An Evaluation of *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language*

Ronan Brown

Introduction

By the time they graduate high school, most Japanese have studied English for at least six years. And although successive national curricula have tried to put more emphasis on communicative competence, functional over grammatical syllabuses, and fluency over accuracy, instruction has continued to concentrate on intensive reading, vocabulary and grammatical form. Meaning-based instruction and oral communication remain largely on the periphery. For this reason, first-year English courses at universities are regarded by both teachers and students alike as aiming to activate the passive knowledge gained in high-school lessons. Most students will have, as McDonough, et al. (1993) put it: "a very good 'usage' background but [now] need a course which will activate language use" (p. 68).

If it is also accepted that the best way to improve language skills is by using that language, then it follows that a focus on form should be subsidiary to language use. Willis (2000) succinctly points out that: "Through language use, both productive and receptive, learners become aware of language form and gradually adjust and develop their own language in light of this" (p. 19). This is essentially where extensive reading can fit in. If it is incorporated into the syllabus, the imbalances in previous instruction can begin to be redressed by shifting the spotlight off form and onto meaning. Moreover, by self-selecting large amounts of engaging and motivating material that is comfortable to read, students are not only

going to improve their reading skills, but also the productive skills of speaking and writing as well, as they participate in follow-up fluency activities and tasks in the communicative language classroom.

Since the publication of *The Language Teacher* vol. 21/5 (Tokyo) in May, 1997 - a special issue on extensive reading, edited by Rob Waring - there has been a burgeoning interest in Japan in how to capitalize on the benefits of this approach to language instruction. Subsequently in 1998, Richard Day and Julian Bamford published *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom* (Cambridge), the first book to focus specifically on the theory and practice of extensive reading, thereby underpinning the foundations of this approach. Also at this time, the Extensive Reading Colloquiums coordinated by Ken Schmidt at the Jalt Annual International Conference began and have been a major feature on the conference schedule every year since. Soon after that, Thomas Robb, based in Kyoto, set up www.extensivereading.net - a significant website with bibliographies, articles, reviews, presentation handouts, and guidance for implementing and maintaining extensive reading programs. Then, in 2000, Rob Waring launched the discussion group ExtensiveReading@yahoogroups.com, which has proved to be a lively forum for debate as well as a good resource for those seeking advice on issues in extensive reading. And in 2003, the Extensive Reading Foundation, a not-for-profit charitable organization, was formed to promote and support extensive reading programs and initiatives. Which brings us to 2004, the year that Julian Bamford and Richard Day (Eds.) brought out *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* (Cambridge), the book being evaluated here. This volume joins the highly regarded Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers series, edited by Penny Ur. Furthermore, it not only provides a much anticipated and very welcome addition to the library of works on extensive reading in a foreign language, but by being entirely practical and addressing all four

skills, it also dovetails very well with Day and Bamford (1998). *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* is a resource book that offers teachers professional support in the form of practical ideas and guidelines. The 106 activities, written by 41 highly experienced practitioners, allow teachers to realize more fully the language learning potential of extensive reading.

Thus, there have been considerable developments, not least in Japan, since Hill (1997), referring to the 1,400 graded-reader titles in print then, announced that extensive reading exploits a major teaching resource, "the most versatile resource ever developed for teaching a language" (p. 57).

A Principled Approach

Referring to twelve principles, which he believes form a body of theoretical constructs that are central to most second language acquisition contexts, Brown (2002) asserts that: "...viable current approaches to language teaching are 'principled' in that there is perhaps a finite number of general research-based principles on which classroom practice is grounded" (p. 12). So it is with learning to read in a foreign language, not least with extensive reading. Ten principles of extensive reading, or ten characteristics evident in successful extensive-reading programs, which originally appeared in Day and Bamford (1998, pp. 7-8), and were later revised and expanded by Day and Bamford (2002): "...as a tool for professional development...the basic ingredients of extensive reading" (p. 136), now re-appear in the Introduction of *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* as: "a theoretical framework for putting extensive reading into action in the classroom" (p. 3). It is on these ten fundamental principles that the 106 extensive-reading activities in the resource book are founded. (See Appendix for the ten principles.)

