

**WORD
MEMORY
POWER
— IN —
30
DAY**

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**WORD
MEMORY
POWER IN
30 DAYS**

**Peter Funk
with
Barry Tarshis**

A DELL BOOK

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To you the reader, who we hope will enjoy using this book as
much as we enjoyed creating it.

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IN TODAY'S WORLD THE COMMUNICATOR IS KING.

World-famous linguist Peter Funk has helped millions to better the quality of their lives by improving their vocabularies. Author of *Reader's Digest's* "It Pays to Enrich Your Word Power," his simple system not only puts words in your mouth but locks them in your memory forever. Now you can

- Master words from business, law, science, medicine, and politics
Express yourself effectively when speaking or writing
- Improve your performance on the job, at school, on the social scene
- Get more pleasure from books, movies, and television
- Use words to understand the past, to stay on top of what's happening now, to get a jump on what's coming next . . .

Complete with games, quizzes, and charts, this easy-to-follow system is designed to increase your understanding . . . and to give you more words to express your thoughts and feelings . . . to help you make a real impact on your world. You can have a more powerful vocabulary—an arsenal of words you'll never forget—in just 30 days!

By Peter Funk:

It Pays to increase Your Word Power

It Pays to Enrich Your Word Power

Word Power (co-editor)

Guidebook for the New Christian (co-author)

FICTION:

My Six Loves

Love and Consequences

By Barry Tarshis:

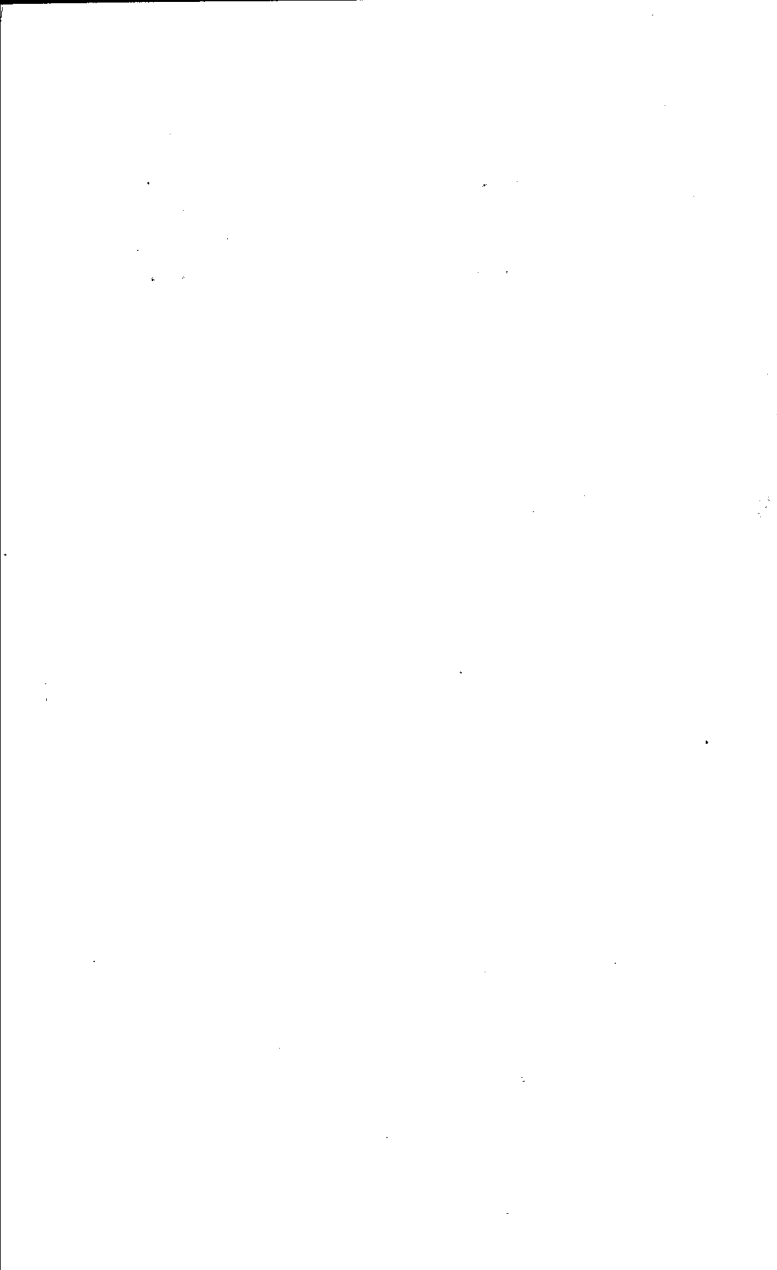
The Average American Book

What It Costs

Tennis and the Mind

It Pays to Increase Your Word Power

Mary Funk was involved in such a multiplicity of activities on this project, it is difficult to know where to begin and end the list. Our grateful thanks to her for her enthusiasm and expertise.



