

**PROMOTING READING AND GOOD READING CULTURE THROUGH THE  
USE OF BOOK TALK AND STORY BOOK AMONG CHILDREN IN  
SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN LAGOS MAINLAND**

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***Abstract***

*This paper is the findings from existing literature on the mechanics of using book talks and story books to inculcate reading and the steps to develop good reading culture in children. This work is an ongoing action research work in selected private and public schools in Lagos Mainland. It has so far been established that the use of story hour, book talk readers' club is making impact in promoting reading and good reading culture among children. The teachers expressed satisfaction with the use of these mechanisms.*

**Keywords:** *Reading culture, book talk, story book, School Children*

**Introduction**

From the Roman Empire, book has being a thing of joy to read as the increase of readers' population became enormous for the love of reading. Gutenberg's development of printing machine in the fifteen century enhanced publications and printing of more titles, thus anxious readers put much pressure on the printing industries that more titles were printed to answer to the yearning of the elites and generality of people.

However, they were different reading culture at that time showing the fascinating similarities and contrast to the reading culture of today, Johnson, (2010). In this paper I tried to look at the ways reading can be reintroduced to children in Nigeria with the use of book talks and story hours to make reading pleasurable and inculcate good reading culture among Nigerian children.

**What is Book?**

Book according to Wikipedia is a set of written printed, illustrated sheets made of Ink, Paper, parchment or other materials. Books are made of printed pages fastened along one side to give proper exposure of the letters or the write up there in. At the evolution age of books; it was mainly physical (hard copy) in nature, but as civilisation explodes book began to come in soft copy i.e. the electronic books (e-book). Therefore book can be any written material processed and organised for reading whether physical book/electronic

book form. It can be inform of a journal, magazine, real core subject book, and fiction and children books among others.

Book is an agent of social and cultural change when read. Avalanche of book then increased growth in readers' population and development with the knowledge acquired through reading. Book is a repository of knowledge; it is an avenue where acquired knowledge is stored for posterity such as History, Research report, family tree record – Library Collectors. It is an invaluable monument that preserves man's achievements and development through the ages. Book is a magic World full of imagination as one reads on, it has transformative power! Book remoulds its readers to be real man, guide them on how to relate in society and practical life. Book is the main element that help people (the readers) to learn and have unlimited benefits

1. It is a valuable source of knowledge with infinite benefits
2. Book transport readers into different worlds and cultures through reading, it gives room for imagination and exercise the brain.
3. It is informative: give insight to ancient civilisation also help readers to learn about new technology and literature.
4. Book guide the reader through experience to know suitable method of living through knowledge acquired in the process of reading.

### **The concept of reading**

Reading is an avenue that promotes knowledge and knowledge sharing through documentation it is the result of a highly motivating learning process which consist of steady progress of efforts and attention'' Ramos,( 2012) . Therefore, Onyedikachi, (2005) opined that reading makes a full man while writing makes an exact man. Children who read do better in school and on standardized tests than children who don't (Kahn, 2000). Teachers and parents need good understanding to know that children who read make better success in their school work and give good handwriting. Therefore, they need motivation to read and use good amount of time in reading as these are important contributors to the gap between good and poor readers (Croy, 2002; Gardiner, 2005). The question is how to encourage the children to love to read at all time.

Research had shown that:-

- (1) Motivation to read is correlated with higher student achievement in standardized tests,
- (2) Teacher involvement in reading book boosts students' intrinsic motivation and
- (3) Various genres and writing styles introduced in a reading story book helps students gain a greater awareness of genres and styles in literary works.

### **Steps to good reading habit**

Reading is a very important issue which in addition to its being enjoyable; it is a basic tool for educational success (Makoti, 2005) Reading in Africa is generally poor due to so many factors among which are lack of parental guide to reading, lack of parental motivation, lack of well equipped school library which are compounded by absolute love and addition to new technological games and gadgets. However, awareness now parades the fact that the essential key to academic success is constant reading to develop good reading habit. Choudhury (1990) expressed that reading habit is best formed at a younger

age- the impressionable age and this becomes a lifelong attribute for the children that make it a habit to read

This study is to find out the following

1. how will the use of story book reading method raise the reading interest of students?
2. how will participating in a story book reading and book talk raise the reading level of the participants in relation to other non-participating students?
3. how will participating in a book talk and story book reading increase the writing abilities of those participating in relation to their peers?

The above can be achieved by the following:-

Parents, Schools and Students

### Steps

Encouragement and guide through the parents and the school:-

#### Parental guide:-

- Ø By picking good pictorial positive colourful children books for the babies and read to them, guide the big ones in picking books of their interest.
- Ø Study the child and stipulate appropriate reading time for the children and tailor this to their time of interest.

