

TAKADA

A Monthly Newsletter of Ibadan Book Club – June Edition

www.ibadanbookclub.webs.com, www.ibadanbookclub.wordpress.com

E-mail: ibadanbookclub@yahoo.com, ibadanbookclub@gmail.com

How to Choose an Appropriate Classroom Read-Aloud

By April Jones, eHow Contributor

Instructions

○ 1

Check out resources, starting at your local library. The staff can give you tips on which books are favorites with children. For many teachers, Jim Trelease's "The Read-Aloud Handbook" is a personal library necessity. You can also find recommendations at the California Department of Education's Recommended Literature Search for Reading and Language Arts (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/l/ap/litsearch.asp>). Just choose "Read Aloud" from the drop-down menu next to "Classification." Story Snoops (www.storysnoops.com) is a new comprehensive book list that offers multiple user-friendly options as well.

○ 2

Predetermine your preferred book length. Knowing your students well and realizing your personal preferences will help you to make this decision but anywhere from 10 to 25 minutes is standard for a classroom read-aloud period.

○ 3

Flaunt your inner actor. Pam Allyn, author and executive director of LitWorld, says, "The best read alouds have characters we fall in love with. From Olivia to Madeline to Harry Potter to Frances, the best literary characters put our students at the edge of their chairs. Practice reading in different voices. Books like "Frog and Toad" are amazingly great read alouds because it is so much fun to talk in those characters' voices."

○ 4

Follow a theme. Many schools use standards-based curriculum, which often makes finding a general theme or topic easy. Non-fiction read alouds are a favorite with children if they incorporate things such as animals or science. In addition, books that cross over into multiple subject matters and deal with social or character issues can greatly enhance your overall teaching experience.

○ 5

Engage students and encourage discussion by choosing stories the children can relate to and predict. Jaylene Garau, an elementary school teacher and author, notes: "Choose a book that tackles issues that pertain to that age group. I taught first graders and they loved stories about loose teeth."

○ 6

Match the book to the students' level. Books that are too juvenile or advanced will bore or frustrate children. Challenging your students by presenting them with a small attainable challenge, however, will accelerate their progress. Dr. Jan Miller Burkins, editor of Literacyhead, states, "When learning to read, there are really two pieces: understanding how the code works (letters and sounds) and understanding what the words mean (vocabulary)." She goes on to explain that the code only offers an approximation. Therefore, reading aloud builds a vocabulary bank to allow children to draw out unknown or mispronounced words encountered in print.

○ 7

Relive the past. Authors or books that you loved as a kid are another wonderful place to look for read alouds for your classroom. If you loved hearing "Make Way for Ducklings," your students will too. If "Polar Express" or "Island of the Blue Dolphins" topped your list of favorites as a child, then it is sure to be a hit in your classroom because your enthusiasm and passion for the story will shine through. Revisit your favorites ahead of time, however, to ensure that they are still relevant to kids today.

- 8

Find books with quality artwork and eye-popping illustrations. "Great illustrations help to hold the interest of little ones," points out Dr. Jeanne Moore, who is director of Teacher Certification at the University of Pittsburgh. Young children love pictures that fill the page, seem bigger than life and have bright, contrasting colors. Older children tend to enjoy sketches of people and animals that look vivid and real and show emotion or facial expression.

How to Prepare a Read Aloud in the Classroom

By Lynn Wolf, eHow Contributor

Reading aloud to students can help them learn to read with fluency and comprehension.

Reading aloud to small children and students of all ages helps them become better readers. They benefit from hearing the inflection in your voice, from the questions you ask them as you read, and from getting hooked on a story. Your enthusiasm as you read can encourage them to explore different types of books themselves. Preparing to read aloud to students involves pre-reading, noting new words students will encounter as you read, and preparing discussion questions that connect the story to their lives.

Instructions

1.

○ 1

Select a story that will demonstrate fluency. When you read aloud to students, you demonstrate how to read with fluency, which means reading with the proper expression and speed for the selection. Even strong readers can struggle with fluency. Make sure you consider how fluently you can read a selection when you're choosing a story to read aloud to students; you don't want to struggle with unfamiliar words in front of students.

