Building reading communities in the Middle Years

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Climbing some imaginary ladder of ever-more-improving books is not the only or even necessarily the best route becoming a fluent and engaged reader.

Margaret Mackey, 2014
We shouldn't teach great books; we should teach a love of reading.
~ B. F. Skinner
In America the aliteracy rate has now surpassed the illiteracy rates.

Stephen Layne, 2009
THE MAN WHO DOES NOT READ GOOD BOOKS HAS NO ADVANTAGE OVER THE MAN WHO CAN'T READ THEM.

MARK TWAIN
Lifelong readers chat with their friends about books. They get excited about a favourite author. They find informational books that support their reading. Successful readers make time to read.

Maddie Witter, 2013
Engaged readers are:

- motivated to read
- strategic in their approaches to comprehension
- able to construct meaning from text

and

SOCially interactive while reading!

Ivey and Johnston, 2013
Starting the conversation
She sat there all day engrossed in her book...

Night fell and bedtime passed... She read on. After finishing her book, it came alive in her dreams that night... (The grown-up)

The next morning...

8:50 AM

Bus departs at 8:50 AM

I slept in and missed the bus!
Current text choices in English classrooms limit engagement and 21st century dialogue for students, about how we live and thrive in “the face of increasing globalization, perspective-altering technologies, and ideological challenge and change.”

Glaus, M (2014) Text Complexity and Young Adult Literature, Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 57:5
If you think reading is boring, you're doing it wrong.
So if people ever look down upon you for crying for fictional characters, you should give them a gentle, pitying look and feel bad for them. If they’ve never cried for a fictional character, then they’ve never loved one (and what a joy that is). If they’ve never cried at a book, a movie, a piece of music, then they’ve missed one of the great pleasures life has to offer. Just because fiction does not contain things that are real doesn’t mean it doesn’t contain truth, and we find it through the alchemy of our tears.

- Cassandra Clare
The Goose-Bump Effect
The Goose-Bump Effect

- Heart Beating Fast
- Confused
- Reaping Ceremony
- The Hunger Games
- The Hunger Games: Mockingjay
- District 13
- Quarter Quell
- The Hunger Games: Catching Fire
- District 11 Victory Tour
- Confused
- Allegiant
- Outside The Fence
- Confused
- Gobsmacked
- Confused
- Heart Beating Fast
- Gobsmacked
- Gobsmacked
- Insurgent
- Confused
- Edith Prior's Vision
- Gobsmacked
- Gobsmacked
- Gobsmacked
- Heart Beating Fast
- Heart Beating Fast
- Confused
- Confused
- Peter saves Trix
- Jeanne's Death
- Heart Beating Fast
- Fashionless defeat
- Embrie
- Gobsmacked
Who is your book crush?
I SWEAR, THIS IS WHERE I’LL FIND THE LOVE OF MY LIFE.
My book crush is **MR. JELLY**! I collected these books when I was between 3-5. Every night my mum would read one out to me, but my all-time favourite character is Mr. Jelly. He is a small, pink, shy bear who is afraid of nearly everything. He lives, sleeps and walks in an orange onesie! He lives in a small, white cottage called *Mr. Jelly's House*. Everyone in the middle of the village is always scared of him. In his house, everything is written by Roger Hargreaves in 2000.

**MR. JELLY** is scared of people, wind, the sun, leaves, earthquakes, the end of the world, school, loud noises, guns, war, comics, worms, snakes, dangers, animals, empty fields, humans, scientists, teeth, raining, giant, crows, being eaten by wolves, trees, crocodiles, judge, murders, being kidnapped, humans, kites and much, much more!! **MR. JELLY** makes me laugh a lot! He usually screams, squirms, screams, shakes, shakes, shout, quivers, invincible, and turns to jelly!

Who is your book crush? I love everything **MR. JELLY**.
If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking.

-Haruki Murakami
A Feast of Fictional Favourites
In Year 7, our accelerated students are involved in an evening called “A Feast of Fictional Favourites” where they will dress up as a character from one of the novels they have been reading. In a similar vein to the “Night of the Notables” programme, students prepare a stand that shows some of the most important aspects of their “life” as that character, while a roving audience moves around the library asking questions and engaging in conversation with all the characters.

In this activity, students choose a character from one of the books they have been reading - and they are not allowed to choose a book that has not been made into a movie. They are encouraged to choose a character that they feel they really know and understand, but it does not need to be the main character from the novel.

They are then asked to create a display that includes the following:

- A carefully considered costume
- A timeline of events (spoilers are allowed)
- A map of where the story takes place
- A collage of one of the most significant settings in the book
- A letter to another character from the book
- A playlist of the music that the character in the book would listen to
- 20 questions your audience can ask you
- Small give-aways for people who ask questions
7 MILLION WORDS
CAN YOUR CLASS DO IT??

- Switched: 73,053 words
- Wonder: 73,569 words
- Gone: 127,678 words
- Hatchet: 43,328 words
- The Hunger Games: 99,750 words
- The Enemy: 98,934 words
- Undead: 72,067 words
- Grant: 15,304 words
- Tom Gates: 69,323 words
- Delirium: 114,476 words
The Rules:

- The competition runs from the first day of term. Books read prior to this, or books that had already been started do not count.

- Only the word count of completed novels count

- All students must contribute by reading a novel. Unless all students in the class complete one book, the class is disqualified.

- No student could read more than four books. This rule was put in place to stop the responsibility of the class’ success falling to just a few individuals. To counteract the possibility of students stopping reading after their four books, there was also an individual class prize based on each child’s reading through the term
Where possible, word counts were taken from the following website http://www.arbookfind.com.au. This accounted for probably 75% of the adolescent books read. All others were calculated on the average number of words on a page times the number of pages - not perfect, but close!

Subject teachers may contribute to the word count, reading one book for the class total - it is up to the students to approach their teachers and this was a resounding success! Some ingenious students approached our school principal, who was a willing participant.

Winners were awarded a Fish ’n’ Chip lunch in celebration
Search Results
Titles 1 - 20 of 289

Wonder
Patricia, R.J.
AR Quiz No. 326175 EN Fiction
IL: MY - BL: 4.8 - AR Fts: 11.0
AR Quiz Types: RP
Ten-year-old Auggie, born with extreme facial abnormalities, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school, where he endures taunts and bullying and struggles to be seen as just another student.
Wonder
Palacio, R.J.
AR Quiz No. 326175 EN

Ten-year-old Auggie, born with extreme facial abnormalities, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school, where he endures taunts and bullying and struggles to be seen as just another student.

AR Quiz Availability:
Reading Practice

ATOS Book Level:  4.8
Interest Level: Middle Years, Ages 9 to 13
AR Points:  11.0
Word Count:  73053
Fiction/Non-fiction: Fiction
Topic - Subtopic: Emotions-Fear;
Series: