

'Shelf Esteem' by Erin Nielsen 3c

Why reading is fundamental for a young person and the detrimental effect of not reading is having on their lifestyle.

Studies have shown that only 1/3 of young people are daily readers. 45% only read for choice once or twice a year. Scary right? In this world of flourishing social media and innovative technology, it would not surprise me to see a huddle of teenagers engrossed on their latest, hottest and cutting edge phones. It deeply saddens me to be living in a world where reading a paperback book would be the cause of puzzled looks.

Many young adults would rather pick up an electronic device than a fresh new book. Some do not even realise, it is a force of habit. I strongly believe that the celebrated media have to receive some blame for this. A myriad of fantastic and world renowned novels have been transformed into red carpet and star studded movies, that are much more appealing to the younger generation. Also television induces young people to read less. Young people would much rather sit down in front of the blazing fire, on an arctic December evening with a TV remote than a world class novel in hand. The effects of this dilemma are damaging. Reading for enjoyment enhances thinking and engages and stimulates the imagination in a way that visual media such as video games and television do not. Reading develops critical thinking, memory improvement, vocabulary and concentration, which is paramount for young adults to have and champion. Constant flashes of bright lights and excessive fluorescent colours cannot be good for health either. Bright lights on a digital device in dim lighting can cause headaches, damage to the peripheral vision and a decline in sustaining information. The visual image of a monochromatic page on a book is much more soothing to the eye. So, is that really an expectable risk, just to feel a sense of fitting in and self-esteem?

Reading however, has a significant number of benefits. It reduces the level of stress in a young adolescent's lifestyle. There is a plethora of books that can transport you to another realm and distract you from the real-life problems being faced. For several teenagers, this could be an escape route for the pressure of exams and daily life. Another advantage is that reading leads to better writing skills. The vocabulary and style of writing the mind absorbs can be recycled in any piece of literature and can actively aid a subject's grade. Lastly, reading is a source of entertainment. Before a mobile phone, a tablet, an xbox, young people had books. So, in conclusion, the detrimental effect of young adults not reading is destructive and it needs to change in order to improve the advancement of today's student's education and daily life.