

Payam Noor University

Reading Skillfully

by:

Razieh Mahdi Beyraghdar

**Assistant Professor, Faculty Member of
Payame Noor University**

Editor:

Maliheh Sadat Mousavi

**Assistant Professor, Faculty Member of
Payame Noor University**

امروز کتابخوانی و علم‌آموزی نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.^۱

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتابخوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پر بار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه مطالعه هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان، تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاورد انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده عظیم‌الشأن خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد

1. <https://farsi.khamenei.ir/message-content?id=2696>

شده است: «إِقْرَأْ وَ رَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده اند.

دانشگاه پیام نور با گستره جغرافیایی ایران شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه جا و همه وقت، به عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره گیری از تجربه های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه مهم و خطیر یاری رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه خطیر یاری می رسانند، سپاسگزاری می نمایم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام نور را منزلگاه اندیشه سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

دانشگاه پیام نور

Table of Contents

Preface	vii
UNIT ONE: Nowruz	1
UNIT TWO: Astronomy	13
UNIT THREE: Secrets of a Happy Brain	25
UNIT FOUR: about Ramadan	39
UNIT FIVE: International Mother Language Day	49
UNIT SIX: Marie Curie (part one)	63
UNIT SEVEN: What can our bones and teeth indicate?	73
UNIT EIGHT: Cultural Expectations and Leadership	89
UNIT NINE: The Origins of Chocolate	101
UNIT TEN: Climate Change: Can we stop it?	113
UNIT ELEVEN: Street Art	125
UNIT TWELVE: The Changing Role of Doctors and Health Care	135
UNIT THIRTEEN: Modern-day Slavery	147
UNIT FOURTEEN: Vegetarianism	159
UNIT FIFTEEN: Marie Curie (part two)	171
UNIT SIXTEEN: Inflation	183
UNIT SEVENTEEN: Why I Refuse to Say 'I Fight my Disability'	193
UNIT EIGHTEEN: Problem of Sleep Deprivation 'the Effects'	205

UNIT NINETEEN: Obesity	219
UNIT TWENTY: Introverts in the Work Environment	233
Answer Key	245
Appendix: vocabulary list	255
Bibliography	259

Preface

The purpose of this book is to help EFL students in general and Payame Noor University students in particular to enhance the reading comprehension skills. This book is designed for individuals who lack familiarity with essential reading skills and those who may struggle to apply these skills in practical situations.

To become a proficient reader who derives enjoyment from reading authentic English texts, students need to grasp fundamental concepts and skills by engaging with diverse original texts. This book systematically introduces four essential reading skills in its initial part. Each skill is accompanied by practical and targeted tasks designed to foster self-guided improvement in reading comprehension. Additionally, throughout all units, specific tasks under the subheading "Focus on Vocabulary" are included to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge.

This book serves dual purposes, functioning both as a main source or supplementary one. To facilitate independent learning, the book includes instructions and guidelines for exercises. Additionally, Key to exercises, as a supplementary part at the end of the book, has also been provided.

The Structure of the Book

The structure of this book comprises twenty units. These units can be divided into two parts: "Presenting Reading Skills" and "Practicing Reading Skills". The first eight units present four primary reading skills—previewing, skimming, scanning, and making an inference.

These skills, initially introduced in the odd units, are subsequently practiced and reinforced in the even units alongside the introduction of new reading skills. In other words, each reading skill is presented in recycling method to consolidate learning. The other units, from unit nine to unit twenty form the second part. These units provide the reader with comprehensive exercises on the reading skills presented in the first part.

To present the four essential reading skills effectively, each two units of the first part is devoted to one skill. The first two units present previewing. Unit one introduces this reading skill and unit two fosters it. Consequently, comprehension questions in both units focus solely on previewing. The second reading skill, skimming, is presented in units three and four. In these two units, students are tasked with answering comprehension questions related to skimming and previewing. No comprehension questions requiring familiarity with other reading skills are presented. Moving on to unit five and six, scanning is introduced as the third reading skill. In these two units, comprehension questions address previewing, skimming, and scanning. No questions requiring familiarity with additional reading skills are included. The final reading skill, making an inference, is introduced in units seven and eight. In these two units, students must answer comprehension questions that involve all basic reading skills covered in the preceding chapters—previewing, skimming, and scanning—alongside making an inference as the new skill introduced in these two units.