The definition of extensive reading given in the Introduction to *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* embodies the key principles. I have italicized them below:

Extensive reading is an approach to language teaching in which learners *read a lot of easy material* in the new language. *They choose* their own reading material and *read it independently* of the teacher. They *read for general, overall meaning*, and they *read for information and enjoyment*. They are encouraged to *stop reading if the material is not interesting or if it is too difficult*. They are also encouraged to *expand their reading comfort zone* - the range of material that can be read easily and with confidence (p. 1).

Since 1998, Day and Bamford's ten principles of extensive reading have generally been well received. For instance, Prowse (2002) says that there is "a great deal of congruence [with my top ten principles]" (p. 144). However, there are others who have reservations. For example, Robb (2002), referring to Principle 3: *Learners choose what they want to read*, asserts that this principle relies heavily on the assumption that students will readily engage in self-motivated learning, which by its nature is at odds with the teaching/learning cultures of many Asian societies. Furthermore, although I believe that when promoting autonomy in reading in the Japanese university classroom certain levels of success are possible, I would concur with Robb that it can be a struggle for learners who are under pressure from an already burdensome curriculum as well as from the demands of extra-curricular activities such as clubs and part-time jobs.

Robb, referring to Principle 8: *Reading is its own reward*, also makes the point that we cannot expect the enjoyment factor alone to provide the motivation to read. In my college extensive reading program, as with many other programs around the country, the students are not only reading for

themselves, but also to satisfy a key course requirement such as the completion of book reports/entries in their reading notebooks after a certain amount of books are read, or the attainment of a mandatory minimum reading target in terms of pages read. In an ideal world, students would read extensively with little or no accountability and without the need for encouragement from outside sources as the route to maximum enjoyment and the acquisition of language. Although we hope that our learners will find genres to enjoy, stories to remember, and writers to recommend, I would tend to agree with Robb that we can never fully assume that the enjoyment factor alone will motivate most students to read at the school and college level in Japan. As Hill (2000) points out, without requiring some form of reflection or intellectual response to their reading, "you put all your eggs in the basket of enjoyment [and thereby] deprive your students of half the benefit" (p. 9). Moreover, you have no answer for those students who say they do not read because they do not enjoy reading even in their first language.

　　Thus, it is pleasing to see that not only does the current version of these principles, outlined in the Introduction of *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* take students' accountability more seriously, but there are six chapters of activities in the handbook that present a variety of feedback and tracking mechanisms, ranging from the simple filling out of reading-record forms to responses that require emotional and/or intellectual engagement with reading material.

Table 1: The organization of *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language*

Part I: Organizing ER	Chapter Title	Example Activities
Chapter 1	Getting Started	Reading and You Questionnaire
Chapter 2	Introducing Reading Material	Color-Coordinated Materials Find Your Level
Chapter 3	Motivating and Supporting Reading	Reading Partners
Chapter 4	Monitoring Reading	Written Book Check Talking About Books Reading Notebook Reading Record Form
Chapter 5	Evaluating Reading	One Minute Reading
Part II: Oral Fluency		
Chapter 6	Oral Reading Reports	Instant Book Report Book Review Round Robin Draw a Picture Poster Presentations
Chapter 7	Drama and Role Play	Where's the Drama?
Chapter 8	Having Fun	Guess Who? Read the Book! See the Movie!
Part III: Writing		
Chapter 9	Written Reading Reports	Quick Book Report Forms One Sentence Summary Getting Personal
Chapter 10	Writing Creatively	Character by the Letter Gifts A Different Ending
Part IV: Reading		
Chapter 11	Developing Awareness in Reading	Developing Meta-cognitive Awareness
Chapter 12	Increasing Reading Rate	Timed Repeated Readings
Part V: Vocabulary		
Chapter 13	Developing and Consolidating Vocabulary	Vocabulary Journal

The Organization of the Activities

The handbook contains 106 activities set out in thirteen chapters, which are in turn divided into five sections. Further insight into the aims and objectives of the book can be gleaned from the contents map in Table 1, which illustrates the general layout of the material. 25 example activities that I have implemented successfully are also listed.

