



What We Learn from Reading

Make Friends with Saints and Sages

〈Edo period intellectual Yoshida Shoin〉

sent his 15 year old cousin, a letter titled, Seven Rules for Samurai.” In it he states, “As you are living as a human being, if you do not understand the truths of times past and present and do not make saints and sages your teachers, you will become a mean-spirited person who thinks only of self-interest. Therefore, it is the duty of a virtuous person to make friends with saints and sages through reading.”

〈Socrates〉

“Reading books is the best way to easily absorb what people have gained through strenuous endeavors and also to develop yourself.”

we come to know how to lead good lives as human beings, and this has never changed in any era.

〈Books of all genres〉

can stir our hearts with depictions of great emotion and wonder as well as show us the sorrows and joys experienced by other people, and all of these are nourishment for the mind.

various studies have shown that reading has many excellent benefits for both the body and the mind, regardless of your age.

The Positive Effects of Reading Printed Books

〈People learn about themselves by〉 〈There is also data showing〉

reading stories, imagining the world within those stories, and empathizing with the characters.

At the same time, reading seems to cultivate the empathy and sensitivity needed to understand other people’s positions and feelings, and to foster the sensitivity that inspires us to be considerate of others.

that people who read a lot of books in childhood have a vocabulary that is about three times greater than that of people who did not.

“The amount of reading a seven-year-old child does will decide England’s reason for existing in twenty years’ time.” This is said to be a quote from former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, implying that a country full of people who have fostered,

through reading, a well-balanced sensitivity and intellect will have a well-educated and gentle population that is very amicable, which in itself is a mark of great national strength.

〈mathematician Masahiko Fujiwara says〉

“Only by reading books do human beings organize isolated information and transform it into knowledge, and only through experience, reflection, and sensitivity does knowledge become organized and form culture”

the functioning of a cultured and enriched mind is necessary to properly evaluate “information,” and much of the sensitivity and contemplative experiences that form the basis of doing so are cultivated through reading.

〈There are many〉

other positive effects of reading printed books, s such as

- Relaxation
- Stress Relief
- Improvements in symptoms of dementia

〈But above all〉

we can receive the teachings of Shakyamuni and Confucius through books (scripture).

The more biographies we read, the greater our joy in being able to relive the lives of others.

〈Furthermore, it is extremely important〉

that young children, who will become the leaders of the next generation, have opportunities to become familiar with printed books because

the feel of a book and the voices of their parents reading words aloud to them will help develop their brains and foster in them knowledge and emotions that are inherently human.

〈President Niwano〉

enjoy reading because I want to learn more about how to live as a human being and develop my mind.

I believe that those routines also form important memories of reading that foster emotional bonding for both the parent and the child.

〈YOUR TAKEAWAY〉

In any case, in the spirit of refining yourself as well as the prospect of nurturing others, why not try adding reading, and therefore learning, to the pleasures of the long autumn nights and make it a part of your daily routine?