



Passages Press

Tips for Readers & Writers

When you have trouble remembering what you read, what helps you improve your comprehension?

Rob Fusillo: In order for me to comprehend what I read, I make up images in my head and remember those images because I have a photographic memory. If I use the information in a short period of time after I read it, I can usually remember it. I've tried taking notes on what I've read and it confused me more than it did help me remember.

Katelynn McLaughlin: In order to remember what I read and improve my comprehension, I talk to someone about the book I read which helps my memory. Discussing the details of a book that I really enjoyed reading helps me remember the general outline of the story. When I write down notes or different parts that are more interesting than other parts helps me comprehend better, too. I also sometimes reread a sentence if it doesn't make sense or I don't get it.

Miranda Parsons: If I have trouble reading I always try to have things quiet, with no noise. The new thing that I tried is reading the same page/pages over again if I forget - that is the

only way for me to remember. I actually find it hard to sit down and just read a book, so those are the things that I use to be able to concentrate.

Gabbie Roberts: I used to have a lot of trouble with remembering things I read; I would have to read the same page two or three times. I have learned that reading quietly to myself has helped a lot. I used to always skim more than I actually read all the words on a page, which could have been a big reason why I didn't remember much.

Molly Bechand: I used to forget what I read, but I learned to slow down and take my time and read each word. It helped me comprehend what I was reading. I like to visualize, summarize, predict what's going to happen next and to try to understand the ideas, pages and the sentences. You can try to check parts of the story you know and sound out the word. You can reread, read on and talk to a friend. You can try to visualize what you read by what happened so far, close your eyes, picture what's going on in your head and use other senses. You can check how you are doing and state the problems.

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What is good writing?

Emma Luscombe: Good writing is writing that makes the reader see and feel as if they are in the book. Rich vocabulary and imagery is really important in good writing. Also, the correct use of punctuation and grammar and the understanding of how to correctly put together a sentence.

Katelynn McLaughlin: Good writing is: ideas that are organized and logical, an author's voice, which is individual and has its own style, word choice that is specific and leaves the reader remembering, sentences that are smooth and expressive, and correct punctuation, spelling and grammar. I think good writing also has something to do with an interesting subject.

Gabbie Roberts: A good writer is someone who knows how to use the right punctuation and grammar. It's also very important to keep the reader's attention, for the writer not to "drag on". The reader should feel as if a story is real, very detailed. If a writer is answering a question, then the answer should have the correct information.



Mikayla Williams: For each person good writing is many different things. To one person good writing is giving the readers something they can respond to. It is making something confusing seem

simple. Writing isn't something you just do, it needs to be worked on and edited to make it perfect in your eyes. Another person may write about their situation to see which decision would have the best outcome. Good writing comes from the heart, the mind, and from outside things going on around us.

How does your child react to books?

Rob Fusillo: I have read *Head Shoulders Knees and Toes*, *Baby Smile* and several other books to her. She reacts by showing expressions. For example, she shows expression by repeating what I've read in her own way. She also asks me to read to her. She loves Dora books.

Katelynn McLaughlin: I read all kinds of books to Lilly. I ask her to point to the dog and the kitty and she does. She will point to whatever I ask her to. I read the *Itsy, Bitsy Spider*, *Bear Went Over the Mountain*, *Good Night Moon*, *Five Little Pumpkins*, *Look at That*, and *Toes Ears and Nose*. Lilly asks me to read to her all the time. She will get a book off the shelf and bring it over and hand it to me and jump up and down. I think reading to Lilly is important because it makes her smarter, more intelligent and she enjoys it.

Gabbie Roberts: When I read books to my daughter, she listens and tries to touch the books. She has enjoyed books a lot since she was three months. She is very interested in them and she likes to hear us read. We read to her every night. Just recently she has started to smile and giggle a little. It's so cute!

Mikayla Williams: Kacy has no interest in being read to. She rips pages out of books and eats them. She just doesn't want to sit still. She would rather play with toys or other children than sit down and listen to a story. I recently discovered that Kacy will pay attention to books if she is very tired. She still doesn't show an interest, though. I could find things that Kacy has an interest in to get her to enjoy being read to. Making another book with pictures of objects Kacy knows would be a good start. I could try telling Kacy stories about things that happened and use objects to keep her attention on me.

