

READ

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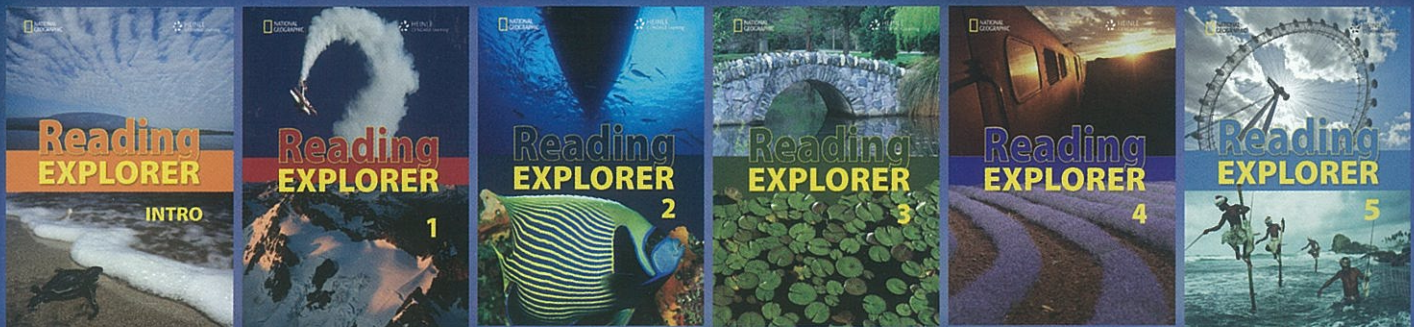


In This Issue:

Shaheena Fazaldin, Abeer Obaid AL Yammahi, Erin Ganju, Pamela Omokolo Awouri, Charlie Higson, Rashid Ahmad Saeed Baomran, Alicia Salaz, Peter Viney, Nick Moore, Helena Frith Powell, Louise Ragan, Maryam Al Ali, Renad Qubbaj, Marion Engin, Paul Nation, Ghassoub Mustafa, Rob Hill, Khalifa Ishaq Ibrahim, Caroline Brandt, Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Fiodhna Gardner-Hyland, David Hill, Tom Le Seelleur, Jackie McAvoy, Abdulrahman Goin, Isobel Abulhoul.

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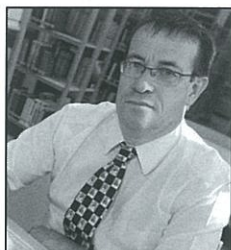
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Editorial

Welcome to issue three. The important factor in encouraging reading is to find books, magazines, newspapers, journals, articles or stories that target the interests of young people and capture their imagination. Studies have shown that students who experience reading in an enjoyable way are more likely to become lifelong readers. A home environment in which reading is visible and celebrated can nurture a positive attitude towards reading, resulting in increased motivation and engagement. The same can be said about a school, library, university or workplace. Reading role models play an important part in attracting new readers. One sad fact remains though in this world in which we share: one fifth of the population will not be able to read these words for they lack the ability to read. The impact on an individual who is illiterate is quite profound. If you cannot read you are more likely to not have a job, not be married nor have any children and may live in overcrowded housing. It is imperative therefore to get the message across to students and children that reading can open doors to universities, jobs and success. We hope you enjoy all of our articles which promote literacy, encourage teachers and parents to promote reading and the many ideas and projects that could be implemented where you work, where you live or where you relax. A big thank you to all our sponsors and writers without who this publication would not have been possible. A special thank you also to *Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi* for allowing us to reproduce her inspiring article from issue one.

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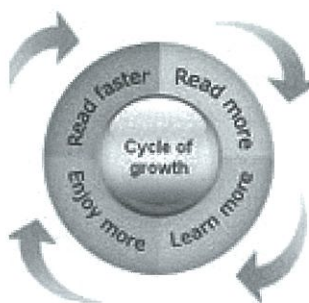
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Reading Champions

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Emirates Airlines Festival of Literature
National Geographic/Heinle Cengage Learning
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Issue Four: If you would like to write an article for our next issue please contact:

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Dr. Fíodhna Gardiner-Hyland was a Teacher Education Consultant, based in the U.A.E. and the Chair of the TESOL Arabia Young Learners' Special Interest Group (SIG) www.interactinclass.com & www.yl-sig.com until August 2011. Since then she has been working at the University of Limerick, Eire.



Fíodhna Gardiner-Hyland
University of Limerick
Eire

10 ways to encourage beginning reading in an Emirati home

Introduction:

Parents worldwide play a significant role in the development of their children's reading (Trelease, 2006). Yet, the fostering of home reading practices seems to be a challenge in both the United Arab Emirates and wider Arab world (Mograby, 1999; Al Tanejji, 2001; Taha-Thomure, 2003; Hyland, 2003.). Learning to read takes practice; more practice than children get during the school day. **Schools that genuinely want to create readers can't do it without parental involvement.** As teachers in the UAE, we need to think of how we can ensure Arabic parents feel able enough to help at home, especially when much of their children's reading is in a foreign language. Providing them with ideas that are manageable and stimulating is a good starting point. This article makes ten simple suggestions on how to encourage Emirati parents to get involved in their child's literacy at home.

1 Create a print-rich environment

Keep a wide selection of reading materials – books, magazines and newspapers – and create a print-rich environment at home. Low shelves that children can reach easily, or specially decorated boxes close to somewhere comfortable to sit will encourage children into the habit of exploring books by themselves. Point out letter-sound relationships to children on labels, boxes and signs. Use a variety of everyday situations to develop children's reading – shopping, traveling, visiting etc. Be aware of your child's reading interests and try to find books that will be engaging with captivating pictures. Get a subscription in his or her name to an age-appropriate magazine. When relatives and others ask for gift ideas, suggest books or bookstore gift certificates.

2 Make reading a ritual

Make reading a habit for bedtime, after lunch, or after naptime. Having a daily reading routine stimulates a child's reading development and also fuels a close relationship between parent and child. The chances are that this new reading habit will become a popular family affair. Not only does regular reading make little ones feel secure and loved, but they also learn pre-reading skills and begin to recognize letters and words.

3 Discover the joy of reading books together

While you read together, adjust your reading speed to the

child's pace. As the child gains fluency and confidence in reading, gradually drop out of the reading. Discuss and make comments on the story during, and at the end of the reading. Encourage prediction of story events. Remember that the story does not have to be completed in one sitting. An older brother or sister, relative or friend could also be encouraged to participate in reading together. The individual attention, physical closeness and feeling of security will all contribute to the child's feelings about books.

4 Engage in Partnered Reading

Read the opening sentence aloud, pause and allow the child to read the second sentence. Continue reading alternate lines, paragraph or pages until the story is completed. Comments, opinions and reactions during the story should be encouraged. Let the child see the connection between the written and the spoken word, by running a finger under the words they are reading.

5 Use the Pause, Prompt & Praise technique

Pause to give your child sufficient time to try to read the word by himself/herself. Prompt if your child is unable to read the word. Use the picture to give hints. Rhyme or sound out the word. Connect it to something your child already knows. Praise your child for his/her efforts, regardless of whether he/she 'gets' the word or not.

6 Read-it again!

The magic of read-it again is a key feature of reading together with young children. While adults will probably get bored reading and rereading the same handful of books night after night, a child loves the predictability of these familiar books. These are the books the child will memorize and these are likely to be the first books the child will read all by himself. Show enthusiasm as you re-read your child's favourite story, whether it is in English or Arabic.

7 Recite rhymes, poems and songs

When reciting rhymes, jingles and simple songs either in English or Arabic, encourage children to repeat them, until they know them by heart e.g. 'Twinke, twinkle, little star' (use pictures, objects or actions as memory-joggers). The rhythm of the poem or song will help children to remember the words. Then show them the *words in print* as this will help them to understand the way in which the written word represents the sung or spoken word. Finally encourage children to perform.

8 Play word games

Word games can provide a relaxed and informal learning situation, free from tension and anxiety. Playing with words is fun and promotes the idea that learning to read is enjoyable. Games include 'I spy with my little eye', 'how many words can you think of that sound like the word...?', 'complete the sentence from the story', 'true or false cards', 'spot the odd word out', 'word bingo' and 'word snap'. Magnetic letters which stick to the refrigerator are easy to move around and children can feel the different letter shapes with their hands, thus helping them to distinguish each letter and make new words.

9 Visit the library

Once children can read by themselves they still need continued support and encouragement if they are to develop into keen readers, especially in a foreign language. One way of tempting children into reading is to make a routine visit to the local library. While **libraries** are still a relatively new concept in the UAE, two libraries to explore are 'The Cultural Foundation Library', Abu Dhabi and 'The Old Library', Dubai Community Theatre and Arts Center (DUCTAC) complex, Mall of the Emirates, Sheikh Zayed Rd, Dubai. (For more details visit <http://www.theoldlibrary.ae/index.htm>.) Of particular note is the reading session for pre-school children which is conducted in the Old Library every Sunday morning. Ensure to go when you are not in a rush, so that your child has lots of time to explore the wonderful world of books. Choosing from a wide range of books, without the pressure of buying, gives children more freedom to experiment and therefore to become more discriminating. Ask the librarian to explain how to use the catalogue system if necessary, so that together you can find books by a particular author or on a particular topic.

10 Make reading fun

Make reading fun by discussing exciting incidents, funny characters, or adding to the story itself. Dramatize the story where possible, using song, mine, puppets or props. Purchase, make or take on loan from school a storysack (Griffiths, 2001). This is a large cloth bag containing a storybook with supporting materials, such as puppets, soft toys of the main characters and a game to stimulate reading/language skills. Make the story as personal as possible by including your child, your family or pet in the story. Don't persist with a book that is uninteresting. Make the reading session short and show your own enjoyment! For commercially produced Storysacks, as well as tips on how to use the sacks visit: <http://www.storysack.com/>.

Conclusion:

The move toward a home reading culture among Emirati families is not likely to be an easy one. Providing information leaflets on how to read with their child at home and offering helpful suggestions, such as the ten tips outlined in this article, along with more extensive development courses to parents will be the first steps in a journey that requires the nourishing conditions to support the encouragement of reading in an Arabic home. By reading to their child, reading with their child, and listening to their child read, by modeling good reading behaviours and providing appropriate literacy activities for their child, parents can give their child the gift of literacy which is paramount in meeting the challenges he or she will face in the future. Few countries in the world have experienced the development seen in the UAE over the past 30 years; it remains to be seen how that progress will help foster a literate and literary population. Perhaps the current generation will begin to develop the habit of reading to their children at home and promote the educational values that will sustain future generations.

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Talk To Your Baby - quick tips

Sharing books with your baby

Sharing books is a wonderful way to help your child learn to talk, and it's the ideal opportunity to share a cuddle at the same time.

- Find a quiet place. Turn off the TV or radio so there are no distractions.
- As well as reading the story, talk about the pictures. If there's a picture of a dog, talk about a dog that you know.
- Give your child time to respond to your chatter.
- Don't put any pressure on your child to name the pictures, but if she copies your words, praise her and say the word again for her.
- Visit your library for different books – it's free to join. Don't worry if books get damaged; libraries understand that this sometimes happens.
- Don't read for too long. Young children get bored quickly so little and often is best.
- Let other grown-ups – grandparents, carers and older brothers and sisters – join in too.
- It's good to share favourite books again and again. Repetition helps children to understand and remember the language they hear.
- Remember, you're not teaching your child to read. You learn to talk a long time before you learn to read, and book sharing is a wonderful way to help your child's language development.



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مشاركة طفلك في قراءة الكتب

مشاركة طفلك في قراءة الكتب هي طريقة ممتازة وممتعة لمساعدة طفلك على تعلم الكلام، وهي فرصة مثالية ليحضن أحدهم الآخر في نفس الوقت.

- فتنش عن مكان هادئ. أغلق جهاز التلفزيون والراديو للتخلص من أي تشويش.
- تكلم عن الصور التي تشاهدها إضافة إلى قراءة القصة إذا كانت الصورة لكلمة فتكلم عن كلب كلاكما يعرفه.
- اسمح لطفلك بالوقت الكافي ليستجيب إلى ثرثرتك.
- يجب عدم الإلحاح على طفلك لأن يقوم بتسمية ما في الصورة، ولكن إذا قام الطفل بمحاكاة الكلمة التي تلفظونها أنتي قدمي له الثناء وكرري تلفظ الكلمة ليستفيد من ذلك.
- قم بزيارة المكتبة العامة لاستعارة كتب مختلفة – إن الانضمام إلى عضوية المكتبة مجاني. لا تقلق إذا تلف الكتاب الذي تستعيره؛ لأن المكتبات تفهم بأن ذلك يحصل في بعض الأحيان.
- لا تقرأ لمدة أطول من اللازم. لأن الأطفال الصغار سرعان ما يسأموا، ومن الأفضل أن تقرأ لفترات قصيرة ولكن مرات عديدة متكررة.
- دع الكبار الآخرين يساهموا كذلك في القراءة. مثلاً، الأجداد والجدات، المعتنين، الأشقاء والشقيقات الأكبر سناً.
- من المستحسن مشاركة طفلك في قراءة الكتب مرات عديدة ومتكررة. التكرار يساعد الطفل على فهم وتذكر اللغة التي يسمعونها.
- تذكر بأنك لا تقوم بتعليم طفلك على القراءة. فالطفل يتعلم الكلام مدة طويلة قبل أن يتعلم القراءة، و مشاركة طفلك في قراءة الكتب هي طريقة بديعة للمساعدة في تطوير لغة طفلك.

Quick tips may be photocopied. For more information visit www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk
Talk To Your Baby is an initiative of the National Literacy Trust.

Charlie Higson is an author, actor, comedian, radio presenter, (former) singer, and television producer, writer and director. He is a well-known celebrity in the U.K, thanks to his comedy creations for Harry Enfield and The Fast Show. Charlie created the series of Young Bond books, based on James Bond's formative years at the exclusive school, Eton, and the third book in his teenage Zombie series is published by Puffin in September 2011. Charlie Higson was one of the authors invited to the 2011 Emirates Airlines International Festival of Literature in Dubai, U.A.E.



Charlie Higson

Author
UK

Reading Champion

What memories do you have of reading & being read to as a child?

My mum used to read to me. I don't remember my dad reading. We had a very conventional set up. Dad commuted to work and mum stayed at home to look after us kids. It was very comforting, being read to, my mum didn't do loads of silly voices, it was just her voice, reading to me, and that was very comforting as a child.

Can you name a book that you particularly liked as a child?

I was, and still am, a big fan of *The Cat In The Hat Comes Back*, by Dr Seuss. I love the language, and the pictures, but what I love most about it is the idea that these poor kids have been left alone in the house and they let in this anarchic *adult* presence that they have to try and deal with. I nicked the idea for my own book *Monstroso*, and of course, the theme of kids trying to deal with life without the help of adults is central to my new horror series, *the Enemy*.

What do you read with your children?

I have just stopped reading to my youngest of three, after 18 years of bedtime stories. Eventually they want to read for themselves. We read all the modern classics together, from *Harry Potter* to *Philip Pullman*, plus of course, *Dr Seuss* when they were younger. They all got into the Greek myths, which was good as I loved them as a child (still do). I also really

enjoyed reading old Professor Branestawm books to them (Norman Hunter), which I had read as a kid, they're still very funny. Reading to your kids means they can access books that would otherwise be too difficult for them.

What do you enjoy reading for yourself? What are you reading at the moment?

I love genre fiction – crime books and historical fiction mostly, a bit of science fiction, and quite a lot of kids books – I have to keep up with the opposition! I've been working my way through the complete works of *Bernard Cornwell* for instance. At the moment I am reading *Carte Blanche* the new James Bond novel by *Jeffery Deaver*, which, funnily enough, has a sequence set in Dubai at the very same hotel I stayed in for the Emirates literary festival.

How do you find time for reading? Where do you like to read?

These days I almost exclusively read in bed and on holiday. Which means that books need to be gripping to keep me awake, so literary fiction is right out.

How would you encourage students to read?

Tell them its fun and give them some good books. Although it's hard because there is no one size fits all with books. I know from my own three that a book that one of them loves another will hate.

Louise Ragan worked as a journalist before switching to TEFL to fulfil an ambition to travel. An intended one-year stint abroad has stretched into 16. Her second career has taken her to Turkey and Cyprus and she is now teaching in the Language Centre, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. She is an avid reader.



Louise Ragan
Sultan Qaboos University
Oman

Poetry

by Louise Ragan

This spring semester, I was assigned to teach level 6 students (our top level at SQU) in the English for English Specialists Programme. This seven-week reading course (a two hour double period each week) involves looking at literary texts - short stories, excerpts of novels and plays, fables and famous poems. The students also had a final project, overseen by a different teacher, which included poetry analysis.

Students moving up to level 6 in spring are generally weaker than those who start our Foundation Programme at that level. Added to this is the familiar issue that many of our students do not see reading as something that is done for pleasure! I decided that, if I achieved nothing else on this course, I would aim to show the students the beauty of poetry. I wanted them to appreciate how a poem can make a reader laugh or cry, and how the imagery within poetry can be a painting with words. I wanted them to start reading poetry, in English, for themselves.

