How to Be a Good Reader

1. Good readers learn to automatically read letter combinations at the ends of words differently than the same letter combinations that form a word. For example, a good reader reads the letters t-r-y as “tree” when it comes at the end of words such as entry, pantry, country, etc. Likewise, a good reader reads the letters t-y at the end of a word as “tee” as in party, county, jaunty, nasty, and empty. At the beginnings of words t-y is usually pronounced tie as in Tyrone, tyre (British spelling), typhoid, and typist. Tries becomes “trees” in entries, pantries, countries, etc. Ties becomes “tees” in parties, counties, and empties.

2. Good readers learn how to pronounce the -sque letter combination as sk as in Basque, masquerade, mosque, grotesque, and bisque. They learn that que at the end is /k/ as in unique, technique, and pique.

3. Good readers learn how to scan.

4. Good readers can use a dictionary and correctly pronounce any word by using the dictionary diacritics.

5. Good readers can read dialects in print. For example, the following is a definition from a recently published southern dictionary. Bad - a place for sleep or rest.

6. Good readers know the conventions cartoonists use to indicate thinking, motion, speed, dreaming, and talking.
7. Good readers catch satire, allusions, and puns.
   a. Satire – the use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule, or the like, in exposing, denouncing, or deriding vice, folly, etc. Stephen Colbert’s television program The Colbert Report is instructive in the methods of contemporary American satire. Colbert’s character is an opinionated and self-righteous commentator who, in his TV interviews, interrupts people, points and wags his finger at them, and “unwittingly” uses every logical fallacy known to man. In doing so, he demonstrates the principle of modern American political satire: the ridicule of the actions of politicians and other public figures by taking all their statements and purported beliefs to their furthest logical conclusion, thus revealing their perceived hypocrisy.

   b. Allusion - a passing or casual reference; an incidental mention of something, either directly or by implication. Andy Warhol, a 20th-century American artist most famous for his pop-art images of Marilyn Monroe, commented about the explosion of media coverage by saying, “In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes.” Today, when someone receives a great deal of media attention for something fairly trivial, and he or she is said to be experiencing his or her “15 minutes of fame,” the allusion is to Andy Warhol’s famous saying.

   c. Pun – the humorous use of a word or phrase so as to emphasize or suggest its different meanings or applications, or the use of words that are alike or nearly alike in sound but different in meaning; a play on words. Example: “You can tune a guitar, but you can’t tuna fish. Unless, of course, you play bass.”

8. Good readers know how to find things in catalogs and can use telephone directories and anything with an index.

9. Good readers peruse newspapers, magazines, books, and other publications on a regular basis.

10. Good readers enjoy reading!!!