

How to Increase Your Vocabulary

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

Evolutionists love to remind us how close our DNA is to that of the chimpanzee or gorilla. But there is one very sharp distinction between human beings and every other species, including the various kinds of monkeys. God gave us the faculty of language, the faculty of speech.

Why did God so endow the human being with this remarkable ability? If you read the Bible you will find the answer. We read in Genesis 1:27: “And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

We were created to be like God, to have certain attributes of God, but not be God. The next passage makes that clear: “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and of every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

And in order to do all of that God gave man a brain properly endowed with extraordinary intelligence in order to carry out these huge tasks. The Bible further states in Genesis 2:19: “And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.”

In other words, God made Adam into a lexicographer--an inventor of names, a creator of vocabulary. Indeed, God gave man the power of language in order to serve four different functions: The first, to know God and be able to communicate with Him. We do that every day through prayer. We’ve done that by writing the Bible, the history of man’s relations with God. Second, we use language to know one’s mate with the ability to communicate at the deepest intimate level. Third, we use language to be able to know other human beings and thereby create society. And Fourth, we use language to know oneself. We are constantly speaking inwardly to ourselves in order to understand who and what we are, and in order to transform our dreams and ideas into reality.

So why should we want to expand our vocabularies? Because knowledge is power, and every new word represents new knowledge. And how does one increase one’s vocabulary? A good place to start is by reading Shakespeare’s plays, all 36 of them which were published in the First Folio in 1623. It is said that Shakespeare invented more new words than any other writer in English literature. New words are needed when it is necessary to convey the meaning of something for which no word exists.

Another good way to expand one’s vocabulary is to read 19th century literature, including Dickens, Carlyle, James Fenimore Cooper, Thackeray, Washington Irving, and other great masters of the written word, who had extensive, rich vocabularies. Also read the

most literate writers you can find who are not afraid to show off their use of vocabulary. However, whenever reading such works, keep a blank notebook at your side in which you can jot down all of the new words you've encountered. Then read their definitions in your dictionary and write your own sentences using these new words. Remember, the more words you know, the more knowledge you have, for each new word represents new knowledge.

As we said, new words are needed to express new ideas or actions for which no words exist. This is particularly true in our hi-tech culture where advances in computer and internet technology require us to invent new words. Words like "geek" and "nerd" were invented by students to describe those with a passion for computers and technological inventions. Such new words are being invented every day.

The fact that God commanded Adam to name every living creature meant that an important part of being a human was the need to make good use of greatest gift God gave us, the faculty of language.

In other words, man was exalted in a way that no other species was by his Creator. Thus, increasing and expanding one's vocabulary is not only necessary for the advancement of man's purpose on earth, but also needed to carry out God's commandments. Besides having been given the faculty of speech we were also endowed with a voice-box that could express thoughts and ideas by sounds. An extraordinary physical phenomenon.

Language, in fact, is the link to the spiritual dimension in our lives. Man is a spiritual as well as a physical being. We are made of matter by God who is not matter. Indeed, if you become a physicist, you will find that the deeper you explore the nature of matter, you will reach virtually no matter at all.

Remember, language is sounds made by the voice box. It has no substance but what it signals in our heads. But written language has permitted us to make a permanent record of what is said. That is why we have science, history, and life stories to tell.

It is the exploration of that microcosmic realm that has made it possible for man to develop computer science in which a million transistors can be put on a microscopic silicon chip.

So scientists increase our vocabulary every day by making discoveries that have to be named. Whenever we invent something new, we have to invent words to describe it.

By the way, God put our language faculty in the left hemisphere of our brains. It is our most valuable piece of brain matter. Without it we would not be human beings. The right hemisphere deals with space, dimension, art, and perspective. In American schools teachers force students to use the right brain to perform the functions of the left brain. The result is dyslexia.

Learning to read must be taught phonetically through intensive phonics so that it conforms with the functions of the language faculty and expands its power. In fact our alphabetic reading and writing system is the most successful reading system ever invented because it conforms with the left brain's faculty, thus making it easy for anyone to learn to read.

And so, increase your vocabulary in order to increase the power of your brain and the power of your mind. Our brains emit dreams, images, and ideas that are not matter, but are the basis of human power. The more words you know, the more power you will have to create, grow, and prosper. Indeed, learning the vocabulary of the stock market may lead you to become a millionaire.