



ARE YOU READING A GOOD BOOK?

Keywords

reading • pleasure • information • self-expression •
teaching • connection • entertainment • story

Graded readers: from the pleasure of reading to the pleasure of learning

In theory it's easy to read a good book; all you have to do is open it up and start. But it's not always that simple. Sometimes it's difficult to decide whether we really do like the book we are reading or if it's boring. And while some of us give up on it, others keep on reading to the end, but with little enthusiasm... and for students it's the same.

When we hear them say, 'I don't like reading', are we sure what they're really saying isn't 'I don't like this particular book', or 'I don't like doing so many exercises and tests when I read a book'?

Of course it's not something we like to hear in a school context, but it does show they'd prefer a book that they could **read for pleasure**, which allows them to follow a story, explore it, see how it ends, become involved with the characters and the situations, get into the plot and the emotions it provokes, and even imagine their own ending or continuation.

A graded reader allows all students to do just this: **express themselves, have fun** and stay **connected** to their own inner and outer world and with the book itself. At the same time the reader allows you, the teacher, to work together with the class, to transmit concepts, **information, grammar, vocabulary**, and **functions**, while following the school programme. Each story encourages students to learn creatively, making sure they focus their attention on the plot, the characters and their expectations of how story will end. In this way they gradually build up their knowledge of the language without getting bored.

For this to happen though, students need to be able to choose the title that interests them, that reflects their personal tastes and level in order to make the learning process more natural.

1 ARE YOU READING A GOOD BOOK?

What are the stories talking about?

1 Read the following texts and decide which genre they belong to.

A fantasy B adventure C horror D comedy

1 There were dishes, cups, bottles, pans, tomatoes, cakes and many other things to pack in the hampers. As soon as George and Harris started packing, they broke a cup. And, this was just the beginning! George is the worst packer in the world. When George dies, Harris will be the worst packer in the world.

Three Men in a Boat by J. K. Jerome
(Reading&Training Life Skills B 1.2)

2 A few hours later he woke up when the curtain fell to the ground and made a noise. The bed was shaking. There, sitting in the bed, was a white figure. The figure slowly got out of bed and moved towards the professor. The figure's face had no eyes but it had a large, open mouth. Professor Parkins jumped up. He tried to go to the door, but he couldn't reach the key.

Stories for the Curious by M.R. James
(Reading&Training A2)

3 Mr Richardson phoned him and said, "George, a bad blizzard is coming to your area. The weather report calls it 'the perfect blizzard'! Stop your work, get into your van and drive back now!" George knew he was in danger. As he was picking up his equipment, he fell on the ice and hurt his foot badly. He got into the van and tried to turn on the motor but... the motor didn't start.

Alaska Adventure! by Gina D.B. Clemen
(Reading&Training A2)

4 The knights took Rhiannon to the castle. Sir Brangwyn was sitting at a long table. 'Young Rhiannon,' he said, 'you must help me catch the white unicorn of the forest.' 'The white unicorn?' asked Rhiannon. 'When you are in the forest, you must call him. He will come to you.' 'Oh, no!' said Rhiannon, 'The little unicorn is my friend.' 'You must do what I ask!' cried Sir Brangwyn. 'If you don't listen to me I'll kill your father!'

Legends from the British Isles
(Green Apple A2)

2 Answer the questions.

- Which title would you give to each text?
- What could be the end of each text? Write down your personal ending.
- Which text is your favourite? Why?