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READING POWER

James J. Brown
FOURTH EDITION

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James L. Brown

University of Minnesota

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To the Student

What's most worth knowing? If you don't answer that all-important question right now, you can't begin to use your time to best advantage. After all, you're feeling the full force of a knowledge explosion of unbelievable magnitude. Books, for example, now pour from the world presses at almost a thousand a day! If you read only one today, you're already 999 books behind in your effort to keep informed. Now add newspapers and magazines, including almost 100,000 scientific journals! Overwhelming, isn't it? And—you're the one who's living in this print-filled world of fantastic change. With knowledge doubling every twenty months, you're probably in a state of shock—"future shock," as Toffler once called it.

Well—what *is* most worth knowing? The answer? Knowing how to read! That was apparently the answer back in the last century. Remember the three R's? Reading stood first, and that's still the answer today. A nationwide survey published in the *Pbi Delta Kappan* lists developing "skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening" as the number one goal of education. Again, reading comes first. Barbara Bush adds that there are presently an estimated twenty-three million Americans who have problems with literacy—with reading. What's most worth knowing? Knowing how to read!

Makes sense, doesn't it? For everyone, keeping up is all-important. Do you want that essential information coming at 100 words-per-minute—or 250 wpm? Remember—the average classroom lecture brings you information at about 100 words a minute. The average reader gets information at about 250 wpm—over twice as fast. This means that you hear about 4,000 words in a forty-minute lecture, as compared with getting 10,000 words in forty minutes of reading. But—best of all—by concentrated effort with this text, you should at least double your present rate—getting not 10,000 but 20,000 words in forty minutes of reading.

If reading comes first, what comes next? To find out, begin by putting this page so close to your face that your nose actually touches it. Then try to read the entire page. Go ahead. Try it!

See? To read even one page, you need one more thing of key importance—perspective. You need to get back far enough to see the whole, not just a small fragment.

Perspective is, in a word, the key to this book, as it is to life. We have to view the present within the frame of both past and future. For example, this book helps you look back to those early days in America when we put on rubber tires and sprouted wings. And it helps you look ahead to our need to manage waste and save the life-preserving ozone layer. It focuses on what's serious and what's humorous, what's entertaining and what's useful, what's work and what's leisure. And since all work and no play means lack of perspective, selections touch not only on how to make a speech and how best to apply for a job but also on the amazing first balloon

ascension and the first sensational breaking of the sound barrier. In short, the thirty-four selections provide wide-ranging glimpses of life, from the practical to the exciting.

Furthermore, all selections fit into a broader perspective; they let you explore important rate and comprehension relationships. In short, they give you an ideal opportunity to apply newly learned reading skills in a variety of reading situations, including essential college textbook reading.

The very heart of reading—understanding—must also reflect desired perspective. It's not enough just to get the facts. You want to see both the trees *and* the forest—the facts as well as the main ideas, the literal as well as the reflective. You'll find both in this book, laid out in gradual steps, bringing both facts and meaning into balance. You must learn to crawl before you walk. In the same way, you must learn to get facts accurately before you can build complete comprehension. The first fourteen selections focus on getting the facts; the last twenty focus on getting both facts and meaning.

And what about vocabulary? Here too you need perspective. It's easy to focus on context and overlook word parts—or on the dictionary and overlook context. The exercises in this text focus on all three—context, word parts, and dictionary.

At times, context—even very limited context—practically defines a strange word for you; at other times it provides little or no help. In the following exercises, the very brief contexts in “Part A, Leaning on Context,” reflect this varying degree of helpfulness and lay the groundwork for desired habits of attention to whatever clues are present. Add the heightened awareness of word parts, resulting from “Part B, Leaning on Parts,” and you'll be even better prepared to unravel word meanings. Finally, in “Part C, Making the Words Yours,” you'll find new sentence contexts, more conversational in nature, where you can fit the new words into place, making them indeed yours. This threefold attack on words ends, as it should, with application and use. As you know, best results come from doing—from actively using what you've learned.

Finally, remember that reviewing plays an essential role in learning. To expedite that step, you'll find mini-reviews of all prefix, root, and suffix elements covered in Part B, plus an important mini-review of twenty other useful prefix shortcuts. You'll also find a description of the LDE formula—a formula that will let you deal with literally thousands of additional word parts. Last, you'll find a simplified pronunciation guide to help you with words that might pose a pronunciation problem.

