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The Effect of Reading Habits on Academic Success

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The Effect of Reading Habits on Academic Success

By

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Innovation At Grand Valley State University

In partial fulfillment of the Degree of Master of Education

Abstract

The goal of most students is to achieve academic success. In order to be successful, students must form healthy reading habits because there is a positive correlation between academic success and reading habits. The more students read, the greater their chances of performing well academically. By participating in frequent reading, students will, not only perform well in school, they will also expand their vocabulary, improve their writing skills, and sharpen their critical thinking skills. We are in the midst of a literacy crisis, though. Students are choosing other avenues for entertainment instead of reading. This could potentially have detrimental consequences. In order to get books back into the hands of students, it needs to be a collective effort between teachers, parents, school librarians, and students. Spreading awareness about the connection between reading habits and academic success is key.

Approval Page



The signatures of the individuals below indicate that they have read and approved the project of Taylor Hicks in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Instruction and Curriculum – Secondary Education Program.

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The Effect of Reading Habits on Academic Success

Chapter One: Introduction

Problem Statement

Students' reading habits may impact their academic achievement and cognitive growth. There is no denying that reading is a skill that has an immeasurable effect on a student's academic journey. Reading is defined as, cognitive development in which the learner can comprehend text through understanding, interpreting and relating the meaning of the text (Olifant et. al., 2019). Through reading, students will acquire knowledge, encounter diverse perspectives, and develop critical thinking skills. To put it simply, "...developing strong skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking is a little like building a house: A strong foundation is critical, but if the builder leaves before putting up the walls and roof, it's not a finished product" (Wise, 2009, p. 370). Reading is the foundation for success.

Students' reading frequency is dwindling all around the globe. For example, students in Africa are reading two hours or less per day (Samuel, 2022). Not only are students reading less per day, but they are also no longer simply reading for pleasure (Endris, 2022). This major change in reading habits can have serious, lasting consequences. It will disrupt the "foundation" as discussed by author Bob Wise (2009, p. 370).

Reading has a powerful impact on a student's academic journey. Samuel says, "Reading is not only about gaining knowledge, but aids in academic, social, and personal development as well" (2022, p. 15). Reading can enhance or impede one's academic performance (Olifant et al., 2019). So, the stakes are high for today's learners. There is an incentive to read because of all of the different benefits it provides. If a student wants to succeed in their academics, it benefits them to read as much as possible. As a society, we need to make sure students are reading. After

all, readers are leaders!

Importance and Rationale

Academic Achievement

For most students, their goal is to excel academically. Academic achievement is, “success students attain at school, college or university; in the class, laboratory, library and or fieldwork” (Onwubiko, 2022, p. 2). Students’ reading habits are directly connected to academic achievement. The results of a study conducted by Onel and Durdukoca (2021) showed that biology students who read more frequently and for longer periods of time, received better scores in the class. One can infer that the results would be similar across all subject areas. The results are crystal clear. The more a student reads, the more successful they will be academically.

Vocabulary Development

Consistent reading is directly correlated with the acquisition of a large vocabulary. A large repertoire of vocabulary words is necessary to ensure a student’s academic success. Children who read more frequently encounter more words and are able to see the ways in which words are used (Samuel, 2022; Cain & Oakhill, 2011). These results are highlighted in a study conducted by authors Maipoka and Soontornwipast. The findings of their study revealed that students’ English vocabulary knowledge increased after participating in a ten week reading program (Maipoka & Soontornwipast, 2021). Without a large array of words to choose from, students will struggle academically. So, the more students read, the easier they acquire a wide array of vocabulary words. Then, they will have access to use these words later. This can potentially lead to better success academically, which is the main goal for many students.

Improved Writing Skills

Great writers are able to express their thoughts clearly, concisely, and creatively (Pokhrel, 2022). When students lack creativity in their writing, they repeat the same sentences over and over again (Eser, 2021). In school, students are expected to produce a certain standard of writing at each grade level. Usually, this is according to a grade scale ranging from A-F. If students have a larger repertoire of words to choose from, they will produce writing that is more clear, concise, and creative. Therefore, students need knowledge about which words to use. The more words they encounter, the more words they will learn, then they will have a larger collection of words to pull from. They can gain a larger vocabulary through reading because of the exposure to different words that they may not encounter otherwise. Therefore, the more students read, the more they will encounter a large variety of words, and, then, they will be able to use these words in their writing. They will produce better writing and will be more successful academically.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a process that avid readers practice. Language skills are directly linked to critical thinking, which is a metacognitive process. Metacognition is required for the development of reading and writing skills (Eser, 2021) Through reading, students gain these essential critical thinking skills. Students can then learn how to synthesize the information that they have read and utilize it in the future. There is a linear relationship between writing and reading, using reading and metacognitive reading strategies, and creativity and reading (Eser, 2021). Students who read more, think more critically, and are more creative in their writing because they have a larger repertoire of knowledge to choose from. The more students read, the more successful they will be academically because they will be able to think critically and utilize those strategies. So, there are many positive benefits to increasing reading habits.

Clearly, academic success is directly related to students' reading habits. In order to achieve academic success students must have high academic achievement, a well-developed vocabulary, excellent writing skills, and be able to think critically. If a student is able to accomplish this, they will excel in their academic journey.

Background of Project

We are in the midst of a literacy crisis. Research shows that from approximately 2006 to 2016, media usage has basically doubled. This has led to competition between reading and other sources of entertainment. Books are losing the fight (Lemov, 2022). There is a decline in leisure reading, especially among the younger generation of people (Gezgin et al., 2023). Students are not choosing to read for leisure because of all of the other avenues for entertainment. Some of these activities include, playing online games, watching TV, and browsing the Internet (Hossain, 2017). With the advancement of technology, the use of social media has also become increasingly prevalent. In a study conducted by Vanitha et al. (2021), concluded 72% of the participants preferred technology or social media as a form of entertainment rather than reading books. Twenty-eight percent of the participants preferred reading over spending more time in social media. Students are spending more time participating in activities that do not include reading.

This project is designed with the students at Mona Shores Middle and High School in mind. At the elementary level, students are encouraged to read and are rewarded for doing so. By the end of third-grade, the measure of student proficiency in English Language Arts is 47.1%. By the time students reach high school, proficiency in math and English drops to 31.3% (MISchoolData, 2023). There is a large emphasis placed on the importance of reading by elementary teachers. At Mona Shores Middle School, students participate in sustained silent

reading in English, but there is not a large emphasis placed on reading in any other subject areas. At Mona Shores High School, sustained silent reading, or SSR, is not a common practice. If students want to read, it is done on their own time. The statistics above, reflect the lack of reading in the classroom. Reading habits and academic success are directly linked. So, it's imperative to figure out a way to incorporate reading into the curriculum and to get books back into the hands of students.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to increase students' reading habits, which will, ultimately, increase their academic success. This may be accomplished by examining the effects of reading habits on academic achievement, vocabulary development, writing skills, and critical thinking skills and offer possible solutions to get students back into reading. Due to a change in reading habits, students academic success may be affected. However, due to the positive correlation between reading habits and academic success, students may be able to manipulate the outcome of their academic journey.

