



Volume 2  
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# WISE WORDS



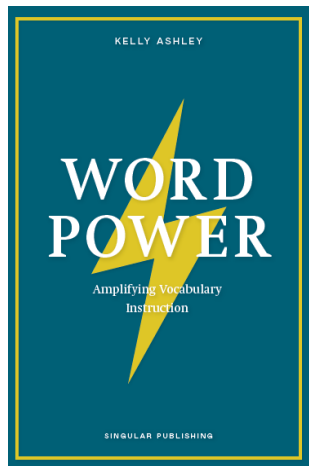
WORD  
POWER

Fun facts to inspire  
conversations about the  
English language



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# What is Word Power?



*Word Power* is a contextual approach to vocabulary instruction, providing practical ideas and strategies for the explicit teaching of vocabulary as part of a literature-rich curriculum. At the heart of the approach are the eight, dynamic members of the *Word Power League* of superheroes – each carefully designed to support teachers and pupils as they *unlock, power-up, charge and recharge* new language in rich contexts, choosing and using language for a real purpose.

For more information about *Word Power* professional development or to order your copy of *Word Power: Amplifying vocabulary instruction*, visit:  
<https://kellyashleyconsultancy.wordpress.com/>

# Phoneme Phantom



Hear  
it.




Say  
it.

## Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Powerful ears** – Listen to sounds in words.
- ✓ **Shield Transmitter** – Practise reading aloud to build fluency.
- ✓ **Hair Stick** – Repeat words aloud to help them 'stick' in memory.



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**DIALECT** (the language of a region) and **IDIOLECT** (the speech patterns of an individual) are interesting to explore. Have you ever noticed differences in the way that you, your family or your friends pronounce certain words? What are your favourite examples of similarities and differences?



***Phoneme Phantom*** explores how words sound. Repeating words out loud and thinking about shared sounds can help build word memory.



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The most common sound in the English language is the **SCHWA**. This is the ‘uh’ sound in words like *cinema* and *the*. Interestingly, ‘schwa’ is a German word but its original meaning comes from a Hebrew word that means ‘emptiness.’ It’s almost as if the ‘schwa’ sound represents a sound that isn’t there at all! Can you think of other examples of words with the ‘schwa’ sound?



***Phoneme Phantom*** explores how words sound. Repeating words out loud and thinking about shared sounds can help build word memory.

# Graphic Guardian




## Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Iron Fist** – Write new words to build word memory.
- ✓ **Direction Glasses**– Think about how letters are formed.
- ✓ **Super Strength** – Build hand strength for writing stamina.



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Have you ever noticed that some letters in our alphabet have straight lines, whilst others have curved lines? Some of the letters with straight lines (for example, 'l' and 't') are actually artefacts from the **RUNIC ALPHABET**. Letters had to be straight as this alphabet was originally carved into stone. Can you sort the letters into groups – straight lines and curved lines? How many are in each?



***Graphic Guardian*** uses his super strength and iron fist to 'anchor' new words when writing. Remember to write new words correctly.

When we hold a pen or pencil, most people use what is called a **TRIPOD GRIP**. This grip is aptly named as it has three ('tri') elements. When we write, we hold our pen or pencil between the *thumb* (1) and *index finger* (2) and rest this on the *middle finger* (3). How do you hold your pen or pencil? What grip is most comfortable for you?



**Graphic Guardian** uses his super strength and iron fist to 'anchor' new words when writing. Remember to write new words correctly.



## Spelling Spy




Look for  
shared  
patterns.

### Vocabulary Superpowers:


- ✓ **Utility Belt** – Use a range of strategies to spell new words.
- ✓ **Pattern Glasses** – Look for patterns in words to make connections.
- ✓ **Tricky Tome** – Edit and proofread spelling errors in writing.



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Have you ever wondered why we have **HOMOPHONES** in English? These are words that sound the same, are spelled differently and have different meanings. The word 'homophone' comes from the Greek words *homos* meaning 'same' and *phone* meaning 'voice sound.' We have homophones in English because of the limited number of sounds (phonemes) in the language which need to be reused to express different ideas (with different spellings). Which *homophones* do you find the trickiest? How do you remember which word is which?



**Spelling Spy** uses visual power to spot and make connections between words based on their shared visual features or spelling patterns.