Poetry

by Niomi Johnson

I have done poetry before, but never bothered typing it, printing it off or putting it in a book. It feels good that I have it as an outlet. The frustrations are typing it and actually putting it together, wondering if it would be good enough. I learned that I could actually be a poet, and be somewhat good at it.

I decided to interview my old poetry teacher Mrs. Lee from Eastport. She was always fun to work with. Mrs. Lee got drawn into poetry when she was a child and she learned the ability to rhyme with nursery rhymes. She said it was fun, and as she got older she understood more, then it got more serious. Her frustrations with poetry are not finding enough time in her life to do it or not finding the right words. The enjoyment she gets out of her work is seeing it published, getting it out there for people to read, and if it touches someone else, it always makes her happy.

Mrs. Lee does many other types of art. She writes fiction, does photography, and haiku. She takes a visual image and mixes it with a haiku.

Mrs. Lee has a couple favorite poets as well. One is Edmand Samus from Camden, Maine. Her poetry just touches Mrs. Lee. Her other favorite poet is an Irishman. Mrs. Lee is Irish as well, so she can relate, and she thinks he puts a lot of thought into his poetry.

Mrs. Lee thinks we need poetry, to see different ways of writing, reading, and learning. Her favorite quote at the moment is by Jimi Hendrix, "When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace."

Do you think about every word, or just let it flow? I asked her. "I think about every word."

The Business of Being Born

a film review by Gabbie Roberts

After watching *The Business of Being Born* and researching the topic it makes me wish that I had had a homebirth. I wish I had watched this film before having my daughter. I feel that home births are the best thing for mothers that are not at high risk during their pregnancy.

According to this documentary, one in three women plan home births in other countries. In the United States, one in three women are having caesarean sections. I can understand the perspective of home births being unsafe. I didn't know that midwives also carry Pitocin and medical tools. Many people are of the opinion that midwives aren't real doctors. After watching this film it has shown me that midwives know how to safely deliver a baby. I had considered a home birth, but I was too scared to go through with it. I thought if something went wrong, the best place to be would be in a hospital.

What was so convincing to me in this film was seeing women have births at home. It seemed less stressful. No one was insisting on pain medication or telling the mother what to do. The women got to catch their baby at delivery and be in their own home.

Seeing the history of hospital births was honestly a little disturbing. The way that they used to tie women up and blindfold them or the tools they would use to get the baby out just wasn't right! It definitely changes the way I think about midwives and home births. If I ever get pregnant again I will definitely be doing a home birth.

I learned that midwives attend over 70% of births in Japan and Europe and in the United States midwives attend less than 8%. I also learned that the U.S. has the second worst newborn death rate in the world and that the U.S. has one of the highest maternal mortality rates. I am very thankful that my daughter and I are healthy, but if I had to do it over I would have done a home birth.

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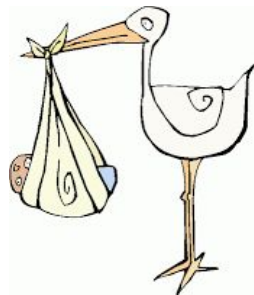
Pregnancy from a Young Dad's Point of View

by Jake Ebbeson

Pregnancy is a very broad subject to narrow down in just a few paragraphs; therefore, I will just briefly touch on a few aspects that really interested me. When my daughter's mother was pregnant, I tried to learn as much about pregnancy as I could. I read many books, pamphlets and articles. I went to every doctor's appointment and asked questions. Before having to deal with pregnancy, I was quite unfamiliar with how a fetus develops, why each trimester is crucial to the baby's development, how the mother's actions and habits can affect the fetus, and what the risks to the mother and child are during the delivery process.

In my research, and through first hand experience, I learned that the fetus has the most developmental change from the first to the second trimester. I learned that a fetus responds to light and sound outside of the womb. I was very impressed to know that an unborn baby is already familiar with the mother and father's voice when they meet for the first time. I learned how healthy eating habits and living styles might help the fetus develop better.

I found out many interesting things about pregnancy and how it works through my daughter's mother and other sources. I am happy to have the knowledge that I have now, because it has become useful in educating my peers about pregnancy and the fears that come with it.



