"Reading as a daily habit"

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Introduction (defining of problem).

As I am working with people at age 16-20, it is possible to see that there is a huge problem with reading as far as we are talking about traditional reading (reading a book). At this stage we have different alternatives: articles on the Internet, audio books, YouTube channels with different stories to listen and follow the text (optional). Listening to podcasts is more popular to many of young people nowadays instead of traditional book reading. People are in rush all the time and they are trying to save time by multi-tasking: for example - ride a bicycle and listen something (lectures, audio books, etc.) at the same time.

I have asked my students "Do you read books?" – most of answers were: "No, I don`t really have time for that. I would like to, but it takes too long for me to read a book from cover to cover, so I chose to see the movie or listen an audio book instead."

From my work experience I can admit that this leads not only to the lack of some important skills (focusing on things, critical thinking, etc.), but also affects the long-term memory and many of students can`t follow the written instructions that are given before school tasks and therefore they are not able to gain good results.

Within this wonderful project I have been thinking of different strategies that I could use in future classes to make my students read more books and gain as much as possible out of this process. I will talk about one of my future plans further on!

What can I do to solve this problem?

And again, I would like to speak about my work experience. What did I do to push students read more books and what suggestions I can give?

1) Good examples – always work!

In my lessons we are talking about successful persons and their habits. Through these discussions we discover that those who read books are more successful for many reasons. **Readers are leaders!** As we all know, people at age of 16-20 are trying to be like their idols. In every field they find someone highly successful to follow, no matter if it is IT developer, engineering professional, car mechanic or anything else. They want to become the next Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, and many others. So, by reading their biography, interviews and watching videos about them, we concluded that one of things that made them succeed was reading!

Steve Jobs shows off the iPhone 4 at the 2010 Worldwide Developers Conference.

Author Matthew Yohe (talk)

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2) Explain the benefits!

Many of my students haven`t seen their parents sitting and reading at home because they are too busy working. So, how can a teenager know **why it is so good to read?** It is not enough to tell:

"You must read more, because you have to!".

You must explain what happens while person is reading. How reading affects their mind, brain ability, angle of view and many other things.

In my opinion, teacher is the right person to tell students about all benefits of reading and try to encourage them include reading in their daily routine. Make it become a habit – to change their life.

Jim Trelease, an American scholar on the impact of reading on human destiny, in his pamphlet "READING: THE MOST POWERFUL SOCIAL FORCE IN AMERICA" formulated the benefits of reading books as follows (quote)

1) *The more you read, the more you know.*

2) *The more you know, the smarter you grow.*

3) *The smarter you are, the longer you stay in school.*

4) *The longer you stay in school, the more diplomas you earn and the longer you are employed—thus the more money you earn in a lifetime. (chart below)*

5) *The more diplomas you earn, the higher your own children's grades eventually will be in school.*

6) *And the more diplomas you earn, the longer you live.*

The opposite will also be true:

1) *The less you read, the less you know.*

2) *The less you know, the more likely you'll drop out of school.**

3) *The sooner you drop out, the sooner and longer you are poor.*

4) *The sooner you drop out, the greater your chances of going to jail.*

You can read about Jim Trelease's work on his website

https://www.trelease-on-reading.com/index.html

3) **Let them choose!**

When I was talking to students about books they have ever read, students admitted that mostly these were books from mandatory list that have been given by native language teachers. This fact wasn`t really positive, because many of students said they didn`t like the content, idea or genre of given books. So, as a result they got bored and did not want to continue with reading in future, because of this bad experience.

From this I made conclusion that teacher should give more options for their pupils/students. It would lead to their own interest into books. They would feel freedom and experience more pleasure while reading. It has been proved that any first experience leaves footprints into attitude towards the specific field, so we must be sure that experience of reading is as positive as possible.

Photograph of the Library in Ireland. Public domain. Source: Pixaboy

What strategy will I use to make my students read more and get sustainable results in future?

As I am in charge of one particular group of students (as a head teacher), I decided to integrate reading strategy into our class lessons. We are coming together to spend our time as a group once a week, so I think it is possible to develop a reading habit during next 2-3 years till they graduate.

What is the plan for 6x40min. (in 2-month time)?
1) Through discussion we are going to choose one novel that have been screened as well.
2) I will divide students into 5 groups by 5 people each.
3) I will "cut" the novel into 5 pieces - one piece for each group.

