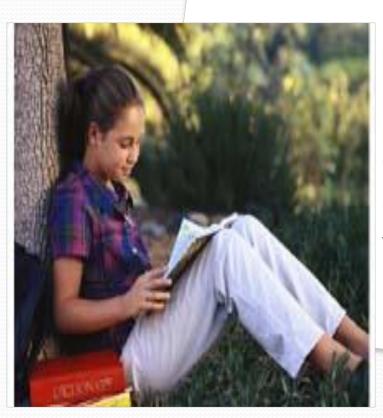
Motivating Middle School Students to Read

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What is Our Goal?



"The man who does not read great books is no better than the man who can't."

Mark Twain

Do You Agree With This Statement?

•"If students are taught to read and write well, they will do fine on the mandated reading tests. But if they are only taught to be test-takers, they will never learn to read and write well."

The Downward Spiral in Reading



- "Until I feared
 I would lose it,
 I never loved to
 read...
- One does not love breathing."

Harper Lee

To Read or Not to Read

•There was a "universal falling off of reading" that usually occurs around age 13 and carries forward throughout the rest of their lives.

Factors

- Poverty
- Poor parenting
- Second-language issues
- Choices of electronic equipment
- Our schools?

What Are We Doing Now?



•Is it working?

Valuing the development of test-takers more than the development of readers

Does Our Testing Promote?

- Creativity
- Common sense
- Wisdom
- Ethics
- Dedication
- Honesty
- Teamwork
- Fair play
- Life-long learning

These are the skills they need to make them "expert citizens."
We may get higher test scores, but are we

getting lower thinkers?

(Sternberg 2007/2008)

- •Limiting authentic reading experiences
- Overteaching books
- Underteaching books



Dormant readers might become engaged readers if someone showed them that reading is engaging.

Donalyn Miller

Dormant readers constitute the largest segment of your school population.

How We Can Reverse



We shouldn't teach great books; we should teach a love of reading.

3 Keys

- High expectations and modeling from teachers (and librarians)
- Access to books and the freedom to choose
- The time to read them

Role Models

- What kind of reader are YOU?
- How can we expect to inspire our students to engage in an activity that we ourselves do not enjoy?
- One of the key factors in motivating students to read is a teacher who values reading and is enthusiastic about having a love of reading with students.

Books, Books, Books

- Ready access to a wide range of interesting material
- "A Book Flood" (Gallagher)"Immersion" (Miller)
- Classroom libraries
- Choice providing students with the opportunity to choose their own books to read empowers and encourages them

Opportunity to Read Every Day

- Daily reading is what transforms reading into a lifelong habit and build reading ability
- Giving them big chunks in the school day to become real readers
- Silent Sustained Reading

Turning the Corner

When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I could do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.

Maya Angelou

- Teachers are calling for a national initiative to connect students with books instead of focusing on testing.
- We must fight the culture of teacher-centered instruction and standardized testing hysteria.
- We should strive to have students read because they want to, not because we MAKE them.
- All teachers and administrators must be onboard.
- We need to help parents.
- Steal reading moments!



"You don't have to burn books to destroy culture. Just get people to stop reading them."

Ray Bradbury

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