

Reading out loud together – using Thought Groups

What are Thought groups?

- Written English is very different than spoken English because there are many ideas between the beginning of a sentence (Capital letter) and the ending (period.).
- Thought groups are parts of a sentence that form an idea.
- They can be 3 to 5 words or even 2 words because it depends on the grammar of the sentence. If you listen to people talk, you will begin to notice them.
- They usually end with a content word (a noun or verb - NOT in, at, on, etc.)
- Don't worry about the grammar. I've included it here for the ones who know it.

Examples:

The people / who are in the class / love to watch movies.

Noun + adjective clause + verb

The pre-1990 horror movies / do not seem / as scary as the movies / from the 2020s.

Adjectives with noun + verb + comparison phrase + time phrase

How does this connect to reading out loud?

- Speakers make a short pause (breath) and in writing, there may be a comma.
- When people read out loud, alone or together as a group, they use thought groups for the rhythm (natural flow).

- This. means. that. they. do. not. read. each. word. one. by. one.
- Theyalsodonotreadallthewordstogetherwithoutbreakinguptheideas.
- Therefore, when reading out loud, these 2 sentences would be read as:
This means / that they do not / read each word one by one.
They also/ do not read / all the words together / without breaking up the ideas.

A very common example of thought groups is how people say or read the Lord's prayer.

The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6: 9 - 13 (English Standard Version)

- As your leader reads the verses, put a / (slash) where the reader pauses for the thought group.
- Check with each other. Then, read it together as a group.

9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name. **10** Your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread **12** and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

- If you click on the link, you can listen to the prayer.

English Standard Version <https://www.biblestudytools.com/esv/matthew/6.html>

Pronunciation research has shown that speakers that use thought groups develop a natural speech rhythm and are easier to understand because the ideas are broken up. Other people can get used to your accent, but the wrong rhythm is confusing for them!

Learn more! *3 Rules to Using Thought Groups* (San Diego Voice and Accent) 8 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgSOC3XrwXg>