Using an easy-to-follow format and including sections such as *Level*, *Aims*, *Preparation*, and *Procedure*, and accompanied in most cases with 'boxes' of photocopiable material, the activities have a wide range of applications. Preceding the activities is the Acknowledgements section, which pays tribute to the 41 contributors, 14 of whom are based in Japan. Tohoku resident Ken Schmidt is the most prolific contributor, having written 11 of the activities, almost all of which are provided with very practical photocopiable sample materials. Gratitude is also extended to the Cambridge Handbooks Series Editor, Penny Ur. There follows an announcement stating that the royalties from the sale of the book will be donated to the Extensive Reading Foundation. After this comes the Introduction, which consists of the definition of extensive reading mentioned earlier, a brief description of the handbook and, importantly, its aims:

> This handbook offers more that 100 activities for setting up students' self-selected reading and weaving it into the language curriculum. These activities give teaching suggestions whatever the focus of the class - grammar, listening, speaking, writing or reading; whatever teaching situation you are in - foreign or second language...whatever the age and language level of your students (p. 1).

Clearly, these aims seek to create a very rich and supportive resource for teachers wishing to exploit the power of extensive reading. This evaluation therefore sets out to present a view of how, and particularly how well, the book achieves these aims. The Introduction also outlines the rationale for implementing extensive reading, which in effect reviews some of the benefits of pursuing such an approach. We are reminded that research has shown that students develop positive attitudes and increased motivation to study the new language, they become better and more confident readers, they write better, their listening and speaking abilities improve, and their vocabulary gets a boost.

The Purposes of the Activities

The activities have a range of purposes. The 46 activities in Part I help teachers introduce extensive reading to students, organize and introduce appropriate reading material, encourage and support students, and monitor and evaluate reading. The 60 activities in Parts II-V help teachers connect reading with specific aspects of language learning, for example, increasing oral fluency (26 activities), working on writing skills (19 activities), improving reading skills (8 activities), and expanding vocabulary (7 activities). It is assumed that students have access to suitable reading materials, for example, a library of graded readers.

The handbook culminates with a very useful section entitled "The 12 Most Frequently Asked Questions about Extensive Reading". In answering such questions as *How can I keep track of reading material? How much should students read?* and *What should students do after they finish reading?*, the editors have outlined a very practical route through the handbook using a set of 35 activities to explain how to resolve these questions. In effect, these resolutions form the basis of a well-founded extensive reading program.

Descriptions of Key Activities

In Part 1: *Organizing Extensive Reading* there are five chapters and 46 activities. Ten activities from chapters two, three, and four will be discussed here. The purpose of the activities in chapter two is to introduce students to a world of easy, enjoyable and interesting reading material such as graded readers. The activity *Identify the Books*, in which students match the blurbs of 19 books with their corresponding front covers; and the more involving activity *Blurb and Title Match*, in which students listen to blurbs being read out and try to guess the titles to which they belong are both excellent ways of generating interest in books and kick-starting the extensive reading program. A similarly useful activity is *Genres and Titles,* in which students choose five different books on display, read the title, blurb, chapter headings, look at any illustrations and then try to determine which fiction/non-fiction genres they belong to. Students can thus be better prepared when they are finally introduced to the extensive reading library. Generally, extensive reading libraries utilize a system in which books have been grouped according to level of difficulty using, for instance, an activity such as *Color-Coordinated Materials*. This activity allows teachers to sort and label a collection of language learner literature on a common scale, which is important because levels are not consistent among the main publishers. To determine students' reading levels on entry to the program, a very practical activity is *Find Your Level*, in which students are asked to read page-length sample passages from library books - one from each level of the program - and underline any difficult words or phrases. This enables teachers to make quick, ballpark estimates of comfortable levels at which students can begin reading. Students generally start at a level with no more than two difficult words per page/passage.

