

PRE-READING

A. Look at the photo of Usain Bolt and read the caption. How do you think he feels? How do you know?

B. Look at the infographic on page 96. Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Which of the poses matches the one Usain Bolt is doing?
2. What do you think the graphic tells you about how different poses make us feel?

C. Look at the title of the passage. What do you think “power poses” are?

- a. How you hold your body when you win a big prize
- b. How you exercise at the gym to make your body strong
- c. How you sit or stand to show how powerful you are

D. Skim the passage quickly. What kind of reading passage is this? How do you know?

- a. An article about some research
- b. A report about a news event
- c. A personal narrative



Usain Bolt reacts after winning a gold medal at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland.

POWER POSES

1 Amy Cuddy, a social scientist and TED speaker, studies body language (or *nonverbal communication*). She is particularly interested in nonverbal expressions of power. This is what our bodies do when we are—or feel—powerful. Cuddy believes that by changing our body language, we can change how powerful we feel.

2 To **prove** this point, she ran an experiment. First, she invited a number of candidates to be interviewed for a job. Next, immediately before the interview, Cuddy asked half the candidates to practice high-power poses for two minutes. The other candidates were asked to practice low-power poses for two minutes. Then the interviews were filmed and later watched by a

panel of interviewers who were not told what the experiment was about. The panel judged the candidates who had practiced the high-power poses very **favorably**. However, the interviewers did not want to hire anyone who had done the low-power posing.

3 Cuddy gives a simple, biological explanation for this. She says that striking some poses **releases** particular chemicals in the brain. For low-power poses, these chemicals make people believe they are powerless. Feeling powerless, they often do not **cope** well with **stress**, and they are less positive. **Conversely**, Cuddy found that high-power poses release other chemicals in the brain. These tell people that they are powerful, so they then feel **confident**. Interestingly, Cuddy

found that it didn't matter what **qualifications** a candidate had, or even what he or she actually said in the interview. “It’s not about the content of the speech,” explains Cuddy, “It’s about the presence that they’re bringing to the speech.”

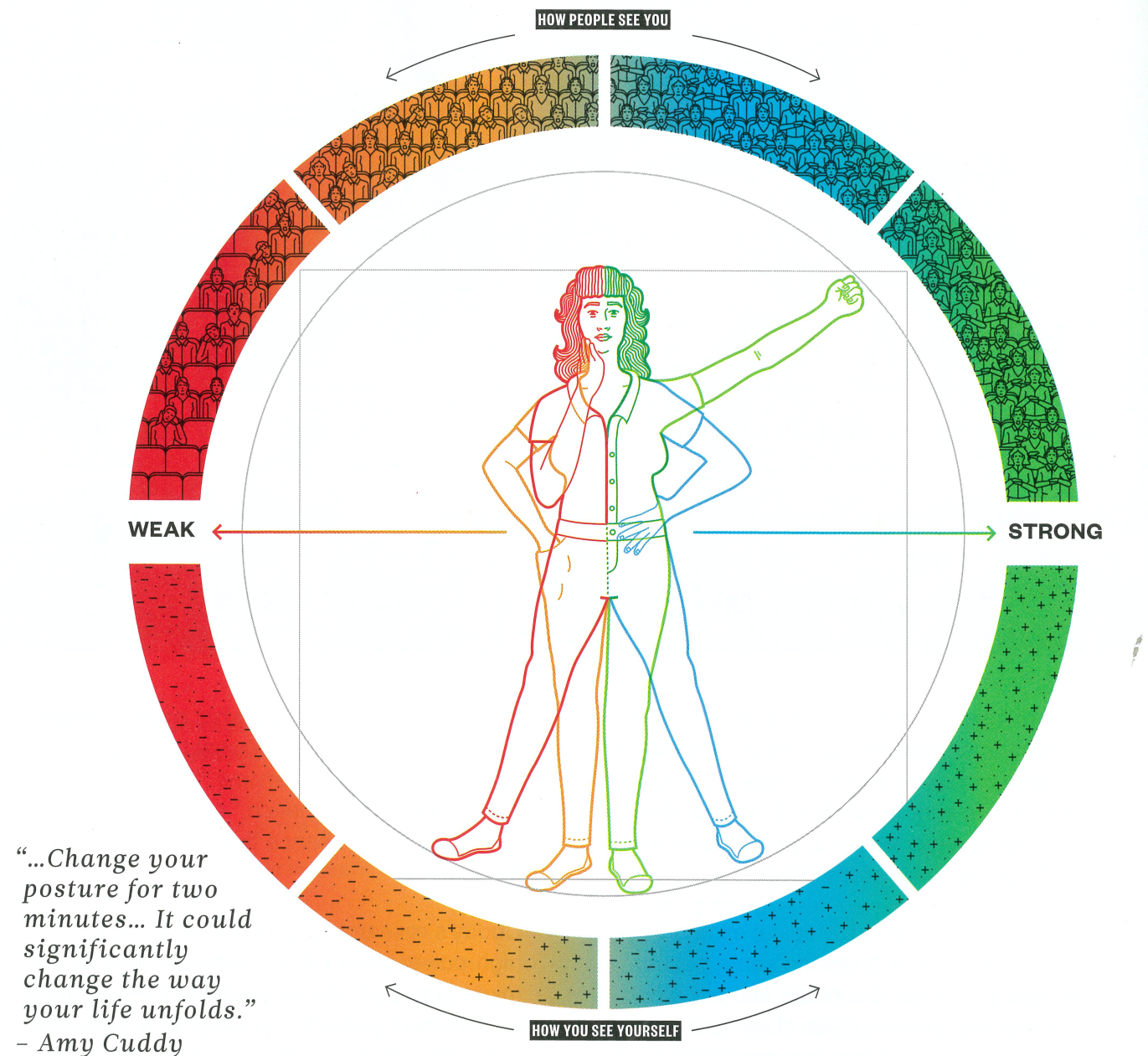
4 Cuddy’s research suggests that doing a high-power pose for two minutes—even if we might look a bit silly when doing it—may make us feel more powerful. Feeling more powerful may very well make us *believe* we are more powerful. And that belief has the power to change our lives.