Part two is composed of twelve units, each containing additional reading texts covering various topics. Subsequently, there are comprehension questions designed to enhance and assess students' understanding using the four reading skills introduced in the initial part. Following the reading of each unit's text, students must respond to questions in the subsequent comprehension section. This section is divided into several subsections, each concentrating on a specific reading skill. Occasionally, a single reading skill is evaluated through two subsections containing different question types. In certain

subsections of the reading comprehension questions in the last units of this part, students are tasked with identifying the reading skill they applied to answer the questions.

The last section of all units of this book is a part called *vocabulary Exploration* allocated to some exercises on vocabularies consisting of the following subparts: *word meaning*, *word families*, *word tips*, and *fill in the blanks*. In 'word meaning' subpart, the students are provided up with some excerpts containing some new vocabularies of that unit as well as some new vocabularies of the previous unit(s). In these exercises the students are required either to cross out the one word in parentheses with a different meaning from the other choices or to choose the one word in parentheses with an appropriate meaning. The second subpart 'word family' presents different forms of one or two new vocabularies of that unit with various following exercises. It makes students familiarize with specific word usages. The subpart 'word tips' is presented in some units and chosen based on the content of the reading passages, help students expand their vocabulary domain. In the last subpart 'fill in the blanks, some cloze tests are presented and the students are required to fill in the blanks with an appropriate word. Cloze tests of all units have similar content and vocabularies with the main reading text at the beginning of each unit, but the same content is expressed in a different form. As the students' reading skills and vocabulary knowledge develop, the length of cloze tests also expands. In each unit, both new vocabularies of that unit and vocabularies of the previous units are evaluated.

My especial gratitude and thanks belong to Allah, who has protected me through all stages of life. I am thankful of him particularly for his help with this piece. I would like to express my gratitude to my dearest, my parents and siblings for their existence, kindness and encouragement. I dedicate this book to my mother in heaven, who used to sit by my side as I was writing the first draft. She has been the greatest

mentor in my life. Words cannot help me express my gratitude and thanks to her for everything specially her everlasting and unlimited love and kindness. This is one of the works which always reminds me the best memories of being with her.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the two referees for their comments and helpful guidance on the initial manuscript. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the editor who endeavors in evaluating and revising this piece. I value the positive feedback and insightful remarks from both reviewers and the editor, which proved instrumental in making necessary revisions and enhancing the overall quality of the book. I also would like to express my gratitude to the Publication Center of Payam Noor University to fructify this piece.

I welcome all suggestions from readers, as the primary goal of this book is to assist students in enhancing their reading comprehension skills and expanding their vocabulary knowledge.

Razieh Mahdi Beyraghdar
Faculty Member
of Payame Noor University
Spring 1404

UNIT ONE

Nowruz

In this unit, you will

- learn the essential reading skill of "*Previewing*".
- read a passage on '*Nowruz*'.
- increase your vocabulary knowledge on this topic, by learning key terms and concepts associated with '*Nowruz*'.

A- Pre- reading Activities

Read these questions. Discuss and share your answers with a partner or a small group.

1. Are you familiar with the oldest New Year celebrations in the world?

2. Why do people celebrate the New Year?

3. In what ways do the people around the world celebrate the New Year?

2 Reading Skillfully

A1- Reading Skill 1: Previewing

By previewing a text, you can form a general idea of what it is about. It allows you to recall what you already know about a topic and what you can expect to learn. Accordingly, it is necessary to spend a few minutes previewing before you begin to read academic texts.

How to preview a text?

- Read the title if there is one and subtitles.
- Look at the photos, tables, and diagrams if there is any.
- Read the first sentence of each paragraph and the last sentence of the first and the last paragraph.

Key Points

- You should preview a text as quickly as possible.
- By previewing, you are not reading for specific information, but trying to identify the topic.
- Previewing helps you to predict some of the ideas stated in the passage.
- Good readers predict and think about what they are going to read.

A2- Applying Reading Skill 1: Previewing

Preview the following Reading by answering the following questions. Discuss your answers with a partner or a small group.

Read the title. You already know that the article will be about Nowruz. Read the first sentence of each paragraph and the last sentence of the first and the last paragraphs.

Place a checkmark (✓) next to the type of information that are likely to be found in the text.

- ___ 1. timing of Nowruz celebrations
- ___ 2. preparations made by people for Nowruz
- ___ 3. the founder of Nowruz
- ___ 4. different ways that Nowruz is celebrated
- ___ 5. the end date of Nowruz festivities

A3- Vocabulary Review

Study the following words before reading the text below.

