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Daniel Libeskind's Three Lessons in Architecture

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The first step in digitally reconstructing the Reading Machine was to build a strong documentation base to pull information from. Having a view of all the parts of the machine was crucial to building and understanding on its ability to the size of one of the base members. It took multiple iterations of models to find the correct proportioning system.

I was fortunate to be able to find a picture of the Reading Machine with a chair in relationship to it. Chairs have a typical width and height dimension that gave me a range of possible dimensions for space between the two large wheels. Chairs have an average width of 24” to 18”, which provided me with a base for which I could begin to dimension the overall width of the machine. The final model of the Reading Machine is thought to be accurate to a hundredth of an inch.

The information uncovered about the Reading Machine has informed me about the construction process, and the proportioning systems of the machine. From the digital model, I pulled the pieces apart to get a list of parts and pieces that moves the research forward. All the pieces of the Reading Machine have a base or two sides with a dimension that is either 3/4”, 1 1/2”, or 2 1/4”. It’s likely that this means that Reading Machine was constructed with dimensioned lumber, with the 2 1/4” pieces being rapped down to 2 1/2” pieces. This also suggests that proportion played a big role in the construction of the Reading Machine. Understanding the construction process is important to reconstructing a physical model of the machines, as well as understanding the theory behind the creation of the machines.