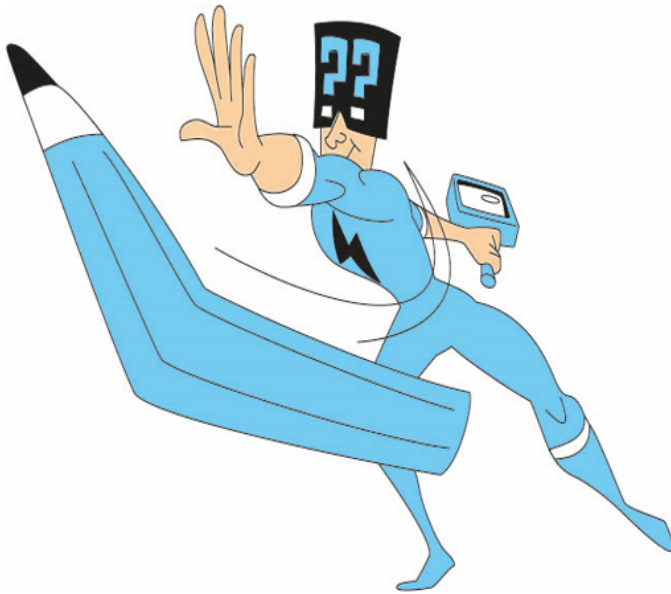
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Some words in English have **SILENT LETTERS** – *plumber, muscle*. Did you know that many of these words originally came from the earlier Roman/ Latin language? For example: *plumber* was ‘plumbum’ (meaning lead piping) and *muscle* was ‘musculus’ (meaning little mouse) in Latin. Can you find any other examples of words with silent letters and where they came from?



***Spelling Spy*** uses visual power to spot and make connections between words based on their shared visual features or spelling patterns.

# Professor Personal



Make a  
personal  
link.


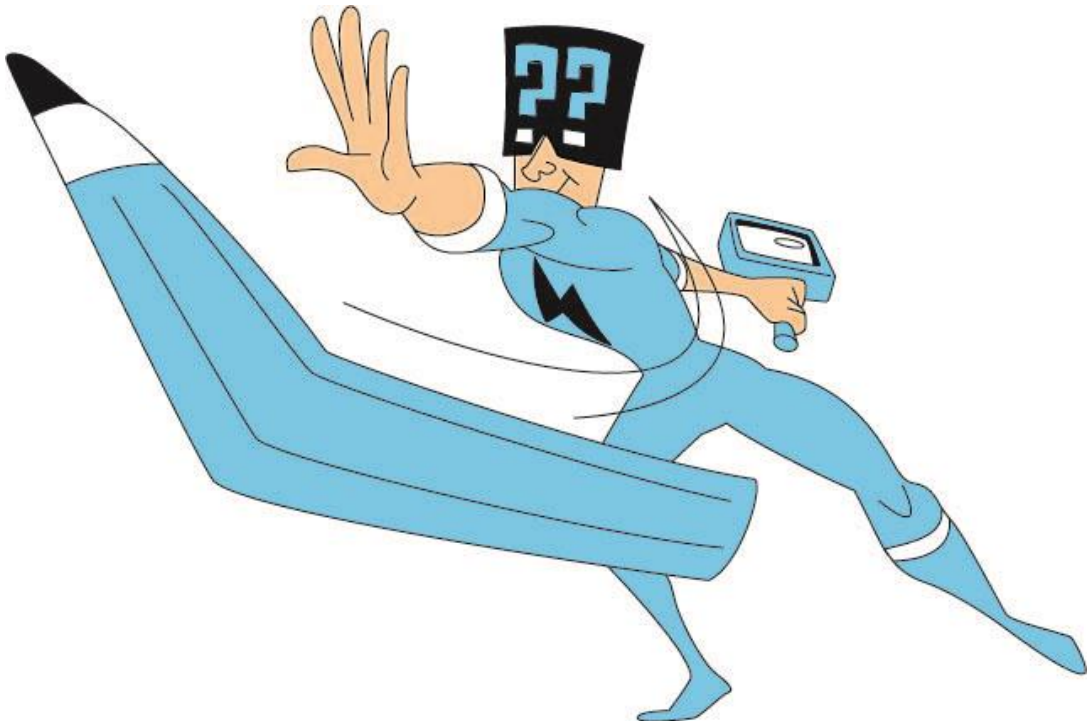

## Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Question Power** – Ask and answer questions about words.
- ✓ **Boomerang Pen** – 'Catch' new words to discuss with others.
- ✓ **Spyglass** – Use inference and prediction to 'spy' the hidden meanings of words.




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What do you call your different **MEALS** throughout the day? Do you call the morning meal *breakfast* or something else? Do you call the mid-day meal *lunch*, *dinner* or another variation? Do you call your evening meal *dinner*, *tea*, *supper* or something not listed here? Share your personal connections with these familiar words. Why do you think we have so many different names to describe the same thing?



***Professor Personal*** thinks carefully about the personal connections he can make with language using inference, prediction and questioning skills.





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When we read, we use our **INFERENCE** skills to make sense of what the author and illustrator provide for us in the text by linking this information to our personal experiences and understanding. The word *inference* comes from the Latin word 'inferentem' meaning 'bring into.' What strategies do you use to 'bring' the hidden meaning 'into' your mind when you read? What works best for you?



***Professor Personal*** thinks carefully about the personal connections he can make with language using inference, prediction and questioning skills.

# Captain Connector




Connect  
new words  
and ideas.

## Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Bountiful Bucket** – 'Collect' connections using word webs.
- ✓ **Super Flexibility** – 'Stretch' connections by thinking about how words are used in different contexts and in different kinds of texts.
- ✓ **Connection Catcher** – 'Catch' connections between the meanings and uses of words across the curriculum.



