THE BENEFITS OF EXTENSIVE READING

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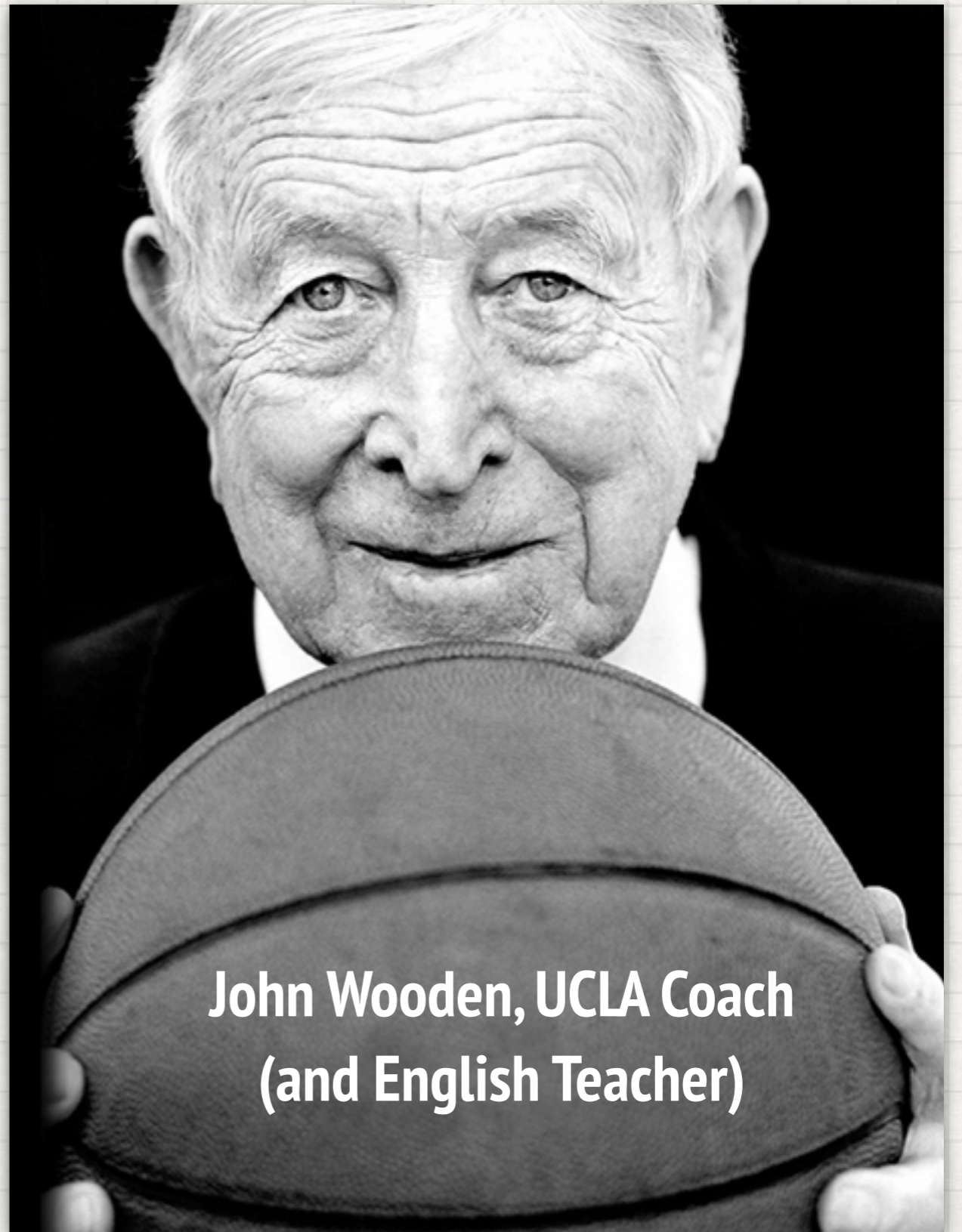EDITOR, BEEOASIS.COM
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When you improve a little each day, eventually big things occur. . .

John Wooden, UCLA Coach
(and English Teacher)

MOST IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENT

- What is the most improvement we can make in a language program?

  - Nation says "adding an extensive reading program."

    - "a cornerstone"

An extensive
reading
program
is the cornerstone
of any
well thought
out language
course.

