

Reading Long Passages

Question

I'm not very good at reading long passages. Even if I learn new words, I can't read them very well. What is the key to becoming good at reading long passages?

Answer

I think that reading long passages in English is basically the same as reading modern Japanese passages. Therefore, it is very helpful to think about what kind of people are good at reading modern Japanese passages. After all, they are people who have read a lot of books, newspapers, and magazines and know common sense. Such people can usually grasp the gist of some difficult Japanese words.

These people are not people who have memorized Japanese words one by one in a vocabulary book. They have a lot of background knowledge and are used to reading sentences. By "used to reading," I mean that they know how to read a passage from beginning to end. **Even if they don't understand something, they can ignore the parts that don't seem to affect the overall point and continue reading.** These people are quick to grasp the points that the learners are making, and they can usually predict what is going to be written next while reading a sentence.

Therefore, I think there are **two types** of people who are good at reading long passages in English.

First, there are those who are good at modern Japanese writing and have developed common sense, and can approach English with the same sense. This type of person knows how to read sentences by instinct, so they can read more and more accurately.

The other type is the one who approaches English by memorizing words because they have not developed such habits. Up to this point, however, most people are like that, and there is nothing particularly unusual about it. In fact, this is where it starts to get important.

In order for this type of person to become good at reading long passages, **they should familiarize themselves with reading long passages in their spare time (or decide to do one every day).** **The more you work at it, the less you will have to worry about reading long passages.** You will be able to predict the development of the story, and you will be able to say that you are a reader.

However, once you have acquired English vocabulary as fragmentary knowledge and then only wait for the next exam armed with that knowledge, you actively read long passages only during exams, or you read hard because you have no choice during exams, you will hardly succeed.

In conclusion, I would like to say, "Learn English vocabulary along with the story of long passages. Even after that, continue to read long passages voraciously and get the hang of reading".