

CLASSICS: Why And How We Can Encourage Children To Read Them

Fiza Pathan

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CLASSICS: Why And How We Can Encourage Children To Read Them asks a very basic question: why should children read books deemed 'timeless'? Fiza Pathan provides many answers to this question - and they are not limited to benefits to children, either.

There are many reasons for reading classics. Being time-tested and well-written, they improve language skills and they stimulate the imagination. Their descriptive powers are considerable, and many hold moral and ethical lessons for all ages. Moreover, they often provide surprising and ongoing insights into current events and general knowledge: an asset the teacher author discovered when one of her students was called upon to take an impromptu quiz on the subject and succeeded, crediting his reading of classic literature for addressing thought-provoking questions.

These ranged from a question on which group of people in an English court give a verdict (answer: a jury - from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) to the word for the study of languages (linguistics - from *Pygmalion*) and the definition of someone who hoards money without spending it (a 'miser', from *A Christmas Carol*).

But this is simply one of the many educational benefits to be gained from reading the classics, and as Fiza Pathan explains these benefits, she also addresses the different challenges of reading classic literature for different age groups, provides discussions of where to locate these books and how to define a 'classic', and contrasts the pros and cons of abridged versus unabridged versions.

With its wealth of information that ranges from book clubs for young people to notes about obstacles to reading and comprehension and the myriad benefits of classics, *CLASSICS: Why And How We Can Encourage Children To Read Them* is a treasure trove of insights highly recommended for teachers and adults who want to pass on the legacy of classic reading to kids.

-D. Donovan, Senior Reviewer, Midwest Book Review