

it
pays
to
increase
your

**WORD
POWER**

Based on
the famous
Reader's Digest
feature

by Peter Funk

IT PAYS TO
INCREASE
YOUR
WORD POWER
BY PETER FUNK



BANTAM BOOKS
TORONTO • NEW YORK • LONDON • SYDNEY

*This low-priced Bantam Book
has been completely reset in a type face
designed for easy reading, and was printed
from new plates. It contains the complete
text of the original hard-cover edition.
NOT ONE WORD HAS BEEN OMITTED.*

IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR WORD POWER
*A Bantam Book / published by arrangement with
Funk & Wagnalls, A Division of
Reader's Digest Book, Inc.*

PRINTING HISTORY

Funk & Wagnalls edition published 1968

Bantam edition / February 1970

<i>2nd printing . . . October 1974</i>	<i>5th printing . . . February 1979</i>
<i>3rd printing July 1976</i>	<i>6th printing August 1980</i>
<i>4th printing . . . September 1977</i>	<i>7th printing May 1981</i>
<i>8th printing December 1981</i>	

All rights reserved.

Copyright © 1968 by Peter V. K. Funk.

*This book may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by
mimeograph or any other means, without permission.*

*For information address: Funk & Wagnalls,
53 E. 77 St., New York, N.Y. 10021.*

ISBN 0-553-20957-4

Published simultaneously in the United States and Canada

*Bantam Books are published by Bantam Books, Inc. Its trade-
mark, consisting of the words "Bantam Books" and the por-
trayal of a rooster, is Registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark
Office and in other countries. Marca Registrada. Bantam
Books, Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10103.*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9

FOREWORD

How To Get the Most Out of This Book

It is hoped that this book will be of value to you in two ways.

First, that it will help your vocabulary to grow in richness of expression and power.

Second, that it will help you remember the words you are learning so that they will always be at your command.

The words selected are all highly useful ones appearing in magazines, newspapers, books, heard on the radio and television or in ordinary conversation. They should give you the ability to be explicit in the way you talk and write, bringing a sense of excitement and vividness. An additional emolument which follows logically is that, without doubt, you will understand more of what you read and hear.

To get the most from HOW TO INCREASE YOUR WORD POWER, there are a few simple rules it would be well to follow. They are not difficult and will be a distinct aid in building up an impressive *Word-Bank* memory.

GOOD HABITS

Plan to use this book a few minutes each day. It does not really matter how fast or slow you go. This depends on you

and your time schedule. What is of paramount importance, however, is the consistency of your efforts. Psychology teaches that to establish a good habit, you must be consistent.

DEFINITIONS

When a word is somewhat more difficult, needing amplification, various examples of usage are given, and the overall meaning *clearly* delineated. The answer sections therefore, should always be read with utmost care. They are the heart of this book.

WRITE THE WORD

Take a 3 x 5 card. On one side write the word you want to learn or remember. Underneath, put the phonetic pronunciation. Now, on the opposite side of the card write the definition together with a sentence illustrating how the word is used. This will be your most vital step in committing this word to memory. By writing it out, you are involved physically as much as you are mentally. Your mind and eyes are aiding you. Your muscles in your hand and arm are being used also. Psychologists call this developing a *kinesthetic sense*, or a muscle sense.

If you are without eyesight, you can visualize an object by running your hands over it, feeling its shape. It is no longer an abstract object. There is a similar effect in writing a word. It actually becomes a part of you.

I adjure you then, to do this with every single word that is not yet a part of your working vocabulary. It is without question the easiest way to make a word yours for life.

PUT THE CARD WHERE THE ACTION IS

Place the card where you will see it many times during the day. Take some scotch tape putting it on the bathroom mirror, or on a bulletin board, your desk, on a door. Each time you see it, your memory will be refreshed, automatically.

REPETITION IS THE SECRET

The advertising industry employs the principle of repetition. Think how jingles and slogans barrage us. Use your word as often as you can when talking to others. By experimenting and trying it in as many different situations as possible, you will grow familiar with it. And don't be afraid of making a mistake; most of us do at one time or another. This is the way you learn.

