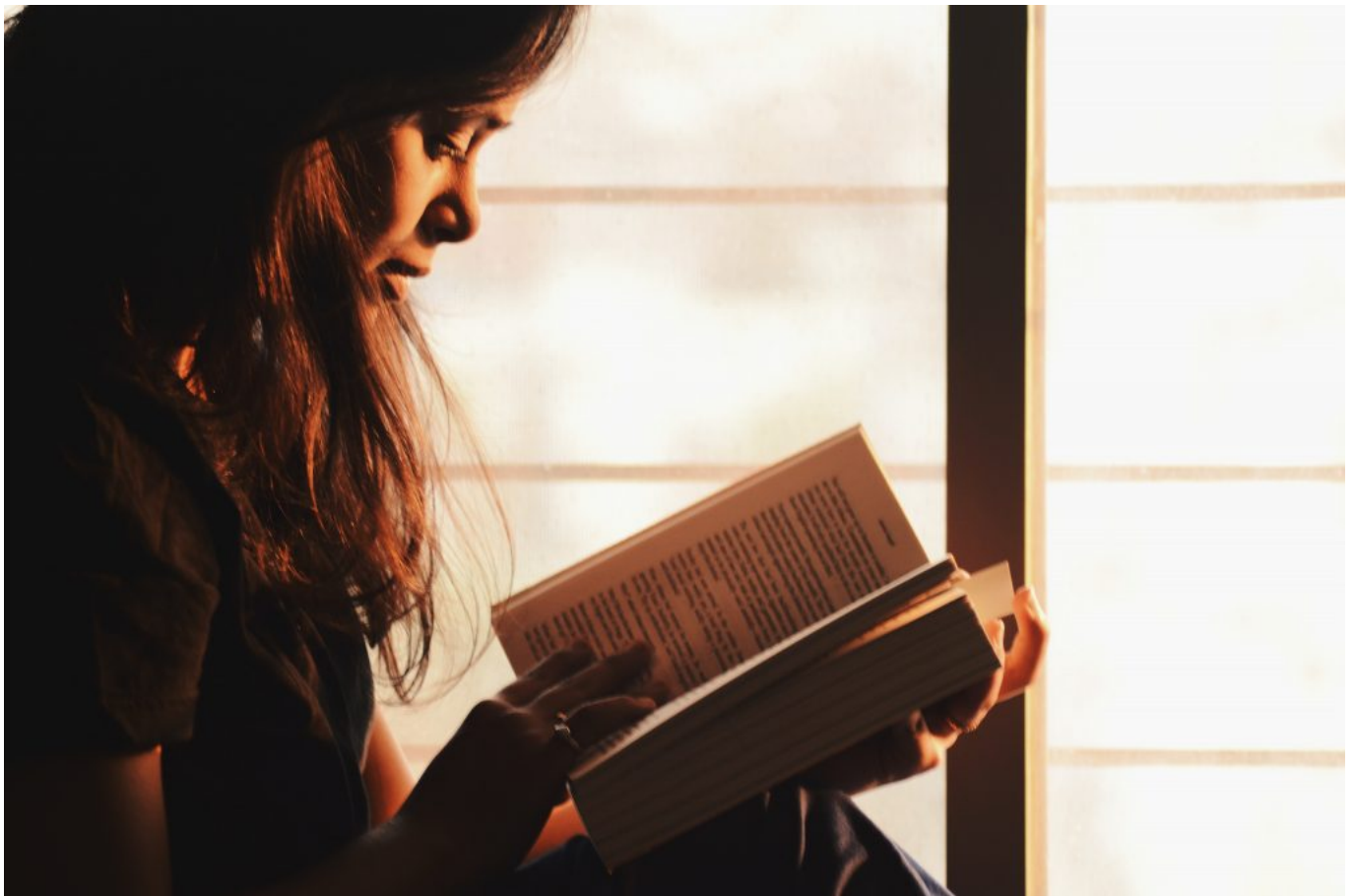


# How reading can make you a better teacher

If you have spent a lot of time surfing different blogs, as I did, you surely have come across numerous blog posts that tell how reading will improve your writing game.

But did you know, that reading can make you a better teacher as well?

Reading regularly has a lot of benefits, some of which directly translate into improving your game in the classroom. In this post, I will give you some examples of why reading is important for your game as an educator, as well as give you some reading recommendations.



Reading regularly can have a lot of benefits for you as a teacher

The five main ways how you can use reading for your benefit as a teacher are:

- You want to give quality input to the students, so you need a broad

horizon – reading is the right method for that

- Reading can give you more insight into your own practices
- To become a better teacher, you need good communication skills – reading can help with that
- Reading can be a relaxing activity – a relaxed teacher is a better teacher
- To be a better teacher, you need to design interesting lessons – reading can help with inspiration

You want to give quality input to the students, so you need a broad horizon – reading is the right method for that

Your most important job as a teacher is to guide your students in their quest to become the best version of themselves. No matter the subject you teach, it is important that you are an authority in your field.

