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# The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works

By David Crystal



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## The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works By David Crystal

We all know eloquence when we hear it. But what exactly is it? And how might we gain more of it for ourselves? This entertaining and, yes, eloquent book illuminates the power of language from a linguistic point of view and provides fascinating insights into the way we use words. David Crystal, a world-renowned expert on the history and usage of the English language, probes the intricate workings of eloquence. His lively analysis encompasses everyday situations (wedding speeches, business presentations, storytelling) as well as the oratory of great public gatherings.

Crystal focuses on the here and now of eloquent speaking—from pitch, pace, and prosody to jokes, appropriateness, and how to wield a microphone. He explains what is going on moment by moment and examines each facet of eloquence. He also investigates topics such as the way current technologies help or hinder our verbal powers, the psychological effects of verbal excellence, and why certain places or peoples are thought to be more eloquent than others. In the core analysis of the book, Crystal offers an extended and close dissection of Barack Obama's electrifying "Yes we can" speech of 2008, in which the president demonstrated full mastery of virtually every element of eloquence—from the simple use of parallelism and an awareness of what *not* to say, to his brilliant conclusion constructed around two powerful words: *dreams* and *answers*.



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## The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works By David Crystal Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #533714 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-05-17
- Released on: 2016-05-01
- Format: Kindle eBook



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## Editorial Review

### Review

“What do we mean by eloquence? In his new book the smart and prolific pop-linguist David Crystal sets out to give an answer—and some practical suggestions as to how any of us might work to acquire it.”—Sam Leith, *Financial Times*  
(Sam Leith *Financial Times* 2016-05-10)

“Rhetoric has its own algebra, and Crystal deciphers it superbly.”—Philip Collins, *The Times*  
(Philip Collins *The Times* 2016-05-14)

"While the title might evoke blarney, wedding toasts, and garrulous relatives, this book offers far more than that. . . . Crystal takes the reader through a complete course in preparing and giving public presentations. This is a charming, intelligent book—this reviewer cannot resist calling it eloquent. . . . This reviewer learned something from every chapter. This thought-provoking book will be invaluable to those who engage in public speaking."—*Choice*  
(*Choice*)

### From the Author

Praise for David Crystal's *A Little Book of Language*:

“*A Little Book of Language* may be for children (of all ages, as the saying goes), yet it's by no means childish or juvenile. In other words, buy it for your son or daughter, but read it yourself.”—Michael Dirda, *Washington Post*

“*A Little Book of Language* is a paean to language in all its guises. Crystal has clearly thought long and hard about his subject. . . . [H]e is always revealing and thought-provoking.”—David B. Williams, *Seattle Times*

“An enlightening and entertaining celebration of language and linguistics.”—P. D. Smith, *Guardian*

“In his light and amusing *A Little Book of Language*, David Crystal treats the world's 6,000 tongues—which are disappearing at an alarming rate—as a natural resource no less precious than our oceans and forests.”—*Daily Beast*

“[An] exhilarating romp through the mysteries and vagaries of language. . . . This is the perfect primer for anyone interested in the subject.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

### About the Author

**David Crystal** is an independent scholar with lifelong experience as a lecturer, public speaker, and broadcaster. He lives in Holyhead, UK.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Justin Price:**

This The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works book is simply not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book will be information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This kind of The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works without we comprehend teach the one who reading it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't end up being worry The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works can bring once you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even cell phone. This The Gift of the Gab: How Eloquence Works having good arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

#### **Robert Bell:**

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#### **Dennis Sellers:**

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