

Chapter 1 : Essay On The Importance Of Hobbies

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

The report - a page compendium of more than 40 studies by universities, foundations, business groups, and government agencies since - paints a dire picture of plummeting levels of reading among young people over the past two decades. Only 30 percent of year-olds read almost every day. The number of year-olds who never read for pleasure increased from 9 percent in to 19 percent in . Almost half of Americans between ages 18 and 24 never read books for pleasure. They will not achieve anything close to their potential because of poor reading. According to the report, reading ability has fallen as well. While scores have improved for 9-year-olds, they dropped sharply for year-olds. Only about a third of high school seniors read at a proficient level, a 13 percent decline since . In , almost 40 percent of college freshmen and 35 percent of seniors read nothing at all for pleasure, and 26 percent 28 percent of seniors read less than one hour per week. Even among college graduates, prose-reading proficiency declined from 40 percent in to 31 percent in . The new report, titled "To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence," focuses on reading in general, and it reaches down to younger age levels. While not all studies are exactly comparable in some details such as time spans , overall they trend in the same direction. The report notes that average annual household spending on books, adjusted for inflation, dropped 14 percent between and , and that consumer book sales declined 6 percent from to . The report does not explain why youth reading has declined, but Gioia said he suspects three main reasons: Second, we are surrounded by nonstop media, but for the most part it does not acknowledge reading. When the media made a celebrity of J. Rowling, 10 million people bought her book. Third, our lives are completely cluttered with a million gadgets. It found that more than half of middle and high school students use other media most or some of the time while reading, and that 20 percent of the time they spend reading they are also watching TV, playing video games, sending messages, or otherwise using a computer. Besides plotting statistical trends, the report cites economic consequences. Seventy-two percent of employers rated high school graduates deficient in writing, and 38 percent cited reading deficiency. One out of five American workers reads at a lower level than necessary to do his or her job. Not surprisingly, proficient readers are more likely to attain management jobs and higher incomes. Possibly the most striking finding is that, regardless of income, levels of reading for pleasure correlate closely with levels of social life, voting, and political activism, participation in culture and fine arts, volunteerism, charity work, and even regular exercise. Being low in literacy is self-isolating, tends to push you out of culture altogether. Schroeder, president and chief executive of the Association of American Publishers, said part of the problem could be that adults can make children feel that reading is a duty. A common complaint she hears from children and young adults is that few books relate to their lives or interests.

Chapter 2 : Young people 'prefer to read on screen' - BBC News

*The reading interests of young people [George Whitefield Norvell] on racedaydvl.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Reports on a forty-year study of the literary selections commonly included in the school curriculum as compared with students' reading interests.*

Tweet By Jessica E. Moyer, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities Are teens really not reading as much as they did in the past? Are teens reading, but in nontraditional formats that are underreported? If surveys focus on book reading, what about teens who do all their reading online or in digital formats? What about teens who listen to audiobooks? If questions are only concerned with literature, how are we counting the many people who read nonfiction, newspapers, magazines, and websites? Do they prefer print books, e-books, or do they prefer to listen to audiobooks? Can they comprehend at the same level across all formats? Do they comprehend best when reading in their preferred format, or is there a format in which most teens comprehend best? Do teens report being more engaged or interested in leisure reading texts in one format over another? By knowing more about reading format choices and comprehension, self-reports of reading habits will increase validity and the questions can be tailored to reflect new developments in reading generations. Background Over the last few years, both popular and scholarly presses have been rife with articles about how kids and young adults, usually defined as people under 40 years of age, are not reading. As a librarian and literacy researcher, I read these articles with great concern—is it really true that kids and young adults are not reading? But as I began to look deeper and review the research as a literacy scholar, I realized that many studies were only counting traditional book and print-based reading, and sometimes were only narrative texts instead of informational texts. The rate of decline for the youngest adults, those aged 18 to 24, was 55 percent greater than that of the total adult population. Readers who responded to this poll most often reported reading fiction and religious works. Results indicated that children and young adults were reading significantly less than in the past. Among year-olds, the percentage of non-readers doubled over a year period, from nineteen percent in to nine percent in . On average, Americans ages 15 to 24 spend almost two hours a day watching TV, and only seven minutes of their daily leisure time on reading. What the media hype failed to report was that this survey once again only asked about print-based reading, and whether the participants had read a work of literature such as a novel, book of poetry, or play in the past year. Nonfiction reading did not count, nor did non-print-based reading. Significantly, the question that did include nonfiction and other types of print-based reading, asking if participants had read any book that was not for work or school in the last year, had results that were unchanged from . In contrast to the NEA, The Pew Internet and American Life Project is one of the only national organizations to address the digital literacy activities of 21st century teens. The report, The Internet and Daily Life, addressed leisure readers who read online, but like most of the Pew studies, the results were self-reported, and only five percent of respondents reported doing the majority of their leisure reading online. Is it significantly different among teens versus the adult readers of the Pew study? Media in the Lives of 8 to 18 Year Olds. This report is a comprehensive overview of the many different kinds of media that are part of the daily lives of youth, from iPods to home computers with internet access 74 percent in to cell phones and TVs, and the many and rapid changes of the last few years and its effects on the lives of young people. The data in this study is drawn from a nationally representative sample of students ranging from third to twelfth grades, and, like the others, is compiled from a survey that relies on self-reporting and the questions that the researchers think to ask about. Sections of the report break down media use by type, such as TV or computer use. The computer use section is illuminating, as it tracks changes from to , during which the participants significantly increased time spent on games, web surfing, instant messaging, and overall computer use from 27 minutes per day to 62 minutes per day. Missing from this section are questions about online reading and use or participation in fan fiction. In terms of overall media use, they found that youth have a ceiling of approximately six to six and a half hours per day to devote to media, and all the different media must compete for that time. This section of the report breaks down overall media use, and here print media reading is included. In both and , amount of time dedicated to print stayed the same, 43 minutes per day. This

