

Reading Response

Pembroke's Friday Freebie

Ban the Book Report

Promoting Frequent and Enthusiastic Reading



Reading

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Boys often prefer practical how-to and informational texts.

See page 15 for a reproducible version of My Current Reading for Pleasure Survey; see page 16 for My Current Reading Profile.

Conferences and Surveys

In conferences with students, especially students who claim not to enjoy reading, teachers and librarians can usefully invite students to identify subjects of interest—football, hockey, cars, horses, magazines, movies, and so on. Librarians provide invaluable help in matching reluctant readers with texts linked to their current personal interests. In recommending texts based on current interest, we can encourage students to extend their reading tastes over time. In helping students select texts with an appropriate level of difficulty, we can nudge students toward more challenging and more literary texts as their reading abilities develop. With guidance, a reader can be led by a favorite author, topic, or genre to similar and possibly more challenging books.

Matching students with personally significant and motivational books becomes a major focus as teachers encourage frequent independent reading. When students claim to dislike reading, respond that they just haven't yet discovered the right book and that the right book awaits discovery by every reader. Work from the conviction that there are interesting books for every student, books that motivate personal involvement and lifelong reading, books that lead readers enthusiastically to recommend titles to other students.

Reading profiles or surveys represent one strategy to guide students in their choices of books for independent reading. Consider using surveys like those on pages 15 and 16 in a class discussion about favorite reading. Have students revisit the survey throughout the school year, so they can note changes in their reading preferences.

My Current Reading for Pleasure Survey

NAME: *Chris Lopez*

DATE: April 25

I like books that are *fictional, romantic and funny*.

I am likely to reread material that is written *by my favorite author or that is fun to read*.

I dislike books that are *always talking about tragic events*.

My favorite place for reading is *in my room*.

I would like to read more about *fictional, romance books*.

I would describe the amount of reading that I do as a *hobby; an enjoyment*.

I am likely to finish a book that *that has a great plot*.

I am unlikely to finish a book that *always talks about bad, depressing stuff*.

For the next month, my personal reading goal is to *re-read the Twilight Series of Stephanie Meyer and try out other books*.

My Current Reading Profile

NAME: *Ann Shaefer*

DATE: September 12

The first part I look at in a novel is *the front picture*.

I like to read novels that look at *something scary or surprising*.

One thing that "puts me off" reading a novel is *when the author says the same thing over and over again*.

I usually read a novel in about *one day* (days, weeks).

My favorite authors are *Peg Kehret*.

When I describe myself as a reader, I usually use phrases such as *fast, good*. My good reading habits are *I read fast and can summarize a book*. Reading habits I would like to change are *to stop reading a book in one day or less*. My personal reading goals for this term (week/month) are *to read something different than chick-flicks and scary books*.

School Library Collections

School library collections strongly influence the viability of independent reading effort. Teachers and librarians must constantly monitor and update classroom and school library holdings, paying particular attention to authors, titles, and subjects that appeal to students. Collections should include graphic novels, texts at a range of reading levels, a range of informational texts, fiction and poetry, and audio books.

Recorded reading or audio books allow students to enjoy texts beyond their reading level. It is critical that students follow the print as the text is read so that they learn print forms of oral language. In some independent reading programs, volunteers record readings of texts or serve as reading buddies; i.e., partners who read the book with the students.

See page 106 for titles that can assist you in maintaining current library sources.

Oral Reading and Book Talks

Encourage frequent independent reading by regularly sharing your own competent and enthusiastic reading of appealing texts in a variety of literary forms. When students present a competent oral reading of a favorite part of a text, it can motivate other students to read the book.

Follow these guidelines to improve your oral reading of texts. Encourage students to apply these techniques when they engage in oral reading.

- **Respect Punctuation Cues:** Many readers pause unnaturally in oral reading. Unnatural pauses impair a listener's comprehension of an oral reading. Remember that a comma signals a pause; a period signals a stop. An exclamation mark signals emotion; a question mark signals an inquisitive tone, and, in some cases, a tone of disbelief or anger.
- **Use Timing and Pacing:** Decide how quickly the text will be read and where changes in pace are appropriate.
- **Vary Volume:** Different texts require different volume and changes in volume.
- **Use Emphasis:** Remember that an effective oral reading always moves to a focal point. Choose the point of emphasis. Signal it with a slight pause and a deliberate emphasis of key words.

Good Bits conferences represent another possibility to encourage students to read extensively. A *good bit* is a part of a text that the reader finds interesting, enjoyable, memorable, or personally important. Following your modeling of a Good Bit conference, students take turns sharing good bits with the entire class or a group of classmates. Provide them with these guidelines:

Many adults identify a teacher's reading aloud as their favorite memory of school—a memory that inspires their own lifelong reading.