Objectives of Project

The objectives of this project are as follows:

- Increase teachers' awareness regarding existing strategies to increase student reading through a book study
- Inform teachers and parents about the relationship between reading habits and academic success
- Increase students' academic performance
- Increase students' leisure reading

Key Terms

Reading: Making meaning of words (Samuel, 2022, p. 15).

Reading habits: Time spent reading; recurring reading (Ameyaw & Anto, 2018, p.2).

Academic achievement: Students success in school, usually noted by a final letter grade (Onwubiko, 2022, p. 2).

Sustained Silent Reading: Reading for a length of time without interruption (Chua, 2008, p 180).

Matthew Effect: Refers to the gap that appears between good and poor readers (Cain & Oakhill, 2011, p. 431)

Scope of Project

The scope of this project is to examine how students' reading habits affect their academic achievement, vocabulary development, writing skills, and their ability to think critically in the classroom setting. All of these different factors are essential for students to be effective in today's modern classroom. Additionally, this project aims to provide some possible suggestions as to how we can encourage students' reading habits, which will then, lead to their overall academic success in the classroom. There are some limitations to this project, though. One of the major limitations is the value set on reading. At home, if parents choose not to read, and they are not modeling that behavior for their children, then, more often than not, those students will not want to read. Reading habits start at home. Additionally, extra time to read is not always part of a school's curriculum. It's imperative to suggest ways that classes can incorporate more time for students' to read. Lastly, another limitation could potentially be access to reading materials. Depending on socio-economic status or location, some children may not be able to access literature as easily.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

Introduction

We are in the midst of a literacy crisis. This is troubling because it could have a detrimental effect on students' overall academic success. There is no denying the connection between reading habits and academic performance. Students who are behind can not possibly be prepared for college or a career (Wise, 2009). Therefore, students are not set up for future success if they struggle with their literacy. Ameyaw and Anto (2018) state, "reading has personal values; it is the door to almost all knowledge and vocations, such that the mechanical worker on the factory floor needs to read some basic material like rules and regulations governing operations on the factory floor" (p. 1). Reading is the foundation for success. The more students read, the greater their chances of achieving academic success. If students choose not to read, the results could be detrimental. Immediately following this chapter, there will be information discussing the major theories that emerge from the literature and the rationale for the project. The reader can, then, expect to find research from other studies regarding the same topic, a short summary of information gleaned from the research, and conclusions that can be drawn based on the previous research.

Theory/Rationale

There are three main perspectives that emerge from the existing literature related to reading habits and academic success: the cognitive perspective, the socio-cultural perspective, and the contextual perspective. This section aims to break down each perspective and examine their connection to reading habits.

Cognitive Perspective

According to Endris (2022), reading is a cognitive process in which there is an interaction

between the reader and the text. Reading requires a certain amount of cognitive skill. Cain and Oakhill (2011) discuss the Matthew effect and its connection to reading habits. The Matthew Effect refers to the gap that forms between “good” readers and “bad” readers (p. 431). Poor readers may choose less challenging books, therefore, they are not getting the same rich reading experience as a child who is considered a “good reader”. Whereas, a “good reader”, will interact with more challenging texts because they are comfortable with tackling difficult words (2011, p. 432). Metacognition directly connects to the cognitive perspective. “The idea that students use their imaginations more richly in narrative texts, that writing and reading skills, which are based on a metacognitive process, affect each other in direct proportion, and that factors such as awareness and attitude are also a part of the acquired skill shed light on the research” (Eser & Ayaz, 2021, p. 642). Cognitive skills have a major impact on reading habits.

Socio-cultural Perspective

Another perspective that emerges from the literature is the socio-cultural perspective, meaning that one’s reading habits are influenced by outside factors. In other words, a person’s social situation and their environment has an effect on their reading habits (Endris, 2022). For example, parents’ reading habits have a direct impact on their child’s. Children whose parents tend to put a high value on reading, will also value reading, and will be more likely to read for pleasure (Siah & Kwok, 2010). Librarians play a huge role in fostering a love for reading. “Libraries and librarians help to introduce the best use of reading for information, pleasure, passing examinations, and personal growth - attributes which characterize the lifelong learner” (Hossain, 2017, p. 44). Therefore, libraries play a crucial role in fostering reading habits and, ultimately, assisting in academic success. Teachers play a key role in fostering reading habits. If educators want students to value reading, they have to provide time and space for students to

read and discuss their books (Merga, 2018). Technology usage has a large affect on reading habits. More people are connected to different sources of technology than ever before. There has been a large increase in technology usage compared to past generations (Khatri, 2021). In fact, people are driving it to “maximum utilization” (2021, p. 40). Students are choosing technology over reading. Additionally, socio-economic factors may affect reading habits. Children who come from low income families tend to struggle in their early education (Fraumeni-McBride, 2017). This will lead to struggles with reading later on. Reading is a foundational skill, so if students do not develop the skill early in their lives, they will struggle later on. Many different outside factors have an impact on reading habits and academic success.

Contextual Perspective

According to Siah and Kwok (2010), reading habits are based on context. They connect the contextual theory to sustained silent reading by stating that it may be beneficial in some situations, but not beneficial in others. Context is important because every person’s situation is different. One factor that may relate to context is enthusiasm towards reading. Teachers, librarians, and parents have to be advocates for reading and help foster a love for reading. Students may have poor literacy skills because they lack enthusiasm towards reading (Ameyaw & Anto, 2018). If students appreciate the value of reading, they will want to participate more often. Additionally, schools and classrooms that provide a designated reading time, like sustained silent reading (or SSR), will encourage students to read. Students enjoyed reading more after spending some time participating in sustained silent reading (Pegg & Bartelheim, 2011). They just need the right opportunity, or context, to foster that appreciation.

Research/Evaluation

There is no arguing that reading has many benefits. The more a student reads, the more successful they will be academically. Students whose main goal is to excel academically should keep this in mind. There are many factors that affect one's academic success. These same factors are also directly connected to reading habits.

