BLOGS

7 Ways to Improve Reading Speed for CLAT and AILET 2025

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Want to learn about 7 ways to improve your reading speed? Read this post to learn more!

For CLAT aspirants, slow reading speed is more than just a minor inconvenience—it can be a significant obstacle. With the exam's heavy focus on comprehension-based questions across multiple sections, a slower reading speed directly affects performance in both accuracy and time management.

There are only two weeks left for CLAT and AILET and the one area where students often feel the time crunch is in the tackling lengthy passages. Improving reading speed at this point can make a noticeable difference, especially since comprehension is such a crucial component of both exams.

Here are 7 ways you can improve your reading speed and increase your marks in the exam!

1. Practice Active Reading in Short Bursts

Passive reading won't cut it. Active reading, where you focus intently on understanding the main idea and identifying key details, is essential. Try this exercise:

- Set aside 15-20 minutes daily for reading a newspaper editorial or a complex passage.
- Focus on grasping the main idea in a single read-through, without backtracking.
- Push yourself to summarize the passage in a sentence or two after reading.

2. Use a Timer for Each Passage

Time yourself while practicing reading comprehension passages. If you can finish a passage in five minutes, set a timer for four and a half minutes next time. This pressure can help you stay conscious of your reading speed and avoid unnecessary delays.

Gradually reduce your reading time by 10-15 seconds each day, pushing your speed without sacrificing comprehension.

While preparing for CLAT, I used to read editorials and time myself to see how fast I could complete the article while comprehending the details. This really helped me on the day of the examination as my mind was trained to focus on the passage and retain information simultaneously.

3. Work on Eye Movement and Focus

When reading, avoid fixating on each individual word. Practice moving your eyes smoothly across lines and taking in groups of words instead. To practice this, try to read two or three words at a glance. Focus on minimizing the stops your eyes make while reading each line.

You can also place a pen or finger beneath the lines you're reading and move it steadily across, training yourself to read at that pace.

4. Avoid Subvocalization

Subvocalization is when you "say" the words in your head as you read. While it's a natural habit, it slows down reading speed significantly. Try to train your brain to process words visually without mentally "speaking" each one. A trick is to count in your head while reading, which can prevent you from saying each word in your mind.

5. Prioritize Vocabulary and Contextual Understanding

The faster you understand difficult words and concepts, the quicker you'll get through passages. With limited time, focus on high-frequency words that often appear in legal and editorial writing. You don't need to master every word, but being able to quickly infer meaning from context will help.

Sometimes, we tend to skip a few words as our brain already understands how to the rest of the statement is going to be. Try focusing on important details in the passage and you can improve your reading time.

6. Skim, Then Scan for Details

For comprehension passages, begin by skimming the first line of each paragraph to get a sense of the structure and main points. This skimming should take less than 30 seconds.

Once you have a mental roadmap, return to the beginning and read more carefully, knowing which parts might be more crucial. This method allows you to focus more on relevant parts, enhancing speed without missing details.

I would suggest you read the entire passage, focusing only on key phrases, skipping non-essential words like “the” and “a”.

Instead of reading each word individually, you can also read in chunks of 2-3 words. For example: Instead of reading “The rapid growth of technology,” train yourself to see it as “The rapid growth | of technology.” By grouping words, you can reduce your reading time without losing meaning.

7. Practice Mindful Reading with Simulated Passages

CLAT and AILET often feature passages with nuanced and dense language. Practice with passages that mirror these styles—editorials, legal opinions, and analytical essays are good sources. After reading, try to answer questions about the passage as if you were taking the exam. Analyze any questions you get wrong to understand where your comprehension fell short.

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