○ 2

Connect with students' prior knowledge before beginning the story. Sometimes it takes students a while to get into a story. Build anticipation for the story before you take out the book. Think about the story's theme, or primary message, and how that might relate to the students' lives. Think about the characters and how they might be like students in your class. Find a way to introduce these similarities before you tell the students you're going to read to them.

○ 3

Create a list of vocabulary words from the story to discuss with students as you read. Reading expands vocabulary. Most stories will include words your students have yet to encounter. As you pre-read the selection, compile a list of vocabulary words and simple definitions that you can share with students as you read. If you're reading a novel or small book with chapters or different sections, divide the vocabulary list into sections. Introduce only the words for each section before you read, so you don't overwhelm students.

○ 4

Prepare questions to ask students as you read. Students must learn to ask questions as they read. They should consider the 5 Ws and H -- who, what, when, where, why, and how -- as they read. The questions you prepare for

students should focus on the characters, plot and theme. Prompt students to make predictions and inferences as you read to them.

- 5

Consider how the story can be connected to the students' lives. Students learn best when they're engaged mentally and emotionally. They're expected to learn so much during their K-12 years, and often they want to know why this information is important. Prompt students to think about what they have in common with the characters in the story, or how they might have experienced something similar. Students who can see themselves or their lives reflected in the stories they read are more likely to become lifelong readers.

How to Read Aloud Rhyming Books

By Anne Cagle, eHow Contributor

Reading rhyming books aloud is a rewarding experience. Rhymes move people emotionally and create wonderful memories.

Instructions

1. Reading Rhymes

- 1

Finding the right book is important. The selection should not be too long or too short. Consideration of your audience is essential. Is it composed of adults, teens, or children? Mainly women or men? Is the book for a special occasion, like a wedding or a birthday? A librarian can help you find the appropriate material.

- 2

Read silently through your book. Do the rhymes flow evenly? Choose a book that has a smooth flow to its verses.

- 3

Read the book out loud to yourself. Note any passages that trip you up, and work on those areas. Recording your voice, then listening to it, can give you a good idea of how to present the material. Don't rush. Put life into the words. Reciting in a monotone can kill a presentation.

- 4

Ask for someone to listen to you while you read the book. Ask for feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.

- 5

Present your material. Take a deep breath and engage your audience with a confident tone. If there is a question-and-answer session afterwards, listen closely to the responses. This feedback will help you in your next presentation.

How to Read Aloud in MS Word

By Joshua Laud, eHow Contributor

When you are writing long Word documents you might find it useful to have the text read aloud. Microsoft Word features a basic text-to-speech engine that will read aloud any text typed in. To use the text-to-speech function, you must add it to either the Microsoft Office Ribbon or taskbar. Once you have added the button to one of these two locations, you will be able to use it freely.

Instructions

- 1.

- 1

Launch Microsoft Word.

- 2

Click "File," then "Options."

- 3

Click "Quick Access Toolbar" in the left pane or "Customize Ribbon" if you want to add it there instead. Click "Choose commands from" and then select "Commands Not in the Ribbon."

- 4

Select "Speak" from the list and click "Add" if you are adding to the Quick Access Toolbar. Click "New Group" or "New Tab" if you are adding it to the Ribbon, then click "Add," then "OK."

- 5

Click the "Speak" button once you have typed something to hear your work read aloud.

How to Read Books Aloud for Comparing and Contrasting

By Mara Pesacreta, eHow Contributor

Comparing is the act of determining similarities, and contrasting involves determining differences. Reading books aloud for comparing and contrasting is different from reading books aloud without this component because you can use your voice and sense of role playing to sense subliminal differences in tone and structure. To read books aloud for comparing and contrasting, you should become familiar with the books you intend to do this

with, have different people read aloud and discuss the similarities and differences of the works openly.

Instructions

1.

