

Get your children into the flow of a good book!

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Summertime, And the livin' is easy... With summer upon us, that tune from George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* is stuck in my head. I think it's a sign that I should adjust to summer mode and take it easy. For me, summer mode means sitting back and reading – not about common core, flipped classrooms, or cloud computing. It means reading for pleasure - a good beach book that can get me in the “flow.”

Psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi proposed the concept of flow in which one is fully immersed in a task. For me, that means the perfect page turner that causes me to completely focus on reading and lose track of time. Do we allow our children to get in the “flow”?

I've been in many school libraries over the course of my career and hear comments from kids wanting to read graphic novels, the latest vampire romance or even a bit of “potty humor.” And there just is no time for that. I know and understand the limitations that are necessary in a school library visit, but it's summertime and the reading should be easy!

How about visiting the library and allowing your children to browse and choose a book that can truly cause them to get in the “flow”?

Donalyn Miller in *The Book Whisperer* suggests that students should be empowered to make as many of their own book choices as possible. She advocates for “The Rights of the Reader” one of which is “the right to escapism.”

Stephen Krashen, a true advocate for reading for pleasure, gives us this quote by a student, Sophia “*I really enjoy reading when there are no strings attached, when there is no book report or assignment I also like the freedom of choosing any book I wish to read. ... I believe that people would read a lot more if they find books they are fascinated by. No pressure of doing well on an assignment, but the pleasure of reading ... I know when I find a book I like. I just can't put it aside. On the other hand, when I am being forced to read, I lose interest instantly.*”

Most libraries sponsor a summer reading program for kids (and adults). “Dig into Reading” is a popular theme this summer. It's also yard sale time and that's a great place to pick up books. Provide the time and access and you might find your child getting lost in a book. Check out some of these websites; they might help your child (and you) to “get in the flow.”

- ☆ James Patterson has created a tool that can help get kids reading—and get them to love reading: (www.readkiddoread.com)
- ☆ Notable Book Lists published by the Association for Library Service for Children – back lists are available and they address a variety of age groups: (www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists/ncb)
- ☆ Goodreads is a free site for readers. You can see what others are reading, their reviews, and their ratings. You can also post your own reviews: (www.goodreads.com)
- ☆ The Book Report Network provides thoughtful book reviews for a variety of age groups, compelling features, in-depth author profiles and interviews, excerpts of the hottest new releases, contests and more every week: (www.teenreads.com).
- ☆ Guys Read is a web-based literacy program for boys founded by author and First National Ambassador of Young People's Literature Jon Scieszka. Their mission is to help boys become self-motivated, lifelong readers: (www.guysread.com)



Happy Reading!