A Teen Mom Answers Back

by Kiera Satele

I feel strongly about people who judge young mothers or pregnant teens. I honestly think having a child has no age limit as long as you're a good mother. Everybody has something to say about young mothers, but half the people saying something about it had a mother who was young when they had them. I salute all the young mothers who had their child instead of going the easy way out and having an abortion.

I read that teen girls who have mothers with little education are much more likely to become a mother at a young age than girls with better educated mothers. To me that seems a little bit judgmental. I don't believe there's a link between an uneducated mother and a daughter becoming a young mother. No parent in their right mind wants their young daughter having a child, especially being in high school and living in their parent's house.

One thing I can't stand is when people talk about something they know *nothing* about. Most people who comment on teen parents have no experience and very little understanding about teen parenting. I think people should mind their own business. How does someone else being pregnant affect them? It's not their life, so why do they have so much to say? I go on Facebook and I see a bunch of people slamming teen mothers. I think it's hurtful because a lot of teen mothers have been through a lot and try their hardest. It's easy for them to judge, but what people might not understand is it's hard going from having a lot of friends, going out when you want, and doing dumb things to doing none of that. I think it's healthy for young moms to get a little time to themselves and shouldn't be judged for it.

I think people judge teen parents because they don't think we're responsible enough to take care of another human being just because we got pregnant at a young age. Yes, we made the mistake of having

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intercourse without using protection but we should get credit for making a wonderful decision- keeping the baby instead of getting an abortion or giving it up for adoption. Nobody is perfect, so judging somebody from a mistake they made is awful. Most teen mothers change for the better once having their child. It makes them realize a lot and mature a lot more.

I'm a young mother. I got pregnant at 15 and when I found out I was pregnant, I was scared. I was scared of what everybody would think and say. Now that I've accepted that I'm a young mother, the love and bond I have shared and grown with my son has changed my whole outlook. I don't care if anybody hates me because I'm a young mother. Being a mother has changed me in a completely good way. My life actually has meaning. Instead of going out and doing the dumb things I used to do, I do something meaningful with my time. I spend it with my son and create more of a bond with my son.

My life isn't over like everybody tries to make everybody believe. I know I'm young but I also know my son and I will have a great life and such a bright future. I'm a strong and determined female. I go to school, and I'm looking for a job to better myself and to make a better life for my son. I'm working on getting my high school diploma. Our future is bright because I push the negativity out my life and stay positive. I know one day my son will be proud of me and the woman I become through all the struggles I go through to make it to the top. I hope my son knows that I did it all for him and how much he has made me into a better person.

Equality

by Mikayla Williams

An issue I feel strongly about is equality. I feel strongly about equality because everyone has the right to be with whom they love and to be happy. More and more people are feeling comfortable about coming out. However, there are still so many who are afraid because

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of how some people get treated for being different.

I was first educated about gay rights when my best friend came out to me as a lesbian. At that time I didn't really know what gay was. I had just heard people using expressions like, "You're so gay," among other more inappropriate things. My freshman year in high school another very close friend brought me to OUT! As I Want to Be, a support group for the young LGTB community and their strong allies. The amazing new people I met changed my entire knowledge of the word gay.

Love isn't something you can change. Not allowing two people to get married is just making it so they cannot be happy. People who are straight can get married several times and those who are homosexual cannot get married once (in most states). Not allowing them to marry isn't going to change how they feel towards one another. Beginning this year people of the same sex can legally get married in Maine. It is a disgrace that other people influence what goes on in someone's relationship. A relationship is meant to be between two people, not millions.

More and more teens and even adults are committing suicide because of how people treat them because they are gay. I can only imagine how I would feel if I was the reason someone took his or her own life. On January 29th 2013, 15-year-old Jadin Bell from Oregon committed suicide because he had been bullied in person and online for being gay. This teen hung himself on a playground because he didn't have the stamina to continue with this nonsense.