The activities in chapter three help encourage students by providing support and inspiration. *Reading Partners*, an activity in which students are assigned a classmate with whom to plan and discuss reading, is an excellent example. In cooperative pairs, students choose the same book to read for homework. Having a friend to read with is mutually supportive as one student motivates the other to achieve reading targets. Moreover, because they build their understanding of the same book together, the partners will naturally feel more comfortable when first engaging in feedback activities such as *Written Book Check* or *Talking about Books*, (two excellent ways of monitoring reading from chapter four). In cultures where students are more used to a teacher-centered set up, utilizing a class-reader approach, then a *Reading Partners* phase before finally asking students to engage in self-selected independent reading may provide a more gradual introduction to extensive reading. Thus, *Reading Partners* is an effective sheltered stage for students who are in the process of becoming independent readers.

Chapter four is concerned with monitoring reading and has a range of practical activities that allow students and teachers to keep track of what is being read, how much is being read, and the quality of that reading. To help keep account of their reading and their progress towards reading targets, students can keep a *Reading Notebook*, in which they can also insert a *Reading Record Form*. In my reading skills classes, these two very practical activities provide a tangible means of monitoring progress, and form the basis on which students are assigned credit for the extensive reading they have done. On the *Reading Record Form*, students enter data for each book they read such as its title, level, time taken to read it, rating for difficulty, rating for interest, and the number of pages read. The ultimate reading target may be in terms of a certain number pages read, for example, 350 pages to achieve an A grade in my first-year reading skills classes for English literature students.

Regarding page counts, I employ a system of "weighted pages" (wpg)

Helgesen (1997, p. 32), in which one page of a higher-level book is worth more than a page in a lower-level book. Essentially, a page from elementary-level book is worth 0.75 wpg, a page from an intermediate-level book is 1.00 wpg, and a page from an upper-level book is 1.25 wpg. The advantage of this system is that it encourages students to find a comfortable level at which to read and then to ascend to the next level as their increasing competence allows. Before adopting the wpg system, I found that targets such as a book a week, or 350 pages per semester were too vague and students were tending to read only those books at the lower to mid levels all through the semester, rather than challenge themselves by trying to read one or two books at the upper levels. Now, therefore, students aim instead at a reading target of 350 wpg per semester, which provides more rigor to the program.

Keeping a *Reading Notebook* is preferable to having students fill out weekly book-report forms, as notebooks encourage students to become more responsible for their reading. Moreover, many students like the extra space to write a more involved reader response to the literature. In addition, many like illustrating their reports with drawings, while others like making visual representations of the relationships between the characters, or the progression of the plot. A section at the back of the notebook is dedicated to vocabulary records of new lexis met in intensive reading lessons, as well as extensive reading. Students add data such as the source of the new lexis, its part of speech, its meaning (e.g., in the form of a translation, definition, drawing, gloss, or synonym) and an example sentence. This approach is similar to the activity *Vocabulary Journal* from chapter thirteen.

For each book read, students make an entry in their *Reading Notebook*. After writing a brief summary, students produce a reader response, subjectively expressing their interpretations of the characters, the events,

the setting, and the issues raised. An excellent means of guiding this response is the activity, *Getting Personal* (from chapter nine), in which students are offered nine ways to respond personally and creatively to what they have read. For example, students could write a letter from one character to another explaining what has happened, or write a diary entry for a character at a particular point in the story, or create a comic strip for a key part of the story. Thus, because there is considerable self-investment in the notebooks, they become more valuable in personal terms, rather like private journals or diaries.

