



**Jim Peake of [MySuccessGateway.com](http://MySuccessGateway.com) with  
[Howard Berg](http://HowardBerg.com) – The World's Fastest Reader  
According to Guinness World Records**

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**Jim Peake**

This is Jim Peake at [mysuccessgateway.com](http://mysuccessgateway.com), and today I've got a fantastic call with Mr. Howard Berg, and you can find him at [mrreader.com](http://mrreader.com). And Howard is the world's fastest speed reader and he's been heard on over 1,000 TV and radio stations; radio stations across the nation, just a few of them are, Regis and Kathie, Dick Cavett, Jon Stewart, Good Day New York, Good Morning Texas, Toronto Today, among a few of them. And so anyway, Howard, instead of me going through the list of accomplishments that you've encountered and completed, can you – why don't you share a little bit about your background and your experience over the last few years?

**Howard Berg**

Well, I got in the Guinness Record Book in 1990 as the world's fastest reader for reading 80 pages a minute. I was the only person they have ever listed under that category, and I started off in college; I was at the State University of New York, Binghamton, and I was majoring in biology, and in my junior year I read some books on the physiology of the brain. I got interested in psychobiology, which is the biology of behavior, and it required taking a dual major in bio and psyche, but I only had one year college left, and the dean said, you can't – you won't be able to do it, you'll have to take six science courses a term in your senior year, and no one could handle that much science.

And that's when it hit me; no one teaches us how to learn, not even in school. They tell us what to learn and what will happen when we don't learn but not how to fix the problem. So I started reading books on how the brain works and how we learn, and I got up to 80 pages a minute and finished the four-year program in a year, and took a graduate course in Educational Psyche by taking one of those tests – an external test. I read the book in seven hours four times, and I got a B+ on a six-hour test which I took in 50 minutes, and then I went on to start a school along with Dr. Kuni Beasley. And we're getting kids through high school using these same techniques, in two-and-a-half years with 30 to 45 college credits. In fact, no student that started with us in junior high has ever finished high school, they all graduated with their college degrees before they got out of high school.

We had three thirteen-year-olds go to college; when Stephen Terry graduated at 16 from the University of Texas, Arlington with a 4.0, he is graduating at 19 from Oklahoma University with a 4.0 Master's degree in math. And Brad Owler finished college in six months, the whole four-year program – and we've been doing this now for ten years, so we are very excited by what we're seeing with these techniques with kids, with adults, with people trying to keep on top of information at work, and I came on today to share some of the strategies that have helped all these people become so successful, to manage their knowledge. And hopefully, some of your listeners will also be interested, and that's why we're here.

**Jim Peake**

Yeah. And I'll tell you the genesis of me getting you – picking up the phone and calling you. I read a book by Timothy Ferriss called, '*The 4-Hour Workweek*', and one of the products that he has happens to be a speed reading program, course, or something of that sort, and I'm like, well, let me go find out who else is out there. I've already reached out to him, I haven't heard back from him, like, who else out there is doing speed reading, because I think obviously, being able to process more information certainly could be helpful and from what – I mean it sounds like – you know, and Tony Robbins, you've probably heard of him, the lifestyle coach and the trainer; he

says that compression of time is the secret to everything. So, it sounds like you're getting some really amazing results in sending kids through college and having them graduate well before they are 18 years old type of thing. And that's – I don't think a lot of people know that this is available and/or doable. So...

**Howard Berg**

[4:09] And by the way, the same thing we do with the college kids we do with businesspeople; it's just – the only difference is reading's a screwdriver; a businessperson reads a spreadsheet or the training for a certification, and the child's reading, '*Little Women*', but it's still called reading, and the only thing that really changes is what they read, and not how reading is done.

**Jim Peake**

Right; so you're talking about what information they are pulling out of...

**Howard Berg**

Exactly.

**Jim Peake**

Yeah, because – I'll give you a good example; I'm in the process of reading the book called, '*Blink*' right now by Malcolm Gladwell. It's a very good book; however, for me it bogs down in certain areas, where he is giving examples on how people make decisions very quickly, in a military setting or picking out a jam, or any one of these things – and I'm like, well gees, how can I – I almost wish the book was 30 pages, because I think that some of the examples go on ad nauseam, but he's supporting them, so – and I understand that. But really, what I want to get out of it is, the 10 or 15 examples that he uses, know what happened in those examples and that's it.

**Howard Berg**

You're right on track, but we also teach in our program that reading isn't learning; a lot of people might find that surprising hearing that from me; reading is one of the blades in the learning Swiss Army knife, it's the big fat blade. But you could read a book and fail a test; you could read a book and perform poorly in a meeting. A good example, you memorize a calculus book, you know, every equation, all the differential equations, but you don't know when to use them or what they do, or how to combine them. So even though you have all that data...

**Jim Peake**

You don't have the logic behind it.

**Howard Berg**

Exactly; so we teach reading, studying, test taking and writing; it's an integrated system. So, you're not just reading words on a page. Why don't I give you a couple of tips that we can use, so people can actually see what we are doing?

**Jim Peake**

Sure; that would be awesome.

**Howard Berg**

Well, the first thing I'd like to talk about is reading speed; the average person reads about 200 words per minute; the range for normal reading is 150 to 400 words per minute. But when you're driving in a car, you're driving at about 65, 70 miles an hour on a highway, and you're reading the road – and unlike a book which is in one direction, your reading in four directions, the front, back, left and right – instead of being overwhelmed, you're bored; you turn on the radio, talk to people, you make calls, you watch the dashboard instruments, you follow the driving instructions, you read the road signs, and you're still bored. So why is reading the road at 70 miles an hour, four directions, multitasking dozens of things, easier than just reading a book in one direction? It is a simple answer, and it explains how fast reading works. When you're reading the road, everything is processed as a movie, and your brain sees all that information and constantly updates it

effortlessly. When you're reading in a book, there's a little voice in the back of your head pronouncing one word at a time; you're literally hearing a book with your eyes; that's the bottleneck, that's why we read so slowly. So by teaching people how to see a book a little bit more like a movie, and a little bit less like a conversation. Even a slight shift will increase a normal person by 100% or more in just 2½ hours; it's that simple.

