

Developing Reading Habit among Children

Dr. Rajesh Chhabra

Asst. Prof. C. R Law

College of Education, Hisar

Abstarct

Reading is one of the frequent means of gaining knowledge. In the present day context, growth or decline of reading habits has become a special concern.

The paper highlights the importance of reading different types of reading. Realising the pivotal role of reading in personal and academic achievement, reading habits between students and teachers. The author is very much optimistic about the improvement in reading in future if the teachers , parents and school librarian join hands together. School and homes needs to tap the richness of children in order to encourage boys and girls into reading habit. Children needs to be engaged in reading to create a nation of lifelong enthusiastic readers.

The child should learn to be inquisitive. The paper also emphasises development of a national policy of empower the school libraries and school librarians.

Introduction

Reading is one of the most frequent means of bringing knowledge and culture within the reach of the people. It helps in enriching the knowledge of an individual in the society as it increases more intellectually motivated interactions as the primary source of acquiring the knowledge. The cultivation of regular reading habit helps in achieving intellectual development, an important factor of personal and social development. Reading forms an important place in the intellectual and social life of an individual.

Education loses its purpose and value, if reading is not one of the daily programmes of an individual.

In the present day context, growth or decline of reading habits has become a social phenomenon than individual pursuit, now, the human life as well as the world is breaking up. In such a fragmented world an fragmented lives, the biggest challenges comes to the reading material and reading habits. Society and books are much linked to each other. Reading material are the creative output of the human being. The publications are considered as the mirror of the society. The reading material plays a major role in changing the present day society. The human being can change drastically and that's a reason we can be optimistic to see in changing society.

Reading Habit:-

Reading is to mind that what exercise is to body- Richard Steele (1672-1729) . To understand what is going on in the world today requires knowledge that can be found through reading material. Books found through reading material. Books are the quickest and constant friends. They are easily accessible and the best friends as long as scholars roam the earth, books will keep them good company. It is said that, today the youth have more challenges on mind and more deadlines to meet. Every minute had become precious especially for the youth. The beauties of reading are a far away dream for the career-centric, goal

oriented generation of today. The importance of the time has become so valuable that , one does not even wait for morning newspaper to catch up with the another dimension to reading habits. The access to Internet has raised the bar over media all over the world.

Types of Reading:-

Basically, reading habit is a mental process, which is developed and indeed influenced by the individuals family and social environment, his/her level of education, needs and aspiration and availability of resources. We come across various types of reading as follows:-

Lifelong Reading:-

Learning is a lifelong process. Lifelong learning is "never too soon or too late for learning". Lifelong learning allows citizens with learning opportunities at all ages and in numerous contexts at work, home and through leisure activities, not just through formal channels such as schools and higher education's is incomplete without lifelong reading. Reading is an essential and integral part of lifelong learning.

Benefits of Lifelong Reading:-

- Lifelong reading strengthens one's ability to concentrate. Reading trains to be alert, flexible and prepares one to meet the challenges that come along with the changing situations.
- Lifelong reading helps to become a better writer. Professional writers suggest that a lot of reading makes a difference in our writing when we make time to read.
- Lifelong reading helps in building self-confidence.

Reading for Pleasure:-

Reading for pleasure is an extra-ordinary and entertaining activity. Some people read for instruction, which is praise-worthy and some for pleasure and entertainment. The books meant for this category keep the reader in happier mood, relaxed from the day to day worries and refresh the mind for the upcoming work and also add to the creativity in different spheres of life. The more we read, the better we get at it and the more we enjoy it.

Reading for Information:-

Reading allows a person to be well informed. Without being informed about the latest happenings around, one feels ignorant.

Reading helps to decipher new words and phrases in everyday conversation. The habit can become a healthy addiction and adds to the information's available on various topics. It also helps to stay in-touch with contemporary writers as well as those from the day of yore and makes one sensitive to global issues. Reading also supplements educational developments.

Reading for knowledge:-

Knowledge is power. We study to increase our knowledge and the textbooks are the essential means to fulfil this objective. But textbooks are curriculum and syllabus-oriented. The mental and intellectual development can take place only when we read more. It is observed children and teenagers who love reading have comparatively higher IQs. They are more creative and have better academic contribution in school and colleges. It helps in intellectual development.

Casual Reading:-

The importance of reading habits among the children can not but be over emphasised. The importance of reading among the children plays out in a myriad of developmental, emotional, and learning, issues, from bonding and security to learning to read and to future success. The books on different stories like, Ramayana, Mahabharata adventures, sotries, travelogue, biographies, etc. helps the child in strengthening the habit of casual reading. Every child deserves to have good books are the treasure of knowledge which he/she can call as his/her own. This has to be stored in ones own bookshelf, which can be pulled at any time the reader wants to read.