But not only that, in today's world, it is even more important that students learn to connect the knowledge they have to get a broad understanding of the world. If you want to help them in their quest, it will be a big advantage for you if you also have a lot of insight into areas, that are beyond your immediate area of expertise.

Children are often curious minds, and they are likely to ask a lot of questions. It is how children are.

And it is important, that they preserve this curiosity all their lives. The best way to help with that is by pointing out directions to the answers they are looking for.

This is exactly, what reading does. You get to open your mind, so you, in turn, can guide your students in opening theirs.

## Reading can give you more insight into your own practices

If there is one thing, I learned during my practice as a teacher, it is that I constantly need to be ready to change.

The pedagogical method that I use today, might not work tomorrow.

Also, there are a number of factors that have an influence on the dialectic between you and your students. For instance socio-economic background, culture, race, gender, neurodiversity, and so on.

Reading can provide useful insight into many of these factors.

By reading and learning about how different people experience the world, you can get a better platform to stand on and develop your empathy.

I like to read about politics and philosophy a lot, and I often think about how I can utilize the knowledge I gain in my lessons.

From reading historical novels, you can also learn a lot about how we used to look and interact with each other and our children, which can lead to some healthy reflections on your own practice in the classroom.

To become a better teacher, you need good communication skills – reading can help with that

We already established that reading can have a positive impact on your writing.

But actually, it can serve you in developing your oral skills, also.

Think about it. If you want to teach someone anything, you need to be able to get your message across.

Just like there are many styles of writing, there are also many styles of speaking.

Which words you use, where you put the emphasis, your pitch, all those factors create your unique voice.

And you can improve that voice through reading.

Reading helps in building your vocabulary. It can also give you more experiences to draw from when you try and make your point.

Nobody likes to listen to people who just want to hear themselves speak. One way of showing, that you are an authority on your subject, is by knowing what is out there.

Your students may not always show their enthusiasm, but they will follow you if you give them value.

Reading can be a relaxing activity – a relaxed teacher is a better teacher

Let us face it. Being a teacher is not always a thankful job. You will meet students or parents, who are in opposition of you, every teacher does. And your leadership or school board is not always gonna play your game either.

In such situations, you will usually gain very little, by letting your emotions get the best of you.

This is easier said than done. But I mean it. In order to cope with stress, we need to take our well-being seriously.

I use reading as one of my favorite pastimes when I need to relax. But by

reading I do not mean surfing around social media or news websites. Because there the aim is always to just play on our emotions and get us riled up. No, I mean books or long blog articles, that are well-written and where you can feel the research and work, that has gone into that piece.

It is so relaxing to snuggle up with a good blanket and your drink of choice and dive into the author's mind.

And when you are relaxed, your students and others will thank you for it.

Over the years I have found, that the more I have found some stoic calmness, the better results I get in my work. You can too.

## To be a better teacher, you need to design interesting lessons – reading can help with inspiration

Education is a dialectic process. There is a reason, why Paolo Freire used the terms “educator” and “educant” in his book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. The link above will take you to Amazon, where you can find it.

It signifies that the two are, in fact, equal participants in the process. What that means for us as teachers is, that we have a responsibility. A responsibility to design lessons, that are well thought out, engaging, and relevant.

Again, that sounds good on paper but can be difficult in practice. Even after 16 years, I still struggle with it, sometimes.

But reading can be an excellent resource for solving this problem.

Because reading books and longer articles can give you mountains of inspiration. But don't just stick to crime novels (nothing wrong with that genre). Branch out. Read about politics, philosophy, current events, or history. You will see that it will get your ideas flowing when you design your lessons.

It works well for me. Like I said before, I always think about, how I can use what I learn from reading in my lessons.

## Read more, read often

I hope, that you found this article useful. When it comes to reading, it is a challenge, however, to find time in our busy schedules to do it.

I recommend trying to build a habit, by not setting too ambitious goals. If you manage to read two pages every day, but can actually do it every day, you are already on the right track. Consistency matters.

Here I would like to throw in some recommendations of books I read recently, which I found both interesting and qualifying for my work.

I will link to their respective Amazon pages.

### Yuval Noah Harari – 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

The author really fleshes out in a well-written style, how drastic our society is changing. He also shares some good reflections of what that means for our education systems

### Ulcca Joshi Hansen – The Future of Smart

Probably the go-to book, if you want to understand how and why our education system is failing a large majority of students and what can and should be done to rebuild it from the ground up.

### Catherine Price – How to break up with your phone

The book contains a comprehensive list of research about how smartphones affect our dopamine systems and capacity for emotional regulation. This is a must-know for educators, in my opinion. Because our children are most vulnerable to these effects. The discussion of how we use technology in a responsible way is long overdue.

Tell me, what did you read recently, and how did you use it in your classroom?

*Note: This post contains affiliate links to Amazon of books and other items I used or know well, which I recommend in this article. This means I get paid a small commission if you choose to follow the link and make a purchase.*