- **Celebrate (v):** to show that a day or an event is important by doing something special on it
- **Contain (v):** if something contains something else, it has that thing inside it or as part of it
- **Equinox (n):** one of the two times in the year (around 20 March and 22 September) when the sun is above the equator and day and night are of equal length
- **Hemisphere (n):** one half of the earth, especially the half above or below the equator
- **Involve (v):** entail, if a situation, an event or an activity involves something, that thing is an important or necessary part or result of it
- **Perform (v):** entertain an audience by playing a piece of music, acting in a play, etc.
- **Preparation (n):** the act or process of getting ready for something or making something ready
- **Preserve (v):** keep a particular quality, feature, etc.; to make sure that something is kept
- **Replace (v):** take over, to be used instead of somebody/something else; to do something instead of somebody/something else
- **Tradition (n):** a belief, custom or way of doing something that has existed for a long time among a particular group of people; a set of these beliefs or customs

B- Reading

Nowruz



¹Nowruz means 'new day' in Persian and is the most important festival of the year in Iran. It is also **celebrated** in a number of other countries across the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, the Balkans and East Africa, and dates back at least 3,000 years. The holiday has changed over the thousands of years that it has been celebrated, and different regions have **preserved** or developed different **traditions**, as well as adding new ones. But wherever it is observed, it celebrates the original message of rebirth and renewal.

²Nowruz marks the spring **equinox**, when night and day are of equal length. This is usually on 20 or 21 March. It's the day when winter changes into spring in the northern **hemisphere**, and it feels like a new beginning. In Iran it is followed by four days of public holidays, and schools and universities close for two weeks.

³People start their **preparation** for the festivities weeks beforehand. They clean their homes from top to bottom, including carpets, windows and curtains. Everyone in the family helps out. Anything broken is repaired or **replaced** and the house is decorated with flowers. By doing this spring cleaning, people wash away the bad things from the previous year and *prepare* for better things to come in the new year.

⁴People prepare a special table in their homes, where they place small dishes holding seven symbolic foods and spices. The names of these foods all start with the letter 's' in Persian and so the table is called the 'seven s's' (haft-seen). The dishes generally **contain** wheat or bean sprouts (sabze), vinegar (serke), apples (sib), garlic (sir), a wheat-based pudding called saman, a red spice called sumac, and senjed, a kind of wild olive which is common in the region. Other symbolic objects can include goldfish, painted eggs, candles and a mirror. The seven s's symbolize life, love, health and prosperity.

⁵Fire forms an important part of the celebrations, and bonfires are built and lit on the streets for four Tuesdays in the weeks before Nowruz. On the last Tuesday, people observe the Festival of Fire (Chaharshanbe Suri), which **involves** jumping over these fires, which is believed to bring health and good luck in the new year.

⁶Iranians spend the night of Nowruz with their family. The traditional new year dinner is white fish with rice and herbs. Many families give a money gift (called eidi) to the children to mark the new year. People often visit each other's homes and always bring traditional gifts.

⁷People also celebrate on the street. Traditional poetry, song and dance play a key role in the celebrations, and people fill the streets to watch and *take part in* the **performances**. *Traditional sports* are also popular. They often involve horse-riding or wrestling.

⁸The festivities end on the thirteenth day after Nowruz, when people traditionally spend the day picnicking outside. The countryside is full of families eating, dancing, singing and enjoying the last day of the holidays.

6 Reading Skillfully

C- Post- reading Activities

C1- Reading Comprehension: Previewing

Read the following questions. Discuss your answers with a partner or a small group.

1. What does the word "Nowruz" mean?
2. When is Nowruz celebrated?
3. How do people prepare for Nowruz?
4. How is Nowruz celebrated?
5. When does Nowruz come to an end?

C2- Open-ended Questions

- **Do some research on *Christmas*. Then think about the answers to the following questions. Discuss your answers with a partner or a small group.**

1. What does the word "Christmas" mean?
2. When is Christmas celebrated?
3. How do people prepare for Christmas?

4. How is Christmas celebrated?

5. How long is Christmas holiday?

- **How do you spend Nowruz holiday? Discuss with a partner or a small group.**

D- Vocabulary Exploration

D1- Word Meaning

Read the following excerpts. For each excerpt, cross out the word in parentheses which has a different meaning from the other choices. Compare your answers with those of a partner.

