

Holt summary assignment

[Education](#)



An avid reader, Holt recalls he never looked up words in a dictionary as a child, but the lack of a dictionary did not make him any less intelligent or appreciative of language. He, like many other literate people he met, developed his vocabulary by encountering the same words “ over and over again, in different contexts” (359). Holt’s understanding of what it takes to nurture a love of reading in children from an early age evolves throughout the essay.

He argues that reading would be a more enjoyable experience for children if parents and teachers allowed children to read stories that interest them and not expect them to understand every word or interpret every meaning behind it. Critique: discovered several strengths and weaknesses in Holt’s argument. Agree with him that it is unrealistic to expect children to look up words in a dictionary to appreciate words. Holt is not against using a dictionary as long as the reader uses it practically to look up words that interest him or her. To look them up in order to fulfill an assignment, however, will not promise vocabulary development.

It is possible that forcing words upon a beginning reader will do more harm than good. For most children, learning how to read is similar to learning a new language, and this skill set improves with practice and patience. I also agree when he says we must be careful not to embarrass students if they make mistakes; this method usually causes the student to give up altogether. However, Holt’s argument at times seems biased and overgeneralized. For example, he asserts “ that for most children school was a place of danger, and their main business in school was staying out of danger as much as possible” (360).

His implication that children hate reading because they fear ranking mistakes is valid, but disagree that most of them view their teachers as literary predators. Children's attitudes about reading and education in general are affected by a number of factors such as learning styles, personality, the acquired habits, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. To place the blame on "us" teachers in his inclusive comments about how we humiliate and shame children through our teaching methods is unfair cause I can think of several examples where this is not always true or was not necessarily true during the time he wrote the essay.

His suggestions about how teachers should assess and evaluate student writing contradicts many of the modern teaching guides have read, which posit that holistic grading includes teacher and student feedback.

Application: Holt's essay allowed me to think critically about my own teaching methods and reflect on what has worked successfully in the classroom and what has not. Many college students take English because it is a requirement and their attitudes toward writing are much like the freshman that Holt describes in the conclusion of the article.

They are very anxious about their writing even if they are strong writers, and they seldom write for pleasure rather than for necessity. Holt discourages teachers from using reading as a tool for public humiliation and promotes student-centered learning, which advocates. While realizing there are students who depend on being told exactly what to do for each assignment they are given, I have observed that most students thrive when they have control over what they learn and discover new ideas independently and collectively. This type of learning is supported by positive reinforcement.

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