Another very useful means of monitoring reading is the activity *Written Book Check*, with which teachers can determine quickly and accurately whether students have read the books they claim to have. The teacher photocopies a double-page spread from the middle of a scene in the second half of the story. The student is given the photocopied pages, (but not the book) together with two questions on a sheet of paper: (1) What happened before this part of the book? (2) What happened after this part of the book? Students write their answers on the sheet and return it. The teacher checks for accuracy. Alternatively, rather than a written response, the answers can form the basis of an oral report or interview similar to the activity *Talking about Books*. In this activity, students express their opinions about what they have read. Although it begins in a structured way, talk about books generally leads to related topics of interest. Activities such as these not only affirm the importance of the reading program, but also underline the multi-skills nature of extensive reading.

Developing Oral Communication

In Part II: *Oral Fluency* there are three chapters and 26 activities. Five activities from chapters six and seven will be discussed here. In chapter six, the spotlight is on oral reading reports. Students tell each other about the

books they have read independently; in so doing, they have a natural and engaging topic for conversation. The *Instant Book Report* activity utilizes a simple six-sentence framework of sentence stems that helps to structure students' attempts to deliver mini-book review. This framework is written on the board for students to use as a guide when telling their partners about their book. I also encourage students to use the front cover and illustrations as further props when explaining their story. A similar, but more involved activity is *Book Review Round Robin* in which students report their reading in pairs, first with notes, then on changing partners, they report again, but without notes this time. Two excellent oral-recounting activities that elicit a creative response to reading are *Draw a Picture* and *Poster Presentations*. In the former, students try to recall a pivotal or memorable scene from a book they enjoyed, and using their imagination they draw a rough sketch of it within five minutes. I tell students to use pens. Pencils and erasers not are allowed as their use is too time consuming. Students then exchange pictures, and when they have stopped laughing, they write three questions relating to the picture's content. These are then returned to the owners who consider the questions, before beginning to give their oral report. To support students when they are explaining their pictures to their partners, I write a six-sentence slot and fill framework on the board. This is a top favorite activity with my students. A similar activity, but one which requires more preparation, is *Poster Presentations*. Students design posters for their favorite book and then present them to their classmates. This allows students to report on their reading in a creative way that integrates language skills and intelligences. This is a very good activity for pre-intermediate public speaking classes.

Chapter seven offers a range of activities that will please those teachers who like to incorporate drama and role play into their lessons. *Where's the*

Drama is an activity in which students give theatrical renderings of prose passages with the aim of helping them realize the dramatic and musical qualities of a reading. This activity is essentially a form oral interpretation of text. I instruct students to listen to the professional audio recordings of their passage (if available) before and/or after their performance. This is a popular activity in my speaking skills classes.

Developing Writing Skills

In Part III: *Writing* there are two chapters and 19 activities. Six activities from chapters nine and ten will be discussed here. In chapter nine, the focus is on written reading reports. These activities offer students a variety of ways to report on their reading, ranging from the straightforward *Quick Book Report Forms*, which act as an alternative to keeping reading notebooks, and *One Sentence Summaries*, which help students identify the main ideas (great practice for budding journalists), to the more creative *Getting Personal*, described earlier. However, it should be borne in mind that if the purpose of the class is teach reading skills, then, to ensure that writing does not become too time consuming, students should limit themselves to 20 minutes when producing reports. Another creative and interesting way to report on their books is the activity *Picture It*, in which, instead of writing a regular book report, students draw a picture and write about what it shows. This is the written counterpart to the oral reading report activity *Draw a Picture*, described earlier. The picture comes from the student's imagination, not copied from the book. They write briefly about what their picture shows, what happens in the story before and after this scene, and about their opinion of the book. Among my reading skills' students, this is a popular means of responding to a book.

