KARAOKE
READING & MATH

Sing Along. Read Along. Solve Along.



Dr. Gene A Constant
Global Sovereign University Press

The Reading Gap, in Numbers

This book exists because of five numbers. Each one comes from a source you can look up.

Reading. In 2023, 28 percent of American adults aged 16 to 65 read at the lowest level measured, or below it. That is about 58.9 million people, up from 19 percent in 2017.

Numbers. In the same survey, 34 percent scored at the lowest level in using numbers, about 72 million people.

Songs. In India, film songs shown with their words on screen gave about 200 million weak readers roughly 30 minutes of reading practice a week.

Children. Among children there who saw many of those songs, 70 percent who began unable to read a letter became functional readers, against 34 percent of those who saw few.

A ruler. In 1975 the U.S. Navy paid for a way to measure how hard a page is to read. This book puts that ruler on every song.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, Highlights of the 2023 U.S. PIAAC Results (December 2024); PlanetRead research summary (2023), reporting studies by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and a World Bank estimate; Chief of Naval Technical Training, Research Branch Report 8-75 (1975).

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The case studies in this book are of two kinds. Real cases are matters of public record, with sources listed. Teaching cases are realistic illustrations; their people and places are invented, and any resemblance to real persons is coincidental. This book is education, not a promise of results. KARAOKE Reading is practice for people who can already sound out words, and it does not replace learning to read from the beginning. Every word problem in this book is made up.

GSU does not teach subjects. It teaches people to keep their lives from breaking down, and it proves they can.

Global Sovereign University: Different by Design. Better by Mission.


GLOBAL SOVEREIGN UNIVERSITY
The Education of the Future is HERE

Hear Chapter 1 Read Aloud

Your copy of this book comes with a private reading room on the Global Sovereign University website. Chapter 1 is there, ready to read on a phone or computer or to hear read aloud. Each word lights up as it is spoken, so you can follow along.

Point your phone’s camera at the code below. You will find the same code under the Chapter 1 title.

This room comes with the book and is not listed on our website. Listening uses the voice built into your own device, and nothing is recorded or sent anywhere.

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Not Because It Was Easy

YOUR PRINTABLE CARD

The KARAOKE Card

Every title from Global Sovereign University comes with a one-page job aid that leaves the book and goes to work. This is yours. Print this page and keep it by the screen where you practice. Each chapter is reduced to one idea and the question it asks of you.

HOW IT WORKS		ASK
1	**A song you know**	*Which song could I sing without the words?*
2	**Words on the screen**	*How many minutes of songs do I hear each week?*
3	**Ears check eyes**	*Which word did my ears catch me on today?*
4	**The right rung**	*Can I sound out most words in a headline?*
5	**The Navy ruler**	*What grade did I read today?*
6	**Borrow what works**	*What do I know from work that could teach?*

HOW TO USE IT		ASK
7	**Good, Better, Best**	*What was my best round, and can I beat it?*
8	**Listen and read**	*Which big word do I now recognize?*
9	**Numbers have words**	*Can I say 0.25 out loud?*
10	**Solve along**	*What did I save, and how did I check it?*
11	**Two at a time**	*Who will read with me this week?*
12	**The next verse**	*What will I sing tomorrow?*

Sing it. Read it. Solve it. Then do it again tomorrow. Learning is FUNdamental.

THE WHOLE BOOK IN ONE PICTURE

How KARAOKE Learning Works

The stage works the same way for words and for numbers. A voice speaks, a gold light moves, and your eyes follow. Read down each column, then across.

KARAOKE READING

Sing along. Read along.

1. **Pick a song you know**
   The words are already in you
2. **Set your speed**
   40 to 160 words a minute
3. **Follow the gold light**
   Each word lights as it is sung
4. **Ears check your eyes**
   Checked the moment you read it
5. **Three roads**
   Good, Better, Best, then Endless
6. **The Navy ruler**
   A grade on every song

KARAOKE MATH

Say it. Solve it.

1. **Pick a problem**
   A real-world word problem
2. **Hear every symbol**
   × is times, = is equals
3. **Start and change**
   What you have, what happens
4. **Say it, then do it**
   80 × 0.25 = 20
5. **Check it two ways**
   A quarter of 80 is 20
6. **Three roads**
   Good, Better, Best, then Endless

Your ears check your eyes.

The same gold light carries words and numbers.

ROOM 1 · FROM CHAPTER 1

The Kitchen Radio



A man in his fifties stands at a kitchen counter after a long shift. An old song comes on the radio and he sings every word without thinking, the way he has for forty years. On the counter beside him sits a letter he has not opened. He knows every word of the song. He does not yet know he is closer to reading the letter than he thinks.

A song you already know is the easiest page you will ever read, because you already know what it says.

from Chapter 1

ROOM 2 · FROM CHAPTER 2

Songs on the Village Screen



In a small village, a family gathers in front of a television in the evening. A film song plays, and the words run along the bottom of the screen, each one changing color as it is sung. The grandmother sings. The children sing. Without anyone telling them to, their eyes are following the words.

If you know the song and the words are on the screen, you cannot help reading them.

from Chapter 2

ROOM 3 · FROM CHAPTER 4

The Right Rung



A tutor and a grown learner sit at a library table with a newspaper. She points to five words in a headline and he sounds them out, slowly, one by one. He gets four. She smiles and turns her phone toward him, with the gold KARAOKE stage on it. He is ready.

KARAOKE Reading does not teach a person to read from nothing.

from Chapter 4

ROOM 4 · FROM CHAPTER 5

The Manual



A seventeen-year-old sailor sits on a bunk aboard ship in the early 1970s, a thick training manual open on his knees. He is reading slowly, lips moving, determined. Somewhere ashore, the Navy is paying a research team to find out whether manuals like this one fit the young men who have to learn from them.

if the reader cannot read the page, the problem may be the page, not the reader.

from Chapter 5

ROOM 5 · FROM CHAPTER 10

The Jacket on the Rack



A young mother stands at a clothing rack holding a jacket with a red sale tag. Her son, about ten, looks up at her. She says the problem out loud: eighty dollars, twenty-five percent off. He says the quarter first. They both laugh when they get sixty.

Checking an answer two different ways is one of the most valuable habits in math.

from Chapter 10

ROOM 6 · FROM CHAPTER 11

KARAOKE Night



In a church basement on a weeknight, eight people of every age sit facing one screen. A song is on, the words lit in gold, and they are going around the room, each reading one word. Someone misses one and everyone laughs, including him. On the wall, a paper sign shows last week’s best round.

A person who believes reading belongs to people like him keeps reading.

from Chapter 11

CHAPTER 1

A Song You Already Know

Hear this chapter read aloud
This reading room comes with the book and is not listed on our website.

There is a test I like to give people who tell me they are “not a reader.” I hum the first few notes of a song they grew up with, and then I stop. Nine times out of ten, they finish the line for me. They know every word. They know where each word falls in the tune, how long it lasts and what comes next. They have carried those words in their heads for twenty, forty, sixty years without ever trying to memorize them.

Then I ask a question. “If I showed you those same words on a screen, one at a time, while the song played, could you follow along?”

Most people say yes before they think about it. And they are right. A song you already know is the easiest page you will ever read, because you already know what it says. Your ears have done the hard part. All your eyes have to do is keep up.

That small idea is the heart of this book. GSU calls it KARAOKE Reading, and its younger brother KARAOKE Math. Every word lights up in gold at the very moment you hear it. Your eyes ride along with the light, and your ears tell your eyes they got it right. Do that for a few minutes a day, and you are reading more than you think, without a worksheet in sight.

The Problem Nobody Talks About

Here is a number that should stop every one of us cold. In 2023 the United States took part in the Survey of Adult Skills, run by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. It tested grown people, ages 16 to 65, on everyday reading. Twenty-eight percent of American adults scored at the lowest level or below it. That is about 58.9 million people. In 2017 the same share had been 19 percent. The line went the wrong way.

The numbers for math were worse. Thirty-four percent of American adults, about 72 million people, scored at the lowest level in numeracy, up from 29 percent in 2017.

A person at that lowest level can usually find one fact on a short, simple page. A menu, a sign, a price tag. What they cannot do with ease is read a page that asks them to put two ideas together, follow steps in order, or work out a number that is not printed for them. That is most of the paper that matters in a grown person’s life: the letter from work, the lease, the bill with a warning on it, the dosage on a medicine label, the sale price on a jacket.

Most of these people are not beginners. They went to school. Many of them can sound out a word if you give them time. What they never got was enough practice to make reading smooth, quick and automatic. Reading stayed work, so they did as little of it as they could, so it stayed work. It is a loop, and it tightens every year.

Practice Is the Missing Piece

Ask any coach how a player gets good, and you will hear one word before any other: reps. A basketball player shoots thousands of free throws. A pianist plays the same scale until her fingers find it in the dark. A Navy radioman, which is what I was in 1970, copies code until the dots and dashes turn into letters in his head without his having to count them.

Reading is the same. A child or a grown person who can sound out words still needs thousands of hours of reading before the words start to jump off the page on their own. The trouble is that practice is boring when it is hard, and it is hard when you have not had much practice. Nobody wants to sit down after a long shift and drill a list of words they already feel bad about.

So the question GSU asked was simple. Where do people already spend time with words, on purpose, because they enjoy it?

The answer was in the car, in the kitchen, at the ballgame, in church, at weddings and at every birthday party in the country. People sing. They sing along to the radio. They sing the anthem with their hand on their heart. They sing in the shower when nobody is listening. They sing the songs their grandparents sang. And while they sing, they are doing something that looks a great deal like reading practice, except that there is nothing to read.

Put the words on the screen, light each one as it is sung, and the practice is there.

What This Book Is

This is the story of a GSU innovation, told plainly. It explains where the idea came from, which turned out to be a professor watching a foreign film with subtitles and a country that loves its movie songs. It explains why it works, which comes down to how your ears and eyes check each other. It is also honest about where it stops working, because a tool that claims to do everything usually does nothing well.

It walks you through the two stages GSU has built so far. The first is Sing It, Read It, where old American songs light up word by word. The second is Say the Math, where every symbol in an equation lights up with its spoken word, so “3 × 4 = 12” becomes “three times four equals twelve.” It shows you KARAOKE Math, where a word problem about a jacket on sale is solved out loud, one lit word at a time. And it gives you a plan for doing all of this with another person, because two people at one screen beat one person alone almost every time.

Along the way you will meet a ruler the U.S. Navy paid to have built in 1975, so that sailors’ training manuals would fit the sailors who had to use them. GSU puts that same ruler on every song on its stage. I like that story for a reason you will understand by the end of Chapter 5.

Who This Book Is For

This book is for the grown reader who reads slower than he wants to, and who would rather nobody knew it. Nobody needs to know. The GSU pages need no account and no name, and the only thing they remember is your best round, kept on your own device.

It is for the parent who wants to help a child read more without another fight at the kitchen table. Pick a song you both know, press Start, and read the gold word out loud together.

It is for the young reader, eight and up, who can sound words out but has not yet found reading fun.

It is for the teacher, the tutor, the librarian, the pastor and the neighbor who keep meeting people who cannot read the paper in front of them, and who want something to offer that does not feel like a punishment.

And it is for anyone who has ever said, “I am just not a math person.” Numbers have words, too. Once you can say a problem out loud, you are halfway to solving it.