My point of view would just annoy ignorant people who care what other people do. I hope someday my opinion will be the opinion of the majority of the people of the planet, if not of all. Those who say equality is against their religion clearly do not think for themselves. Just because you believe someone's religious path, doesn't mean everything they say you must agree with. Like the signs that say, "God Hates Gays", yet those who hold them up believe God created everything. Why would He create something

he hated? I am not being disrespectful to anyone's religion, just stating my opinion. I believe everyone has a right to feel the way they do.

New Perspectives on Conflict

by Kaniah Sockabasin...

Step 1: Cool off

I cool off by leaving the argument for a few minutes. I go outside and think to myself if the problem is really worth arguing about. Before I go inside I take a deep breath and tell myself that the problem we are having will get resolved faster if we come to a compromise without yelling or blaming each other.

Step 2: Tell what's bothering you using "I statements."

The other day my fiancé and I had a disagreement about the laundry. Instead of blaming my fiancé for how expensive our electricity bill would be if we used the dryer everyday, I used "I" statements and said, "I think it would be a really good idea for us to pick two days out of the week to do laundry, so our electricity bill won't be out of our budget." My fiancé agreed. If I would have said, "You need to stop doing so much laundry or you're gonna pay the bill yourself!" our disagreement would have escalated to an argument.

Step 3: Each person restates what they heard the other person say.

The good thing about restating what the other person is saying to you, is they feel like you are trying to understand and acknowledge what they are explaining to you. That way if you get it wrong they can correct you.

Step 4: Take responsibility.

Both people in a conflict usually have some responsibility. Instead of blaming the other person, I try to be accountable for my actions. Even though being accountable doesn't make what I did right, I still feel good about admitting to what I did if it was wrong.

Step 5: Brainstorm solutions and come up with one that satisfies both people.

When I moved into my new house, there were three of us that had to agree on how to rearrange our living room. So we all sat down and threw out ideas about how to rearrange it, until we all agreed.

Step 6: Affirm, forgive, or thank.

After a disagreement, when we finally come to a compromise, it's nice to forgive one another because it clears up the tension. I personally feel like a weight is lifted off my shoulders when I forgive someone or share affection.

by Brittany Wescott...

All couples have conflict at some point during their relationship or marriage. We all have a strong emotional connection with the people that we love. Conflict is not bad if you work through your issues, if you are respectful of one another during communication. Men and women respond to conflict in different ways. Men like to withdraw from a conflict, whereas women are more direct than men. They get their points across, and they're much more critical than men. When couples aren't happy, resolving a conflict is more difficult. Unhappy couples have miscommunication.

I have been in many fights in my life and most of them were over things that were very stupid. After reading things about people fighting and bad relationships it gave me a lot of insight into the relationship that I am in now. There are some very useful words of wisdom out there, and you just have to look beyond everything. In all reality life is too short to fight, even though at that certain time when we fight, we don't think about that. Now when I feel like an argument is coming on, I will allow myself to cool down and calmly have a conversation about something that's going on that's bothering me or my other half.

When you live with someone it also gets harder because you see them every day, and you never really know what someone's like until you live with them for a while. There are ups and downs in everyday life and in

relationships in general.

by Dakota Sprague...

Getting angry and upset at someone or something is part of life. How do you deal with the issue? Throw a fit and hope it gets better? No, most people use conflict resolution. So what is conflict resolution? It's a method to help resolve problems; they're different steps taken to reach a goal or agreement.

When I was younger and tried negotiating with someone it never worked. I always thought I was right - end of story. That was my main issue - when I wanted to think I was right, I was! When I tried to do something and it wasn't doing what I wanted it to do I got very angry or upset. As I grew up I realized I'm not always right and that's life. You just have to deal with the cards you were given. It also got a lot easier to negotiate with someone because I was able to understand the issue at hand. When you get into a conflict you should always try and use the steps to conflict resolution

Effortless

by Mikayla Williams

A relationship shouldn't be work.
It shouldn't be fighting to make things work,
It should be two people no more no less.
Outside conflicts shouldn't reflect it.
Outside parties shouldn't disrupt it.
So many times I have cried myself to sleep.
So many times I have begged for you to stay.
No more letting myself get hurt,
For someone who doesn't care.
No more letting myself give in to you,
For simple things to change your mind.
I am done being let down.
I am done being broken down.