candidate: *n.* a person who applies for a job

presence: *n.* a way of behaving—for example, a way of standing or sitting or speaking—that makes a person memorable to others

HOW PEOPLE SEE YOU, HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF

We all know that our body language affects how people see us. But does it also shape how we see ourselves? In her TED Talk, “Your body language shapes who you are,” social psychologist Amy Cuddy discusses how our posture can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain and change our feelings about ourselves. That means that standing tall and proud—even when we don’t feel confident—can have a positive impact on how we’re perceived. So take a look in the mirror; your next success could depend on how you pose.



PROTECTIVE
Placing your hand on your face or neck is a low-power pose that communicates a need for protection from other people.



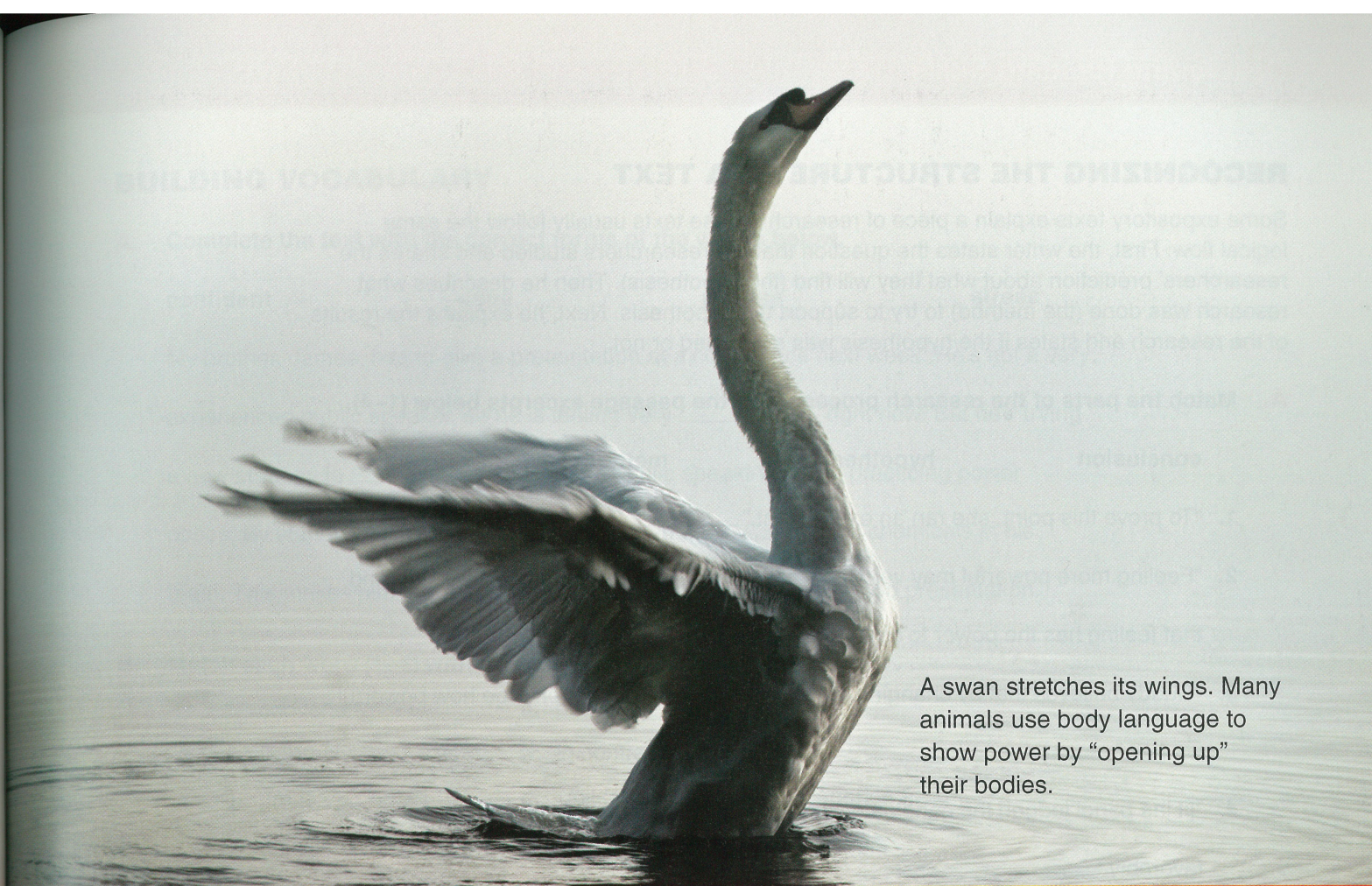
HAND-HIDING
Hiding your hands in your pockets is another example of a low-power pose; it hints that you may lack self-confidence.