How to Use This Book

Read it straight through, or start with the part you need. Chapters 2 through 6 tell the story and the science. Chapters 7 and 8 show you the reading stage. Chapters 9 and 10 do the same for math. Chapter 11 is for two people working together, and Chapter 12 looks ahead.

Every chapter is short and ends with something to do. Most of it can be done on any phone, free, at www.globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading. Keep your phone close while you read. When the book says “try it,” try it. Five minutes with the light on will teach you more than five pages about the light.

One Word to Carry

At GSU we have a word we carry everywhere we can. The word is FUNdamental. It is not a joke. It is a claim. Learning can be fun. It can be retained. It can lead to a yearning for learning. A person who enjoys the practice does more of it, and a person who does more of it gets better. That loop can tighten the right way, too.

You already know the songs. Now let us light the words.

DEEP RESEARCH · WHO THE SURVEY TESTS

The Survey of Adult Skills tests adults aged 16 to 65 in more than thirty countries.

In the United States the average literacy score fell 12 points between 2017 and 2023, from 271 to 258. The people this book is written for are not a small group, and the number is growing.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Highlights of the 2023 U.S. PIAAC Results (December 2024).

CHAPTER 2

Words on the Screen



Try it: Sing It, Read It
globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading

In 1996 a young Indian scholar was finishing his doctorate in the United States. One evening, needing a break, he watched a Spanish film with English subtitles. He had studied Spanish, and as the actors spoke he found himself reading along in English while he listened to Spanish, matching the two in his head. Then a thought struck him that would shape the rest of his working life.

What if the songs in Hindi films were subtitled in Hindi?

Not translated. Subtitled in the same language they were sung in, word for word, so that what you hear is exactly what you read.

To understand why that idea mattered, you have to understand two things about India at the time. The first is that the country had hundreds of millions of people who had been to school but could barely read. They could recognize letters, maybe sound out a word, but they could not read a newspaper. Official counts called many of them literate. Their lives said otherwise.

The second is that India loved its film songs. Movies from Bombay, the city now called Mumbai, were full of songs, and those songs were played on television hour after hour, week after week. Families watched them together. Children knew every word. Grandparents knew every word. People who had not read a book in thirty years could sing a hundred songs from memory.

Put those two facts side by side, and you can see what he saw. A nation of weak readers was already spending hours every week with words it knew by heart. The words simply were not on the screen.

From an Idea to a Nation

Back in India, he joined the faculty of the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad and went to work. He named the idea Same Language Subtitling, SLS for short. He tested it, measured it and pushed it onto national television. By August 2002 it was running on a national scale.

The method was almost embarrassingly simple. Take a song that is already on TV. Run the words along the bottom of the screen in the same language. Light up, or change the color of, each word as it is sung, the way a karaoke machine does. That was it. No classroom, no teacher, no homework. The reading happened while people were doing something they already wanted to do.

He later founded a nonprofit to carry the work further. Its stated vision is a planet where everyone can read. The idea won a Library of Congress Literacy Award. A World Bank writer on education technology called it, in a phrase I have never forgotten, karaoke on Bollywood for mass reading. The same writer estimated that it gave about 200 million weak readers roughly 30 minutes of reading practice a week.

Thirty minutes a week does not sound like much until you multiply it by 200 million people and by every week of the year. No school system on earth could buy that much reading practice. Television was already paying for it.

What the Measurements Showed

An idea that sounds good is not the same as an idea that works, so the next question was the right one: did people actually read better?

The longest study followed children and adults over five years of weekly film songs with same-language subtitles. Among school children who could not read a single letter at the start, in 2002, 70 percent of those who saw a lot of subtitled songs had become functional readers by 2007. In the group that saw few subtitled songs, the figure was 34 percent. That is more than double. Among people aged 15 and older, the gains were smaller but still real: 14 percent of the high-exposure group moved from not being able to decode at all to functional reading, against 5 percent of the low-exposure group.

A later study compared two neighboring states over two years. One state broadcast about twenty films a week with same-language subtitles on the songs. The other did not. By 2015, 68 percent of third graders in the subtitling state could read at a first-grade level or better. In the other state, the figure was 43 percent, even though that state had started with slightly better scores.

Eye-tracking studies, which use a camera to record exactly where a person looks, gave a second kind of evidence. In one study of weak readers in a remote village, about 70 percent were caught reading the subtitles without being asked to. Nobody told them to read. Their eyes simply went to the words, because the words matched the song.

The man behind the idea had a phrase for this. He said same-language subtitles cause automatic and inescapable reading. If you know the song and the words are on the screen, you cannot help reading them. Your eyes go there on their own.

What GSU Took From It

When GSU went looking for new ways to help grown people and children read, this story jumped out for three reasons.

The first reason was the reader. The person the Indian studies were built for, someone who went to school, can sound out words, and never got enough practice to read a real page with ease, is the same person GSU serves. Most of our learners read at about a sixth-grade level. They are not beginners. They are people stuck in the middle of the climb.

The second reason was the price. Same-language subtitling costs almost nothing per reader, because it rides on something people already do for fun. GSU is a tuition-free nonprofit, and every tool it builds has to be free to the learner. An idea that turns entertainment into practice, with no tutor and no textbook required, fits our purse and our mission.

The third reason was the joy. Nobody has to be talked into singing a song they love. The practice is the fun part. That is what we mean when we say FUNdamental.

What GSU Did Not Take

Here is where honesty matters. The Indian results came from years of weekly exposure across whole states, measured by trained researchers. GSU has not run studies like that, and this book will not pretend that a few minutes on a web page will do for you what five years of television did for a village. The next two chapters explain why the idea works, and then, just as important, where it stops working.

What GSU did was borrow a proven idea from outside education, rebuild it for our learners, and put it where anyone with a phone can reach it, free, any hour of the day. That is how we find most of our best ideas.

Try It

Open www.globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading on your phone. Choose America the Beautiful. Leave the speed where it is and press Start. Do not try to read hard. Just let your eyes follow the gold light while you listen. When it is over, ask yourself one question: did you read every word? You probably did.

DEEP RESEARCH · A NAME FOR AN IDEA

Same Language Subtitling was first named in 1996.

The idea is simple enough to fit in three words: same language, on screen. A film song in Hindi gets its words in Hindi along the bottom of the picture, each word lit as it is sung. The World Bank estimated that the program gave about 200 million weak readers roughly 30 minutes of reading practice a week, without one classroom.

Source: PlanetRead research summary, Impact of SLS on reading literacy (2023).

CHAPTER 3

Why Your Ears Teach Your Eyes



Go further: free ways to learn to read
globalsovereignuniversity.org/ways-to-read

Reading is really two jobs done at once. The first job is turning marks on a page into sounds and words. Teachers call it decoding. The second job is understanding what those words mean together. A good reader does both so quickly that they feel like one thing. A struggling reader spends so much effort on the first job that there is little left for the second. By the time he has sounded out the end of a sentence, he has lost the start of it.

Here is the key fact that makes KARAOKE Reading work. Most struggling readers are much better at understanding spoken words than written ones. A grown man who stumbles over a paragraph in a letter will understand every word of it if you read it to him. His listening is far ahead of his reading. The gap between the two is exactly where the practice needs to happen.

When you read along with a song you know, the meaning is already handled. Your ears have it. That frees your eyes to do the one job they need practice on: connecting the look of a word to the sound of it, again and again, at the speed of real language. Every time the gold light lands on a word at the instant you hear it, your brain makes one more link between what a word looks like and what it sounds like. Thousands of those links, made quickly and without strain, are what smooth reading is built from.

The Ears Check the Eyes

Think of it this way. When you read alone and come to a hard word, you have to guess and hope. If you guess wrong, nobody tells you. Many weak readers have spent years quietly guessing wrong, and the errors have set in like bad habits.

When you read along with a song, every guess is checked the moment you make it. Your eyes land on a word. Your ears hear it a split second later. If the two match, your brain notes that it got it right. If they do not, your brain notes the correction. You are getting a small lesson with every word, and nobody had to stand over you to give it.

That is what we mean when we say your ears teach your eyes. It is a private tutor that never gets tired, never sighs and never tells anyone your score.

Why the Light Matters

Plain subtitles, the kind that sit at the bottom of a TV screen, are useful. But there is a reason GSU lights each word as it is heard instead of showing a whole line at once.

A line of text that appears and then disappears gives a slow reader a choice he cannot win. Either he reads the words, and loses track of the sound, or he listens, and lets the words go by. Lighting each word in time with the voice solves that. The light tells his eyes exactly where to be. He does not have to hunt for his place. He just follows the gold.

The light also sets a pace, and the research on reading while listening has something important to say about pace. A careful review published in 2023 pulled together 30 studies with nearly 2,000 readers. Overall, reading while listening helped understanding only a little compared with reading alone. But the review found something worth noticing: when readers set their own pace, the benefit disappeared. The audio was doing its work by setting a steady pace that pulled the reader along. The same review found signs that struggling readers and people learning a second language may gain more, though it warned that there are still too few studies to be sure.

GSU took two lessons from that. First, keep the pace, because the pace is part of the tool. Second, let the reader choose the pace before starting. On the GSU stage, you set the speed from 40 to 160 words a minute, and then the light carries you along at that speed. Start slow. Speed up when it feels easy. That is how a runner trains, too.

Why a Song Helps

A song is more than words with a tune behind them. It has three gifts for a reader.

The first gift is that you already know it. A known text is the easiest kind of text to read, because your memory fills in the meaning and your eyes only have to keep up.

The second gift is rhythm. Researchers have studied whether music helps people remember words, and the answer is more interesting than a plain yes. A well-known set of experiments published in 1994 found that people remembered the words of a ballad better when every verse was sung to the same simple melody than when they were spoken. When each verse had a different melody, though, the music got in the way, and the spoken version won. Later work found that rhythm alone, with or without music, can help people recall text, as if the beat gives the words a frame to hang on. The lesson is clear. Simple, repeated, steady songs help. Fancy ones can distract.

That is exactly the kind of song GSU puts on its stage: old, plain, steady American songs that repeat. Home on the Range. I’ve Been Working on the Railroad. America the Beautiful. Every one of them belongs to everyone, and every one of them has a beat you can tap your foot to.

The third gift is the slowdown. Words are sung more slowly than they are spoken. A singer stretches “beautiful” across several beats. For a reader who needs a fraction of a second longer to connect a word to its sound, that stretch is a gift.

Why It Does Not Feel Like Work

There is one more reason the method works, and it may be the most important. It does not feel like a lesson.

A grown person who struggles to read has usually been made to feel small by reading. Reading aloud in class. A form at the doctor’s office. A test at work. A child’s homework he could not help with. Every one of those moments taught him to stay away from print.

A song brings no such memories. People sing at their happiest times. When the words come with the song, a reader meets print in a good mood, at his own speed, with no one watching. He finishes the song and wants another. That wish, to do it again, is the most valuable thing any reading tool can produce.

Try It

Go back to the stage and choose Home on the Range. This time, set the speed to 50 and read every gold word out loud, just under your breath. Then set the speed to 80 and do it again. Notice whether the second time feels easier. It usually does, because your eyes have already met the words once.

DEEP RESEARCH · SAME TUNE, BETTER MEMORY

In experiments published in 1994, people remembered the words of a ballad better when every verse was sung to the same simple melody than when the words were only spoken.

There was a catch. When each verse had a different melody, the spoken words were remembered better. A tune helps memory when it is simple and repeats. A complicated one gets in the way. That is why the GSU stage starts with old, plain songs that most people already know.

