



There Are Monkeys in This Book

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From a talk for
the BYU Reading Council

I used to teach for Los Angeles Unified School District in their home-hospital school, which meant I drove around instructing children with medical problems that kept them out of school. Of course I brought the kids good books. I remember showing Esphyr Slobodkina's *Caps for Sale* to a 6-year-old named Anna, who was recovering from having an eye removed as part of her cancer treatment. She immediately recognized the book. She wanted to hold it. Her face lit up, and she leaned forward to whisper some vital information: "There are *monkeys* in this book."

What books make your face light up? Have you ever looked up at the end of a book and couldn't remember who you are or where you were? Have you ever read a book more than once? Maybe three times or ten times. Has a book ever torn your heart out? Has a book ever made you long to be older, taller, better? Or maybe just to catch the train to Hogwarts? Have the characters in a book and their troubles ever felt real to you? Did your mom or dad read a certain book to you that you've never forgotten? What books are still in your heart?

Benefits in Pleasure

For many, "reading for pleasure" has been replaced by reading for testing. But from an instructional standpoint, reading pleasure is actually reading practice. Just the way we expect a student of piano or tennis or math to practice, we must expect our students to practice reading. Malcolm Gladwell (2008) found it takes 10,000 hours (or 20 years) to become an expert at something. Thus students should be putting in far more than 10 minutes of reading in class every day or so.

First, regular (even extensive) reading practice improves school performance, especially when it comes to the infamous "fourth grade slump," as Jeanne S. Chall (Chall & Jacobs, 1983) calls the drop in reading that hits many students at about that point. That's the time when reading gets harder, as we introduce textbooks and push kids to absorb content in new ways. That, sadly, is when reading tends to stop being fun and become a chore. Ironically, continuing to read for pleasure will make it easier for students to access increasingly difficult textbooks in the fourth through twelfth grades and beyond. And yes, it will help them with those ubiquitous standardized tests.

What's more, regular reading is a powerful tool for teaching kids to write. I'm a published author, and while I've had a few good writing teachers along the way, they're not the ones who really taught me to write. My best writing teachers were the hundreds of books I read as a

child and into my teens and adulthood. Not only do books teach young readers how stories are constructed—plot, character, setting, and theme—but they also teach children how a paragraph is put together. Even more important, they teach young readers how a *sentence* is put together. Think of those thousands and thousands of sentences being read, all modeling how to compose the most vital structure of our written language.

As we recognize benefits, we naturally ask how we can promote reading for pleasure—AKA reading for practice. Here's what not to do: A mother I know assigned her 10-year-old son to read *Moby Dick*. Because it's a classic. When I heard about that, I cringed, and not just because I had personally started reading the book at one point in my life and been bored to tears. No, I wondered whether this boy's burgeoning interest in reading could survive his being forced to slog through something so clearly inappropriate for his age and personal interests. What next, *Anna Karenina*?

The Kid-Book Match

If kids are going to get the practice they need, they must *like* reading. And *that* will happen only if we match the right book to the right child.

Kinds and interests. I recently polled a group of 16 kids at a summer writing camp about their favorite books. A week later I polled another 10 kids at an informal author's visit. They mostly named books like the *Fablehaven* and *Harry Potter* series and, for the older kids, the *Hunger Games* books. I did hear a few *Anne of Green Gables* and some dragon books. One girl staunchly listed a couple of contemporary realism titles. A younger girl liked the *Magic Tree House* series. You will find that most kids, and in fact most readers, are fans of (1) sci-fi/fantasy or (2) contemporary realism, historical fiction, and nonfiction. Even the little omnivores tend to lean more one way than another. It's important for you to find out which of the two directions your children or students are leaning.

Many boys are drawn to nonfiction. You may have heard talk about boys who are reluctant

readers and the importance of meeting their needs. You've surely noticed that boys are often outside playing sports or inside playing video games. These activities create fierce competition for reading, which can seem passive by contrast. Another issue is that there's such a big push for fiction in schools that boys who aren't sci-fi/fantasy fans may not know about the availability of appealing nonfiction and action or sports fiction. Sports and science magazines and books like the *Eyewitness* series can be very satisfying to this group. You can also try books such as *Grossology*. These are disgusting but fascinating—and they're really just science in disguise.

Levels. Readers fall along a range of motivation. We don't usually worry about avid readers, and with good reason. But even they can benefit from being introduced to new authors, titles, and series. One of my nieces simply read the *Twilight* books over and over until I introduced her to Sarah Dessen's books and other YA options.

At the other end of the spectrum we get reluctant readers. A lot of time is cheerfully, hopefully wasted on trying to get them to read at all. This time tends to be wasted because, even with all our good intentions, we often try to force these kids to read books that are a little or a lot too hard for them. Let reluctant readers choose simpler books! Not boring ones, simpler ones. It's easy to overshoot on the reading level. Don't forget that kids need to know 95% of the words on a page to be able to read independently. Not 70. Not 80. But 95. So please, dial it down. A tactic that also helps is to read together: "I'll read the right-hand pages, and you read the left-hand ones. If you get stuck on a big word, just tell me and I'll help you."

