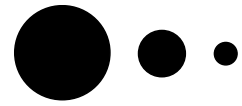


# **THE GROWTH MARATHON**

**One Stride At a Time**



**KNOWLEDGE**

**EMPATHY**

**WRITING**

**ON READING PT.1**

**MEMORY**

**WHY READ?**

**ELOQUENCE**

**VOCABULARY**

**TGM**

• ● ● **THE GROWTH MARATHON** ● ●

---

— **One Stride At a Time** —

## **Contents**

Introduction ..... 1

History of reading ..... 1

Why we should read ..... 2

Benefits of reading ..... 3

Conclusion ..... 5

## Introduction

Reading. We hear a lot about reading these days. We are being told to read more. Do we even know why we need to read? Do we know how we have to read? Do we know what we have to read? Having that mantra ("You have to read") repeatedly bombarded at us can make some read with no purpose, can make others rebel and read less, and can help a few others read adequately and synthesize what they have read.

In my quest to figure out a better way to read and understand what I read, I decided to write this article series (consisting of three parts). I think you'll be able to get value from this.

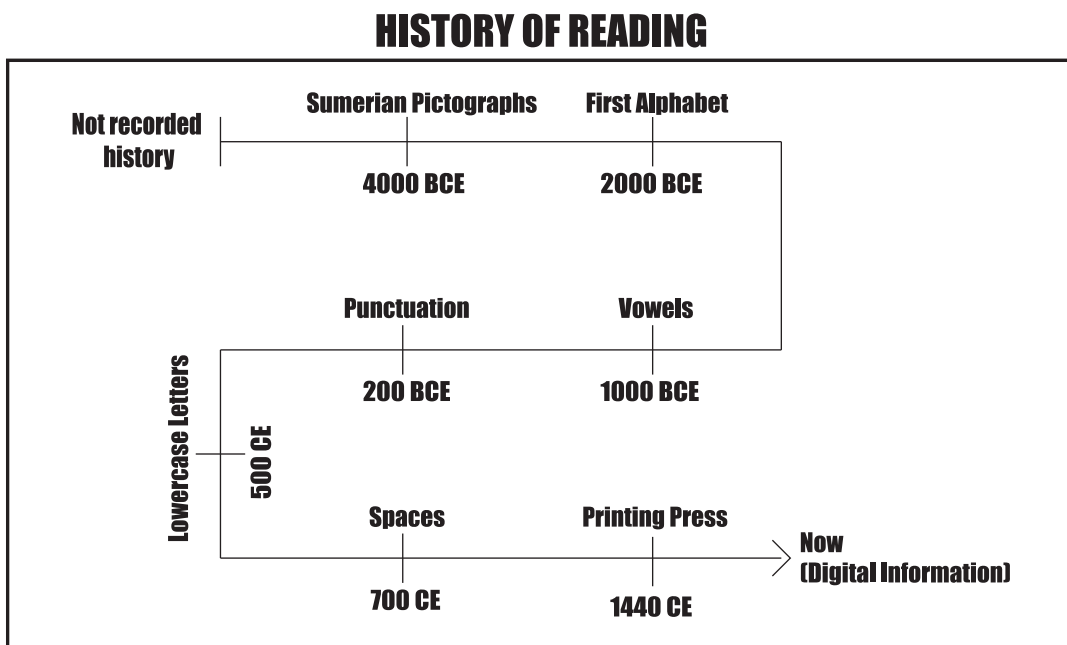
I believe reading's ultimate goal is to understand things in less time than the person who researched on them. My aim by the end of this article series is to answer the following:

Why we read - How to read (and remember) - What to read

This first article will touch on why we read or rather, why we should read. Let's get into it.

(**Note:** Every time I say reading, I mean "Active Reading", i.e., engaging with what you are reading.)

## History of reading



Before talking about the importance of reading and the benefits of reading for the brain, let's get back in time and pinpoint when reading was created. Yeah, created. Reading is not a natural progression in our growth, human beings had



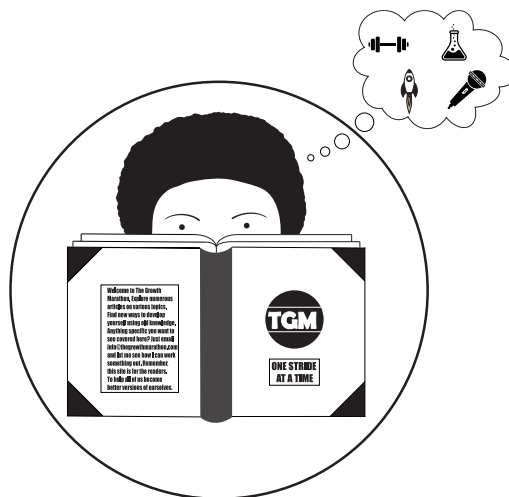


- Summarize your readings, go through them, package your argument, the contradictions etc.
- Pick the right words, then place them into adequate sentences, then into paragraphs.
- Each paragraph should flow into the other, there should be a sequence.
- Writing is iterative, modify each sentence and paragraph till you get the one that is the most impactful. See if you can discover what you believe to be true (I like this point. Is reading one of the ways human beings use to find the truth? Informative reading is, but you need to engage with the text.)