○ 1

Become familiar with the books that you plan to read aloud for comparing and contrasting by reading them first. As you read through each of the books, take notes on elements that you will want to discuss later. It is often helpful to take notes on the behavior of the characters. By taking notes on their behavior, you will be able to read aloud more effectively and in turn remember more about minor characters that are not present throughout the entire duration of the story.

○ 2

Meet with a group of friends to read the books aloud for comparing and contrasting. All of you should sit in a circle. This way, you will all be able to see each other's expressions as you are reading through the literature.

○ 3

Decide which individuals can read which parts. When reading books aloud for comparing and contrasting, it is best to have the words flow freely. This way, the sentences will not sound broken and the story will flow. This will also make it easier for you and your friends to see the similarities and differences of the books. If the book is a play, you should assign each person to read the part of a specific character. Hearing the same voice over and over for a certain character will also help to reinforce the personality of that character. If the book is not a play, you may choose to divide the reading by chapter. Hearing a particular voice for each chapter will help to reinforce the concept that each chapter possesses a designated purpose.

○ 4

Begin the reading aloud of the books. Read one book aloud at a time. If the book is a play, do the reading for an entire scene before pausing for discussion. Even though scenes are not always long, different events occur in each scene. Some of these events are more significant than might be thought. By reading through an entire act, it is easy to miss this pertinent information. Therefore, after reading aloud the scene, pause for a discussion. If the book is not a play, pause between the chapter readings for discussions. During such discussions, you can discuss the elements of what you have just read. Also, since all of you are familiar with the books, you can introduce ideas about their similarities and differences.

○ 5

Discuss the main elements about the different books that make them similar and that make them different. By reading each book aloud, you have had the ability to become more familiar with the work. You have had the opportunity to analyze the structure and events more closely. As you discuss with your friends the main differences and similarities of the books, be sure to discuss the structural elements, as well as the elements that relate to the behavior of the characters.

○ 6

Write down the comparisons and distinctions that you have formed about the books from reading them aloud. By writing down the conclusions that all of you have made, you will be able to remember the lessons you have learned about the similarities and differences of the books by reading them aloud.

How do I Use Read Alouds As a Strategy for Teaching Reading?

By Karen Hollowell, eHow Contributor

Teachers can use read alouds to instill a love for reading in their students.

Read alouds are not just a one-sided exercise in which the teacher reads and the children listen. Teachers should use read alouds to demonstrate effective reading habits to students. There are several skills that teachers can model and practice before, during and after each read aloud to reinforce important beginning reading skills as well as comprehension skills that are crucial to the understanding of text.

Instructions

1.

○ 1

Choose a book or story that the children like. If your students are interested in the topic, they will pay close attention. Give kids a chance to have input about the reading selections by giving them a choice of three books and allowing them to vote for which one they want you to read.

○ 2

Teach kids how to make predictions by previewing the book. This skill is important because it prompts kids to begin thinking critically. Predicting can begin in kindergarten. Show kids the cover of the book and skim through the pages looking at pictures. Ask the children to tell you what they think is going to happen based on what the pictures show.

○ 3

Model pronunciation of difficult words by using comprehension strategies and phonics rules. When you come to a word that may be problematic for your students, show them how to use strategies like context clues to figure out the meaning of the word, which sometimes helps them pronounce it. Then demonstrate decoding skills like breaking a word down into parts then blending the parts together to sound out the word.

- 4

Make the read aloud interactive by asking thought-provoking questions. This can be done during and after the reading. An effective method is to pair students so they can learn to share responses with each other. This also teaches them to express their opinions about what they read. Ask questions that require more than recall of facts. Get them to speculate on the characters' motives and compare them to their own prior experiences.

by Richard Paul and Linda Elder

In the previous two columns we introduced the idea of close reading, emphasizing the importance of the following:

- understanding your purpose in reading
- understanding the author's purpose in writing
- seeing ideas in a text as being interconnected
- looking for and understanding systems of meaning
- engaging a text while reading
- getting beyond impressionist reading
- formulating questions and seeking answers to those questions while reading

To read well, in addition to having the above understandings, students must be able to identify the big picture within a text, to determine the key ideas within the text early on, and to see the scaffolding that connects all the ideas

within the text. In other words, they need to develop structural reading abilities. Moreover, students need to see that there are generalizable skills one must develop to read sentences and paragraphs well. In addition, students must develop reading skills specific to reading certain kinds of texts – like textbooks, newspaper articles and editorials.