stability in daily reading time directly contradicts the results reported in the various NEA studies, indicating significant differences in how these results were collected and analyzed. Finally, in comparing heavy uses of media types, they found, for example, that heavy readers are also likely to be heavy TV watchers or computer users, and that heavy use of any one media type is often linked with heavy use of another media type. This matches the results of the Audio Publishers Association annual surveys on audio use, which found that print readers are more likely to be listeners than non-readers. Each is discussed in detail below. All participants will be 18 to 21 years of age and first-year college students from the psychology subject pool, who are required to participate in two hours of research as part of their psychology course requirements: Observational quantitative data—background knowledge surveys, categorical data sex, age, etc. Experimental data—within group and between group contrasts, comprehension scores across formats, interest, and engagement ratings. Six to eight purposefully selected case studies representing print readers, digital readers, or listeners—for further exploration of format choices and effects on interest and comprehension. Each of the three is described in detail below, along with the associated analyses and strategies.

Observational Quantitative Data In order to provide baseline data for each participant and to control for additional variables in the statistical model, several types of observational quantitative data will be collected on each subject. Prior to the start of data collection, participants will sign a form allowing for the gathering of ACT scores, which are required for all UW-Stout students. To control for the effects of background knowledge in comprehension, a test of background knowledge will be administered to each participant. They will be randomly ordered and written in such a way as not to indicate the actual text. The first part of the follow-up survey will be a ranking of the three formats: Participants will be asked to rank the formats in terms of their preferred choices for leisure reading and about their experience with each modality. Part 2 will cover all remaining observational quantitative data categories. Categorical data will include their age, sex, race, and level of education. Participants will be asked to complete a series of questions about their regular reading habits: Experimental Data The second source of data will come from an experiment of formats, interests, engagement, and comprehension. All participants will read three selections from three different texts and on each of the three formats. All participants will be 18 to 21 years old and first-year female college students from the psychology subject pool, who are required to participate in two hours of research as part of their psychology course requirements. All participants will be female to control for the effects of gender on reading. As reading research shows that men and women have distinctly different interests in reading genres and reading habits, using both sexes at this time would introduce additional complications and potential confounding interactions in the analysis. Using first-year college students allows for the results to be generalized towards older adolescents and young adults, the two age groups singled out in the last two NEA reading studies *Reading on the Rise*; *To Read or Not to Read*, and the subject of the Kaiser report. Only mysteries will be used so as to best control for the variables of interest and comprehension. Mysteries have been selected because many years of reading research across all ages has shown them to be one of the most popular along with thrillers and romance and a genre that is consistently popular with readers of all ages. Unlike romance or science fiction, far fewer readers report hating mysteries or thrillers, thus making them a good choice for this research. As a general rule, mysteries and thrillers also seem to be one of the most socially acceptable genres, especially when compared to romance trash for housewives or science fiction only for super geeks. Since nonfiction reading creates additional complications surrounding comprehension, background knowledge, disciplinary literacy, etc. However, it is recognized that nonfiction reading is a significant leisure reading area, and may account for even more digital reading than print reading. Additionally, as nonfiction is read more often by males, and this study will only include females, it is not possible for it to be included at this time. It is however, along with sex, one of the most important factors to consider in any follow-up studies. After completing each reading selection, participants will be given a brief measure to rate their interest and engagement with the text, each with five possible responses Likert scale. This cycle will be repeated two times so that each participant reads all three formats and all three texts with interest and comprehension measures after each reading. Case Studies Six to eight participants will be interviewed after the completion of prior data collection. The sampling for the cases will be purposive and will be exemplary cases of either print readers,

e-readers, listeners or omnivorous readers. All of the case studies interviews will be semi-structured and open-ended. Each will be digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. Analysis of the transcripts will be done in complement to the quantitative data and will look for themes and categories that represent the previously gathered data, both from the particular participant and the larger group. The case studies will be used to gain deeper understanding of individual and representative participants in the study. They will be used in the write-up of the data to illustrate data and conclusions from the quantitative experimental and survey sources. They will also be used to frame the entire report to make it more interesting and more readable, providing touches of personal stories to the write-up.

