

Reading offers huge benefits to individuals, society

辞書なしで「多読」 自分に合ったものを読もう ジョセフ・ポーシャックさん

英語力をつけたいが、何から始めたらいいの？ 英語上達に近道はあるの？ そんな問いに、日本で英語を教えて20年になる東京基督教大教授のジョセフ・ポーシャックさんは、「多読」(Extensive Reading = ER)の重要性を訴えます。インターネットで多読をサポートする「BeeOasis」(<http://www.beeoasis.com/>)も主宰。朝日ウイークリーを含め、年間百万語といった目標を設定して、辞書を引かずに自分のレベルに合った英文を読み続けられれば、想像以上の力がつくと言います。さあ、以下の英文を辞書を引かずに読んでみましょう。

By Joseph Poulshock
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In Japan, students usually do not read for pleasure in English. They read difficult texts, meeting 20 to 30 unknown words on every page. This kind of reading is not a joy. It's suffering.

Sadly, these learners probably do not know about *tadoku*, or extensive reading (ER). ER is an enjoyable and powerful way to learn English. How do you do extensive reading?

ER has three rules. The first rule is "Read easy." You should know 95 percent to 98 percent of the words in a text. This helps you read without a dictionary and makes reading more enjoyable. ER books are graded into levels, so you can find books at the right level for you. The second rule is "Choose freely." You are free to choose what you want to read. The third rule is "Read big." This means read a lot! What happens when you follow these rules? You get results!

Dr. Hitoshi Nishizawa teaches English at Toyota National College of Engineering. His students improved their English just by doing ER. Students who read 3 million words increased their TOEIC scores as much as those who studied abroad for one year in an English-speaking country.

What is more, students who read 6 million words improved more than those who studied abroad for one year! This shows that ER can equal or even beat study abroad! Reading 3 million words in one year is challenging, but you can do it in 45 minutes a day, or in 2 years, you can read 3 million words in about 20 minutes

per day.

Now, some people doubt that ER can be so effective. "English requires complicated study," they say. "Maybe ER works, but traditional study is more effective."

But that simply is not true. Research by Dr. Beniko Mason shows that ER alone can improve TOEIC scores around 0.75 points per hour. In some cases, readers improved three times faster with ER than by traditional study.

ER can improve your English skills, but reading does much more than that. Reading also increases global wealth, health and equality for women. If a girl is born to a mother who can read, that girl is twice as likely to live past the age of 5. If all children in poor countries could learn basic reading skills, 171 million people could leave poverty behind.

Literacy — the ability to read and write — can defeat poverty. Perhaps no one is working harder on this problem than John Wood. Formerly a top executive at Microsoft, Wood left his high-paying job after a life-changing experience.

While hiking in Nepal, Wood visited a village school. He loved books, so he asked the headteacher to show him the library. But to his surprise, the library had no books! Wood asked, "Where are the books?"

豊かさや健康、平等につながる読書

The teacher replied, "We don't have enough money. We can't buy books for the children." Wood remembered his childhood, his weekly visits to the library, and reading with his mother and grandmother. The teacher spoke again. "Perhaps, sir, you will someday come back with books."

One year later, John Wood returned with 3,000 books. He saw the joy on the children's faces; he saw the hope in their eyes, and he was moved. Eventually, he left his job at Microsoft to start an organization that brings books to children.

Today that organization is called Room to Read. Room to Read has built 1,824 schools and 16,549 libraries. It has delivered 14.5 million books, benefiting 8.8 million children. By 2015, Room to Read wants to give the power of reading to 10 million children.



Joseph Poulshock, Ph.D., is a professor of English Linguistics at Tokyo Christian University and editor of BeeOasis.com.

Wood says, "If we don't reach these young children, we plan their poverty." That's why in April 2014 he asked a group of Japanese people for help. They gave over \$1 million to Room to Read. The money will buy books and build libraries for children. It will help little girls and boys stay in school.

Room to Read provides native-language books for children. Then, after students learn to read in their first language, they learn to read in English. John Wood explains: "English is the uniting language in the world. If you speak English, you can speak to 3 billion people."

Reading is a key to international development, but it does much more than that. Reading also makes you smarter. It builds knowledge and skills that help you live. This useful knowledge is called general or "crystallized intelligence," and studies show that reading builds it.

Reading builds your verbal intelligence. Strong readers have bigger vocabularies than those who read little. Books use rarer words than television and adult conversation. Thus, reading is more important than listening and speaking for growing vocabulary.

Reading builds your social smarts. By reading good fiction, you can better understand your feelings and the feelings of others. This is called "emotional intelligence," and research shows that reading good fiction improves it.

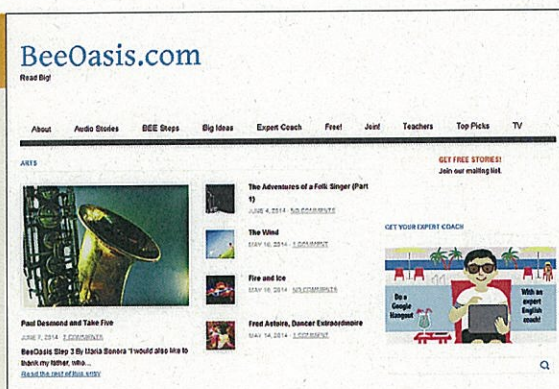
Reading can get you a better job. An Oxford University study showed this. High school students who read outside of school were more likely to get managerial or professional jobs as adults. Reading was the only out-of-school activity to explain this difference.

Reading makes you smarter. It gives you word power. It can help you to get a better job. Reading increases wealth, health and equality in the world. And extensive reading can greatly improve your English! Remember this. Reading has more power than you think!

英文多読支援サイト

BeeOasis <http://www.beeoasis.com>

Read Big/Read Easy/Learn English を合言葉に開設。辞書を引かずに読める英文を毎日読み続けることをサポートすることが目的。優しすぎて退屈する、難しすぎて苦痛といった障害を克服するため、独自の方法で利用者が自分のレベルを設定でき、自分に合った英文を読めるようになっている。1カ月550円の利用料が必要。利用者の好奇心にあった読み物が随時更新されている。



Pop Quiz 7 の正解: 2. rummage = 「くまなく探す」の意味。訳) ジュディスの鞆(かばん)にはいつもたくさんの物が入っている。彼女は鍵が必要になる度に、鞆の中を引っかき回して探さなければならない。