So, how would I do this? The students' English skills were such that using original (ungraded) texts would be challenging. And although all Omani students study Arabic poetry in school, they don't all leave with a love of poems.

Then I remembered I had a BBC DVD bought some years earlier - Essential Poems (To Fall in Love With). This was originally a BBC television series and bought together around 100 poems, each filmed as a mini-drama and recited by high calibre actors and actresses. The featured poets range from Shakespeare to Wendy Cope and Emily Dickinson to Roger McGough. And although teachers in the Middle East may be put off by the romantic love appearance of the DVD, the poems actually look at many aspects of love including parental love.

I started by watching the DVD at home, to weed out any poems with unsuitable visual aspects (skimpy clothes, inappropriate physical contact etc). Then came a second viewing to check for

appropriacy of theme/language, and a third to weed out any poems that I thought would be too complex linguistically for my students' level. There was a final check to discount poems that were too short for students to usefully study, or those that didn't have enough visual context within the drama. After all that, I was still left with more than a quarter that I felt were usable.

The first poem I showed to the class was Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 'How Do I Love Thee?' (read beautifully by Sinead Cusack and dramatised as a middle-aged woman en route to a railway station to meet her husband). This is one of the first poems in the in-house course book, and at that stage, I wanted the students to get a sense of rhythm, and a general understanding of the poem's theme before we looked at the language in more detail.

Subsequent poems included "Funeral Blues" by W.H. Auden. The dramatisation of a woman on the way to her husband's funeral, while perhaps not strictly in keeping with the spirit of Auden's original, reduced me to tears when I first watched it (and brought tears to the eyes of some of the students, including the men!). "Nettles" by Vernon Scannell was perhaps one of the most visual in terms of imagery brought to life. This poem uses many military metaphors in its description of a father waging war against the nettles that hurt his three-year-old son. In the short film, we see the child being stung, the "white blisters beaded on his tender skin" and his "watery grin" as he recovers. The stages of the father taking up his billhook, honing its blade and then slashing "in fury with it Till not a nettle in that fierce parade Stood upright any more" are filmed beautifully, as is the subsequent "funeral pyre" of nettles and their inevitable regrowth.

I also used a poem on the DVD that was originally written in

Arabic ("On Marriage", from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran), recited by Christopher Lee. The students were asked to read the Arabic version first, before watching and reading the English translation.

So, what was the verdict of the students? At the end of the course I asked them for their feedback, explaining that they were the first class to use DVD extracts to support the poetry component of the course. They were asked for their comments anonymously to encourage honest opinions.

All the students said they liked the use of the DVD, and all but one (21 of 22) said the clips aided understanding of the poems. I had asked them to expand on how the DVDs had helped, and, as I expected, most students said they had helped them to understand the poems themselves and the vocabulary as well as the rhythm. However, many of the students also commented that they learned intonation and pronunciation. They unanimously said that they had enjoyed the poetry aspect of the course, and many said they would like to study poetry twice a week rather than once.

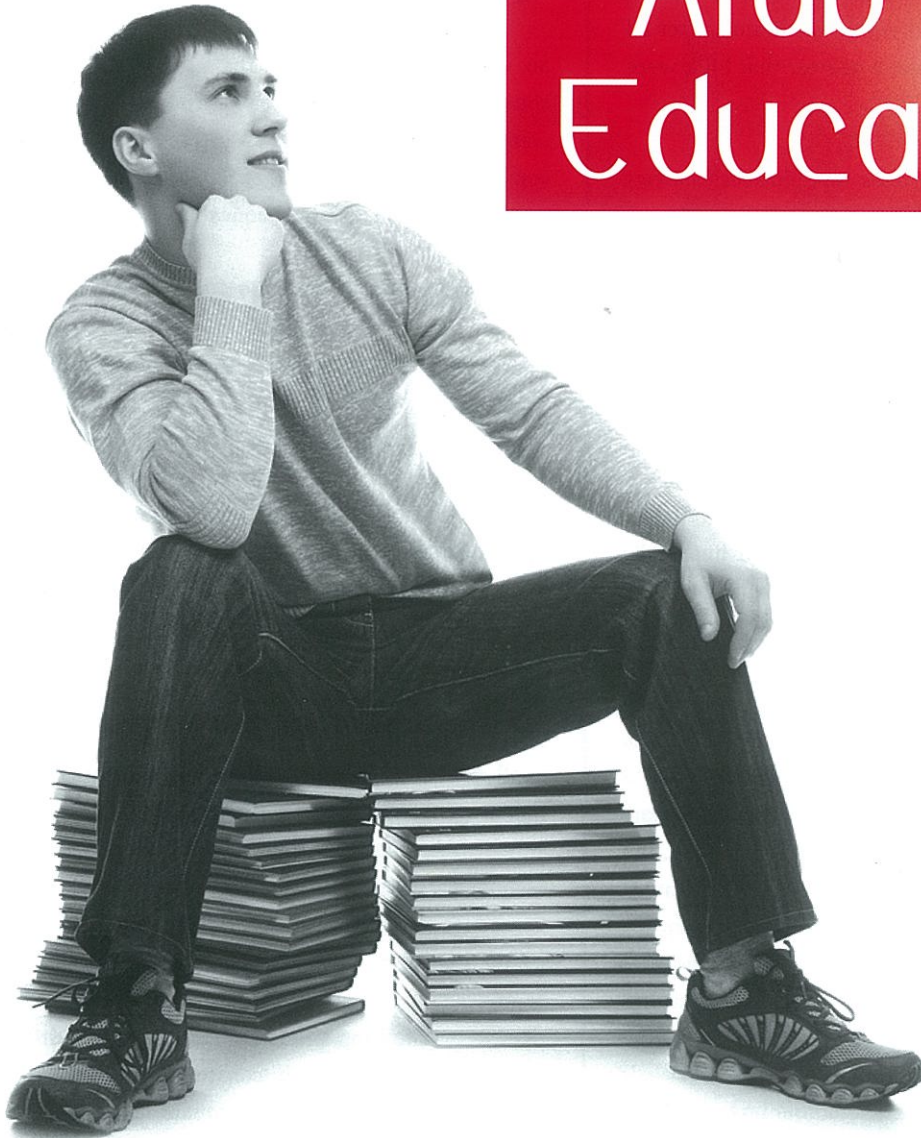
In terms of their work, I saw a steady improvement in the students' ability to produce a simple analysis of the poems we studied. This analysis included their thoughts on the theme, mood, tone, imagery and rhythm. In particular, the visual support of the DVD seemed to improve their ability to focus on imagery within the poems.

I hope my article doesn't sound as though I am working on commission for the BBC! However I did run a quick check on the BBC online shop and found that the DVD is still available, and it's only £2.52. In my constant efforts to make English more exciting and fun for my students, it seems that using this DVD had a positive effect. I'll definitely be using it again.



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The First Extensive Reading World Congress

Extensive Reading: The Magic Carpet to Language Learning

3-6 September 2011

Kyoto, Japan



Organized by The Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) held in cooperation with JERA & the JALT ER SIG.

The Extensive Reading Foundation is a not-for-profit, charitable organization whose purpose is to support and promote extensive reading. (see <http://www.erfoundation.org>). One Foundation initiative is the annual Language Learner Literature Award for the best new works in English. Another is maintaining a bibliography of research on extensive reading. The Foundation is also interested in helping educational institutions set up extensive reading programs through grants that fund the purchase of books and other reading material. Plenary and Featured Speakers

The Extensive Reading Foundation reports that their First Extensive Reading World Congress, held from 3 September to 6 September at Kyoto Sangyo University has been an overwhelming success with more than 400 participants from 20 countries around the world. Participants hailed from the U.K., the U.S., Canada & Mexico, from the Middle East and virtually every country in South and Eastern Asia.

Sponsored by Khalifa University, and representing READ magazine, Tom Le Seilleur attended, participated in, networked, socialized, ate, drank, read, listened, discussed, debated and presented at the conference. He was privileged to attend some outstanding presentations by well known scholars from the fields of education who also promote the idea that reading extensively results in profound learning for students whether they are reading in their own language or learning a foreign language. The conference was attended by over 460 people representing educational institutions from primary school to universities and libraries.

The plenary speakers, and most featured speakers, gave inspiring presentations to packed audiences.

David R Hill (University of Edinburgh and EPER) the guru of extensive reading, challenged the status quo by claiming that extensive is NOT for pleasure. The word pleasure is associated with choice; it is unnecessary and supplementary to an academic context. Hill argued that reading is essential to every syllabus, curriculum, every course. I saw three other plenary speakers.

Richard R Day (founder and Chair of the Extensive Reading Foundation) outlined 10 conditions for extensive programs to prosper.

William Grabe (North Arizona University) outlined how research on reading supports the need for all universities and schools to adopt reading programs and yet he was perplexed by the current lack of reading in education.

Finally, Paul Nation (Victoria University, Wellington and a regular contributor to READ) laid down the premise that reading and vocabulary learning are inextricably linked. If students do not read then they will be lacking in lexis, which will seriously affect their chances of academic success as well as limit their employment opportunities.

All of the presentations were given with good humour, in a relaxed informal environment and there were no ties, nor business suits. This was a conference that concentrated on the issues and not on the presentation or the presenter. The second Extensive Reading World Congress will be held in 2013 and the organizers are looking for hosts. READ invites all potential partners to join it in preparing a bid to hold the congress in the UAE to ensure that extensive reading can spread throughout the region.

By Tom Le Seilleur

Erin is co-founder and CEO of Room to Read, a global nonprofit organization focused on improving literacy and gender equality in education in the developing world. Since 2001, she has led a collaborative effort with Room to Read's in-country teams to design its programs and launches into new countries, as well as managing all day-to-day operations.



Erin Ganju
Room to Read
USA

Can You **Read** This? One in Five People **Cannot**

"Literacy is more than reading and writing – it is about how we communicate as a society. It is about social practices and relations, about knowledge, language and culture."

I left the corporate world 10 years ago to co-found Room to Read, an international nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting literacy and gender equality in education. My corporate work took me to Vietnam at a time when the country was just opening up to the world and to foreign direct investment. I was inspired by the entrepreneurial spirit I saw in the Vietnamese people to pull themselves out of poverty and at the same time disheartened when I saw how many lacked the basic skills or education to really do so. Here we were, as a company, hiring a workforce to operate major factories yet they had barely ever used a telephone, much less a computer. That experience proved beyond question that without education, there is little hope that circumstances will ever change in the developing world.

There is an irrefutable link between literacy and self-empowerment: literacy skills are the foundation for all future learning, and they are paramount in cultivating participation, citizenship and social development. Yet, despite the strides made to eradicate illiteracy, global literacy remains elusive. Today, one in five adults is unable to read or write, and two-thirds of them are women.

Each evening when I tuck my daughter into bed after a day filled with new vocabulary words and first-grade fun, I am

reminded that there will be 67 million children waking up on the other side of the world who will not go to school and will never open a book—putting them on the fast-track to joining the 793 million adults in the world who lack basic literacy skills.

Although this reality can be daunting, it also serves to motivate me. At Room to Read, we believe that education is a hand-up, not a hand-out; that it is a human right. We have seen first-hand that investing in the education of children pays dividends for years to come. Literacy is at the core of all basic education; it has the power to lift families out of poverty in one generation and to change the fate of entire communities in the developing world. Literate parents are more likely to send their children to school; literate people are better able to access educational opportunities; and literate societies are better positioned to achieve gender equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy.

With such compelling reasons for supporting global literacy, why not find your own way to contribute? Visit your local library, read a bedtime story to your children, or donate that box of books you've already read to a charitable organization. Whatever it may be, those of us who were lucky enough to have benefitted from a quality education may want to take a moment to reflect upon how it paved the way for us to achieve our own goals, and what it would have been like to grow up on the other side of that statistic.



Thousands of families are healthier thanks to skilled professionals like Dr. Seuss.

Reading makes us feel good. It makes us smile. Think. Question. You could say it empowers us to be healthier human beings. Room to Read has published millions of original children's books in more than 20 languages. Local authors and illustrators are providing kids throughout Asia and Africa with reading material that's relevant to their lives. Imagine a world where every child learns to read. Then imagine yourself helping us get there. Because when books are in the picture, anyone can turn the page. *Read more at roomtoread.org.*



*Jackie McAvoy is a teacher and author of teaching materials. She has written a series of topic-based readings with lesson plans for Macmillan's teaching website www.onestopenglish.com. All of the lesson plans include tips for teaching and learning reading. Jackie recently co-wrote the beginner level course book *Global for Macmillan E.L.T.* She also writes and records podcasts for teachers and learners of English for www.podcastsinenglish.com. She is now in Thailand where, along with the materials writing, she is a teacher trainer for the British Council in Bangkok.*



Jackie McAvoy
British Council
Thailand

Promoting reading

I have always loved reading. As a child, books took me on adventures to strange, new worlds. They made me laugh, they made me scared and, along the way, they exposed me to new vocabulary, new ideas and a different way of looking at things.

I have taught in a number of countries where reading is less a part of the culture than in the UK. I have been surprised, and disappointed, to learn that some countries don't have fairy tales, or that parents don't read to their children before going to bed. This has helped to explain why the adults in my classrooms weren't very interested in reading themselves, why they didn't buy novels – or newspapers even. It also contributed to making 'reading' as an English language learning skill even more difficult.

Another difficulty to teaching 'reading' is that the fundamental aim of having texts in a course book is to learn a language. In real life we read for pleasure or for information, in the classroom students read to learn. So being faced with a group of students who don't read in their first language, and who see a text simply as a language tool, is a challenge.

This challenge has made me rethink the way I deal with a reading in the classroom. There are two key points I try to address:

1 Engage the students before they read

This doesn't mean pre-teaching vocabulary. It means getting the students to want to read the text. If you think the reading in your course book isn't interesting for your class then don't do it. Find another more appropriate text – from the Internet, magazines, your school library...

Then consider the use of realia to bring the subject to life, questions to arouse interest, quizzes to see how much they

know, predicting and personalizing; get the students involved with the topic. Take information from the text and make true/false questions, take key words and get students to guess what the text is about. Use the headings and any photographs; the more time spent on pre-reading activities the better. If you can motivate your students it makes a huge difference.

2 Use 'real life' responses

Ignore those dull comprehension questions that inevitably go with a course book text! If possible try and make the response to the text reflect real life. Can the students identify between facts and opinions? Can they then agree or disagree with the opinions or correct the facts that they think are wrong? Can they summarise the whole text into one or two sentences? Can they identify the aim of a reading (to entertain, shock, complain...) or the writer's attitude to the topic (indifference, concern, amusement...)? Can they say whether they liked the topic, how they would change the ending, what they would do if they were in that situation, guess what might happen next? Was there something in the text that they thought was funny, or they didn't understand or that made them angry? Perhaps the information in the text can be used to label a diagram, or complete a table. Could they follow up with a letter or email of complaint, write a survey, or make a quiz from the information?

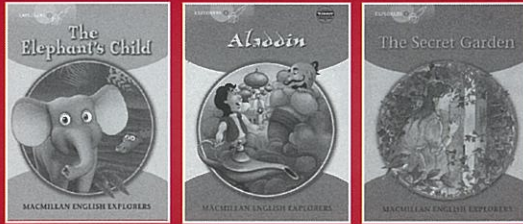
If you want to look more at the language then perhaps the text has speech which can be used for role-playing. Key words or phrases can be removed and students can then discuss why they were in the text. Or students can write their own comprehension questions for each other.

In short you need to bring the text alive, lift it from the page and bring it into the students' lives. It takes time and effort but the results are always rewarding!

Macmillan English Explorers

Macmillan English Explorers form an eight-level reading scheme written specifically for young learners of English.

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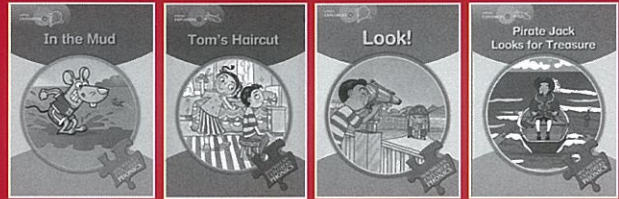


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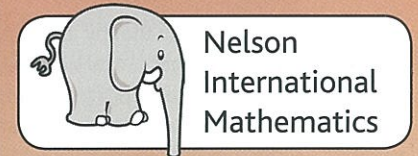


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David Hill taught in Uganda and Malaysia before becoming in 1987 Project Director of the Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading. His services to extensive reading were celebrated recently at the Extensive Reading Foundation's First World Congress when the ERF presented him with the John A Milne Lifetime Achievement Award.



David Hill
Edinburgh University
Scotland

Extensive reading is **NOT** for pleasure!

An article that suggests that extensive reading is not for pleasure must explain two things: why it is NOT for pleasure, and what it IS for. I will do my best!!