The activities in chapter ten continue in this vein by eliciting a creative and imaginative written response to books read. In *Character by the Letter*,

students imagine they are people from a book, then write and exchange letters written to and from these people. In so doing, students now see events from a different angle and thus become more conscious of narrators and points of view. My intermediate reading-skills students say they enjoy 'standing in their favorite character's shoes'. Similarly, the activity *Gifts*, in which students choose gifts for the main characters and then justify their choices, is an engaging means of developing students' appreciation of character and their ability to describe another person's values and motives. Thus, they need to interpret the text well and think critically about the character's nature when defending the gifts they chose for them. Finally, the activity *A Different Ending*, in which students write alternative endings for books they have read, is an excellent means of getting students to think creatively and of developing writing skills. Knowing beforehand that they have to produce a new ending encourages students to read more attentively so as to establish an unbroken narrative flow that logically culminates with their resolution. In writing skills classes, I use class readers with open-ended/unresolved conclusions such as *Chemical Secret* by Tim Vicary (Oxford Bookworms) and ask the students to continue the story by writing another chapter, which provides, in their view, a more conclusive or satisfactory resolution.

Developing Reading Skills

In Part IV: *Reading* there are two chapters and 8 activities. Three activities from chapters eleven and twelve will be discussed here. Chapter eleven focuses more directly on the skill of reading. The activity *Developing Metacognitive Awareness*, in which students verbalize their thoughts while reading as a means of developing reading strategies, is an excellent way of improving students' reading competence. After introducing the concept of think-aloud protocols, students in pairs take turns reading aloud passages

from books. By verbalizing the thoughts and strategies they use during reading, students become more conscious of one another's approach to the task of reading. This activity/technique highlights how the reader uses several strategies such as asking questions, making predictions, checking those predictions, summarizing or paraphrasing. See Janzen (2002, p. 290) for further exemplification of this form of strategy instruction.

Chapter twelve is concerned with increasing reading rate and one very good activity for this is *Timed Repeated Readings*, in which students read the same material three times, reading further and thus faster each time. This activity boosts students' confidence in their ability to increase reading speed, and underlines the focus on fluency in reading. This activity also appears in Day and Bamford (1998, p. 132), where it is called "Repeated Timed Readings". Finally, a good activity for measuring the impact of extensive reading on reading rate is *One Minute Reading*, from chapter five. In the first lesson, the students are given a 600-word passage from a book, which is both easy and interesting. They read at comfortable rate for one minute. After this, they mark the point where they stopped reading and write the date and their names. The teacher collects the passages. In the last lesson, the activity is repeated with a fresh copy of the same passage. The students invariably read further, and are pleasantly surprised when they compare their passages from the first lesson.

Conclusion

By presenting a broad range of classroom activities and tasks that draw on students' reading experiences for further language development, *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* places extensive reading at the center of the language curriculum. It offers a wealth of practical advice for both implementing extensive reading, and integrating it into the overall language program, thus underscoring the importance of encouraging

students to read in the foreign language and the necessity of valuing their responses to that reading. In my view, the handbook has therefore overwhelmingly achieved its aims. Finally, having successively used many of the activities in *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* in reading, writing, and speaking classes for first- through third-year university students, and having surveyed the market place for similar handbooks, I believe that this is the default resource book for teachers wishing to exploit the cross-curricular language learning benefits of extensive reading.

References

Bamford, J. & Day, R. (2004) *Extensive Reading Activities for Teaching Language* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Brown, H. D. (2002). English language teaching in the post-methods era: Towards better diagnosis, treatment and assessment. In J. Richards & W. Renandya, (Eds.) *Methodology in Language Teaching. An Anthology of Current Practice* pp. 9-25 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Day, R. & Bamford, J. (1998) *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Day, R. & Bamford, J. (2002) Top ten principles for teaching extensive reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language* vol. 14/2, pp. 136-141

Helgesen, M. (1997) What one extensive reading program looks like. *The Language Teacher* vol. 21/5, pp. 31-33

Hill, D. (1997) Survey review: graded readers *ELT Journal* vol. 51/1, pp. 57-81

Hill, D. (2000) Mr Nice and Mr Nasty. *English Teaching Professional* vol.17, p. 9

Janzen, J. (2002) Teaching strategic reading. In J. Richards & W. Renandya, (Eds.) *Methodology in Language Teaching. An Anthology of Current Practice* pp. 287-294. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McDonough, J. & Shaw, C. (1993) *Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide* Oxford: Blackwell

