

# Reactions!



Reactions! is an integrated skills program with a focus on reading. It comes at five levels, from Late Elementary to Advanced, and helps students develop a range of reading and vocabulary strategies. These include prediction, identifying your reason for reading, skimming, scanning, dictionary work, guessing or ignoring unknown words and developing the reading habit.

Reactions! is organised around a wide variety of text types including articles, broadcasts, quizzes, letters, recipes, stories, newsletters and advertisements. All units develop from reading into a range of skills activities which include discussion, listening comprehension and writing.



## Why Reactions!?

True or false?

1. Lightning hits more than half a million people every year.
2. The centre of a lightning strike is hotter than the sun.
3. About 50% of people struck by lightning die.
4. When there is lightning, it is safer to stand on one foot.
5. Planes are never hit by lightning.

And did you know that in 1998 a football match in the Democratic Republic of Congo was ended when all eleven players on the visiting team were killed by lightning? The home team was unscathed. (Or was it witchcraft as many of those present claimed?)

The first principle of Clarity's reading and integrated skills program, Reactions!, is to excite the reader's interest in the text. Reading anything other than instructions in the classroom is often contrived, setting up a barrier to generating the real enthusiasm for reading that will push students forward, and crucially, encourage them to read outside the classroom.

One approach is to structure tasks in a way that creates a real reason for reading. The true/false lightning questions above tickle the students' interest, and they genuinely want to find out whether they were right or wrong, and to find out more about the subject. So a kind of authentic purpose has been created.



Another strategy is to simulate the way in which the texts will be used in real life. So for a scanning exercise, we chose recipes. Students pretend they are in the kitchen and as they are cooking they need to know as quickly as possible at whether they have

reached the stage where they add the salt, or whether they should chop the onions. The purpose for reading in this case is not authentic (unless you can actually cook the food in class); the motivation is generated because the task is fun.

## Reading subskills

What are the other principles Clarity has followed in creating Reactions!? It is critical that a reading and skills program should be just that: a reading and skills program. It should not be made to fit into a grammar syllabus, or be used as a way of teaching vocabulary. The focus must be first and foremost on helping students improve their reading subskills, on giving them lots of practice within the course, and on encouraging them to read outside. The program therefore covers prediction, identifying your reason for reading, skimming, scanning, dictionary strategies, guessing or ignoring unknown words, developing the reading habit, and so on.

Reactions! is organised around a wide variety of text types including articles, quizzes, letters, recipes, stories, interviews, and advertisements. Students can also listen to the texts: this is a terrific resource bringing a whole range of native speaker audio into the classroom, or, where students are accessing the program online, the home. Interestingly, the units often end up by linking students into authentic sites on the Internet with graded tasks. For example, a letter from an Inuit girl describing her lifestyle links to an authentic site set up by an Inuit high school.

Oh, and by the way, the centre of a lightning strike is three times hotter than the sun, and most planes are struck two or three times a year by lightning. Is that worrying? Visit [www.ClarityEnglish.com](http://www.ClarityEnglish.com) and view the demo to find out!

## Native speaker audio

There is a huge variety of audio available to students on the Internet through, for example, the BBC or CNN. However, it is almost exclusively aimed at native speakers and is therefore at too high a level for most learners. Reactions! enables students to access a wide range of graded audio from

Late Elementary level all the way through to Advanced. The audio additionally helps students' reading by showing how words are grouped (or chunked) together.

## Add-ons

Add extra activities to Reactions with Author Plus Pro.

You can track student activity using Clarity's Results Manager.



## Facts and Figures

Reactions..

1. comes at five levels from Late Elementary to Advanced.
2. includes 50 units each based around a text and reading skill.
3. includes a wide range of topics and text-types.
4. includes extensive audio and other skills work.
5. links to authentic websites to introduce students to native-speaker environments.
6. leads on to extension activities away from the computer including discussions, debates, presentations and essays.

## Some of the topics included in Reactions!

- Curing insomnia
- Chicken recipes
- Dangerous sports
- Telling jokes
- Fashion
- War poetry
- Wedding disasters
- Yoga
- Dictionaries
- Restorative justice

## Target Students

Age range: Secondary, Higher education  
Language ability: Late Elementary to Advanced

Technical: Network or online

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