Many teachers support extensive reading and organise programmes for their students. Mostly they argue that students should read extensively because they will enjoy it. I think this is a mistake for several reasons. They have no reply to students who say, "If you want me to have pleasure, I can get it much more easily from football or computer games than from extensive reading." They have no reply either to students who say, "Pleasure is not as important as good exam results, so I am not going to spend time on extensive reading." They cannot compete with teachers of all other subjects who say, "I want you to do this exercise or that activity because it is important for your future." By arguing that extensive reading is for pleasure, they make extensive reading an optional activity on the edge of the language syllabus. By making pleasure a goal, they go against nature. Pleasure is not a goal but a by-product. If you aim at pleasure, the thing you do becomes less and less pleasurable. Think of sweets!!

It seems to me, therefore that by arguing that extensive reading is for pleasure, teachers are almost telling students that extensive reading is not important. I am not surprised to hear that they find it so difficult to get their students to read. This is very sad seeing that they work so hard to find interesting books and make them available in class or central libraries.

I am sure they would be much more successful if they explained why extensive reading is so important that students must spend time doing it. This is what I recommend that they should say.

Extensive reading is not something that is only done when learning a foreign language. It is equally important when learning one's mother tongue. Some languages may not have many books, so students may meet extensive reading for the first time when studying a foreign language. But extensive reading is important for both mother tongue and foreign language for the same reasons.

Extensive reading is the best and possibly only way in which a student can develop connections in the brain that enable him to use

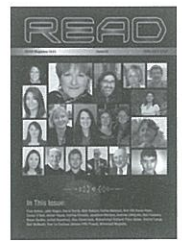
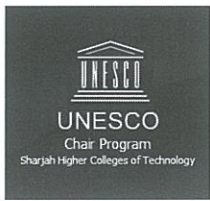
the language automatically and extend mastery over vocabulary and grammar. It is certainly the only way to develop the fluency needed to understand a text and operate in the language at a high level, and to maintain automaticity and fluency.

Extensive reading is the best way to learn about the culture and history of the people who use the language you are learning. It is clear that in order to communicate effectively with Arabic-speaking people it is important to know not only their language but also their cultural background. This includes their religion, literature, architecture, history, landscape, climate, customs and more – all the factors that make one language community different from another. In the case of English, cultural background includes the Greek, Roman and Christian foundations of European civilization and the particular experience of Britain, America or whatever English-speaking community is chosen.

These seem to me powerful enough arguments to support (1) saying to students that they must read, whether they like it or not, both in their own language and in any foreign language they are learning and (2) putting extensive reading in the centre of the syllabus of both mother tongue and foreign language.

Students of English are fortunate that there are a great many excellent series of graded readers that will take them from elementary to advanced levels, and at the moment I am preparing a review of these. Besides asking myself if a text is well written for learners, I am also asking myself if this book tells the student anything about Britain or the USA or any other English-speaking people. Of all current series, the Black Cats published by the Italian company CIDEB give the best information about the historical and cultural background of each story.

Of course I am also asking myself if the stories are interesting. The more interesting they are, the more students will enjoy reading them. So pleasure comes in after all! But that is not why students should read them. They should read them in order to develop language proficiency and to learn about culture and history, both necessary for true communication. And if they are fortunate, they may begin to enjoy reading!



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Renad Qubbaj is the General Director of Tamer institute for Community Education. Ms. Qubbaj joined the Tamer Institute in 2006. In 2009, Tamer were awarded the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, the world's biggest Children's Literature Award.



Renad Qubbaj
Tamer Institute
Palestine

Reading Champion

What memories do you have of reading & being read to as a child?

When I was a young girl, in the mid seventies, the whole situation was different under the occupation. Books of all kinds were forbidden, and we could rarely find books to read. The Israelis knew that books were the key to resilience, and one of the tools towards freedom of thought, so they managed in all ways to prevent Palestinians from owning them. This is why books were invaluable, and having or reading one was a luxury and privilege. I remember that some books I read at that time were very torn and worn, because they were moving around from one person to another, sometimes among hundreds of people, and anyone was considered lucky to have a chance to get to read them. We were very passionate towards

books, and we looked at them as treasure. I remember putting a book under my desk at school to read some lines in the class or in the small breaks between the lessons, because I knew that many others were waiting to read it and that I couldn't keep it forever. I also remember the summer vacations when my uncle used to visit us, coming from Egypt, and that I waited for his visit each year as he used to bring me books as a gift. I still have some of them even after 30 years, as they were the most beloved gift I could have. It was a tough time, but I will never forget the smell of those books and my heartbeat while holding one. Those difficult days made us all appreciate, love and realize the value of books, and I still hold these feelings now, and try to pass them on to my children and the people I work with.

Can you name a book that you particularly liked as a child?

At that time books were limited in numbers and titles, and there were no books targeting young adults, so we used to read adults' books. I mainly loved to read Egyptian detective stories for fun, but as young Palestinian adults, we were all aware of the situation in our country, and understood early that our struggle with the Israelis is a long and difficult one, and that we are defending ourselves and fighting for our existence and our right to live free. This is why we were biased to Palestinian books and writers like Mahmoud Darwish and Ghassan Kanafani, who helped form our identity and shape our personalities as writers of resistance, at the time when the Palestinian cause was the heart of the public concern. I also used to read books and novels of important Arab writers like Najeeb Mahfooth and Taha Hussein. I believe that my readings at a younger age are the reason behind my interest in books as an adult, and I think working at Tamer and publishing for children and young adults was a reaction to being deprived of books as a young Palestinian girl suffering from the Israeli occupation and its restrictions.

What do you read with your children?

I read everything with them, especially my little daughter who is 7 years old. Usually I give them titles to look for, for books I know have very good themes. But I enjoy reading to my little daughter a lot. We read all kinds of books together, Arabic and English children books, and sometimes I even read her some pieces from adults' book to introduce her to the important writers and themes. My work at Tamer has given me the opportunity to have access to a huge number of local, Arab and International books and titles for children and young adults, and I automatically pass them all to my family and children.

What do you enjoy reading for yourself? What are you reading at the moment?

Literature is my favorite, through which I read about history, philosophy and human relations. It is, as I see it, the richest

and most exciting. At the moment I am reading a book about religions in the pre-Islam period, by the Palestinian writer Zakaria Mohammad.

How do you find time for reading? Where do you like to read?

This used to be very difficult when my children were younger, but now I can somehow manage reading in my little free time. The good thing is that my work helps me keep informed of the new developments in children's and young adults' literature, and gives me the pleasure of being part of local development in this sector, as well as charging me with hope and optimism, not only through publishing books, but also through reading them, living in innocence and being involved in new experiences and adventures.

How would you encourage students to read?

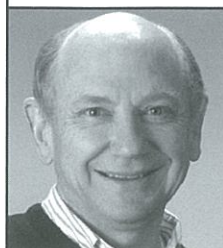
I will share with you Tamer's experience in promoting reading, through providing books of good quality and distributing them to schools, through connecting students to the institute, through providing experience in book discussions in the field, and through including schools in long-term projects.

We have many programs in the institute that target the youth, through which we introduce them to the main objectives of the institute, and include them in the different activities we conduct, especially as the youth teams. As they participate in book discussions, they may also take some texts that the institute has published and transform them into drama performances that might be performed in some occasions that the institute participates in. They also participate in all the campaigns that Tamer conducts within the annual National Reading Campaign, like "Literary Days", "Library Days", "I Donated a Book" and many others. The youth play a major role in the institute's daily life, and many times they are the creators and performers of the activities, as they are the recipients in others.

For more information on tamer please visit <http://www.tamerinst.org>



Paul Nation is professor of Applied Linguistics in the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. He has taught in Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, Finland, and Japan. His specialist interests are language teaching methodology and vocabulary learning. He is a member of ERF.



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Designing reading tasks to maximise vocabulary learning – Part 1

I.S.P. Nation

A well-balanced language course has opportunities for incidental learning and deliberate learning. Incidental learning occurs when learners are reading, writing, listening, or speaking with their attention focused on the message. In spite of the focus on the message, they manage to learn some new words and phrases or become familiar with some unknown or partly known grammatical constructions. Incidental learning can occur through meaning-focused input when the learners are listening or reading, through meaning-focused output when the learners are speaking or writing, or through fluency development activities in any of the four skills.

Most vocabulary learning for native speakers occurs as incidental learning. However, learners of English as a foreign language need extra support in order for incidental learning to occur. This is because foreign language learners do not usually get enough contact with the language and enough contact with language which is at the right level for them for incidental learning to occur. The purpose of this article is to look at how teachers can provide this support through the careful design of activities.

Let us first look in detail at a very effective reading activity to see what conditions for incidental learning it provides.

Vocabulary learning from extensive reading

Extensive reading for foreign language learners involves reading large quantities of material which has been specially written to be at the right vocabulary level for the learners. The books which are most suitable for extensive reading are called graded readers and every major ELT publisher has at least one and often several series of graded readers. For example, Cambridge University Press publishes the Cambridge English Readers which are original texts specially written at several vocabulary levels (see Table 1).

Table 1: Levels of the Cambridge English Readers series

Level	Different words	Approximate length	Example titles
Level 1	400 words	4000 words	Bad love, Blood diamonds
Level 2	800 words	10,000 words	Apollo's gold, Jojo's story
Level 3	1,300 words	15,000 words	The Beast, Two lives
Level 4	1,900 words	20,000 words	Berlin express, Staying together
Level 5	2,800 words	25,000 words	All I want, Tangled web
Level 6	3,800 words	30,000 words	A love for life, Murder maker

For example, in level 2 of the Cambridge English Readers, all the books are written within the vocabulary of 800 words, so that if you know these words you can read the books with no difficulty. Note that the books are quite long, and this gives learners a lot of reading practice at a level which is easy enough for them. The books are written to be enjoyed and the stories are interesting and exciting.

Extensive reading can be carried out in the classroom (and it is best introduced by scheduling regular classroom time for it) or it can be carried out outside of class as a homework activity. The learners choose books which are interesting for them to read at a level which is just beyond their present vocabulary level so that there are some unknown words in the books but not too many. Ideally only around two words out of every 100 running words should be unfamiliar to the learners. The learners then read the books to enjoy the stories and may fill in a brief report form after reading each book, but otherwise they are not required to do any other assessment activities related to the reading. The goal is to do a large amount of enjoyable reading.

How does extensive reading help vocabulary learning?

As learners read they will meet words that they only partly know or that they have not met before. Each meeting provides a small opportunity to learn more about the form, meaning and use of the word within the contexts in which it occurs. After the first meeting with the word, the learners may meet the word again in the book and when they do they have a chance to recall what they learnt from the previous meeting. This recall is probably done subconsciously. Each time a learner meets a word and is able to successfully recall some information from previous meetings, this is called a retrieval. Spaced retrievals help learning. Ideally, learners should read at least one graded reader every week because this allows newly met vocabulary a chance to occur again before the learners have forgotten the previous meeting with it (Nation & Wang, 1999). Vocabulary learning is also helped if each meeting with the word is in some way different from the previous meetings (Joe, 1998). That is, if the word occurs again with a different inflection, in a slightly different grammatical context, in a different meaning context, or in a different collocation. Graded readers naturally provide these conditions. If we look at the occurrences of new words at a particular level in a graded reader (this can be done by running a computer text of the graded reader through a concordance program like AntConc or MonoPro), we find that such words typically occur in different contexts each time they occur. The different contexts help enrich knowledge of the words and make later retrievals easier. Sometimes when a learner meets an unknown word in a graded reader they are not able to guess its meaning from the context clues, and so the learner may look in a dictionary to find the meaning. Looking a word up in a dictionary is a form of deliberate learning and this can make a strong contribution to knowledge of the word.

Graded readers are texts written within a very controlled vocabulary. The main advantage of vocabulary control is that it excludes the many words that are well beyond the learners' present vocabulary level. If a learner tried to read an unsimplified text that was way beyond their proficiency level, they would meet hundreds of words that are unknown to them. Most of these words would only occur once in the text and would therefore act as a barrier to reading without having much chance of being learnt (Nation & Deweerdt, 2001).

So, we can see that extensive reading naturally provides very supportive conditions for incidental vocabulary learning. By reading graded readers, learners meet a manageable number of unknown words in comprehensible contexts. By doing a reasonable amount of reading, they will have the chance to meet these words again and thus will have many opportunities to retrieve knowledge of the words that they have gained from previous meetings with them. They will also meet these words in a variety of contexts which will help enrich their knowledge of these words and increase their retention of them.

How can we maximise the vocabulary learning opportunities provided by extensive reading? The major way to maximise vocabulary learning from extensive reading is by getting the learners to do a lot of extensive reading. Ideally, just under one quarter of the time in a well-balanced language course should be spent doing extensive reading for meaning-focused input and fluency development (Nation & Yamamoto, forthcoming). Vocabulary learning can also be maximized by making sure learners are reading books which are at the right level for them. In addition, vocabulary learning from extensive reading will be helped if the learners combine a little deliberate learning with the incidental learning. That is, when they meet

some new words in their extensive reading, they can put them on word cards for later decontextualised study. Immediately they finish reading a graded reader, learners might like to spend a small amount of time to reflect back on any of the new words that they met during their reading.

Learning conditions

In this description of incidental vocabulary learning from extensive reading we have looked at several conditions which support learning. Firstly, we have the condition of repetition. It is clearly easier to learn something that is met several times than something that is just met once. Although there is no clear cut-off point for the minimum amount of repetitions needed for learning, there is plenty of evidence that the greater the number of repetitions, the more likely learning is to occur (Waring and Takaki, 2003). Nation and Wang (1999) found that it was necessary to read several graded readers at the same level in order to meet all of the new words which were introduced at that level with enough repetitions for these to have a chance of being learnt.

Secondly, we have the condition of retrieval. Having an opportunity to recall something that has been met before strengthens learning. When meeting a word again in a graded reader, retrieval at least involves recognising the form of the word as being at least partly familiar and being able to recall the meaning or part of the meaning that was gained on previous meetings.

Thirdly, we have the condition of creative use (Joe (1998) calls it "generative use"). Creative use can be receptive or productive. Receptive creative use involves meeting a word through listening or reading in new contexts. Productive creative use occurs when a learner produces the word in speaking or writing using it in ways in which the learner has not met it or used it before.

Fourthly, we have the condition of deliberate attention. Deliberate attention means consciously focusing on the language item in order to understand or learn it. Deliberate attention occurs when we look up the word in a dictionary or in a glossary, or when we ask someone about the meaning of the word. As long as this does not interrupt the message-focused activity too much, deliberate attention is a very useful contributor to vocabulary learning.

The second part of this article (in READ Issue #4) will look at a range of message-focused reading activities to see how these conditions of repetition, retrieval, creative use, and deliberate attention can be maximised so that such reading not only provides pleasure and improvement in reading skills, but also contributes to vocabulary growth.

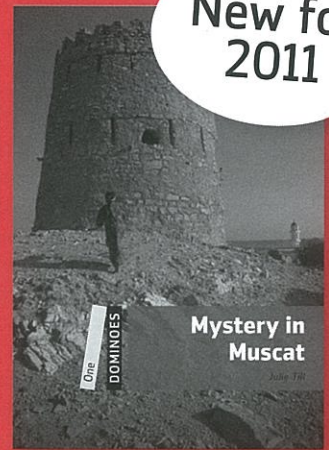
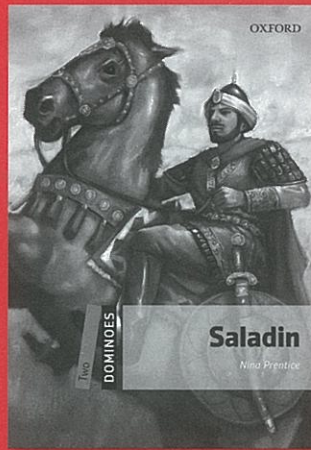
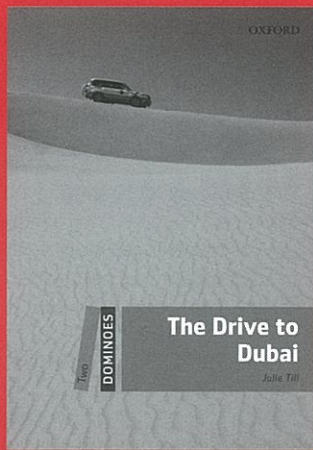
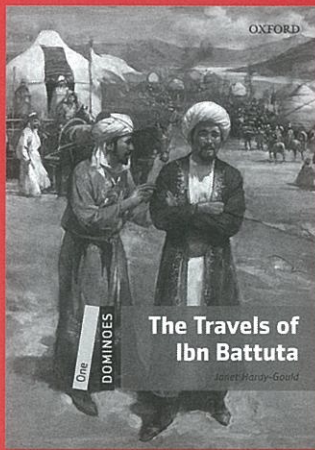
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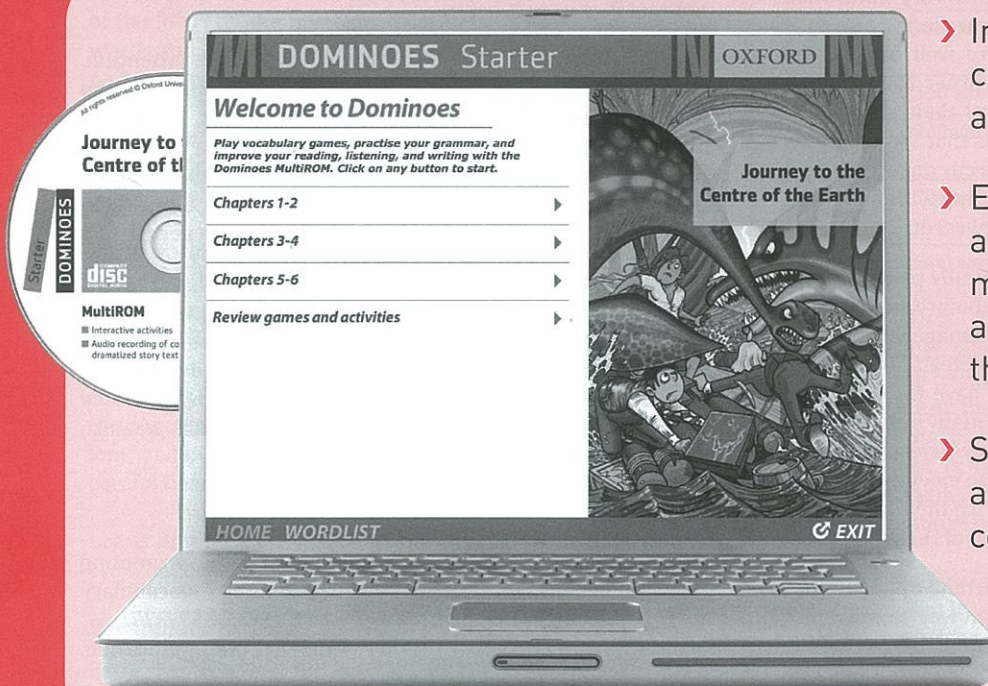
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Susan Saafan
*Al Sariyah Combined School
for Girls
Sweihan*



How to **start** a self-access reading centre on a shoe string

Are you all sitting comfortably? Here is a story I'd like to tell you about how our team of English teachers from a small public school started a reading centre on a modest budget and is now hoping to see it grow. During Term 2 of this academic year the local English teachers and their advisors in Al Sariyah Combined school for Girls in Sweihan decided it was time to put a long talked about plan into action, which was to turn part of their Cycle 3 resource room which had been set up years before by the Head of Faculty and lovingly decorated, into a dedicated reading centre for Cycle 2 and 3 students. All the teachers agreed that incorporating reading regularly into the teaching week by allowing the girls one or two periods for independent reading was the best way to let the girls experience how enjoyable reading can be as well as helping to ensure consistent practice of this vital skill. We went as a team through the following steps to set up our reading centre which any reader can follow through in their own schools should they want to start up their own reading centre or club on a shoe string.