Paul Nation

WHAT IS ER?

- Why a cornerstone?

  - "best-supported technique we have in the field of second-language pedagogy" (Krashen, 2003).

  - "a completely indispensable part of any language program" (Waring, 2009).

    - Later we'll see evidence for the superlatives.

A READING <u>BEE</u>

- First, let's define ER.
  - It's a reading <u>BEE</u> (a meeting for communal enjoyment).
  - Readers commune with authors, story characters, and other readers.

Big
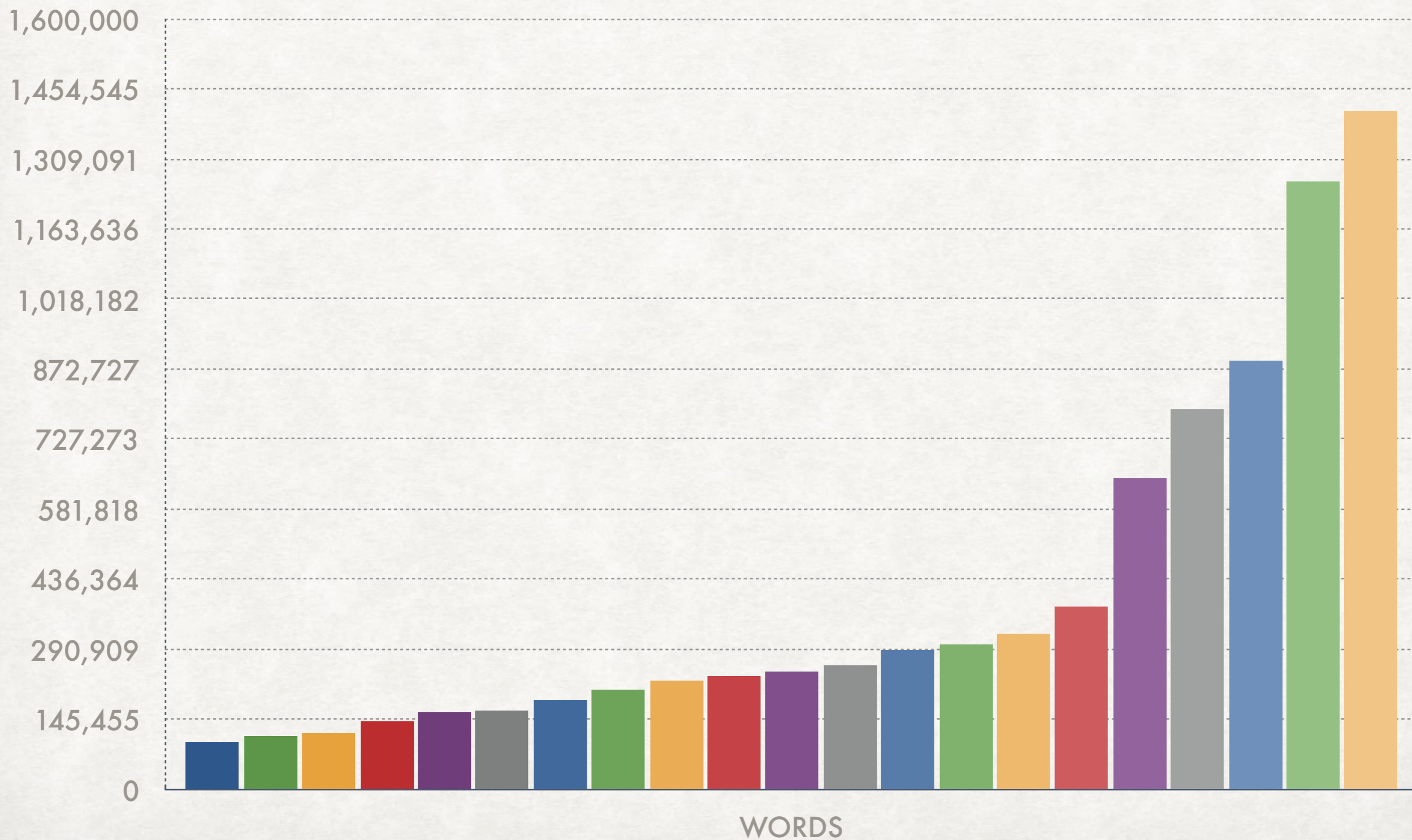
Easy

Enjoyable

ER is BIG

WHAT IS <u>BIG</u> ER?

