

2021年



創作比賽

4 · 23 World Book Day
Creative Competition in 2021



Exploring the New Frontiers of Reading

香港 Hong Kong

高中組 中四 (S4) ▶ 中六 (S6)
Senior Secondary

ACUNA Ashly Carel Vega

Delia Memorial School (Hip Wo)

Topic My Journey With Reading

When you see the word "reading", what's the first thing that pops up in your head? Maybe you think of your favourite book, or a news article you read online the other day. Whatever it is, there's no denying that it is an integral part of our day-to-day lives, especially when it comes in many different forms.

Reading is, in fact, everywhere in our daily lives. From street signs to text messages, it's something utilized regularly. Reading isn't only restricted to visual comprehension, it can be tactile like Braille, commonly used by the blind and visually impaired to communicate. Reading is the key to interacting with other people as you can express how you feel to others. Have you ever felt the excitement of receiving a text message from a loved one? It's amazing what a string of symbols can do to the human brain. Other than that, it is also vital in increasing general knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

I used to read a lot of books as a child considering it was highly encouraged by my parents and teachers. I would get a National Geographic Kids magazine in the mail each month, and I loved reading them from cover to cover. A few magazines grew into a collection, and then on my 8th birthday, I received a "National Geographic Almanac" as my birthday gift. I was so fascinated when I flipped through the pages and explored its contents, ranging from wildlife facts to new technological innovations that year. My interest in science was piqued, and my curiosity only began to grow. I started to appreciate the little things in life a bit more since the book made learning fun.

Whenever the new school year started, I would frequent the library and borrow books that caught my attention. The reason was my primary school enforced a reading award scheme to motivate students to read. You'd win prizes if you read a certain number of books. This scheme not only pushed me to read more, but it also allowed me to explore different genres. Little by little, reading every day became more natural to me. I would finish five books by the end of each week and have plenty of time to read more. You would always see me holding a book as I roamed the school grounds, and thus, I earned the title of being a bibliophile.

As I grew older, I began to hear the people around me say, "I don't read", and the typical excuse was, "I don't have time". I couldn't understand it at first, but regrettably, I started to relate with them before I knew it. It was admittedly never because of my tight schedule, but rather my unwillingness to sit down and pick up a book. In the span of a few years, the way I viewed reading changed completely. I felt alienated from reading when my passion for it died down, and I, along with others, took reading for granted. Countless hours spent on playing video games and other forms of entertainment only lead me to believe I would be wasting my time on books.

Only until very recently have I been reading more often to make up for the lost time. One book that I read is "The First Phone Call From Heaven" by Mitch Albom. Some citizens in a small town started receiving phone calls from the so-called afterlife. It quickly drew the attention of the public and made headlines. When the unusual happens, there is bound to be sceptical individuals lingering with suspicion, and one of them was a man named Sully Harding. Upon his release from military prison, he made it his mission to find out who or what was behind the phone calls from heaven. Whether you believe in the afterlife or not, you would find the book quite thought-provoking and a little emotional. It makes you think about the concept of miracles and whether they happen. Frankly, I was not the type of person to read this kind of book, but my friend offered to lend it to me, and I saw this as an opportunity to get back to reading.

If fictional stories or informational books are not your cup of tea, then maybe comics are. Just by searching "comics" online, you would be provided with many different websites to read from, depending on what you want to read. The best part is, there are hundreds and thousands of reading materials online that are free of charge. If you prefer physical versions of books, you can head over to a website called "Book Depository". You can buy almost any book you want with free shipping! Reading is limitless, and there is bound to be a book out there just for you.

Despite the many reading materials to choose from, instruction manuals are among them that the majority chooses to ignore. Manuals are too complicated at times, and sometimes you just want to jump right in and skip all the obvious steps. Even so, you might be skipping crucial information that you would need in the future. I can say I have undergone these happenings in the past, but gratefully I have learned my lesson. Reading manuals tell you more about the item, and if any assembly is required, it can go much smoother than without reading. Safety also plays a big role here, as you can take precautionary measures to avoid injuries or accidents that may happen in the future. So whenever an instruction manual is included, make sure to read it!