**Jim Peake**

Really, because you know, I have tried that – you know, skip skimming and scanning myself, and I find that my comprehension is not as good. So what kind of tips can you give the listeners to...

**Howard Berg**

[7:54] Several actually; first let's talk about comprehension; it's actually more than a simple thing, there's actually three kinds of learning: literal, implied, and inferential. Literal is what you see on the page, the words themselves; implied is information the author presumes you know already. Suppose the book says, "The woman wore a red dress," you wouldn't say, "Stop! What's a woman? What's a dress? What's red?" because those are things you already know. Well, if I said, look at the *Agelaius phoeniceus* [Red-winged Blackbird] now there's a problem, because you don't know what I'm talking about, it's not in your map. And the third level of learning is called inferential; that's when you really understand the meaning and significance – and the way we teach this – and we're going to do a little exercise with you. Then when we are done explaining what comprehension is on the three levels I'll show people a strategy they can use to actually begin comprehending in their work. We use what we call the Dime Story; the first question we ask is a literal question, and you can help me by answering some of this. Describe a dime, what does it look like?

**Jim Peake**

It's a little cylindrical, flat, wafer-like coin.

**Howard Berg**

What color?

**Jim Peake**

It's silver.

**Howard Berg**

And what do you see...

**Jim Peake**

A picture of Roosevelt's head on it and...

**Howard Berg**

Okay, that's good.

**Jim Peake**

... a picture of – on the back it's got some – I don't have one in front of me, but I believe it's got some sort of like, leafy type stuff.

**Howard Berg**

Very good. That's way above average. And how interesting is this, truthfully?

**Jim Peake**

How interesting is it?

**Howard Berg**

Yeah. Not very is it, it's pretty boring.

**Jim Peake**

It's pretty – we've only got a half a dozen or a dozen or so coins in our total arsenal here in the US, so...

**Howard Berg**

Right; but it's kind of a dull – it's like most education, it's boring, it's stuff on a page; you look at the words and they don't mean much, and you don't know why you need to learn it, somebody told you to read it, and you kind of go through the drill, but you're dragging along, because there's no interest. That's Level One learning; that's what most learning's like today in work and school. Level Two learning; tell me something you could do with a dime other than spend it as money – and I'll start, you can use it as a screwdriver; what else could you do with a dime?

**Jim Peake**

You could use it – you could flip it to determine the outcome of who gets the football at a football game.

**Howard Berg**

Yes, you could use it as a scratch-off. What else?

**Jim Peake**

You could use it as – like a drawing a circle around – tracing a circle.

**Howard Berg**

Yeah, there you go. Now this is a little more interesting than it's silver and flat and round...

**Jim Peake**

Right.

**Howard Berg**

You had to think a little; notice your brain shifted gears from, "What does it look like," description, to, "What have I ever done with a dime, what have I ever seen done with a dime? What might I do with a dime I never thought of doing before?" It's a little more interesting, a little more engaging, it's still not very interesting, it's still not very engaging. Now I'm going to go to the Third Level...

**Jim Peake**

Well, let me just interrupt for a second there, before you go there, because what was happening to my brain as I was describing the cylindrical tracing around the outside perimeter of it, my brain, at the same time as I was doing that was also trying to think of the next thing that that dime could do, and I was coming up with a blank. I'm sorry, okay.

**Howard Berg**

That's exactly right; it still was more interesting than the round and silver. And the third thing is, Roosevelt is on the dime, you're right; most people don't know that – and there is a story behind it, and this is the inferential level of learning. Roosevelt caught polio at 38 while swimming that almost killed him; when he became President, he was in a wheelchair. And he wanted to try to find a cure for polio, because 13% of the population had it and it was incurable; one in eight children had polio. They started birthday balls around the country; every year on his birthday they had parties, and that's how they raised money but it wasn't enough; they just didn't have enough money to find a cure. Eddie Cantor, famous vaudeville comedian, radio host; he told people on his national radio shows, send your pocket change to the President. Soon his friends, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Al Jolson, he also said this on their shows, and dimes started to pour into the White House, lots and lots of dimes, over two-and-a-half million dimes. This money made its way into the hands of Jonas Salk; he found a cure for polio. So when the Congress was looking to change the Mercury Head dime, who better to put on the US dime than Roosevelt? And the march of dimes to Washington that found the cure for polio. And now if I say, Jim, tell me

something about a dime, would it be more interesting than it's sliver and it's flat, and used as a screwdriver?

**Jim Peake**

Knowing the story behind it, yes, absolutely.

**Howard Berg**

[12:39] And if I asked you right now to write an essay about a dime, how hard would it be for you to write two or three pages right now?

**Jim Peake**

It would be pretty easy actually.

**Howard Berg**

Exactly; and we didn't use any memory tricks, we didn't take any notes...

**Jim Peake**

No, but you drew the pictures for me; I could see the pictures of – I could see the dime still in the White House; I could see a visual of Roosevelt; I see him in the wheelchair. So, we think in pictures don't we?

**Howard Berg**

We do; and notice that this is how all learning should be; we made it interesting, we made it meaningful, and we made it significant. Those three criterion have to be met for learning to take place; you can't just look at a book, flip the thousands of pages, and expect the brain to instantaneously store for ever all those details; that isn't how the mind is set up – and that's why a lot of people get frustrated with speed reading, because that's what they're thinking it's supposed to do, and it's not. What speed reading does well is, helps you to find what you don't know and need to learn; so you can eliminate a lot of waste of time. But once you've found what you need, now you switch to a different blade; now we go to the study blade.