Parents must cultivate the habit of reading with children at the selected time of the Day



Source: [shutterstock.com/parents stock photos](https://www.shutterstock.com/parents-stock-photos)

Close monitor the children to see that they read at such specified time every day

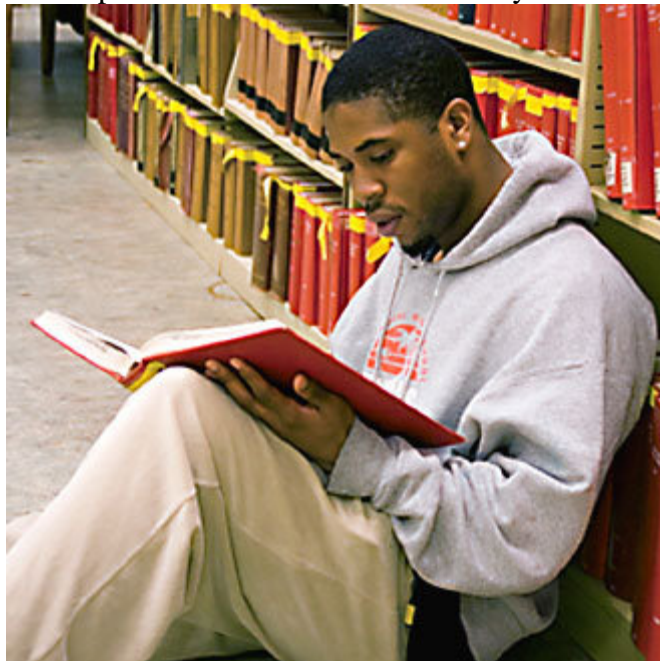
- Ø Censor what the child reads, Pick the book of renowned author and the book must be commensurate to their age and
- Ø Should not be voluminous in pages  
Not dry in look and lettering  
Should be hardcopy for the toddlers  
Should be children picture book for a start
- Ø Draw a log book that will show the Author's name, title of the book and time read every day.

- Ø For fast view and easy monitoring, stick this log sheet to the fridge/a small notice board at the reading (study) arena



*Source: paediatricsofflorence.com+reading book*

Allow the child to pick the arena he/she likes to stay and read in the house.



*Source: parentingclan.com+kid reading to child stock photos illustration*

- Ø At such time of reading please do not disturb by walking round /making phone calls or call the child to do a house chore.
- Ø Evaluate what the child has read when they are through with a particular book.  
In summary using story hour to promote reading must be made a time for pleasure

Read to your child

Read with your children

Be a role model to the children by reading and telling the story of what you read to the children. This can be then be done in turns where it will be their turn to tell the story of what they read, thereby creating a story hour on daily basis. If this is made pleasurable the first time children will be looking forward to it.

### **School Guide**

The school should have a well standard equipped school library to enhance motivation and reading. Good reading habit can be impressed on the children through the school library:

1. Good library setting of colourful arrangement of instructional posters
2. Motivational books with good story line in addition to subject text books
3. Acquire and process more than enough book titles for the student to be well surrounded with books
4. The school librarian should be friendly encouraging and proactive to know what the student like to read and must be censored.
5. Get books authored by renowned prolific authors
6. Establish a book club in the school just like the library and debating society/cultural group
  - i. (i). Encourage student to have reading partner to exchange ideas on book read
  - ii. (ii). Exchange book titles to encourage reading
  - iii. (iii). Encourage student to promote reading themselves ( work with student) to create big books with their own stories as acquired through reading.
7. Have book week when student will come and tell the story/give information on books read from a particular time.

### **The Students**

A real man is made with profitable information that is acquired through reading!

Reading excites the brain, improve thinking and imagination. They should

- Visit library more to read and borrow books for reading.
- Become member of book club/library club
- Must constantly read every day at least 30 minutes which in turn will increase as the love for reading develops.
- Select the simplest book that you can finish reading in a short possible time.

### **Recommendation**

The following are recommended:-

1. That student should read thoroughly and consistently because those who fail in school usually have failed first in reading'' Smith, (1977)
2. That parent should make children grow with books by buying good book of their age standard and not voluminous in pages, availability of books for pleasure

reading and information constitutes a powerful stimulus for developing good reading culture Dike,(1996)

3. Picture books are recommended for toddlers and parents are to read with their children
4. Reading should be made pleasurable to children of all ages and should have easy access to books
5. Children are to be seen as gifts and not harmer on their shot comings / make negative comparison but rather separate the children from their performance to get the best of them thereby give them self confidence and high self esteem.
6. Parents must convey good encouraging words that will motivate children to do much better i.e." You are the light of my life, and this light shines because of who you are rather than what accomplishments you have demonstrated." Study has shown that lack of self-acceptance, anxiety, fear of failure, and impatience with shortcomings, among others waters children performance in cultivating good reading habit
7. Parents must learn that the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts. If they do, their children will learn to see themselves as wonderful composites of abilities and disabilities as well as strengths and weaknesses. This view can become a tremendous catalyst for children's pursuit of excellence, happiness, and contentment.

Children need to see themselves as wonderful composites of abilities as well as strengths while parents must demonstrate the qualities of patience, tolerance, self-control, and flexibility. A flexible parent promotes the attributes children need to have in order to see themselves as individuals who have something wonderful to offer.

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