THE ACID TEST

When feasible, try to explain the word to a child in terms and examples he will understand. This is the "acid test" as to whether or not you grasp the essence of its meaning. A happy peripheral benefit is that the child is going to gain.

SUGGESTED DAILY PROGRAM FOR A MORE DYNAMIC VOCABULARY

Sunday. Read through chapter.

Monday through Friday. Take four words each day, writing the word on a card. Practice as suggested.

Saturday. Retake the tests in the chapter, going over any words you are doubtful about.

The last weekend in each month. Test yourself on all the words you have learned during that period.

And remember to keep your cards available for quick reference in a *Word Bank* box.

HOW TO SCORE

Each test is scored in the same way.

20—19	correct	excellent
18—16	correct	good
15—13	correct	fair

When you complete a test, turn to page (187), marking your score on the graph. As you progress you will have an exact visual image of your rating.

PRONUNCIATION KEY

Just a brief word on pronunciations.

This is the *bête-noire*, the bugaboo for most people. The trouble is that our language does not have enough vowels to carry the many different sounds. Consequently linguists have devised a phonetic system which is rather complicated if one is unfamiliar with it. A few moments spent looking over the pronunciation key of a dictionary will clarify the mystery.

In this book I have followed essentially the commonly used pronunciation system, but I have tried to simplify when it has seemed helpful to do so. As nearly as possible, the words have been made self-pronouncing. You will notice that sometimes, after a given pronunciation, I have tried to make it clearer by inserting within another parenthesis the way that part of the word would be spelled if spoken.

ACCENTS

ā, āy	sounded as in	lāte, lāy
ē, ee	" " "	ēve, bee
ī	" " "	fīne
ō	" " "	tōne
ū, yū	" " "	pūre (or few)
ōō	" " "	fōōd

Vowels not marked at all are sounded like those usually taught in classes learning to read phonetically, as in hat, bed, did, lot, cut.

Short vowels are marked with a breve above to show that they are almost equivalent to an apostrophe.

ă	sounded as in	fī'năl
ĕ	" " "	hov'ěl
ĭ	" " "	em'ĭ grănt
ö	" " "	för bid'
ü	" " "	mī'nūs

**IT PAYS TO
INCREASE
YOUR
WORD POWER**

ONE

The whole point of either speaking or writing is to try to convey a thought which is to be understood. We have over six hundred thousand words to choose from. This may seem like an inordinate amount to be faced with, and indeed it is. But we must remember, also, that this vast number includes many technical words found in the various professions and are of interest only to those involved in a particular speciality.

We draw on a far smaller list. Dropping obvious prepositions and articles of speech such as *the, of, to, etc.*, the number falls somewhere in the neighborhood of five thousand words.

This may seem surprising, but that list includes the living heart of our English language. Within this framework are most of the words which give us the wide range of expression and power that we should have.

Unfortunately, too many people limit themselves to a thousand words or fewer. In this way they resemble a color blind artist who is only aware of a few colors. Consequently his ability to create on canvas is lamentably restricted.

The twenty words in the following test are of one syllable only. So often we find that the words which have punch, color, warmth and emotion turn out to be the shorter ones.

Do we say, *Residence Pleasurable Residence?* No! It is *Home Sweet Home.*

PART I

Test (Check the word or phrase you believe is *nearest in meaning* to the key word. Answers are on page 5)

1. brook (brōok)—A: to put up with. B: bridge. C: deny. D: resent.
2. vie (vī)—A: to covet. B: compete. C: stimulate. D: surpass.
3. eke (ēk) (eek)—A: to dilute. B: supplement. C: coax. D: revive.
4. brunt (brūnt)—A: abrupt. B: impact. C: insult. D: malice.
5. roil (roil) (roy'l)—A: to confuse. B: curl. C: amuse. D: irritate.
6. sloth (slawth)—A: clumsiness. B: sadness. C: stupidity. D: idleness.
7. cull (kul)—A: to win over. B: till. C: select. D: memorize.
8. prate (prāt) (prate)—A: to prance. B: babble. C: brag. D: argue.
9. bode (bōd)—A: foreshadow. B: wait. C: dwell. D: endure.
10. qualm (kwom)—A: warmth. B: misgiving. C: duty. D: peace.
11. moot (mōot)—A: gloomy. B: ugly. C: debatable. D: spiritless.
12. bane (bān)—A: banter. B: mystery. C: affliction. D: exile.
13. deign (dān)—A: to condescend. B: pretend. C: disparage. D: refuse.
14. tryst (trist)—A: appointment. B: coyness. C: faith. D: ruse.
15. irk (urk)—A: to scold. B: make a wry face. C: urge. D: annoy.