Source: Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition (1994).

CHAPTER 4

Where the Light Stops



Start at the first rungs: The Reading Climb
globalsovereignuniversity.org/the-reading-climb

Every good tool has a label that says what it is not for. A hammer is not for screws. A ladder is not for crossing a river. This chapter is the label on KARAOKE Reading, and I want you to read it as carefully as anything else in this book, because it is what makes the rest of the book honest.

KARAOKE Reading does not teach a person to read from nothing.

The Campaign and the Test

A few years ago, a campaign in the United Kingdom told parents that turning on television subtitles was a kind of magic button for children’s reading. It went viral. Celebrities shared it, charities backed it, and even the Prime Minister of the day spoke in favor of it. Similar campaigns appeared in India and in the United States. The message was hopeful and simple: switch on the subtitles, and your child will learn to read while watching cartoons.

Researchers at Royal Holloway, University of London, decided to test the claim properly, with funding from the Nuffield Foundation and help from the University of Nottingham. Their findings were published in 2025.

In the first study, they tracked the eyes of 180 primary school children while the children watched videos with and without subtitles. The result was clear. The children did not look at the subtitles until they could already read fairly well. Children who could read at least about one word per second looked at the subtitles. Children below that level mostly ignored them. Reading at one word per second, the researchers noted, usually takes three to four years of reading instruction. One of the researchers put it plainly: if young children do not look at subtitles, it is hard to see how they could learn from them.

In a second study, children watched television with subtitles at home over a period of weeks, and the researchers tested their reading fluency before and after. They found no evidence that the subtitles helped. What did produce clear gains in reading fluency over the same six weeks was ordinary classroom teaching. The research team’s verdict, published in November 2025, was that subtitles are not the magic bullet the campaigns had claimed, and that the hard work of learning to read cannot be replaced by switching on a setting.

What That Means for GSU

Some people would read that research and throw the whole idea away. GSU read it and did something more useful. We used it to put the tool on the right rung.

Look closely at what the studies found and what they did not. They found that beginning readers ignore subtitles, and that subtitles alone, at the speed of television, do not teach beginners to read. They did not find that people who can already sound out words gain nothing from reading along. In fact, the first study found the opposite pattern: once children could read about a word a second, they did look at the words. And one of the researchers made a point that fits our mission exactly. Children, he said, need substantial reading practice even after the first years of reading instruction.

That is the person KARAOKE Reading is built for. Not the beginner who does not yet know what sounds the letters make. The reader in the middle of the climb, who knows the sounds, can sound out words, and needs miles and miles of practice to make reading smooth. In India, the same idea reached people who had been to school but never got enough practice. In the United States, tens of millions of grown people are in that same middle.

So the GSU stage says it plainly, right on the page: this works best once you can sound out words. If letters are still new to you, start at the first rungs of The Reading Climb and come back. That is not a step down. It is the right step.

Three Differences That Matter

The GSU stage also differs from television subtitles in three ways that answer some of the problems the research found.

First, the reader sets the speed. Television subtitles flash by at the speed of the show, which the researchers noted is too fast for young readers. On the GSU stage, the slowest setting is 40 words a minute, slow enough for a careful reader to land on every word.

Second, the words are lit one at a time. A beginning reader facing a whole line of subtitles does not know where to look. A lit word tells him.

Third, the reader chooses to read. Television subtitles ask the reader to pick the words out of a busy picture full of faces, action and color. On the GSU stage, the words are the picture. There is nothing else to look at.

None of those differences turns KARAOKE Reading into a way to learn reading from scratch. They do make it a better practice tool for the reader who is ready for it.

Why Saying This Out Loud Matters

There is a lot of money in promising people that learning can be effortless. Apps promise it. Programs on late-night television promise it. Most of those promises are false, and the people who believe them end up feeling worse about themselves when the magic does not happen.

GSU will not make that promise. Our learners deserve the truth: reading is built from sounds, then words, then sentences, then pages, and practice at each stage. KARAOKE Reading is a wonderful way to get practice, and it is fun, and it is free. It is not a shortcut around the climb. It is a way to enjoy the climb.

That honesty is also good for GSU. A school that tells you the limits of its own tools is a school you can trust about everything else.

Try It

If you are helping someone else read, try this check before you send them to the stage. Point to five words in a newspaper headline and ask them to read each one. If they can sound out most of them, even slowly, they are ready for KARAOKE Reading. If they cannot, start them on the first rungs of The Reading Climb at www.globalsovereignuniversity.org/the-reading-climb, and bring them to the stage in a few weeks.

DEEP RESEARCH · ONE WORD A SECOND

Children in the study did not look at subtitles until they could already read about one word a second.

The researchers noted that reaching that speed usually takes three to four years of reading instruction. Below that point, the words on the screen went unread. Above it, they could become practice. The tool did not change. The reader did.

Source: Royal Holloway, University of London, news release, April 2, 2025; Psychological Science (2025).

CHAPTER 5

The Navy Ruler



See the Navy ruler grade on every song
globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading

When I enlisted, I was seventeen years old. I had left school after the eighth grade, and the Navy handed me a training manual and told me to learn what was in it. I did. By 1970 I was a radioman, and the Navy had taught me to copy code, run the equipment and keep the messages moving. But I have never forgotten what it was like to be a young sailor with a thick manual written by someone who seemed to assume I had been to college.

I was not the only one. The Navy had the same problem across the whole fleet. Its training manuals were written by engineers and officers. Many of the young men who had to learn from them read at a much lower level than the manuals were written at. A sailor who cannot read his manual cannot learn his job, and a sailor who cannot do his job puts the ship at risk.

So in the early 1970s the Navy paid to find out how hard its manuals really were, and how to measure the reading level of any page.

Research Branch Report 8-75

The work was done under contract for the Chief of Naval Technical Training, at Naval Air Station Memphis in Millington, Tennessee. The report came out in February 1975. Its title is a mouthful: Derivation of New Readability Formulas (Automated Readability Index, Fog Count and Flesch Reading Ease Formula) for Navy Enlisted Personnel. Its number is Research Branch Report 8-75.

The team took three existing formulas for measuring how hard a page is to read and rebuilt them using real Navy enlisted men reading real Navy training material. They tested how well the sailors understood passages from the manuals and tied that understanding to features of the text that a machine could count. The result was a formula that turns any page into a school grade level. It became known as the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, after Rudolf Flesch, a writer who had spent his career fighting for plain English, and the lead researcher on the Navy team.

The formula later became a standard for military technical manuals. Today it is built into word processors, websites and writing tools all over the world. Millions of people use it every day without knowing it began with sailors reading training manuals.

How the Ruler Works

The formula looks at only two things.

The first is how long the sentences are. Long sentences are harder to read than short ones, because the reader has to hold more in his head before the sentence ends.

The second is how long the words are, counted in syllables. “Cat” has one syllable. “Beautiful” has three. “Majesties” has three. Long words tend to be harder words, so a page full of them reads at a higher grade.

The formula multiplies the average sentence length by one number, multiplies the average syllables per word by another, adds them, and subtracts a third. What comes out is a school grade. A page that scores 4 should be readable by a typical fourth grader. A page that scores 12 needs a high-school senior.

The ruler is not perfect. It does not know whether a word is common or rare, only how long it is. “Television” has four syllables and almost everyone knows it. It cannot tell whether an idea is simple or deep. But it is quick, it is fair, it treats every page the same way, and it gives a reader a useful first guess at how hard a page will be.

The Ruler on the GSU Stage

When GSU built its KARAOKE stage, I wanted every song to carry a label that said how hard it was to read, so a learner could choose a song that fit. The Navy ruler was the obvious choice. It was built for grown people learning from print, which is exactly who we serve.

So every song and every read-along on the stage carries a tag that says “About Grade N on the Navy ruler.” The page works it out on the spot, using the same formula the Navy paid for in 1975. Home on the Range and I’ve Been Working on the Railroad come out at about Grade 2. America the Beautiful comes out at about Grade 4. The podcast read-along, The Congruence Code, is a harder climb, at about Grade 7.

A learner can start at Grade 2 and work up. A parent can pick a song at the right level for a child. A tutor can say, “Last month you were reading Grade 2 songs. Today you read a Grade 7 podcast.” That is a real measure of progress, and it comes from a real source.

Why This Story Belongs to GSU

Plenty of reading tools use readability formulas. What I like about this one is the line it draws from a seventeen-year-old sailor with a manual he could barely read, to a ruler the Navy built so sailors like him could learn their jobs, to a free GSU page that uses that same ruler to help a grown person in Ohio or Oregon read along with a song. The Navy understood something in 1975 that too many schools still forget: if the reader cannot read the page, the problem may be the page, not the reader.

Try It

On the stage, look at the tag under each song before you choose it. Start with a Grade 2 song. Read it through twice. Then try the Grade 4 song. When that feels easy, try the podcast read-along at Grade 7. Write down the date each time you move up a grade. That is your climb, measured with a Navy ruler.

CHAPTER 6

How GSU Found It



See the six parts working together
globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading

People sometimes ask me where GSU gets its ideas. The honest answer is that we rarely invent anything from nothing. We find things that already work, often far outside education, and put them together in a way nobody has tried. I call it my Frankenstein view. Dr. Frankenstein did not invent a person. He took parts that already existed and made them come alive together. GSU does the same with ideas.

When one of those combinations turns out to be valuable, we call it a Rabbit. A Rabbit is something you pull out of a hat that nobody expected to find there. KARAOKE Reading is one of our best Rabbits so far.

The Parts in the Hat

Here are the parts that went into it, and where each one came from.

The first part came from India and from television: words on the screen in the same language as the song, lit as they are heard. That is the core idea, and Chapter 2 told its story.

The second part came from the Navy: a ruler that turns any page into a grade level, built in 1975 for sailors reading training manuals. Chapter 5 told that story.

The third part came from your own phone. Every modern phone and computer has a reading voice built into it, one that can read words aloud. GSU's first stage uses that voice, so the page works on any device without downloading anything.

The fourth part came from my own invention, the Trifurcation Road. Every GSU learning tool offers three roads: Good, Better and Best. Good is the road anyone can walk. Better asks a little more. Best is meant to be hard, and often it never ends, because the best learners deserve a challenge with no ceiling.

The fifth part came from an old symbol: the Ouroboros, a snake that holds its own tail in its mouth, which has stood for things that never end for thousands of years. GSU puts a small jeweled Ouroboros beside every challenge that goes on forever.

The sixth part came from GSU's own library: the podcast episodes I have recorded, the books I have written on math as a language, and the reading program called The Reading Climb. Each of those became a shelf or a door on the KARAOKE stage.

None of those parts is new. What is new is putting all six on one free page, aimed at a grown reader in the middle of the climb.

Why Look Outside Education?

Schools tend to look to other schools for ideas. That is how the same ideas, good and bad, get passed around for decades. The best ideas I have found in my life came from somewhere else entirely.

I spent years in retail, building a camera department into one of the best in a chain of about four hundred stores. I spent years in procurement, auditing contracts for a savings and loan. I ran a business selling clothing to customers from the Supreme Court to NASA. In every one of those jobs, I learned that the fastest way to solve a problem is to ask who else has already solved something like it, and then borrow shamelessly.

India's film industry had already solved the problem of getting hundreds of millions of people to spend time with words they enjoyed. The Navy had already solved the problem of measuring whether a page fit its reader. Phone makers had already solved the problem of reading text aloud for free. GSU's job was to notice that those three solutions, put together, answer a question none of them was built for: how do you give a grown reader thousands of hours of practice he will actually enjoy?

