

Everybody Should Read

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In today's society, with entertainment available at your fingertips any time and any where thanks to the widespread use of televisions and computers, many children and students don't read very much. Readership rates of newspapers around the world are dropping as people get more of their news and information from the Internet. Still, even with the added convenience of electronic entertainment, people should cultivate a habit, or better yet, a love, of reading.

First of all, reading expands your vocabulary. Depending on what kind of books or genres you read, you will be exposed to different words, phrases, and expressions. For examples, newspapers tend to have more political, economic, or scientific terms. Romance novels have flowery, somewhat exaggerated wordings. Fantasy novels provide equally fantastic words for mythical creatures and magic. Modern literature will have modern slang and idioms. But what does an expanded vocabulary do for you? For one, it makes your writing more interesting to read, since you can use different words to express the same idea. It also makes you appear more knowledgeable when speaking, and you can use more precise terms to say exactly what you mean to say. Learning slang will also make you sound more natural when speaking in a foreign language.

Secondly, reading can expose you to new ideas. Books are written by people from all walks of life, people whose upbringings are practically guaranteed to be different from yours. They have different viewpoints, different thought patterns, and different histories. You don't have time to think the thoughts of every person who ever lived, or to go through all that they did. Reading is a sort of short cut, which lets you learn from their experiences. A facet of new ideas is new knowledge. For the most part, what you know influences what you can do; the more you know, the more you know how to do. Reading teaches you how to do things, be it through a description of a certain action in a novel or an explicit explanation in a do-it-yourself guide. Aside from being a good way to improve your job prospects, increasing your knowledge also helps improve your social interaction. With greater knowledge, you can talk about more things, and can more easily impress people you speak with.

Reading also heightens your imagination. With television and video games, you are mostly a passive observer, receiving whatever it is that is being shown on the screen and taking it at face value. Reading requires that you first see what is written on the page, think about what the words mean, and then visualize it in your mind. And, since many books will talk about things you've never personally witnessed before, they give you opportunities to stretch your imagination and to try to see in your mind

what you've never seen with your eyes. A vivid imagination is necessary for any creative endeavor, and often comes in handy in the workplace as well. Aside from daydreaming while your supervisor lectures on some boring point, your imagination will also help you come up with solutions to problems that you encounter, solutions that others haven't thought of yet.

All in all, reading is a great way to improve yourself. Many people read with the express purpose of improving themselves. From expanding your vocabulary and increasing your knowledge to improving your imagination, reading makes you a person better equipped to deal with whatever the world throws at you. So turn off the television and pick up a book or magazine; start improving yourself right now!