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I

WHAT WAS THAT WORD AGAIN?

Despite the popularity of vocabulary-building books, a great many people have difficulty remembering the words they learn while reading these books. As a linguist writing the monthly *Reader's Digest* feature "It Pays to Enrich Your Word Power," I find the plight almost universal—even among people with advanced degrees.

The problem nagged me for a long while. But I believe that in this book I have found a new way to help you remember words more easily than you have ever done before.

People today recognize the value of a solid and varied vocabulary. Innumerable studies in recent years show beyond a doubt that a strong vocabulary helps you do better in school, in business, and in the professions. The right words are often as pivotal in successful negotiations as they are in your daily relationships. People who have developed a large "mental dictionary" have more confidence and certainly derive more pleasure from reading, as well as from movies and television.

Like other linguists, I have relied on a variety of games and quizzes in my previous books and in my

column to help readers remember words and learn how to use them accurately. The approach was pioneered by my father, Wilfred Funk, more than forty years ago. This technique is as valid as it ever was and should be an integral part of any serious program of vocabulary improvement. In fact such games and quizzes make up a part of this book.

But such an approach is only a partial answer to word memory. The common experience for most people is that many of the new words they learn slip out of their memories all too quickly. I knew something else was needed. But what?

One day an editor suggested I write a vocabulary builder based on the last mnemonic or memory techniques. And this is what I've done. As far as I know, *Word Memory Power in 30 Days* is the first book that integrates mnemonic (pronounced nee MON ik) techniques into a definite strategy for building the kind of vocabulary you'd like to have. Mnemonics, as you may know already, refers to the science or art of memory improvement through the use of certain devices.

The beauty of the system I use is its simplicity. You can apply it to any new word you learn. Later on in this section I'll explain how you can put these techniques to work for you.

First, however, I want to tell you a little something about the 200-plus words you'll be working with. All of them should be in your verbal arsenal. They cover a broad spectrum of subjects and are loosely grouped under a variety of topics.

These important words impinge on your daily life—sometimes directly and dramatically, sometimes subtly.

WHAT WAS THAT WORD AGAIN?

They involve the concepts, ideas, and expressions that are influential in shaping the quality of your life.

They are "everyday" words. That's the way I like to think of them. They are "everyday" in the sense that you're likely to come on them as you read, when you listen to people talk, or when you hear them on the radio and TV. None of them is esoteric or dated.

All of them, of course, can be looked up in any good dictionary. But dictionaries have one failing. As necessary as they are, they don't have the space to give you a full picture of a word and most of the time you get only the bare bones.

That's why I've explored each of them in some depth, giving you their backgrounds, showing you how they are used and misused today. At the end of each cluster of five chapters you will have an opportunity to test yourself as to how well you know each of the words you've covered. Though the book has a scholarly base, I believe you will find it entertaining to read and easy to use.

You may have noticed that the book is divided into four weeks, which explains the title *Word Memory in 30 Days*. Then, so as to give you a certain number of words each day, each week is divided into five days. You have the weekend off for review to catch up for any day you may have missed. An arrangement like this allows you a certain flexibility, making it easier for you to lay out a program of study. There's no great mystery in learning something new. It's a matter of keeping after it on a fairly regular basis. At the end of thirty days, I'm sure you're going to be surprised and delighted at how many of the new words have seeped into your working vocabulary.

II

MNEMONICS AND WORD MEMORY

A mnemonic device is an artificial contrivance to help your memory. We've all used mnemonic devices consciously or unconsciously at one time or another. Chances are, when you were in grade school, a teacher gave you a little tip to assist you to keep in mind the spelling of a certain word. You remembered to put the *i* before *e* in the word *piece* by thinking of the phrase a "piece of pie."