16. glut (glüt)—A: glue. B: to be lewd. C: disembowel. D: overfill.
17. drone (drōn)—A: talk monotonously. B: complain. C: be idle. D: stretch.
18. mere (mēr)—A: nothing but. B: humble. C: only one. D: weak.
19. deem (dēm)—A: to consider. B: speculate. C: acknowledge. D: consent.
20. loll (löl)—A: to cuddle. B: flatter. C: lounge. D: soothe or quiet.

Answers.

1. BROOK (v)—A: To put up with; bear with; tolerate; endure.

He was an intolerant dictator who could brook no interference.

I will not brook such outrageous conduct.

The word, nearly always, is used now with a negative construction, such as *no* or *not*.

From the Old English *brucan*, "to use, enjoy."

2. VIE (v)—B: To compete; to strive for superiority; put forth great effort to outdo others.

Playing their hardest, the two teams vied for the championship.

The students vie for the highest marks.

From the Old French *envier*, "to invite, challenge."

3. EKE (v)—B: To supplement; to supply by some means, whatever is lacking; to piece out. Another common definition is to make a living with difficulty.

The driver eked out the last bit of speed from his racing car.

They eke out a living by selling wood carvings.

From the Old English *ecan*, "to increase."

4. BRUNT (n)—B: The main impact, shock or stress of a blow or an attack; the hardest part.

The Marines had to bear the brunt of the attack.

She bore the brunt of his anger.

From the Old Norse *bruna*, "to advance quickly, as a fire."

5. ROIL (v)—D: to irritate; to ruffle the temper, or arouse the resentment of; vex; rile.

The governor was roiled by the obvious lie.

The word comes from the French *rouiller*, "to make muddy." The first definition of the English word given in the major dictionaries therefore, is that of making water or wine cloudy or opaque; as the water was *roiled* by the ship's propellers.

6. SLOTH (n)—D: Idleness; sluggishness; laziness. This is a highly derogatory word used in the sense of physical or mental inactivity. It is a reluctance to do whatever work one should. This is a stronger word than just *idle* or *lazy*. Historically, *sloth* is one of the Seven Deadly Sins.

A slothful person is always a burden to any group.

From the Middle English *slouthe*, "slow."

7. CULL (v)—C: To select; pick out from among others; choose.

Please cull the good ears of corn from that pile.

I culled that sentence from a story in a magazine.

From the Latin *colligo*, "collect."

8. PRATE (v)—B: To babble; to talk foolishly and at length; chatter; prattle.

It is better not to prate about family affairs.

He would continually prate about his difficulties.

From the Middle English *praten*, "chatter."

9. BODE (v)—A: To foreshadow; predict or foretell; presage by signs or omens; portend.

A red sun in the evening bodes good weather for sailors.

The new evidence bodes ill for the lawyer's case.
From the Old English *bodian*, "to announce; tell."

10. QUALM (n)—B: Sudden misgiving; uneasy feeling of acting wrongly; reluctance.

He felt a certain qualm at leaving his work uncompleted.

They had many qualms as to whether the plans were practical.

The origin of the word is uncertain, though the original English definition meant illness or disease.

11. MOOT (adj)—C: Debatable. Originally in Anglo Saxon days a "townmoot" was a town meeting for purposes of debate and discussion. Today a moot question or a moot point in law is one that is debatable and disputable and not yet settled.

12. BANE (n)—C: Affliction; anything that ruins or spoils.
Poverty was the bane of his existence.
From the Old English *bana*, "destruction."

13. DEIGN (v)—A: To condescend or behave in a patronizing manner, conscious of having come from a superior position; in keeping with one's dignity.

The duke would not deign to reply to the reporter.