WONDER WOMAN
Shift your pose to make yourself appear bigger. That can take you from looking meek to seeming assertive.



TALL AND PROUD
Take a private moment to hold your arms up in a V-shape and lift your chin. That can make you feel (and seem) powerful.



A swan stretches its wings. Many animals use body language to show power by “opening up” their bodies.

Developing Reading Skills

GETTING THE MAIN IDEAS

Use the information from the passage on pages 94–96 to answer each question.

- What is the passage mostly about? Choose the best answer.
 - Some people are naturally powerful.
 - We can change how powerful we feel.
 - Power makes it hard to cope with stress.
- What did Cuddy’s experiment show? Complete the sentences.
 - Power posing can have a significant effect on _____.
 - After doing low-power poses, _____.
 - After doing high-power poses, _____.

GETTING KEY DETAILS

- A.** Choose the best word or phrase to complete each sentence below.
- According to the reading passage, it **may be** / **may not be** possible for everyone to feel more powerful.
 - The panel that viewed the interviews were **told** / **not told** about the power poses.
 - The candidates’ qualifications made a **very big difference** / **no difference at all** in the experiment.
 - The results of the experiment are explained by chemicals in the **brain** / **muscles**.
- B.** What other term does the passage use that means the same as **body language**?

RECOGNIZING THE STRUCTURE OF A TEXT

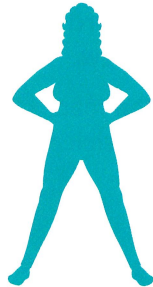
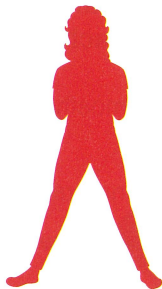
Some expository texts explain a piece of research. These texts usually follow the same logical flow. First, the writer states the question that the researchers studied and shares the researchers’ prediction about what they will find (the hypothesis). Then he describes what research was done (the method) to try to support the hypothesis. Next, he explains the results of the research and states if the hypothesis was supported or not.

A. Match the parts of the research process with the passage excerpts below (1–4).

conclusion hypothesis method results

- 1. “To prove this point, she ran an experiment.” _____
- 2. “Feeling more powerful may very well make us *believe* we are more powerful. And that feeling has the power to change our lives.” _____
- 3. “Cuddy believes that by changing our body language, we can change how powerful we feel.” _____
- 4. “[T]he panel judged the candidates who had practiced the high-power poses very favorably.” _____

B. Using the information from the passage, complete the chart about the results of Cuddy’s experiment.

High-Power Poses	Low-Power Poses
	
Chemical released in brain: ▼	Chemical released in brain: ▼
Tell a person he or she is _____ ▼	Tell a person he or she is _____ ▼
Person feels _____ ▼	Person feels _____ ▼
Interviewers respond _____	Interviewers respond _____

BUILDING VOCABULARY

A. Complete the text with the correct forms of the words below.

confident cope release stress

My brother, James, has to give a presentation at a conference next week. He’s not a very experienced public speaker, so he is feeling very _____ right now. But he’s trying a new strategy to _____ better with public speaking. He is practicing power poses. By standing with his arms above his head, he _____ chemicals in his brain. This makes him feel more _____. I hope he gives a good presentation.

B. Match each word (1–4) with its definition (a–d).

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| ____ 1. conversely | a. positively |
| ____ 2. favorably | b. in contrast |
| ____ 3. prove | c. skills, capabilities, or experience |
| ____ 4. qualifications | d. to show that something is true |

CRITICAL THINKING

1. **Analyzing.** What do you think Cuddy means when she says, “It’s about the presence that they’re bringing to the speech”?

2. **Personalizing.** Think of a famous person or someone you know in real life whose body language makes them seem powerful. What do they do specifically? How do other people react to them?

EXPLORE MORE

There are many online resources about using body language to feel and become more successful. What kinds of nonverbal expressions can have negative effects? Share your findings with your class.