Academic Achievement

Resilience is a character trait that is essential to one's success. A resilient person is not afraid of a challenge and will not back down when faced with difficulties. Students who are more confident readers, do not shy away from more complex texts (Hiebert & Daniel, 2019). This trait is essential to be successful academically. Students who are more confident in their abilities, will not back down when faced with a challenge. Onel and Durdukoca (2021) found that the more students read, the better they performed in their biology course and earned a 70% or higher. While this was conducted in a biology class, this data can be extrapolated to other curricular areas as well because of the positive correlation between reading habits and academic achievement. In a study conducted by Mo (2021), it was found that 95% of the participants were able to achieve a 70% or higher on comprehension questions when they were able to read at their optimal reading level (p. 114). Not only does this require the students to read more, but they need material that fits with their reading level. This requires a bit of extra effort from parents and teachers to make sure students are reading materials that fit their own unique abilities. If students are given the proper materials, and they are encouraged to read more, they will excel in their classes. This is the goal for most students.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development has a direct connection to reading habits. Students who participated in a ten week reading program, significantly improved their vocabulary knowledge

(Maipoka & Soontornwipast, 2021). Students who participated in more frequent leisure reading had an increase in their syntax and vocabulary knowledge (Torppa et al., 2022). The more students read, the larger their repertoire of words to choose from will be. This is because frequent readers “spend more time engaged with text than their less-fluent peers” (Paige & Smith, 2018, p. 13). Additionally, students who read outside of school, tend to enjoy reading despite many difficult vocabulary words present (Reynolds, 2023). In other words, nuances found within word meanings is tied directly to reading habits (Paige & Smith, 2018). Students who read more, have access to a larger variety of words and utilize them later. After the initial encounter with new vocabulary, students can put this knowledge into practice (Vanitha et al., 2021). They also enjoy reading more because they are better prepared to face challenging words. Those that are comfortable confronting larger words, will be more successful academically. They will not shy away from a challenge. Additionally, those that have access to a larger vocabulary are better writers.

Improved Writing Skills

Creative writing can be directly linked to academic success. Pohkrel was able to determine that students who are able to practice creative writing in the classroom, are more successful when completing academic writing (2023). Eser & Ayaz (2021) say, “studies in the literature shows that that creative writing practices are effective in improving students' writing skills, and writing studies have a positive impact on writing skill, writing attitude, lesson attitude, writing anxiety, speaking skills, creative writing skills” (p. 653). Students who write well, will be higher achievers in the classroom. Additionally, in a study conducted by Rod and Nubdal (2022), it was found that higher achieving students were able to better assess their peers’ writing through peer review. Avid readers also tend to notice the different features of writing (Merga, 2017).

These features can be mimicked later to produce better writing. So, not only are successful students able to write well, they are able to notice the intricacies of writing, and they are also better equipped to assess their peers' writing. Therefore, reading habits, the ability to write well, and assess others' writing are all directly connected. As stated above, students who read more have a larger vocabulary, which encourages them to write better. They can also better assess others' writing. These different factors all directly contribute to a student's overall academic performance.

Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking is the foundation for all other academic skills (Kuzina et al., 2022). Therefore, students who can not think critically are doomed to fail. On the opposite hand, those who are able to think critically will be more likely to achieve academic success. Critical thinking skills are sharpened through reading. Good thinkers are usually good readers (Eser & Ayaz, 2021). In order for one to become better at critical thinking, they need to read more. Reynolds (2022) found that students who read more, activated their usage metacognitive strategies more often. Therefore, avid readers will be more comfortable with utilizing critical thinking strategies. In a study conducted by Eser and Ayaz (2021), it was found that when students were assessed, the avid readers utilized different metacognitive strategies.

Teachers can assist students in developing strong critical thinking skills by promoting reading in the classroom, providing students with interesting reading material, and by modeling critical thinking skills (Krashen, 2009). Teachers can help fill the gaps when it comes to critical thinking skills. This is yet another example of how reading leads to academic success and why it is pertinent to promote healthy reading habits. Healthy reading habits do not just appear, though. They must be fostered and nurtured.

Reading Habits Start at Home

Healthy reading habits start at home. Student attitudes have a lot to do with their reading habits. These attitudes towards reading are usually created by their parents. Students who place a higher value on reading, tend to read more. This same group was also more likely to have had experiences reading with their parents (Siah & Kwok, 2010). Rikin et al. (2015) also found “...caregiver reading frequency correlates positively with emergent literacy, academic, and social skills in children” (p. 656). They also found that reading as part of a bedtime routine helps foster reading habits (Rikin et al., 2015). Onel and Durdukoca (2021) found that there is a positive correlation between the number of books read and the number of books one has access to at home. If a student has access to more literature at home, they will be more likely to read more. However, there are opposing views to this point. In a study, 58.65% of 104 respondents shared that their home environment did not provide support for reading (Ameyaw & Anto, 2018). This shows the critical role that parents/guardians play in how students view reading. Therefore, parents need to be made aware of the link between reading habits and academic success. Healthy reading habits start at home.

Choice Reading

Student choice plays a huge role in determining whether or not a student enjoys reading. Endris (2022) suggests that offering literature with topics that interest readers is a way to encourage reading. So, teachers, parents, and librarians need to pay attention to what students are reading and enjoying. Students will be encouraged to read about topics they enjoy. Merga (2018) states that students should have the freedom to change out a book if they are not enjoying it. The freedom of choice could lead a student to read outside of the typical school day. That autonomy allows students to really choose books that they enjoy. If they enjoy what they read, they will

want to read more. If we provide students interesting reading material, this will, in turn, cause them to read more (Krashen, 2009). In a study examined by Krashen (2009), it was noted that students who were able to “self-select” their books actually read more (p. 20). This knowledge can be applied to today’s classroom. Student choice is a powerful way to try to encourage students to read more. The more they read, the more successful they will be academically.

Sustained Silent Reading

As stated above, sustained silent reading has an effect on a student’s reading habits. In an effort to help aid students in their academic success, schools have put sustained silent reading programs into effect (Siah & Kwok, 2021). Some research shows that elementary-aged students tend to have positive attitudes towards reading when their school’s curriculum includes sustained silent reading (Fraumeni-McBride, 2017). Students just need the time and space to be able to pull out a book and read. If students are given sufficient time to read, it will also improve their attitudes towards silent reading (Pegg & Bartelheim, 2011). This will encourage students to read more. As stated earlier, sustained silent reading is a common practice in Mona Shores Public Schools’ elementary classrooms, and some middle school classrooms, but the practice dwindles at the high school level. At Mona Shores Middle School, academic growth from third to eighth-grade has dropped from 46.3% to 45.1%. As stated in chapter one, proficiency in English Language Arts is also dropping (MISchoolData, 2023). As students begin to read less, their academic success is suffering.