Prowse, P. (2002) Top ten principles for teaching extensive reading: A response. *Reading in a Foreign Language,* vol. 14/2, pp. 142-145

Richards, J. & Renandya, W. (2002) *Methodology in Language Teaching. An Anthology of Current Practice* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Robb, T. (2002) Extensive reading in an Asian context - An alternative view. *Reading in a Foreign Language* vol.14/2, pp. 146-147

Waring R. (Ed.) (1997) *The Language Teacher* vol. 21/5, Tokyo: Japan Association for Language Teaching (Jalt)

Willis, D. (2000) *Syllabus and Materials* University of Birmingham: Centre for English Language Studies

Appendix: The Ten Principles of Extensive Reading (Bamford & Day, 2004, pp. 2-3)

1. *The reading material is easy*. This is the most important principle of extensive reading for language learning because students are unlikely to succeed in reading extensively if they have to struggle with difficult material. Learners read material that contains few or no unfamiliar items of vocabulary and grammar. (There should be no more than one or two unknown vocabulary items per page for beginners and no more than four or five for intermediate learners.)

2. *A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics is available*. Variety means that learners can find things they want to read, whatever their interests. Different kinds of reading material also encourage a flexible approach to reading. Learners are led to read for different reasons (e. g., entertainment, information, passing the time) and in different ways (e.g., skimming, scanning, more careful reading).

3. *Learners choose what they want to read*. Self-selection of reading material is the basis of extensive reading, and it puts students in a different role from that in a traditional classroom, where the teacher chooses or the textbook supplies reading material. One reason that many students enjoy extensive reading is that *they* choose what they want to read. This choice extends beyond selection of reading material. Learners are also free, indeed encouraged, to stop reading anything that is not interesting or that they find too difficult.

4. *Learners read as much as possible*. The language learning benefits of extensive reading come from quantity of reading. For the benefits of extensive reading to take effect, a book a week is an appropriate goal. Books written for beginning language learners are very short, so this is normally a realistic target for learners of any ability level.

5．*Reading speed is usually faster rather than slower.* Because learners read material that they can easily understand, it encourages fluent reading. Dictionary use is normally discouraged because it interrupts reading, making fluent reading impossible. Instead, learners are encouraged to ignore or guess at the few unknown language items they may meet.

6．*The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding.* In contrast to academic reading and intensive reading, and the detailed understanding they require, extensive reading encourages reading for pleasure and information. Rather than 100 percent comprehension, learners aim only for sufficient understanding to achieve their reading purpose.

7．*Reading is individual and silent.* Learners read at their own pace. In some schools, there are silent reading periods when students read their self-selected books in the classroom. Most extensive reading, however, is homework. It is done out of the classroom in the student's own time, when and where the student chooses.

8．*Reading is its own reward.* Because a learner's own experience is the goal, extensive reading is not usually followed by comprehension questions. At the same time, teachers may ask students to complete some kind of follow-up activity after reading. There are a variety of reasons for this: to discover what the students understood and experienced from the reading; to keep track of what students read; to check student attitude toward reading; and to link reading with other parts of the curriculum. What is important is that any follow-up activity respect the integrity of the reading experience and that it encourage rather than discourage further reading.

9．*The teacher orients and guides the students.* Extensive reading is different in many ways from traditional classroom practice, and teachers need to explain to students what it is, why they are doing it, and how to go about it. The teacher will also want to keep track of what and how much students read and their reactions to what was read in order to guide them in getting the most out of their reading.

10．*The teacher is a role model of a reader.* Example is the most powerful instructor. If the teacher reads some of the same material that the students are reading and talks to them about it, this gives the students a model of what it is to be a reader. It also makes it possible for the teacher to recommend reading material to individual students. In this way, teacher and students can become an informal reading community, experiencing together the value and pleasure to be found in the written word.