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## DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE READING HABITS AMONG CHILDREN

Ms. V. Satya Sri Durga ([satya14sri@gmail.com](mailto:satya14sri@gmail.com))

Dr. V. Chandra Sekhar Rao ([csrv8@yahoo.co.in](mailto:csrv8@yahoo.co.in))

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### Abstract

This paper is just a review that the tendency to read a book decreases among the teenagers. School students do not have reading habits to acquire the knowledge of their subjects or studies. The habit of reading is essential for widening the experience and knowledge. They should be provided or facilitated with good and interesting books which are of moral content-value. The habit of reading helps in developing the mind and personality of a person, providing insights into human problems, and influencing attitudes and behavior. Teachers or parents have to develop the habit of reading among the children from an early age.

**Keywords:** Reading Habits, Story Books, Social Media Websites, Traditional Literature

### Introduction

*"A room without books is like a body without a soul."*

- Marcus Tullius Cicero

*"A survey in UK showed that with the increasing age, the tendency to read a book decreases; the effect profoundly seen when comparison was made between three age groups - six to eight, 12-14 and 15-17 year old. There have been frowns from parents and many quarters of society towards the teen indulgence in FB, internet and other social media websites. They are not happy with the neglect of reading books. Thus it's worthwhile to discuss on the thought that whether social media is killing the practice of reading books." - CareerRide.com*

In the present day scenario school students especially teenagers seem neglecting their studies and reading habit and at the same time they are busy in engaging with social media websites. It is true that the school students do not have reading habits to acquire the knowledge of their subjects or studies. They depend on electronic devices or gadgets which provide instant or readymade answers/results available in the internet. They spend most of their time in searching what others are doing, instead of reading text books or their study subjects adding knowledge to their own life.

## Background Study

Reading habit is an important aspect for children to improve their language skills. (Reyene, 1998). Bignold (2003) asserted that the habit of reading can develop Children's reading skills. Thus, the habit of reading is essential for widening the experiences and knowledge of young people whether it is for pleasure or for the purpose of learning (Green, 2002). Grabe & Stoller (1997) confirmed that a good reading habit is significant for individuals to develop their personalities and mental abilities.

Kaufman (2001) observed that children spend their time watching TV and playing video games when they are not spending a great deal of time reading and writing. Statistics collected according to Kaufman by the U.S Department of Education "National Centre for Educational Statistics" shows that students' achievement in both has been declining in recent times.

## The Responsibility of Teachers and Parents

It is the responsibility of teachers and parents to cultivate the habit of reading among the students of teenagers. The habit of reading helps in developing the mind and personality of a person, providing insights into human problems, and influencing attitudes and behavior.

Reading is important for everybody in order to cope with new knowledge in a changing world-that of the technological age (Sangkaeo, 1999). Teachers and parents should encourage children/pupils to visit the school / public libraries and to borrow story books, magazines, novels and periodicals to read; which will help them in developing reading and writing skill as well as empowering them with the skill of effective oral communication. Thus, the children can acquire the ability of effective reading habit for a better future.

To cultivate the habit of reading among children teachers and parents should guide and motivate them as:

- Parents have to read on a regular basis and ensure that their children see it and start reading with interest. Generally children will emulate their parents' habit of reading and enjoy the quiet time spent with them while reading.

- Teachers or parents can develop the habit of reading among pupils, taking a book that has text and pictures and discussing with them about the characters, situations and incidents in it. In this way they will get interested and motivated towards reading.

### Books Suggested for Pupils

In order to develop the habit of reading among the young students or children, they should be provided or facilitated with good and interesting books which are of moral content-value and they should be constructively helpful to build up their character in the contemporary society. Here are some books that may be helpful.

**Picture Story Books:** story books with pictures can explain with illustrated pictures. The pictures are the "eye-candy" that gets children's attention.

**Traditional Literature:** It is a good thing children should be introduced traditional literature, the concept of a story and the different types of stories or genres such as:

- *Folk tales* - explaining things about life, nature, or the human condition.
- *Fairy tales or magic stories*- with the features of magical and enchanted forces, they always have a "happily ever after" ending, where good is rewarded and evil is punished.
- *Fables*- in verse or prose, with a moral ending, tales of animals and other inanimate objects that teach lessons about life.
- *Legends*- embellishing the life of a real person. The facts and adventures of the person are exaggerated, making the individual famous for their deeds.
- *Myths*- portraying themselves as representing a distant past, containing common themes and characters, often "gods."

**Biography:** non-fiction form based on the life of a person. Biographies can motivate children to understand the lives of famous, important people how the process of growing up shapes the opportunities, choices, and challenges people face in life.

**Poetry and Drama:** children should be introduced Poems and drama that are important genres - verse, prose, rhythm, rhyme, writing styles, literary devices, symbolism, analogies, and metaphors.

### Conclusion

Therefore, Parents and teachers are advised to encourage good reading habits among children from an early age. Children are facilitated to spend a lot of time reading prior to attending school and adapting to the reading-focused learning environment. Developing reading habit makes children empower with the skill of effective oral communication as well as learning more about the world around them.

### References

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