Here's an example of a study technique we teach in our program – and this is a very powerful tool; we call this one ABCOQ.

**Jim Peake**

ABCOQ?

**Howard Berg**

ABCOQ. Now, imagine you're in a Word document and you have a three-column table...

**Jim Peake**

Okay.

**Howard Berg**

In column one, you're going to put in ABCOQ; 'A' stands for the abstractive terms, which means the new words, the vocabulary; those words are usually italicized, bolded, or they are listed at the end of the unit. 'B' stands for the names, the biographies, the people; names of things, people that were important in that subject; 'C' stands for chronologies, or dates, or numbers; statistics, numbers, dates, 1492, 3.14 for pi, those things. 'O' stands for, you make an outline of all the bolded headings – you know how every chapter in a textbook has headers, and those headers have headers frequently?

**Jim Peake**

Yep.

**Howard Berg**

All that goes in column one. And lastly, 'Q' is for the questions; any questions that the author wants you to know the answers to, whether they are in the chapter or at the end of the chapter, or the unit, those get put in column one.

**Jim Peake**

Right. What's column 'A' again? I'm sorry, I missed that.

**Howard Berg**

That's column 'A' – column 'A' is the new words, the new names, the dates, the headings and the questions.

**Jim Peake**

Column 'A'?

**Howard Berg**

Yes. Column 'C' or column three...

**Jim Peake**

Is the names...

**Howard Berg**

No. Is the reference.

**Jim Peake**

'B' is names.

**Howard Berg**

Reference; that's where you put your citation; if you're doing this for research purposes, you put in your MLA citation or your Chicago Manual of Style, or your APA, whatever citation system you use for your business, or your disciplined, there's a number of different kinds, that's how you show where your material came from, if you're doing it for research. Now, you go back, and in the middle column, in your own words, what does the word mean? Don't copy it, explain it. Who is this person, and what did they accomplish that made them important in this chapter? Why is that a significant date? Why is it something I should remember? Give the four key points covered in that particular header, the four most important things you just learnt. Now you could do more than four, but a minimum of four, and answer the question. Now, notice what's happened, Jim, we stopped reading, and we began looking at our own map for meaning and significance. We had to find a relationship between what we just learnt and something we understand, and described it in our own words. So now, instead of viewing text passively for a brief second and expecting some kind of magical transformation to take place, what we have done is used it in a meaningful and significant way. So now we own that information because we see the relationship between what we are learning and something we understand already – and that locks it in – so you're not going to forget it three minutes later. Now here's the beauty of this; I want you to picture this three-column table...

**Jim Peake**

Yep.

**Howard Berg**

[17:00] And in column one, if you're writing a report, you put in all the headings you would put into your report.

**Jim Peake**

Right.

**Howard Berg**

And then in column two, you're going to treat column one as if it was an essay test. And the reason we do this is people become conditioned in school; when they do essay tests, nobody sits and wonders if their grammar, or agreement, or style are excellent – all you're thinking about is I've got five minutes and three essays, I have to write till my hand gets numb. And you write, and you write, and you write. So we're putting ourselves in that state where we just have to get it done – and as we are writing, in the middle, the first draft starts to appear. Now, you may know Word could be used to merge; most people use the merge function in Word with Access or Excel; they put in names for form letters, and addresses. You can also merge a table. So you save this table, and when you set up the template, which we have done already in our program, and you press merge, the report writes itself. The heading appears on top, bolded and underlined, the essay is indented one space below the heading, and right after it is the citation, embedded right where you want it. In doing this, we've had 11 to 15 year-olds do 28-page research papers at the graduate school level in less than four hours.

**Jim Peake**

How many?

**Howard Berg**

Less than four hours.

**Jim Peake**

How many research papers?

**Howard Berg**

28 pages.

**Jim Peake**

28 pages?

**Howard Berg**

We had a high school dropout, she had to do five research papers. She finished high school with us in six weeks – we do adult diplomas. She got in college in eight weeks fully funded. She had to do five research papers, and she was a working mom, had three jobs and four kids. So she had from 5 in the evening till 11 at night to write an 8, 12, 18 and 28-page report – and that includes the research, the writing and the rewriting – and her lowest grade was a 92.

**Jim Peake**

Wow! So why aren't they using this in our education system around the country?

**Howard Berg**

They are, but they're not using it in every – the Lutheran Ministries High Schools in Milwaukee are using it. We have several schools in – we have schools in Hot Springs, we have schools in Houston area, about nine of them, we have four or five schools in the Dallas area, we have a school in Palm Desert, and we are moving this out there. In fact some of the people listening might be interested in learning how to run their own school because we are licensing people to do that. It's one of the things that we have available. In fact if they go to [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com), this is my website, [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com), they can get information there, they can take the reading program, but they could also sign up to become an affiliate and that would give them the opportunity to resell the program to other people through their own websites as a business opportunity. So we are trying to get this tool out to the public as much as possible and the best way to do that is have other people work with us and make money doing it. So you are doing a good thing and helping people, but at the same time you're getting paid for it. So it's double incentive, doing good and making money.

**Jim Peake**

Right, right; I mean this is – yeah, I would think that since this is a technology/technique that – you know, there's a lot of benefits to it. I'm sure some kids will be resistant to it, and teachers – or actually, the education system would probably be more resistant to it.

**Howard Berg**

[20:32] Actually we just – it depends on the school. I agree with you; our education system is really in a morass; 28% of high school seniors can't read at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level – these are the seniors, not the dropouts; 38% of the seniors can't count – that's fractions, decimals, percentages; 90% of the graduates can't write a paragraph. So there's a 30 to 50% dropout rate in college.