Finding a Safe Home

by Kayla McKenney

When I was five I was put in foster care so in order to really answer the question what made me feel safe or unsafe I will need to tell both about my life at my birth home and the life at my foster home. What made me feel unsafe as a child in my biological home was my father. He was always drunk or on pills and he would scream at my three older sisters and me. Also, he used to hit my mom a lot and I remember this scaring me a lot. Another thing that scared me was when my mom and dad had their so-called friends over, because they all would start drinking and dealing drugs and people would get loud and as a kid loudness and alcohol meant violence.

Another person who made me feel unsafe was my Uncle Norm. He would come in our room at night when we were trying to go to sleep (not that we could with all the noise), and he would start to touch us sexually and this was scary cause I was just a kid; I did not know what was going on, but I would not fight back because if I did I would get smacked or kicked or hit some other way. Not a day went by at this house where I did not feel unsafe.

Now what made me feel safe was my foster home and this is because Shirley and Bob and Trenton were just the best people you could ever meet! When I first moved into their house I was afraid that my biological dad was going to come and take me away and hurt me, so at night I would sit up in my bed and just stare at the window watching for them. I felt the need to protect my new mom and dad, but also I was scared. For a while they moved me into every room in that house to see which one I was more comfortable in and finally, they gave up their room for me and that helped me sleep better because there was fewer windows. Also, I felt safe because there was no alcohol in the house. They were quiet people and they did not hurt me or sexually touch me. They took care of me, fed me, gave me a nice bedroom and nice clothes and nice things and I felt more love

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than I had ever known. They kept me from age five until age seventeen. To me, they are my mom and dad; they raised me when my biological parents couldn't. My biological dad to me is not my dad. My foster dad will always hold a bigger place in my heart. He did not hurt me. He loved me and he earned my love.

Taking Care of Myself

by Rob Fusillo

My emotional needs are met by having people sit down and talk about their problems and for me to be able to talk about my struggles. I meet my spiritual needs by taking the time to sit down by myself and relaxing daily. When I drive late at night on unchartered roads, destination unknown, especially if it is snowing, I find this peaceful and a time to relax. Physically, I need to do things that are hands-on. I like to build things and construct things that are productive. This is not only part of my physical needs, it is part of my spiritual needs. It relieves my stress. My social needs are met by spending time with my family. This would include Katelyn and the kids and to continue using my sales skills in a job format. I like to make deals that work out in my favor. This interaction with the public is social.

Fear for me is being afraid of my temper. I am afraid I will lose my temper with people who do not display any sense of respect for my family or friends. I try to keep the wrong people away and not have this type of person in my life. This type of person might include addicts or others who don't have respect for life. I try to filter my temper constructively by finding a safe adrenaline rush, like chopping wood or making a good deal. I am always aware of this anger and try to filter it constructively. I noticed a sense of relief from writing things down instead of taking them out in other ways. Writing a journal frustrated me because I like to physically relieve my stress (chop wood) and writing is not active enough for me.

I take care of myself in other ways by being in a healthy relationship with Katelyn, spending time without the kids and still spending quality time with Cami and Bentley. We are also starting our own family traditions. One of these traditions is to not spend Labor Day at an Indian Pow Wow. We would like to start making our own decisions about what Katelyn and I want to do on holidays. I require very little sleep at this time in my life. These self-care skills are the ones that work for me.

Career Search

by Miranda Parsons

The kind of career that would match my interests would be a CNA and then a registered nurse. I just like the idea of helping people; it honestly makes me feel better about myself to help others. Also, I'm friendly and nice to people. I am willing to get over my social anxiety in order to go forward with this.

For now, I would like to start smaller while I am working on getting my diploma. I have just recently gotten a job at Subway in Belfast; my experience there has been great; I really like it. I am learning to be people-friendly and be in a fast-paced environment. Of course, it is not my dream job, but it will get me by for now. I also enjoy it and have fun at the same time!

Interview with Diana Blood who works at the Belfast Family Dollar:

Where do you see yourself in the next five years in your work?

To become a CNA and take the course this fall.

What can you tell me about your job?

It's nice. I enjoy the people and I feel that I am becoming very good at working in the store as a cashier and also stocking the shelves.

What do you do for your job?

I am a cashier and I stock shelves; it is a pretty easy job.