The possibilities with reading are endless, as you can involve reading with anything. My experiences with reading have not always been positive, but it has been unforgettable, to say the least. My perception of reading changed from time to time, but the result came out the same way as the beginning. The various reading materials I explored enabled me to become a more open-minded and knowledgeable person, and my horizons have expanded far and wide.

Comments

- Student's experience with reading is well documented.
- Well written with fluent language.

KOSAR Tayyeba

Po Leung Kuk Vicwood K. T. Chong
Sixth Form College

Topic What You Read, You Become

Have you ever wondered how much your hobbies have helped you in building your character? I believe every person has their own pastimes. Reading has helped me in character-building and it has changed my life. I guess not only mine but also many people's. Imagine just being able to read without feeling or knowing the meaning and the use behind the words, how worthless that would be. We readers are very powerful in a sense of imagining scenarios through reading and we are able to put ourselves in someone's shoes.

My habit of reading was developed at the age of 3, my parents used to have daily reading sessions before my bedtime. Listening to all those princesses stories became a crucial part of that 3 year old's routine. I can still remember from childhood, I used to make weekly visits to the library in the morning. The first book I read myself was "Mr. Happy", a simple and short story book by Roger Hargreaves. It is about how Mr. Happy tries to make Mr. Miserable happy too by trying to get along with him. He instantly invited him back for a chat. I wanted to be Mr. Happy and spread happiness by trying to help people around me. The Mr. series is absolutely the best choice for toddlers to start up with, they are hilarious and have wonderful little morals.

Reading has expanded my knowledge and imagination on a whole new level. Year by year, reading has provided me with a great improvement in my writing and reading skills. I will never run out of things to write or discuss. I like reading history and fiction books. The books that have a significant influence and inspiration to give out. From just being able to read some 20 to 50 pages, I am now capable of reading over 1,000 pages.

During the quarantine period, I read a french novel called "Les Miserables", a unique world class classic by Victor Hugo first published in 1862 in France. It is a very old historical novel and considered one of the greatest novels of the 19th century. It suits all forms of literature. In the book, Jean Valjean after spending 19 years in prison for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving family is finally released, but his past keeps haunting him. The character "Jean Valjean" is the hero of the show. His humanity and compassion is most considerable. Due to not being able to get a shelter for the night, he goes for another theft for the silverware from the priest. However, he fails and the priest gives him the silverware as a present. Afterwards, he repents under the name of M. Madeleine with the silverware the priest gifted and starts up a factory and brings prosperity to the town of Montreuil.

Time passes and Valjean becomes a wealthy mayor in the town, Javert an inspector finds him and grows suspicious. The rest of the novel is set in Paris, where Jean assumes a number of identities to avoid arrest fulfilling a promise to her dying mother Fantine. He then rescues a girl called Cosette from an evil family and becomes her guardian. Eventually, when Cosette is all grown up, he left her in a safe place so that she may have a more normal life.

Jean has fought with the sewer system of Paris and tried to get an equal lifestyle for women of France so they can live freely and safely. In his entire life, he followed the bishop's teachings and became a good man and soon after the wedding of Cosette and Marius (a young lawyer), Jean himself was on the deathbed.

I have a collection of my favorite quotes from this novel and I would like to share a few with all of you.

"Let others rise to take our place, until the earth is free" by Jean Valjean
Elaboration: Let the politicians kill the innocent souls till the earth is free from good people.

"Do you hear the people sing?" by Gavroche (a street child)
Elaboration: Do you politicians hear the innocents speaking for their rights?

"To love another person is to see the face of God." by Jean Valjean
Elaboration: To purely love someone is like meeting God.
Because people purely love their creator.

The novel is mainly about how one person started the revolution and fought for the justice of innocent people and everyone joined together. This book well explained the power of unity and the power of speech. I think in today's world, injustice still exists and this novel may empower people to work together to bring a change. The novel consists of over 1,500 pages and not everyone is a fan of reading, so I would like to recommend the movie version of "Les Miserables" to them. The movie has a big plot and high emotion which are entirely communicated in songs. My favorite song out of all songs is "Do you hear the people sing", that one song is enough to voice the anger and frustrations of the nation's people. Both the movie and the novel are successful projects. The movie is appropriate for all age groups. This novel is a great piece and truly a life changer.

