

READ ON, SPEAK OUT

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READ ON, SPEAK OUT is a reading development book designed for higher intermediate adult learners of English as a second or foreign language. The material, while carefully controlled for language, reflects the content and style of American magazines and textbooks, and covers important issues in Sociology (*The Gray Revolution: It's in to be old*), Economics (*The Credit Card Economy: Money transactions of the future*), Psychology (*Johnny Can't Read: A failing grade for American public Education*) and the Sciences (*Television of Tomorrow: from tuning in to touching in*).

Although the focus on these issues is on the American experience, the issues themselves are universal to all cultures which have experienced the technological revolution.

The book contains ten study units divided into three sections.

The first section consists of an opening article which presents general information and opinions on a current topic, followed by exercises designed for reading comprehension, vocabulary practice and questions for discussion. The articles themselves have been arranged according to reading difficulty. Certain idiomatic expressions and vocabulary are included in these opening articles and later recycled.

Multiple choice and True/False questions are used to check comprehension. There are two exercises for vocabulary practice and expansion after each article. The format for the first exercise varies from unit to unit and includes such types as:

- a) Filling in blanks by choosing from a list of terms which occur in the text.

<i>credit card</i>	<i>purchase price</i>
<i>monthly installments</i>	<i>Social Security number</i>
1. Each individual who is working in the United States has a _____.	
2. You can pay all at once when you get your credit card bill or in _____.	

- b) Multiple choice items.

1. <i>custody of the children</i>
a. <i>Welfare</i>
b. <i>concern</i>
c. <i>charge</i>

2. The nuclear family

- a. father, mother and children
- b. extended
- c. modern

(from Unit 2, page 12)

- c) Selecting from a list the word that is closest in meaning to the word(s) in italics.

<i>fetus</i>	<i>diagnosis</i>
<i>pregnant</i>	<i>history</i>

1. In the mother's body, amniotic fluid surrounds the unborn child.
2. The amniocentesis test is recommended for a woman with a family background of genetic disease.

(from Unit 3, pages 20/21)

- d) Crossword puzzles. (See Units 5 and 10).

The second vocabulary exercise makes use of analogies, thus enabling students to see new lexical terms not as isolated units, but in relation to other items and/or categories.

ENOUGH: SUFFICIENT as SIGNIFICANT: _____

- a. PLENTY
- b. IMPORTANT
- c. SIGNAL

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE as TRANSPORTATION _____

- a. CAR
- b. TELEVISION
- c. LETTER

The classification of relationships is done in terms of Grammatical Negation, Similarity, Categorical categories, to mention but a few. A careful explanation on the working out of analogies is given in the introductory notes to students.

The Discussion Questions, which round off this first section, relate to the issues presented in the article and allow students to explore the ideas put forward by the author and make comparisons with their own native culture.

The next two sections, PRO-CON and MAKING DECISIONS provide the

student with an extension of the introductory topic and require him to use the specialised vocabulary to analyse various points of view and express his or her own opinions.

In the PRO-CON section, a subject for debate is put forward and is followed by an outline of the argument and counter-argument, thus encouraging students to take a stand.

The last section, MAKING DECISIONS, is the least structured of the three. This section focuses on individuals and how they are affected by the issues under discussion. This provides an excellent opportunity for role-play, as students are encouraged to project themselves into the personality of the people portrayed and then judge the outcome of the situation. There are no right or wrong answers or correct solutions to the questions posed. Students are expected to give advice and make recommendations for problem solving.

As well as the ten study units, the book contains a six-page glossary and an Answer Key, adding a dimension of self-study to what is already a very flexible book.

There is a wide variety of visual stimuli, ranging from photographs, diagrams and cartoons, to line drawings, tables and graphs.

In general, the layout is both attractive and clear, moving from section to section in a logical, lively and well-planned manner.

READ ON, SPEAK OUT provides ample opportunity for students to explore various levels of meaning and in so doing, develop critical awareness which will enable them to separate objective fact from subjective opinion.

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