Procedures The data described above will be collected in a mixed methods study. This next section will describe each step of the research procedures and note the type or data being collected. Unless otherwise noted, all research will be collected in a single session in a research lab space at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, in Menomonie, WI. Once recruited, participants will be scheduled for a minute visit to the research lab. Upon arrival, consent and assent forms will be reviewed and signed. The next step will be completion of the background survey, based on the materials in each of the text selections. Before any further data is gathered, participants will be wired for the EDA collection, which will continue throughout the experiment. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of three groups for the experiment, based on the three-by-three grid in Figure 1. They will read from a printed book, an e-book on an Amazon Kindle e-book reader, or listen to an audiobook using a Playaway audio playback device. The Kindle is a self-contained e-book reader designed and sold by Amazon for use with its Kindle format e-books. With more than , titles available, the Kindle library is one of the largest e-book libraries in existence. The Kindle emulates the print reading experience in several ways; it is the same general size and shape of a trade paperback book although it is significantly lighter and the e-ink text is not backlit and thus does not cause eye strain in the way that a computer-based reader does. In many cases, the e-ink is clearer and easier to read than poorly-printed text on thin pages of many mass market paperbacks. The Kindle cannot be turned on or off; it only uses battery for refreshing the page and using the built-in wireless connection, which can be used for blog or newspaper reading, as well as for purchasing additional books from Amazon. The Kindle can also play Audible. Audiobooks will be played using Playaway audios, which are self-contained audiobooks players preloaded with a single title, and are based on MP3 audio players. They have nearly all the same features for listening and are slightly smaller than the current generation of iPod Nanos. Their self-contained nature, needing only batteries and earphones or speakers, makes them ideal for this project. They are also rapidly becoming an important source of audiobook circulation in public libraries. Participants will read the assigned text and format for each reading time. Before using the audiobooks and e-books, participants will be given a brief demonstration of how they work. After the first reading is completed, they will answer the interest and engagement questions. Then they will complete the Content Reading Inventory comprehension test for their assigned text.

Chapter 3 : Political interest and engagement among young people | JRF

This article was published in The School Review (), which is continued by American Journal of Education (present).

The Oxford Dictionary defines hobby as a favorite activity that a person does for pleasure and not as his or her regular business. It is developed through a constant and systematic process. A hobby is not pursued to make a profit. The main purpose of a hobby is to derive pleasure out of it. It gives us mental and physical relaxation. While making a choice out of many ways of spending our time, we ought to ensure that it restores our lost energy and cheers us up. There are a good number of hobbies. The hobby that fits our interest, nature and our budget would be the best. A young person needs all round development of his or her personality. A person may become like a machine if he does his routine work throughout the day. Most people should take some time off from their routine work and play games or go on picnic, movies or pursue their hobbies. A hobby keeps a person active, busy and cheerful. There is hardly a person who does not have a hobby. Not only the educated but also the uneducated pursue one hobby or the other. Some of the common hobbies are playing cards, flying of kites, petting of birds and animals, gardening, stamp collecting, coin-gathering, sewing, crafts, embroidery, knitting, cooking, photography, writing letters to editors of newspapers, writing poetry, reading books and magazines, swimming, listening music, watching movies, surfing internet, traveling etc. Selecting of hobby depends upon the time for hobbies. They become busy in shaping their careers. However, it is very important to develop a hobby. Some hobbies can open up new vistas of knowledge, entertainment and careers. Painting, music, computer software development, graphics designing etc. A creative product may not be of any commercial value. But it gives satisfaction to the artist. The creative person could become an author, and editor or even an art director. A graphic designer can start graphic designing as a hobby. Later on, he can adopt it as a profession. Painting is a popular hobby. It is learned after years of practice. A neat hand is required for his hobby. Many professional schools of painting have been established to train children as well as the youth. Many students today seek a career in computer. They can attain perfection in it if they start with computer software development as a hobby. Gardening develops a sense of eco-responsibility in our minds. A garden full of flowers looks beautiful and gives us sweet fragrance. Flowers and beauty to the garden as well as the house. They delight the sense and give us a great relief from the world full of tension and pollution. As a student, one may cultivate the hobby of reading newspapers and magazines regularly. They keep one aware of the current national and international events. In the long run, one will benefit from it if one has to appear in competitive examinations. Besides reading periodicals, one may also have interest in reading novels. Traveling is another important passion. It is very thrilling to visit new places and to meet with different kinds of people of various cultures. Travel management now also opens a wide range of career for youngsters. The old, especially in rural areas spend their spare time in playing cards. The young and the old take delight in flying kites. Other hobbies include billiards, snooker, tennis etc. Swimming and a few games can be considered sports as well as hobbies. They soothe the soul. Hobbies should be least costly. They should provide creative satisfaction and relaxation. Stevenson, a writer of the Nineteenth century, in his essay. He believed in recreation and relaxation. Each one of us should choose a worthwhile hobby that gives us change and joy. At times our hobbies become our profitable vocation.