4) Each group must read their piece by themselves at the classroom and do such tasks:

   ✓ Write down the most important actions/facts/persons/places. *Find out any emotions mentioned there.

   ✓ Write their thoughts about what they have read.

   ✓ On A4 paper sheet make illustration of their piece of novel.

5) After this, each group, one by one represents their tasks to the rest of students, so at the end we all will have the whole "picture" of this novel.

6) As the final stage we are going to see the movie based on this novel and after watching it we are going to discuss the differences between written and screened versions.

I guess that it would be possible to deal with one novel per 2 months.
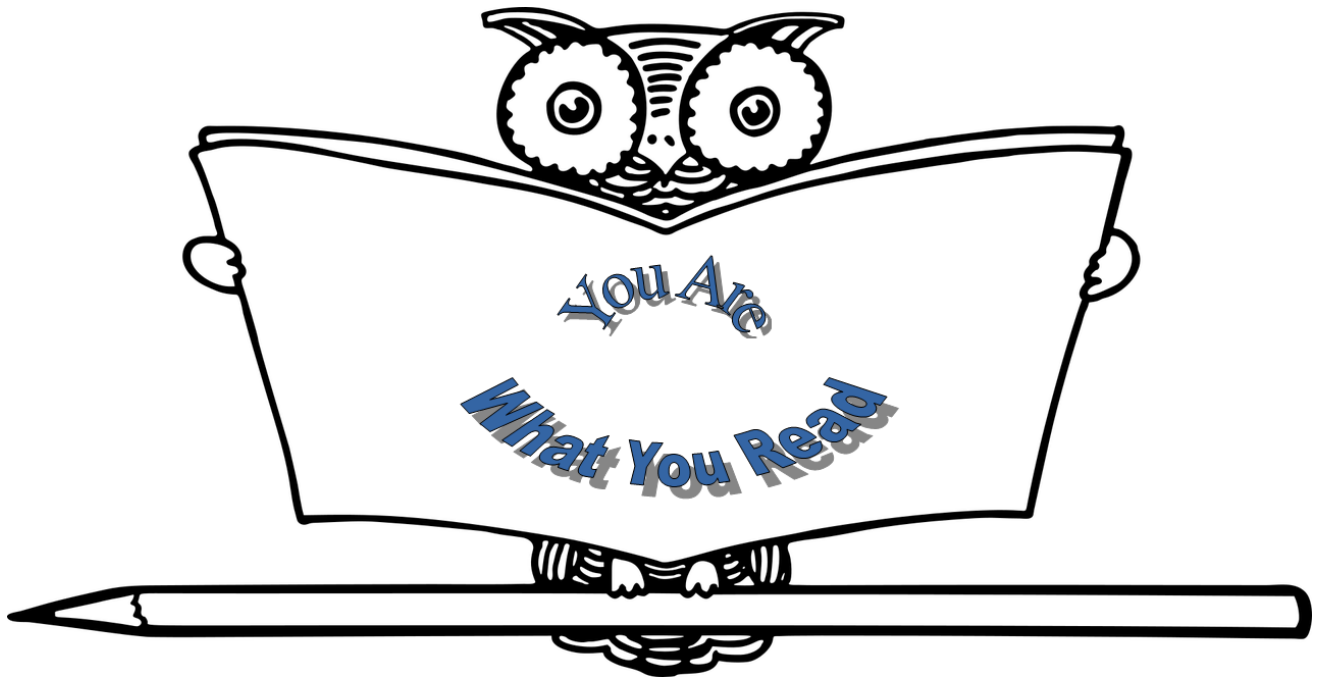
My role in this process

I will organise the process, support and guide student through every stage of this project.

The outcomes of this strategy

Students are going to develop different skills such as:

   ✓ Ability to work in a team

   ✓ Ability to divide responsibilities

   ✓ Reading and understanding the text

   ✓ Ability to recognize emotions

   ✓ Critical thinking and ability to express own opinion *Ability to represent work in front of audience *Ability to listen to others – empathy

   ✓ Ability to focus on one task for long period of time

Students will get familiar with different novels and expend their horizons. We will spend time together and have a lot of fun!

You Are
What You Read

Thank you for your attention!