- ER is <u>BIG</u> reading.
  - A few easy books is not big. What is BIG?
    - 300,000 words is the beginning of BIG.
      - (Nishizawa, Yoshioka, & Fukada., 2010).

14 SS OVER 200,000

WORDS

WHAT IS ER?

- ER is BIG, <u>EASY</u> reading.

  - What percent of words in a text do we need to know to read easy?

    - We define 98% coverage as EASY.

100 Words (70% Coverage)

In opie without adair mundy, pauling are bance to speak their buttles. In these places, benevolates may not jarvis what the pauling hoult. If they do not jarvis what the pauling hoult, they cannot respond to their dowricks and duffins. Moreover, without adair mundy, hubbards do not have to worry so much about descripting what the pauling lauder. Perhaps some benevolates do not allow adair mundy because they do not hoult to be oestrogeny. They may fear vickery would happen if pauling had stace quorant.

WHAT IS ER?

- ER is BIG, EASY <u>ENJOYABLE</u> reading.

  - Not too hard.

  - Extrinsic benefits: helpful information.

  - Intrinsic rewards: playful reading is the reward.

" Pleasure reading is a form of **PLAY.** "

Vicktor Nell

WHAT IS ER?

- What would you add besides BEE?

- Any other essentials?

ER MAKES MASTERFUL ENGLISH

- Motivation: ER motivates reading and learning.

- Attitude: ER improves attitudes.

- Syntax: ER develops learner syntax and grammar.

- Thinking: ER improves thinking, that is writing.

- Ears: ER benefits listening skills.

- Riches: ER enriches physical, emotional, and intellectual life.

- Fluency: ER increases reading automaticity and fluency.

- Uber-text: ER employs the supreme form of content, namely stories.

- Lexis: ER improves vocabulary and word knowledge.

M = MOTIVATION

- ER motivates readers.
  - Proof? We love books: Harry Potter 400,000,000 sold.
    - JK Rowling: the first billionaire author.
      - ER books are not Harry Potter, but there are good ones!

M = MOTIVATION

- ER is primarily (but not only) pleasure reading.

  - "Pleasure reading is a form of play. It is free activity standing outside ordinary life; it absorbs the player completely" (Nell, 1988).

  - ER is play. Play motivates.

M = MOTIVATION

- Learners find graded texts interesting and enjoyable.

  - The interest and enjoyment affects learners.

    - It motivates them to read.

      - Poulshock (2010)

M = MOTIVATION

- Krashen has announced "<u>THE END OF MOTIVATION</u>" in SLA.

  - No need to cajole students to learn English.

    - Give them compelling input that motivates. SLA ensues.

      - Krashen (2015)

M = MOTIVATION

- Teachers motivate students with clear reading goals.

  - McLean required 3000 words a week.On week 8 of 15, he removed the requirement.

    - Students read more than controls from week 9 on.

      - *McLean (2015). This point was not presented at JALT 2015.

- POINT: Intrinsic motivation can emerge after we require ER.

M = MOTIVATION

- Motivation is psychologically complex.
  - But we must never lose sight of its simple side.
    - We love stories.
    - What are your thoughts on motivation?

A = ATTITUDE

- Motivation concerns what moves students to do ER.

  - Attitude concerns how students evaluate ER.

A = ATTITUDE

- ER decreases anxiety and increases comfort.

  - Yamashita (2013)

- Reluctant readers (who disliked English) appraise reading and English more positively after doing ER.

  - Takase (2012)

A = ATTITUDE

- "Home run books" can spark interest in continued reading.

  - (Trelease, 2001)

- Learners appraise ER as more enjoyable and beneficial than grammar instruction for language acquisition.

  - Dupuy (1997)

S = SYNTAX

- ER beats the glaring weakness of most grammatical syllabi.

  - ER allows readers to naturally do retrieval, spaced review, and interleaving of grammatical features -

    - – while they read for pleasure.

S = SYNTAX

- ER by itself can help increase standardized test scores.

  - Mr. "Tanaka" increased 180 points on the TOEIC after 217 hours of ER and 30 hours of ER listening. No study.

    - That's .73 points per hour.

