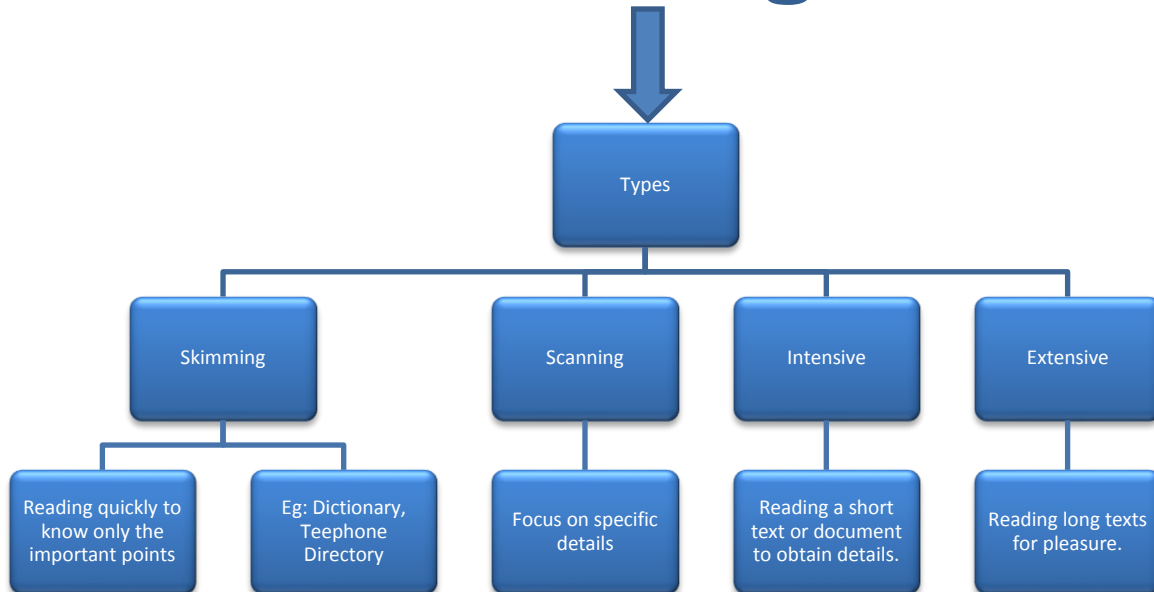


# Reading



## A generation of couch potatoes

Lots of teenagers have posters of their sports heroes on their bedroom wall. But do they follow the healthy examples set by these athletes? British parents are worried that young people are not as fit and healthy as in the past. Why is this? According to the British Heart Foundation, 13 to 15 year olds are spending too much time doing sedentary activities such as watching TV or playing computer games. A special report describes a generation of couch potatoes, young people sitting around at home, growing up in their bedrooms, travelling by car and in serious danger of heart disease as they get older. Is this their fault? Are young people lazy? Many parents don't allow their children to play outside or walk to school by themselves. "I ring my Dad on my mobile and he picks me up from the station. It's 10 minutes' walk from home but he thinks it is dangerous," says 14 year old Carrie. Some teenagers blame their over protective parents for making them unfit. It is certainly becoming more difficult to encourage young people to have an active life and protect their hearts. In recent years schools have spent less time on sports. "My Mum did lots of hockey and netball at school but we didn't have time for that this year because we had so many exams to prepare," says Ben, 16.

Fitness campaign:

➡ Think of four ways to encourage young people in your town / area to improve their fitness.

➡ How can you encourage a more active lifestyle at home and at school? Use expressions like:

- I think we should...
- It might be a good idea to....
- Why don't we....

**Homework: Write about lifestyles in your city/country. How does your lifestyle compare to your grandparents' lives? Has anything changed? Discuss these topics:**

- **Transport**
- **Diet**
- **Home**
- **Spare time activities**
- **Physical activities**