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|  **Features of Traditional Reading Class** |  |

     In a traditional English reading class, students are mainly **trained to improve their language skills-first to enlarge vocabularies and then to improve reading comprehension ability**. They are expected to obtain information or knowledge from the text and accept the idea or viewpoints presented in the textbook. Most of the **reading articles are literature works, humorous stories and scientific articles**, but very few argumenta articles with strict logic. The reading **exercises are often multiple-choice questions**to test students’ comprehension. The traditional lecturing and classroom activities are not very helpful in fostering students’ critical thinking. So a new way to teach English reading focusing on developing students’ critical thinking should be proposed. Students should be trained to be critical readers who can “question, organize, interpret, synthesize, and digest what they read”(Paul, 1995, p.491)
     A typical lesson consists of a**pre-reading phase** that activates and builds background knowledge, guided reading of a text, and **post-reading**exercises that include comprehension checks, discussion and writing activities. This is usually followed with **exercises to develop skills**, such as determining main ideas, finding supporting details or arguments, guessing at unfamiliar vocabulary by using context clues, and expanding linguistics competence(e.g. through word study and sentence analysis exercises). In such a skill-building approach, Shih (1992) argues that it is assumed that the practice of basic skills will enable students to handle actual content-area [reading assignments.](http://criticalthinking2015.weebly.com/)
      Thus, reading teachers should regard comprehension as only the beginning of reading critically and encourage students to question the text by analyzing and evaluating what they read.