Summary

The research, undeniably, shows that reading benefits students. “Those who read more, read better” (Krashen, 2009, p. 18) Onwubiko (2022) adds that students who read frequently and at their reading ability, will be more successful academically. The more students read, the better

they will read and the more successful they will be academically. Over time, they will build a better vocabulary because they have a larger repertoire of words to choose from. A larger vocabulary will also enable students to become better creative writers. There is a positive correlation between creative writing and academic writing. Students who read more are able to employ metacognitive strategies that actually improve their writing (Eser & Ayaz, 2021). If a student is able to write better creatively, then their academic writing will improve, too. Those who read more, will also enhance their critical thinking skills. This is something that non-avid readers will not experience. Clearly, there are benefits to reading more books. However, it is important to communicate that healthy reading habits start at home. Students need to be encouraged to read and have a positive association with reading. Student choice is also important. Students will be more likely to read books that they want to read.

Conclusions

Based on the research, we can conclude that reading habits lead to overall academic success. In order to lead successful, productive lives, students need to be prepared for college and beyond. This can not happen if we are in the midst of a literacy crisis (Wise, 2009). In order to begin resolving this issue, we need to, first, spread awareness. Olifant et al. (2019) suggests that teachers should make students aware of the connection between reading habits and academic success because it may increase students' motivation to read. After all, students are the population suffering from our current crisis. Students should also be encouraged to read more by their parents/guardians because children tend to "emulate their parents behavior" (2019, p. 8). If students see a positive, healthy relationship with reading at home, they will mimic this type of behavior at school. School librarians are also in a favorable position to encourage students to

read. After all, they are the individuals in charge of stocking the school library. They need to make sure they are offering options that students actually want to read.

Awareness is the first step when trying to create change. This knowledge will open the door for conversation about how to proceed on the path forward. Healthy reading habits start at home. These habits are fostered and nurtured at school. So, teachers need to promote reading in their classrooms and model reading behavior. Teachers who have a positive relationship with reading, who model reading behavior, and have the knowledge to talk about different types of literature will be the most successful in encouraging their students to read (Olifant et al., 2019). Additionally, students should have access to books they like because, then, they will want to read. All of these different factors will affect students' reading habits. With this knowledge, we can promote reading. The more students read, the greater their chances of academic success. In the words of Bob Wise, “we must work together to make every child a high school graduate who is prepared for college, work, and success in life. We owe nothing less to our students and to our nation” (2009, p. 375).

Chapter Three - Project Description

Introduction

Students' reading habits directly effect their academic success. Avid readers are achieving higher grades, increasing their vocabulary knowledge, and improving their writing and critical thinking skills. These skills are all prevalent in high achieving students. Therefore, there is an incentive for students to read. Instead of reading, students are choosing to participate in other activities. This could have detrimental effects on their academic performance.

This project aims to inform teachers and parents regarding the connection between academic success and reading habits. The more information available, the better. There will be resources that parents and teachers can use to track their students'/child's reading. There is also information about applying for a library card in the Muskegon area. Sometimes, lack of access prevents people from reading. Access to a library opens up a whole world of possibilities.

In the following sections, the reader can expect to find all of the different components laid out. There is also a section for project evaluation and project conclusions. Last, but not least, there are plans for implementation of this project.

Project Components

First, this project will raise teachers' awareness regarding the benefits of reading. In Appendix A, there is an image of a text written by Kelly Gallagher. This is an excellent resource that could be used to teach educators how to implement reading culture into their classroom. The goal of this book is to provide teachers with information about how to include literacy instruction in their classroom. Teachers who are not English Language Arts teachers may not know where to begin when it comes to enriching their curriculum with literacy-rich activities. At Mona Shores Middle School, we participate in professional development opportunities where we are given a

book to “study”. Multiple sessions can be led throughout a school year where administration dives deep into the contents of the book. Teachers should then be given time to converse and process their learning. From this learning, they can begin to implement new tools into their classroom. Book studies are an excellent way to create a new learning opportunity for teachers without it feeling overwhelming. There is also a copy of a presentation that could be used at the first professional development session, and there is a handout that can be given to teachers/parents regarding reading habits. This handout can be passed out to parents at the beginning-of-the-year open house, or sent out as an email attachment. Immediately following the handout, there is a survey that will be passed out to teachers at the end of the professional development meeting. This survey aims to gauge teachers’ understanding of the connection between reading habits and academic achievement. It also examines the reading culture in their classrooms and the district as a whole. Teachers will fill this out to the best of their ability.

In Appendix B, there is a resource that can help teachers and parents track students’ reading. The literacy tracker, created by Reading is Fundamental, offers a way to “quickly check students’ reading progress throughout the year and help students find recommended books matched to their interests and reading level” (Reading is Fundamental, n.d.). This provides an excellent mode for parents and teachers to gauge where students are at with their reading habits. This could also spark a potential conversation regarding future reading. Sometimes, all it takes is that one book to pique students’ interest.

Then, in Appendix C through D are some resources that will encourage students to read. First, there is a reading log. This is another example of how parents, teachers, and even students, can keep track of what is being read. Next, there is a copy of a monthly book challenge. This encourages students to sample different genres of books. Following the book challenge is a copy

of book bingo. This is actually a resource that is used in my own classroom as Mona Shores Middle School. Students are eager to earn a “bingo”, so they race to complete all of the listed activities. Teachers and parents can use these resources as a way to encourage reading. After each resource is completed, a prize could be awarded to provide positive reinforcement.

Last but not least, Appendix E includes information about applying for a library card at the Muskegon Area District Library. This resource is meant to bring awareness. Some people just do not realize that this is a service that is free and is available to them. Teachers or administrators could have school librarians communicate this information with parents.

Project Evaluation

Quantative and qualitative data can be derived from the post-meeting teacher survey. The survey examines the number of hours of reading that is assigned to students, how many hours they believe students are spending on the assigned reading, teachers views on the benefits of reading, and how Mona Shores can improve their reading practices. The survey will act as a springboard to begin the conversation about the district’s reading practices. It will require teachers to examine their current reading culture in their classrooms, and may encourage them to make changes to incorporate more opportunities for reading. Success will be measured based on teachers making conscious decisions to improve the reading culture in their classrooms, promoting reading to their students, and communicating the benefits of reading to the parents/guardians of their students.

Additionally, quantitative data can be gathered from the literacy tracker. Teachers/parents can input their student(s)’ grade level and the literacy tracker will output information regarding their reading level compared to their grade level. This is a great place to start beginning the conversation surrounding next steps for students. Teachers will be able to find this information

on the handout that they will be given at their beginning of the year professional development session. Parents will also receive a copy of the handout at the beginning of the year open house. This information is meant to spread awareness. Then, we as a district can begin tackling the problem.