**Jim Peake**

Ninety percent of high school graduates can't write a paragraph?

**Howard Berg**

That's correct. According to the Texas State Education Agency, 46% of the freshmen in Texas will not graduate in six years – that's in Texas, and...

**Jim Peake**

46%...

**Howard Berg**

Will not graduate college in six years.

**Jim Peake**

Okay, so that says to me, being the uneducated podcast guy out here on the Internet that maybe that could use some improvement.

**Howard Berg**

And then the reason that problem exists is most of them don't want to improve it – it's a morass. It's basically – I taught for 10 years; I worked in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights. I was with a student who was reading a book backwards and upside down; so I reported it to Dean of Guidance, which is what you're supposed to do, and he said "That's Mohammed, he's from Afghanistan", this is like 15 years ago, and he's never been to school. Well he's in school now, and he's got a big problem, he can't read. He says, "I know all about – he's going to be 21 in six months. Tell me does he come every day?" I said yes. He says, "Then we're getting paid, don't worry about it." I said, "But you've got six months, and he's here every day; what are you going to do to help him the next six months?" He looked at me and says, "We're getting paid. We're throwing him out in six months, what are you worrying about?" I said, "What about the kid?" He threw me out of his office because I had the gall to suggest that the Dean of Guidance should actually care about a kid who's showing up every day, who can't read. Why would he want to do anything about that? We're getting paid, what's the difference? And that's the attitude – and I have seen it in three schools I worked in. The most important person in that school was the attendance counselor because that's where the money comes from, the attendance...

**Jim Peake**

That's ridiculous. That's...

**Howard Berg**

So we started our own school system, and we're putting it all over the country.

**Jim Peake**

And this is a home schooling course?

**Howard Berg**

[22:45] It's home schooling, but it's like water; it will fit into any curriculum. We use it with private schools to help boost the academics and lower the operating cost, and we use it in public schools. Laguna Beach is very interested in this – that's sort of like a Beverly Hills District, and Orange County, and they saw the value in this. And we're negotiating right now to bring it into that system. And there are schools that care – like, the Laguna school cares, but a lot of schools just don't seem to get it that there's a way to fix the problem. What they're interested in most schools are tests.

If you're a superintendent, and you make a smarter kid smarter, there's no win; it doesn't give you any job security. If you take a kid who's at an eighth grade reading level in the sixth grade and take him to a ninth grade reading level in the sixth grade, nobody cares; what they are interested in is taking a third grade reading level to the sixth grade reading level, and that's where you get your job security as a superintendent. So, the focus at the – it's very political – the focus in the system has been on bringing lower students up to the bare minimum standards rather than helping the students that are already there get better, because that doesn't enhance your chance of keeping your position. So there's a selective pressure on these people to focus more on low achievers and just bringing up to bare minimum – that will keep them employed. And you really can't blame them, because that's what their job security is hinging on; that's...

**Jim Peake**

That's the way our antiquated education system's set up.

**Howard Berg**

Why do you think we have a school system that's shut down for July and August? So kids can go home to the farm and help bring in the crops – it was set up for farmers. How many children today have that problem in New York City, in Chicago, in Dallas – they have to bring in the crops? But still, we're on a 10-month system. In fact, when you go to summer school to make up a deficiency, how many weeks does it take to learn geometry in summer school?

**Jim Peake**

How many weeks – probably six weeks, eight weeks...

**Howard Berg**

Four to six weeks. How long does it take to make up biology in the summer?

**Jim Peake**

Same.

**Howard Berg**

So why does it take 10 months the rest of the year? It's because they get more jobs; you have to keep people employed. There's no advantage in a school that's working on a clock, garaging students and getting paid by the student to speed it up. They won't make more money that way; the pressure is to keep them as long as you can. And so, our school is set up not on a clock, it's set up on performance.

We had a young man in Sugar Land, finish high school biology in a week – and you'll say, what did he learn? Our tests are all essay tests; here's some of the essays. How does ATP power a cell? Describe the genetic code and how it works? This is an 11-year-old, and he had 340 essay questions at that level, and got four wrong – and if he could get 340 questions right – well, 336 questions right in one week, then good for him. Why should he sit for another 10 months to learn what he already knows? We moved him to the next course. We don't work on a clock, we work on performance.

We did this with graduate students, University of Phoenix – not Phoenix, Laterno. Dr. Beasley is a business professor for 18 years, and he taught a course in operations management, which is considered to be the driest, most difficult course in the MBA program – and he gave them the

option of using our system versus the traditional. And every student in the course voted to take the system. They finished the 8-week curriculum in two and a half weeks, and the lowest grade on the final was a 92. The average, normal grade on the final – remember it wasn't his test, it was the school's test – the normal average grade would have been a 75. And then this school got ticked off because he didn't take eight weeks, he only took 2½ weeks. It was on a clock. And that's the problem; we are in an antiquated system. It should be based on performance and learning, not on how many hours you sit in a chair doing nothing and learning what you already know.

**Jim Peake**

Well, it sounds like it would make learning a whole lot more fun if I'm able to get through the material and comprehend it.

**Howard Berg**

For me, I brought a Kaypro II in 1985, that was before Windows; its CPM came with 10 books – I wrote and published an article in Wordstar the next day. So I learnt word processing, CPM, and data processing in one night – nobody to help me because no one had brought a computer yet that I knew. And I learnt it well enough to teach word processing in a junior high school for two years. And it just shows you how nice this is; when you have something you really want to do and you really need to learn, and you can learn 80 times faster than normal – it gives you a real competitive edge.

[27:40] So let me demonstrate how fast your brain can learn. Let me give you another specific technique, a memory technique – I'm going to give you 10 things to memorize – and I'd like our listeners to do this as well, and I'm not going to show you how the first time, because...