In this column we will focus on the theory of close reading. We will discuss “structural reading” first. We will then make some basic points about the art of reading sentence and paragraphs. We will conclude with some domain specific theory: how to read a textbook, how to read a newspaper, and how to read an editorial. For examples of the theory we outline here, see [*The Thinkers Guide to How to Read a Paragraph: The Art of Close Reading*](#). The following guideline is written directly to the student:

Structural Reading

Structural reading is a form of close reading applied to the overall structure of an extended text (usually a book). In it, we focus on what we can learn about the book from its title, preface, introduction, and table of contents. Structural reading has two main uses. First, it enables us to evaluate a book to determine whether we want to spend the time to read it carefully. Second, it provides an overview to use as scaffolding in reading the text. If we can get a basic idea of what a book is driving at before we read it in detail, we are much better able to make sense of the parts of it as we read them paragraph by paragraph. Knowledge of a whole helps us understand all of its parts. Knowledge of a part helps us better understand the whole (which contains the parts).

To read structurally, ask these questions:

- What does the title tell me about this book?
- What is the main idea in the book? (You should be able to figure this out from skimming the introduction, preface, and first chapter.)
- What are the parts of the whole, and how does the book deal with

those parts? (Again, this may be found in an overview in the introduction, preface, first chapter, and/or table of contents.)

- In the light of my structural reading, what questions would I pursue during close reading?

How to Read a Sentence

Reading a sentence consists, first of all, in finding a way to state what the sentence says so we can think the thought the sentence expresses. Further ways to make the meaning of a sentence clear are: elaborating the sentence, finding an example, and illustrating its meaning.

Finding key sentences means finding the sentences that are the driving force within a book. Structural reading is one way by which we locate key paragraphs and boil them down to key sentences, and thence to key ideas and key questions.

An important part of reading with discipline is to connect sentences to the broader context within which they are located, to see how they fit within the written piece. For every sentence you read, you might ask:

- How does this sentence connect with the other sentences in the text?
- How does this sentence relate to the organizing idea of this text as a whole?

Good readers read sentences in relationship to other sentences, connecting each sentence with the purpose of the written piece. Taking a sentence out of context can pose problems because sentences read in isolation from the sentences that precede or follow them often overstate a point. The sentences that precede or follow usually clarify the author's true meaning, or bring it in line with supporting facts. Good readers read a text charitably and generously. They look for qualifications of points that otherwise might seem false or overstated.

How to Read a Paragraph

Carefully reading a paragraph involves finding the idea or question that is the driving force within the paragraph. Finding key paragraphs consists of finding the ideas or questions that are the driving force within the book. Structural reading, you will remember, is an important means by which we locate key paragraphs.

All paragraphs within a written piece should connect to every other paragraph so that we can see logical connections between ideas. All ideas should form a system of meanings. As you move from paragraph to paragraph, ask:

- What is the most important idea in this paragraph?
- How do the ideas in this paragraph relate to the ideas in previous paragraphs?
- How are the important ideas in the text connected?

Look for paragraphs that focus on significant ideas or questions. Connect those ideas, when possible, to situations and experiences that are meaningful in your life. To actively connect ideas to life situations, ask:

- How can I relate this idea to something I already understand?
- Is there an important idea here that I can use in my thinking?
- Have I ever experienced a situation that sheds light on this idea?

