

READING SUCCESS

Second Edition

4

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Contents

01	A Lazy Man	4
02	My New Baby Brother	6
03	Pass the Salt, Please	8
04	Lions	10
05	A Night at the Theater	12
06	The New Neighbor	14
07	At the Bus Stop	16
08	Mozart	18
09	A Cruel Comment	20
10	Moving	22
11	Can You Hear Me?	24
12	The Sun	26
13	Christmas in Australia	28
14	Online Chatting	30
15	An Aggressive Woman	32
16	Endangered Animals	34
17	A Kind Grandmother	36
18	How to Get to the Airport	38
19	A Stupid Thief	40
20	Making a Movie	42
21	Staying at a Friend's House	44
22	The Box Hill Tennis Club	46
23	A Time Sheet	48
24	Marco Polo	50
25	A Tall Story	52
26	Judith's Email	54
27	The Worst Memory in the World	56
28	The Great Pyramid of Giza	58
29	The Wrong Thing to Do	60
30	Sarah's Email	62
31	A Very Patient Family	64
32	The Space Race	66
33	A Letter from Sydney	68
34	How to Make Prawn Curry	70
35	Review: Uncle Henry's Vacation Video	72
36	Rubber Boy	74
37	The Accident	76
38	Classified Advertisements	78
39	Car Hits School Bus	80
40	Easter Island	82

¹ **contortionist** a person who can bend their body into strange positions

⁴ **flexibility** the ability to bend easily

⁶ **dislocate** to move a bone out of its normal position

¹⁹ **cram** to squeeze into a small space

Rubber boy Track 36

Daniel Browning Smith is an American **contortionist**. He can do amazing things with his body. He has become famous as Rubber boy. He was born in Mississippi in 1979 and discovered his ability for **flexibility** at an early age. He saw some pictures of contortionists and started practicing.

He discovered that he could **dislocate** his joints and do all the contortions in the pictures he saw. When he was 18, he ran away from home and joined a circus. He toured America and went to Singapore, where he performed on television. When he returned, he trained with a Chinese master. He learned how to bend his body in stranger and stranger shapes.

He can bend so far backwards that the top of his head can touch the seat of his pants. Then he can bend so far forward that he puts his head between his legs and kisses the seat of his pants. He can dislocate both arms and legs and even turn his head 180 degrees.

One of his most famous contortions is to take the strings out of a tennis racquet and then crawl through the racquet head. Although he is five foot eight inches (172 cm) tall and weighs 135 pounds (61.5kg), he can **cram** his body into a box almost as small as the carry-on luggage an airline will allow you to take on an international flight.

Smith tours the world, displaying his amazing contortions in shows at sporting events and concert halls. *The Guinness Book of World Records* calls him the most flexible man in the world. He has appeared in television documentaries and performed on television shows. He has also acted in movies such as Men in Black.

In also acts in the theater, makes commercials, and does trade presentations. You can see video clips of parts of his show on the internet.

Reading time

_____ minutes _____ seconds **308 words**



Vocabulary Review

■ Match each word with its meaning.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. contortionist • | • a. to squeeze into a small space |
| 2. cram • | • b. when something is very bendable |
| 3. flexibility • | • c. person who can bend his or her body into different shapes |

Reading Comprehension

■ Choose the best answer.

- When did Smith begin to rehearse contortionist tricks?
 - When he was eighteen
 - When he saw some pictures of contortionists
 - When he toured America
 - When he went to Singapore
- Why is Smith so good at contortionist tricks?
 - He was born in Mississippi.
 - He appears on many television shows.
 - His body is naturally flexible.
 - He joined a circus when he was 18.
- When did Smith discover that he could do contortionist tricks?
 - When he was young
 - When he joined the circus
 - When he acted in *Men in Black*
 - When he trained with a Chinese Master
- Why is Smith called Rubber boy?
 - He trained with a Chinese Master.
 - He can turn his head right around.
 - He is very flexible.
 - That was his name in *Men in Black*.

Summary

■ Fill in each blank with the correct word.

appeared fit forwards popular stage

Rubber boy is the 1 _____ name of Daniel Browning Smith, an American contortionist who has his own show and has 2 _____ in many television shows and movies. He can bend 3 _____ and backwards and 4 _____ his body into a very small box. He discovered his flexibility at an early age and has toured America and the world with his very 5 _____ show.