**Jim Peake**

You want me to list them as well?

**Howard Berg**

Yeah, let the listeners do this too, it would be fun. After I give you the list, and you won't be able to do it, I'm going to show you how to do it, and then how to use this to learn things. So you'll see how easy it is with this system.

**Jim Peake**

Shall I write these down?

**Howard Berg**

No, that's the whole point, you don't need to; you didn't have to write it down with the dime either. Here we go; we want to remember: pole, shoes, tricycle, car, glove, gun, dice, skate, cat and bowling pins. I'm going to be right now, Jim, you know a few of them, but not all 10 backwards and forwards. Is that a fair presumption?

**Jim Peake**

Yes.

**Howard Berg**

Okay, well in about 3½ minutes from now, you'll know the whole list backwards and forwards.

**Jim Peake**

Okay.

**Howard Berg**

This was discovered thousands of years ago by the Greeks, things you know already that are in your memory, work like hangers. What do you do with a hanger?

**Jim Peake**

You put it on a – you hook it on a post...

**Howard Peake**

Right, and you put clothes on it, you hang things on it. Well, the hangers we are going to use are things you know. I know you can count to 10, I know our listeners can count to 10, so you use the numbers from one to 10 to learn ten things; let's start with the number one; doesn't it look like a pole, a big, tall number one? So what's one?

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Two, how many shoes you are wearing?

**Jim Peake**

Two.

**Howard Berg**

What's two going to be?

**Jim Peake**

Shoes.

**Howard Berg**

What's one?

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Three, tricycle, how many wheels on a tricycle?

**Jim Peake**

Three.

**Howard Berg**

What's three?

**Jim Peake**

Tricycle.

**Howard Berg**

Two?

**Jim Peake**

Shoes.

**Howard Berg**

One?

**Jim Peake**

Pole. Boy, that was easy.

**Howard Berg**

It's going to get easy, you're going to be able to do the whole thing. Four, car. How many tires are on a car?

**Jim Peake**

Four.

**Howard Berg**

So what's four?

**Jim Peake**

Car.

**Howard Berg**

What was two?

**Jim Peake**

Shoes.

**Howard Berg**

What was one?

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

What's three?

**Jim Peake**

Tricycle.

**Howard Berg**

Notice I'm jumping; doesn't matter, because you're not memorizing, you're associating.

**Jim Peake**

Right, right.

**Howard Berg**

Five, gloves. How many fingers are in a glove?

**Jim Peake**

Five.

**Howard Berg**

What's five?

**Jim Peake**

Gloves.

**Howard Berg**

What's three?

**Jim Peake**

Tricycle.

**Howard Berg**

What's one?

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Six, gun. How many bullets in a six gun?

**Jim Peake**

Six.

**Howard Berg**

So six is?

**Jim Peake**

Gun.

**Howard Berg**

Four was?

**Jim Peake**

Four is car.

**Howard Berg**

Two is?

**Jim Peake**

Shoes.

**Howard Berg**

Seven is lucky in dice. So, what's seven?

**Jim Peake**

Dice.

**Howard Berg**

Five was the number of fingers in a...

**Jim Peake**

Glove.

**Howard Berg**

Three is a...?

**Jim Peake**

Tricycle.

**Howard Berg**

And one is a...?

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Eight rhymes with skate; rhymes work. What's eight?

**Jim Peake**

Skate.

**Howard Berg**  
What was six?

**Jim Peake**  
Six gun.

**Howard Berg**  
Four?

**Jim Peake**  
Car.

**Howard Berg**  
Two?

**Jim Peake**  
Shoes.

**Howard Berg**  
Good. Nine, how many lives does a cat have?

**Jim Peake**  
Nine lives.

**Howard Berg**  
What's a nine?

**Jim Peake**  
A kitty.

**Howard Berg**  
What was seven lucky in?

**Jim Peake**  
Dice.

**Howard Berg**  
Five is a...?

**Jim Peake**  
Five is a glove.

**Howard Berg**  
Three?

**Jim Peake**  
Three is a tricycle.

**Howard Berg**  
One?

**Jim Peake**  
Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Ever go bowling? How many pins are in a lane?

**Jim Peake**

How many pins are in a lane?

**Howard Berg**

Ten.

**Jim Peake**

Ten.

**Howard Berg**

So, ten is bowling pins. What's ten? Bowling pins. Let's do the whole list together; one...

**Jim Peake**

Pole.

**Howard Berg**

Two...

**Jim Peake**

Shoes.

**Howard Berg**

Three...

**Jim Peake**

Tricycle.

**Howard Berg**

Four...

**Jim Peake**

Car.

**Howard Berg**

Five...

**Jim Peake**

Gloves.

**Howard Berg**

Six...

**Jim Peake**

Shooter. Gun.

**Howard Berg**

Seven...

**Jim Peake**

Seven is lucky dice.

**Howard Berg**

Eight rhymes with...?

**Jim Peake**

Skate.

**Howard Berg**

Nine is a...?

**Jim Peake**

Nine is a... Hold on, hold on... Nine...

**Howard Berg**

Think about it. Cat.

**Jim Peake**

Cat.

**Howard Berg**

There you go. And ten was the game of...?

**Jim Peake**

Ten was the game of bowling.

**Howard Berg**

Good. Here's how to use this; it's actually a tool. You know when you have to learn numbers in work, school, statistics, hotel numbers – 3.14, that's the value of pi, you know how quickly everyone forgets that. You learn it, and five minutes later, "What was it?"

**Jim Peake**

3.14.

**Howard Berg**

Here's how you remember it. You make a movie out of it; three is a tricycle, one is a pole, four is a car – tricycle hits the pole on a car – I'll play you the movie, you give me the value of pi. Tricycle, what number?

**Jim Peake**

Three.