My goal for the coming year is to at least make a small change in the society and keep climbing up on the ladder of reading. Reading has completely transformed my personality and it has made me into a more motivated and calm person than I was before. You are what you consume. It's beautiful, when someone decides to embark on the literature journey. They are indubitably supplying their brains with immense knowledge. They are filling the void with wonderful energy clouds. The more books you consume, the more you are exposed to different ideologies, syntax, words, plans, history, biographies, success stories, moral lessons, wisdom, experience and knowledge. It is a great loss to not indulge in the fascinating capabilities of the mind to consume and produce. There is correlation between the number of books a person has read and their creative writing abilities. Reading helps you plan and view things from different perspectives. Therefore, what you read, you become.

If you want to start reading, here is some advice. Grab a book which you are interested in and explore your favorite genre. Remember to start with short stories, books with less pages so that you can sit still and read continuously.

Some recommendations for the starters, "Dork Diaries" by Rachel Renee and "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" by Jeff Kinney are very relatable to schooler's daily school life and are some very interesting books that can break the boredom. What are you waiting for? It is never too late to start reading.

Comments

- Student introduces a great fiction and is able to document her experience with reading clearly.
- Can see how reading affects the contestant since her childhood.
- Skillfully chosen and integrated materials read to engage readers.

作品排名不分先後，以獲獎者姓名排序。
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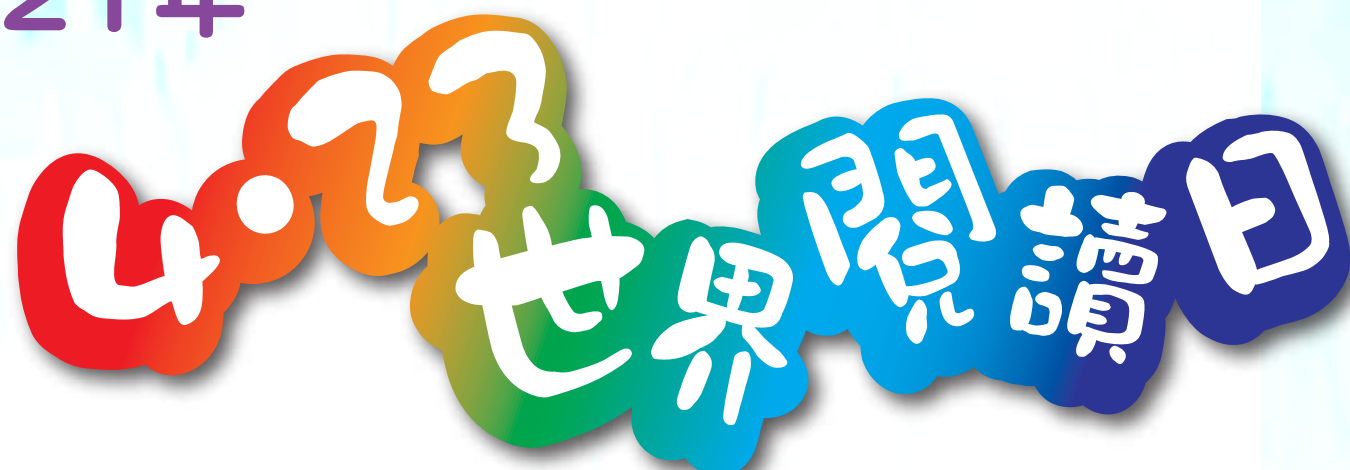
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Senior Secondary

LEUNG Wing Yu

Shau Kei Wan Government Secondary School

Topic New Frontiers of Reading: From Self-Recognition to Success

'Life is difficult, yet it is a fantastic gift'. This is my motto to push me towards my goal. Now, as a senior secondary student, I always have a question for myself: What is the meaning of a perfect life? How can I have such life? Through reading, I finally get the answers. Since I was 13, I started asking myself the above questions. Instead of searching the Internet, I prefer finding these answers for my life questions through reading. Books often encourage me to think critically, as they stimulate reflection on life. Furthermore, some stories do strike a chord with me. They resonate with me and my world view has been changed positively. Through substantial reading, I can learn how to read between the lines in the real world and this life skill greatly helps me to solve day-to-day problems by getting to the gist of an issue, especially when I am handling some torturous life situations. Moreover, great stories often teach me how to act appropriately in my life. Instead of rising to the bait, I should keep calm when someone provokes me if I do not want to make the situation worse.