Step One

With a small budget of 15,000 Dirhams how did this team of teachers set about it? First, each teacher looked at the catalogues available to order graded readers locally from suppliers like Muttanabi and All Prints in Abu Dhabi. It was a fun task (who doesn't like shopping?) but also presented the challenge of which readers to choose on such a small budget for 6 different grades. We decided on small sets of both fact and fiction readers

which covered a range of topics the girls were studying in their English classes following the new ADEC curriculum. They had to be colourful and attractive and at the student's level so it does pay to have someone on the team who is familiar with any of the series of readers, as classification of levels of difficulty appears to range greatly from publisher to publisher.

Step Two

We bought CD/DVD players and headphones to fully exploit the books which all came with their own CD ROMs to make the reading experience a more engaging experience and to provide relatively painless sustained listening practice into the bargain by cashing in on the student's preconceived notions about using head-phones to suck them into the reading experience.

Step Three

The Head of Faculty set up a schedule for the teachers and finally, comfy, cute and attractive chairs and new smart shelves reallocated from the library were bought and set out to make the environment attractive and unique.

Step Four

And now that our little reading centre was set, what next? Well, the students are regularly using the centre and enjoying the experience, and reading isn't boring anymore!! We now have a reading challenge competition this term with the winner, who has read the most books, getting a prize donated by the school.

So go on, try and set up your own reading centre if your school doesn't have one, we will come and visit!

Nick Moore has worked variously with students and teachers of English, English for specific and for academic purposes, and of linguistics in Brazil, Oman, Turkey, U.A.E. & U.K. for over 20 years.



Nick Moore
Khalifa University
Sharjah

Forget Facebook – Get a Bookbook

One of the greatest things about reading is sharing. We can share books, share the ideas that they contain and share our opinions about them. There is a website that allows anyone to do all of those things. The website goodreads.com gives you the chance to rank, rate and review all of the books you have ever read, the books you are reading and list all the ones you want to read. You can use the website to keep track of the books you have read and share your views, and you can involve your students, who are probably of the Facebook generation, to start social-networking their reading habits and preferences. Below you will find a quick guide on getting started with goodreads.com, some of its features, and a few ideas on sharing this site with students.

Getting Started

From goodreads.com, you can set up an account with an existing Facebook, Twitter or Google account or you can use any email account. Once you have followed the sign-up procedure, you can start adding books to your bookshelf. Goodreads has more than 130,000,000 books in its searchable catalogues, so the chances are that if you have read it, they have it. To help you organize your books you can assign them to different shelves in addition to the 'Read' 'Currently Reading' and 'To Read' shelves provided. For instance, I also have Music, Language and Linguistics, Neuroanatomy, and Fiction shelves. It is easy to rate a book (with 1 to 5 stars), and as you do it is automatically added to your 'Read' shelf. Before you know it, you have a healthy-looking list of books.

Sharing Views

[Goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com) is designed to share views on reading. You can rate and review any book you are reading or have read. As you will discover when looking for new books to read on the site, there are plenty of others out there wanting to share their views of books with you. It is easy to find friends on

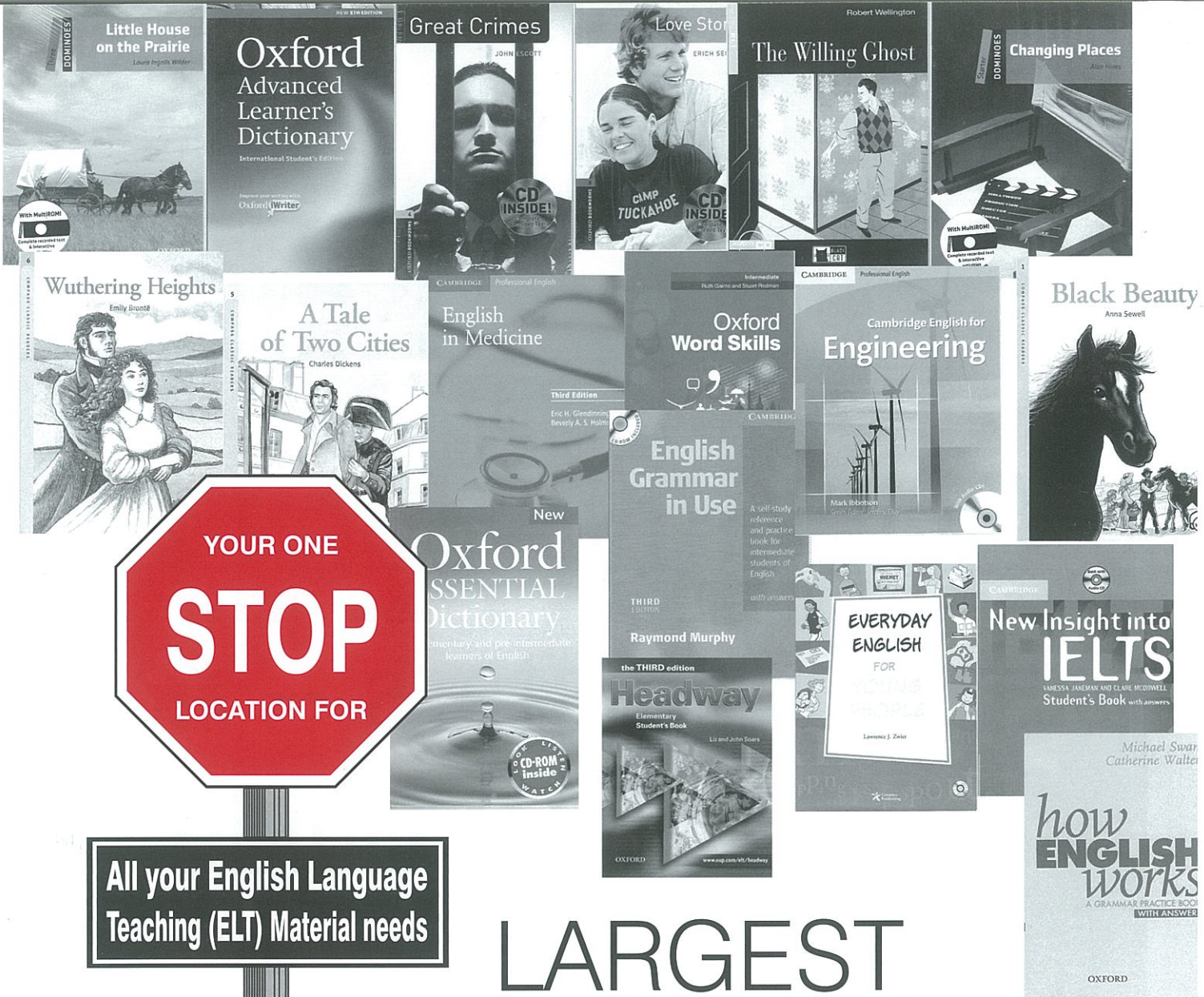
goodreads.com. First, you can invite your family and real-life friends, near and far, old and new, to share their reading habits and preferences online. As they join and invite their family and friends, your reading community expands rapidly. Second, you can find friends with similar interests through Goodreads. For each book that you read, you can find other people's reviews and find those that have similar views. You can look at other people's bookshelves and you can quickly find other people with similar tastes. Sending a request to be someone's 'Goodreads friend' is a simple process. Third, you may find a reading group that matches your tastes. There are hundreds to choose from and they discuss their reading online.

Apps and Widgets

Goodreads has an iPhone and an Android app, so you can use your smartphone to update the site while on the move. It has widgets that you can add to your blog or your Facebook page to tell everyone what you are reading, what you like reading and what reading groups you belong to.

Students @ Goodreads.com

As a simple replacement for the tried and done-to-death book review, goodreads.com offers a 21st century update for the Facebook generation to share their views on reading, and for you or any friend or classmate to add comments. It also offers a quick and easy reaction through a rating system and a refreshing way to keep a reading record. The 'Currently Reading' progress update section provides graphs that measure how long a book takes to read, and all of the other features can be used with a small group. Reading groups, for instance, can be set up for use with a specified group such as a class or year group that may be following the same book or reading on the same topic. Once your students have a goodreads.com account, you will soon discover many other features that they can show you.



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Al Ain

Tel: 03-7556160 Fax: 03-7556165

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Website: www.albatra.com

Alicia Salaz is a faculty librarian at Dubai Women's College. She has been working on reading promotion for first-year and foundations students at the College since 2008. She holds her MLIS from the University of Washington in Seattle.



Alicia Salaz
Dubai Women's College
Dubai

Celebrity**READ** Posters – A **Practical** Guide

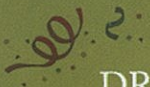
How our college is using local and regional role models to inspire and motivate Emirati college students, and how you can, too!

We know that role models play an important part in cultivating the motivation to read among young people. A 2009 study by the National Literacy Trust (UK) suggests that one of the important ways role models inspire young people to read is by being seen reading themselves (Clark, Osborne & Dugdale, p.25). With this in mind, the library of Dubai Women's College (DWC) jumped on the chance to purchase a collection of 'READ' posters featuring well-known celebrities from the American Library Association a year ago in order to inspire and promote reading among its 2,200 strong student population. The ALA's selection, available from <http://www.alastore.ala.org>, features an expanding roster of recognizable faces and role models, such as Kiera Knightley and Aishwarya Rai, encouraging young people to pick up a book and READ. Librarians at DWC, however, lamented the lack of local or regional personalities in the selection, since we also know

that young people tend to identify closer individuals from their immediate family, institutions, and societies as major role models (Clark, Osborne & Dugdale, p.6-7). The team at the DWC Library sought a way to get the "closer-to-home" role models of their student population featured in the same way as the more distant, albeit very exciting, personalities in the ALA collection. The result of their effort has been to produce a starter collection of regional personalities that anybody can use in their educational institutions, and a production method that any educator could use as a model. "We got the idea to start making our own versions of the posters when we noticed that the ALA offers design studio software and graphics," said Karla Castle, faculty librarian at DWC. What follows is a description of how the idea was carried out.

From idea to actualization

The first step was to secure management support for the project. A media release agreement was developed in consultation with the college marketing department, who



