

# The importance of reading essay sample

[Profession](#), [Student](#)



Mark Twain once said that “ The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them.” Reading is one of the most powerful skills sets a person can have, yet almost all students who have access to good books, shamelessly take little advantage of them. Children who are growing up in the digital age are reading less and less, but can we blame them? The children of this era are growing up immediately immersed in the wave of technology and seemingly have no choice but to be sucked down under by the continuously changing current. This wretchedly means that books are left wet and unused, on the shoreline. The increasing usage of technology and the decrease of reading is hurting the development of children in not only the category of reading itself, but also writing and social skills. The importance of reading desperately needs acknowledgement. When we live in a time where technology is directly effecting the education of students in an adverse manner, there should be greater emphasis put on the importance of reading for pleasure in order to counteract the declining abilities of students.

The author of Study Finds Reading for Pleasure Puts Child Ahead in the Classroom, an inside look at the study The Role of Reading, reveals how “ children who read for pleasure are likely to do significantly better at school than their peers” (“ Study on Reading”). The study carried out by Alice Sullivan and Matt Brown, divulges how reading can not only help children to gain higher scores in reading, but also vocabulary, spelling and math. Sullivan and Brown looked at what types of reading and at what ages in specific helped to improve scores. The typical scenario was this. Younger children who have parents who read stories and novels are more likely to

continue reading on their own for pleasure throughout adolescents. These children were the children who had the highest scores on the tests. Reading is essential for learning and achieving in all disciplines. The author concludes by saying that reading good books for pleasure is an important aspect of a child's development, but what exactly does reading good books and reading for pleasure mean when put together?

Defining a good book is complicated but a “ good book[s] offers natural resistances” and transforms a person into a better reader (Anton 116). Challenging material can improve the way a person thinks and problems solves. With that in mind, reading for pleasure is not simply to read for information or in search of an answer. When a person reads for pleasure, it should be for solely the reason of enjoying the act of learning, but by learning I do not mean reading textbooks. Textbooks are very informational but not what most would consider leisurely reading. Time needs to be set aside out of every child's life and taken for reading a myriad of different genres of literature in order to help expand the minds of younger readers. A good book changes the way a person thinks and helps him to grow intellectually. The benefits of reading are endless. Reading is the gateway to knowledge and if a person allows reading for pleasure into their everyday lives, then they can reap the rewards. The problem is that many students are children are not allowing reading into their lives. The importance of reading for pleasure is beginning to be overlooked, when it should not be.

Referring to her study, Sullivan states that “ there are concerns that young people's reading for pleasure has declined” (qtd. in “ Study on Reading”).

She does not go on to explain as to why she believes that reading is declining but she doesn't need to. In the digital age, reading for pleasure is becoming a lesser and lesser way of spending free time and it is effecting educational development negatively. Our generation has grown up always being surrounded by technology, but whether or not technology has changed us for the better is debatable. It would be wrong to deny that the increase of technology has benefits for students, but also wrong to deny that the same increase of technology is taking hits to students' developments of important skills such as reading and writing. Ashley Martin, author of the *The 4 Negative Side Effects of Technology* says, " Due to excessive usage of online chatting and shortcuts, the writing skills of today's young generation have declined quite tremendously" (Martin).

The reason this is important is because writing and reading are correlative. Studies like that of *The Role of Reading* show how technology is affecting education, especially reading and writing, negatively. Students are synced into their gadgets twenty-four hours of the days, seven days a week and it is not unusual for free time to be spent gaming, texting or tweeting, but it is these very activities that are destroying the way students think. Free time needs to be spent reading, in order to counteract the less than favorable effects of technology on students. It is proven that to become a better writer one must become a better reader. The secret to success is right in front of us and easily available. Libraries are filled to the brim with books dying to be opened up and read, but as Stephen Rowe, a professor at Grand Valley State University, so bluntly says, " No one reads anymore. No one has time- or space, except for diversionary reading or informational reading" (Rowe 172).

This isn't to say that reading ceases to exist, but that something has caused a barrier between reading for leisure and modern day students.

That barrier is technology and it needs to be broken down. As with every arguable subject there is the good and the bad. As stated before, it would be wrong to deny that technology also has positive effects in the classroom. In recent years technology has grown tremendously, and so it is not uncommon to find a student that is equipped with a personal computer, smartphone, and other media devices such as an E-Reader, tablet, or iPod, all at once. With these devices, any question in need of an answer is just seconds away with the tap of a keyboard and the click of a button. The ease of access to information has grown exponentially. Students can read about the news, explore new ideas and access social media all on their smartphones and or personal computer. The education system realizes this increase in technology among students and is now providing online textbooks and study guides. Homework assignments and quizzes are expected to be completed online as well. The purpose of technology is to make the lives of the users easier, and technology does succeed to do that, but at what cost?

With technology, there is a good side, the ease of information, but there is also a negative side that is losing the benefits reaped from reading good books. Therefore, with the declining of reading for pleasure, there is an ever more present need for parents, teachers and all people to encourage reading and discourage the overuse of technology when it is not necessary. Parents and teachers need to provide opportunities for students, especially younger children to read as much as they can. Succeeding in today's ever changing

society is tough and it would be wrongful for people who have the capabilities to deprive students of the means to the skills needed to succeed. No parent wants to see their child struggle in school educationally or socially, but it might be inevitable if no one takes action in the progression of reading for leisure. The facts are there; reading for leisure increases tests scores, but when reading is replaced with technology, a student's capabilities, especially those of writing and problem solving and obviously, reading, decreases. With it being said that "The minds of children are like blank pages", action needs to be taken to fill those pages with a library of books and not a collection of electronic apps (Martin).

#### Works Cited

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