

Reading habit and its importance in society

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Introduction :

There is increasing awareness in the world that reading is of fundamental importance in the life of individual citizens. Reading is necessary for every body in order to cope with new knowledge in the changing world of the technological age. Reading is a passion. It is a skill. Once we get hooked to reading, the time spent on reading books will become our favorite activity. Reading is one of the most important components for continued education, for the acquisition of new knowledge and skill, for gaining information through media, especially newspapers, books, television, radio and computers. It is an essential tool for life long learning for everybody through which humans can transmit knowledge to their future generation.

Collins and Cheek (1999) describe reading as a process that requires the use of complex thought processes to interpret printed symbols as meaningful units and comprehend them as a thought unit in order to understand a printed message.

According to Rubin (2002), reading is a total integrative process that starts with the reader and includes the affective, perceptual, and cognitive domains.

Importance of reading :

Reading is an important process of acquiring information by receiving a message from print in a meaningful way. Some view reading as a complex process integrating all aspects of

human behavior and demanding varied and continued instructional guidance to read accurately, to appraise what is read and to relate, what is read in a significant way to other areas of life.

A good reading habit is necessary for a healthy intellectual growth. Children normally use sensory perceptions to know their immediate surroundings and widen their vision, through reading. Reading is a habit, which is not a one time experience. It is accepted that a good reading habit has to be cultivated and natured in the early years of life. The reading habit, therefore, plays a very crucial role in enabling a person to achieve practical efficiency.

Advantages of Reading :

Reading habit benefits our life many ways. The regular reading habits benefit us in several ways like it improves our vocabulary

It gives us a glimpse into other cultures and places

It improves concentration and focus

It builds self-esteem

It improves memory

It improves creativity

It improves our reasoning skills

It reduces stress

Ways to cultivate reading habit :

Most people wish they read more. It is an activity that is both fun and enlightening. It can

help us be more knowledgeable and successful. However, it is an activity that many people do not engage in very much. There are some ways to inculcate the reading habit among us. Firstly, set times. We should have a few set times during everyday when we will read for at least 5-10 minutes. For example, we can read during our breakfast and lunch or in time when we are free like when we go to bed or waiting for someone. We also have to set a reading goal. Our goal might be a book a month or one per week. Second, always carry a book. Wherever we go, we must take a book with us. For example, when we want to go to class or work. Before we waiting for someone like our lecture or friends, we can read the book that we caring. So, we do not waste our time. It also a great way to pass the time. We also must make a list. Keep a list of all the books we read and the books that we want to read in future. We can keep the list in our journal, diary or pocket notebook. Then, we can add any title of good book that we hear, online or ask our friends and colleagues what they are reading. It will make easy for us to find the book when we go to library or book store. When we are reading, make it pleasurable and fine a quite place. Reading improves concentration. Also concentration is needed while reading. So whenever we are reading any books we should make ourselves comfortable in chair or on our bed. A quite place will make us peace. If we fine our self stressful while reading the book, do not continue reading under pressure like that.

Factor limiting reading habits :

Following are responsible for poor reading habits among us

Absence of a reading culture :

In our society people usually prefer to

believe on oral information. People prefer to listening and chatting more than reading. Traditionally scholars are the same time animated and narrated written words from books to illiterate through reading aloud, animated reading dramatization or even demonstration. It was necessary because of the difficulty in learning alphabets and in acquiring reading skill where written or printed materials were scarce and treated as valuable objects. Traditional reading animators were elder members of the family, members of religious institutions, professionals or amateurs. The inherited cultural habit has been transmitted and obstacle to reading habit from generation to another. In short, at the present; their societies still depend their own information rather than written one.

Illiteracy

One cause of poor reading habits is that most of our population is illiterate.

Poverty

One-third of our population is living below the poverty line and unable to fulfill their basic necessities. So it is impossible for them to purchase books.

Poor education system

Our education system runs on the one textbook system and teacher's do not encourage students to read books other than the textbooks.

Inadequate library systems

In our country the reading habits are declining day by day. Public libraries are very few, and the school libraries are not present in a true sense.

Absence of a conducive reading environment

There is no proper reading environment in India's libraries and the facilities of heating, air-

conditioning, furniture, etc. are very poor.

De motivated library staff

Library staff is not motivated and committed to their profession. People usually complain about their irrational behavior.

The lure of electronic media

TV's potential effect on children's reading performance has become an issue of growing concern among education and often cited as a cause for the decline in reading if children spent amount of their viewing time only programs which entertain rather than educate.

Role of parents in promoting reading habits among their children

Reading habit should start from young itself. There for parents should play a main role in convincing and telling their children on how important it is for a person to read no matter what type of reading material it is but it must be beneficial. The parents of all children should provide an environment for the fostering of healthy reading habits. Reading should be as natural to a child as the activity such as watching television or using computers. It is important that the parents who are keen to foster the reading habit among their children should themselves know something about books and authors. Now a day it is understood that parents are busy with their work, but they must make sure their children reads daily. Other than that, parents should bring their kids to the library at least once a week and they have to read together with their kids, so that the kids will be encouraged to read. Parents also can set up a mini library at home with the materials available and suitable for reading. Parents also should advise their adult children to read newspaper on a daily basis and not only reading story book or novels. This is to make sure that they

are aware about the current issues.

Libraries and the promotion of reading habits

Libraries play an important role in promoting the reading habits in any society. To create reading habits among people it is necessary for the libraries to reach out to the people. Librarians will have to take the books to the people rather than waiting for the people to come to the library to look for books. There are of course many methods of taking books to the people. One way would be for library staff to set up market stalls. Another way would be to make a mobile library which could visit the villages. One thing that attracts peoples toward libraries is the calm and peaceful environment of study. Libraries are the places where the learning material should be placed everywhere in an organized manner. Such an environment would attract users and motivate them to sit there and read books, some other journals or books of their own choice. In libraries, the form of promotion activities include a wide variety of activities, such as

An effective library orientation program should be introduced in libraries with the purpose of training users to get maximum benefits from the available library services.

For the promotion of reading habits special lectures, training courses, book fairs, exhibition, etc. should be organized.

Library activities should be promoted through advertising using the mass, electronic and print media.

Books and journals should be recent, relevant to users' interest and according to their needs.

Well-trained and qualified staff should be appointed in libraries.

Library staff should provide training to the user to organize home libraries.

For the promotion of reading habits several campaigns can be launched, e.g. library week, book day, etc.

Quiz competitions can be organized in libraries to check the student's knowledge about various books.

Conclusion

It is important to encourage the reading habit so that people grow mentally and fulfill their potential at every level from village to university. Nobody can fulfill his or her potential without the cognitive growth that comes from reading widely and people will not read further than their immediate needs if they are not given the reading habit. Such growth is every person's right and will benefit the country economically as well as benefiting the individual personally.

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