Young people were at least as likely as their older counterparts to oppose richer people opting out of the NHS (though a majority of respondents at all ages thought this was fine), and did support.

School teacher Sissi Yli-Hukkala. All normal schedules for the week are off. I thought that we could focus on reading as a process, to promote the idea that reading is valuable in its own right. Maybe the students will internalise the idea that they could read in their spare time as well," says their teacher Sissi Yli-Hukkala. At first the idea inspired scepticism in both her students and her colleagues. The teachers were also worried about how I would be able to motivate the teens to read," Yli-Hukkala says. A few days into the project, however, the pupils seemed to be coming around to how rewarding reading can be. I would never have read this much otherwise. Persistence is the key Yli-Hukkala says she is well aware of the challenges involved with getting pupils to read. Mean PISA test scores in reading comprehension have fallen steadily since the year , for example. Young people increasingly reject reading as a leisure activity in the age of mobile phones. Yli-Hukkala says some of tenacity is required. Reading might seem a chore at first, but it becomes wonderful when you stick with it for awhile," she says. She sees her role as a teacher as acting as a conduit for connecting young people and reading, and removing any barriers between them. She says that the first job is to help students get past their initial distaste at the prospect of digging into a book. No one is forced to do it, but removing distractions has proven to be a big help. Tell them that phones and other gadgets have to be put away for awhile because everyone is going to read quietly. They are carried away and become enthusiastic about it," Yli-Hukkala says. Not reading at home - until now Yli-Hukkala says she had previously tried to have pupils start books in class and continue reading at home, only to notice that no progress was being made. She decided to try asking them to read the same book long enough so they would get drawn in. Her experiment has generated interest in her Espoo community, and the local library has arranged workshops on different topics associated with reading for the class. Discussions about books that the whole group has read have also been popular. Many of my students have said that it is fun to talk about the books that they have just read," the teacher says. The nationwide "Lukuviikko" campaign promoted by the Finnish Reading Centre takes place this year from April

Chapter 5 : Young people | Society | The Guardian

Enter your mobile number or email address below and we'll send you a link to download the free Kindle App. Then you can start reading Kindle books on your smartphone, tablet, or computer - no Kindle device required.

Share via Email We are legion: Or something like that. The precise ages and political labels vary with the telling, and many supposed coiners of the phrase include George Bernard Shaw, Winston Churchill and Georges Clemenceau. The same received wisdom has always led conservatives to dismiss student politics with a world-weary sigh, and has been exploited by operators on the left from Chairman Mao to Harold Wilson. The question, of course, is whether such a sentiment is true. But these high-profile movements may just be masking a broader shift: Has Britain raised a new "heartless" generation of children of Thatcher – and, arguably, of Tony Blair? Or has the received wisdom on the imagined journey through life, from hot-headed radical to self-satisfied reactionary, never been all that true? This even manifests in areas like the welfare state, despite young people being far more likely than their older compatriots to be unemployed. That gulf on welfare between the age gaps is a strong one: Attitudes on a few other issues also showed a split, albeit not quite so stark: The generational shift in attitude towards benefits is perhaps the most frightening shift for advocates of the welfare state – and it is not a mere blip of one opinion poll. According to the long-running British Social Attitudes survey, today more than half of British people think unemployment benefits are too high – versus just over a third in the Thatcher era. Geographical unity is fine, but I think most people prefer the unity and friendship that comes from shared interests. We get to do that now. Borrowing a phrase from the economist Daniel Klein, he says: In another generation, that role might have belonged to the army. Attitudes such as neighbourliness and patriotism are not mere opinions – lightly held and amenable to deftly pitched arguments – but far deeper beliefs that will be harder to shift. Being a veteran is something that has been associated with being an old man for about as long as any of us can remember. Long-sightedness, by contrast, has been – and barring some technological breakthrough – will always remain a facet of old age. In the same way, we can draw a distinction between being associated with a particular age at any one time and having been born in a particular year – and thus being a member of the sort of particular cohort that we label baby boomer or generation X. Analysis in both Britain and the United States has pooled surveys taken across a large number of many decades and grouped interviewees across them depending on when they were born, and established some powerful cohort effects that work in a progressive direction, particularly in connection with race. These results are not passing currents, but deep tidal shifts that apply again and again when people born at the same time are asked the same questions at different times. They are shifts that manifest in other ways against a traditional idea of conformity with "people like me": But herein lies the rub for those of the traditional left: Research by Ipsos-Mori, based on the British Social Attitudes survey, has compared four cohorts of Britons prewar, baby boomers, generation X and its successor, generation Y against each other. Their findings show the prewar generation – perhaps remembering a world before such institutions existed or remembering the war that shaped them – strongly supportive of the NHS and welfare state. But then each subsequent generation supports both institutions less, and less. Worse yet, support within each generation has fallen, not risen, over the years. I think everyone on the left could always do more, though the restrictions put on the unions in the s are suffocating," she says. He went on to a shock defeat against the Tories in This, he suggests, could be a mistake. Any grouping is arbitrary, but the ones used by the Ipsos-Mori researchers were: Baby Boomers The generation born between and , as postwar prosperity and the new welfare state led to a population boom. This generation was the first to enjoy widespread university grants, welfare safety nets, and if they were lucky enough to hang on to their job were hitting the peak of their careers during the late 80s, and are now starting to move into retirement. Generation X Anyone born between and , this generation grew up in the aftermath of the social reforms of the 60s, only to be hurled into the economic battles of the s, as the postwar consensus crumbled.