What We Changed

Borrowing is not the same as copying. Every part was changed to fit GSU's learners.

The Indian programs ran on television, on a schedule set by the broadcaster. GSU's stage runs whenever the learner wants, at the speed the learner chooses.

The Indian programs used whatever songs were popular that week. GSU uses old songs whose words belong to everyone, so there is no fee to pay, no permission to ask and no risk that a song will disappear.

Television subtitles sit at the bottom of a busy picture. On the GSU stage, the words are the picture.

The Indian programs could not tell a viewer how hard each song was. GSU tags every song with the Navy ruler.

And none of the old programs had a Best road. GSU's Endless Verse never ends. Each round is faster, with more missing words to fill in, and it keeps going as long as the learner does.

The Honest Part Again

This is a good place to repeat what Chapter 4 said, because it is part of how GSU finds its ideas. When we pull a Rabbit out of the hat, we also go looking for the evidence against it. In this case we found it at Royal Holloway, and it made the tool better, because it told us exactly who the tool is for and who it is not for.

A Frankenstein idea that nobody tests can turn into a monster. One that is tested, honestly, and put on the right rung of the climb can come alive and do real good.

Try It

Think about something you are good at that has nothing to do with school. Cooking, fixing engines, coaching a team, running a church supper. Ask yourself: what does that job know about learning that schools could use? Write your answer down. You may be holding a Rabbit of your own.

CHAPTER 7

The Stage: Sing It, Read It



Open the stage: Sing It, Read It
globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading

Enough history. Let us walk onto the stage.

Open www.globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading on any phone, tablet or computer. You will see a banner with KARAOKE in white and Reading in gold, and under it four buttons: Start singing, Say the Math, Why it works, and The books. Press Start singing. The page slides down to a section called Sing It, Read It. That is the stage.

You do not need an account. You do not type your name. Nothing you do on the stage is sent anywhere. The only thing the page remembers is your best round on the Best road, and it keeps that on your own device, not on ours.

The Shelf

At the top of the stage is a shelf of songs. Each one sits on its own card, with three things printed on it: the title, where the song came from, and its grade on the Navy ruler.

America the Beautiful. Words by Katharine Lee Bates, 1911. About Grade 4.

Home on the Range. An American cowboy song from the 1870s. About Grade 2.

I’ve Been Working on the Railroad. An American work song from 1894. About Grade 2.

Every song on the shelf is old enough to belong to everyone. Tap a card to choose it, and its words appear on the stage below, line by line, in a soft gray.

Below the songs is a second kind of shelf, Listen and Read, with an episode of GSU’s own podcast. Chapter 8 is about that one.

The Controls

Under the shelf are three road buttons, a Start button, a speed slider and a small box marked Read it to me.

The speed slider runs from 40 to 160 words a minute. Start at 60 or 70. That is about the pace of a slow, careful speaker. Most people talk to each other at somewhere between 120 and 160 words a minute, so the top of the slider is close to real conversation.

Read it to me turns on your device’s own reading voice. With the box checked, each line is read aloud as the light reaches it. With the box unchecked, the light moves on its own, and you supply the voice, either out loud or in your head. Use the voice when you are learning a song. Turn it off when you want to prove you can keep up without it.

One honest note: today, the voice on the stage speaks the words. It does not sing them yet. GSU is preparing its own sung recordings, with the light timed to every sung word. Chapter 12 tells you about that. For now, the beat comes from the voice and from you.

The Good Road: Follow the Light

Choose Good and press Start. The first word of the song turns gold. Then the next. Then the next. The line you are on brightens, and the lines you have finished stay bright, so you can see how far you have come.

Your only job is to keep your eyes on the gold. That is all. When the song ends, the page tells you how many words you just read. A short song is about forty or fifty words. Read the three songs twice each and you have read about three hundred words, and you have read them at a steady pace, with every word checked by your ears.

Good is the road for learning a song, for warming up and for any day you just want to enjoy it.

The Better Road: Fill the Gap

Choose Better and press Start. This time, about one word in five has been taken out and replaced with a gold blank. When the light reaches a blank, the song pauses, and three words appear below the stage. One of them is the missing word.

Pick the right one and the song goes on. Pick the wrong one and the button turns red, and the page asks you to read the line again and try another. There is no penalty and no timer on the choice. Take as long as you need.

This road asks your eyes to do more than follow. They have to read the line, hold its meaning in your head and choose the word that fits. That is real reading, and the song is helping you do it. When you finish, the page tells you how many gaps you filled and how many wrong picks you made. Try to bring the wrong picks down to zero.

The Best Road: The Endless Verse

Choose Best, and a small jeweled snake appears beside the road. That is the Ouroboros, GSU’s sign for a challenge that never ends.

Press Start. The Endless Verse begins like Better, with gaps to fill. When you finish the song, the page does not stop. It moves to the next song on the shelf, a little faster, with a few more gaps. Then the next, faster still, with more gaps again. Round after round, it keeps going until you choose to stop.

The page remembers your best round on your device. Your goal is to beat it. There is no top. A learner who reaches round ten today can reach round eleven tomorrow. That is how GSU builds every Best road: hard on purpose, and with no ceiling, because the learners who want to climb highest deserve a climb that does not run out.

Two at a Time

At the bottom of the stage is a line worth reading: two can climb together. One person reads the gold word out loud, and the other reads the next one. It is a simple game, and it turns the stage into something two people do side by side. Chapter 11 is all about that.

What to Do Each Day

If you want a routine, try this one. It takes about ten minutes.

Day one: Good road, one song, twice, at a comfortable speed.

Day two: the same song on the Better road.

Day three: Good road on a new song, then raise the speed by ten words a minute and do it again.

Every few days: one round of the Endless Verse, just to see how far you get.

Once a week: write down your best round and your fastest comfortable speed. Watching those two numbers rise is the best encouragement there is.

Try It

Choose I’ve Been Working on the Railroad. Do the routine for day one right now. Then come back to the book.

CHAPTER 8

Listen and Read



Try it: Listen and Read
globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading

A song is a fine place to start, but songs are short, and their words are simple. A reader who wants to climb needs longer, harder text. GSU's answer is the second shelf on the stage, called Listen and Read.

The first item on that shelf is an episode of my own podcast, Voice of Sovereignty. It is called The Congruence Code, and it runs about two minutes and thirteen seconds. It talks about how people's words and their tone of voice sometimes say two different things, and what our brains do when they notice the mismatch. It is real adult content, the kind of thing you might hear on the radio on the way to work. On the Navy ruler, it comes out at about Grade 7.

How It Works

Under the episode title is an audio player and, below that, the full text of the episode in a scrolling box. Press play. As the episode talks, the words in the box light up one at a time, in step with the voice. Words you have passed turn bright. The box scrolls on its own to keep the gold word in view.

Because people speak faster and less evenly than a song is sung, the light on this shelf is timed by the length of each word, spread across the length of the episode. It is close, but it can drift a little ahead of the voice or a little behind it. Two buttons fix that: Earlier and Later. Each press moves the light half a second. If the gold word arrives before you hear it, press Later. If it arrives after, press Earlier. In a few presses, the light and the voice line up.

The read-along stops before the closing message of the episode. That is on purpose, and it is honest: the end of that recording contains a number about GENO, GSU's tutor, that is out of date, and GSU will not light up a wrong fact for a learner to read.

Why Spoken Text Is Harder

A podcast is harder than a song for three reasons, and each one is good practice.

First, you have never heard it before. Your memory cannot fill in the words, so your eyes have to do more of the work.

Second, the sentences are longer and the words are bigger. "Autonomic." "Psychological." "Contradictory." Those words would stop many readers cold on a page. Heard and seen at the same moment, they become words you have read.

Third, people speak at the speed of conversation, faster than the stage's songs. Keeping up with the light on a podcast is a real step up.

That is why the GSU page calls it a harder climb. It is the right shelf for a reader who has found the songs easy and wants something with more meat on it.

What Comes Next on This Shelf

I have recorded more than two hundred podcast episodes over the years. Many of them teach something useful: a trade, a business idea, a piece of history, a way of thinking. Each of them could become a Listen and Read card. The plan is to start with episodes that teach, run short and already have a clean written transcript. Each one will carry its own Navy ruler grade, so a learner can choose by difficulty as well as by subject.

The shelf will also grow beyond my own voice. America's founding documents, such as the opening of the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution and the Gettysburg Address, belong to everyone. Hearing them read with the words lit is a fine way for a learner to meet them for the first time, or to understand them properly for the first time after years of half-remembering them from school.

Why This Matters for Grown Readers

Most grown people who struggle with reading do not want to practice on children's books. They are right not to. A forty-year-old man does not want to read about a cat on a mat. He wants to read about work, money, family, history, health and the news. Listen and Read lets him practice on adult ideas at a level he could not yet manage alone, because his ears are carrying him.

That is the same reason audiobooks paired with print have helped struggling readers in study after study. When readers hear a fluent voice while they look at the words, they meet vocabulary and ideas they could not yet reach by reading alone, and they hear what smooth reading sounds like. A careful review in 2022 found that for struggling readers and people learning a second language, hearing the audio while seeing the print helped understanding more than print alone. GSU's version adds the gold light, so the eyes never lose their place.

Try It

Play The Congruence Code once without reading. Just listen. Then play it again and follow the light. Notice how many of the big words you now recognize on the second pass. That is your reading growing.

DEEP RESEARCH · READING WHILE LISTENING, WEIGHED

A 2023 review of 30 studies with 1,945 readers found a small overall benefit to understanding from reading while listening.

When readers set their own pace, the benefit disappeared. That suggests the steady pace of the voice is part of what helps. The review saw signs of a larger benefit for struggling readers and for people learning a second language, and said more studies are needed to be sure.

Source: Educational Research: Theory and Practice (2023).

CHAPTER 9

Numbers Have Words



Try it: Say the Math
globalsovereignuniversity.org/math-games

Here is a problem written the way a math book writes it:

3 × 4 = 12

Now here is the same problem written the way you would say it:

three times four equals twelve

They are the same idea. But for millions of people, the first line is a wall and the second line is a sentence. That is the idea behind GSU's second KARAOKE stage, Say the Math.

Math Is a Language

I have written a whole book on this, called Math as a Language. Its argument is simple. Math has an alphabet: the digits 0 through 9 and the symbols for plus, minus, times, divided by, equals, greater than, less than and the rest. It has a grammar: rules about which things go in which order, and what the parentheses do. And it has dialects: the way a carpenter talks about numbers is not the way a banker does, and neither one talks like a math teacher.

A person who cannot read the alphabet cannot read the language. Many people who say "I am not a math person" are really saying "nobody ever taught me to read the symbols." They can often do the math in their heads when the problem is spoken. Ask a waitress what twenty percent of fifty dollars is and she will tell you ten dollars before you finish asking. Show her "0.20 × 50 = ?" on a test, and she may freeze.

The Same Light, for Numbers

Say the Math uses the same idea as Sing It, Read It. Every symbol in a problem lights up in gold, with its spoken word printed underneath and read aloud by your device's voice.

3 lights up, and you hear "three."

× lights up, and you hear "times."

4 lights up, and you hear "four."

= lights up, and you hear "equals."

12 lights up, and you hear "twelve."

Your ears teach your eyes again. After a few problems, your eyes start to say the words before the voice does. That is the moment a symbol stops being a squiggle and becomes a word you can read.

