Reading: A Very Short Introduction
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Reading: A Very Short Introduction explores the fascinating history of literacy and the opportunities reading opens. For much of human history reading was the preserve of the elite, and most reading meant being read to. Innovations in printing, paper-making, and transport, combined with increased public education, brought a boom in worldwide literacy from the late 18th century. Established links between a nation’s levels of literacy and its economy led to the promotion of reading for political ends. Reading has also been associated with subversive ideas, leading to censorship. Telling the story of reading, its ambiguities and complexities, from the ancient world to digital reading and restrictions today, this VSI explores why it is such an important aspect of our society.