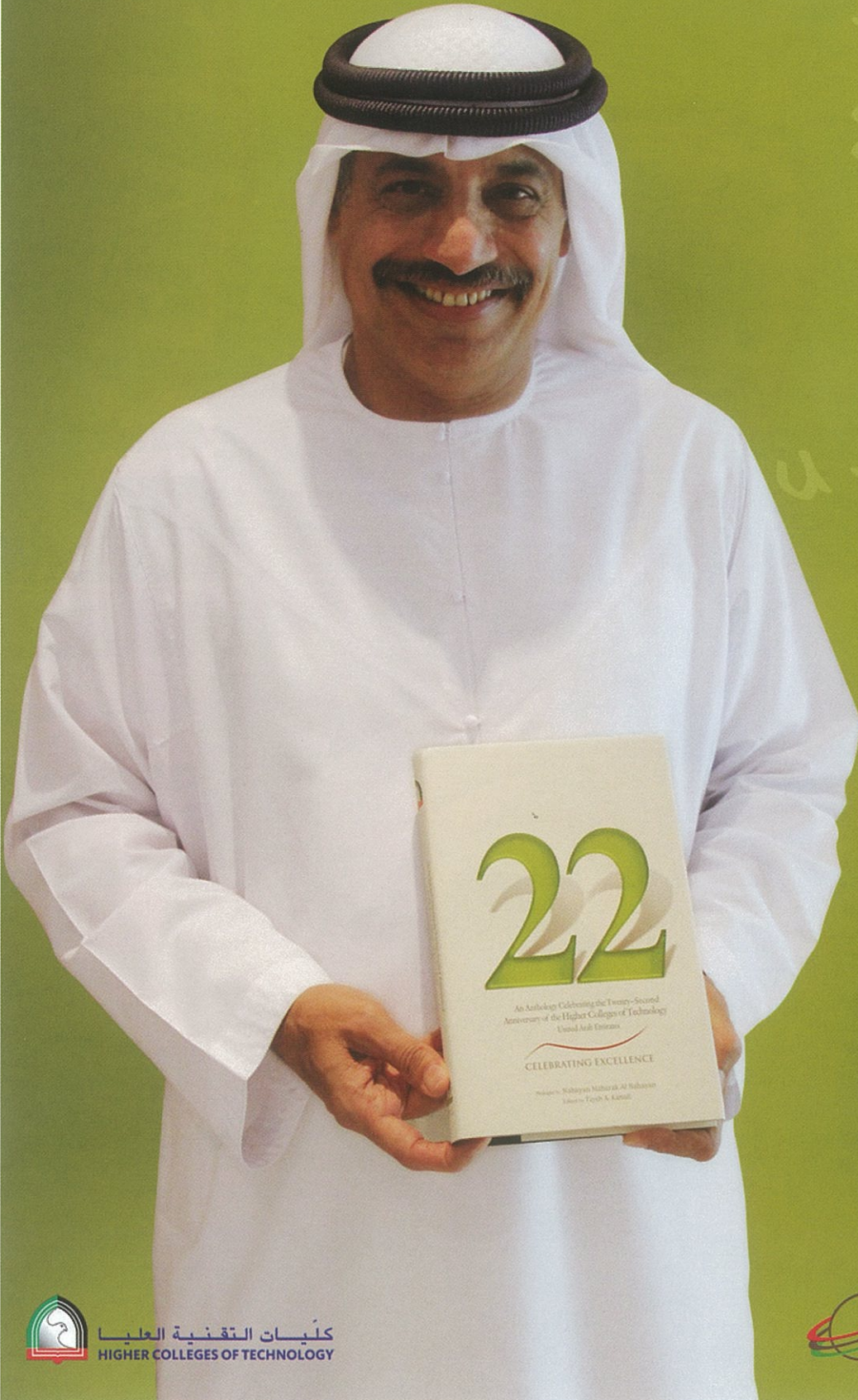
DR. TAYEB KAMALI

- HCT VICE CHANCELLOR -



اقرأ

READ



كليات التقنية العليا
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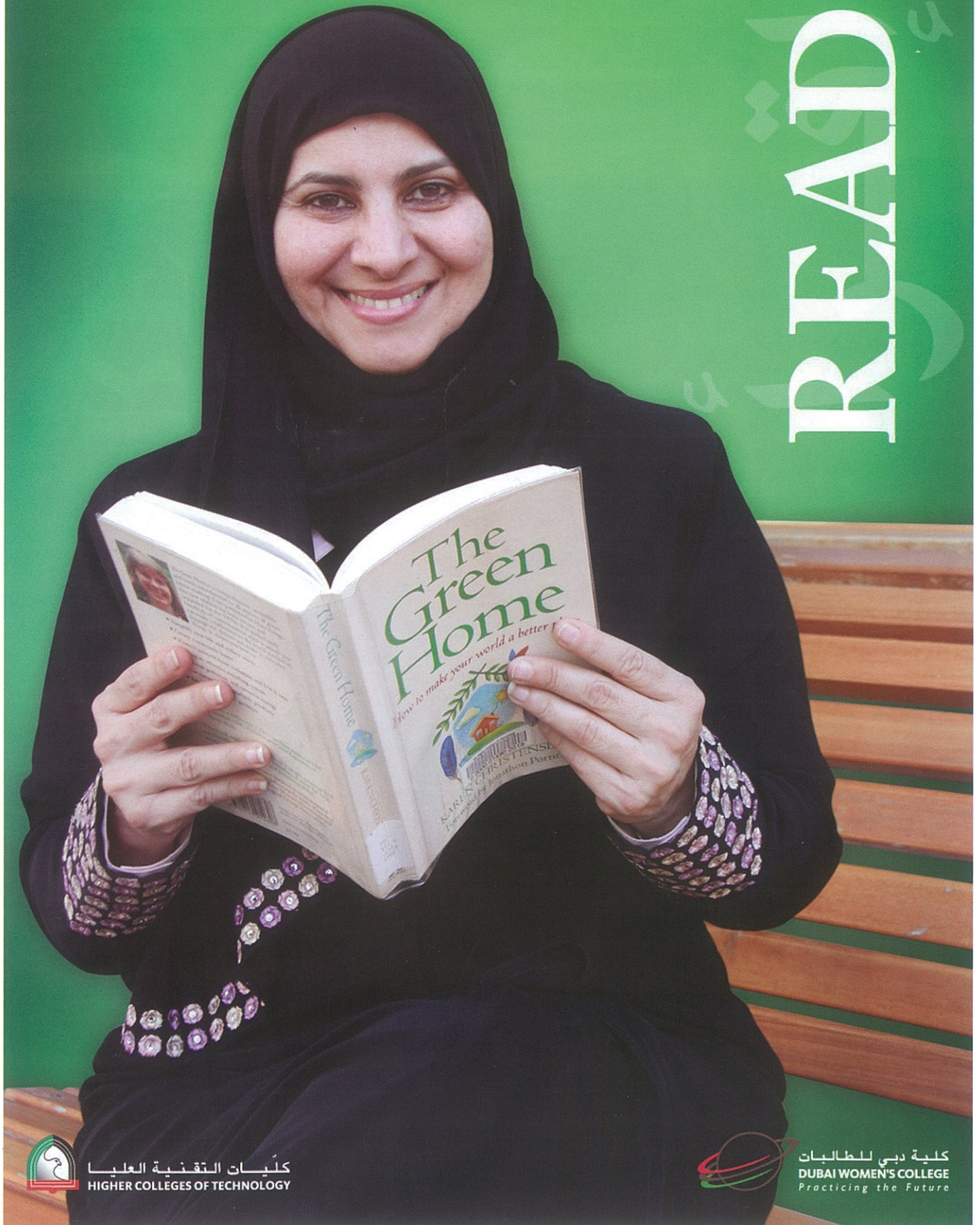


كلية دبي للطالبات
DUBAI WOMEN'S COLLEGE
Practicing the Future



HABIBA AL MARASHI
CO-FOUNDER AND CHAIRPERSON OF
EMIRATES ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP (EEG)

اقرأ READ



كليات التقنية العليا
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اقرأ

READ

Wael Al Sayegh

-POET-



كليات التقنية العليا
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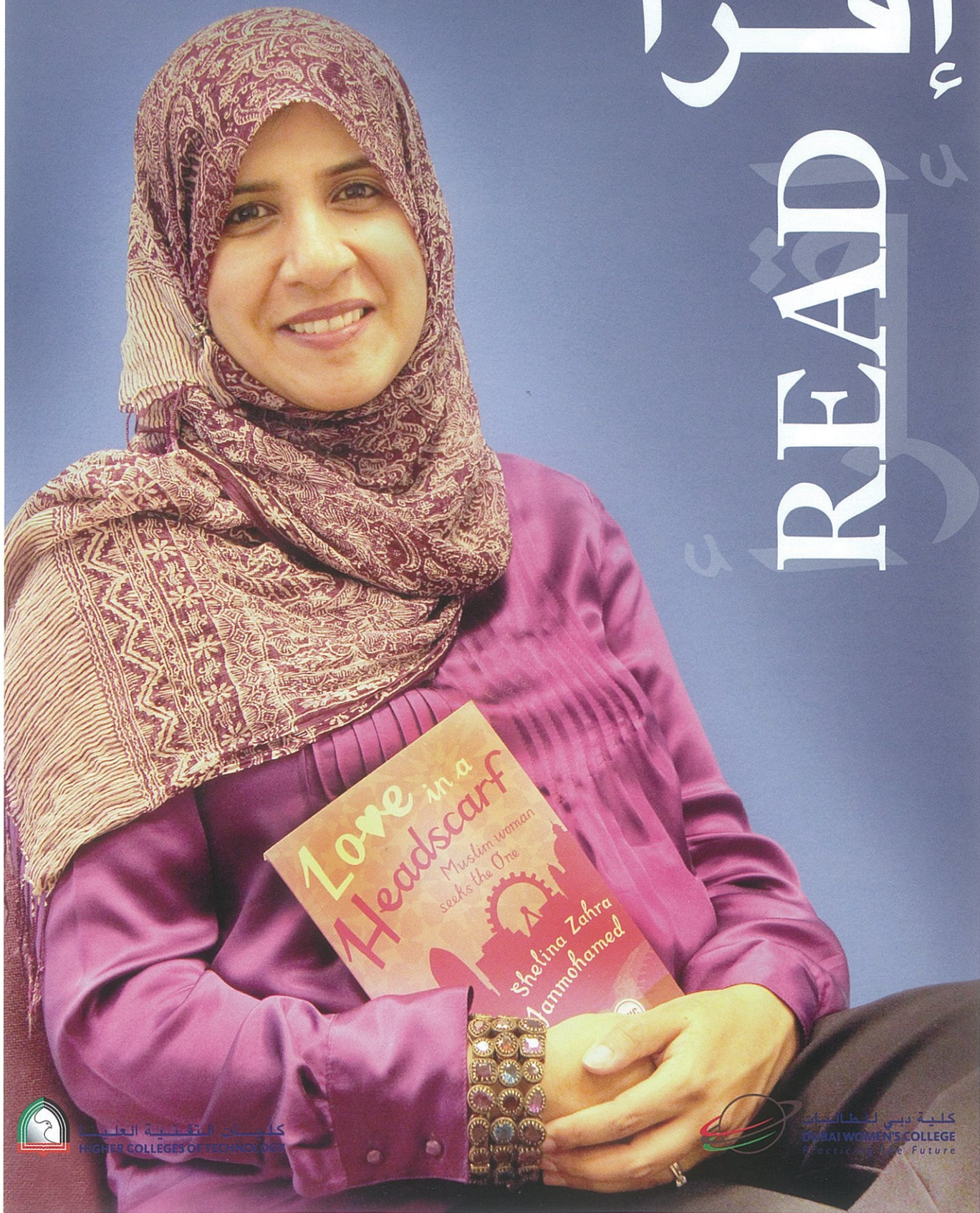
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Practicing the Future

SHELINA JANMOHAMED

-AUTHOR-

اقرأ

READ



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DUBAI WOMEN'S COLLEGE
Practicing the Future

were also brought on board to handle the photography, graphic production and promotion. The team also purchased the American Library Association's READ Design Studio software¹.

Once the process was in place, DWC began recruiting role models. Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Chancellor of Higher Colleges of Technology, was formally invited to be the first leader to join the campaign.

Another one of DWC's first local celebrity READ posters came to fruition during a visit to the college from Emirati poet and cultural consultant Wael Al-Sayegh. "We had already invited Wael to visit and give a reading to our students from his newly published book, *There's an Elephant in the Majilis*," said Robin Bishop, library supervisor. "We thought, as long as he's here; why not ask him to do a READ poster?" Wael agreed to participate after an informal inquiry, took the release form home with him to review, and came back another day in his preferred dress to do the shoot.

Another of the first participants was Shelina Janmohamed, the UK-based author of *Love in a Headscarf*. She visited Dubai during the Sharjah International Book Fair and agreed to visit DWC to talk to students about her novel while she was in the area. This time, library staff inquired about her participation on the poster ahead of time and forwarded the release agreement by e-mail so that on the day of her visit she was prepared to do the shoot. Again, DWC marketing staff did the photography and post-production.

Since these first participants, DWC has also garnered participation from Dr. Tayeb Kamali, Vice Chancellor of the Higher Colleges of Technology, Mohamed al Hammadi, Editor in Chief of National Geographic al Arabia, and Habiba Al Marashi, co-founder and chair of the Emirates Environmental Group. The director of Dubai Women's College, Dr. Howard Reed, even agreed to do a portrait alongside his young son, Julian. The collection thus far has been printed, framed, and hung in conspicuous places around the library in the center of the college campus.

¹ Available for USD \$249.00 from <http://www.alastore.ala.org>

Reactions

After displaying some of the initial posters around the DWC Library, student reactions were overwhelmingly positive. Staff also conducted a survey, asking students who they would most like to see featured in future posters. Some of the names in highest demand were His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, along with Sheikhha Lubna Al Qasimi and local singer Hussein al Jasmi. Dr. Ghassoub Mustafa, English Faculty at Dubai Women's College believes the READ Poster Campaign is a genuine attempt at reminding students of the importance of reading as a vehicle and an indispensable instrument to perform well in their academic life and in their future career. "It is a constant message to students to convince them that there is no skill more crucial to a successful life than reading. I hope that the READ posters will revive in students' minds the image of 'the legendary love for books' by the Arabs who had lived in Cordoba and Baghdad, the world's greatest learning centres in the Middle Ages. The well-read and highly cultivated Arabic society of that era presented to the world unrivalled thinkers, philosophers, scholars, doctors, astronomers, and polymaths."

Looking Ahead

The Dubai Women's College team is hoping to compile a portfolio of 10 high-profile role models during 2011. A "2012" collection will be considered based on popular demand and/or the availability of suitable subjects. All posters produced will be available to the educational community at large for the cost of printing only, at no profit. Current and future editions of DWC-produced READ posters can be ordered online at <http://dwclibrary.wordpress.com/readme>.

Reference

Clark, C., Osborne, S. & Dugdale, G. (2009) *Reaching Out with Role Models: Role Models and Young People's Reading* [Online] London: National Literacy Trust. Available from: "http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0403/Role_models_2009.pdf" (Accessed: 26 April 2011).



The Power of Radio Talking Of Books

is a weekly review



A weekly review show harnessing the insights of some of Dubai's most well read people. From new releases to chats with local and international authors, this is a must-listen for any bibliophile. Every week the panel, which consists of co-hosts Isobel and John, regular reviewer Linda Park plus one guest, discuss and review a selection of books. These books are generally a range of fiction and non fiction, including topics such as business, mind body and spirit, travel, history and memoirs, etc. Most weeks Isobel and John also manage to secure a phone interview with an author relevant to that week's discussions. You can also enter the weekly quiz for a Dh100 Magrudy's gift voucher and hear all about the latest best sellers in store! And if you fancy taking part in the show you can, every week Isobel and John select a Book Champion to come on the show and talk about their favourite book, so if you have a book you're passionate about email talkingofbooks@armonline.com and we could be hearing you on the show!



Talking of Books

Hosted by John MacDonald and Isobel Abulhoul

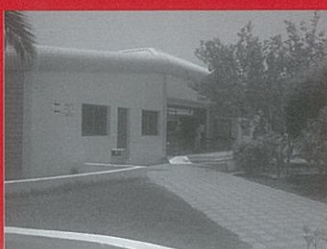
Live shows every Saturday
from 12nn to 3pm on Dubai Eye 103.8



Al Ain English Speaking School Community Library

The Al Ain English Speaking School Community Library is currently open Fridays, 11am to 1pm, and Sundays 2.30pm-4pm. The library is always open on Fridays, even during holidays. The library is generally open most days from 2.30pm to at least 3pm as children pop in after they finish school. You don't have to have children at the school to take out books. The library caters to children and adults. It is

run by volunteers and the books are very generously donated by the Al Ain community. The library has been open for over 5 years, and is well attended the whole community. Located at Al Ain English Speaking School, Falaj Hazaa,. Contact: Asa Smith, 050 338 5003, asalives@hotmail.com It costs 150 Dirhams for a family per year.



Pamela Omokolo Awuori, a trained secretary with a military background and exceptional organizational skills, joined the field of security with 4GS and is deployed at Khalifa University, Sharjah so as to attain greater heights in her profession through great interpersonal skills and integrity in a multicultural environment. Pamela has taught French on a voluntary basis and aspires to study business French to fulfill her dreams sooner rather than later.



Pamela Omokolo Awuori
G4S
Sharjah

Reading Champion

READ ANYWHERE

Reading is a habit that benefits our life in many ways. Through reading, we are uplifted Mentally, Spiritually and Socially. Thus, we get the will-power to be more confident, smarter and improve our general knowledge of the world around us. As practice makes perfect therefore, our thoughts are elevated.

Reading is a fundamental skill-builder that has enabled me to get a glimpse into other cultures and religions. Some friends give me different books to read and that has broadened my life experience and mind since I am living in a multicultural environment.

Adding book-reading, newspapers and magazines to my daily schedule and sticking to it has improved my Time Management Skills.

Sometimes, I read when I am troubled by the state of the world to relieve stress and keep my mind fresh.

Consequently, reading has made me to be always confident, polite but firm. No matter how wrong-footed I may be, I always focus on the best.

Since reading has improved my vocabulary and creativity, my previous employers used to ask me to edit daily reports and initiate ideas during meetings to increase the work performance. Through extensive reading, I am always vigilant and observant and I am able to form opinions and predict every move of the people around me.

Reading is a natural process that we should honour with due respect as every course on the earth has a matching book to provide deeper information to increase the overall intelligence. Books are eye-openers to things that have already happened or are happening in the world we live in.

My advice is to read anywhere, since books are portable, and read more books.

<http://tesolarabia.org>

18th International TESOL Arabia Conference 2012

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE THROUGH LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

MARCH 8-10, 2012, DUBAI MEN'S COLLEGE

Caroline Brandt teaches academic communication skills to engineering students taking B.Sc. degrees at the Petroleum Institute in Abu Dhabi, UAE. She has a Ph.D. in TESOL Education, an MA in Linguistics for TESOL; an undergraduate MA in Linguistics as well as a Cambridge ESOL Certificate and Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults.



Caroline Brandt
Petroleum Institute
Abu Dhabi

A great reader chooses the next great read....

Book industry statistics suggest that over a million titles were published in the US alone in 2009 (Bowker, 2010), and figures indicate that this number is increasing annually. Such choice is evident when you visit bookstores like Magrudy's in Dubai Festival City, the new *Books Kinokuniya* in Dubai Mall or if you go online and visit Amazon.

It can seem daunting, and in fact I left my first visit to *Books Kinokuniya* a few weeks ago empty-handed. This reminded me of a similar experience I'd had when I was living in Hong Kong. New to the city, I visited *Toys R Us* just before Christmas, to buy gifts for my two young daughters. I'd heard that this branch was the biggest in the world, so I didn't expect to have any trouble finding things I liked. But I did. I was simply overwhelmed by the choice available and I walked away without having purchased so much as a pack of cards. On that occasion I felt annoyed and frustrated. When I walked out of *Books Kinokuniya* with nothing however I was quite content, because I knew that I had at home a shelf full of new books that I was looking forward very much to reading. A quick count reveals that 54 new books await me on that shelf. I realize that this probably equates to around 2 years' supply, but then, much of my life has been spent in countries where it has been difficult to find a range of English language books, so

I have a tendency to collect them wherever I go.

A good book review will help you to decide if you are likely to enjoy the book or not.

A number of strategies help me to identify a book I want to read. They are all equally important and useful to me. For example, I read book reviews in newspapers, magazines and online. A particular favourite is the *Culture* section of the UK's *Sunday Times*, which is easily available in the Emirates. In relation to newly-published books, this paper offers two features: it lists 'bestsellers', based on numbers of copies of the books that are estimated to have been sold, and the feature that I find much more useful, short book reviews.

Look for phrases in reviews describing books positively, such as 'a rewarding read'; 'highly readable' or 'fascinating'.

I select books on the basis of reviewers' descriptions and opinions. A good book review will help you to decide if you are likely to enjoy the book or not. All types of books are reviewed, including biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, fiction and non-fiction titles. For example, in one 2010 edition of *Culture*,



there was Rebecca Skloot's review of 'The Immortal life of Henrietta Lacks.' The reviewer described the book as 'riveting' (which always attracts my attention) and it's about science and an abuse of power in the name of research. I'm interested in the social dimension of science and research, so I decided to buy this book and I expect to enjoy it. Later in the same edition of the *Culture* section, other phrases, describing other books, caught my eye: 'a rewarding read'; 'gleefully acerbic'; 'highly readable'; 'this near faultless memoir [is] a treat'; 'unerringly intelligent, fascinating and near-astounding'.

