



## Strategies to Support a Positive School Climate

# Reading for Fun

Leisure reading entails reading for pleasure from a self-selected source (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007). Leisure reading helps build foundational language and literacy skills, including verbal fluency and reading comprehension; thus, students who spend time reading outside of school become better readers (Mol & Bus, 2011).



### Why is it important?

- Out of school learning activities, such as reading for pleasure, are linked to higher student achievement (Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001).
- Lower ability readers benefit the most from exposure to print media and leisure time book reading (Mol & Bus, 2011).
- Student interest in reading for pleasure declines in early adolescence, which limits opportunities to refine fundamental reading skills (Nippold et al., 2005).
- Attitudes toward leisure reading improve when reading materials and topics match students interests and motivations (Worthy et al., 1999).

# In Practice

School leaders can instill greater interest in reading by increasing opportunities for leisure reading.



## What can schools do?

The following actions can be used to develop a culture of literacy at school:

- Invest in quality, well-funded school libraries that contain a variety of up-to-date print content for students to read.
- Create class timetables that enable students to regularly attend school libraries to engage in reading-related activities.
- Host school-wide events that encourage reading for pleasure (e.g., bookfairs, book week activities etc.).
- Ensure that parents, caregivers and school staff understand the impact leisure reading can have on student achievement.



## In the Classroom

Educators can have a positive impact on students' lives through leisure reading (Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Nippold et al., 2005).

Teachers can instill lifelong reading habits by:

- Connecting with students to determine their personal interests and offering reading materials that align with those preferences.
- Creating classroom libraries designed to give exposure to varied reading materials, including magazines and graphic novels.
- Providing daily blocks of uninterrupted silent reading time to allow students to read from a source of their choice.
- Introducing reward systems that encourage students to read (e.g., bonus points, classroom trophy etc.).
- Maintaining educational continuity by challenging students to take on optional summer reading assignments.

## References

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