the practice period.
   1. Minimum picture, graph, and illustrative material--maximum straight type.
   2. One used in a current course, if possible.

B. Assess the book difficulty in two ways:
   1. Decide how difficult the book is for you in terms of your own background and interest and label hard, medium, easy.
   2. Decide how difficult the book is in terms of vocabulary, style, the print, gloss, column division, study aids, etc.

C. Decide your purpose for reading. If using a text, consider also:

D. The instructor's purpose for using this text; the author's purpose in writing the book; the relationship of the text to the lecture and the type of test you'll have later. Some purposes for reading might be:
   1. To study intensively for maximum learning;
   2. To read for general ideas and structure;
   3. To skim for particular facts or dates.

E. The difficulty levels and the purposes for reading will help you to be aware of what affects your rate efficiency and to set more realistic rate goals during the assignment.

III. The Record-Keeping Steps

A. Figure words per minute and the unit used for comparison.
   1. Count the words per line in the text (take a rough average, round off to 5 or 0; i.e., 252 rounds to 250, 253 to 255) or use a table.
   2. Count the lines per page (again round off).
   3. Multiply the words per line by the lines per page to get the words per page.
   4. Formula for words per minute:

      \[
      \frac{\text{Words Per Page} \times \text{Pages Read}}{\text{# of Minutes of Reading}} = \text{Words Per Minute (WPM)}
      \]

B. Time allotments for this assignment.
   1. Do 4 time sets per week (no more than one per day).
      a. Each time set consists of 20 minutes.
      b. The 20 minute period is divided into 5 minute intervals (4 trials).
   2. You will need to use a timer (kitchen, egg, or automatic) rather than a watch which distracts.
   3. After each 5 minute interval compute your WPM, then record.
C. Record WPM on graph paper.
1. Label your horizontal axis with trials and sets. Also note the date and time of day for each set.
2. Label your vertical axis with word per minute intervals, not more than 10 to 15 WPM apart (maintain the same base number even after considerable improvement).

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text name</th>
<th>Difficulty Level</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SET 1:
Date: November 1
Time: 11:00 p.m.
Place: kitchen table

SET 2:
Date: November 1
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: desk (bedroom)

Be conscious of changes and reasons or change as you graph your record.

IV. Assignment Variations

A. Learning to keep records (2 weeks minimum).
1. Add analysis of changes in pattern, place, and time of day as soon as the record keeping is learned (end of 2 weeks).
2. Begin setting goals for each set or, in some cases, each trial of each set (continue this process as long as necessary).

B. Add concentration technique (1 week minimum).
1. Procedures:
   a. Turn away from reading whenever you realize you are daydreaming.
   b. When you return, back up one or two paragraphs to start again.
   c. Record the number of times you stood up during reading your graph.

C. Apply SQ3R method of study (2 weeks minimum).
1. Think through question and answer, then stop timer.
2. Write question and answer on back of graph paper.

D. Apply underlining technique according to 4 rule procedure:
1. Read first.
2. Capture author's idea.
3. Underline words or phrases to hang together in sentences communicating the author's idea.
4. Edit by reducing in margin to key points, marking with numbers, etc.

E. Apply contract (as long as desired).
1. Make a contract to meet some goal of pages completed or words minute for a certain period.
2. Set a reward and/or punishment such as listening to a record or cleaning your room for meeting or lack of meeting your goal.
3. Keep record as during previous stages. In addition, report what happens accurately and in detail in a log.
4. Analyze and restate as you progress. Keep desired changes to small increases.
V. Final Reporting

A. Make a total graph for the assignment.
   1. Use one continuous progress line over whatever period used.
   2. Add comments on graph if desired.

B. Write an evaluation and analysis.
   1. Compare progress under various techniques.
   2. Assess the value of assignment to you.

VI. Learning Experience from Doing This Assignment

A. Reading:
   1. How variable the rate is due to:
      a. Personal variation such as time of day, interest in topic, background, etc.
      b. Text material such difficulty level, style, and introduction of new material.

B. Self-Control:
   1. How to analyze what happens and set goals (small ones) to change behavior as desired.
   2. What the relationships and realities of rate and comprehension are for you.
   3. What some other realities of personal strengths and weaknesses are for you and how they affect your behavior.
   4. An increase in motivation or desire to do better through successful self-controlled progress.