Your friends and family are a good source of book recommendations: make a habit of exchanging recommendations.

Another good technique for choosing a book is to seek the recommendations of friends, particularly those with tastes similar to your own. Books are a favourite topic of conversation with me, partly because many make an impact on me that I like to share, but also because I like to hear about books others have read. With some friends, recommendation has become a habit. I manage to meet one friend only once or twice a year as she lives in the UK, but we make a point of exchanging a book every time we meet. Another friend who writes to me regularly always tells me about what she's reading at the moment, or she recommends a book she knows that she thinks might be related to my life in some way. I particularly value these recommendations, because she's much older than me (in her 80s) and so can recommend books that I may not have heard about. For example, she told me about the writings of Patrick Leigh Fermor, whose books document his journey made on foot during the 1930s, from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople. They contain a great deal of historical, geographical, social and linguistic information about Europe,

and I find this very satisfying as not only is his writing a pleasure to read, but it's informative, too.

Watch out for books by authors who win the following prizes: Pulitzer, Whitbread/Costa Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award, the Man Booker Prize, the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (also known as the Arabic Booker), and the Prix Goncourt.

I also rely on prizewinning books. Seven years ago, a newspaper published a list of all the authors who had won the Nobel Prize for Literature since 1901. I carry this now yellowed list around with me in my wallet. I can tell you, for example, that this prize was won by Paul Heyse in 1910 and by Pearl Buck in 1938. More recently, it was won by Jose Saramago in 1998 and J. M. Coetzee in 2003. I've read books by many of the authors on this list, and I'm always looking out for others. Other good authors to watch out for are those who win the Pulitzer, the Whitbread/Costa Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award, the Man Booker Prize and the Prix Goncourt.

Browse your favourite bookstore

I love browsing in any bookstore, but I prefer smaller ones. In fact, we selected our family home in the UK because it was located only a short walk from an excellent bookstore. Apart from its manageable size, there are two other things I love about this bookstore. First, the people who work there read and write brief reviews of some of the books, and these reviews are posted on the shelves next to the books they're about. Not only can you read the review, but you can also find the person who wrote it and discuss the book with him or her. They are happy to do so! Secondly, amongst all the books is an excellent café and the bookstore owners actually encourage you to take a book or books off the shelf and read while you enjoy a coffee. Being able to read a chapter or so of a book in such relaxing circumstances can really help me to decide whether or not I'll enjoy it. I usually sit down with six to ten books and will rank them and buy the top three.

It doesn't always work out, of course. I've sometimes not enjoyed a book that has come to me through one of the approaches above. But this is a rare event, and certainly worth risking when I consider the abundance of books available today.

The trick is to enjoy the selection process as much as the book you have actually chosen: becoming a great reader begins with finding pleasure in *choosing* your next great read.

Reference

Bowker. (2010). New Book Titles and Editions. Retrieved: <http://www.bowkerinfo.com/bowker/IndustryStats2010.pdf>

Robert Hill taught in Spain, Greece and England before starting a long career teaching English at Italian universities in Sardinia, Verona and Milan. He has given talks and seminars on reading all over the world, including the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain. He is series consultant for all the Black Cat series of graded readers and author of *The Black Cat Guide to Graded Readers*.



Robert Hill
Black Cat Publishing
Italy

Adapting Classic Stories

Language learner literature includes non-fiction and fiction, which is graded from beginner level to intermediate and beyond. There are two kinds of graded fiction: original, specially written stories and adapted classics. In this article I will explore the merits of adapted classics – but still recognising the merits of original fiction!

Occasionally I meet teachers who say that original, specially written stories are always preferable to adapted classics (though I haven't heard learners express this opinion). Sometimes the reason given is that original language learner literature is up-to-date in settings, characters, events and issues. But more often the reason given is that adapted classics are somehow 'not the real thing'. I find this a curious objection, partly because as a child I read a lot of abridged classics in comic form.

It is true that adapted classics are certainly not 'the real thing'. But teachers know this, and if students should have this misapprehension, then teachers can – and should – remind them they are reading an adaptation. Besides, reading an adapted classic doesn't stop readers from reading the real

thing in later life (or a translation of the full text into the mother tongue). I think people do tend to 'revisit' adapted classics they have read: I went on to read the real thing some years after I had read my abridged classics! By analogy, a new film of a classic story – which is another kind of adaptation – often leads to a new printing of the book, showing that film adaptations create an appetite for the real thing.

In their school years – or let's say from five to fifteen – learners are likely to be attracted to the contents of classic children's or young persons' literature, such as Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Kipling's *The Jungle Book* and *Just So Stories*, Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, Dickens's *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist*, as well as *Little Women*, *Peter Pan*, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Treasure Island*, ... the list goes on and on! But, unless the young learners are educated bilingually, they will find these great stories far too difficult. Carroll's and Kipling's wordplay (distorting, combining and inventing words), Twain's use of dialect, and the sheer length of Dickens's novels, are all too difficult for young foreign learners. If they read adaptations, although they will not fully experience the author's delight

in vocabulary, the local atmosphere of the setting or the intricacies of the plot, they will nevertheless experience a contact with classic literature they might not otherwise have.

Apart from providing entertaining storylines, how else might contact with classic literature be desirable? Apart from teaching language skills, many teachers of English aim to provide learners with some sociocultural knowledge, defined by the Common European Framework of Reference as 'knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken'. Such knowledge includes the following features: the activities of everyday living; living conditions; interpersonal relations; values, beliefs and attitudes; social conventions; etc. Any story will to a certain extent contain these features. Original, specially written fiction can, of course, have contemporary settings and be up-to-date in details about what people eat/wear, their jobs/pastimes, prices, etc. Adapted classics illustrate similar features at various periods in the past – but awareness of a nation's history is also a part of sociocultural knowledge. Besides, the values and beliefs that are embodied in canonical fiction are generally long-lasting, and form part of the cultural identity of the country from which they come. Adapted classics also introduce learners to famous authors from English-speaking countries, who are part of a nation's contemporary cultural identity because they have become national icons. For example, as this issue of READ is published, exhibitions and celebrations worldwide are commemorating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens, who was born on 7 February 1812. Dickens is an element of today's British culture, not yesterday's.

Now, for a brief example of an adaptation. Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*, published in 1902, are 'origin stories': they describe – amusingly! – how animals got their characteristics (e.g. how the camel got its hump, how the leopard got his spots, etc.). The story of how the elephant got its trunk begins like this:

'In the High and Far-Off Times the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk. He had only a blackish, bulgy nose, as big as a boot, that he could wriggle about from side to side; but he couldn't pick up things with it. But there was one Elephant – a new Elephant – an Elephant's Child – who was full of 'satiableness' and that means he asked ever so many questions. ... He asked his tall aunt, the Ostrich, why her tail-feathers grew just so, and his tall aunt the Ostrich spanked him with her hard, hard claw. He asked his tall uncle, the Giraffe, what made his skin spotty, and his tall uncle, the Giraffe, spanked him with his hard, hard hoof.'

The young elephant continues asking questions to other animals, until a painful event leads to his nose being extended... The style is hugely entertaining for native-speaker children, but difficult and often inaccessible for young learners. Some of Kipling's effects are: deliberately archaic phrases, 'High and Far-Off Times' and 'O Best Beloved'; amusing but infrequent words such as 'bulgy'; misspelt words – "satiableness" instead of 'insatiable curiosity' – to amusingly imitate how a young native-speaker might mispronounce complicated words!

Here is the beginning adapted at A1 level, for post-beginners:

'The Elephant's Child is a young elephant and he lives in the forest in Africa. He is grey and he's got big ears, and his nose is... small! He is a curious elephant and he asks a lot of questions.

One hot summer day he asks his Aunt Ostrich, 'Why have you got a lot of feathers?' His aunt gets angry and hits him.

He asks his tall Uncle Giraffe, 'Why have you got a lot of spots?' His uncle gets angry and hits him.'

Vocabulary is simplified (and the word 'curious' is glossed at the bottom of the page in this adapted edition), subordination is removed and the tense is changed from the past to the present. But the repetitions in the narrative – the elephant's questions and the responses – are maintained. Such repetition, which occurs naturally in many traditional and classic stories, is absolutely ideal for the acquisition of language by young learners.

So, the adaptation is certainly different from Kipling's text, but it does bring something of Kipling to young learners – and it is still an entertaining story! And, of course, I hope you are curious to find out how the elephant got its trunk...



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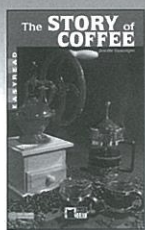
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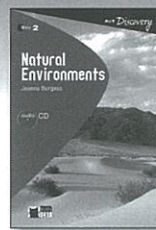
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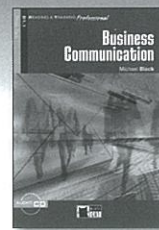
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Helena Frith Powell is editor of *The National's M* magazine. She now lives in Abu Dhabi with her husband Rupert and their three children Olivia, Bea and Leonardo. Helena is the author of "More France Please, We're British" (2004) and "Two Lipsticks and a Lover" (2005), which are based on her experiences in France and the French Mistress column in *The Sunday Times*. She is also the author of a memoir called "Ciao Bella" (2006), a book about ageing called "To Hell in High Heels" (2008) and "The Viva Mayr Diet" (2009). Her latest book is a novel about the French art of having affairs called "Love in a Warm Climate" (2011).



Helena Frith Powell

The National
Abu Dhabi

Interview with Helena Frith Powell

Where are you from?

I was born in Sweden (my mother is Swedish and my father Italian) but brought up in England after my mother married an Englishman when I was two, so I feel English.

How did you begin writing?

I wrote my first attempt at a novel as a young girl. It was my real father who encouraged me to write, but it was truly awful. I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested in writing. I remember as a child (I had a rather alternative childhood) grown-ups would say 'one day dear you'll write a book about all this' and I would smile sweetly but be thinking 'yes I bloody well will, and you'll be in it.' Funnily enough, I still sometimes don't consider myself a writer, but I think it was as recently as this year when I was on TV to promote my first novel, "Love in a Warm Climate" (my other five books have been non-fiction) that I really felt like a writer. My first published book was all about moving to France and was inspired by a column I had on the *Sunday Times*. But prior to that I had been working away on my memoir which would eventually be published as "Ciao Bella."

What books have most influenced your life?

Good question..."The Great Gatsby" is one. I think it is one of the most perfect novels ever, and "Wuthering Heights" which I fell in love with when I was fifteen. I was also inspired as a teenager by one of our most popular chick-lit writers called Jilly Cooper, and I always said all I wanted to be was a Jilly Cooper. I was never really going to write serious fiction. Although I do find her books a bit obvious nowadays. I also love "The Leopard" by Lampedusa and "Cheri" by Colette. Another classic author I adore is Edith Wharton, her novels "The House of Mirth" and "The Age of Innocence" are brilliant and her short story "Roman Fever" is, to me, the perfect short story.

If you had to choose, which writer would you consider a mentor?

That's very difficult. My father (who is also a writer) says you must always have a model when you're writing a book, so I suppose my mentor is whoever my model is for the work I am on. This applies much more to fiction than non-fiction of course, but in my fiction I am aiming for chick-lit crossed with "Cold Comfort Farm", so maybe just a level above pure chick-lit, with

lots of humour. If I had to pick one writer, it would probably be Scott Fitzgerald, although he might turn in his grave to hear me say that! Irene Nemirovsky is definitely one of my mentors, as is Margaret Atwood – both extremely gifted female writers I admire greatly. Atwood's "The Blind Assassin" is an incredible book – unforgettable – and as far as Nemirovsky goes, you can pick anything. Everything she wrote is splendid.

What book are you reading now?

I just re-read "Rebecca" by Daphne du Maurier and am now reading "The Elegance of the Hedgehog" by Muriel Barberry.

Are there any new authors that have grasped your interest?

Lots of them; I loved "One Day" by David Nicholls, for example, and am really enjoying the Barberry book – very different from my style, more profound and really quirky.

Can you share a little of your current work with us?

It is about first love. My working title is "Someone Like You." It is in part based on personal experience. I came across my first love recently and was astounded at how it affected me – totally irrational – and I started thinking about this Facebook age and how easy it is for people to get back in touch nowadays. I have been on holiday in Sri Lanka working on it and am really happy with it so far. It is not a first person account like "Love in a Warm Climate", but centers on the lives of five main characters and is a 'bigger' novel in some ways as it covers more ground and more story lines. I am really excited about it.

What did you learn from writing your latest book?

I learnt that writing a novel is far more difficult than writing a non-fiction book.

Do you have any advice for other writers?

Rewrite - I go back again and again and again, tweaking and adding things.

Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?

Thank you for all the mails and all the support, and encouragement. I love writing books and as long as you love reading them I will keep at it.

Ghassoub Mustafa holds a Doctor of Education from Exeter University, UK. At present, he teaches, English, History, and International Studies at Dubai Women's College. He has been a member of the Research Committee at DWC for the last 7 years, and had served as head of that committee for 2 years.



Ghassoub Mustafa
Dubai Women's College
Dubai

Salt Your Books

The old adage says, 'you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink'. Gary, who owns a farm, ascertains that this is not true (Scott 1998). He claims he can make any horse drink by adding more salt to the horse's oats, and the horse will feel thirstier which guarantees sending him to the water bucket. Scott (1998) was inspired by Gary's creativity and he discovered the magic effect of salt in motivating people to read. He claims that salting creates a compelling desire to read.

Scott illustrates 'salting to read' by citing the story of a father who wanted his teenage daughter to read a biography of a woman that he himself had read and found very impressive. He wanted his daughter to know the principles that guided that successful lady's life. Therefore, he dramatized the impact of that book to the point that his daughter was asking questions. He claimed that that lady did something that worked magic on people and they fell in love with her. Filled with curiosity, she kept pleading to tell her what that lady did, but he gave no answers and he kept adding more salt. The girl felt so thirsty, that she snatched the book, disappeared in her room and

devoured the whole book in two hours. Obviously, the father salted his words well.

'Salting' is creating curiosity after making your interlocutors feel very thirsty. This is how Scott defines salting, "Believe it or not, there is a way you can salt your communication that will make the other person terribly thirsty for what you are going to say... The more you want to raise the attention level, the more "salt" you sprinkle into your words. This "salt" is a statement, a group of statements, or a question that creates curiosity. When used correctly, it makes the person you are talking with ... want to hear what we are about to say even more than you want to say it" (1998.p.205).

This brings to my mind the legendary Shahrazad in the Arabian Nights who should be accredited with being the first salter in history. This wily storyteller used the salting technique to save her life and the lives of thousands of virgins in Shahryar's Kingdom. With that unique skill she cured the King's insanity of marrying a virgin every night and beheading her in the

morning. Her salted stories held him so spellbound that he spared her life because he wanted to know the end of the story and wanted to hear more.

What Shahrazad was doing one thousand years ago is what we need to try nowadays with our Reading-Proof students. She simply thrilled the king by telling him a thriller and stopping short before dawn at the climax of the tale as story telling in the Arab tradition ends at dawn. The next day, Shahrazad narrated another exciting fable and survived one thousand and one nights.

So how I have employed Scott's and Shahrazad's salting strategies to motivate my students to read? I have done it at several levels, in class, in private with individuals, and in students' assemblies. In class, I take a book and ask if anyone has read it. Of course, the answer is very often 'blank faces', or No, or a giggle. Here I begin my salting; book marketing.

Here are examples of books that I have marketed through intensive salting. The first book I have salted is the book that taught me about salting; Scott's masterpiece, "Simple Steps To Impossible Dreams". In fact, the book's title is so alluring and creates curiosity. I photocopied the book cover on one side and on the other side I photocopied page 69; a funny story of an obnoxious parrot and a silly couple in a pet shop only 200 words. The students marveled, and, laughed heartily at the funny story which triggered a hot debate on how people should react to criticism.

As I noticed their increased interest in the book, I kept sprinkling more salt reminding them that the book contained more exciting stories; besides, it teaches the 15 Power Secrets of the World's Most Successful people, including Oprah Winfrey. Oprah's name was a ton of salt. This worked like magic and the next day I had students asking: *How do you spell the author's name? Is this book available in the library? How can I order it?* etc.

I have used assemblies to salt books that I awarded to winners of certain competitions. One student won the Secret, by Byrne. She loved the book so much that she used it as her topic when

she entered Dubai Women's College Speech Competition. She was one of the best salters I had ever seen. She gave such an outstanding performance that she won first place. The audience who were mostly students got so salted that they rushed to her as she finished, asking about The Secret and the Law of Attraction. Even some teachers got salted and decided to read the book.

Salting is a motivational strategy that arouses students' passions, and appeals to their minds and hearts, which could send them to the library. Here are some salting principles:

- Select interesting books and reading materials that have an appropriate level of difficulty to your learners.
- Always select an interesting short excerpt as part of your salting.
- Keep repeating the name of the author as you may create a bond between students and author. Once a salted student fell in love with Stephanie Meyer after reading Twilight, and devoured most of her books.
- Recruit salted students to become Reading Campaigners.
- Create reading partners.
- Keep a bank of quotes, comments, and positive impressions about books read by students, and post them.