- Provide a little background about the text and why you chose it.
- Read the good bit as effectively as you can.
- Tell why you like the good bit, why it is enjoyable for you.
- Invite questions and reactions from others.

Reading Targets and Contests

A school's independent reading program sometimes includes the setting of targets—often a minimum of five to ten books per year. The targets specify dates that reading responses are due. Ideally, students will voluntarily read beyond the minimum targets.

Each personal-response assignment in this book includes the requirement that students report on reading completed; e.g., the entire book, at least half of the book, less than half of the book, little or none of the book. Consider whether students will complete responses for books that they have not read entirely. If they have not completely read the book by the date on which a response is due, you might challenge them to do so by the next due date. You might suggest that students complete a response based on a partial reading of the text and then move on to another book that might be more motivational. As a feature of differentiated instruction, set different reading targets for different students.

It is a good idea to provide a reading folder for each student. The folder will contain reading surveys completed by the students throughout the year, as well as the students responses to independent reading. A few times during the year, challenge students to review the collection to select what they think is their best response, with a page attached to explain their choice. Encourage students to identify a personal reading goal as part of the assessment. With their own and parents' permission, students share responses in classroom displays and presentations. Such sharing motivates other students to read the book and illustrates possibilities for thoughtful reading responses.

Be wary of contests as part of independent reading programs. Schools that employ prizes, such as pizza, hockey cards, and merchandise, suggest that reading is a chore that is good for you but requires an extrinsic reward. While contests and prizes might motivate students to develop a love of reading, often the reading ends at the end of the contest. Instead, emphasize that reading is enjoyable and personally important; therefore, reading is its own reward and often is a better entertainment option than a prize item.

Timed Reading Records

To promote independent readers, allow class time for independent reading, expecting that reading time will be used productively. Many teachers employ timed reading periods and records to encourage focused and productive reading. They report that students' reading rate and comprehension improve as a result. Key features of timed reading include the following:

- Students complete a separate form for each book that they are reading. This form is kept in a folder.
- Before the reading period, students record the date and the page on which they begin their reading. They may use estimates, such as "top of page 5."

Each personal-response assignment in this book includes the requirement that students report on reading completed; e.g., the entire book.

Selection criteria for best responses should be negotiated in class.

- Use a timer for a set reading period, often 15 to 20 minutes. When the timer sounds at the end of the period, students stop reading.
- Students record the page on which they stopped reading. In addition, they calculate the number of pages they have read and add a brief comment, summary, or prediction.

Independent Reading Record

Name: *Kim Tan*

Title of Text: *Tom Sawyer*

Date	Start Page	Finish Page	Pages Read	Comment
Oct. 5	15 (top)	20 (middle)	4 ½	<i>The part about Tom giving medicine to the cat is funny. I wonder if this could happen in real life.</i>

Special events for reading celebrations might feature authors, community members, and students. Events can be planned for classrooms or larger venues.

Celebrations of Reading

A school’s independent reading program will be enhanced when celebrations are included. Celebrations remind students that reading enhances one’s life. In the spirit of celebration, speakers talk about why reading is important to them, their favorite reading, and their favorite memories of reading. Sometimes they will present a competent oral reading from a favorite book.

In inviting speakers to talk about their favorite reading, offer suggestions such as the following:

- My favorite children’s book
- The book I liked best when I was a child
- A book that made me believe in myself
- My favorite book about an inspirational person
- Books that helped me become a writer
- A book I couldn’t stop reading
- A book that inspired me to travel
- My favorite adventure book
- My favorite fantasy or science fiction book
- My favorite book of poetry
- A favorite story that someone told me
- A book that helped me deal with loneliness
- A book that made me understand that it’s okay to be different
- My favorite book about being a friend
- A book that made me more considerate of others
- A book that helped me overcome a prejudice
- My favorite picture book
- A book that helped me complete a project
- A book that helped me learn something new
- A book that helped me learn something important about the world
- A book that helped me choose my career

My Current Reading for Pleasure Survey

NAME:

DATE:

I like books that are

I am likely to reread material that is

I dislike books that are

My favorite place for reading is

I would like to read more about

I would describe the amount of reading that I do as

I am likely to finish a book that

I am unlikely to finish a book that

My Current Reading Profile

NAME:

DATE:

The first part I look at in a novel is

I like to read novels that look at

One thing that “puts me off” reading a novel is

I usually read a novel in about _____ (days, weeks)

My favorite authors are

When I describe myself as a reader, I usually use phrases such as

My good reading habits are

Reading habits I would like to change are

My personal reading goals for this term (week/month) are