Qualitative data can be collected through the reading logs and seeing how many students complete the reading activities (i.e. book challenge, book bingo). This serves as baseline information regarding students' reading frequency. Once this baseline is established, teachers and parents can then provide incentives for students to encourage reading. For example, at Mona Shores Middle School, students can earn a PRIDE pass for making positive choices. They are able to save these passes to use at the school store each trimester and they are entered into a drawing to win a free lunch. Teachers can reward students after completing a certain amount of reading.

Project Conclusions

Reading habits are directly related to academic success. Students who start reading young have an advantage because they are more likely to achieve success later in life (Fraumeni-McBride, 2017). Success is obtained through high academic achievement, an advanced vocabulary, solid writing skills, and critical thinking skills. Avid readers are more likely to understand the information presented to them in class, therefore, they will be more likely to have high academic achievement (Onel & Durdukoca, 2021). The amount of reading a student completes is essential in developing their vocabulary. When interacting with different texts, students gain a larger repertoire of words and are able to see ways in which these words are used (Paige & Smith, 2018). This benefits students because they will be able to recall when certain words are used and they will be able to apply that knowledge to future situations. Reading and

writing skills are directly connected. Students who read more are able to write more creatively, which aids in their academic success (Eser, 2021). Critical thinking is a megacognitive skill that is developed through reading (Eser, 2021). The more students read, the more they practice these metacognitive strategies.

The major problem is that students are choosing other avenues for entertainment. In 2016, a study was conducted and it was found that only 12% of high school seniors read either books or magazines (Lemov, 2022). There are many people who need to get involved and encourage students to develop a love for reading. Students' enjoyment of literature affects how much they read (Fraumeni-McBride, 2017). Reading habits are developed early on in life and are influenced by a child's caregiver (Rikin et al., 2015). The more a parent/guardian reads, the more likely a child is to develop those healthy reading habits. Teachers can have a profound effect on students' reading habits. Studies have found a positive correlation between sustained silent reading (SSR) and students' attitudes towards reading (Siah & Kwok, 2010). Teachers can implement SSR into their classroom. Students also tend to read more if they are allowed to choose the books they read and are given interesting reading material (Krashen, 2009). School librarians need to create an environment that invites students to visit the library. Parents, teachers, and school librarians all play a key role fostering a love for reading. We must close the door on the literacy crisis that plagues today's students.

Plans for Implementation

This project could be adapted so it could be implemented in any school setting. However, it is specifically designed with the teachers, parents, and students of Mona Shores Public Schools in mind. Resources could be changed/updated to meet the needs of other districts. In order to be successful, the implementation of this project would require a "all hands on deck" mindset. This

means that all school staff, parents, and students will need to participate in order to achieve the desired results.

Administrators will need to receive training, and then they will need to conduct a professional development for the entire staff. This could be accomplished as a building, or as a district-wide professional development. The content of the professional development will need to raise awareness regarding the connection between reading habits and academic success. Then, administration will need to provide direction as to how teachers can promote/implement more reading in their classrooms.

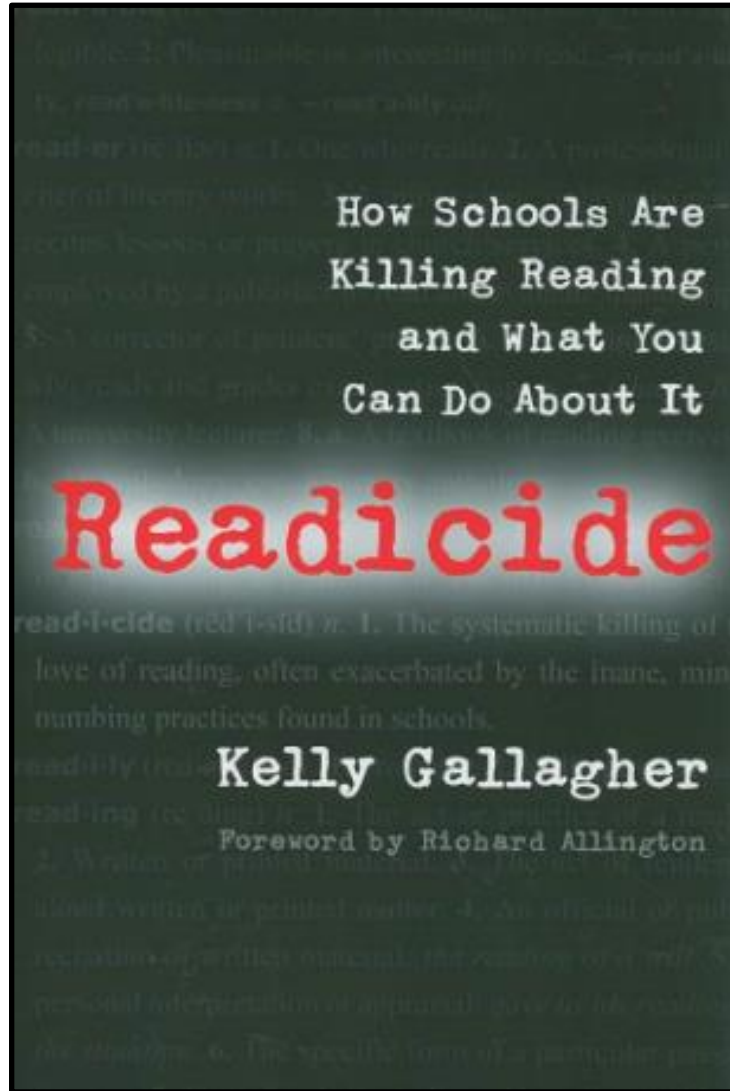
After receiving information from the professional development, teachers will need to implement the training in their classrooms and figure out how to promote healthy reading habits. This may be difficult for some subject areas, but teachers will find a way because the common goal is to ensure students' success. In an English Language Arts classroom, teachers will need to continue to promote reading, provide interesting texts for students to read (i.e. choices in their classroom libraries and including new additions to their curriculum), give students time and space to talk about the books that they are enjoying, and they should provide time for students to visit the school library and participate in sustained silent reading as part of the daily classroom routine.