**Howard Berg**

Hits a pole...

**Jim Peake**

One.

**Howard Berg**

...on a car.

**Jim Peake**

Four.

**Howard Berg**

Now you know how to figure out the value of pi – tricycle, pole, car. And you can use this with larger numbers, phone numbers, room numbers in a hotel, parking areas when you have a huge parking, like in an airport parking lot and you can't find your car, you make pictures. And now you have a way to remember numbers – and that's what we teach. If they go to [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com), again, we have the program online, it's available, and they could become an affiliate and sell this

on their own website to help other people. And if they are interested in getting a student in the school or starting their own school, they can e-mail me through the website.

**Jim Peake**

Right. Is this up on Amazon too?

**Howard Berg**

No, it isn't.

**Jim Peake**

No? Okay.

**Howard Berg**

[32:48] No. This is something we self-produce, and we're very excited; we've seen so many wonderful things with this program. We had a group of kids do a course in sophomore psychology, college sophomore psychology – these are 12 to 15-year-olds – lifelong developmental psychology. These kids had a 30-chapter book. Using the technique that we have in our program, they finished the course in one week. And then 18 of them took the CLEP – the CLEP is the advanced placement test. Fifteen out of 18 kids got the college credit in one week – that's phenomenal.

**Jim Peake**

Wow!

**Howard Berg**

I mean, nobody hears of these things happening on a normal day-to-day thing in a school. You hear about a genius kid here or a genius kid there, but when you see kid after kid after kid doing this, and they are normal people, that's a breakthrough – and that's why I'm here; I'm here to let people know there is a solution – and it's not just for kids. How many people are sitting at their desks each day, wondering how they could stay on top of all the information they need to make decisions? Driving themselves crazy, with all the letters and the e-mails and the magazines and the newspaper articles, and the information they have to use for correspondence, and for taking certification exams, like the things for preparing a financial plan or a real estate test or a GMAT or an LSAT and they are going absolutely out of their minds, because nobody teaches them how to learn – and that's exactly what we do, we teach learning, we don't just teach speed reading.

**Jim Peake**

Right; so you've got the home course, and do you also have like, class courses, like, where you show up and...

**Howard Berg**

Yes, they can e-mail me at [mrreader@msn.com](mailto:mrreader@msn.com). I do live trainings – in fact, we're a not for profit – one of our businesses is a not for profit. If people wanted a free 30-minute program on the Web for their company, or their church, or their school, or their college courses – it's not just for one person, if they have – they can use a webcam and a laptop projector, and I can go online and do a 30-minute program using my projectoring webcam from here, and then, afterwards they can ask questions – and I'd be happy to volunteer that, we do that all the time. We are very concerned about the illiteracy in this country, we're trying to fight it, and we also know that if enough people see what we do. Couple of them are going to say, you know what, this is something I really want – I don't want to just hear about it, I want to actually accomplish what he's talking about. These are the people who really want to be successful, or people who want to be leaders, and they end up taking a program or end up becoming an affiliate, or starting a school, and they make a lot of money and they help a lot of people. And that's how I make my business work, and I can afford to be generous with my time, because there are enough smart people out there that understand what I'm doing is important and can help other people, and help them make lots of money doing it.

**Jim Peake**

Right; so they can actually, you said, start a school, like a speed reading school?

**Howard Berg**

No, their own junior high, high school.

**Jim Peake**

Really?

**Howard Berg**

Oh, absolutely. We set schools up all over the country. See, Dr. Beasley has two Ph.D.s, and he is able to give out a State of Texas diploma through his extension program. And all they really need is a place where kids can plug into a wireless network. We have a school in a karate dojo in the Houston area. The building is gigantic, it's a huge gym, and the karate classes start at five o'clock. So this whole building sits empty all day, like a music studio might or a dance studio. And they come in, they have folding tables, they unfold the tables, they put the chairs out, they have a wireless network – we do all the teaching. All the work is done on the Internet; each student gets the homework, is e-mailed to them, they do the readings online using a disk that they get, and then they e-mail the homework back for correction. So the person who is actually there isn't doing the instruction, they're doing the proctoring, they're making sure they don't cheat on the test, that they are actually doing the work that they are assigned and not throwing furniture around the room, and that they are safe – that they are sitting in a safe environment, and not running around the street when they are supposed to be doing work. And we charge like \$200 a month per student to teach all the courses, and we also provide college planning and SAT training, and most of the people doing this charge between 600 and \$850 a month. So they make the difference between the 200 they are paying us and the 650 to 850 per student that they collect, and they are making a really nice side income doing this and helping the kids.

**Jim Peake**

[37:32] So what's the youngest age that you can get these kids involved in this type of program?

**Howard Berg**

The youngest age for this program is sixth grade.

**Jim Peake**

Sixth grade, okay.

**Howard Berg**

And it's really not an age thing, because a lot of our kids are home schooled, and some of these home schooled kids are – at eight years old are in sixth grade. However, we do have a K25 program, the difference is, the younger children need an adult to teach them; they can't read, they can't write, they can't count yet. So you can't expect a kindergartener to go online, download their homework, read the exercises and fill in the boxes, because they don't know how. So they need an adult to teach them up until about the sixth grade, and then the model shifts. We're very much on the same kind of model as Oxford. And if you're familiar with Oxford, the students don't go to classes, they have a mentor; and the mentor gives them the work that they need to do and then they report back and they look over what they are doing and tell them what they need to fix and what they did correctly. So the students are learning how to teach themselves.

**Jim Peake**

So Oxford in England?

