

## Tip One: The Importance of SSR Time (22.2.19)

- Silent Reading time is **important**.
- Model what a good reader looks like. (Try to use this time to READ, rather than plan and organise - easier said than done! See further hints below)
- We must encourage good reading habits.
- If you need this time for content, then try to introduce a critical reading that applies to your topic and extends their knowledge, thinking and vocab.
- Try NOT to let the students read on their devices. Engaging with physical paper/ written text is hugely important to the development of our students' critical reading skills. (More research is emerging regarding this - yes, online! - [Listener article link](#))

*'The ability to apply critical analysis, empathy and imagination, to discern truth, gauge inference and appreciate beauty are under threat...'*

*'Our brain development is being put at risk by the sheer volume of reading that we are doing online and on digital devices.'*

## What we can do as teachers, parents and influential adults?

Research<sup>1</sup> has identified six important practices and qualities of teachers who encourage recreational reading:

- Personal enjoyment of reading is clearly apparent
- A willingness to instigate and support student centred discussion around books;
- A broad knowledge of both young adult texts and youth popular culture;
- Effectively communicated expectations that students will read at school and at home;
- A knowledge of the interests and aspirations of the students; and
- The use of in-class practices that encourage reading for pleasure, such as reading aloud to students and silent reading.

If we want teenagers to choose to read recreationally then **all** secondary school staff (and parents) need to be reading role models – who encourage, support and provide opportunities for students to choose their own books, time to read, for pleasure, time to discuss their reading in **every** subject, not just in English, and support students as they develop their identity as readers.

*Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift.— Kate DiCamillo*

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from a letter from Jo Buchan, Senior Specialist Developing Readers, Services to Schools National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Matauranga O Aotearoa to the [Secondary English Mailing List](#) 4 February 2019