Chapter 6 : US report says young people reading a lot less - The Boston Globe

Norvell, George Whitefield. The Reading Interests Of Young People. [East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, Print. These citations may not conform precisely to your selected citation style. Please use this display as a guideline and modify as needed.

Then, in a report, *Reading on the Rise*, the NEA proudly reported a 21 percent increase in young adult readership which began in and has continued through In , when the fourth book in the series, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* was released, it sold nearly 3 million copies the first weekend it was available. By , the second Harry Potter movie, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, was in theaters and in , the fifth book, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, was released, selling 5 million copies worldwide in the first 24 hours it was available. This is, of course, not true. In , Richard C. Educators have always known reading is important for child development, it has simply been difficult to market literature to this age group. The moviesâ€™ heightened the fervor, spawning video games and collectible figurines. That made it easier for kids who thought reading was for geeks to pick up a book. In the past seven years, the young adult genre has exploded with a number of new book series [See list below]. Between and , the number of young adult titles published per year fell dramatically, dropping from 5, to just over 3., according to R. In , there were over 30, The study found that the average time spent reading books for pleasure in a typical day rose from 21 minutes in to 23 minutes in , and finally to 25 minutes in The *Story Siren*, a young adult online book review authored by an Indiana graduate student gets 3., unique page views a day. He did not, however, mention the quality of young adult literature or its growing availability via the internet. This is no unfamiliar claim. Worldwide, young adults are the most literate demographic. With the highest literacy rates, the young adult demographic was primed for a good book. *Harry Potter* revealed what NEA statistics previously doubted: In , when the final book in the series was released, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, it sold 11 million copies worldwide in the first 24 hours it was available. The *Twilight Saga*, a four book series by Stephanie Meyer, has sold over There are many new young adult series and kids line up at midnight to get their hands on the first available copies. Series previously thought to be an impossible number of pages are suddenly not so long: *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy by J. Tolkien and *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. Lewis , are mere fractions of the length of *Harry Potter*. After reading only five different book series the seven-book *Harry Potter* series, the four from *The Twilight Saga*, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy plus *The Hobbit*, the seven-book *Chronicles of Narnia*, and the thirteen-book, *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket the young adult has read at least 13, pages for pleasure. Bowker changed their categorization of books, choosing to include any book that had been issued an ISBN whereas they had previously limited the scope to books with ISBNs that were also for sale. This indiscriminate approach is partly responsible for the massive increase in the number of young adult books but R. Bowker only traced book production back to using this method. Regardless, in when C.

*Go to Public Collections to browse other people's collections. Items from these collections can be copied into your own private collection. Create your own Private Collection by searching or browsing to find items of interest and then adding them to a collection. Use * or ? to search for alternate.*