**Howard Berg**

Yes. We are following the same model as the Oxford model; it's the Paideia system; the Paideia system was started by Mortimer Adler. Mortimer Adler was the editor of the Britannica series for

38 years, and of the Great Western Books. And he devised a way to accelerate learning, and none of the schools would listen to him. So we did a hybrid of the Oxford model, the Paideia system, and then we put it on steroids by boosting the performance using accelerated learning. Dr. Beasley, my business partner, taught college for 18 years, went to college 22 years, has two Ph.D.s, has an MBA, which he got in 50 weeks while he was in the military, full-time enlisted as an officer, did it in the evening on a real program, not an online, and he has a Bachelor of Science. Now he takes his experience with teaching college and learning what he has done, and I take my knowledge in psychobiology, and we combined our two sets of skills and we've got a super system, which teaches reading, study, test taking and writing.

We even have an SAT prep program. We had 11 and 12-year-olds scoring 1100 and 1200 in the SAT, before they took algebra or geometry. That's a true story. We just had a 15-year-old, she scored a 780 on the writing, a 730 on the math, and a 700 on the reading – she's 15. She was in community college, she's in Denver, and in her bio course, her first college course, she got 100 on every exam; so the kids and the adults in the course got angry, because she ruined the curve. And they said, "What are you trying to do, break some kind of record?" And she says, "Yeah." Good for her.

**Jim Peake**

Yeah. Okay, so we are talking – I mean, I'm not a biologist and I don't have the math skills or the math knowledge or the math ability, so – at least I don't think I do, I haven't really applied myself, so I don't know. So you're talking people with normal – what I call normal intelligence can...

**Howard Berg**

Oh yeah, these are not genius kids. The young man who finished bio in a week, he was in the dean's office every week; when he went to regular school, he was so bored – what do they do in regular school? The smart kids have to slow down for the slow kids to catch up, and the slow kids are pushed at a pace that they can't keep up with, they don't learn anything, and then everybody is miserable.

**Jim Peake**

And at the end of the day you've got a 46% flunk-out rate.

**Howard Berg**

Yeah. We have every student on their own curriculum. Every student works at their own pace. So you get 15 people in a classroom, but no two students are doing the same program.

**Jim Peake**

So do you think the public school system would ever be able to manage a individual, self-paced type of education system, if...

**Howard Berg**

I seriously doubt that they would do it because it's not in their best interests; they are basically there to create jobs, and they would need fewer teachers to do it...

**Jim Peake**

They would need fewer teachers to do this?

**Howard Berg**

Right. What they would do with us, what we find they are interested in is, they are interested in this test scores. We could show students how to perform better on standardized tests, than this route, because that means the superintendent gets his job back next year. More kids scored higher on the test – that's what they're interested in, I'm sorry – it's unfortunate, you ask anybody in the system, and the number one priority in the schools right now is the test because that's what the government is holding them accountable for. And if your job depended on test scores, what do you think you would focus on?

**Jim Peake**

Strictly test scores.

**Howard Berg**

And that's what they do, and you really can't blame them. I would do the same thing, but I'm in the education business and they are not, they are there to teach the test.

**Jim Peake**

They are in the testing business basically. Well, they are in the standardization business, because they are trying to standardize everybody into the same buckets. It's a damn shame really. So the good part is, you've got a better mousetrap and...

**Howard Berg**

[42:57] Yeah, and we're selling it, and the people listening, they can get involved – they can get involved in several ways; they can get involved by taking the program for themselves. If all they want is to be able to do more in their own life, and they know that information is the key to learning, and they can learn more in less time, then they go to [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com).

**Jim Peake**

So if I take the home study course and the program, and let's say if I'm averaging 200 words a minute or something of that sort...

**Howard Berg**

You'd expect that in 2½ hours to be between 350 and 450. That's extremely realistic.

**Jim Peake**

In 2½ hours?

**Howard Berg**

2½ hours, yes.

**Jim Peake**

Okay, so then how about in 2½ weeks, where would I be then?

**Howard Berg**

It depends on what you do with it; if you continue to practice as I suggest, I would expect you to go much faster, I'll explain you why very easily. When you're driving a car, you know when you first drive, you have to think where's the gas, where's the brake, and you hit the brake, you think you're going to go through the front window...

**Jim Peake**

It becomes natural after a while.

**Howard Berg**

About four weeks, you're driving, you put on the radio, you won't even know you're in the car. What we want to do is to have the same thing happen in reading; in about four to six weeks, what happens at the beginning is, the brain has seven chunks that it can process data with consciously; so two of those chunks are focusing on what they are doing to read. In a month's time, those two chunks don't need to be involved anymore, they go back to reading, and the actual reading activity becomes instinctive like driving a car. So just simply by getting that extra two processing chunks back for the learning, helps you to go quicker. So it takes a couple of weeks, like learning to type or learning to swim, and after you have done it for a bit, it just becomes very instinctive, it doesn't require a lot of thinking and you're able to do it effortlessly, and that's exactly what we want to see happen. So yes, people can get much quicker with very

little effort, but they do need to practice; and I can't make them do that; I could tell them to do it, I could tell them why it's important, and I could tell them what to...

**Jim Peake**

Right, but they have got to take the initiative. So I could theoretically coach my young 8-year-old son on how to do this.

**Howard Berg**

I don't know if...

**Jim Peake**

Or that's too young?

**Howard Berg**

What you can teach them at eight years old is how to study, how to take notes, how to memorize – I taught my grandbabies, I'm a grandpa; we taught the grandkids when they were three years old that memory technique I showed you – and they learned it – they're not stupid, very little kids can do that. So yeah, the memory stuff is great for young kids, I often teach it to very young kids. The reading program, there are parts of it you could teach the children learning to read, but I wouldn't start them on speed reading until they can read. Because taking a kid who is learning to swim and throwing them into deep water before they can swim is not a good idea.

**Jim Peake**

Right. Okay, that's good to know, because obviously, you know how aggressive parents are these days in wanting to get little Johnny up and running on pretty much everything to give him that competitive advantage.

