

## The Role Of Reading In Nine Famous Lives

Donald E. Howard



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According to the end-of-millennium Arts and Entertainment Television Network survey, the single most influential person of the last thousand years was Johann Gutenberg, the inventor of the printing press. The revolutionary advent of moveable metal type made possible the diffusion of books to people around the world, profoundly influencing the lives of many famous historical figures thereafter. This book attempts to demonstrate the role that reading has played throughout the course of history. It documents the lives of nine individuals of outstanding achievement whose efforts were molded by the books they read. The subjects are presented in chronological order according to birth. Respective chapters contain brief biographies of the subjects and discuss the ways in which each used books as a principal aid in the development of his or her exceptional talents. Subjects include Benjamin Franklin, who was in 1724 an active connoisseur in the rapidly growing printing trade, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Booker T. Washington, Pearl S. Buck, Louis L'Amour, and Nelson Mandela. The book maintains that while these historical figures represent a wide range of talents and influences, to each is attributed invaluable contributions to society. Each was a dedicated reader, inspired to greatness by the power of the written word.

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