ANIL AGGRAWAL'S
Internet Journal of Book Reviews
A sister journal of AAIJFMT · Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology

VOL. 8, NO. 1 · JANUARY – JUNE 2009
Downloaded from www.anilaggrawal.com · ISSN 0972-9674 (Online) · https://www.anilaggrawal.com/br/vol_008_no_001/others/editorial.html

GUEST EDITORIAL

HOW TO CITE
Aggrawal A. Editorial: The Reading Habit. *Anil Aggrawal's Internet Journal of Book Reviews*. 2009;8(1).

The Reading Habit

Anil Kohli, India



"To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life"

-W. Somerset Maugham

Reading is both fun and enlightening. It helps us in being more knowledgeable and successful. Reading develops your mind and it expands your intellectual horizon. Learning to read is not just a matter of mastering a few simple skills, nor is literacy just a matter of passing a reading test. Learning to read must involve acquiring the reading habit. Literacy must be viewed as the regular exercise of reading skills through reading books.

The time-honoured reasons why children should read books are now bolstered and supplemented by new research evidence that book reading can make a unique and powerful contribution to children's reading development. Impressionable minds can be nurtured and molded in ways more than one. But books and the printed word are among the best tools used for reaching out to a child. Despite the deep penetrating reach of the visual media, books have a definite edge over other

mediums of communication and entertainment. Child psychologists and counselors have often stressed the importance of the reading habit in modern-day children. Reading sharpens the thought processes of a child. It increases his or her attention span. It gives him the faculty of thinking and understanding. Language is a gift for a child and books give this gift in abundance. Reading a book aloud can be a good exercise not just for memorization but also for improvement of speech and vocabulary. Books trigger a child's imagination.

Men who read stand a better chance of attracting women according to a study. Women are inclined to judge men by the type of books they read.

> *...The printed word is not the sole reservoir of knowledge. Television, Internet and other modern audio-visual media also contribute to the child's growth. However, reading should compliment other mediums. Otherwise, it leads to lopsided development...*

The printed word is not the sole reservoir of knowledge. Television, Internet and other modern audio-visual media also contribute to the child's growth. However, reading should compliment other mediums. Otherwise, it leads to lopsided development.

Reading will become more important in the future. The growth of computers and the Internet will mean that the ability to read will be vital. There are concerns that computers take away some of the skills from reading, rather than encouraging them. Some people fear that tools such as spell checks and voice recognition techniques will have a detrimental effect on reading skills.

In an age when browsing the net, playing with funky handsets and passing non-stop SMSs seem to be the order of the day, reading a book in a peaceful corner of a library has become an archaic idea for most people. While technology is slowly taking a steady control over individual lives, the reading habit is fast vanishing into thin air. The greatest challenge to traditional booksellers is the competition posed by other leisure goods such as music, videos and most dramatically, the cinema. Sadly, the reading habit is on the decline.

> *...Globalisation and nuclear family structures have made life more mechanical and money-oriented. Adults hardly can find time to read books. Students are constantly being whipped for performance. There is a tremendous pressure upon students to perform and excel. In the little time they get after finishing the homework, all they want to do is watch cartoon channels or play video games...*

Globalisation and nuclear family structures have made life more mechanical and money-oriented. Adults hardly can find time to read books. Students are constantly being whipped for performance. There is a tremendous pressure upon students to perform and excel. In the little time they get after finishing the homework, all they want to do is watch cartoon channels or play video games. Some parents are so psyched about the future of their children that at times it is they who discourage their wards from reading any other book than their textbooks. The situation is no better among college students. Students visit the libraries for their research work rather than reading a book for their own pleasure. Library for them becomes popular only before the final examination.

I know we all want to develop a book reading habit but time constraints and lack of interest always puts this habit in the back burner. Parents need to resurrect this habit for themselves and their children as it adds multiple dimensions to a child's growth. Creating the reading habit in your child is the best way to ensure that they will be readers when they grow up and it will help them to be successful in life as well. Some suggestions for strengthening the reading habit are to always have a

book around, frequently visit a library or bookstore, set a reading goal, turn off television or internet and instead spend the time reading, keep a reading log/list and last but not least have 'DEAR' time (drop everything and read).

Access to books is a necessary condition for becoming a good reader. Our society must provide all possible encouragement and opportunity for children to read books. P arents have also got to read enough in order to become a model for their children. It is never too late for anyone to start reading. The habit of reading can be a lifetime gift for your child.

-Anil Kohli
India

Editorial appearing in the Previous Issue

Editorial appearing in the Next Issue

Editorials - Cumulative Index