Reading habits can be encouraged by classroom teachers and administration, but really the joy of reading comes from home. First of all, parents need information about the connection between reading habits and academic success. This may provide the motivation that they need if they are not supporting leisure reading at home. Second, parents need to promote or continue to promote reading to the best of their ability. If students see that their parents value reading, they

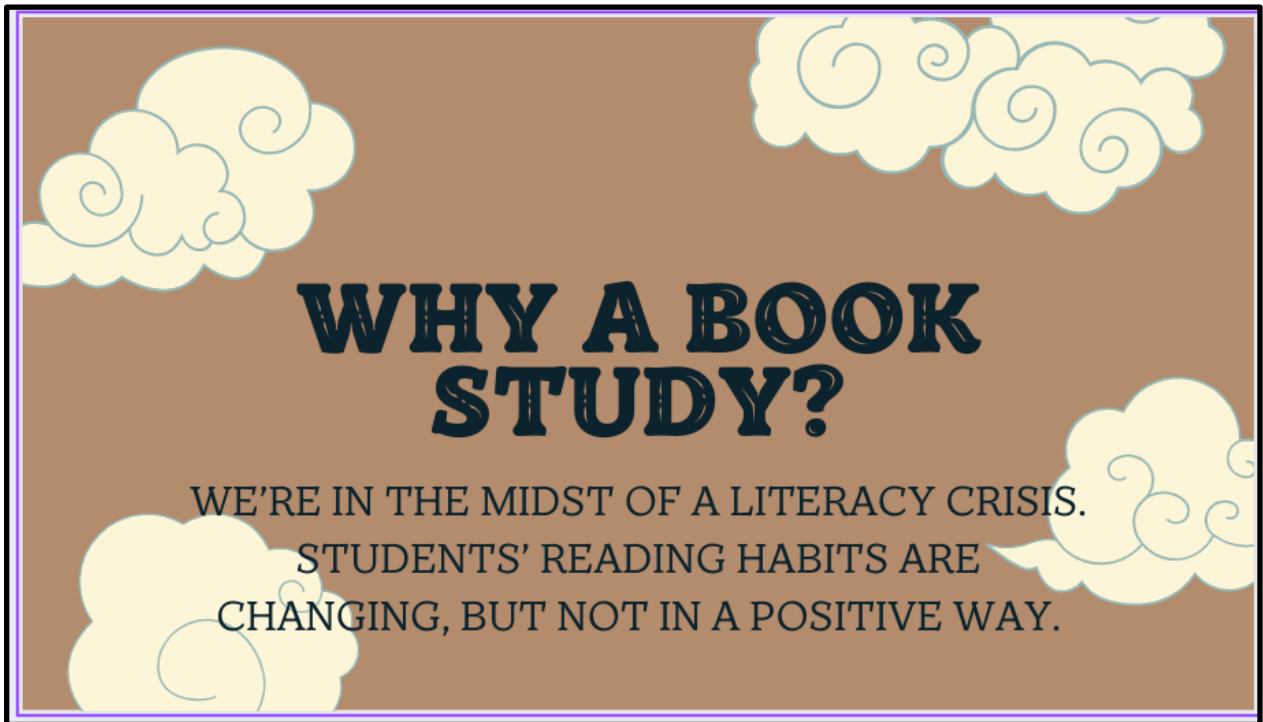
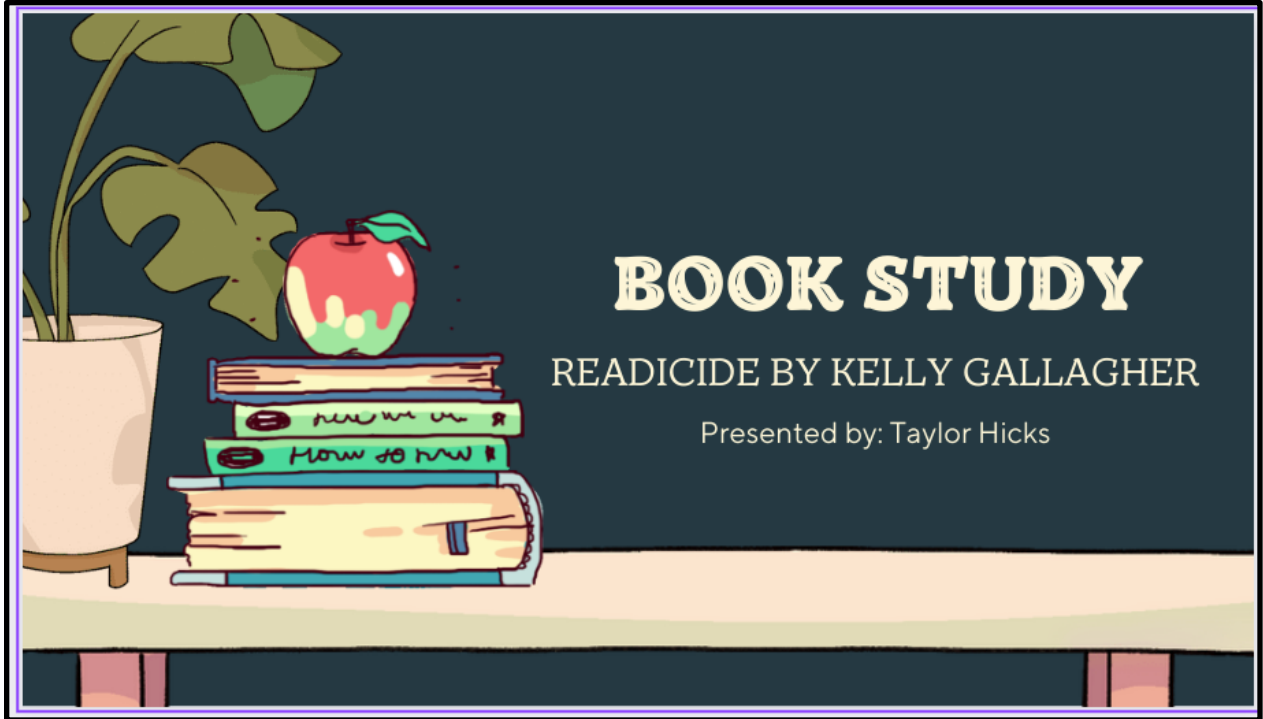
will more likely want to participate in the activity. After all, reading habits are truly formed at home.

School librarians play a key role in promoting healthy reading habits. Really, they need to continue doing what they do best, promoting books and encouraging students to read. There are a few ways to accomplish this task. They can offer information about local libraries, they can teach students how to apply for a library card if they choose to visit their local library, they can discuss/promote online resources for checking out books (i.e. Libby), they can create a warm, welcoming environment that encourages students to continue to visit the school library time and time again, and they can offer opportunities for students to get excited about reading (i.e. Scholastic Book Fairs and/or reading contests). It takes a village, but with the implementation of this project, we can begin to pull students out of a reading slump and encourage their academic success.

Appendix A



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WHY IS READING IMPORTANT?