So, as you work through this book, be assured you're using an approach that will bring a greatly improved vocabulary and that reading skill most worth having. In addition, you'll find increased awareness of how to fit what you read into better perspective. It's a challenge worthy of your best efforts.

To the Instructor

As with previous editions, my goals for writing this fourth edition of *Reading Power* are:

1. To stimulate heightened student interest in reading and vocabulary development.
2. To provide a practical classroom-tested program for achieving maximum reading proficiency and vocabulary growth.
3. To provide help in applying a wide range of specific reading and study techniques for better and more flexible management of textbook reading.
4. To fit reading into a broad framework, establishing it as an activity of prime importance both in and out of school.

Teachers and students alike need a textbook that is both stimulating and practical. To provide that has been my hope. This text has grown out of my firsthand teaching experience with more than 6,000 students of reading at the University of Minnesota. Add other users of previous editions and I would like to think this text has helped over 150,000 students with their reading problems.

As in all subject matter areas, results tend to be unsatisfactory without high student interest. For that reason, I have continued to make interest a matter of prime concern in writing this book. That means using an informal style in the instructional articles to encourage easy reading. That means drawing from bestsellers and popular magazines and including well-known names among the authors. As a new feature for this edition, I have included eight passages from six currently and widely used college textbooks. But here, too, I have kept interest uppermost, selecting passages of particular appeal. As every teacher knows, strong student interest is imperative—insuring satisfactory progress.

I have chosen thirty-four entirely new selections for this edition, three more than in any previous edition. The added selections permit greater choice in making assignments. I have retained the same organizational format as before—a format well-accepted by previous users, encouraging, as it does, student development of metacognitive skills. Each of the fourteen instructional articles is followed by selections providing immediate opportunity to apply the techniques covered. This application step moves students quickly from theory into practice, accelerating growth.

The text is divided into five carefully structured parts, each advancing the student one step further toward development of full reading potential.

PART I, THE CHECK-UP, introduced by the instructional article, "Reading Power—Key to Personal Growth," focuses on diagnosis, providing initial

explorations into the major factors of comprehension, rate, and word power. This opening part immediately involves the student and motivates increased effort, matters of key importance. You will probably want to supplement these informal explorations by using a standardized reading text. Test scores provide more accurate indications of ability and permit specific group comparisons.

Two selections follow this first instructional article. The first comes from Fulghum's bestseller—*All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*—a fascinating account of the first exploration of space—by balloon! The second selection—"Breaking the Sound Barrier"—comes from Yeager's autobiography—another bestseller—and describes the first flight faster than the speed of sound.

PART II, THE BUILD-UP, does two things—starts the student along 1) the vocabulary improvement road and 2) the reading-for-facts road, to build a solid foundation for the subsequent move into in-depth comprehension.

The vocabulary approach reflects significant research done by Holmes and Singer. Their research pinpoints factors of most importance in reading comprehension and speed. They discovered that *vocabulary in context* was the single most important first-order factor contributing to comprehension—39%—considerably more than *intelligence*, a 27% contribution. In addition to those figures for first-order factors, second- and third-order factors provide additional evidence—*vocabulary in isolation* contributing 47%, *prefixes* 11%, and *suffixes* 10%. In short, to improve comprehension, word study would seem the best path.

The vocabulary exercises in this text are solidly based on the Holmes-Singer research. Students are led gradually from *vocabulary in isolation* with minimal context to an informal *vocabulary in context* and, finally, to vocabulary in the full context of the article being read.

Before reading a selection, then, students work through an exercise—"Leaning on Context"—built around ten troublesome words drawn from that selection, words with minimal context. Such exercises uncover words that pose difficulties. Students are encouraged to resolve any difficulties by consulting their dictionary. The next exercise—"Making the Words Yours"—provides ten complete informal contexts except for missing key words—the ten just studied. Students must supply the appropriate word to fit each sentence context—an important reinforcing step. Now the student is properly prepared to read the article, ready to deal with the words in full context. This approach minimizes potential word blocks to understanding.

In addition, the vocabulary exercises, "Leaning on Parts," which also precede each selection, show students exactly how to make more effective use of word parts—prefixes, roots, and suffixes.

The second instructional reading—"How Do You Best Get the Facts?"—begins to lay a strong foundation for complete comprehension. Readers must be able to get facts accurately if they are to draw correct conclusions. Judgments or inferences based on a faulty or incomplete grasp of

details are of necessity inaccurate. For that reason, the first twenty-one readings work to establish a solid foundation of factual accuracy.

