

Critical response:
"how teachers make
children hate reading"
essay sample



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Critical Response: “ How Teachers Make Children Hate Reading” Essay Sample

Critical Response Paper #1 I remember sitting in disgust as I was reading A Separate Piece, by John Knowles in my 10th grade English class. I never understood why I had to read such uninteresting books. My mind would wonder onto a different subject and then I couldn't remember what I had just read. It was always like that when I started a book that the rules said a student “ had” to read. I thought school was supposed to be interesting. The essay “ How Teachers Make Children Hate Reading” by John Holt explains it all perfectly.

Looking up words in the dictionary that I didn't know from a book was even more uninteresting to me. I would have to stop in the middle of a sentence to look up a word, and then when I came back to the reading I would be even more lost than before. Why couldn't the rules be just a little more convenient? For instance, if you get to a page with lots of unknown words, then look them up for your own behalf for better understanding of the book. Sometimes I still understand what I am reading with just a few words that I don't know. I most of the time can just figure out what they mean without stopping to look them up.

I remember when one time my English teacher read Loves Music, Loves to Dance, a Mary Higgins Clark book, out loud to the class. After that book, I always wondered why that kind of author couldn't be part of the literary canon. I really enjoyed the week that my teacher read us that book, because I actually enjoyed going to English. When my teacher finished the book I

continued to read Mary Higgins Clark's books. She is now one of my favorite authors.

John Holt was a teacher himself and in his essay he completely understand where children are coming from. Making a child read an uninteresting book is not going to encourage them to read more. Reading boring books made me want to read less. Not all the books were necessarily boring either. Some of the books were really hard to understand and I just couldn't grasp it. So then the book would bore me so then my mind would wonder onto another subject like mentioned above.

A student's opinion must not really matter. I am sure that if our opinion did matter then the whole canon would be a little different. I understand that some of the authors have to be on there, but just adding a couple extra authors for the students. It would make class a little more interesting. " Are we going to read a interesting book or a challenging book this week?" If authors were a little bit more wide spread then maybe it would give more of a variety.

John Holt's essay really had a good point of view on how teachers make children hate reading. I know that sometimes teachers don't have a choice in what they teach, but when they do they should make it interesting. Reading should be fun and interesting. Kids shouldn't have to get angry at a book because they have to read it, but instead get angry because they have to put it down.