

**MAKING  
WORDS  
WORK  
FOR YOU**

**A Guide to Creative  
Word Power**

**Robert J. White**

**Jo-Ann Unright**

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## **A Guide to Creative Word Power**

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A NAUTILUS COMMUNICATIONS BOOK

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# Introduction

In today's world of machines and electronics, most careers still require an understanding of language and an ability to write well. Applications, reports, sales records, forms, memos; all of these and more demand a certain degree of competency in communicating meaning. The level of competency you reach in expressing yourself effectively can often have a direct effect on the level of success you will achieve in your work.

Good writing should not be viewed as a mysterious process or a special gift—it is simply a combination of clear thinking and a need to communicate this thinking in a meaningful way. And yet learning to write well is often a difficult skill for students to master and a difficult subject for teachers to teach.

This book has been devised to help ease the difficulty of both learning and teaching effective writing skills. To encourage your interest in becoming a competent writer, please examine these basic facts about writing:

1. Writing often will improve your writing skills.
2. Writing is a product of your imagination combined with your command of language.
3. The greater your vocabulary, the greater your ability to choose the most effective expression of your thoughts.
4. Every good writer was a beginner at some point in his or her writing career.
5. As you become more proficient in effective writing, you become more proficient in effective thinking.

6. All art and history depend on some form of writing for perpetuation.
7. You never stop learning how to become a more competent writer.
8. What you write is often viewed as a reflection of your intelligence, your ability, and your essential self.
9. The written word is often more powerful than the spoken word.

*Making Words Work For You* can be the first step to becoming a more capable writer. It can help you build an increased vocabulary that is the foundation of good writing.

Words are presented in this book in a way that employs the methods of both a dictionary and a thesaurus. Each word is combined with related words into eighty-one different general categories. You can use the Table of Contents to locate a particular category or the Index to find a specific word. Each category listing is alphabetized to make your search easier.

Each word is defined, provided with the appropriate syllabication, and used in a sentence. These sentences are intended to illustrate correct usage and to stress meaning.

It is hoped that as your vocabulary and word power increase, you will develop a greater command of essential writing skills and will derive more enjoyment from the writing process.



# A Hole in One

## (Openings)

<b>alcove</b>	<b>interstice</b>
<b>aperture</b>	<b>niche</b>
<b>bay</b>	<b>nook</b>
<b>breach</b>	<b>opening</b>
<b>cavity</b>	<b>orifice</b>
<b>cubicle</b>	<b>perforation</b>
<b>embrasure</b>	<b>pocket</b>
<b>fissure</b>	<b>recess</b>
<b>fumarole</b>	<b>split</b>
<b>gap</b>	<b>vacuum</b>
<b>hollow</b>	<b>vent</b>
<b>indentation</b>	<b>void</b>

---

**alcove** (al' cove) *n.*

a nook; a small recessed section of a room; an arched opening or hole in a wall of a room

My room has a little alcove where I can hide away and study.

---

**aperture** (ap' er ture) *n.*

an opening or open space; a hole; an interstice

The aperture in the crumbling wall allowed us to slip into the garden.

---

**bay** (bay) *n.*

a vertical division of a wall; a compartment

We lowered the cargo into the bay of the ship.

---

**breach** (breach) *n.*

a gap (as in a wall) made by battering; a broken, ruptured, or torn condition or area

The explosion produced a breach in the side of the building.

---

**cavity** (cav' i ty) *n.*

an unfilled space within a mass; a hollowed-out space.

My tooth had a huge cavity that had to be filled

---

**cubicle** (cu' bi cle) *n.*

a small partitioned space; a sleeping compartment partitioned off from a large room

There are little cubicles in the library where you can go to study quietly.

---

**embrasure** (em bra' sure) *n.*

an opening in a wall or parapet of a fortification, usually for allowing the firing of missiles

The castle wall was marked by embrasures where the archers could shoot arrows at the enemy.

---

**fissure** (fis' sure) *n.*

a narrow opening or crack of considerable length or depth, usually occurring from some breaking or parting

The earthquake caused a fissure in the farmer's field.

---

---

**fumarole** (fu' ma role) *n.*

a hole in a volcanic region from which hot gases and vapors issue

The area surrounding the fumarole smelled of sulfur from the escaping gases.

---

**gap** (gap) *n.*

a separation in space; a break in a barrier

There was a gap in the fence where we climbed through to the park.

---

**hollow** (hol' low) *n.*

having a cavity within

The tree has a hollow where lovers leave letters and little gifts for each other.

---

**indentation** (in den ta' tion) *n.*

a notch; a recess in a surface; a dent

There was an indentation in the side of the car caused by an accident.

---

**interstice** (in ter' stice) *n.*

a space that intervenes between things; an aperture

There was an interstice between each stake in the fence.

---

**niche** (niche) *n.*

a recess or opening in a wall, especially for a statue

The statue was in its own niche in the entryway of our home.

