

READING FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND WHY IT MATTERS

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Generally, our first chance at printed materials was when we started learning shapes, colors, numbers, and letters since most of us are visual learners. Research suggests that about sixty-five percent of the population learns visually which implies that there is a need for the information to be seen to retain them. Our early encounter with books was exhilarating especially when the subject focuses on a fairytale story that dazzles almost everyone. Needless to say, these compiled pages had been our source of amusement.

Down through the years, a major shift in our perspective about books has been triggered. From being a source of entertainment, books are now being referred to as a source of knowledge. This is where the problem usually starts. The pressure to read books that do not really interest our learners impact their level of appreciation for reading. In schools, children are forced to read bundles of books on different learning areas and while this might be alright for some, it could be exhausting for others.

At present, this is reflected by how ironic students complain about having to read their self-learning modules while indulging in their favorite stories on Wattpad. Voluntary reading has such a powerful academic impact that students usually learn better when they study willingly. There is a powerful link between voracious reading and stronger language skills as well as there is a significant connection between a dislike for reading and a person's negative outlook of experiences in the classroom. The psychological cost of putting too much emphasis on analyzing heaps of text and reading to merely absorb information comes in the form of disengagement in voluntary reading.

Another essential difference to note is that children usually have a positive experience in elementary school, and it eventually drops in high school. This may be contributed by the fact that most of the books that children read during their primary years are mostly storybooks and picture books which are a lot more entertaining than purely text reference books that they dread to see in high school.

Allowing our children to read for entertainment may help nourish their verbal and creative skills as well as develop their empathic capacity which will then lead to a reduced prejudice against stereotyped groups of individuals. As much as reading can give us abundant information, it can also lighten our burden at times.

Hence, it's a false dichotomy to think that it's useless to read for fun because just like food, we should read in variety, and these different selections of reading materials will form part of our reading diet.

References:

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