

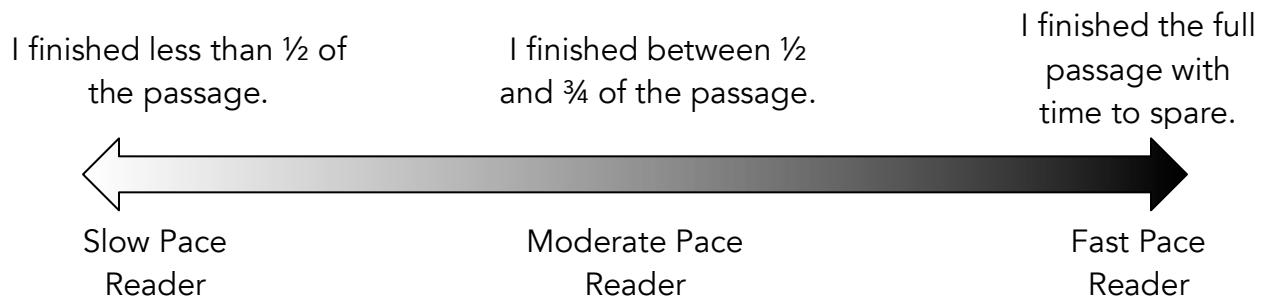
# ACT READING QUICK-TIP PREP GUIDE

There is no single “correct” way to tackle the ACT Reading section; depending on your reading speed, comprehension level, and retention ability, you may need to make adjustments to what you read below.

Follow the steps to start on your way in determining the best ACT Reading strategy for you!

## STEP ONE: DETERMINE YOUR READING SPEED

While running a timer, read a full ACT passage at your natural reading speed. Stop the timer between 2:30 and 3:00 minutes. Then, find your reading speed on the spectrum below. Note that, with practice over time, you can increase your natural reading speed. The only thing that makes reading easier is reading itself!



## STEP TWO: PLAN HOW TO USE YOUR TIME

\*\* (See page 4 for a word about paired passages) \*\*

### Slow Pace Readers

Consider completing only three of the four passages on the ACT reading section. Read each passage for about 4 minutes, and then spend about 12 minutes on each passage's questions. It's very important that you're as accurate as possible on each question: read the answer choices carefully!

### Moderate Pace Readers

Aim to finish all four passages. Read each passage for between 2.5 and 3 minutes. Then, answer the Line-Reference questions (see next page) first. Lastly, do the others questions, aiming to spend around 6 minutes total on each of the passage's question sets. Remember that accuracy is more important than answering 100% of the questions!

### Fast Pace Readers

Aim to finish all four passages. Read each passage in full, and then go after the questions in whatever order is best for you. Spend about 8.5 minutes total reading each passage and answering its questions. Slow down on the questions, because details are crucial to getting the correct answers!

## GENERAL ACT READING STRATEGIES

1. **SPEED.** The ACT Reading section is FAST. Train yourself to read and answer questions more quickly by always practicing with a timer or watch. Remember that you can bring a wristwatch to the ACT, as long as it doesn't make noise or perform mathematical calculations.
2. **WHITTLE IT DOWN.** Use process of elimination to your advantage. Examine any extreme answer choices (answers that talk in absolute terms like "never", "always", etc.) very carefully before choosing them.
3. **BE LIKE A SPONGE AND GET YOUR BEARINGS – THE QUADRANT METHOD.** Many ACT Reading questions will not tell you where to go to find an answer (see "Find the Detail" Questions on the previous page); this means you need to remember where things are. Whatever your reading speed, make sure that you're as focused as possible on what you're reading so that you absorb and understand as much as you can. To help you remember where things are, consider using the "Quadrant Method", illustrated below. Using your pencil, divide the passage into four roughly equally sized regions. In each region, focus on the main ideas: what point is the author making? What are the major events and who are the major figures/characters discussed? What is the setting? When you get to the questions, ask yourself, "In which quadrant might I find this information?". Knowing where to go is half the battle.
4. **PAIRED PASSAGES.** Sometimes, the ACT Reading will feature two mini-passages for a series of ten questions. Fortunately, the questions will feature headers that indicate the passages to which they apply. It's up to you how you want to handle these, but we suggest doing the following. Try to spend about 2.5 minutes on each step
  - a. **READ PASSAGE "A" FIRST, AND ANSWER ITS QUESTIONS.** Spend about a minute reading the passage and a minute answer the questions that apply to passage A.
  - b. **READ PASSAGE "B" SECOND, AND ANSWER ITS QUESTIONS.** Spend about a minute reading the passage and a minute answer the questions that apply to passage B.
  - c. **ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT APPLY TO BOTH PASSAGES.** The passage will tell you which questions require information from both passages. Do these last.
5. **PRACTICE<sup>3</sup>.** Practice constantly. Practice consistently. Practice effectively. Use real ACT exams and Method Test Prep's web-based program to improve your skills gradually, and you'll be ready for the test when the real thing comes around.