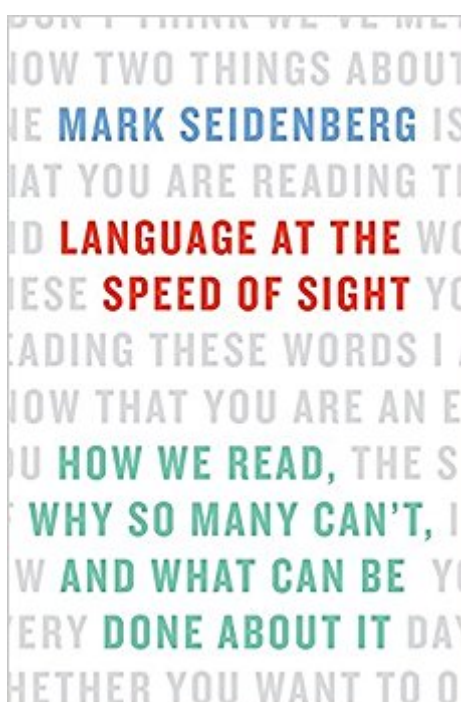


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Language At The Speed Of Sight: How We Read, Why So Many Can't, And What Can Be Done About It



Synopsis

According to a leading cognitive scientist, we've been teaching reading wrong. The latest science reveals how we can do it right. In 2011, when an international survey reported that students in Shanghai dramatically outperformed American students in reading, math, and science, President Obama declared it a "Sputnik moment": a wake-up call about the dismal state of American education. Little has changed, however, since then: over half of our children still read at a basic level and few become highly proficient. Many American children and adults are not functionally literate, with serious consequences. Poor readers are more likely to drop out of the educational system and as adults are unable to fully participate in the workforce, adequately manage their own health care, or advance their children's education. In *Language at the Speed of Sight*, internationally renowned cognitive scientist Mark Seidenberg reveals the underexplored science of reading, which spans cognitive science, neurobiology, and linguistics. As Seidenberg shows, the disconnect between science and education is a major factor in America's chronic underachievement. How we teach reading places many children at risk of failure, discriminates against poorer kids, and discourages even those who could have become more successful readers. Children aren't taught basic print skills because educators cling to the disproved theory that good readers guess the words in texts, a strategy that encourages skimming instead of close reading. Interventions for children with reading disabilities are delayed because parents are mistakenly told their kids will catch up if they work harder. Learning to read is more difficult for children who speak a minority dialect in the home, but that is not reflected in classroom practices. By building on science's insights, we can improve how our children read, and take real steps toward solving the inequality that illiteracy breeds. Both an expert look at our relationship with the written word and a rousing call to action, *Language at the Speed of Sight* is essential for parents, educators, policy makers, and all others who want to understand why so many fail to read, and how to change that.

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Customer Reviews

"In *Language at the Speed of Sight*, [Seidenberg] develops a careful argument, backed by decades of research, to show that the only responsible way to teach children to read well is to build up their abilities to connect reading with speech and then to amplify these connections through practice, developing skillful behavioral patterns hand in hand with the neurological networks that undergird them...Every teacher of young children as well as those who train them should read this book."-Michael S. Roth, *Wall Street Journal*"Seidenberg reviews the latest science on reading and makes an impassioned plea for putting this knowledge to use."-*Scientific American*"[An] important and alarming new book...Seidenberg makes a strong case for how brain science can help the teaching profession"-David Kipen, *New York Times*"Cognitive neuroscientist Seidenberg digs deep into the science of reading to reveal the ways human beings learn how to read and process language...Seidenberg's analysis is backed up by numerous studies and table of data. His approach is pragmatic, myth-destroying and rooted in science-and his writing makes for powerful reading."-*Publishers Weekly*"The neuroscience underlying [Seidenberg's] findings is complex, of course, but [he] does not often fall into thickets of technicality...his discussions are clear and accessible... A worthy primer on the science of comprehending language."-Kirkus"Few works of science ever achieve Italo Calvino's six qualities of our best writing: Lightness, exactitude, visibility, quickness, and consistency. Mark Seidenberg's new book on the science of reading and its profound implications for educational practice achieves just that. With both wit and rigor, he pulls no punches as he lays bare both the egregious errors that persist in the teaching of reading, and their antidote in knowledge of the reading brain. If every educator, parent, and policy-maker would read and heed the content of this book, the rates of functional illiteracy, with all their destructive sequelae for children and society, would be significantly reduced."-Maryanne Wolf, author of *Proust and the Squid*"*Language At The Speed of Sight* is an incisive tour through the fascinating science of reading-how brains and their owners succeed and fail to master this uniquely human and irreplaceable skill. From cuneiform to phonics to dyslexia to the future of literacy, Seidenberg is a master guide: a world expert on reading who-lucky for us-is as gifted a writer as he is a

scientist."-Benjamin Bergen, author of *What the F*"A world-renowned expert explains the science of reading with clarity and wit-anyone who loves to read will be fascinated, and teachers will absolutely devour this book."- Daniel Willingham, author of *Why Don't Students Like School?*"Have you picked up the idea that reading is something that kids 'just pick up' and shouldn't be rushed into it, or that learning to read is something different from mastering something separate called 'comprehension,' or that a whole book about reading would be dull? *Language at the Speed of Sight* will disabuse you of all three notions and more-pick it up and marvel at how hard it will be to put it down."-John McWhorter, author of *Word on the Move* and *Talking Back, Talking Black*"No technologically advanced society exists without reading. This is the remarkable story of why, and how it all works. From David Letterman's irony to posited Sumerian patent trolls, the writing is lively, informative, and supremely entertaining."-Daniel J. Levitin, best-selling author of *This Is Your Brain on Music* and *The Organized Mind*

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR LANGUAGE AT THE SPEED OF SIGHT No technologically advanced society exists without reading. This is the remarkable story of why and how it all works. From David Letterman's irony to posited Sumerian patent trolls, the writing is lively, informative, and supremely entertaining. Daniel J. Levitin, best-selling author of *This Is Your Brain on Music* and *The Organized Mind* Have you picked up the idea that reading is something that kids just pick up and shouldn't be rushed into, or that learning to read is something different from comprehension, or that a whole book about reading would be dull? *Language at the Speed of Sight* will disabuse you of all three notions and morepick it up and marvel at how hard it will be to put it down. John McWhorter, author of *Word on the Move* and *Talking Back, Talking Black*

A well written and highly readable account of the current scientific knowledge of how children learn to read. Sadly, this critical information is not well known or accepted by many teachers, and the gap between research and classroom instructional practice remains. Given the importance of efficient reading skills in our current information based world, this is very concerning.

An informative and impassioned plea to improve reading instruction through the application of the most recent scientific research into how children should be taught to read.*Language at the Speed of Sight: How We Read, Why So Many Can't, and What Can Be Done About It*

The man has an incredible mind and understanding of people/language

personalization/personification.

You think you know how to read? But do you know much about 'reading'? You will when you finish this book and you'll be confirmed in the central importance of reading to civilization.

This important and readable book on recent findings and insights from the science of reading needs to be read by anyone interested in understanding "how we read". This audience includes parents, teachers, teachers of reading methods, and anyone else concerned about effective instruction and helping all our children learn to read.

The wait for this book was well worth it. Love the frank language and the writing style. Love the content. Will recommend this to many.

One of the most insightful accounts of why the science of reading has yet to find its way into our classrooms

Must read for teachers

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