3 Tips for Improving Your Reading Comprehension and Retention

by ALEXANDER BEIGA

ADHD and Reading: How to Read With Adult ADHD

When is the last time you read an entire book from start to finish? Some people find reading enjoyable, and others not so much. Either way, the purpose of this article isn't to get you to like reading. This is for adults who have ADHD and want to start reading more.

How ADHD Affects Reading

To figure out how ADHD affects reading, you have to revisit your childhood.

All children have an innate desire to learn, ADHD can't change that. But a child with ADHD will need a unique learning approach because ADHD affects working memory (what you use to retain and remember what you read).

Children with ADHD are especially capable of giving attention to things they like, even more so than a non-ADHD child. As a result, the books used to teach ADHD children reading should appeal to their interests.

A child is more likely to remember an interesting book than a boring book. The catch here is that all this also applies to adults.

Disclaimer: As an ADHD child I won awards for reading. Now as an ADHD adult I get paid to read.

Below you will learn strategies that address common adult ADHD reading problems to give you the confidence and know how to finish an entire book from start to finish. (Or at the very least, learn something!)

Reading Strategy Number 1: Check Your Reading Comprehension

Child (and thus adults) with ADHD are more likely to have under-developed reading comprehension skills.

Reading comprehension is a person's ability to understand what they read. If your reading comprehension isn't too great, it could be making it difficult for you to enjoy reading.

What I want you to do now is check your reading comprehension. And to do that, you will need to ask yourself a couple of questions. All the questions will be about this article:

1. Why Are You Reading This Article?

You might say because you want to learn how to read more. Or you have a relative with ADHD who needs help reading. Perhaps someone close to you is worrying because they can't finish reading an entire book.

Before you start reading a book, you should ask yourself why you are reading it and how finishing it will benefit

you. Doing so will give you a purpose and make you think twice about not finishing.

2. If You Had to Summarize the Previous Paragraph in One Sentence, What Would You Say?

(It's okay to re-read it.)

Here's my answer: People reads books for a reason, knowing why you want to read a book before you start reading will increase your chances of finishing.

Summarizing pages or chapters of a book is a great way to check your reading comprehension and draw more from the text.

Reading Strategy Number Two: Join a Book Club

When you think of reading, you probably picture yourself alone sitting in a chair with your nose in a book or a tablet. Nobody ever said reading has to be something you do alone.

If reading is boring to you, join a book club. Joining one will give you more motivation to read. Not to mention, you'll get to make new friends, and have fun.

Reading Strategy Number Three: Figure Out Your Reading Level

Certain books are for different audiences. Consider the "reading level" of a book you want to read. Things that influence the reading level of a book include length, vocabulary, and abstract concepts.

For example, a book intended for elementary schoolers won't include words exceeding two syllables. It surely won't have topics like sex, love, and murder.

Whereas an adult book will include at least one of those topics, along with themes that will make you re-think life. Expect words that are four or even five syllables long.

Choose a book that's right for your reading level, and you will have an easier time reading. The more you read, the better you will be at it.

Bonus Adult ADHD Reading Tips

Long ago a Chinese general known as Sun Tzu wrote, "Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory." With that in mind, let's review a few reading tips/tactics that will help you use the strategies you just learned.

1. Read to learn, not to finish. Reading is about learning something and being able to use it to benefit yourself and those around you.
2. Do you read better in silence or do you need white noise? Find out!
3. Highlight or underline any passages in a book that stands out to you. This way you can share it with others or come back to it later.
4. If you don't know the meaning of a word, look it up.

What book do you plan on reading next?