What are your strengths and weaknesses for this job?

I am a friendly person and easy going. I am very easy to get along with and I do my job well. Those are my strengths. I can't really think of a weakness, but if I could, it would have to be maybe being too slow.

What could you teach your future employees?

I could teach them to take pride in their jobs and do it the way it is supposed to be done.

Interview with CNA Amanda Johnson:

What are your main duties as a CNA?

ADL: Activities of daily living. Main duties are to care & provide for patients & or residents. Assist with daily activities such as: hygiene, getting them dressed etc.

Do you see yourself staying with this career in the future?

I love my career but I also want to work with kids, so no I don't see myself staying in this career.

What are your major strengths and weaknesses as a CNA?

My weakness is remembering routines. I have a horrible memory & everyone's routine is different. My strengths are understanding the residents' requests & respecting the care they want and deserve. I joke with them as they do me. I keep it not only professional, but I also try to be a friend.

Why did you choose the career you are in?

Because my mom would bring my sisters and me into the nursing home she worked at and we would talk to her residents. They were all so kind.

What do you like least about your job?

Not being able to spend enough one-on-one time with the residents. There's always something to do so there's hardly ever time to chat with them unless you are getting them ready or giving them a shower.

Can you tell me about a time you had a rough day with a resident? How did you deal with it?

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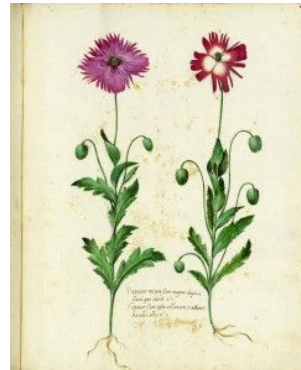
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There was this one woman who used to give new employees a hard time, she did it with me one day, I explained to her that I wasn't there to argue with her. I was simply there to provide care. I also told the charge nurse & had another CNA in the room with me. Someone who the resident knew very well just incase the resident tried making a false accusation against me. They do that sometimes when they don't like the CNA. After that I had no more problems with her.

Botany

by Gabbie Roberts

Botany is one of the oldest branches of science. Botanists study 400,000 species of living organisms. Botany began with early human efforts to identify edible, medicinal and poisonous plants. Botany traces its roots back more than twenty three centuries, to the Father of Botany, Theophrastus (c. 371–287 BC), a student of Aristotle. In the middle of the first century Pedanius Dioscorides wrote De Materia Medica. It was a five volume encyclopedia about herbal medicine.



Plants are the fundamental basis of nearly all food chains because they use the energy from the sun and nutrients from the soil. If we didn't have plants we wouldn't have anything! I don't think many people realize how much we need plants and how many uses plants have. Hemp, cotton, wood, paper and vegetable oils are some materials made from plants. Plants respond to and provide understanding of changes in the environment. Plants can act like an early warning system alerting us to important changes in our environment.

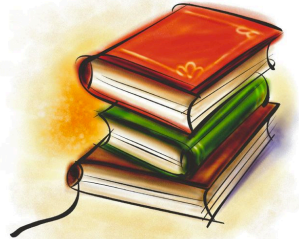
What surprised me most out of my research is that scientists can analyze pollen

found in fossils and remains from thousands or millions of years ago and figure out the reconstruction of past climates and the prediction of future ones. Plant systematics and classification are essential to understanding habitat destruction and species extinction. Ultraviolet radiation causes changes in plants, which can help in studying problems like ozone depletion.

Some plants reproduce sexually, some asexually, and some both. The breeding system or how the sperm from one plant fertilizes the ovum of another, depends on the reproductive morphology, and is the single most important determinant of the genetic structure of plant populations. Stamens may be called the "male" parts of a flower; collectively they form the androecium. Carpels may be called the "female" parts of a flower; collectively they form the gynoecium. The "perfect" flower has both stamens and carpels, and may be described as "bisexual" or "hermaphroditic". Roots anchor it to the ground, gather water and mineral nutrients from the soil, and produce hormones.

After researching about plants I'm shocked and amazed. I never really took the time to think about how much plants provide and how it works. I will be taking a botany class when I go to college. I am very interested in learning more about plants.