In conclusion, there are two signs of the success of the Salting Campaign; librarians reporting more traffic in the library and students talking of authors rather than titles. Finally, remember, you now have a technique to make any stubborn horse drink. I am sure some of you are salted and now are beginning to search for Scott's book, or are waiting to salt your students.

Reference

Scott, S.K. (1999) *Simple Steps To Impossible Dreams*, Fireside: New York





Room to Read Quick Fact Sheet

The Challenge

793 MILLION PEOPLE – one in five adults – are illiterate with the majority living in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Of the illiterate, nearly 2/3 are women.

67 MILLION PRIMARY-SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN are out of school and over 70% of them live in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

1.9 MILLION TEACHERS are still needed to achieve universal primary education by 2015, more than half of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

WAGES CAN INCREASE BY 10-20% when a girl is educated for one extra year beyond the average.

Our Results

OVER 6 MILLION CHILDREN will be provided better access to education through Room to Read by the end of 2011.

OVER 1,450 SCHOOLS & 12,500 LIBRARIES have been established by Room to Read.

OVER 590 CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN 25 LOCAL LANGUAGES have been published, representing more than 5.7 million books.

OVER 10 MILLION CHILDREN'S BOOKS have been distributed including original Room to Read titles, donated English-language books and local language books.

OVER 13,650 GIRL SCHOLARS have been supported by Room to Read's Girls' Education program.

Room to Read believes that World Change Starts with Educated Children.® We envision a world in which all children can pursue a quality education that enables them to reach their full potential and contribute to their community and the world.

Room to Read seeks to transform the lives of millions of children in developing countries by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education. Working in collaboration with local communities, partner organizations and governments, we develop literacy skills and a habit of reading among primary school children, and support girls to complete secondary school with the relevant life skills to succeed in school and beyond.



Our Programs

Our Literacy program enables primary school children to become independent readers. Room to Read focuses its efforts on developing reading skills and the habit of reading in primary school aged children because literacy is the foundation for all future learning. We do this primarily by establishing libraries, increasing access to age-appropriate and culturally relevant reading materials (including publishing our own original children's books), and improving the child friendliness of the school environment. We have recently increased our support for reading and writing instruction including creating materials and providing training for teachers.

Our Girls' Education program supports girls to complete secondary school with the skills necessary to negotiate key life decisions. Room to Read focuses on girls transitioning to or in secondary school because that is where the biggest –and most permanent– gaps in gender equality in education take place. We do this primarily through supporting girls to attend school, providing female mentoring and creating more girl-friendly school environments. We have recently added more emphasis on teaching life skills to girls so they will finish school and maximize their opportunities.

For more information, email Room to Read at info@roomtoread.org or visit us at roomtoread.org. Follow us on Twitter (twitter.com/roomtoread) or on Facebook (facebook.com/roomtoread).

Recognition

HIGH-IMPACT GIVING

Recognized in Barron's magazine "25 Best Givers" list (2009 and 2010).

FISCAL EXCELLENCE

Awarded Charity Navigator's highest 4-star rating for sound fiscal management for 5 years in a row—a recognition that only 6% of their rated charities can claim.

UNESCO RECOGNITION

Winner of UNESCO's 2011 Confucius Prize for Literacy recognizing excellence and inspiration in the literacy field.

SOCIAL INNOVATOR

Chosen as Twitter's first Corporate Social Innovation partner.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

Awarded the Skoll Foundation's Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2004, 2006, and 2010.



Our Model

Invest locally. We hire and empower local teams to run our in-country operations, and we partner with local communities and challenge them to co-invest in each project. This ensures their active participation and sense of ownership.

Build community capacity. We ensure we are always contributing to growing the capacity of the local community. For example, in our Local Language Publishing program, we hold workshops with local authors and illustrators to empower a growing pool of local talent.

Improve program quality. We continuously track our programs through ongoing monitoring and evaluation. For example, during the first three years after a library is established, site visits are conducted every

three months to assess progress, offer needed training and provide additional books and educational materials.

Manage efficiently and effectively.

We ensure maximum investment in our programs. For every US\$1 Room to Read receives, 83 cents goes directly to programs. We also maintain a diversified donor base with 47% of our funding coming from outside North America.

Create a global movement. We have over 52 chapters in 16 countries (including Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney in Australia) and over 10,000 volunteers that network, plan events, and raise awareness for Room to Read. Our chapters collectively raise approximately 35% of our annual operating budget.

Press

Room to Read has received significant global media coverage, including:

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



ABC
Radio National



VOGUE CBS CNN

The Sydney Morning Herald

The New York Times



Newsweek

FINANCIAL
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Our Reach

Room to Read currently operates in nine countries throughout Asia and Africa.



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Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi is President of the Emirates Publishers Association as well as Founder and CEO of Kalimat Publishing. In 2009, she established the Etisalat Prize for Arabic Children's Literature and in October 2011 won the British Council's International Young Publishing Entrepreneur Award.

**Sheikha Bodour bint
Sultan Al Qasimi**

*Kalimat Publishing
Sharjah*

Reading Starts at Home

Spending just 20 minutes with a child before they go to bed is enough to create a close bond between parents and children – this precious time not only strengthens the parent-child relationship, it also creates lifelong memories. It can also improve a child's ability to analyze and innovate, it sharpens their sense of perception, and it expands their horizons. This is true even of infants, who might appear too young to understand, but can benefit from the colours, sounds and expressions associated with reading.

As parents, the most rewarding moments we experience are those that we share with our children; for example, reading them a bedtime story that they love before they fall asleep. It can be even more exciting to watch the expressions on their faces, see their reactions to events in the story, and listen to their comments on the sounds and movements we make during our storytelling as we attempt to create a lively, fun atmosphere. Our children's reactions while we are reading –

and their desire to ask questions and express their comments and opinions – are signs of intelligence, maturity, innovation, and a vivid imagination. These are precisely the attributes that we need to enhance, stimulate and nurture. With that in mind, I would like to share some of my most memorable experiences with my own children as an example of how to enhance the special moments that you spend with your children.

It has been scientifically proven that there is no specific age at which children should start reading. Children like hearing voices, expressions and words even before they are born, and this habit grows during their first few years of their lives. As parents, we should be happy to spend just 20 minutes a day reading to our children. Nor should we mind repeating the same story over and over again every night. Every time they hear a story, a child learns new words and expressions, and gains the ability to analyze the events in a different way. This spurs their imagination and allows them to invent new

episodes for their favourite storybook heroes. Repeating the same story every night may bore you as a parent, but your children will love it!

Mothers, and especially working mums, often struggle to find enough time to complete their daily duties and tasks, and one of the most difficult challenges is finding enough time to spend with their children. But it is rewarding – and necessary – to share time with them! Consequently mothers should be re-evaluating their schedules, and ensuring that they devote time to their children as part of their daily routine.

It is also very important that we select carefully the books that our children read. There is a vast array of wonderful books available today for children of all ages to enjoy, and we should help our children choose stories that they will relish and that are suitable for their age.

In conclusion, the time that we spend with our children is as important to us, the parents, as it is to them. It encourages us to be innovative, introducing the contents of books in a fresh way even though we may have read the same stories many time before, and it prompts us to think carefully about how to make the most of the limited time that we spend with our children to ensure that it is as rewarding and fulfilling as it can possibly be.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our thanks to Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi for giving us permission to reprint this article from issue 1 of READ.

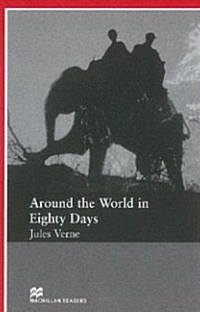
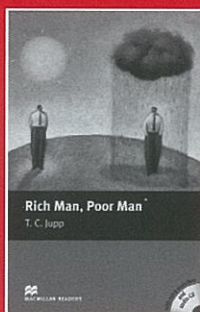
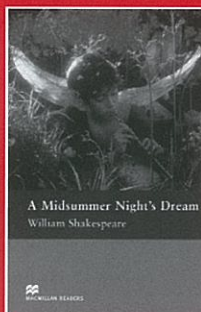
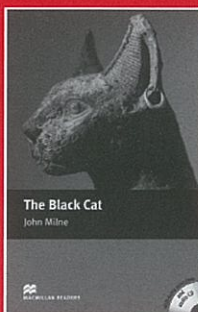
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Marion Engin teaches in the Department of Languages at Zayed University. Before coming to Dubai, Marion worked in Turkey for 20 years. Her professional interests include understanding better how to scaffold learners. Her personal interest is reading!



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Book groups – Why we should have them?

Have you ever found yourself utterly frustrated because you have just read a brilliant book but there is no one to talk about it with? Or you want to recommend a book but not quite sure who to recommend it to? These are all good reasons to get out there and start up a book club. Book clubs are a great way of bringing together friends whose main common area is a love of reading, and a fascination for all types of books. I have been lucky enough to be involved in a variety of different book groups, both in Dubai and in Ankara, Turkey.

Reasons why a book group is a good idea:

- 1. You get to read books you would probably not choose yourself.** One member who stayed with us for 3 years in Ankara was with the Dutch Embassy, and through her we read a fantastic book called "The Twins" by Tessa de Loo which has been translated from the original Dutch. I still remember being utterly engrossed. It was a great read, and a book that none of us would have thought to look at in the bookshop, let alone read.
- 2. You get to share thoughts on a book in a friendly, non-threatening environment over some drinks and nibbles.** In a way, it is making a mere conversation in a corridor more systematic, and organized.
- 3. You listen to other people's reactions to books.** This widens your own understanding of the characters, plot, ideas, themes etc. We all read in different ways. Some parts of a book will resonate with people in different ways, and different parts of a book stay uppermost in people's minds. This struck me most in a discussion some years ago about the book "When we first met" by Lionel Shriver. I had not even realized that the whole story had been a figment of the protagonist's imagination. This could only be understood from one short phrase, right at the end, which I obviously glossed over. I suddenly saw the book in an entirely different light.
- 4. You understand the book on different levels.** I sit fascinated while a friend describes their reactions to

different characters. We all have different personalities and experiences, and we interpret characters in books through these. This aspect was profoundly felt after reading the book "Solar" by Ian McEwan. None of us particularly liked the male protagonist, a selfish, sweaty, egotistical, overweight academic. However, a friend who was struggling with her own weight at the time, talked about how she empathised with him, his feelings of control related to weight, and how it affected his relationships with other people. I got a very different and much deeper interpretation of the character.

- 5. You feel encouraged to read.** When I first started reading "The Time Traveller's Wife" by Audrey Niffenegger I found it heavy and laborious and a little confusing. I gave up. At the book group discussion, friends were so enamored of the book I decided to give it another go, and loved it! It is still one of my favourite books.
- 6. It is nice to know you are not the only nerd out there!** My daughter was preparing a CV for school. She asked me what she should put down for hobbies. Since she enjoys reading, and often reads my book group books, I suggested she put down reading. She was horrified. "But that's so boring" she replied! One is supposed to have hobbies like bungee jumping or para-gliding. What is wrong with reading! Have we really got to that stage?

In conclusion then, I hope I have convinced you to start up or join a book group. Time Out Dubai lists book groups which run in the city. You can join an existing group. Or you can start up your own group. To help you choose a book you can check out winners and nominations for prizes such as the Pulitzer Prize, the Man Booker Prize, LA Times Prize, the Orange Prize and others. The way you organize the discussion at a book group meeting can be completely open, or you can find questions online. And if you don't like the online questions, you can make up your own.

So.... what are you waiting for? Get out there and get reading with friends!

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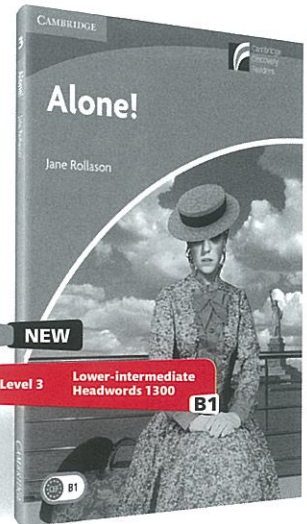
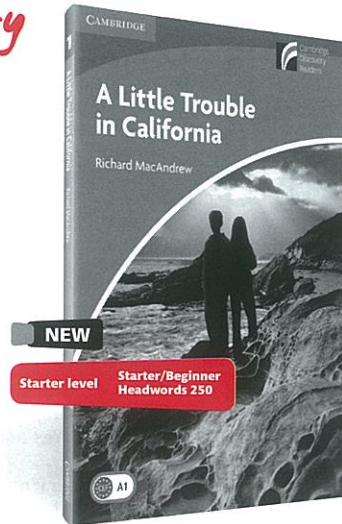
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Student Reading Champions

	Tell us about yourself	What memories do you have of reading or being read to when you were a child?	What do you enjoy reading for yourself? What are you reading at the moment?	How would you encourage students in particular to read?
 <p>Maryam Al Ali</p>	<p>I am 18 years old and a student at Khalifa University, freshman year. My aim is to enter the field of nuclear energy to change the power system in the UAE.</p>	<p>When I was child I had read a lot of children magazines and short stories but the most interesting stories that I remember was 'The Four Nights and Lila Wa Altheieb' (Red Riding Hood) and also a magazine which called Majed. In addition, when I was child I preferred to watch cartoons more than reading stories, so I can say then I was not a good reader. I do not remember if my parents read to me when I was child.</p>	<p>I prefer to read horror stories which are about crimes and murders because I think it's excited to read these kind of stories which make me interact with the characters and events. In addition, I love to read magic stories because it takes me to a different world where everything is possible to happen and always the good people win at the end, so it gives a positive purpose to the readers.</p>	<p>I really have a strong belief that reading is important, is an important thing and it should be one of our habits, so I advise all the students to read if they do not want to repeat my mistake and also to not lose one year of their life in foundation and if they want to have a good knowledge that will help them in their studies and their life.</p>
 <p>Abdulrahman Goin</p>	<p>I am 19 years old and resident in UAE. I am interested in reading and solving mathematical problems. Currently, I am a student in KUSTAR and I am aiming to get a bachelor's degree in Electronic Engineering with distinction.</p>	<p>To be honest, I read a lot of books but most of these books were written in Arabic. Before I entered KUSTAR I felt afraid from reading English books. However, when I became a student in KUSTAR, many things changed and I became more interested in reading English books.</p>	<p>I actually like to read about a variety of topics. However, the most three interesting topics for me are adventures, science fiction and detective. At the present time, I am reading about 'The Silent World' and 'The Secret Garden'.</p>	<p>Reading is the key of success. The more you read, the more information you learn. Reading also is the best way to enhance your level in English and gain many new vocabularies.</p>
 <p>Abeer Obaid Al Yammahi</p>	<p>I'm a 19 year old student at Khalifa University, freshman year. My aim is to spread the concept of reading over the whole world.</p>	<p>I remember many magazines my parents were reading them for me, for example, Majid Magazine for young people. Also, I had read some Islamic books about Prophet Mohammed peace be upon him.</p>	<p>I usually love reading books that have a purpose in it, because, in my opinion, these books will increase my knowledge and my experience in my life. Actually, I had read many things since I have entered the university, but most of the time I read many magazines to entertain myself.</p>	<p>I extremely recommend students at schools to start the first step on their own, which is to read a lot of books in English, even if they were silly books, because this move or step will help them to develop in their study at the university.</p>
 <p>Khalifa Ishaq Ibrahim</p>	<p>I am a 19 year old Emirati citizen born in Sharjah. I'm the second oldest brother of 3 siblings. My passion for technology and electronics is growing day by day since I'm surrounded by them everywhere and that's the reason why I want to be an engineer. There are other interests in my life such as sports, celebrities' news and literacy.</p>	<p>To be honest, I wasn't reading very much because there weren't any incentives that encouraged me to read or improve my reading skills. However, after joining the university, the reading activity became a critical part my activities. I can say that I have read more than 80 books or articles within 14 weeks.</p>	<p>Most of my reading time, I spend them reading my favorite sort which have to do with the mysteries and crimes. There are other kinds but those are what I'm really enjoying reading. I have been reading the stories of 'Agatha Christie' and 'Sherlock Holmes'.</p>	<p>Obviously, reading is a fundamental thing in our lives. Personally, students have to read if they want to be someone. You cannot be an engineer if you don't read. YOU JUST DO IT.</p>
 <p>Rashid Ahmad Saeed Baomran</p>	<p>I was born in Sharjah, UAE. I am 18 years old. I am currently studying at Khalifa University. I am good at writing journals, solving physics problems, and taking notes. There are other things that I am interested in, for example, football, swimming, and video games.</p>	<p>Since I joined this university, I began to read one book a week. After the mid-term I began to read two books a week. In my opinion, this progress has developed my English language skills.</p>	<p>I enjoy reading stories or books which talk about scientific innovations and fiction. Another type which I like are stories about crimes, thriller and horror. At the moment, I am reading a book called Secret Codes which was written by Ken Beatty. It is a very interesting book which is about secret messages, ciphers, and how they were sent, hidden and received.</p>	<p>I believe that reading is very important, because it develops our abilities in English language, for example we can develop our vocabulary, writing and reading. So I advise students to read as much as they can, because that will help them in university.</p>

My name is Shaheena Fazaldin, South African educationist with more than 25 years of experience in the field of Education. Reading has been an integral part of my teaching/educational career, which started in E. Africa, then blossomed in South Africa at the International School of South Africa, and finally here in UAE where I am the Head/Coordinator of the English Department (JP) at Al Ansar International School in Sharjah, UAE



Shaheena Fazaldin
Al Ansar International School
Sharjah

Everyone Should Be a Reader

As the English Coordinator (JP section) at Al Ansar International School, I aim to promote literacy and ensure that every child works up to his/her full potential and achieves to the best of his/her capability. My special interest is to promote a number of methodologies for enhancing the student's process of learning how to READ; for READING is the KEY to SUCCESS! It opens every door towards education.