A secret weapon to use with reluctant and less interested readers is graphic novels. Once I was talking to a teacher named Lydia in the resource room, and she told me her worries about her own daughter, a 10-year-old who was struggling in school and basically hated reading. I grabbed one of Jennifer and Matthew Holms' *Babymouse* graphic novels off the shelf and said, "Try this." My friend made a face and said that it wasn't a real book. "Trust me," I told her. So she gave it a

shot—and came back ecstatic. “She loves them!” Lydia said. “She’s never even *liked* a book before!” I’ve had similar results with giving Jarrett Krosoczka’s *Lunch Lady* books to second-grade boys (and some first graders). Graphic novels, in addition to their inherent value as stories, are less intimidating than regular prose books and act as a great steppingstone into reading. They do this by calming down kids who don’t trust books to be kind to them.

Of course the majority of kids fall somewhere in the middle of this spectrum. They may enjoy a good book every so often, but they don’t seek out books. They can usually find something to do other than reading, such as texting. I see this group as being at high risk when it comes to reading because the potential is there, but it’s just not happening. So the crippling effects, while they are more subtle than those of reluctant readers, are nonetheless real. Such kids read enough to keep teachers off their backs, but their general apathy about reading is a problem for our society and its hopes.

Only the Best

What you do when you give children books is *define* the idea of a book. Let that definition be wonderful!

Boring? Confusing? Kids sometimes want to read the dreck known as TV and movie tie-ins. They do need to choose what they read, but keep your eye on the prize: Provide kids with the best books you possibly can. One mother told me that she just buys her kids books at the thrift store so she doesn’t have to deal with library due dates and fines. I was not happy to hear this. I’ve seen the selection at thrift stores, and it isn’t outstanding. Don’t define books for your children as “boring” or “low quality.”

I once used a reading program with first graders that came with a set of little phonics-based books. I took one look and refused to use them. Somebody had decided to allow *no* sight words in those things. None. Unfortunately, this decision resulted in books that didn’t even make sense to me, let alone to my students, who were English language learners. “But those are just for decoding practice,” the teacher next door said. “No,” I told her. “When we hand these to

beginning readers, we’re telling them that this is what a book *is*, this strange, unpleasant, incomprehensible little thing.” They were terrible representatives of their species.

Now if you’re not sure what books are great, read some of the publications for librarians and booksellers. For example, I take the *Horn Book* to keep current.

Whose classics? Even some of the Newbery Award books, especially the older ones, can be stodgy. And while I personally love *Charlotte’s Web*, I remember giving it to an athletic fourth-grade girl who said plaintively, “I’m sorry, Ms. Coombs, but it’s kind of boring. Do you have another one like *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*?” Roald Dahl’s books are pretty timeless.

There’s a term they’ve been using in children’s book publishing for the past 10–15 years: *quiet*. A quiet book may work for the avid reader and for the quiet child, but it can feel draggy to many of today’s children. Sure, you can do some read-alouds with the most striking of these books, but don’t hand them out for individual reading except to those children who truly have the interest and personality to match. I just heard about a short summer reading list that included *Number the Stars*, *Trumpet of the Swans*, and others like them. No choices given: just read these. They may be admirable books, but they are not destined to make every kid in the class a more enthusiastic reader. They’re an especially poor selection for most boys. In general, fast-paced is a better idea for today’s kids. It’s one of the reasons for the popularity of Rick Riordan’s *The Lightning Thief* and other adventures of Percy Jackson.

Love them, share them. If you don’t love books, you’re in real trouble. It’s like those celebrities who used to pitch soft drinks they never touched in real life. They are now required to use those products—and so are you. Be a reader. Live the dream. Your missionary zeal will shine as you share your love of the printed page (or Kindle) with your students. I once had a first grade student write in her daily journal, “Ms. Coombs doesn’t just like books. She *loves* books.” I read that particular class the best books I could possibly find every day after

lunch. Filet mignon, not hamburger. I bought a wildly cool classroom library and kept the books in baskets on my students' desk clusters, rotating the baskets every week. I made books seem like the best thing in the universe. It wasn't too hard because I'm a believer. The next year a baffled second grade teacher approached me and said, "I don't get it. Our class had a scheduling conflict, and we had to choose between going to the computer lab and the library. The kids who were in your class last year banded together and said, 'Let's go to the library! It's way more fun!'"

Matchmaking

Help children find the books that will enthrall them and sing in their hearts for years to come. It's not quite as hard as it sounds.

Find. First, find out what books kids have liked best in the past. Don't worry if these are picture books. If students can't think of any, ask them what movies and TV shows they like. Humor? Action? Horror? Is this child mostly a sci-fi/fantasy fan, or perhaps a reader of contemporary fiction, historical fiction, and nonfiction?

