

READING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A PLEASURE, NOT A PRESSURE

by:

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Reading necessitates a learning skill that remains essential to the execution of the teaching and learning process. It is the process of understanding text-based information and is one of the most important additions to learning in a variety of contexts. Readers can gain new knowledge through reading, depending on what they read. However, learners are developing an instant gratification culture, in which learners are losing their desire to comprehend literary texts at a deeper level. Since it is more comfortable, many prefer watching movies and browsing the internet than reading books. Due to efforts to promote literacy among school children, students perceive reading as a learning pressure activity rather than a hobby. The real world is putting pressure on parents, who are also putting pressure on teachers and learners due to demands that learners need to perform well in their academics.

The difficulties with pupils' reading interest and literacy are highlighted by numerous types of research and educational policy. Several studies have demonstrated that excessive learning pressure will impair students' ability to process material cognitively and may result in poorer academic achievement. Learning pressure affects people's behavior, academic performance, and psychological health (Chu & Wang, 2015). Some parents and educators urge children to read at such a young age and bombard them with reading materials which makes them lose their reading interest. Additionally, students are negatively affected by increased performance pressure. Despite thoroughly absorbing the reading content, they could feel unprepared, and a child becomes caught in the spiral of pressure to perform (Bansal, 2022). To deal with it, parents and educators should promote a stress-free atmosphere so that learners can succeed and put all of their anxieties behind them. Hence, understanding the fundamentals of reading is crucial

because it forms the basis for fostering and enhancing a love of reading. Moreover, making connections between the reading material and daily life, and posing a few leading questions before beginning the lesson help to spark their attention (Kafle, 2020). Children's needs and interests are very essential when it comes to shaping their reading habits.

The pupils' reading experience should be enjoyable so that they will be motivated to study the book and understand its significance (Haryudin & Nurmalasari, 2019). To read a text that is thorough and filled with engaging media, learners must be driven to do so. One of the reading strategies that can be used is pleasure reading. Reading for pleasure can be described as voluntarily chosen reading or that readers continue with enthusiasm and freedom after it has been assigned (Wilhelm, 2017). The study found that teachers in the core subject areas believed that reading for pleasure was advantageous, even crucial, to students' growth and achievement (Labby & Sullivan, 2016). Reading fosters critical thinking in learners and enhances reading comprehension, which is advantageous in all subject areas. Reading should be established as a worthwhile activity to reignite student interest in reading for pleasure. Students who read frequently choose enjoyable and simple-to-read books to help them improve their reading speed and fluency. In other words, reading is far superior to simply studying vocabulary, grammar, and phrases in texts for students to learn how to read. Reading for broad comprehension is one reading goal that is usually focused on when reading for pleasure. It suggests that the only motivation for reading for pleasure comes from the readers themselves. Further, it can be assumed that reading for pleasure can lead to satisfaction since the reader's aim motivates them to read.

Reading can significantly improve a person's life and academic performance. It opens the door for a thorough study of everyday situations, provides the reader with a deeper understanding of their language, and exposes the reader to new experiences (Post, 2020). A person becomes more well-rounded the more experiences they are exposed to.

Reading for pleasure is therefore a means of raising consciousness as opposed to only being amusing or instructive. It is intended that the reader would adopt a new perspective on pleasure reading. A profound level of cognitive achievement is expected by next-generation standards around the world. Students need to put in the effort and develop methods over time to meet these standards and the challenges of navigating modern life. A tried-and-true way to get there is through promoting the benefits of pleasure reading.

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