I know people who routinely use mnemonic devices to recall the names of people. You meet a man named Harry who has a ton of hair, and you think, *Hairy Harry*. Another man I know keeps the nautical terms *port* and *starboard* straight by using the question "Is there any port left in the wine cabinet?"

Different as each of these mnemonic devices may be, they all represent the same basic concept: association. You associate, or connect, whatever you want to remember with something already familiar to you, or something easier to recall than the original object to be remembered.

Since relatively little is known about the mechanics of memory (although there is some fascinating research

MNEMONICS AND WORD MEMORY.

going on in the field), no one really understands the processes that make mnemonic devices work. But an abundance of studies show that they do work and that is what's important for you and me to know.

There are different types of memory: long-term and short-term. An apparently effective way of converting easily forgotten short-term memory into the more enduring long-term one is to make a connection between the two: that is, connect a new piece of information with information already stored in long-term memory.

The mnemonic devices accompanying each of the words in this book create an association to help you remember the word. But *remembering* is not the same thing as *mastering*. The individual word descriptions explain clearly and fully just about all you will want to know about that word. That part has nothing to do with mnemonics.

You may find it tempting at times to skim over the word description, concentrating on the mnemonic device. I urge you not to. What is particularly useful about the mnemonic system is that it doesn't discard the traditional methods of vocabulary building. It simply adds to these methods a new and enjoyable way of imprinting a word more permanently in your memory, which is what you want.

I'd like you to keep in mind that using the mnemonic devices in this book is very much a game—a game, moreover, in which there are no rigid rules, a game governed by common sense and imagination.

For example, take *cryptic*, a word you'll be working with in the book. *Cryptic* is an adjective that conveys

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the idea of having a hidden meaning. The word description explains all of this and shows you how the word can be used.

Following this description is a word which I call the *word link*. The word link is a word or a phrase that sums up the essence of the word's meaning. With *cryptic*, the word link is *hidden*. This is the link between the meaning of the word and the device that's going to glue it in your memory.

Now to the mnemonic device. The idea is to come up with an association that will link *cryptic* with *hidden*. Most of the time I've used a play on words. What does *cryptic* (KRIP tick) sound like? Can we come up with an image based on the sound—not the meaning—of the word? *Cryptic*. Say it enough times and maybe you'll hear the phrase *crib tick* as I did.

Now, if you let your mind play with the sound, a *crib* is easy. What about *tick*? What if there was a clock in the crib? A clock *hidden* in the crib makes it seem as if the CRIB is TICKing (CRYPTIC).

Let's try another—*kowtow*. The word means "to fawn over, to defer to in a servile way." When you kowtow to somebody, you are, figuratively speaking, bowing down to him. Here again, the word description provides you with a good background on the word. My word link is bend over. It catches the spirit of the word.

Here, as with *cryptic*, a play on words does the trick. Doesn't kowtow sound like cow toe? And if you want to see a cow toe what do you do? Bend over, of course. So here you have the link between kowtow and bend over.

This method of recalling a word helps you to have

it on hand whenever you want, so that later you won't be saying to yourself, "That's the word I meant to use. Why couldn't I remember it?"

A moment's glance at any one of the words in this book will probably clear up most questions you have about the process. Each word has both a word link and a memory key that you won't have any difficulty using. If you don't like the ones I've made up, create your own devices.

You can relate words to people you know, or to phrases or names very familiar to you. You can make up funny scenes in your head. The more absurd the imagined situation, incidentally, the more impact the image will have and the better will be the retention power of the device. Play around with words. The trick is to let go. Let your imagination fly. Have fun. You have an unlimited license in your use of mnemonic devices. You can even be earthy. Who's going to know?

One final word: I'm enthusiastic about the possibilities of what *Word Memory Power in 30 Days* can do for you. By the time you finish this book, several things will have happened.

You will have increased your vocabulary substantially, and will have an enviable expertise in understanding and knowing how to handle these main-spring words. At the same time, you will find yourself far better acquainted with hundreds and hundreds of related words. You will have added to your word supply dramatically, and you will have learned new ways to remember words more easily and permanently.

But above all, my real hope is that because of this breakthrough in word memory techniques, you will

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be stimulated to continue adding to your store of words.

Even though you have a strong and active mind, until you build a comparably vigorous vocabulary you can use effectively, your mind will never develop its potential. I believe my book will help you toward this goal and bring you new enjoyment and success in every area of your life, for *new* words express *new* life.