**[8 Powerful Tips to Improve Spanish Reading Comprehension](http://takelessons.com/blog/spanish-reading-comprehension-z03%22%20%5Co%20%22Permanent%20Link%3A%208%20Powerful%20Tips%20to%20Improve%20Spanish%20Reading%20Comprehension)**

Are you intimidated by texts, magazines, or [books in Spanish](http://takelessons.com/blog/using-books-to-learn-Spanish-z03)? Do you feel overwhelmed at the thought of reading and understanding written Spanish? The following tips will allow you to increase your Spanish reading comprehension and help you feel assured as you navigate new linguistic territory.

**1. Notice the title and any photos or graphics in the text.**

These things will give you an idea of the style and content of the text. Improving reading comprehension in Spanish is like becoming a detective, and things like the title and images are your clues!

**2. Draw on your own experience with and knowledge of the topic.**

It’s likely the reading selection may cover some material that you already know. Thinking about keywords and points that the author may address, based on your prior knowledge of the topic, will increase your ability to decode the text in Spanish.

**3. If there are reading comprehension questions attached to the text, read through the questions first so that you can look for the answers to the questions as you read.**

This will increase your engagement and understanding of the text. Knowing the questions ahead of time also gives you an idea of what the main points of the text may be, since the questions are often centered around general comprehension.

**4. Get a gist.**

Skim the whole text to get a basic idea of the meaning. Don’t worry about reading it thoroughly yet or understanding everything. Then, as you read it more in depth, you can scan each paragraph before you read it more carefully.

**5. Consider the context of the text.**

Depending on where the story takes place, if it’s literature, you might expect to see informal or formal language. If it’s a news article, you might expect to see clear facts and details presented. Understanding how the author might convey the information allows you to anticipate the text and increase your comprehension.

**6. Use cognates.**

Cognates are ever-helpful words that sound similar in Spanish and English and often share the same Latin root. If you’re struggling with understanding a passage, try to determine what you already know simply from finding the cognates. (Note: Be wary of [false Spanish cognates](http://takelessons.com/blog/false-spanish-cognates-z03)!)

**7. Watch out for figurative language.**

Often, when you first start to read in a foreign language, you can forget that not everything is intended literally. Figurative language can be complex to grasp since the expressions are usually not equivalent in Spanish and English. However, if you anticipate some use of figurative language, it can reduce the amount of confusion you encounter with the text.

**8. Use your knowledge of grammar.**

Understanding how the sentence is constructed can help you understand the meaning. Identify the subject, predicate, any conjunctions, direct and indirect objects and prepositions, and prepositional phrases. This is especially helpful if you encounter a wordy and complex sentence with many parts. Breaking it down can be the key to comprehension!

You will find that the more you practice using these tips while reading Spanish, the more your reading comprehension will increase. You can also read a text before your lessons: use the strategies above to gain as much understanding as possible, and then go over it with your [Spanish tutor](https://takelessons.com/language/spanish-lessons?utm_source=blog-student&utm_medium=blog&utm_content=post&utm_campaign=tl-blog) to further increase your Spanish reading comprehension. May your reading time be productive and fun!