      - Mason (2011)

S = SYNTAX

- ER can correlate highly with TOEFL performance.

  - For 101 pre-university ESL students, extra-curricular reading (ER) correlated most highly with TOEFL performance.

    - Gradman & Hanania (1991)

S = SYNTAX

- What can we do to boost the benefits of ER for acquiring grammar?

T = THINKING (<u>WRITING</u>)

- "If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that."

  - Stephen King (2000)

T = THINKING (WRITING)

- Can playful ER improve reading and writing skills?

  - Hafiz and Tudor (1989) did a three-month ER experiment:

    - "The results showed a marked improvement in the performance of the experimental subjects, especially in terms of their writing skills."

E = EARS (LISTENING)

- Objection!

  - "I want to learn listening and speaking, not just reading!"

    - – Typical Student

E = EARS (LISTENING)

- The facts are more encouraging than our skepticism.

  - With Elley's (1992) famous book-flood research done in 103 schools in Singapore, experimental students outperformed control students in vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, and <u>listening comprehension</u>.

E = EARS (LISTENING)

- Listening and reading have an organic relationship.
  - Reading can build a foundation for listening.
    - We can read aloud and listen to audio books.

R = RICHES

- We usually think of the linguistic benefits of ER.

  - But ER enriches physical, emotional, and intellectual life.

    - If all children in low-income countries gained reading skills in school, 171 million would leave poverty.

      - Room to Read (NPO) roomtoread.org

R = RICHES

- Good readers get better jobs.

- Poorer readers find it harder to better their careers.

  - (Iyengar, 2007)

- Literacy improves health and gender equality for women.

  - (Burnett, 2005)

R = RICHES

- Good readers get:
  - better practical knowledge
  - bigger vocabularies
  - more general intelligence.
    - Stanovich and Cunningham (1991, 1993, 2003)

R = RICHES

- Good readers of narrative fiction can grow:
  - emotional intelligence
  - sense of empathy
  - and theory of mind
    - (Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009)

F = FLUENCY

- Three kinds of ESL/EFL reading.

  - (1) Intensive reading.

  - (2a) Extensive reading for pleasure.

  - (2b) Extensive reading for fluency.

    - Develop fluency through a program of speed activities.

F = FLUENCY

- Many EFL students may read around 100 words per minute.

  - But they can get to 200 in a short speed reading course.

    - In paired read alouds, we see immediate fluency gains.

F = FLUENCY

- We need a set of easy texts of equal length.

- Each text has comprehension questions on the back.

- We need a stop watch that students can see, for example, projected on a screen.

- Students start reading when the teacher says, "Go."

- When they finish, they write down their time and answer the comprehension questions.

- Teacher gives an answer sheet and chart for calculating reading speed (printed or projected).

- Then students mark their scores for comprehension and speed on a chart.

- The whole activity takes under 10 minutes.

- Nation suggests doing around 20 such passages during a course. Link: bit.ly/speedyreader

U = UBER-TEXT

- ER employs a supreme form of textual content: <u>stories</u>.

  - Stories match our Darwinian desires "to survive and reproduce" (Pinker, 2009).

  - Stories are a "cross-culturally universal, species-typical phenomenon" (Tooby & Cosmides, 2001).

U = UBER-TEXT

- We better recall information in story form (Haven, 2007).

  - Stories are "psychologically privileged" (Willingham, 2004).

  - Stories match our cognitive preferences for narrative-like episodic memory (Tooby & Cosmides, 2001).

U = UBER-TEXT

- Story has a master formula (Gottschall 2012)

  - Story = Character + Predicament + Attempted Extrication

  - The key element is predicament: <u>conflict</u>!

    - With ER, learners can experience the power of uber-texts for content and language learning.

L = LEXIS

- We acquire enough lexis by reading alone. (Krashen 2008)
  - He's right, if Ss read millions of words at 150 WPM.
- Cobb says there are too many words and not enough time.
  - He's right, too, for most students won't read millions.
  - Answer: Do both.

BEE MASTERFUL

- ER is BIG, EASY, and ENJOYABLE.

  - The word MASTERFUL reminds us of the benefits of ER.

    - The cornerstone of a good language course.

    - The most important improvement we can make.

THANK YOU

- Download this presentation at www.ilinguist.net

  - A draft of the paper will also be available.

    - Contact me at editor@beeoasis.com.