Needs of Reading Habit:-

A good books or reading an informative piece makes the ideal companion, it is interesting, builds on our patience, and allows growing in the pool of knowledge. Coping with the challenges of present society needs childs mental, emotional as well as social development where reading plays a virtual role.

For students:-

Reading seems to be a part of educations of a child but actually it is related to the overall development of children. Reading provides coherence among recognisable depiction of the real world. Reading plays a vital role in all-round development of the child. It helps to learn think logically, to enjoy activities among themselves.

From the above points, it is clear that, reading opens the door for knowledge. It is a battle, which must be won at any cost. By developing habit reading among the children we can increase the literacy skills.

Factors influencing Reading Habits:-

- Inadequate literature for school children.
- Growth and development of electronic media.
- Recognising the value and importance of schools libraries/ librarians.
- Teachers as instructors(providing biographical instructions)
- Lack of national policy on school libraries.

Ways to Cultivate Reading Habit:-

"To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge for almost all the miseries of life".

People set many goals for themselves e.g. to loose weight, to stop procrastination and so on. So, "read more" can be one of the set goals of the human being. A good book can be highly enjoyable, entertaining , and informative and a best companion. Realising the importance of a book, we should cultivate the habit of reading. There are a number of ways to cultivate reading habit.

- Always carry a book wherever you go.
- Make a list of all the great books you want to read.
- Reduce watching television and browsing internet

Role of Parents

Parents are the first person with whom a child comes into contact. A child imitates her parents. If parents introduce books to their children, they develop a love for books. The attitude of parents forms the base for promoting reading habits. In India illiteracy of parents is stumbling block in promoting reading habits in rural children, who form the majority of more than 200 million children population of India. Now with the spread of compulsory education and awareness in parents-especially in rural women folk, the importance of giving good books is very important for a child to develop as that of nutritious food, comfortable clothes and health care.

Role of Teachers

After parents, it is the teacher who wields great influence on the child. At primary level, the teacher's word is 'Brahma Wakya' or sacred word for a child. Teachers can and should encourage children to read. A good school library with enthusiastic librarian can be a vibrant place for promoting reading habits in children. But today hardly 10 to 12 per cent of school have library. Books are locked in the cupboards. And librarians are most reluctant to issue books to children for the unwarranted fear of children losing and damaging them.

1. Once the books are published and the teachers guide them into the wonderful world of books, then the children are motivated to use the books. From pre-primary level,



teachers should read out books to the children. Teachers must know the importance of children's books. Hence, children's literature should be made a part of the teacher's training programme.

2. To make their subjects interesting they can use other interesting books from library. As referred by NCF-2005, there should be less libraries.
3. Every week one hour can be reading hour for whole school right from Principal to pre-school child even chowkidar. It creates an atmosphere of reading.
4. Books related activities go a long way in motivating children to read. Book weeks may be organised, in which book discussion, writing book reviews meeting the author, book exhibitions are held. The language teachers may be involved to carryout such kind of programmes.
5. School teachers can plan visit to public libraries. It will enable children to know the working of libraries, how to choose books of their choice in the library. It also makes them realise the vast numbers and variety of books.

Role of Libraries

The Libraries play a vital role in motivating the children and teachers towards reading. Presence of extensive collection of resources is the beginning

of the reading programme. Children need guidance and support in learning about the materials. Many ways are adopted by the library staff to increase the reading habit among the children.

Conclusion

Reading is an important area of language education. Promotion of reading must be one of the main objectives of language teaching. Understanding the importance of reading/opportunities for individualised reading need to be built at all stages of school education in order to promote a culture of reading and teachers must set the examples of being members of such a culture. This requires efforts in the area of developing children's literature and also making librarian essential component of the school at all levels. The nation needs enthusiastic and inquisitive readers and this will only be possible when our children will be engaged in reading. The words of Rudyard Kipling, "I keep six honest serving men. They taught me all I know, their names are what and why and when and where and how and who " reminds us the importance of inquisitiveness will get way to move on when one reads books for one's own pleasure and satisfaction.



References

1. CANGELOSI, J.S. 1990. Co-operation in the Classroom: Student and Teachers Together (2nd Ed.) National Education Association, Washington D.C.
2. CHENG, K.O.2000 Review of the Literature regarding the Short and Long-term Consequences of Corporal Punishment on Children. Doctoral Research Paper, Biola University (ERIC databse:ED442568)
3. HYMAN I.A. and J.H. Wise (Eds.) 1979 Corporal Punishment in American Education. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.
4. KURIAN S. 2007 Are You a Victim of Coproal Punishment? The Hindu Young World 28 February.
5. NCERT. 2005 National Curriculum Framework-2005 NCERT Publication Department New Delhi.