Every time I walk on the street, I see many young people walking with a sullen face. They work relentlessly hard every day and they are exhausted. I start asking myself: What have they been working for? Many young people feel lost about their future. They are not sure what they are working for and how to succeed. Even middle-aged people, who have lived for more than half-century, still question the purpose of their life. For my part, I would recommend everyone to read the following two books to seek answers for their life questions.

The more pristine my room becomes, the more precise my life goals are. I believe that when I sort things in my room with fastidious care, I am also putting different life goals in order. Therefore, the first book I recommend everyone to read is "Spark Joy: An Illustrated Master Class on the Art of Organising and Tidying Up" written by Marie Kondo. Marie is an influential tidying expert and she is a flat decluttering specialist. She believes in the simple living style and she spreads her philosophy through teaching her students to remove unnecessary belongings from their rooms. Before reading this book, I did not know how to start tidying my room; however, after reading it, I know how to tidy my closets and fold my clothes properly. After witnessing the massive difference of my room after decluttering, I have learned how to live a meaningful life by cherishing what I have, such as curbing my spending and buying things only when I need. This enables me

to save more money as I do not squander it. When I see my room become immaculate, I can concentrate to work and study, and this helps me to be more productive as I can easily find things I need.

'Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it'. Many people may find these words familiar. However, this quote is very important to me as it teaches me how to overcome difficulties when I pursue my life goals. Another book that deeply affects me is "The Road Less Travelled", in which M. Scott Peck told me that the only way for me to live a perfect life is through 'delaying gratification', 'accepting responsibility for my actions', 'self-discipline' and 'making a determined effort at spiritual growth'. As a psychiatrist, Peck emphasises the importance of self-control and self-discipline as they play a key role in solving all problems in everyone's life. This book begins with a famous sentence, 'Life is difficult', which is coincidentally the same as the first part of my motto, 'Life is difficult, yet it is a fantastic gift', and it explores issues like evil, love, mental health and illness, and the writer's spiritual and mental health crises. There is a message which has an emotional effect on me in this book and it is related to discipline. According to Peck, 'Without discipline we can solve nothing. With only some disciplines we can solve only some problems. With total discipline we can solve all problems'. After reading this book, I think I know the secret of a perfect life: I should be disciplined enough to seize opportunities for upward mobility although such opportunities are very narrowing and meagre. When I am still a student, I should plan my career carefully so that I will know what to do in the future. Peck told me that 'discipline' is not only about accepting a code of behaviour, but also about the appreciation of a plethora of opportunities that are made available in front of me. Prioritise my life goals, plan my future strategically when I am still a senior secondary student. Life is difficult, yet it is a fantastic gift to all of us.

From ancient times to the present day, books are important to humans as they instill moral values into them and allow them to know what has been happening. I am grateful for having the chance to delve into these two books as they turn my life around by equipping me with the skills, values and attitudes that I need. Reading at the new frontiers, I know myself better and life is no longer difficult for me.

Comments

- Experience in reading is well documented. Student also learns a great deal of life lessons through reading.
- Detailed examples to support how the writer grew up with reading.

WONG Lok Ching

Sha Tin Methodist College

Topic Self-Awareness

What is the meaning of life? I bet many people have spent their whole life finding the answer. Some travel around the world, some ask the ones they know, some try to meditate, just to figure it out. For me, seeking the meaning of life is a life-long mission and reading is a good solution. By reading others' experience, we can find our life direction more easily.

