



WORD POWER MADE EASY

**BOOKS BY NORMAN LEWIS**

*Word Power Made Easy*

*How to Speak Better English*

*The Lewis English Refresher and Vocabulary Builder*

*How to Read Better and Faster*

*Power with Words*

*Thirty Days to a More Powerful Vocabulary*

*(in collaboration with Wilfred Funk)*

**For Children**

*Journeys Through Wordland*

*Vocabulary and Spelling*

# WORD POWER MADE EASY

————THE COMPLETE THREE-WEEK VOCABULARY BUILDER————

**BY NORMAN LEWIS**

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FIRST WEEK  
GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

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## HOW TO TEST YOUR PRESENT VOCABULARY

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*If you are the average adult, your vocabulary is barely one-and-one-half times as large as that of a child of ten.*

And you know only one fourth as many words as the average college sophomore.

But that's the least of it—

What is infinitely more significant is that you are now increasing your vocabulary at no more than one one hundredth your rate when you were in the lower grades of elementary school!

These accusations may sound insulting—but they are not intended to be. They are only an attempt to get you to face the facts about vocabulary development that educational testing has turned up in recent years.

Let us examine some of these facts.

According to a typical investigation by Professor Robert H. Seashore, chairman of the Department of Psychology of Northwestern University, the average child of ten knows the meanings of 34,300 different terms, and since his sixth year has been learning new words at the rate of 5000 a year.

The results of a similar investigation, conducted by Columbia University Professor George W. Hartmann among the students of the Alabama Institute of Technology, show that the average col-



lege sophomore has a vocabulary of approximately two hundred thousand words.

How do these figures compare with your own? I have obtained data on adult vocabularies by testing hundreds of students in the Adult Education Program of the City College of New York. These data show:

1. That the average adult vocabulary is 50,000 words—one-fourth the size of the vocabulary of a college sophomore, only one-and-one-half times as large as the vocabulary of a ten-year-old.
2. That the constant rate of increase among adults is in the neighborhood of fifty words a year—one one hundredth the rate of children between six and ten.

This wide discrepancy is something to think about, isn't it?

But wait—perhaps you are not the average adult. Perhaps your vocabulary is not comparatively anemic; perhaps you have come a lot further, since you were ten, than most people.

Shall we put it to a test?

## A TEST OF VOCABULARY RANGE

Here are sixty brief phrases, each containing one italicized word; it is up to you to check the closest definition of each such word. To keep your score valid, refrain, as far as possible, from wild guessing. The key will be found at the end of the test.

1. *disheveled* appearance: (a) untidy, (b) fierce, (c) foolish, (d) peculiar, (e) unhappy
2. a *baffling* problem: (a) difficult, (b) simple, (c) puzzling, (d) long, (e) new
3. *lenient* parent: (a) tall, (b) not strict, (c) wise, (d) foolish, (e) severe
4. *repulsive* personality: (a) disgusting, (b) attractive, (c) normal, (d) confused, (e) conceited
5. *audacious* attempt: (a) useless, (b) bold, (c) foolish, (d) crazy, (e) necessary
6. *agile* climber: (a) lively, (b) tired, (c) skillful, (d) careful, (e) stubborn