Reading is my passion. I aspire to promote Reading and Literacy. My motto is "EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE A READER"..... for today's readers are tomorrow's leaders!

Some of the things I have introduced and are being implemented at school:

Readthons (reading logs) which are very child-friendly and appropriate for the junior primary. Our children use these regularly when reading homework is assigned. Students receive readers and are assigned to read the book and write a short sentence/s on the best part of the story that they have enjoyed reading (assignments are age-appropriate). They have a choice to write or draw. At the bottom of the page they should fill out 4 new words that they have learnt (from the assigned reader).

We hosted a Reading Awareness Week in the past which was a great success. We planned many activities during the week; the most productive one was D.E.A.R., which stands for **DROP EVERYTHING AND READ**. We had assigned 10 minutes daily whereby every class and everybody would drop everything and just READ!! A Reading Awareness week has been planned out for the coming semester and we have great ideas lined up that will surely facilitate & promote READING.

I have had the opportunity to host many other events that relate to reading. Some of these are: Spelling Competition, Story Writing Competition and a Poetry Recital. Pictures of our story-

writing event that relates to our reading enhancement are on this page. This event was a great success with over 200 entries.

My aim is to ensure that every child gets the best of opportunities when it comes to learning.

Below are some of the contributions towards the Story-Writing Competition. This event brought out great awareness towards the importance of BOOKS & READING. Some of the students receiving their awards



Peter Viney is the co-author of *Fast Track To Reading* (Garnet), *IN English*, *Handshake*, *Grapevine*, *Streamline* (all OUP) & *Survival English* (Macmillan). He is on the board of the Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) and the series editor of *Oracle Readers* (Garnet Education).



Peter Viney
Extensive Reading Foundation
UK

Apart from the story ...

The **extra** stuff in graded **readers**

The story is the most important thing in any graded reader. This is recognized in the Extensive Reading Foundation annual Language Learner Literature awards, where judges rate the story, not the accompanying material. This article looks beyond the story to assess all that extra stuff that goes around the story.

The glossary

Graded readers usually have a glossary. The major series have a word count, and then a permitted number of extra words which are then glossed. These figures vary from scheme to scheme, but a 400 word scheme might have a twenty word allowance for content words, and a 1250 might have forty words. One of the major arguments is over international words, which are allowed in some schemes (e.g. Streamline Graded Readers, Storylines and now Oracle). It has been stated that the average beginner, on day one of an English course, is already familiar with at least two hundred English words. Few people are going to need to stumble over *spaghetti*, *espresso*, *café*, *restaurant*, *football*, *internet*, *WiFi*, *jet*, *rock and roll*, *jazz* and so on.

Noticeably, some publishers go way above these extra word counts, because they're designing readers primarily for one language group, and can (or should) bring guessability into the equation. Even so, I saw a 120 word glossary in a 500 word reader. This is just about a quarter new words, which is way off any scale of readability. That number of words to check impairs extensive reading and the flow of the eye over the page.

Students need to learn to read past new words and try to guess the meaning from context, just as we do in our mother tongues. If there are too many unfamiliar items, the process stutters to a halt. For the same reason, I'm very much against glossing on the actual page. It takes the eye off the running text, whether it's in a sidebar or in a footnote. I've had this discussion with those of the opposite view who say reading footnotes is training for academic texts. No. It's a different thing, and anyway comes much later. Extensive reading involves reading for pleasure and acquiring greater reading pace. It involves learning to deduce meaning from context. For

me, the only place for the glossary is in the back of the book.

I would always endeavour to use new words at least three to four times to aid the deduction task. Too often, a new word appears just once, giving the reader no option but to resort to the glossary. We used to try for four appearances. It's often stretching the story too much, and we have to be content with three, or perhaps two if the item is in an illustration as well. A single appearance in an illustration does not familiarize students with the word shape and spelling though.

When I was writing for Oxford University Press, glossing words was an easy process, because you could refer to the appropriate dictionary for the level for the wording of the definition. Now, as series editor on the Oracle scheme, I find myself looking at four or five dictionaries from different publishers, and distilling my own definition. With some nouns, a small illustration is the most efficient way to do it. However, the glossary is part of the reading process, and I found myself favouring longer glosses and short cultural notes in the gloss. It's all "reading" after all.

Illustration

If you are going to illustrate a graded reader, the illustrations should serve a purpose. At a simple level this might just be attracting the reader. Black Cat readers are praised for their beautiful illustration by everyone who picks them up, and the illustrations' role is persuading you to want to read it.

Usually, illustration serves the purpose of helping to explain the story and new words; didactic illustration rather than decorative illustration. In some cases (Macmillan's *White Fang* is one I praise here), the labelled illustration at the beginning of the book proved a reference for the whole story.

I get annoyed when an illustration of two talking heads, of people we've already seen in earlier illustrations, fills a page in glowing colour. It has no purpose. But a designer might disagree and discussions with designers indicate a role. Sometimes it's there just to lighten the text. Sometimes an illustration pads

out a chapter to avoid a very short page, or two very dense pages on a spread (the left and right hand pages of a book are called 'a spread'). Even with a boring talking head, it may be that the illustration adds information about the character.

Style is another matter. Bland, anodyne pictures can only be justified if they serve a clear explanatory role. For filling space, motivating the reader or lightening text, a degree of artistic merit is required. Sometimes the artist's style is so strong and quirky that it fails to do the didactic job. Sometimes illustrations are 'too young' for the target audience. Sometimes they're plain inept, which motivates no one.

In text books, I always prefer a variety of art styles and a mix of photo and drawing and computer-rendered drawing. That's because some people love a style, others hate it, so variety is best. With a reader, that doesn't work, you're always going to have a single illustrator. This isn't (just) a question of cost. It also gives continuity and flow to the story. The result is a tendency to steer away from very strong art styles to something blander.

When we were doing the art briefs for Oracle, the art instructions were sometimes longer than the text they referred to. We had an advantage. Oracle has a new word count and grading scheme, but the stories themselves in the first batch had already been published as Streamline Graded Readers (with black and white illustration) then re-illustrated in colour as Storylines. So we usually had a chance to compare what two artists had done previously, before commissioning a third artist. We could say what was right and what was wrong about the earlier work. We could also judge some illustrations as pointless, and identify points where an additional illustration would be more useful.

White space, fonts and density

With all ELT textbooks, Asian countries ask for 'more white space.' Text density is a problem, as are too small type, or unusual fonts. For example, many people will find 12 point text with one and a half line spacing more readable than ten point text even with double line spacing. My reading eyesight is fine, but even I find problems with old paperbacks with tiny text on soft cheap paper, and narrow margins. The experience of reading a hardback novel on better paper, with less dense text, and more white space in the wider margins is much better. Recently I read a discussion on a sci-fi novel from the 60s which sparked my interest to re-read the book. I picked up my ancient paperback and groaned at the tightly packed text and narrow margins. I went to a book shop and looked at a later trade paper back (i.e. hardback size paperback) edition. It wasn't much better. I downloaded a copy on my Ipad instead, preferring 1100 widely spaced, airy electronic pages to 500 closely-packed paper ones. Few state that as a positive for electronic readers, but it really is.

Designers will always prefer white space at the end of chapters in a story. Publishers, mindful of the rise in paper and printing cost (and in transport costs, because they're heavier) will opt to run on the chapters to save space. As I've entered publishing to re-launch my earlier videos with our own imprint, Three Vee, I've become aware of the difference just a few pages

makes to the narrow profit margins left to the publisher at the end of the process. In spite of that, one of the first choices we made in redoing readers was to add eight to sixteen pages per story and give everything more 'air.'

Exercises

This is a thorny one. Almost all the authors say the point is the story and involvement in it, and that they would prefer not to have exercises at all. When I wrote the *Departures in Reading* series, which is long out of print, the exercises were on the four centre pages (i.e. one folded sheet of paper), which could be removed by the teacher before issuing the books. These were also on tinted paper so they stood apart. The teacher made the choice.

With Streamline Graded Readers, they went in the back of the book, and were deliberately straightforward rather than inventive. When Storylines was done, the exercises went onto Photocopiable worksheets and on line, and were more innovative.

Now we see several new series of readers which are mini-text books, with exercises and extra information after every chapter. I think this impairs the extensive reading process. It's intrusive and dictates what you do with them. They might be excellent supplementary language teaching material, but they're no longer readers in the true sense.

So the choice is hard. The people most interested in extensive reading tend to say the only exercise question is, 'OK, you've read this book. Do you want to read another one?' But teachers have to justify the use of readers, and there are ingrained habits. If you ask teachers, some would use comprehension questions, some wouldn't, but they agree that you might as well have them at the back of the book just in case. An exercise where you fill in words from the glossary in a new context also focusses on the new words. The new words are important. If a 750 word reader arrives at the editor with forty-five extra words, the author will be asked to reduce that to thirty. Equally, if it arrives with only ten extra words, the author will be asked to increase them to thirty.

We decided to put exercises back in and to keep them largely to the predictable and expected. I probably wouldn't use the straight comprehension questions myself. My research tells me a lot of teachers would.

The first exercise usually involves finding specific information, facts, from the story, and encourages skimming through at speed to find them, a useful skill to encourage. I also believe students working on their own will benefit from filling words from the glossary into new contexts, or doing small crosswords with the new words.

Teachers ask for discussion and extension questions based on the story and it's easy to add them. They only really work if others have read the same story at the same time.

The story ...

In the end, the story wins through, whether the additional stuff is good, bad or indifferent.

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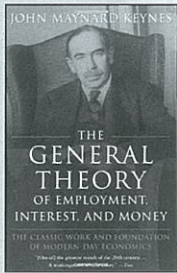
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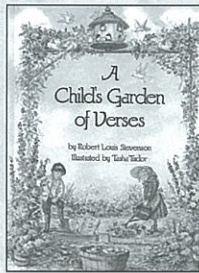
Isobel Aboulhoul's Bookshelf

Isobel's Early Years

The next edition of **READ** will feature the Emirates Airlines Festival of Literature (EAFL), to be held in Dubai in March 2012. We are excited to announce that the **READ** team have interviewed the curator and organiser of the festival, and a supporter of **READ**, Isobel Aboulhoul. As a preview to that edition we offer a list of books that have made an impact on Isobel's life. We hope to present other bookshelves in the future.



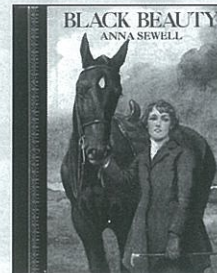
The family of John Maynard-Keynes had a major influence on Isobel's early years.



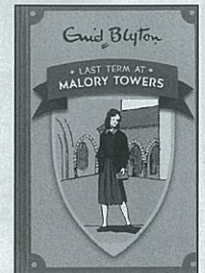
Poetry has always been important and Stevenson's collection is still treasured



"The Secret Garden" was the first book when Isobel could "no longer see the words"



"Black Beauty" was another childhood favourite



As a child, Isobel read a lot of Enid Blyton stories

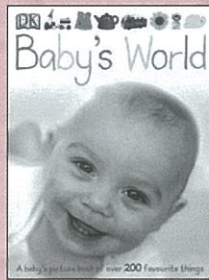
Isobel's Books for Children



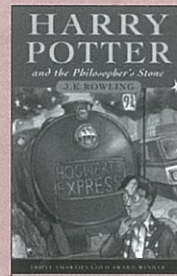
Although this was a children's bedtime story, Isobel had to read it alone to know how it ended.



'Hetty Feather' by Jacqueline Wilson. Look out for this author at EAFL 2012

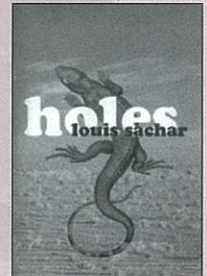
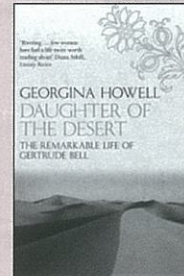
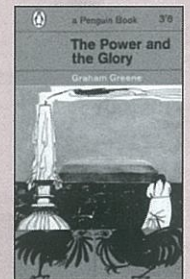


As a baby, one of Isobel's daughters had a favourite page which indicated her future career path.



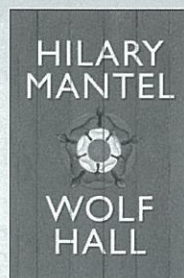
There was nothing quite like Harry Potter, and Isobel's children were big fans.

Firm Favourites

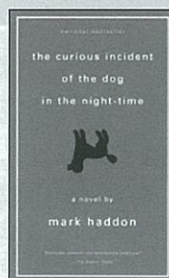


Isobel counts these titles among her favourites: 'The Idiot' by Fyodor Dostoevsky, 'The Power and the Glory' by Graham Greene, 'Gertrude Bell - Daughter of the Desert' by Georgina Howell and 'Holes' by Louis Sachar

Recent Books that have Excited Isobel



Wolf Hall is one of those books that can occupy your mind.

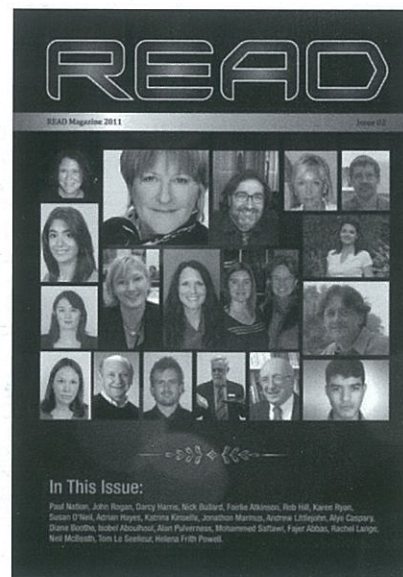
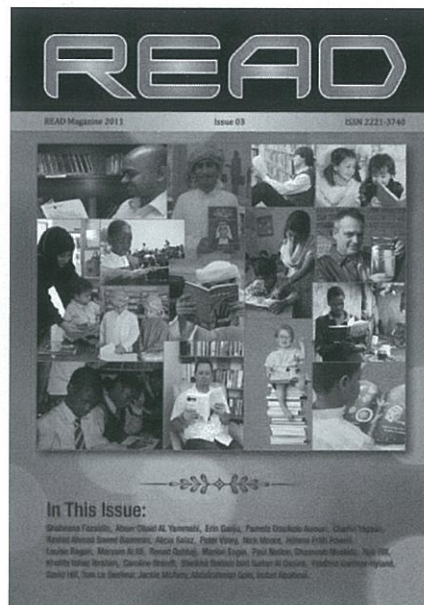
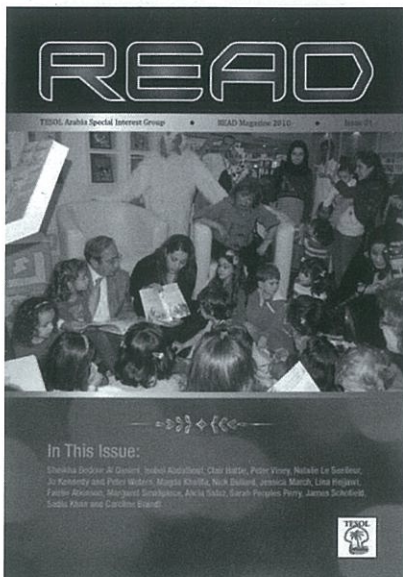


Another favourite children's book that is just as loved by adults



It came as a surprise to Isobel that Persepolis could tell such a gripping story as a "graphic novel."

To find out more about these books, and to learn more about Isobel Aboulhoul's views on books and reading, make sure that you get a copy of **READ** Issue 4, available before EIAFL 2012.



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Everyone needs to know that the UAE and the Middle East is reading.

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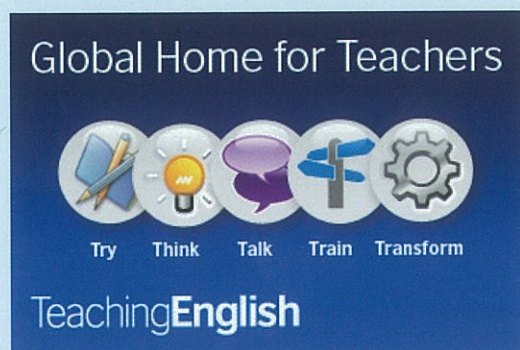
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