I always wonder what my value is, and what I am supposed to do when I grow up. And it just makes me feel more perplexed. Until I read a book, "The Afterlife: What Really Happens in the Hereafter", written by Elizabeth Clare Prophet. In this book, we humans are said to have an afterlife, our souls will eventually go to the ether, which is similar to heaven, but before that, we will have to experience reincarnation in order to pay for our karma, we will meet the people we owe and we have to face the unfinished tasks of our past life, so that we can pay off our debts. But how can we pay off our debts? An eye for an eye? If we punch someone in the face, just let him punch us back? However, this is not how it works. To pay for the karma of hatred, we need to learn to love and forgive, love the ones we hate and forgive them. Otherwise, we will never pay off our karma and have the chance to get into the ether. I know this is hard to forgive and love the one who hurt us but isn't it the meaning of life? We learn to love and forgive for our whole life, no matter our families, friends, or enemies.

Maybe we cannot light up the world, but at least we can bring warmth to all the people we know. That will be a difficult lesson throughout our life.

A book, "The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World", written by Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu, teaches us the four steps to forgive, which is admit the wrong, face up to our deep feeling, try to forgive and repair or give up the broken relationship. Only when we learn to forgive, we can set ourselves free. Someone may disagree, they may think only taking revenge can ease their pain, but the truth is taking revenge won't make them feel better, in fact, they are still painful, cause they lock themselves up and use the chains of hatred to tie themselves tightly, they won't feel happy again until they let go from the bottom of their heart, which is to forgive the ones who hurt them. By using the example above, if someone punches you in the face and you punch back, will the pain of your wounds disappear? The answer is no, your pain will not disappear, but forgiving someone does not mean escaping, we can try to talk to him, then decide whether to repair or give up this relationship.

Forgiveness makes our life abundant because we will no longer grapple with something or someone, we let go, it is a liberation of the soul, we set ourselves free, and this is why we should learn to forgive throughout our life.

The other important lesson to learn in our life is to keep upgrading ourselves, "The Courage to Be Disliked: The Japanese Phenomenon That Shows You How to Change Your Life and Achieve Real Happiness", written by Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga, teaches us many philosophies on life. Many of us have made mistakes and we care about them, we regret, we hate ourselves of being careless, we may even stagnate, but this book teaches us to move on, many of us stuck in the past and tried so hard to figure out the answer, but it is meaningless, because it will only make us feel like it is destined to exist, thus we won't make a change, we will never upgrade. So what we need to do is figure out the purpose rather than the reason, we shouldn't feel bad for our experience, instead, we should learn from our experience and find out the purpose of our behaviour, we should also notice that our experience can't define who we are, we are the one to endow them with values. It reminds us to keep going and never stop. The author also mentioned the teleology, which is very interesting. There is an example, which is when we yell, we are not really angry, we get angry because we want to yell. In order to yell without feeling odd, we create a sense of anger. Maybe we can think about the purpose of these behaviours before we take actions, it helps us to get to know ourselves more. There is another message in the book which inspires me a lot. I was scared of being disliked, I did a lot of things I didn't like just to make others happy, I felt pressure to go along with what those around us are saying or doing, but this book tells me the real freedom is to be hated, when we do something we want, there must be someone who doesn't like us, but we don't have the responsibility to cater to others cause we don't live for them. All we need to do is to try our best, this is our business. But when people don't like what we did, this is their business, we can just wave them aside.

Reading helps me figure out what I want to become, life journey is so long and I am sure that in the rest of my life I will face a lot of challenges. Maybe I will feel confused, but reading must help, just like a teacher, telling me what to do. When we see ourselves clearly, we are more confident and more creative. We make sounder decisions, build stronger relationships, and communicate more effectively. We are less likely to lie, cheat, and steal. We are better men who get along with our family, our colleagues, and friends. And maybe I will be a good leader someday.

Comments

- Student shows great passion in reading and is able to learn a lot about herself through new categories.
- Full of self-awareness and reflections on her reading journey.
- She might have already found the answer for "what is the meaning of life?" through reading.
- Well expressed writer's self-reflection on reading.

作品排名不分先後，以獲獎者姓名排序。
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YE Wing Lam

Kowloon True Light School

Topic Turning a New Page of Life

Non-fiction books had not been in my booklist until 2020. In 2020, I started to choose reading non-fiction English books, though reasons behind being an avid reader of them were unknown. A frontier of reading English non-fictions has been explored.