The stage is on GSU's math page, at www.globalsovereignuniversity.org/math-games, under the links that say "Step up to the plate with GENO."

The Three Roads

Like every GSU tool, Say the Math has three roads.

Good: Hear It. Eight starter problems, from 3 × 4 = 12 to 2 × (3 + 4) = 14 and 7 > 5. Each symbol lights up with its word while the voice says it. Your job is to watch and listen.

Better: Say It. The words under the symbols are blank. When a symbol lights up, you pick its word from a short list, including number words like "sixty-five" and symbol words like "is greater than." Now you are reading math yourself.

Best: Endless Equations. The page writes new problems without end. It starts with adding and subtracting, then moves to times and divide, then two-digit numbers, then problems with parentheses. You name every symbol in the problem, then pick the answer. Three misses ends the run. The Ouroboros sits beside it, because it never runs out.

Why the Words Matter So Much

Researchers who study math learning have found again and again that math vocabulary matters. Students who know the words of math tend to do better at word problems, and teaching those words directly can help students who struggle. One study of third graders who were having trouble with math gave them direct teaching on thirty-five common word-problem terms, with plain definitions and pictures, as part of their lessons. Word problems are hard for many students for a simple reason. Before you can do the math, you have to read it, and the reading is full of words like “fewer,” “each,” “per” and “percent” that mean something exact.

That is why the numeracy results for American adults worry me as much as the reading results. In 2023, about one in three American adults scored at the lowest level in numeracy. Many of them can count money and make change. What trips them up is the printed problem: a sale sign, a loan statement, a dose on a label, a recipe that has to be doubled. The math is often easy. The reading is what stops them.

Say the Math attacks that problem at the root, one symbol at a time.

Reading Symbols Out Loud

Here are the symbol words every reader should be able to say without thinking. Say the Math uses all of them.

+ plus
− minus
× times
÷ divided by
= equals
> is greater than
< is less than
% percent
$ dollars
. point
( ) the parentheses, which say “do this part first”

A tip from the stage: when you see a decimal point, say “point.” The number 0.25 is “point two five,” or “zero point two five.” Saying it out loud that way makes it much easier to read than trying to say “twenty-five hundredths” in your head.

Try It

Open the math page and play the Good road through once. Then take a piece of paper and write the eight problems from memory, in symbols. Read each one out loud, the way the voice did. If you can, you have just learned to read a new alphabet.

CHAPTER 10

KARAOKE Math: Sing Along, Solve Along



Go further: math as a language
globalsovereignuniversity.org/language-of-mathematics

Say the Math teaches the alphabet of numbers. KARAOKE Math puts that alphabet to work on the kind of problem that shows up in real life: a word problem, read aloud, with every word and every number lit as you hear it.

GSU's KARAOKE Math banner shows the first problem we chose, and I want to walk you through it here, line by line, the way the stage does.

The Jacket Sale

A jacket costs $80.
Today it is 25% off.
To find the savings, multiply 80 by 0.25.
80 × 0.25 = 20
You save $20.
Now take the savings away from the price.
80 − 20 = 60
The jacket costs $60 today.

Read it again, slowly, and say every symbol as a word.

A jacket costs eighty dollars. Today it is twenty-five percent off. To find the savings, multiply eighty by point two five. Eighty times point two five equals twenty. You save twenty dollars. Now take the savings away from the price. Eighty minus twenty equals sixty. The jacket costs sixty dollars today.

Notice what happened. Nothing in the second version is harder math than the first. It is the same problem. But the second version is something you can say, and anything you can say, you can think about.

What Each Line Teaches

Every line of the jacket problem carries one idea, and the KARAOKE stage lights them one at a time so they do not pile up.

“A jacket costs eighty dollars.” This line gives you the starting number. In a word problem, find the starting number first.

“Today it is twenty-five percent off.” This line gives you the change. The word “off” means the price goes down. The word “percent” means “out of every hundred.” Twenty-five percent means twenty-five out of every hundred.

“To find the savings, multiply eighty by point two five.” This line tells you how. Twenty-five percent written as a decimal is 0.25, said “point two five.” To find a percent of a number, multiply.

“Eighty times point two five equals twenty.” This line does the math. If you are not sure, think of it as money: a quarter is twenty-five cents, and eighty quarters is twenty dollars.

“You save twenty dollars.” This line says what the answer means.

“Eighty minus twenty equals sixty.” This line finishes the job. Savings come off the price.

“The jacket costs sixty dollars today.” This line answers the question the shopper actually cares about.

Check It Two Ways

A good learner checks the answer another way, and the stage does too.

Twenty-five percent is the same as one quarter. One quarter of eighty is twenty, because four twenties make eighty. Twenty off eighty leaves sixty. Same answer.

Checking an answer two different ways is one of the most valuable habits in math. It also builds trust. A learner who can prove his own answer does not need a teacher to tell him he is right.

Why Sing Math?

GSU's KARAOKE Math banner says "Sing along. Solve along." Some people laugh at the idea of singing math. They should not. People have sung their way into numbers for centuries. Children chant the times tables. They sing the alphabet. Grown people remember phone numbers by the rhythm of the digits. Chapter 3 described the research: a simple, steady tune repeated can help people remember words, and rhythm alone can give words a frame to hang on.

So GSU wrote a short jingle for the jacket sale, set to a simple, steady beat, so the steps can be remembered as easily as a chorus:

Eighty dollars for a jacket,
twenty-five percent off today.
One quarter of eighty is twenty,
that's the part you do not pay.
Eighty take away twenty,
sixty dollars, that's the price.
Find the quarter, take it off,
and you can check it twice!

The words are GSU's own. When the sung version is recorded, every word of it will light up in gold as it is sung, the same as the songs on the reading stage.

The Shape of Every Word Problem

The jacket problem has a shape, and almost every word problem in daily life has the same one.

Find the starting number.

Find the change and what kind of change it is: up or down, more or less, each or total.

Say the math in words.

Do the math.

Say what the answer means.

Check it another way.

When a learner can say those six steps out loud for a jacket sale, he can say them for a paycheck, a loan, a recipe, a gas tank or a medicine dose. KARAOKE Math will add problems from all of those, one at a time, each lit word by word, each with its Navy ruler grade, each with a Good, Better and Best road.

Where the Light Stops for Math

Chapter 4 put a label on KARAOKE Reading, and KARAOKE Math needs the same label. Lighting the words of a problem does not teach a person what multiplication is. A learner needs to know what “times” means before a lit “times” can help him. What KARAOKE Math does well is the step most people trip on: reading the problem and turning it into math they already know how to do. For the rest, GSU’s math classes and workbooks, from fourth grade through eighth, start at the beginning.

Try It

Find a sale sign in a store, a flyer or an advertisement. Read it out loud the way the stage does, saying every symbol as a word. Then work out the sale price, and check it a second way. If you can do that, you can solve a real word problem.

DEEP RESEARCH · WHERE PERCENT COMES FROM

Percent comes from the Latin per centum, “by the hundred.”

Twenty-five percent means twenty-five out of every hundred, which is the same as one quarter. That is why the jacket problem can be checked by taking a quarter of eighty. Read the word, and the math is already half done.

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “percent.”

CHAPTER 11

Two at a Time



Go further: Adult Literacy Lab
globalsovereignuniversity.org/adult-literacy-lab

Everything in this book can be done alone, on a phone, at midnight, with nobody watching. Sometimes that is the best way. A grown reader who has hidden his reading for years may need to practice privately before he lets anyone see.

But reading is a social thing, and so is singing. People sing together in church, at ballgames, around a campfire. When two people share a screen, both of them read more, both of them try harder and both of them laugh more. This chapter is about doing KARAOKE Reading and KARAOKE Math with another person.

The Gold Word Game

The simplest game on the GSU stage takes two people and one screen. Choose a song and set a slow speed. Turn off Read it to me. Then take turns: one person reads the first gold word out loud, the other reads the second, back and forth to the end of the song.

That is all. It sounds too simple to matter, but watch what happens. Each person has to be ready for every other word, so neither one can drift. Each person hears the other read, so each one learns from the other’s mistakes and successes. And because it is a game, nobody feels tested.

A parent and a child can play it. Two friends can play it. A tutor and a grown learner can play it. A grandparent who cannot read well and a grandchild who can will both get something from it, and the grandparent will never once feel taught.

Rules for the Helper

If you are the stronger reader of the two, you are the helper, and these rules will keep the game safe and fun.

Never say “That’s easy.” It is not easy for the other person, and the words say they should be ashamed.

Wait. When your partner stops on a word, count to five in your head before you help. Most of the time, they will get it.

Help with the sound, not the answer. If your partner is stuck on “majesties,” say the first sound, “ma,” and let them finish it.

Celebrate quietly. A small “nice” when they get a hard word is worth more than a cheer.

Keep the secret. If your partner has trusted you with the fact that reading is hard for them, that trust is theirs to share, not yours.

These are the same rules GSU teaches to Navigators, the helpers in The Reading Climb. They work for one reason: they make the stronger reader patient, and patience is what a struggling reader needs most.

KARAOKE Night

Some readers do better in a small group than with one partner. For them, GSU suggests a KARAOKE Night: one screen, one hour, a few people, and nobody keeping score except against their own last best.

Here is a plan for one hour.

The first ten minutes: everyone sings one song together on the Good road, with the voice on. Nobody reads alone. This warms up the room and makes it clear the evening is for fun.

The next fifteen minutes: the Gold Word Game around the room. Each person reads one gold word, then the next person reads the next. Go around the room until the song ends. Then do it again a little faster.

The next fifteen minutes: Better road, as a team. When a gap appears, anyone can call out the missing word. The group picks together.

The next ten minutes: KARAOKE Math. Put the jacket sale on the screen and read it together, saying every symbol as a word. Then have each person say how much they would save on something they want to buy.

The last ten minutes: the Endless Verse, as a team, to see how many rounds the room can make together. Write the number on a piece of paper and tape it to the wall. Next week, try to beat it.

A KARAOKE Night needs one screen everyone can see, a speaker loud enough to hear, and somebody willing to press Start. It can happen in a living room, a church basement, a library meeting room, a break room at work or a community center. It costs nothing. GSU’s pages are free and stay free.

Why Together Works

There is a reason people learn languages faster when they live with people who speak them. Language is learned in company. Reading is the written form of language, and it, too, grows faster in company. A reader who hears others read, who reads for others and who laughs with others at a missed word is building the same skill as a reader practicing alone, but with something extra: the feeling that reading is something people like him do.

That feeling may be the biggest gift of all. A person who believes reading belongs to people like him keeps reading. A person who believes it belongs to other people stops.

Try It

Pick one person you trust. Ask them to play the Gold Word Game with you for one song. Afterward, ask them which word was hardest for them. You might be surprised.

CHAPTER 12

The Next Verse



Ask GENO, free, in 83 languages
globalsovereignuniversity.org/free-tutor

Everything you have read about so far is live today, free, on GSU's website. This last chapter is about where KARAOKE Reading and KARAOKE Math go next. I will tell you plainly what is built, what is being built, and what is still a plan, because a promise is only worth making if you mean to keep it.

Real Voices

Today the voice on the reading stage is your device's own reading voice. It is clear and it is free, but it speaks the songs instead of singing them, and it sounds a little different on every phone.

GSU is working with ElevenLabs, a company that makes lifelike voices and music by computer, to change that in three ways.

