

Tips on Getting People to Read - Again

With TV, music, video games, and the Internet, it is no wonder why less and less people find time to read. More often than not, reading comes as a chore and the pleasures people once took in sitting down with a good book or article have all but been lost on most. If you are teacher, librarian or parent who's becoming more and more concerned over this trend, you may ask yourself what you can do to reverse it. The task may seem daunting considering what you're up against, but given the will, patience and a few tips on how to encourage people to read, you just might be able to bring back a few more noses into books. The key here is to take time, not just to pitch the advantages of reading (which may come off as preaching to others) but to know the people you're trying to reach and what kinds of reading materials they could possibly be interested in. First of all, provide ready access to reading materials. If you're a librarian, it is more than just opening the doors and waiting for people to come in. Promote the library as you would any business. If there is some money set aside to do so, make some flyers and distribute it in high traffic areas such as parks or bus stops. Get the people aware that there is a library in the neighborhood and that they're more than welcome to visit. Of course, indicate the times you open and close as well. If you're a teacher, place some books or magazines in the classroom that your students can browse through during break times. If you see any that display interest, cultivate that interest right away by asking what topics they're interested about. Take time to research on their favorite topics, both in the library and on the Internet. Then share these resources with your students. Pointing them in the right direction with a topic they're already interested in will increase the chances of pursuing reading on their own. As a parent, take time to read to your children, whether they're young or in their teens. It's pretty easy to get small children excited about bedtime stories so start them off while they're young. As they increase their reading skills, let them read for you while you help them along with the more difficult words. Not only will this develop the habit of reading for your children, you are also creating priceless moments with your children. Getting teens excited over reading can be a bit more challenging. For one thing, you may need to address the age gap especially when it comes to interests. Good thing that may work for you is the fact that as you read this article, you already have a working knowledge of surfing the Web. Your teenagers are probably more likely to read up on things on the Internet than they would in a library. Do not harp on this issue, but rather work on this. Your teenager has already immersed him/herself in a medium you can use, so take full advantage of it. Get involved in their interests as well as their surfing habits. Browse the Internet together and learn about your teenager's interests with them. This is perhaps the hi-tech way of reading with your kids, who used to beg you for bedtime stories not too long ago. Another tip is to bring out the ideas that have been formed from reading. As a librarian or teacher, organize discussion groups or clubs on certain topics. As you get people to exchange ideas with each other through discussion, the more they will want to read up. The happy conundrum here is that the more people know, the more they want to learn. Sustain this with a friendly and non-competitive environment and you may find your club growing in numbers over time. The same thing can be done in the home. Let the family pick up a certain topic together and assign subtopics to each member. After a given period, come back together over perhaps cake and ice cream and discuss what you've learned from what you've read. Again, this not only encourages each family member to read, but also creates precious times as a family. The trick is to stop the idea that reading is a chore. Reading never was a chore anyway to begin with. It was the gift of being able to share ideas and information at a reach far larger than mere conversation. Reading can transcend distance, and yes, even gaps in generations. Be excited and communicate that excitement and the enthusiasm will win over those who never thought reading could be so fun and easy.

About the Author

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