The Book Corner



The Fault in our Stars

written by John Green
reviewed by Mikayla Williams

Sixteen-year-old Hazel was diagnosed with cancer when she was 13. Her parents took her out of school and she didn't get out much after that. She started going to a cancer

support group and at one meeting she met Augustus. They start hanging out and gave each other each a book. The book Hazel gave him didn't have the ending. Augustus found the author and used his dying wish to bring Hazel to Amsterdam to get some answers as to what happened after the book.

The author was a bitter man, and didn't give them the answers. When they returned Gus became bedridden. His cancer had come back. He had an 80% chance of survival but he was one of the 20%. He had written a letter to the author in his last days. Once Hazel was able to read the letter she was at ease.

I connected to the book in a way of being a mother. One example is that Hazel's mother was paranoid about what may happen to her daughter. It reminded me of how I felt when Kacy had a seizure; thankfully, she was fine. Another way I relate to the book is losing someone you care about from a disease. The book wasn't exactly exciting, but it was amazing how even though two people were limited by their illness, they made it across the world to do something that mattered to them.

I didn't cry while reading it. However, I know how Hazel felt when she pushed Gus away because she didn't want to hurt him. I have been to a place where I have felt like not getting up, but there is something that makes me do the things I don't want to. I mostly related to Hazel because she isn't very social because of her life.

The Hunger Games Trilogy

by Suzanne Collins
reviewed by Erika Bishop

I read the Hunger Games series. These books are based in a place called Panem that is divided into twelve districts. Each district is very poor and has certain laws and certain work –mining, farming etc. Every district has to send one boy and one girl ages 12-18 to the hunger games. The hunger games are a fight to the death game that takes place in a

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different type of location each year and is watched on TV by all the districts. The last one standing is named winner and gets his or her own house and a supply of food and money.

In the first book the sister of the main character, Katniss Everdeen, is drawn for the hunger games but she steps in to take her place. She's a hunter in her district, even though it's against the law. In the first games she manages to get a bow as her weapon, which she's extremely good at using. She and the supporting character, Peeta, begin a love story for the media, but she struggles with what is real emotion and what is the act.

The Hunger Games is a fantastic series. When I first heard about this series it didn't sound like something that I would be interested in, but I was hooked from the first chapter of the first book. It's a trilogy and at the end of each book I was dying to get my hands on the next. This series has a little bit of everything in it: romance, violence, death, friendship and heartache; it really pulls at your emotions. And the way it's written sucks you in. At times I felt my heart beating fast with anxiety about what would happen next. I really lost myself in these books while I was reading them. I love the main character and the way the writer lets you into her head. It's definitely worth checking out.

The Pregnancy Project

by Gaby Rodriguez

Reviewed by Katelynn McLaughlin

I read The Pregnancy Project by Gaby Rodriguez. Gaby started the book off with her childhood, talking about her background, which included her mother also being a teenage parent. Gaby was the "one" in the family that everyone had hoped would be successful in life and do something better with her life. All of her siblings were young dads and had not done anything with their lives.

For her senior project, she decided to pretend to be pregnant as an experiment to see how people would treat her. Gaby found

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out through this experiment how society treats a teenage parent. Gaby discovered that even people close to her were not supportive and told her she ruined her life. These same people also treated her boyfriend this way. At the end of this book she goes in front of the entire school and rips out her fake stomach and announces that she was never pregnant to begin with. Her schoolmates and teachers were shocked.

I would recommend this book to anyone because it had a good message in it that people do look at teen parents differently and that you should never judge someone. Teen parents can still go on with their lives and succeed.

The Pregnancy Project

a poetic response by Haileigh Ingraham

I faked a pregnancy
I got a lot of hate because of it
everyone said it was bound to happen
because every family member of mine had
become a parent at a young age
statistics show a lot of teen pregnancy each
year
so I wanted to help prevent it by this project
and to show everyone how it was like to be
pregnant
after the big reveal came out that I was not
pregnant
a lot of people were touched
and I had a lot of news reporters wanting to
interview me
but I didn't want that
it became something bigger than I expected
I want to become something more than what
my family became
so that would mean I didn't want to follow in
their footsteps and become a teen mom
my name is Gaby and this is my story.