One stares at the television that rests on an end table, the second fiddles with a hand-held video game; the head of the third is wrapped in earphones. Some have brought their own tapes, some doze, most stare up at a small movie screen. What is missing from these pictures, and increasingly from our lives, is the activity through which most of us learned much of what we know of the wider world. Ironically, but not coincidentally, reading has begun fading from our culture at the very moment that its importance to that culture is finally being established. But of course such prophecies are delivered in print, so no one pays much heed. The anecdotal evidence that reading is in decline is copious and compelling. The fact is that few of us, and few of our friends and few of our children, have the time to read as much as we would like. Those old islands of quiet -- libraries, studies and dens -- long ago were invaded by flat screens and Nintendos. Now they are called "family rooms" or, more accurately, "television rooms. And that pile of unread New Yorkers or Rolling Stones or Los Angeles Times Magazines keeps growing, each unread issue an additional piece of anecdotal evidence. Books, the oldest form of print, seem to be doing reasonably well. Publishers, in fact, are churning out more and more of them: That is about 16 times the number of titles printed 40 years ago one of the reasons "keeping up" may seem so much harder for us than it did for our parents and grandparents. And publishers are selling more, too: Reports of the death of the book seem greatly exaggerated. Ah, but are those books actually being read? Not, in many cases, from cover to cover. A recent Gallup Poll found many more people in than in who say they are currently reading a book or novel, but many fewer now than in who say they have completed a book in the past week. In a society where professional success now requires acquaintance with masses of esoteric information, books are often purchased to be consulted, not read. Fiction and general-interest nonfiction works would seem to be designed to be read, but lately these books also serve other functions. Their authors often employ them as routes to movie contracts or to tenure or to the intellectual renown that apparently comes with having catalogued definitively, in two or three dense volumes, how George Bernard Shaw, say, spent each of his evenings. Their publishers increasingly see these books not as collections of sentences and paragraphs that might be clarified and sharpened but as product that must be publicized and marketed so the balance sheets of the large conglomerates they now work for might tilt in the right direction. Given the pace of modern life, the readers of these books, too, may have other purposes in mind -- a quick, conversation-enhancing skim perhaps. They have begun replacing the bottle of Scotch or the tie as gifts -- giving them about the same chance of being opened as those ties had of being worn. The number of bookstores in the United States has been growing in recent decades, at a rate second only to that of fast-food restaurants, but according to statistics supplied by the American Booksellers Assn. In , Michael Kinsley of the New Republic conducted an experiment. These were the books that all of Washington seemed to be talking about. And library use is up. Public-library circulation in the United States has grown from 4. However, the "units" we are checking out of the library now include not only lots of school and business readings but also cassettes, CDs and videotapes. Here is perhaps the most frightening of the statistics on books: More and more of us apparently can. Gathering evidence to confirm or deny this surmise, however, is not easy. There are too many different kinds of magazines and too many individual variations in their popularity. We do know that the magazine business has been in dire straits lately, but this has been caused by a falloff in advertising, not necessarily in circulation. The best indicator of whether we are spending more or less time with magazines may be "time-use" studies such as those compiled at the University of Maryland. Magazine publishers, however, can take some encouragement from the fact that most of that drop had occurred by the s. The statistics on newspaper readership are much less ambiguous and much grimmer. The numbers on per capita newspaper circulation and the percentage of American homes that receive a daily newspaper form similar graphs -- graphs you could ski down. Americans on average now read newspapers much less frequently than

they did 30 years ago, 20 years ago, even 10 years ago. And young people have been losing the newspaper habit even faster than their parents. I sense a general lack of interest in public affairs among my students. The Gulf War provided further evidence of how far the newspaper has fallen. The days when we found most of our news set in type on a page are long gone. Those time-use studies actually discovered a slight increase from to in the amount of time people said they spend reading books and magazines: And this drop has occurred at the same time that the amount of education Americans obtain has been rising dramatically. The percentage of Americans who have completed four years of high school has more than tripled since , according to the Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey, and the percentage of Americans completing four years of college has more than quadrupled. If education still stimulated the desire to read, all the statistics on reading would be shooting up. That they are not may say something about the quality of our educational system and about the interests of the students it now attracts. It certainly says something about reading and its future. If dramatically increased exposure to an educational system based on the printed word cannot get us to read, what will? A hundred years ago, on days when no circus was in town, people looking for entertainment had three alternatives: Those looking for information were restricted to the latter two. Many of our ancestors, to be sure, were unable to read, but those who could relied upon it, as Thomas Jefferson did, with a desperation that is difficult for us to imagine. Books, in those days, had a unique power to transport. Indeed, we have thought up an entire communications revolution, and there have not been many of those in human history. The first such revolution was the development of language hundreds of thousands of years ago; the second, the development of reading and writing in the Middle East about 5, years ago; the third, the invention of the printing press years ago. The fourth communications revolution -- ours -- began, perhaps, with the experiments of Samuel Morse, Guglielmo Marconi and Thomas Edison in the 19th Century, and it has been picking up steam ever since. Movies, recordings, radio, telephones, computers, photocopiers and fax machines are all part of it. But, of course, the most powerful product of this revolution, so far, and the one that has posed the largest threat to reading, has been television. Some print lovers have taken heart from the recent troubles of the TV networks or from the fact that the amount of time the average American family keeps the TV on each day, as measured by Nielsen, finally leveled off in the mids -- at about seven hours a day. But, of course, we have since supplemented broadcast and even cable TV with other equally diverting forms of programming. But then, while we were still getting used to having this perky new friend in our bedrooms, a second wave hit. In , only 5. Add still more minutes for video games. So much for that leveling-off. Russell Jacoby and his wife have found a sure way to protect themselves and their two children from the siren songs of the tube: But most of the rest of us now share our homes with one or more TV sets, which we turn on more than we would like to admit. It is a wonder that we manage to find the time to read even as much as we do. When Lincoln arrived in Congress, his fellow congressmen, by one account, dismissed him as a "bookworm. The First Lady campaigns for literacy. We end TV shows with pleas to read books. Yet it is no longer something that we ache to do. How many kids today surreptitiously finish books by flashlight under the covers? Instead, reading, like eating broccoli, has now become something that we feel we should do always a bad sign. Never in human history has reading been more respected. This is not surprising. One of the characteristics of any technological revolution is nostalgia for the old order. Socrates, who lived a few hundred years after the invention of the Greek alphabet, when writing was transforming Greek culture, strenuously argued the superiority of the oral culture it was replacing. Such nostalgia for the methods of oral tradition -- memorization, rhetoric, recital -- kept them alive in the schools well into this century. Now similar calls are going out to defend the schools against the incursions of the new information technologies so that our educational institutions can serve as repositories of another fading tradition -- reading. Only then did we gain the perspective to see the effects of reading on our thoughts. Those effects are profound, as anthropological studies of societies without reading have begun to show. For example, the following statements were presented to members of a mostly preliterate tribe in a remote area of the Soviet Union: Novaya Zembla is in the far north, and there is always snow there. Each locality has its own animals. It is not that such preliterate people are less intelligent than we are. They simply think differently -- "situationally. Written words can be played with, analyzed, rearranged and organized into categories black bears, white bears, places where there is always snow. The correspondences, connections or