Do your homework—or find a librarian to help you. You can google lists of good books in specific genres. Certain bloggers specialize in children's books, usually librarians or teachers (e.g., Watch. Connect. Read., or A Fuse #8 Production, or Jen Robinson's Book Page). Find out which books are popular with kids right now. Take a poll of your class or even of your school. What books do children tell each other about?

Introduce. When you're ready, give students a pitch and some choices. I always try to hand a child six books I think she will like, six books that fit her profile. I tell my student a little about each book or just have her read the jacket copy of each one. Then I encourage her to take the two or three she likes best and try them out. Not just one. "Read a little of each one and see how it goes." The message is "*See how it is with books? You have options. You have opportunities!*"

Engage. Don't forget the follow-up. "What happened?" It's like gossip. "What did [main

character's name] do since we last talked? Did he solve that problem with his friend or make things worse?" I don't mean *quiz* the young reader; I mean take a sincere interest in the events of the book—whether you've read it or not. Let students tell you, or at least tell their book groups, what's going on in their books. What's the scoop? This is just plain fun, and it makes the books matter more. It gives them heft and presence in children's lives.

Try some of these. Now I can't leave you without some recommendations. Here are a few more secret weapons—books that grab a lot of kids. Along with the *Lunch Lady* books, a good pick for first and second grade boys is the *Dragonbreath* series. Then hit the second- and third-grade boys with *Captain Underpants*. For boys ages 9 to 13, the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series is usually a winner. Second and third graders who are less fantasy inclined may also get hooked on the *Magic Tree House* books (more historical fiction than fantasy) and the *Boxcar Children*. And yes, the *Goosebumps* series is still a real draw for young fans of the shivers.

Roald Dahl's books are also beloved, though they are a little harder to read if kids are struggling. Many upper grade readers love the Harry Potter and Percy Jackson books, while many readers in middle school and high school thrive on the *Hunger Games* trilogy. For reluctant and struggling readers in fourth through ninth grades, I recommend Gordon Korman's adventure series (e.g., *On the Run* and *Island*). See also sports books by Tim Green and Dan Gutman, though these aren't quite as easy to read.

Then there are a myriad of titles and series that are not as well known, but have great appeal for individual children. For example, I was finally able to hook my cousin's fifth-grade son on a book called *The Fourth Stall*. And I just loaned a 10-year-old girl *Ella Enchanted*.

You can do it. Give the right book to the right child, and watch the magic.

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Kate Coombs received the 2013 Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award for her book Water Sings Blue. Her other books include The Runaway Princess, The Runaway Dragon, The Secret Keeper, Hans my Hedgehog, and Goodnight Mr. Darcy. Her seventh book, The Tooth Fairy Wars, is due out in July. She lives in Utah, where she works as a curriculum developer.

A group of scientists placed 5 monkeys in a cage and in the middle, a ladder with bananas on the top. Every time a monkey went up the ladder, the scientists soaked the rest of the monkeys with cold water. After a while, every time a monkey went up the ladder, the others beat up the one on the ladder. After some time, no monkey dare[d] to go up the ladder regardless of the temptation.Â Given that there seems to be no evidence anywhere of this experiment ever actually taking place, that all trails of references eventually lead to the claim in this book, and that this is the earliest available mention of the experiment, until further evidence becomes available the most reasonable conclusion is that C. K. Prahalad or Gary Hamel made up the experiment for their. book. Riddle: There are two monkeys on a tree and one jumps off. Why does the other monkey jump too?Â 100 best riddles book. Buy now! About | Contact | Archives | Blog | Terms | Content Policy | Privacy Policy Â© Riddles.com 2020. âœFirst published in 1992, There Were Monkeys in My Kitchen won the Mr. Christie Award for Best Canadian Childrenâ€™s book. With hilarious new illustrations by Sydney Smith and Sheree Fitchâ€™s zany rhymes, this edition will introduce the bestselling book to a whole new generation.â€ I was delighted with this book, but Steven, at three, not so much. He liked the rhymes which are catchy and change meter often. But some of the terms went too far over his head. Monkeys of every kind in every room: gorillas âœFirst published in 1992, There Were Monkeys in My Kitchen won the Mr. Christie Award for Best Ca There aren't seven monkeys in the tree. 2 is there a fish in the water? There isn't a fish in the water .3 is tâ€|Â 3- There is one crocodile. 4- There are two boys in the classroom. 5- There are five erasers on the floor. 6- There is a bird flying in the air. 7- There are ten ants in the wall. 8- There is a new teacher in school. 1. Ver respuesta. 1. There are three monkeys on the picture. 2. There are some intresting stories in this book. 3. There are fifteen boys and thirteen girls in our class.Â There aren't some interesting srories on the book. 3. Are there fifteen boys and thirteen girls on our class? There aren't fifteen boys and thirteen girls on our class.