First, sung recordings. Each song on the shelf will be recorded as a real sung performance: one clear voice, a gentle accompaniment and a slow, steady tempo, with every word sung clearly and separately, so it can be followed by eye. The first one will be America the Beautiful.

Second, exact timing. A computer can take a recording and its words and work out the exact moment each word is spoken or sung. With that, the gold light will land on each word at the very instant you hear it, instead of being estimated.

Third, one voice for math. Say the Math needs only about forty spoken words to cover every number and symbol it uses: zero through nineteen, the tens, "hundred," and the symbol words. Recorded once in GENO's voice, GSU's tutor, those clips will make the math stage sound the same on every phone.

None of this changes how the stage works for you. It just makes it sound better and line up better.

More Shelves

The stage will grow, one shelf at a time.

More songs, old enough to belong to everyone, chosen because they are simple, steady and widely known.

More Listen and Read cards from GSU's podcast, starting with short episodes that teach something useful.

America's founding documents, read with the words lit: the Preamble, the opening of the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address.

Times tables as chants, skip-counting to a beat, lit like the songs.

More KARAOKE Math word problems drawn from GSU's fourth- through eighth-grade workbooks, each one read along, then solved.

Every one of them will carry its Navy ruler grade, and every one will have its Good, Better and Best roads.

Measuring What Matters

GSU does not collect your name or your score. That is a promise. But we do want to know, in total, whether people use the stage and how far they climb. So we count visits and uses, the way any website does, without knowing who you are. In a month or two, we will look at which songs get used, which roads people choose, and how far people go on the Endless Verse. That will tell us what to build next.

What I Hope You Take From This Book

When I was a young sailor reading a manual written for someone else, I did not need to be told I was smart. I needed practice, and I needed it in a form I could stand to do. That is what this whole book is about.

You already know songs. You already know how to count money. You already have ears that understand spoken words far better than your eyes yet understand printed ones. KARAOKE Reading and KARAOKE Math simply put your ears to work teaching your eyes, a few minutes at a time, with the words lit in gold.

It will not make the climb disappear. Nothing does. It will make the climb something you want to do again tomorrow. And a person who wants to do it again tomorrow is a person who is going to get there.

Learning can be fun. It can be retained. It can lead to a yearning for learning.

It’s FUNdamental.

Try It

Tonight, before you put this book down, open the stage and sing one song. Then come back tomorrow and sing it again, a little faster. That is the whole method. The rest is just more verses.

Case Studies

A claim about learning is easiest to trust when you can check it. This section holds two kinds of cases. The real cases are matters of public record, and their sources are listed so you can look up every one. The teaching cases are realistic illustrations written for this book; their people and places are invented, and any resemblance to real persons is coincidental.

A REAL CASE · CHAPTER 2

Two States, Two Results

In one Indian state, about twenty films a week were broadcast on television with the words of their songs shown on screen, in the same language they were sung in. A neighboring state did not have the program.

Researchers tested third graders in both states. The neighboring state had started with slightly better reading scores. By 2015 the order had turned around. In the state with the subtitled songs, 68 percent of third graders could read at a first-grade level or better. In the neighboring state, 43 percent could.

No new schools were built for this. No teachers were hired. The practice came through something families were already doing every evening: watching films and singing along.

What it teaches. Practice delivered through something people already enjoy can move a whole population. The songs were not the lesson. They were the practice the lesson needed.

Try it. *Count how many minutes a week you spend listening to songs. Imagine half of those minutes with the words lit.*

Source: PlanetRead research summary, Impact of SLS on reading literacy (2023), reporting a 2015 study by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

A REAL CASE · CHAPTER 4

The Magic Button That Was Not

A campaign in the United Kingdom told parents that turning on the subtitles would help their children learn to read. It was an appealing idea. It cost nothing and asked nothing of anyone.

Researchers at Royal Holloway, University of London, put it to the test. They tracked the eyes of 180 children as they watched subtitled television. Children did not look at the subtitles until they could already read about one word a second.

A second study compared six weeks of watching subtitled television at home with six weeks of ordinary classroom teaching. The television brought no reading gains. The teaching brought clear ones.

What it teaches. A tool used on the wrong rung does nothing. The same tool on the right rung can help. Lit words are practice for a reader who can already sound out words, not a first lesson for one who cannot.

Try it. *Before you recommend any learning tool to someone, ask two questions: who is this for, and who is it not for?*

Source: Royal Holloway, University of London, news releases of April 2 and November 27, 2025; Psychological Science (2025).

A REAL CASE · CHAPTER 5

Manuals That Fit the Sailors

In the early 1970s the U.S. Navy found that many of its enlisted men read below the level of the training manuals they had to learn from. A sailor who cannot read his manual cannot learn his job, however willing he is.

The Navy paid for research to build a way of measuring the reading level of any page. The researchers had sailors read real Navy training material and tested what they understood. The formula that came out of the work turns a page into a school grade using two counts: the length of the sentences and the number of syllables in the words.

It was published in February 1975 as Research Branch Report 8-75. Known today as the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, it became a standard for military technical manuals and is now built into common word-processing programs.

What it teaches. When readers struggle, measure the page as well as the reader. Sometimes the fastest way to help a reader is to fix the page.

Try it. *Take one page you have to read at work or at home. Count the words in its three longest sentences. Could any of them be split in two?*

Source: Chief of Naval Technical Training, Research Branch Report 8-75 (1975).

A TEACHING CASE · CHAPTERS 3 AND 7

The Railroad Song at Lunch

Marcus, 46, drives a forklift. He has kept it to himself for years that reading is hard for him. His daughter set up the KARAOKE stage on his phone and showed him the speed slider.

He started with I've Been Working on the Railroad at 50 words a minute, on the Good road, in his truck at lunch. Nobody saw him. Ten minutes, every working day.

In three weeks he was at 90 words a minute on the Better road, filling in the missing words. In the fourth week he read the new safety notice on the break-room wall without asking anyone what it said.

What it teaches. Small daily practice, in private, adds up. Marcus did not need a class. He needed ten minutes, a song he knew, and a place where nobody was watching.

Try it. *Choose a time each day that is already yours: lunch, the bus, before bed. Put ten minutes of the stage there.*

A TEACHING CASE · CHAPTERS 9 AND 10

The Register

Rosa, 34, works a store register. When a customer asks what a sale price will be, she freezes. The numbers on the sign seem to slide around.

She practiced the jacket problem on KARAOKE Math, saying every symbol out loud as it lit up. Then she did the same with three sale signs at her own store, reading each one aloud on her break.

A week later a customer asked about 30 percent off a $40 sweater. Rosa said it out loud: thirty percent of forty is twelve, forty take away twelve is twenty-eight. Then she checked it a second way before she answered.

What it teaches. Reading the problem out loud turns a wall of symbols into math you already know. Rosa could always do the arithmetic. She had never been shown how to read it.

Try it. *Read one sale sign out loud today, and work out the price two ways.*

A TEACHING CASE · CHAPTER 11

The Tuesday Night Room

A small church started a KARAOKE Night in its basement: one projector, one speaker, eight people from a nine-year-old to a great-grandmother.

The first week, the room made it to round three of the Endless Verse together. Someone wrote a 3 on a piece of paper and taped it to the wall. By the sixth week the paper said 9.

Two of the regulars, who had never read aloud in public, began reading the church bulletin aloud before the service.

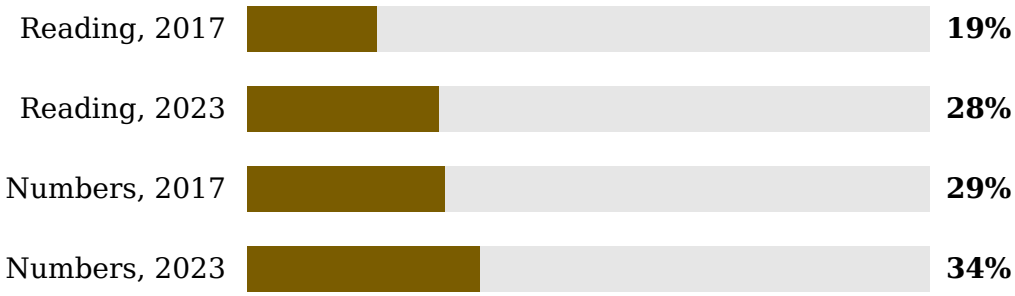
What it teaches. Reading grows faster in company, and a shared goal keeps people coming back. Nobody in the room was graded. The only score was the room’s own last best.

Try it. *Find one room, one screen and three people. Hold one KARAOKE Night.*

DEEP RESEARCH

What the Studies Show

This book makes a claim: that reading along with a voice you can hear, one lit word at a time, is real practice for real readers. A claim like that should rest on facts a reader can check. Here they are, in order, with the sources named. Some of them support the claim. One of them sets a limit on it, and that one matters just as much.



American adults aged 16 to 65 at the lowest level or below, Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC). Source: National Center for Education Statistics, December 2024.

1975. The U.S. Navy published Research Branch Report 8-75, the study behind the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. It was built by testing sailors on real Navy training material.

1994. Experiments found that people remembered the words of a ballad better when every verse was sung to the same simple melody than when the words were spoken. With a different melody for each verse, the spoken words were remembered better. Later work found that rhythm alone can help people recall a text.

1996. Same Language Subtitling was named. Film songs in India began to carry their own words on screen, lit as they were sung.

2002 to 2007. In a five-year study, 70 percent of school children who could not read a letter at the start, and who saw many subtitled songs, became functional readers, against 34 percent of those who saw few. Among people 15 and older, 14 percent moved from not reading to functional reading, against 5 percent.

2015. Third graders in a state with weekly subtitled songs out-read those in a neighboring state, 68 percent to 43 percent at a first-grade level or better, though the neighboring state had started ahead.

2022. An eye-tracking study of weak readers in a remote village found that about 70 percent read the subtitles without being asked. A review of studies the same year found that for struggling readers and second-language learners, audiobooks with print helped understanding more than print alone.

2023. A review of 30 studies with 1,945 readers found a small overall benefit from reading while listening. When readers set their own pace, it disappeared. The same year, a study of 75 third graders with math difficulty tested direct teaching of 35 common word-problem terms, because the words in a problem are often what makes it hard.

2025. Researchers tracked the eyes of 180 children and found they did not look at subtitles until they could read about one word a second. Subtitled television at home brought no reading gains in six weeks. Classroom teaching did.

Read the list again and notice what it says together. Lit words, a steady voice and a simple tune are real practice, and practice is what most struggling readers are missing. They are not a first lesson. A reader has to be able to sound out words before the light can carry him. That is why this book puts KARAOKE Reading on the right rung, and why it says so plainly.

Source: Chief of Naval Technical Training, Research Branch Report 8-75 (1975).

Source: Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition (1994); Perceptual and Motor Skills (2008).

Source: PlanetRead research summary, Impact of SLS on reading literacy (2023), reporting studies by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (2014, 2015), the Journal of Eye Movement Research (2022) and a World Bank estimate.

Source: Educational Psychology Review (2022); Educational Research: Theory and Practice (2023).

Source: Georgia State University research news (2023); Frontiers in Psychology (2016).

Source: Royal Holloway, University of London, news releases of April 2 and November 27, 2025; Psychological Science (2025).

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Highlights of the 2023 U.S. PIAAC Results (December 2024).

TEST YOURSELF

Cover the answers and try these before you read on. Every answer is in this book.