contradictions among various statements can be carefully examined. As investigators such as Ong and anthropologist Jack Goody have explained, our system of logic -- our ability to find principles that apply independently of situations -- is a product of literacy. This logic, which goes back to the Egyptians, Hebrews and Greeks, led to mathematics and philosophy and history. Among its accomplishments is our culture. And when written words are set in print, they gain additional powers. Our sentences grow even less connected to our persons as they are spelled out in the interchangeable letters of movable type. Our thoughts grow more abstract, more removed from the situations in which we happen to find ourselves. Superstitions, biases and legendary characters like dragons and kings have difficulty fitting into these straight, precise lines of type. Charts, maps and columns of figures can be duplicated exactly for the first time. According to seminal media theorist Marshall McLuhan and historian Elizabeth Eisenstein, the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment were both products of the printing press.

Chapter 8 : Generation self: what do young people really care about? | Society | The Guardian

Young People's Reading Interests in South Africa. Machet, M. P. The Children's Literature Research Unit at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, implemented a research project examining what young people were reading at the end of the 20th century, similar to a research project which had been carried out at Roehampton Institute in London.

The research demonstrates that the limited way in which young people see politics is a key factor discouraging their interest. Their views and conceptions are often based on a restricted understanding of politics and lack of trust in politicians to represent their interests. They also feel there is a lack of opportunities for them to engage politically. In spite of generally low levels of interest in politics, the researchers found young people concerned with and involved in a wide range of issues. These cover the broad political agenda, even if young people speak of them in different terms. The report looks at why some young people are more interested in politics than others. It also reports the proposals the young people made for making politics more interesting and facilitating their greater involvement in the political process. Summary Summary During the s media speculation and academic debate have been increasingly exercised about the alienation of young people from political life. However, there has been a lack of evidence of how young people visualise politics and the reasons why they appear to be uninterested. It consulted a cross-section of young people, aged between 14 and 24, from a range of backgrounds and circumstances in Britain. In spite of generally low levels of interest in politics, the issues that concerned the young people covered the broad political agenda. Their views and images of politics were often based on a lack of understanding of politics and little trust in politicians to represent their interests. Irrespective of levels of interest in politics, the young people had engaged in a range of different activities that were concerned with politics. Even those with little interest had sometimes voted or taken part in some other activity, like signing a petition or attending demonstrations. Young people, however, consistently referred to their feelings of powerlessness and the limited opportunities for them to engage in politics until the age of Across the sample, young people proposed various initiatives for stimulating their interest. Some young people did not think anything could be done to arouse their interest. Background Evidence suggests that young people have low levels of political interest and knowledge, and poor opinions of politicians. Political interest across the sample The research identified five different groups of young people, each of whom varied in their level of interest in politics and the way in which they displayed this interest. The first two of the groups lacked any interest in politics; they were united in their dislike of politics and shared a general perception that politics is boring. However, the first group reported being indifferent to politics, and the second group was more cynical about politics and actively avoided anything to do with the subject. The third group of young people was selectively interested and only engaged with politics when it related to an issue which was of concern to them - otherwise, they shared similar views about politics as the previous two groups. The fourth group took a passive interest in general current affairs and issues which were personally relevant. They tended to be at an early stage in the development of their views about politics. The final group of young people were highly interested and displayed a high commitment and active interest in politics. Of all the groups, these young people tended to have the most sophisticated understanding of politics, which had been shaped and informed by a variety of sources. What switches young people off politics? The findings confirm and contribute to existing evidence about the factors that disengage political interest. Because the young people conceptualised politics in a limited and narrow way they perceived the subject as boring and irrelevant to their lives at present. Indeed the young people often reported that they were preoccupied with other interests and activities that dominated their lives, which resulted in their having little time to devote to politics. The young people lacked faith, or sufficient trust, in politicians to tell the truth or keep to promises. This had also alienated them from politics. The young people identified a lack of opportunities for them to engage in the political process until the age of This and their perception that politicians did not respond to their needs had also contributed to low levels of political interest. Acquiring an interest in politics The young people interviewed identified a number of ways in which their political interest had been activated. The realisation, as they grew older, that politics was of relevance to them had been stimulated by changing