- Higher academic achievement (Onel & Durduckoca, 2021)
- Increase in vocabulary knowledge (Cain & Oakhill, 2011)
- Improved academic and creative writing (Pohkrel, 2022; Eser & Ayaz, 2021)
- Improved critical thinking skills (Eser & Ayaz, 2021)

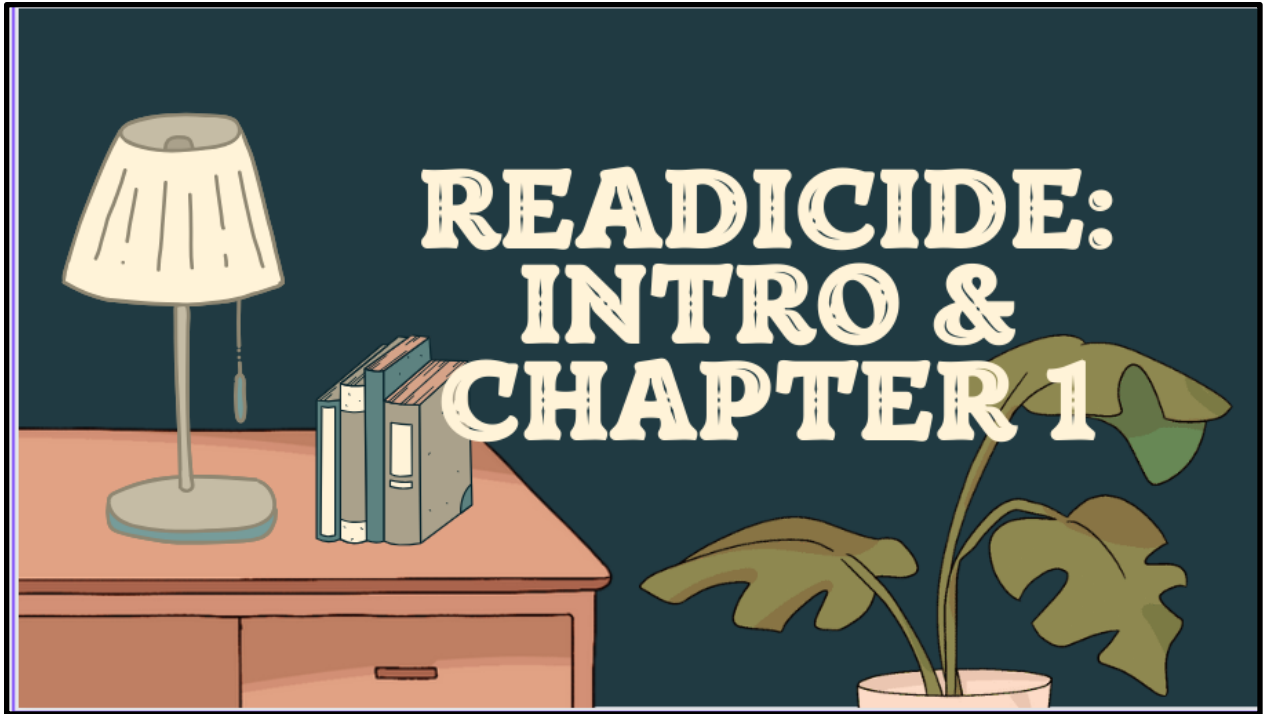


WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING INSTEAD OF READING?

- Watching tv
 - Playing video games
 - Browsing the internet/social media
- (Hossain, 2017)

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

- Book study: Readicide by Kelly Gallagher
- Collaborate as a staff and implement strategies suggested by Gallagher



READICIDE: INTRO & CHAPTER 1

INTRO & CHAPTER 1

AGENDA

- **Independent Reading & Reflection**
- **Table Share & Discuss**
- **Additional Questions to Ponder**
 - What are your thoughts about the value of reading? How do you show this in your classroom?
 - What are some practices you can incorporate into your own classroom to encourage reading?
- **One Word Takeaway**

A light yellow illustration of a table with three books and a vase of tulips.

INTRO & CHAPTER 1

READING SELECTIONS

- PG 1-6
- PG 7-9: STOP AFTER "WITH ANY DEPTH?"
- PG 12: STOP AFTER "THE PROBLEM"
- PG 14-18: "THE PAIGE PARADOX"
- PG 24-26



INTRO & CHAPTER 1

READING SELECTIONS

- PG 1-6
- PG 7-9: STOP AFTER "WITH ANY DEPTH?"
- PG 12: STOP AFTER "THE PROBLEM"
- PG 14-18: "THE PAIGE PARADOX"
- PG 24-26



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The Need to Read

We are in the midst of a literacy crisis. Students are choosing not to read for pleasure. This choice may have drastic effects on their academic achievement.

Overview

Students are choosing not to read, which could have a negative effect on their academic achievement. For most students, their goal is to be successful in their academic journey. This resource discusses the connection between reading habits and academic achievement. Additionally, it offers next steps and resources to encourage students to read.

Summary

Key Information	<p>Reading habits are directly correlated with academic success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Avid readers<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ are more likely to achieve academic success○ have a larger vocabulary repertoire○ are better creative/academic writers○ are able to use complex critical thinking strategies <p>What are students choosing to do instead of read?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Watch tv● Play video games● Browse the internet/social media
Blockers	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Parents are not regular readers at home.2. Teachers are struggling with how to implement reading practices into their classrooms.3. The curriculum does not offer time to add in reading.4. Parents and teachers are not aware of the connection between reading habits and academic success.
Next Steps	<p>Teachers will participate in a book study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Readicide: How Schools are Killing Reading and What You Can Do About It<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ By Kelly Gallagher● Administration will work directly with staff to implement better literacy practices into their classrooms <p>Resources will be given to help encourage/support reading.</p>
Support Needed	<p>Parents can visit the websites listed below. Healthy reading habits start at home!</p>

Relevant Resources

Reading is Fundamental

Find resources to encourage and support healthy reading habits.

www.rif.org

Muskegon Area District Library

Learn more about your local library. Library cards are free!

www.madl.org

MI School Data

Learn more about Mania Shores students' reading proficiency.

www.mischooldata.org

10. What resources could Mona Shores offer to encourage students to read more?

Appendix B

A Free Formative Assessment Tool

RIF's free and easy-to-use Literacy Tracker Tool enables educators and families to quickly check students' reading progress throughout the year and help students find recommended books matched to their interests and reading level.

Using adaptive, low-stakes reading challenges based on student self-selected interests, this tool informs educators and families on students' reading progress over time. Literacy Tracker provides reading performance reports to help inform instructional decisions and tailored book lists to encourage independent reading in school and at home.

