

# **HOW TO READ A BOOK IN THE BEST WAY**

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How to Read a Book in the Best Way by George Philip Philes

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**GEORGE PHILIP PHILES**

**HOW TO READ A  
BOOK IN  
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Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873,

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How to Read a Book in the Best Way.

Philos, George Philip

# HOW TO READ

## A BOOK

IN THE BEST WAY.

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"THE COLLEGES, WHETHER THEY PROVIDE US WITH LIBRARIES, FURNISH NO  
PROFESSOR OF BOOKS; AND, I THINK, NO CHAIR IS SO MUCH WANTED."  
EMERSON.

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"What do we, as a Nation, care about Books? How much do you think we spend altogether on our Libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses? If a man spends lavishly on his Library, you call him *mad*—a Bibliomaniac. But you never call one a Horsemaniac, though men ruin themselves every day by their horses, and you do not hear of people ruining themselves by their books. We talk of food for the mind, as of food for the body; now a good Book contains such food inexhaustibly; it is provision for life, and for the best part of us; yet how long most people would look at the best Book before they would give the price of a large turbot for it. Though there have been men who have pinched their stomachs and bared their backs to buy a book, whose libraries were cheaper to them, I think, in the end, than most men's dinners are. A precious thing is all the more precious to us if it has been won by work or economy; and if Public Libraries were half as costly as Public Dinners, or Books cost the tenth part of what bracelets do, even foolish men and women might sometimes suspect there was Good in Reading."—RUSKIN.

W. A. R. L. D. O. T. K. A. Y. S.



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## PART FIRST.

### HEALTHY READING.

#### I.—SINGLE THOUGHTS.

*Lemma.*—What can I tell you about Books to induce you to listen to me?

- I. Function of a book.
- II. Not so much good done by reading as there ought to be.
- III. The reason is want of a guide.
- IV. Qualifications of the author for this duty.

*Glance at the Problem*—

How are we to use Books?

- I. Are they worth the trouble?
- II. Who is the bookworm?
- III. Whence is the barrenness of general readers?
- IV. How is it a guide is wanted in Reading *now*, and not before?

V. How are the great engineering problems of the day solved?

*Four Stages of the Development of the Mind; or,*  
Nature's method of teaching us to read her Book.

- I. As a child : Concepts.
- II. As a youth : Theory.
- III. As a man : Practice.
- IV. As a sage : Wisdom.

## II.—COMMON THOUGHTS,

Or, *Propositions* flowing from the Single Thoughts.

*Particular Propositions*, relating to reading.

- I. What is the general aim in reading a Book?
- II. The particular motive?
- III. How often must we read a Book?
- IV. What must be our aim in each different reading?

Lastly, what has been said of one book is applied to any number.

*General propositions*, necessary to profit by what follows :

- V. The method of Nature truly conservative.  
What is, is good, under conditions.
- VI. Pleasure and pain, what? or Theory of Life.  
Model man and woman.

## III.—DEEDS.

Why left to the learner himself?

## IV.—WISDOM.

Being rules, precepts, and maxims, for the good of  
*The Body.*

- I. Read aloud.
- II. Stop often.
- III. Walk.
- IV. Read large print.

*The Mind.*

- I. Have faith; and find a substitute for reciprocity.
- II. Write down what you know.
- III. Read first to understand.
- IV. Do not skip passages.
- V. Pause often.
- VI. Read with a pencil and paper.
- VII. Copy out memoranda at night.
- VIII. Observe striking passages.
- IX. Do not read everything recommended.
- X. Do not expect to feel any good from one Reading.
- XI. Be not down-hearted if the fruit is long in coming.