personal and financial circumstances, and this sometimes triggered an interest in politics. In addition, being exposed to discussions or information about politics had sometimes aroused an interest. Finally, the young people also identified the opportunity to get involved in politics, typically on reaching the age of electoral eligibility, as having activated their interest. Images of politics and politicians With the exception of young people with higher levels of interest, politics was generally viewed as dull and boring. Others reported their boredom with party political squabbles, which, they indicated, were irrelevant and removed from the lives of young people. In general, politicians were viewed by these young people in a negative light; they were seen to be remote, untrustworthy, self-interested and unrepresentative of young people. They were consistently described as white, male and middle-aged, and often portrayed as being affluent and upper class. How are young people engaging politically? Irrespective of their interest in politics, young people across the sample had engaged in a range of different activities which were concerned with politics. Even members of the low-interest groups had sometimes voted or taken part in some other activity, like signing a petition or attending demonstrations. The young people consistently referred to the ways in which they felt they were excluded from participation in the political process. Even where they acknowledged there were opportunities, they argued that the views of young people remain unheard and are treated as immature and childish. Views about voting Their views on voting did not necessarily hinge on levels of interest or on reported voting behaviour. Young people emphasised the importance of voting even when they had not voted and did not intend to vote in the future. The role of family and class in driving voting decisions was most apparent amongst young people who were still living in the family home. Otherwise, voting decisions were driven by peer group influence, a particular policy, a desire for a change in government, and the sheer novelty of voting for the first time. In addition, lack of understanding about politics, registration issues and a lack of trust and faith in politicians were given as reasons for not voting. Encouraging political interest The suggestions young people made for encouraging political interest centred on the factors that were turning them away from politics. They were therefore concerned with four related areas: Conclusions The researchers conclude that the challenge to those who are keen to kindle political interest is to ensure that young people are aware of the relevance of politics within their lives. While they need to be shown that politics is more than party politics, they also need to be made aware that politicians share a number of their interests and concerns. However, in order to engage their attention, politics needs to be delivered in an accessible and enjoyable way that enables them to consider and appreciate the issues being discussed. Political parties will clearly have a role to play in achieving this. But it is essential that this will operate and coexist alongside the other ways in which young people can be empowered and informed - for example, at home, at school, or amongst the local community. In addition, politicians need to give more consideration to the concerns of young people, and forums that facilitate such dialogue are required. Ways of involving young people in the structures and processes of decision-making are also needed. The impact which these initiatives will have, however, depends upon the degree to which, and manner in which, young people believe their interests and needs are being heard and responded to. In order to convince young people that their interests will be effectively represented they will want to see politicians from a wider cross-section of society. They will also want to see evidence that politicians are acting on their behalf. A balance needs to be struck between empowering and engaging young people and pressurising them to participate and be interested in politics. Young people seem keen to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms for their involvement but they may feel increasingly burdened if there are too many requests for their participation; the electorate as a whole is increasingly being asked to vote in more elections. In participating in these elections they are also required to fathom their way through a range of new and complex proportional representation voting systems. Finally, it should be recognised that young people are currently taking action in a range of political activities even if they do not see them as political. In the past, too much emphasis has focused on the apathy of the young. It is now time to focus attention on the role of politicians, educators and elders in engaging and representing the interests of young people. About the study A cross-section of young people, aged between 14 and 24, from a diverse range of backgrounds and circumstances in England, Wales and Scotland, were consulted. They were invited to consider politics in their terms, employing their reference points as well as conventional political benchmarks. A total of 24 focus

groups, 16 paired and 20 individual interviews were carried out with young people across four different age groups, , , and years. A set of verbatim transcripts were produced from the tape recordings of the interviews and focus groups. Downloads Findings Political interest and engagement among young people Political interest and engagement amongst year olds 1. Uniquely, we also run a housing association and care provider, the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust.

Chapter 9 : Younger Americansâ€™ Reading and Library habits | Pew Research Center

Among teen-agers in recent years, reading anything serious has become a chore, like doing the laundry or prepping a meal for a kid brother.