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How To Read Faster And Get Your School Work Done In A Blink

INTRODUCTION

More information is published each week than in all of human history through the year 1800; yet, the average reading speed is only 200 wpm with a mere 10% being retained into long term memory. In the time it takes you to read this sentence, I can read this entire page...and another as well. Recognized as the world's fastest reader, I will help you learn to read faster so you can complete your assignments quickly and easily, and still find time for things that you enjoy.

THE ROOTS OF SLOW READING

You already possess the ability to rapidly read essential information. It is an innate ability. Let me prove this to you. Think about how much information your brain must process while driving an automobile on a highway. It must view and analyze the motions of the surrounding cars, road conditions, weather conditions, read signs, and at the same time avoid hitting animals or people who might cross the road. Instead of being overwhelmed by all this information you become so bored that you might turn on the radio, talk to other passengers, or make cell phone calls. If your brilliant brain is so adept at swiftly reading a road during a drive, then why can't it read text just as quickly

and easily? The answer is simple. Instead of seeing a book during reading, your brain hears a voice that pronounces the word sounds printed on the page. Quite simply, you don't see a book—you hear it. Yet, vision is faster and more powerful than hearing. By becoming a more visual reader you will instantly increase your reading speed. Let's begin this process together.

BECOMING A MORE VISUAL READER

Watch a child read and what do you see? You see them reading words one letter at a time, such as **D O G** spells dog. As an adult, your brain barely notices the letters appearing on the page. Instead you see entire words like dog, or even entire phrases like “hot dog”, “ice cream”, or “United States of America”. “United States of America” contains four distinct words, almost the width of an entire column in a textbook or newspaper. If you can see four words then why can't you see entire lines, sentences, paragraphs, or even an entire page at a glance? You can! You just need a simple system that improves your brain's visual reading efficiency. The first step is understanding how your magnificent brain is decoding text on the unconscious level. Once you become conscious of this unconscious activity you will be able to speed it up to a higher reading speed still being able to comprehend, store, and recall essential information.

As a student, I trained to become a Psychobiologist at the *State University of New York at Binghamton*. During my studies I learned how our brain uses *schema*, or more simply our map of the world, whilst decoding text. Each of us has a lifetime of

experiences stored in our memory map. Stored experiences that writers expect us to possess and use while reading.

Let's use an example to learn how you use schema to interpret text. Imagine I wrote a story and told you, "*the woman wore a red dress.*" I would expect you to know what I meant by the word *woman*. As a reader you don't expect me to explain to you that a woman is a female. You already know this information. You are using your schema or life database to read this text.

Probably the best way to demonstrate schema's important role in making text meaningful is by giving you a paragraph to read that is completely lacking any schematic clues. Although the words in this passage taken from my *Mega Speed Reading Program* are simple and familiar you will find them almost impossible to read:

This is an easy thing to do. If possible you will do it at home, but you can always go somewhere else if it is necessary. Beware of overdoing it. This is a major mistake and may cost you quite a bit of money. It is far better to do too little than attempt to do too much. Make sure everything is properly placed. Now you are ready to proceed. The next step is to put things into another convenient arrangement. Once done you'll probably have to start again real soon. Most likely, you'll be doing this for the rest of your life

It's pretty tough decoding this text since it lacks any schematic clues. Did you guess that this paragraph is discussing doing a load of laundry? Picture the word **laundry** printed right about this text as a single word title, and read this passage once

again. Isn't it amazing how much clearer this passage becomes simply by adding a single schematically significant word? Even a single schematic clue can make text understandable. From this example it is clear that schema plays a major role in making text meaningful, but how do you know where to look for schematic clues while reading? We find this out in our next column.

Howard Stephen Berg is the world's fastest reader and Vice President of Gateway Preparatory School. For information about Gateway's online curriculum for High School & Junior High school, Accelerated Learning Programs, and College Preparation write or call:

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