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**ANTONYMS** are words that hold opposite meanings. The word *antonym* comes from the Greek roots ‘anti’ meaning ‘opposite or against’ and ‘onym’ meaning ‘name.’ By exploring opposite meanings of words, we can strengthen our understanding. For example, if we aren’t *angry*, we might feel *calm*, *happy* or *peaceful*. Can you think of other antonyms for emotion words such as: *fearful*, *confused* and *caring*?



***Captain Connector*** makes wider connections between words. She thinks carefully about how we use language for different purposes.





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A **CONTRONYM** is a word that has different meanings that are also opposites. Think about these examples: 'bolt' (*to secure a door* and also *to run away*), 'wind up' (*to finish something* and also *to start something*), 'fast' (*stuck firmly* and also *moving quickly*). Can you find any other examples of *contronyms* to share?



**Captain Connector** makes wider connections between words. She thinks carefully about how we use language for different purposes.

## Meaning Mastermind



Think of a  
personal  
definition.

### Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Context Vest** – Explore word meaning 'in context.'
- ✓ **Multi-coloured Hair**– Think of 'multiple' or other word meanings.
- ✓ **Super Slippers**– 'Slip in' new words when communicating to recharge and build word memory.



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**PORTMANTEAU** words combine the sounds and meanings of two words. This particular meaning of the word *portmanteau* was coined by Lewis Carroll to explain the kinds of words he invented for the 'Jabberwocky' poem. Here are some examples: *podcast* combines iPod and broadcast; *brunch* combines breakfast and lunch; *chortle* is a combination of a chuckle and a snort. Can you find any other examples of *portmanteau* words?



***Meaning Mastermind*** thinks carefully about word meaning in context. She uses the grammar and structure of sentences around words to understand meaning.





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All words have the potential to powerful – even seemingly simple words. One of the fascinating things about the English language is the way we can move words around in sentences to change their meaning. Let’s test out this theory. Place the word ‘only’ in the sentence below. How does the **POSITION OF THE WORD** ‘only’ change the meaning of the sentence each time?

*She told him that she loved him.*



**Meaning Mastermind** thinks carefully about word meaning in context. She uses the grammar and structure of sentences around words to understand meaning.

# Morpheme Marvel




Think of root words, prefixes and suffixes.

## Vocabulary Superpowers:


- ✓ **Root Suit** – Explore the meaning of 'root' words.
- ✓ **Laser Mask** – Look for and connect word parts between different words (prefixes, suffixes, roots).
- ✓ **M-belt Badge** – Remember to use 'M'orpheme Marvel's powers by thinking about word roots when spelling new words.



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**‘ROOT WORD’** is an umbrella term that refers to *prefixes, suffixes* and *base* or *stem* words. Roots are also generative – they have the potential to ‘generate’ (or make) many other words. For example, the root word ‘tract’ can be used to make approximately 140 different words – tractor, attractive, detract, distract, extract. How many more examples can you think of? Some other popular roots are ‘dem’ and ‘pan.’ Can you think of other words that use these roots?




***Morpheme Marvel*** thinks about meaning units (morphemes) in words such as root words, prefixes and suffixes. He uses this word knowledge to help him make connections.



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Many of our prefixes are borrowed from earlier **LATIN and GREEK** languages. This is why we often have more than one prefix that has the same meaning. Consider these examples to compare:



Latin	Greek	Meaning
super-, ultra-	hyper-	above
in-, im-, il-, ir-	anti-	against
mal-	dys-	bad, wrong
semi-	hemi-	half
intra-	endo-	inside
de-, dis-	a-, an-	not



***Morpheme Marvel*** thinks about meaning units (morphemes) in words such as root words, prefixes and suffixes. He uses this word knowledge to help him make connections.

## Doctor Derivation



Think about word history, social and cultural influences.


### Vocabulary Superpowers:

- ✓ **Field Glasses** – Look for historical, cultural or social connections within and between words.
- ✓ **Multi-lingual Headphones** – Explore words borrowed into English from other languages.
- ✓ **Time-travelling Watch**– Think about how word meaning, spelling and/or pronunciation changes over time.






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**MIDDLE ENGLISH** was a form of English that was spoken after the Norman (French) conquest from 1066 until the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is for this reason that there are about 10,000 words in our modern English language that have been borrowed from French. French influenced our language as it was spoken by the monarchy. We can thank the French influence for words we use everyday such as: *courtesy, honour, guage, guardian* and *reward*. What other French words do you know that are used in English?



***Doctor Derivation*** uses her knowledge of the history of words to make connections. She also enjoys exploring words that have been borrowed into English from other languages.



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Did you know that the Old English word *aeppe* (apple) was used to describe any kind of **FRUIT**, not just the tasty ‘apple’ that we know and love today? *Peach* was ‘persicum’ in Latin or ‘Persian apple,’ *pomegranate* was ‘apple with many seeds’ and *pineapple* was named because it was a ‘fruit’ (*apple*) that looked like a pine cone (*pine*). Can you explore the history of your other fruity favourites?



***Doctor Derivation*** uses her knowledge of the history of words to make connections. She also enjoys exploring words that have been borrowed into English from other languages.