**Howard Berg**

And we want them to have it, but we want them to be happy, we want them to be kids – there's a reason they have a childhood. The nice thing about our program is, as they get smarter, they have more time to do things they like. A lot of the kids in our program have all kinds of outside hobbies and interests. The 15-year-old – she won the Colorado State Music Competition and got to play with the Denver Philharmonic at 15. What a thrill! That's a kid who is having a really thorough life; she's scoring As in college at 15, and she's playing with a professional orchestra and an audience, and she's doing fantastic. What kind of life do you see for that child compared to the kids that are barely able to read or write, which is so many of the kids in the schools today? That's why we are doing this, because a lot of these kids could perform better, but nobody teaches them how. They yell at the kids and then they don't show them what they did wrong and how to fix it. And it's not just the kids, it's the adults – I can't think of a person today who hasn't been struggling to stay on top of the information they have to know for work.

**Jim Peake**

Yeah, I totally agree with that. That's an accurate statement in my view.

**Howard Berg**

[47:11] We have a solution, and it's a quick one. Four hours is all the reading program takes, and then you practice it for about six weeks, and you go to the next level and you're ready.

**Jim Peake**

And then what happens at the next level, what's...

**Howard Berg**

Well, what happens at the next level is, your speed goes up, and you're able to do it – there's actually four levels of learning, and this is in any subject. The first level is called unconscious incompetence; you don't know you don't know, so you don't care because you don't know. Second level is called conscious incompetence; you know you don't know, so you take a course

to fix the problem. Third level is called conscious competence; you know, but you have to think a lot to make it work, and it takes some of your time away from what you're doing. The fourth level is unconscious competence when you don't have to think about it, you're so good at it, it just works by itself, it's on autopilot – and that's really what we want to get them on, autopilot.

**Jim Peake**

So that's the fourth course?

**Howard Berg**

It's not a course – that's the, any subject you learn, guitar, swimming, math, there's...

**Jim Peake**

So what you're saying is, this one course that you've got here...

**Howard Berg**

Is actually four programs.

**Jim Peake**

It's got four programs in it.

**Howard Berg**

Reading, studying, test taking and writing; they are all integrated, and they all work together, but they can all be taken separately.

**Jim Peake**

And so if somebody buys that course or engages himself in that course, they can master those four different disciplines.

**Howard Berg**

If they follow the instructions and do the exercises the way we tell them to, yes. They have to follow instructions. I'll give you a good example, somebody called me up, "It didn't work." I said, "Okay, what book did you use?" Calculus. And I specifically say in the introduction; pick a book you're familiar with, there's no new words or ideas, so the only thing that would throw you is your speed and not the content. I said, "Are you a good math student?" He says, "Terrible." Have you ever studied calculus before? No. You're trying to learn how to read faster in calculus, which you know nothing about. That's like me trying to read faster in Chinese – you have to speak the language to read it. Can you speed read calculus? Absolutely. But can you learn to speed read while you're learning calculus, at the same time? No. You want to be in a book that's like, "George Washington was the first President of the United States." And the only reason you wouldn't know what that means is, you're reading too fast, not because, "Who's George Washington?" That's compared to the derivative of  $x^2$  is  $2x$ .

**Jim Peake**

Do you find a lot of people that don't follow directions?

**Howard Berg**

Not a lot of people but as you probably know, there are some people who just don't care what you tell them and do what they want because they think they know better, and you're doing something for 20 years and you know that this is what works and they don't listen. So, I can't fix that. If someone won't listen, I can't fix that, but if they follow the instructions, they're going to get really, really incredible results. We have thousands of people – actually I see about – I know the program was once done by Nightingale Conant about 10 years ago, and they sold 650,000 copies, and you figure an average copy got used by two people, that's 1.3 million, plus the other ones we have done, I've done 800 live seminars and a number of other things. So I would say there's over 1.5 million, 2 million people that we helped already.

**Jim Peake**

That's awesome. That is really good.

**Howard Berg**

It's exciting; I really like what I do.

**Jim Peake**

I hear it in your voice. So, I don't want to keep you that much longer because we're coming up on an hour; but just talk to me real quick about the finger movements on pages – you know, I've seen people speed reading and they're moving their fingers. What is that all about?

**Howard Berg**

When you're reading, you're hearing the page instead seeing it. Your hand can move your eyes more rapidly across the camera, so you're able to see more in less time. And so the hand helps to overcome this inertia, this need to look at things one word at a time. So that's the reason you're using your hand. And again, they can go to [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com) and they could get the reading program; it can be taken online, or we can send them a DVD set, and after they finish that then we can sign them up into the study, test and write programs as well. And if they want to become an affiliate, they could sign up right there and begin – all you need to do is put the link on your website, and if anyone clicks through on your website to my website and buys anything, they'll be able to immediately use it.

**Jim Peake**

Right, right. Well, this has been awesome. I've learnt a lot just on this interview Howard.

**Howard Berg**

Well, that's why we are here – I enjoy doing it, and I want to thank the people for listening to us. I hope some of them will take advantage and go to [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com). They could also call me if they have a question at 866mrreader – that's my home by the way, that's a house. I don't use an office, I use my home. 866mrreader, which is 866-677-3233; I try to help. I try to answer any questions they have, I'm willing to do free programs for them, for their companies and schools that help boost learning. You have to do something; the world's in trouble, and we found something that's going to make a difference and it's our responsibility to get it into the hands of the people who can use it.

**Jim Peake**

That's an awesome mission. Well, I can't thank you enough. This is Jim Peake at [mysuccessgateway.com](http://mysuccessgateway.com) closing out an awesome interview with Mr. Howard Berg, and you can find him at [howardberg.com](http://howardberg.com). Thanks so much, Howard.

**Howard Berg**

Thanks for having me.