---

**nook** (nook) *n.*

a recess; an interior angle formed by two meeting walls; a secluded or sheltered place or part

We found a little nook in the wall where we could hide the key.

---

**opening** (op' en ing) *n.*

a breach; an aperture

There was an opening in the hedge big enough for us to walk through.

---

**orifice** (or' i fice) *n.*

a mouth or mouthlike opening

The orifice of the whale looks like a huge cavern.

---

**perforation** (per fo ra' tion) *n.*

a hole or pattern made by or as if by piercing or boring

A shotgun blast was responsible for the perforation in the street sign.

---

**pocket** (pock' et) *n.*

an air hole; a small isolated area; a cavity containing a deposit (as of gold or water)

There was a pocket of air trapped between the river's surface and the ice.

---

**recess** (re' cess) *n.*

an indentation, hole, or interstice

We crept into a recess in the cliff where we could be sheltered from the rain.

---

**split (split) n.**

a narrow break made by or as if by splitting

There was a split in the hull of the boat.

---

**vacuum (vac' u um) n.**

emptiness of space; a space absolutely devoid of matter; a vacant space

The vacuum created by his absence would be hard to fill.

---

**vent (vent) n.**

an opening for the escape of gas or liquid or for the relief of pressure; an opening at the breech of a gun through which fire is touched to the powder

He touched the torch to the cannon's vent and the gun jumped back as it fired.

---

**void (void) n.**

an empty space; an opening; a gap

There was a void in the group when she moved away.

---

# A Lot of Nerve

## (Courage)

**audacity**  
**backbone**  
**courage**  
**dauntlessness**  
**doughtiness**  
**effrontery**  
**fortitude**  
**gall**  
**gallantry**  
**grit**  
**heroism**

**indomitableness**  
**intrepidity**  
**invincibility**  
**mettle**  
**pluck**  
**resolution**  
**spirit**  
**temerity**  
**valiance**  
**valor**

---

**audacity** (au dac' i ty) *n.*

boldness; daring; spirit

He had the audacity to argue with the professor.

audacious (*adj.*)    audaciously (*adv.*)

---

**backbone** (back' bone) *n.*

firm resolute character; pluck; courage

He didn't have the backbone to defend his point of view in the face of opposition.

**courage** (cour' age) *n.*

ability to conquer fear or despair

It takes courage to leave home.

courageous (*adj.*) courageously (*adv.*)

---

**dauntlessness** (daunt' less ness) *n.*

fearlessness; boldness; bravery

There was a dauntlessness in the way they marched into town.

dauntless (*adj.*)

---

**doughtiness** (dough' ti ness) *n.*

valiance; fearlessness

The doughtiness of their leader gave them the courage to go on.

doughty (*adj.*)

---

**effrontery** (ef fron' ter y) *n.*

shameless boldness; impudence

She had the effrontery to question the authority of our ground rules.

---

**fortitude** (for' ti tude) *n.*

strength of mind that enables a person to meet danger or bear pain with courage

The soldier greeted the command to charge with the same fortitude he had shown before.

---

**gall** (gall) *n.*

impudence; righteous bravery

The boy had the gall to disregard his father's orders and go out with his friends anyway.

**galling** (*adj.*)

---

**gallantry** (gal' lant ry) *n.*

bravery; heroism; chivalrousness

The knight rode his horse into battle with his usual gallantry.

**gallant** (*adj.*)    **gallantly** (*adv.*)

---

**grit** (grit) *n.*

unyielding courage

The boy showed he had grit when he put himself in danger to save his little sister.

---

**heroism** (her' o ism) *n.*

extreme courage; valor

He showed his heroism by dashing into the burning building to save the sleeping child.

**heroic** (*adj.*)

---

**indomitableness** (in dom' i ta ble ness) *n.*

unconquerability; inability to be subdued

The prizefighter showed his indomitableness by winning fight after fight.

**indomitable** (*adj.*)    **indomitably** (*adv.*)

---



---

**intrepidity** (in trep' id i ty) *n.*

fearlessness

The girl proved her intrepidity by walking the highwire with no safety net.

intrepid (*adj.*)

---

**invincibility** (in vin' ci bil i ty) *n.*

unconquerability; indomitableness

The invincibility of Molly Brown was the theme of a musical.

invincible (*adj.*)    invincibly (*adv.*)

---

**mettle** (met' tle) *n.*

spirit; courage; quality of temperament

He showed his mettle when he accepted the challenge.

mettlesome (*adj.*)

---

**pluck** (pluck) *n.*

fortitude or courage (informal usage)

Do you have the pluck to finish this task?

plucky (*adj.*)

---

**resolution** (res o lu' tion) *n.*

determination in purpose; firmness of resolve; courage

He showed real resolution in his decision to find a new job.

resolute (*adj.*)    resolutely (*adv.*)

---