PART III, THE SPEED-UP, concentrates on a matter of particular student concern. Almost all students have major problems covering the required reading. This part focuses on helping students manage their study time better by knowing and using such study techniques as surveying, skimming, and scanning, and by learning how to increase reading speed without losing comprehension—valuable aids in achieving academic success.

PART IV, THE WORK-UP, makes the all-important transition from factual to in-depth comprehension. “Reading for Meaning” starts the process. That and all the remaining selections—twenty-seven in all—have comprehension tests balancing factual with inferential, judgmental, and critical questions. Concentrated attention is given to reading words, paragraphs, and entire selections more effectively, an ordering to encourage metacognitive skills development. Techniques for getting better grades and developing special interests in varied academic areas conclude this part.

Finally, PART V, THE ROUND-UP, provides the opportunity to pull together all the newly developed reading and vocabulary suggestions—all the separate strands of content—for final application and reinforcement. Of the eight selections in this part, the first four come directly from college textbooks—samples of the reading students must do effectively to succeed in school. The last four come from books and magazines—general reading. This twofold division serves as a reminder that reading remains of prime importance both in and out of school.

The selections following each instructional article are ordered, insofar as possible, from easy to difficult, from shorter to longer. The average difficulty approximates the Standard English level on the Flesch Reading Ease scale. Exact reading ease figures are given for each of the selections on page 381 of the Appendix, a new feature with this edition. The selections touch a wide variety of subjects: serious and humorous, personal and social concerns, speaking, writing, listening, job-hunting, pollution, adventure, becoming educated, short stories, personal narratives, literacy, and creativity. The selections “Lincoln at Gettysburg” and “Biographies Bring New Companions” relate specifically to cultural literacy.

The Appendix, in addition to the index according to difficulty, contains progress record charts to help students visualize improvement, a conversion table for changing reading time to word-per-minute rate, and answers for all the exercises and comprehension tests to provide immediate feedback.

In short, this book is eminently practical, emphasizing both reading and study procedures. Flexibility is a central concept, with specialized techniques, different kinds of comprehension questions, and a wide variety of short, highly interesting articles and stories contributing to that objective. The book leads the student in a step-by-step progression toward achieving his or her full potential as a reader.

I wish to thank Vicki Fishco, Coordinator of the University's Communication Skills Center, Kentucky State University, for help in making a closer connection between text and current concerns. I also wish to thank the following individuals who reviewed the manuscript and made helpful suggestions for improving the text: Lois Hassan, Henry Ford Community College; Louise S. Haugh, Pima Community College; Clare E. Hite, University of South Florida; Vickie Kelly, Louisiana State University—Alexandria; Judith Little, Community College of Allegheny County; Barbara Risser, Onondaga Community College; and Westa W. Wood, Virginia State University. Especially do I wish to thank my wife, Ruth, who went over every page of the manuscript, making valuable suggestions and perceptive criticisms during its preparation. Her training and experience as a certified tutor and teacher of reading provided valuable insights.

J. I. B
Prescott, Arizona

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PART
I

The Check-up

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Getting Ready for Words

Now for your first step toward greater word power! It's the first of forty-eight such word power workouts, each with an in-depth coverage of ten of the most difficult words from the selection that follows. Complete all forty-eight; make your vocabulary 480 words richer.

At first in every exercise you'll meet each word in the briefest of contexts exactly as found in the selection to be read. Sometimes that context supplies no more than an indication of part of speech. You match words and definitions with context help. Next you make the words yours by turning to the longer sentence-length contexts, approximating the English you yourself might use. Fit each word into its appropriate sentence. Then repeat the sentence a time or so to make it seem natural. These steps sharpen your awareness of meaning and provide useful reinforcement before you meet the word for the third time as you read it in its full, complete context.

To make a word yours, use it three times. Once isn't enough. That's only a good beginning. Twice and it's almost within your grasp. It's the third time that does the trick—that makes it rememberable. That's the rationale behind these exercises.

To be sure, you already know some of those 480 words. Even so, the exercises will bring such words closer to the tip of your tongue or pen for easier use. That's called fluency—a very important facet of word power. After all, you don't want to waste time groping for words. You want them ready for immediate use.

In addition, starting with Selection 4, you'll find other vocabulary exercises over all-important prefix, root, and suffix elements—shortcuts to the meanings of over 15,000 words of desk dictionary size.