1. The days and weeks before Christmas are characterized by frantic shopping for presents. Many groups of friends or workmates (*take part, participate, decorate, are involved*) in a 'Secret Santa' group. This is where each person buys a small present for one other person in the group, but the identity of the giver is never revealed.
2. There are many different Easter (*customs/ traditions/ conventions/ practices*) around the world. In some places, people eat lamb on Easter Sunday, but there are many other foods, such as hot cross buns – spiced, sweet bread buns made with raisins – that are traditional in the UK.
3. Holi is an ancient Hindu festival that originated in India and Nepal and is now celebrated in many places around the world. It represents the arrival of spring and the victory of good over evil. An important part of the celebration is forgiving anyone who has upset you and (*correcting, developing/ repairing/ replacing*) any broken relationships. Holi is sometimes called the festival of colors.

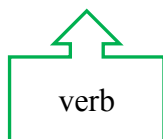
D2- Word Family

Most words belong to a "family" of words with shared meaning. For example, the word forms **celebrate** (a verb), **celebration** (a noun), **celebrity** (a noun), **celebrated** (an adjective), and **celebratory** (an adjective) are related to one another. To know which form to use, you must figure out the word's part of speech in a sentence. The differences in the spelling indicate different parts of speech.

Celebrate

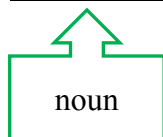
The verb **celebrate** means “to observe (a day) or commemorate (an event) with ceremonies or festivities”.

- They were **celebrating** their wedding anniversary at a cozy restaurant.



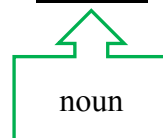
It has several noun forms. One is **celebration** which means “a special event that people organize in order to celebrate something”.

- Each year a birthday **celebration** concert is held in his honor.



Another noun form in this word family is **celebrity** which means “a famous person”.

- We cannot trust her sayings just because she is a TV **celebrity**.



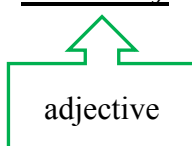
Celebrated is an adjective form and means “famous for having good qualities”.

- One of his most **celebrated** works is in our exhibition.



Celebratory is another adjective form. It means “celebrating something or marking a special occasion”.

- We were invited to a **celebratory** dinner.



Word Form Chart			
Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
celebration celebrity	celebrate	celebrated celebratory	_____

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate form of **celebrate.**

1. The couple their golden wedding in January.
2. Being recognized in the street is part and parcel of being a
.....
3. The team had a dinner after winning the championship.
4. We had a to honor our grandparents.
5. He died three days before the opening of his most film.

Involve

The verb **involve** has the core meaning of "include". The passive verb form usually takes the preposition *in* or *with* and means "to be included or connected".

10 Reading Skillfully

- This job **involves** a lot of travels.

the active form of verb

- He said it would be the last time they *were* **involved** in something.

the passive form of verb

The noun form is **involvement**.

- FBI had no proof of his **involvement** in anything.

noun

Involved as an adjective means "complicated". With the word "long", it describes a series of tasks or an event with many parts.

- My sister doesn't like to take part in such a long and **involved** ceremony.

adjective

Word Form Chart

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
involvement	involve	involved	_____

Answer the following questions using different forms of involve in parentheses. Compare your answers with those of a partner.

1. What has made Mary's parents so upset? (**involvement**)

2. Why do you seem so tired recently? Is there any problem in the company? (involved)
3. Why was John caught by police the other day? (involved)

D3- Fill in the Blanks

Read the following text on *New Year's celebrations*. Fill in the blanks with appropriate vocabularies in the box below. There are two additional words.

involve equinox custom
 prepare performance
 celebrations traditions

The city of Babylon in ancient Mesopotamia was where the first New Year's celebrations were recorded about 4,000 years ago. The Babylonians held their (1)..... on the first new moon after the spring (2)..... and called this festival Akitu (which comes from the word the Sumerians used for barley). Barley was cut in Mesopotamia in the spring, and during Akitu there was a different ritual on each of the 11 days that the celebration lasted. Statues of the gods were carried through the streets of the city, and in this way the Babylonians believed that their world had been cleaned to (3)..... for the new year and a new spring.

There are a number of strange and interesting New Year's (4)..... around the world. For example, in Scotland, New Year's Eve is called Hogmanay and 'first footing' remains a popular (5)..... with people visiting friends' and neighbors' houses just after midnight. The first person who visits your house should bring a gift as this will mean good luck.