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|  | How does the age of the reader impact the reader’s ability to learn to read and/ or develop skills and competency in reading?  What are the issues involved, particularly when thinking about ALL the changes involved in adolescence?  Background: Recent trends have focused on adolescent readers because of their vulnerable status. Earlier research did not pay much attention to this age range. Rather, it was lumped in with others. Often, this age is looked at only in terms of secondary education. Even then, the research looks more at reading of expository materials almost exclusively and these with an eye toward college prep.  This article looks at both reading IN schools and OUT of schools. Additionally, this article investigates the biological aspects of the adolescent as it relates to reading.  Specifically: biophysical, cognitive and psychosocial attribute of the adolescent and consider development issues as well as transitional issues as the young person becomes an adult.  The article intends to address:   * What do adolescents read? * Why do adolescents read? * How do adolescents read?   **WHO ARE ADOLESCENTS?**  Humans between the ages of 12 and 18 and can be looked at by dividing into four areas:   * Physical development *transformation of brain structure and organization* * Cognitive development *including increase reasoning ability/ abstract thought* * Changes in self/ social relationships *greater autonomy focusing more on peers* * Changing context *shifting school contexts and educational expectations*   *italics* above indicate as related to reading,  **BIOPHYDIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT**  ***Puberty and the Adolescent Reader***  Direct relationships can be discerned between maturation of the human body physically, and the adolescent’s reading. For example, more emphasis on magazine reading with a subject of the human body and sex. Additionally, a higher level of understanding at this age.  A direct relationship was discussed between young girls reading beauty magazines and their subsequent almost obsessive compulsion to be thin and engage in risky behavior. |
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| Define: **voluntary processing** vs. **involuntary processing**  Define: **anaphoric ties**  the use of the same word or phrase at the beginning of several successive clauses, sentences, lines, or verses, usually for emphasis or rhetorical effect. "She didn't speak. She didn't stand. She didn't even look up when we came in" is an example of anaphora.  Define: **cloze**  A test that requires test taker to fill in missing words and therefore demonstrate their level of understanding of the text as a whole | **NEUROLOGICAL CHANGES**  Newer methods of seeing into the brain, recording various brain activities, makes it possible to see differences between adolescent brains and those of other age groups.  Additionally, these changes seem to become evident in behaviors, for example self-awareness.  *Cognitive Monitoring or Regulation.* Young readers were unable to identify errors in text.  *Related Memorial processing.* Higher levels of understanding, for example giving insight into a character or writing a paraphrase that demonstrates understanding of the text become more evident at this age.  **COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**  “Qualitative shifts in reasoning ability and increasing comfort in abstraction” (p. 162)  Piaget calls this formal operations of hypothetico-deductive thought (1964/1967)  Adolescents are more able to consider different points of view and to use reading, particularly literature, as a way to broaden their own experiences and understand their world.  *Inferential and Elaborative Comprehension*  The ability to understand texts even when sections are missing increases with age.  *Recognition and Use of Text Structure/ Features*  The ability to understand metaphors and this abstractly increases with age, as does the ability to consider a character’s goals and their story.  The same is true of texts that focus mainly on science and also social studies. Making assumptions based on prior knowledge deepens with age.  **PSCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  Reading is a social act!  *Reading habits and interests.*  Reading is sometimes seen as ‘feminine.’  Youngsters read voluntarily if they classify themselves in certain ways.  Reading differed for girls (reading magazines focused on beauty, sex, relationships, etc.) while boys read about computers, sports, cars.  Also read much on the internet.  A decline in reading is noted during this age partly because of other interests developing—socializing, participation in sports, etc.  *Identity and Social Roles*  Magazine *Full On* designed to be an intervention for young boys. Reading this was acceptable and even permitted in public.  Some communal reading occurs, too. |
| It’s very interesting how interest in reading is influenced by both internal factors (physiological, emotional) and outside factors (the need to socialize, receive peer approval).  How do popular novels, such as *Harry Potter* or *The Hunger Games*, break through that barrier? | |
| What is meant by a “visible author?” (p. 168)  What is “Motivation to Read Profile?”  Define: **graphophonemic**  Refers to the sound relationship between the orthography (symbols) and phonology (sounds) of a language | **CHANGING SCHOOL CONTEXTS AND EDUCAITONAL EXPECTATIONS**  As students move through upper grades, the focus is turned away from reading instruction toward Language Arts and English with reading and comprehending literature as the task.  Skills learned in English are expected to cross curriculum. In other words, the ability to interpret text in a short story can also be used to understand a word problem in math, a science experience in biology and a case study in history.  Two areas of interest—Domain Specific of Content-Area Reading  *Domain-Specific or Content-Area Reading*  In one study, a girl was given the task of skimming a text and the boys then took on the role of conducting the experiments.  *Engagement and Affect.*  Hormonal changes affect the interest in reading but creating engaging literacy activities can curtail these adverse effects.  For example, making personal connections to the text. However, “this is only helpful when there is relevant *and* accurate knowledge to relate to the text or task at hand.” (p. 169)  Females valued reading more than males. They read if they enjoyed the reading, in other words the subject matter.  **LESSONS LEARNED**  *The Biophysiological Bases of the Literacy Experience Cannot Be Overlooked*  Researchers can sometimes forget that adolescents are undergoing a LOT of changes and that these changes can affect what they read, how they relate to what they read, why they read and how they apply what they read to their encounter with the texts.  *Expanded Visions of Adolescence Should be Mirrored in Expanded Views of “Struggling” Adolescent Readers*  The article identifies that the typical disabilities associated with adolescents might miss the mark with this age group.  Challenges for them include the inability to interpret abstract concepts or be able to cope with complex content.  These readers, particularly boys, don’t want to be perceived as ‘schoolish’  Struggling readers are those who have no interest in reading or a willingness to engage in a text. |
| I’m trying to understand, perhaps, how I became a struggling reader or one who lacked the interest or motivation to read. | |
|  | *Limited or Narrowly Conceived Literacy Programs or Interventions May Exacerbate Rather than Ameliorate Reading Problems for Adolescents.*  Experiences are foundational for adolescents.  “Given the rises in linguistic abstraction, conceptual load, and domain-specific applications that routinely confront adolescent readers, many direct literacy experiences would benefit this population.” (p. 170)  *Keys to Reading Motivation for Adolescents Might be Found in Nontraditional or Alternative Texts Processed in Out-of –School Settings.*  Reading materials for this age group must be age appropriate and of interest topically.  Magazines are one area that might be developed further.  Adolescents are comfortable with technology; therefore, why not make more available through this medium?  Texting, emailing, browsing the internet ARE ‘print based’ technologies even if they are NOT actually printed—they clearly involve the decoding of print.  “For adolescents to take advantage of the bountiful opportunities reading offers, they – and we—must have a clear and convincing vision of their real possibilities as readers.” (p. 171)  Dewey spoke about how important it is to engage the young mind. It’s still true. |
| The article did not directly address perhaps the most important element- the ongoing creation and writing of this NEW engaging material so that adolescents continue to have good reading material. | |
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