The above steps build you a foundation. A lot of successful people are extremely good at articulating what they want. Simply put, reading helps you think and discover what you believe is true.

In my case, the problem I was trying to solve was "The necessity of reading". As I mentioned before, we constantly get bombarded with advice about reading (from peers, mentors, teachers, social media posts etc). I suspect it all comes from a place of care, but just reading sentences like "Reading is good" repeatedly rubs me the wrong way and usually makes me not want to do it. But I've enjoyed reading in the past, hence researching for this article was just to provide myself with more evidence of why I should read more (you decide if you should after reading this article and thinking about it).

## Benefits of reading



The brain is one of the most important organs in the body, controlling most processes in our body. Even though it is not a muscle, it should be trained to keep it in optimum shape. Reading stimulates the brain, which according to various studies improves how well the brain functions.

One of the main benefits of reading is that it enhances our memory (the more you read, the more you train your brain to recall, the better it gets at it). I think the ability to recall is crucial for our survival because if you don't remember information and how to do different things, you cannot function properly in our societies.

Better memory is just one of the benefits of reading. I present five additional benefits of reading below:

### **1. Knowledge acquisition:**

Reading and writing allowed human beings to transmit knowledge over space and time. This helped us as a species to develop faster. Knowledge acquisition is beneficial for individuals because it provides you with more tools to face the world's challenges (Do a simple search on the internet to find some advantages of knowledge acquisition).

To enhance your knowledge acquisition skills, reading is crucial. The brain is made up of different parts responsible for different functions. The process of turning letters into words and words into thoughts (overseen by the parietal lobe), which results in understanding text can be enhanced by reading. Another brain function key in knowledge acquisition is processing visual information (i.e., interpreting and using visual information from our surroundings, this is overseen by the occipital lobe) and reading equally boosts this ability. You can read more on this [here](#).

### **2. Better vocabulary and articulation:**

Struggling to express your ideas? Words from novels, magazines, news articles etc. that you read can trickle into your vocabulary. Better vocabulary and articulation imply better communication, which is an [in-demand soft skill](#). According to a [survey](#) conducted by Cengage in 2019, 69% of employers hire candidates with better communication skills. Some other research indicate that employees with better communication skills also get promoted faster. These benefits can also be felt in your personal life.

Don't you feel frustrated when you cannot clearly express what you have in your mind? I know I do, time for me to start reading Rhythm of War, I've postponed that for long enough.

### **3. Improved writing skills:**

Reading adequately (i.e., engaging with what you are reading) is bound to improve the way you structure your thoughts and eventually how you write, as writing is just formalized thinking. This clearly depends on the books you read; you need to gradually step up the level of difficulty as you get better. What are the benefits of improved writing skills? I'll let you do your research on that, in the words of Jordan Peterson, if you can write adequately, "[You are absolutely deadly, nothing can get in your way](#)".

### **4. More resilient brain**

Regular reading helps you when you are not so young anymore. Those who have engaged in mentally stimulating activities (like reading) most of their life are less likely to develop dementia (According to a [2013 study](#) conducted by Rush University Medical Center).

In my opinion, more active reading implies more recall, and the more you push your brain to recall, the better it gets at remembering information, forming stronger connections in your brain, and slowing down age-related memory deterioration.

## 5. Improved Empathy

Reading activates numerous parts of the brain, making it a life-like experience (Seems like when you read something related to a sense, that part of the brain also gets activated, like reading about perfumes activates the olfactory cortex, reading about how a surface feels leads to activity in the sensory cortex etc). As we live what we read, reading about people's emotions can help us understand them better and put ourselves in the shoes of the characters we are reading. This can seep into our real-life interactions.

These are a few benefits of reading that resonate with me. Now that we've had a look at the benefits of reading, let's figure out ways to get the most out of what we read.

## Conclusion

This article touches on why we should read. The brief history on reading provided was just to remind us how far we have come and hopefully give us a better appreciation for reading. To substantiate this, I provide some proven benefits of reading.

The next article ([Part 2](#)) will touch on ways to understand and remember what we read. Some techniques to help with that will equally be provided such as elaborative rehearsal and Feynman's Technique.

What's your best takeaway from this article? Let me know in the comment section [here](#).