1. Who is KARAOKE Reading built for?

2. What does SLS stand for?

3. In the five-year study in India, what share of high-exposure children became functional readers?

4. At about what reading speed did children start to look at subtitles?

5. In what year did the Navy publish Research Branch Report 8-75?

6. What two things does the Navy ruler count?

7. What are the three roads?

8. How do you say 0.25 out loud?

9. What is 25 percent of $80?

10. In the Gold Word Game, what does the helper do before helping with a word?

Answers. 1. Readers who can already sound out words and need practice. **2.** Same Language Subtitling. **3.** 70 percent. **4.** About one word a second. **5.** 1975. **6.** Sentence length and syllables per word. **7.** Good, Better and Best. **8.** Point two five. **9.** $20. **10.** Counts to five, silently.

A Reader’s Dictionary

The Language of the Stage

Every subject has its own words. These are explained in plain language, the way this book uses them. Keep these pages close as you read.

Automatic
Done without having to think about it. A reader who knows a word on sight reads it automatically.

Decimal
A number with a point in it, such as 0.25.

Decode
To turn printed letters into the sounds and words they stand for.

Endless Verse
The Best road on GSU’s reading stage. It never ends and gets a little faster each round.

Equals
The word for the symbol =. The two sides are the same amount.

Eye-tracking
Using a camera to record exactly where a person looks.

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level
A formula that turns a page into a school grade, built for the U.S. Navy in 1975.

Fluency
Reading smoothly, at a good pace, with few stops.

FUNdamental
GSU’s word for learning that is fun, is kept and leads to a yearning for more learning.

Gold Word Game
Two people take turns reading each gold word out loud.

Grade level
The school grade at which a typical student could read a page.

KARAOKE Math
Reading a math problem along with a voice, every word and symbol lit as it is heard.

KARAOKE Night
One screen, one hour and a few people reading and singing along together.

KARAOKE Reading
Reading along with a song or recording, every word lit as it is heard.

Listen and Read
The GSU shelf where recordings, such as podcast episodes, are read along with the words lit.

Melody
The tune of a song.

Navigator
GSU's name for a helper who sits beside a reader.

Navy ruler
GSU's name for the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level.

Numeracy
The ability to read and use numbers in daily life.

Ouroboros
A snake holding its own tail. GSU's sign for a challenge that never ends.

Percent
Out of every hundred.

Rabbit
GSU's name for a valuable idea found by combining things that already work.

Readability
How hard or easy a page is to read.

Rhythm
The steady beat in a song or in speech.

Same Language Subtitling
Putting the words of a song or show on screen in the same language they are spoken or sung in.

Syllable
A part of a word with one vowel sound.

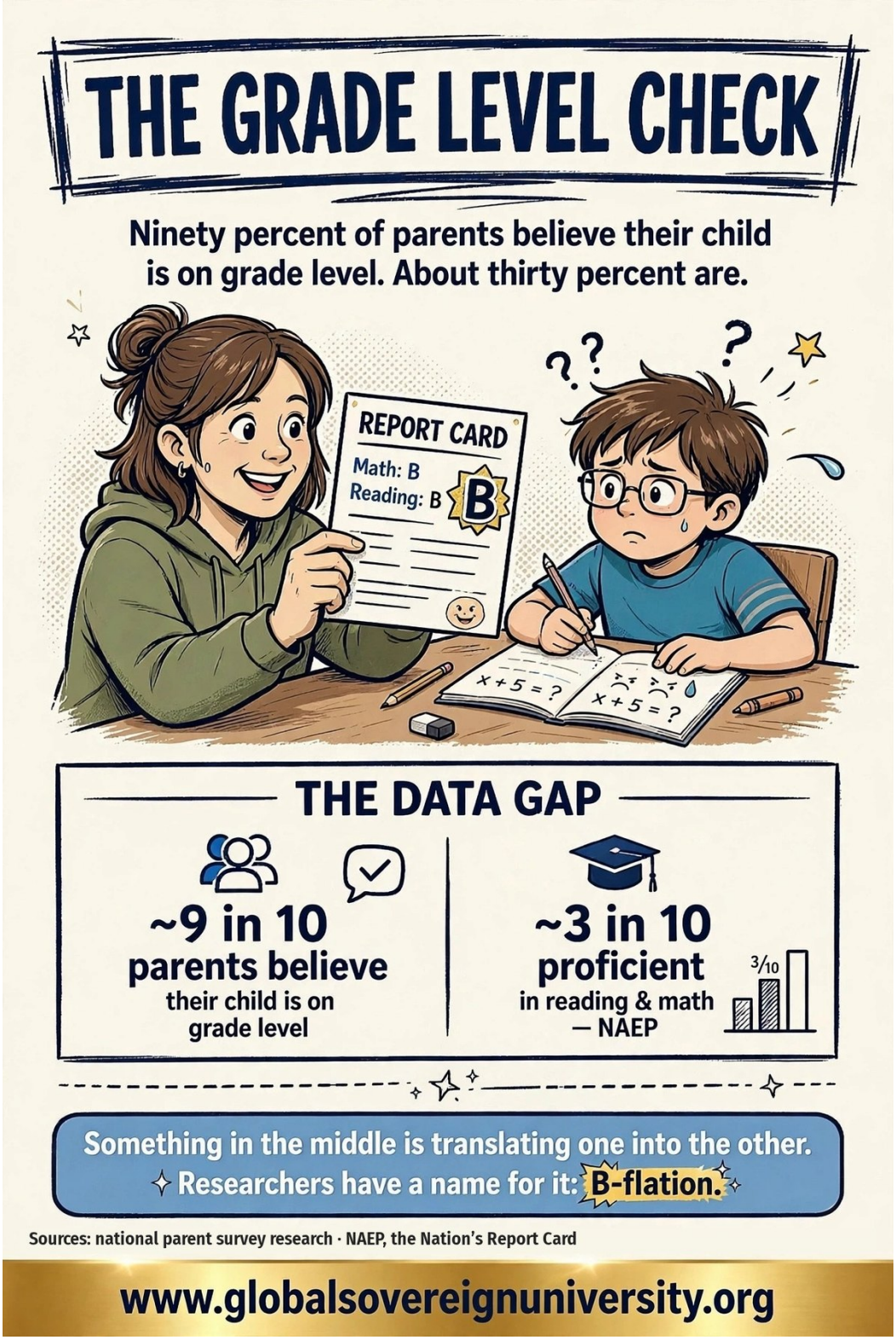
Symbol
A mark that stands for a word, such as + for "plus."

Trifurcation Road
GSU's three roads in every tool: Good, Better and Best.

Word problem
A math problem written in words.

Sing it. Read it. Solve it.
Learning is FUNdamental.

The Grade Level Check



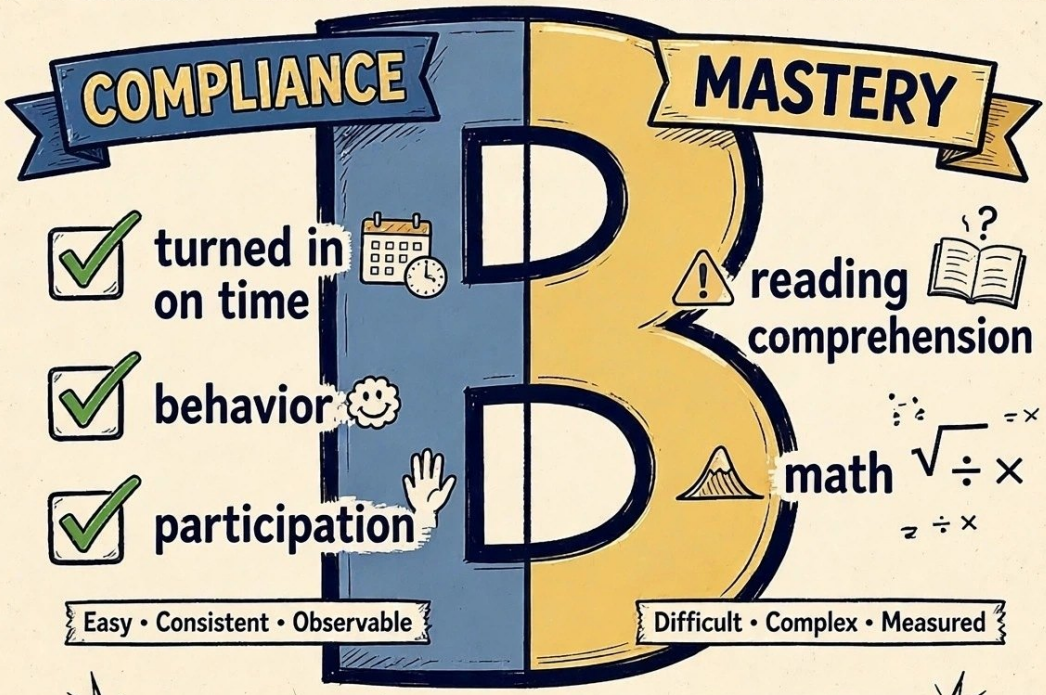
HOW A REPORT CARD CAN BE HONEST AND STILL BE WRONG

PAGE 02

Middle school grades blend two different things.

One is understanding, the other is compliance.
Both matter but the second is easier.

Understanding — Compliance



In Oregon, the bar moved.

Since 2020, students have not had to prove reading and writing proficiency to graduate.

A student who is organized, polite, punctual and cannot read a chapter will earn B's for years.

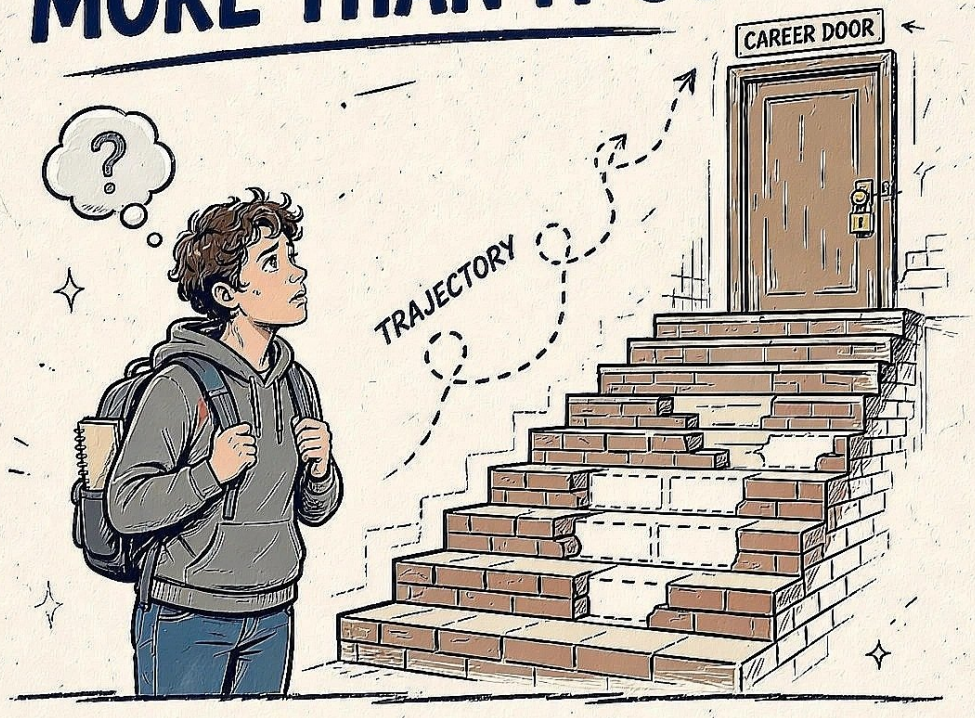
Every B is true about compliance • and false about mastery.