The chief deigned to pay us a visit aboard our boat.

From the Old French *deignier*, from the Latin *dignari*, "to consider worthy."

14. TRYST (n)—A: An appointment to meet at a previously arranged meeting place, especially one made between lovers.

She hurried to keep her tryst with Robert.

From the old French *triste*, "a place for watching or waiting (in hunting); an ambush."

15. IRK (v)—D: To annoy; irritate; exasperate; bore.

Detail seems to irk him.

The way she drove a car was irksome to him.

From the Middle English *irken*, "to tire."

16. GLUT (v)—D: To overfill; fill to excess; satiate; over-supply.

Too many eggs will glut the market.

After the banquet, I felt glutted with food and drink.

From the Latin *glutto*, "swallow."

17. DRONE (v)—A: To speak in a monotonous tone; to make a dull, humming sound.

We almost went to sleep as he droned along.

I heard the droning of bees near my window screen.

From the Old English *dran*, "a drone, male bee."

18. MERE (adj)—A: Nothing but; nothing more nor better than what is mentioned; only.

I escaped with a mere scratch.

But he is a mere puppy!

The TV show is mere trash.

The mere mention of his name filled the children with terror.

Mere and *bare* are often interchangeable, the difference being, however, that *bare* is more often thought of in a positive sense. "He *barely* escaped with his life." *Mere* is negative, suggesting something lacking. "He is *merely* a private." *Mere* comes from the Latin *merus*, "bare."

19. DEEM (v)—A: To consider; to believe; judge.

The Arab wants to shape his corner of the earth as he deems best.

Do whatever you deem fair.

From the Old English *dom*, "judgment."

20. LOLL (v)—C: To lounge; recline in a relaxed and languid manner; also to droop, dangle or hang loosely.

He is completely relaxed as he lolls in his chair.

His head lolled on his shoulders.

From the Middle Dutch *lullen*, "to sleep."

PART II

You may be still uncertain as to the meanings of some of the test words used in this chapter. Match the key descriptions in the left column with the words in the right column.

Can You Match Them Up?

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. judge or think | a. brook |
| 2. take on the main stress of something | b. loll |
| 3. an appointed place or meeting | c. deem |
| 4. only | d. bode |
| 5. foretell | e. brunt |
| 6. choose | f. mere |
| 7. rest lazily | g. cull |
| 8. endure something | h. irk |
| 9. stoop patronizingly | i. tryst |
| 10. exasperate | j. deign |

Answers: 1-c; 2-e; 3-i; 4-f; 5-d; 6-g; 7-b; 8-a; 9-j; 10-h.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. talk foolishly | a. bane |
| 2. indicates a monotonous sound | b. vie |
| 3. to not want to do anything | c. roil |
| 4. be something that causes great harm | d. moot |
| 5. arouse resentment | e. eke |
| 6. have too much of it around | f. sloth |
| 7. be a question or point not yet settled | g. drone |
| 8. have a certain reluctance | h. glut |
| 9. try to outdo others | i. prate |
| 10. supply whatever is lacking | j. qualm |

Answers: 1-i; 2-g; 3-f; 4-a; 5-c; 6-b; 7-d; 8-j; 9-b; 10-e.

PART III

brook	bane
vie	deign
brunt	tryst
roil	irk
sloth	glut
cull	eke out
prate	drone
bode	mere
qualm	deem
moot point	loll

Which of the words above best replaces the italicized word or phrase?

1. She could no longer *tolerate* his arrogance.
2. The two *put out great effort to compete* with each other to win the nomination.
3. He raised chickens to *supplement* his income.
4. The island bore the *main impact* of the storm.
5. The unfair criticism *ruffled the temper* of the French chef.
6. His *laziness* infuriated me.
7. He carefully *picked out* the best shells from the box.
8. The entire time she *chattered* about her imagined illnesses.
9. The strong market *indicates or foretells* great success for my common stock.
10. As we left the port he had *uneasy feelings* about the weather.
11. Her selfishness was the *main affliction* of his life.
12. It's a *real* question as to whether the case should even come before the judge.
13. She walked by, not *condescending* to even look at the receptionist.
14. Somehow he found out about our *appointment to meet*.