A student-centered, user-friendly tool designed to complement and enhance a school's existing literacy curriculum, educators and families can use [Literacy Tracker](#) to increase:

- ✓ Use of formative assessment data to provide a feedback loop and help design personalized reading strategies for students;
- ✓ Awareness and understanding of students' reading needs between tri-annual benchmark assessments;
- ✓ Students' awareness of their reading performance in relation to tasks;
- ✓ Literacy skills in the areas of vocabulary and language development; and
- ✓ Students' reading frequency, motivation and engagement to ultimately, increase reading achievement



DATE	LEVEL	INTEREST	Student Reading Progress	ASSIGN
March 1	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
March 8	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
March 15	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
March 22	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
March 29	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
April 5	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
April 12	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
April 19	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud
April 26	3rd	Adventure	<div style="width: 100%;"><div style="width: 100%;"></div></div>	Read Aloud



Access for your student(s) is tied to your teacher or parent account and information is never shared beyond your account.

For a detailed overview, please download the [Literacy Tracker User Guide](#) or view our [Tutorial Video](#).


To get started using Literacy Tracker today, be sure you're logged into or create a new Literacy Central account.

GET STARTED USING LITERACY TRACKER

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Appendix C

_____ Name



Reading Log

	Book Title	Author	# of Pages	Date
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____	_____	_____
















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NAME _____

RIF's 40 Book Reading Challenge

Pick a Book. Read a Book. Mark a Book.

 Realistic Fiction Book: _____	Adventure Book: _____	 Historical Fiction Book: _____	Sports Book: _____	 Fantasy Book: _____	Graphic Book: _____	 Science Fiction Book: _____
Your Choice Book: _____	 Biography Book: _____	Your Choice Book: _____	 Non-Fiction Book: _____	Mystery Book: _____	Award winning classic Book: _____	Non-Fiction Book: _____
 Poetry Book: _____	Picture Book Book: _____	Poetry Book: _____	Your Choice Book: _____	 Graphic Book: _____	Fairy Tale Book: _____	 Holiday Theme Book: _____
Biography Book: _____	 Adventure Book: _____	Realistic Fiction Book: _____	 Picture Book Book: _____	Poetry Book: _____	 Mystery Book: _____	Non-Fiction Book: _____
 Fairy Tale Book: _____	Fantasy Book: _____	 Award winning classic Book: _____	Non-Fiction Book: _____	Award winning classic Book: _____	 Sports Book: _____	Historical Fiction Book: _____
Your Choice Book: _____	Science Fiction Book: _____	Holiday Theme Book: _____	Graphic Book: _____	Your Choice Book: _____		

Reading
Is Fundamental

Use the **RIF Reading Log App** to track reading time along with your booklist. Download the app free on Google Play and the Apple App Store.



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Appendix D

Book Bingo

<p>I've listened to a teacher read.</p> <p>My favorite teacher read-aloud is:</p>	<p>I've read a graphic novel.</p> <p>Title:</p>	<p>I've read outside.</p> <p>My favorite place to read outside is:</p>	<p>I've read a picture book.</p> <p>My favorite picture book is:</p>	<p>I've stayed up really late to read.</p> <p>The book I couldn't put down was:</p>
<p>I've read a book that is also a movie.</p> <p>I think the _____ is better than the _____.</p>	<p>I've read a book with the animal as the main character.</p> <p>Sketch a pic below.</p>	<p>I've read a horror novel.</p> <p>The book that scared me the most was:</p>	<p>I've borrowed a book from a family member.</p> <p>The book I borrowed is:</p>	<p>I've read a poem.</p> <p>My favorite poet is:</p>
<p>I've read a book of short stories.</p> <p>Title:</p>	<p>I've read in the car.</p> <p>My favorite book to read in the car is:</p>	<p>FREE</p>	<p>I've read a book by a female author.</p> <p>Author's name:</p>	<p>I've read a book that made me laugh out loud.</p> <p>Title:</p>
<p>I've read a book about facts (non-fiction).</p> <p>Title:</p>	<p>I've listened to an e-book.</p> <p>The name of the book is:</p>	<p>I've read a "how-to" book.</p> <p>I was trying to learn how to:</p>	<p>I own a book I've never read.</p> <p>Circle one: I want to/don't want to read it.</p>	<p>I've read a mystery novel.</p> <p>My favorite mystery book is:</p>
<p>I've re-read a book.</p> <p>The book I re-read is:</p>	<p>I've read a fairy tale.</p> <p>My favorite fairy tale is:</p>	<p>I've read a book by a male author.</p> <p>Author's name:</p>	<p>I've read while eating a snack.</p> <p>My favorite snack to eat while reading is:</p>	<p>I've read in a blanket fort.</p> <p>The book I read in the fort was:</p>

Appendix E

[HOME](#) [NEW CARD](#)

I Want To...

- [Access My Account](#)
- [Contact MADL](#)
- [Get A Library Card](#)
- [Request A Purchase](#)
- [Volunteer](#)

New Card

Who Can Get A Card?

Library cards are free to anyone who lives or owns property in the Muskegon Area District Library Service area. You will need to provide a driver's license or state ID with your current address. Children under 18 will need a parent or guardian to sign for their card. Get started applying for a library card by filling out the form below, and someone from MADL will get back to you within 72 hours.

Name:

Address:

City or Town:


State:

Zip or Postal Code:

Phone:

Email:

Date of Birth:

I'm not a robot  [Privacy](#) [Terms](#)

Appendix F

NAME: Taylor Hicks
ORGANISATION: Grand Valley State University
ADDRESS: USA

14:20

Description: Dissertation or Thesis Permission

Thank you for your request for permission to reproduce Taylor & Francis book content. I am pleased to confirm that permission is granted subject to the terms and conditions outlined below:

Title: 9781571107800 | Readicide | Edn. 1 | Paperback | Origin US

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Rights: A&Q
Language: English
Format: Print & Electronic
Academic Institution: Grand Valley State University
Name of Course of Study: Advanced Studies in Education Program
Title of Dissertation or Thesis: The Effect of Reading Habits on Academic Success

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Appendix G



Karly O'Brien

To: espinozt@mail.gvsu.edu >

10:06 AM



New Form Submission from **RIF.org: Contact Form**

Hi Taylor,

Thank you for reaching out to us! My name is Karly, and I am the Content Developer here at RIF. I am a former classroom teacher and reading specialist, so I am slightly nerding out at the fact that you would like to use our resources!

You are absolutely welcome to utilize any of our resources in your paper. Please make sure to appropriately cite RIF in whatever format your program uses (I imagine APA). If you decide to utilize any of our resources that are in partnership with Family of Readers, please make sure to keep the trademark in your appendix (you will see it on the resource).

Please reach out if you have any other questions!

Karly O'Brien (She/Her)
Content Developer
[Reading Is Fundamental](http://ReadingIsFundamental)
750 First Street, NE, Suite 920
Washington, DC 20002
www.rif.org

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