The report card is not lying. It is answering a different question.

www.globalsovereignuniversity.org

PAGE 3

WHY THIS MATTERS MORE THAN IT SOUNDS



WHAT HAPPENS

- A gap you know about is a problem.
- A gap you don't know about is a trajectory.
- The student moves to the next grade on material they never secured.
- By the time it surfaces, it is a failed placement exam, a repeated course, a career door that quietly does not open.
- And the person concludes they are not smart, because nobody ever showed them the actual measurement.

Scan the code on page 4 to check, privately.

PAGE 4

SO HERE IS THE MEASUREMENT.

FREE, AND NOBODY IS WATCHING.



This check gives you a straight answer about reading and math — the highest grade level where answers hold up.

READING
15 questions
grade 4–8 passages → harder

MATHEMATICS
15 questions
grade 4–8 ladder

WRITING
one prompt
scoring guide you apply

Global Sovereign University

SCAN TO CHECK PRIVATELY

Free • Private • In Your Browser

Disclaimer: It is a screener, not a standardized test, not norm-referenced, not psychometrically validated. Does not satisfy state homeschool assessment. This is a signal, not a diagnosis.

GSU

CONNECT. TRADE. THRIVE.

WELCOME TO THE GLOBAL BARTER EXCHANGE



SECTION 1 · THE CONCEPT

POST WHAT YOU OFFER. FIND WHAT YOU SEEK.

The Exchange finds the person on Earth who is your trading mirror. They have what you want, and they want what you have. No money required.

- **TRADE A SKILL**
- **OFFER GOOD GOODS**
- **GIVE A LESSON**
- **BARTER HOURS**

A repair for a remedy • A lesson for a loaf

CORE FEATURES

GLOBAL REACH:
Open to adults everywhere, on every continent, in every time zone.

VERIFIED SKILLS:
Stand out with unique GSU-VERIFIED credentials. Proof of capability no trader can fake.

NO MONEY. EVER.:
The Deal is the exchange of pure value. We never touch cash, cards, or crypto.

FREE TOOLS:
Use the Trustline Ledger to keep score on hours and the GENO AI Tutor for expert help in 83 languages.

READY TO MAKE YOUR FIRST TRADE?
Join the community that builds value beyond money.

JOIN NOW

GSU GLOBAL BARTER EXCHANGE • Community-Driven • Trust • Free • Global

Keep Going: Free at Global Sovereign University

This book is the argument. Global Sovereign University has built free places to practice it. Everything below is free, with no login. Point your phone’s camera at a code, or type the address.



KARAOKE Reading

The stage itself: Sing It, Read It and Listen and Read, with the gold light and the three roads.

Chapters 1 to 8

globalsovereignuniversity.org/karaoke-reading



Say the Math

Every symbol lights up with its spoken word, beside GSU’s thinking games.

Chapters 9 and 10

globalsovereignuniversity.org/math-games



The Reading Climb

For any person, at any age, who wants to read better. Start at the first rungs.

Chapter 4

globalsovereignuniversity.org/the-reading-climb



The Thirteenth Language

Math taught as a language you can read, speak and think in.

Chapter 9

globalsovereignuniversity.org/language-of-mathematics



Adult Literacy Lab

Free reading, writing and arithmetic practice for grown learners.

Chapters 4 and 11

globalsovereignuniversity.org/adult-literacy-lab



Ask GENO

GSU’s free tutor answers questions at any hour, in 83 languages.

Any chapter

globalsovereignuniversity.org/free-tutor

More books: globalsovereignuniversity.org/bookstore

About Global Sovereign University

Global Sovereign University is a tuition-free school operated by The Foundation for Global Instruction, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation (EIN 39-2716552) based in Eugene, Oregon. It opened on July 1, 2025.

There is no tuition and no login. The classes, the tools, the certificate exams and GENO, the tutor, are free to every learner, of any age, anywhere. A growing library of GSU books can be read free in your browser.

The university is funded by the sale of books, this one among them. Every title in a catalog of more than 300 was donated to the Foundation by its author.

We teach capability, not dependency. A learner climbs as high as he or she chooses, and proves each step.

Global Sovereign University is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and book sales are its only income. A purchase is not a tax-deductible donation.

GSU does not teach subjects. It teaches people to keep their lives from breaking down, and it proves they can.

Global Sovereign University: Different by Design. Better by Mission.
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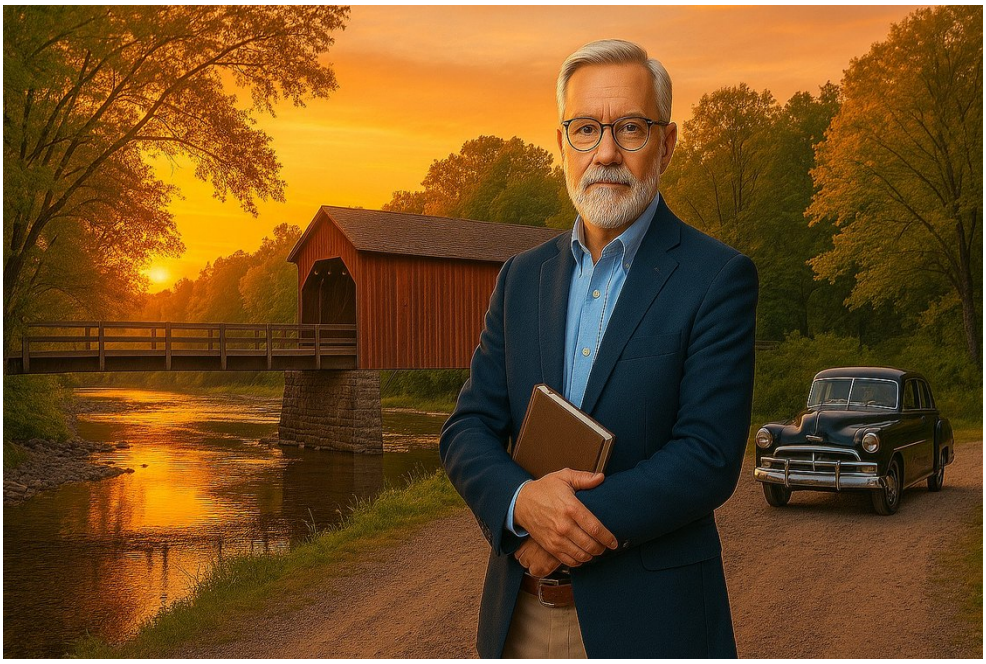
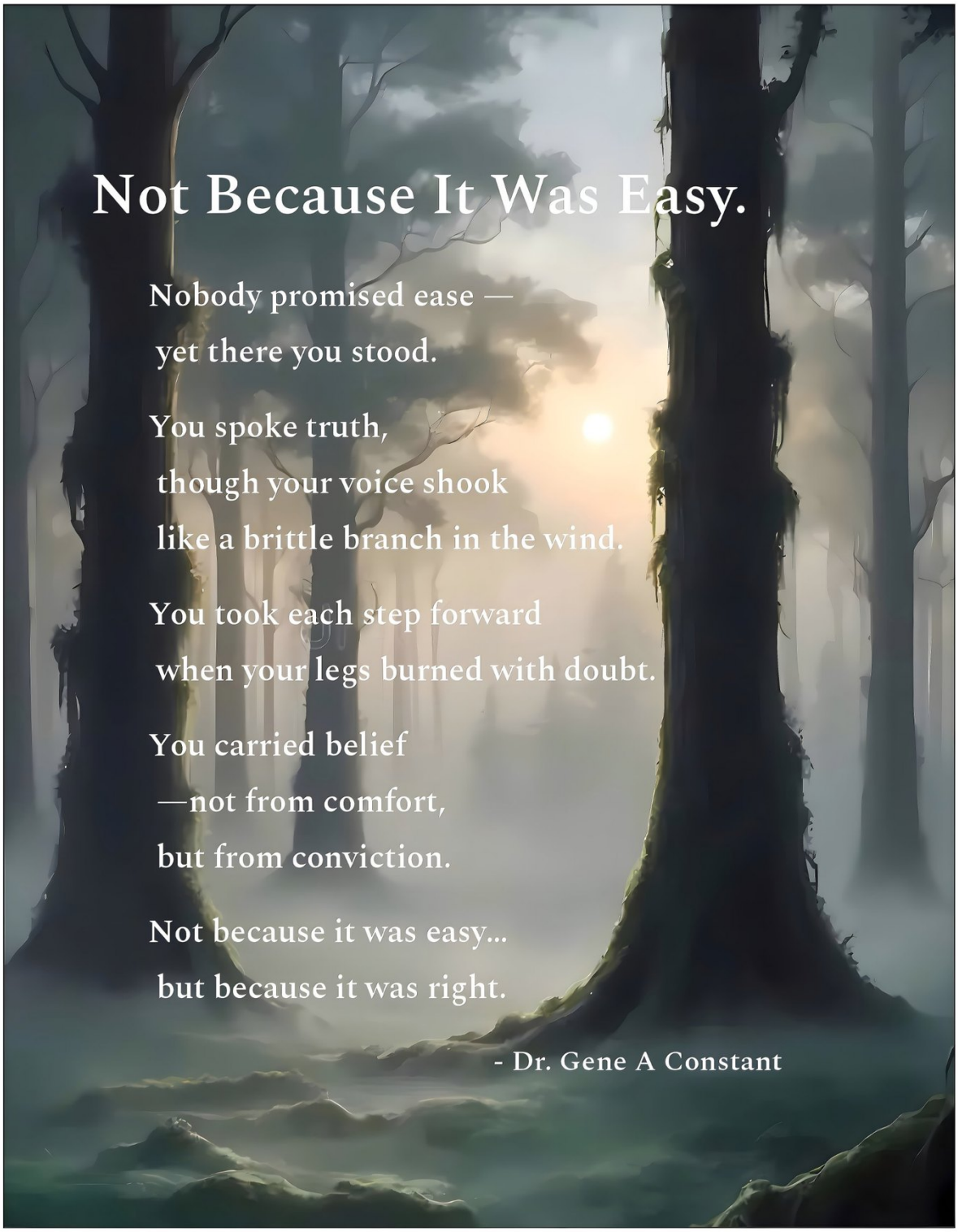
About the Author



Dr. Gene A Constant, DBA, is an author, business scholar, military veteran, and founder of The Foundation for Global Instruction and Global Sovereign University. Having overcome extreme childhood poverty and hardship to enlist in the U.S. Navy at age seventeen, Dr. Constant transformed an eighth-grade departure from formal schooling into a lifelong crusade for educational self-mastery. Through decades of corporate leadership, market innovation, and academic rigor, he eventually earned his Doctor of Business Administration and induction into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Today, Dr. Constant integrates a lifetime of executive and technical experience with advanced artificial intelligence to pioneer open-access learning platforms that liberate individuals from poverty, debt, and dependency.

Global Sovereign University: Different by Design. Better by Mission.

Not Because It Was Easy



Ouroboros



He closes the last page of every book this university publishes. He is not decoration. The serpent that takes its own tail is among the oldest drawings people have made, and it carries one idea: what goes out must come back, or it is lost.

Meet Ouroboros: the mark and the five stages
globalsovereignuniversity.org/ouroboros