

Going Deep with Young Readers

Books let us go deep by showing us ourselves

We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become.

— Ursula LeGuin

Books let us go deep by showing us the world

You think your pains and heartbreaks are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, or who have ever been alive.

— James Baldwin

Encourage ownership. Allow for choice.

When students self-select books, we must value their choices as much as possible. This means accepting failed attempts when readers choose books that don't work out or select books that span a range of reading levels.

— Donalyn Miller

Make Connections. Build community.

Building relationships with other readers sustains a student's interest in reading because it reinforces that reading is an acceptable and desirable pastime.

— Donalyn Miller

Where choices are honored, recommendations are trusted

Encouraging students to read what they want while exposing them to high-interest, engaging, quality texts of all kinds fosters their engagement and provides the diverse experiences they need to find texts that will meet their reading interests and needs both today and tomorrow.

— Donalyn Miller

This is how I show my students that I love them — by putting books in their hands, by noticing what they are about, and finding books that tell them, “I know. I know. I know how it is. I know who you are, and even though we may never speak of it, read this book and know that I understand you.”

— Donalyn Miller

Books are a dress rehearsal for life.

— Katherine Paterson

Reading is not a duty, and has consequently no business to be made disagreeable.

— Augustine Birrell

Books are the plane, and the train, and the road. They are the destination, and the journey. They are home.

— Anna Quinlan

From Donalyn Miller’s *Reading in the Wild*:

Wild Readers...

Dedicate time to reading: “Our students must see themselves as readers, or they will never embrace reading beyond school.”

Self-select reading material: Children need to be given the opportunity to try a variety of books “even if they don’t work out.”

Share books and reading with other readers: To raise Wild Readers, all adults must show reading is something “our culture values as a life activity.”

Have reading plans: Kids need to see their teachers actively reading and planning “ways to expand [their own] reading lives.”

Show preferences: While Wild Readers show preferences, these “are not fixed. Wild readers move between different types of reading material depending on

their needs and interests at any given time.” Preferences may change and grow along with the reader.

The world was hers for the reading.
— *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*