My first self-chosen English non-fiction was still dwelling in my memory. Having the joy of reading English books being found, I went to the school library during some recess time. There were an array of books, including novels and non-fictions, being displayed here. Being attracted by the book cover of the book "Quiet Power: The Secret Strengths of Introverts", I borrowed it from the school library. This book has been attractive to me. Transparently, this book was a conversation between the writer and introvert kids and teens, in search of helping them gain confidence as introverts and providing guidelines to them. When I was a child, when I was asked to describe myself, I always introduced myself as an outgoing kid who loved playing with others. I thought I was an extrovert. In 2020, I found that I was not as extrovert as I think. Maybe more accurately speaking, I thought extroverts meant exactly the same as "outgoing people".

However, in 2020, I found myself wrong. If a word is required to replace the word "introverts", "observers" will be a good alternative. According to the book, introverts are people who observe more than expressing their views. Introverts may not be diffident.

Frankly speaking, this shocked me. Introverts were usually considered as shy people, which was a stereotype. After reading this book, I found that introverts can in fact be good leaders and are essential in reality. Observing more, introverts are often more considerate than extroverts. This book listed out the strengths that introverts actually have, changing how readers think towards introverts. As a reader, I found reading vital to help myself construct a clearer map of living.

This book makes me embark on a journey of reading non-fictions. Reading different types of books is really a process that you widen your horizons and explore your frontier not only in terms of reading but also your mindset.

Aside from this thought-provoking book, there was a book I found interesting. "Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions", written by Edwin Abbott, was a book introduced by my Mathematics teacher. This book allowed my mind to think in different perspectives. People, who were lines, living in Lineland did not understand what the Square who lived in Flatland thought. Square did not understand the logic of the Lines. People often could not understand one another as they were not stepping out of their zones, followed by getting into one another's zone. Pointland, Lineland, Flatland...different people live in different pieces of land, arranged by their thoughts.

Dreams could be big and meaningful. A dream might not be realistic when you were dreaming. Just like Square, who came from Spaceland. In the story, Square wished to pursue everyone in Lineland and Flatland on what Sphere, from the third dimension, told him on what he, Sphere, about the third dimension. Facing no welcome from the crowd, Square decided to write a novel on what he knew. He eventually realised his knowledge had lost in the hierarchical society.

Reality could be important when we were designing our dream. As a teenager, I had to lay out my path to the future. What should I do in the future? If I had a dream which seems unrealistic, should I pursue it like a fool? These questions slipped out of my mind after reading this book. I found that Square and I are alike. I believed the "facts" Sphere told but people around me are like Lines and Points in Flatland and Pointland respectively. People believed what they had known. It seemed to be foolish being like Square. However, Square did not know his "foolish actions" had led to the publishing of this novel, affecting thousands of people. Chasing dreams was a beautiful part in our autobiography. Youth was so beautiful that people at that time had nothing to lose.

As an introvert like the Square, I was so glad that I had read these books. These were books that I read as a start of my journey of reading non-fictions. It was found that I had different thoughts on various big topics in life. For example, after reading the book "Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions", reflection was done. I found myself being like Square. I found that I like making others have the same logic with me. I found the world did not need identical people. Differences were needed, just like an orchestra. An orchestra could not be consisted of violin only. I had found a sort of things and I wanted to modify them.

Exploring the frontier of reading, not only the types of books you read but also your reflection on the book was different. Exploring the frontier of reading would never be too late. If you have questions, reading a book will be a perfect solution to sort it out. If you do not have any questions, reading a book will also be fine to provoke thinking. If you are searching for changes, exploring a new frontier of reading is a good solution. Exploring a new frontier is not difficult, if you want to have a start, you may try reading the books "Quiet Power: The Secret Strengths of Introverts" and "Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions".

Comments

- Student does a lot of self-reflection in reading. Very impressive experience.
- Full of reflection after reading. Appreciated.
 - Content matches with the title.
- Fresh and compelling ideas presented in an organised way.

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