In short, when you finish this book, your vocabulary should be over 15,480 words stronger. That includes new words, new meanings for old words, old words raised to a more fluent level—plus some dramatically useful shortcuts to word meanings. That all adds up to increased confidence and satisfaction with your improved ability to communicate—in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

So—do each exercise carefully, checking your answers with the key. Clear up any word difficulties before reading on. If needed, get additional help from your dictionary. Always get a total word power score for yourself.

1 Reading Power—Key to Personal Growth**WORD POWER WORKOUT****A. Leaning on Context**

In each of the blanks provided, place the letter that precedes the best definition of the underlined word in context to the left.

FOR EXAMPLE:0. k must rely on knowledge

k. depend

Words in Context	Definitions
1. ___ that <u>dependable</u> car	a. shocking, emotionally
2. ___ reading power <u>generates</u> learning power	b. supreme; special
3. ___ lying as in magic <u>preservation</u>	c. reliable
4. ___ know your <u>potential</u>	d. essential
5. ___ a recent comprehensive <u>survey</u>	e. detailed study; investigation
6. ___ an <u>avid</u> reader	f. unchanged condition
7. ___ not nearly so <u>traumatic</u> or unsettling	g. produces
8. ___ of <u>crucial</u> importance	h. capabilities; capacity
9. ___ serves as a <u>catalyst</u>	i. enthusiastic
10. ___ make himself genuinely <u>indispensable</u>	j. way of hastening a result

Check your answers with the Key on page 391 before going on.
Review any that you have missed. See the dictionary for further help.

Pronunciation aids: 6. av'id; 7. traw mat'ik; 8. krōō'shul; 9. cat'uh list.

KEY: add, āce; end, ēven; it, īce; odd, ōpen; pōol; up.

B. Leaning on Parts (begins with Selection 4)

C. Making the Words Yours

In each blank below, enter the most appropriate word from the ten words in context in the first exercise, substituting it for the word(s) in parentheses. Use these words: *avid, catalyst, crucial, dependable, generates, indispensable, potential, preservation, survey, traumatic*.

FOR EXAMPLE:

0. Can we (depend) rely on him?

1. Quick freezing keeps the food in perfect (unchanged condition) _____.
2. Being bitten by a snake can be quite (shocking, emotionally) _____.
3. He's an (enthusiastic) _____ baseball fan.
4. Use this chemical as a (way of speeding up reaction time) _____.
5. Fastening your seat belt is of (special) _____ importance as a safety measure.
6. He's the most (reliable) _____ pass receiver we have.
7. You should make a (detailed study) _____ of the job opportunities in that field.
8. This motor (produces) _____ how much horsepower?
9. You should certainly know your (capabilities) _____.
10. Salt is a(n) (essential) _____ ingredient in cooking.

For the 20 Items on These Pages,
5 Off For Each Mistake.

Word Power Score: _____

Answer Key on Page 392.

How Well Do You Read?

If you decide to make a trip by car, the first thing you usually do is to get out a map and figure out your best route. It's the same with reading. First, you have to see where you are, decide where you want to go, then lay out the best route for getting there.

As you start your reading improvement program, you have three all-important questions to ask yourself. (1) How fast do I now read? (2) How much do I comprehend? (3) How much word power do I now have?

Those are the big three. Once you know the answers to those questions, you can see more clearly the best route to follow for maximum improvement. Obviously, you can't know when you've doubled your reading rate unless you know what your present rate is. And you can't know when you've improved comprehension or vocabulary unless you also know what they now are.

You'll find all kinds of combinations. After all, it's not only our fingerprints that are distinctively different. Some read fast and comprehend little; others read fast and comprehend much. With some, vocabulary is well developed; with others it is in need of major attention. What is exactly true of you? What are your own strong points and weak points?

These next few pages will begin to give you some answers. On the next page, you will find a selection which you are now to read. Use a stop watch or clock with a sweep second hand so that you can see exactly how long it takes you to read the entire 1,000-word selection. Read it once only—the way you normally read. Don't try to read either faster or slower than usual. When you have read the very last word, check to see how many minutes and seconds it took you. Then turn to page 385 to determine your word-per-minute reading rate.

Your next step is to take the ten-item test on the page following the selection to check comprehension. Don't look back at the selection. You want to know how much you comprehend with one reading, without further review or looking back.

After the comprehension check, you'll find a twenty-five item vocabulary test to check the third big question—how much word power do I have?

Now get ready to time yourself as you read the following selection—an exact timing. That's important if you are to have an accurate beginning rate score.