How to Read a Textbook

The first and most important insight necessary for successfully reading a textbook is that all textbooks focus on “systems” which, when internalized, can help us reason through a specific set of problems. They focus on a special way of thinking about a special set of things. To elaborate, history textbooks teach a special way of thinking about events in the past. Biology textbooks teach a special way of thinking about living things. Mathematics textbooks

teach a special way of thinking about the numbers, shapes, and figures. Physics textbooks teach a special way of thinking about mass and energy and their interrelations. The same is true for all other textbooks.

Thus, there is no way to learn mathematics from a math textbook without learning how to figure out correct answers to mathematical questions and problems. There is no way to learn history from a history textbook without learning how to figure out correct or reasonable answers to historical questions and problems. There is no way to learn biology from a biology textbook without learning how to figure out answers to biological questions and problems. Any subject can therefore be understood as a system of figuring out correct or reasonable answers to a certain set of questions. We study chemistry to understand chemicals and how they interact (to answer questions about chemicals). We study psychology to figure out human behavior (to answer questions about certain human problems). All subjects can be understood in this way. All textbooks can be read in this way.

Most textbooks begin with an introductory chapter or preface that introduces us to the field of study: What is biology? What is physics? What is history? It is important for us to do a close reading of this opening chapter in order to acquire from the very beginning an insight into the most basic and fundamental concepts in the field.

Once we have a basic idea of the whole of a subject from the introductory chapter, we should be able to do some thinking within the system. Thus, with a basic idea of biology, we should be able to do some simple biological thinking. We should be able to ask some basic biological questions and identify some relevant biological information. This is crucial to success in reading the remainder of the textbook because if we do not have a clear concept of the whole, we will not be able to relate the parts (covered by the other chapters) to that whole.

Our reading strategy should not be whole, part, part, part, part, part...but, rather, whole, part, whole, part, whole, part. We first ground ourselves in a basic (though introductory) idea of the whole. We then relate each part (each

subsequent chapter) to that whole. We understand the whole through integrating the parts into it. We use the whole as our tool of synthesis. We use our knowledge of the parts as a tool of analysis.

How to Read a Newspaper for National and International News

To become adept at reading the news, you first must understand that every society and culture has a unique worldview. This colors what they see and how they see it. News media in the cultures of the world reflect the worldview of the culture they write for. Suppose you have two persons reporting on the events of your life — your best friend and your worst enemy. Your best friend would highlight the positive things about you; your worst enemy would highlight the negative things about you. Both would think they were simply telling the truth.

If you understand this, you can apply that understanding to how the news is constructed by every country in the world. Within any country, the news media highlight what is positive about the country; its enemies' news media highlight what is negative about it. As a critical reader of the news, you must make adjustments for both of these biases. So if you are a Frenchman in France reading French newspapers, you must read the fine print to find out the negative things about France that are being suppressed or buried. If you are reading a newspaper from a country that considers France its enemy, you must, in a parallel way, read to correct for its one-sidedness (its predictable negativity about France).

At present, the overwhelming majority of people in the world, untrained in critical reading, are at the mercy of the news media in their own country. To learn how to read the news critically, you can begin with our guide entitled *How to Detect Media Bias & Propaganda*. It focuses on how to:

- interpret events from the perspective of multiple views
- find multiple sources of thought and information, not simply those of

the mass media

- identify the viewpoints embedded in news stories
- mentally re-write (reconstruct) news stories through awareness of how stories are told from multiple perspectives
- assess news stories for their clarity, accuracy, relevance, depth, breadth, and significance
- identify contradictions and inconsistencies in the news (often in the same story)
- identify the agenda and interests served by a story
- identify the facts covered and the facts ignored in a news story
- identify the points of view systematically presented in a favorable light and those presented in an unfavorable light

These are some of the skills that critical readers of the news develop. To take command of the way the mass media influence your thinking about the world, you must learn how to see through their biases and appreciate dissenting as well as mainstream points of view. Only then can you come to well-reasoned conclusions using a balanced approach. At present, few people have developed the skills to do this.

How to Read an Editorial

To become adept at reading editorials, you must first understand that the goal of the editorial writer is to make a brief case for one side of a controversial issue. His or her goal is not to consider all sides or to do what a writer of a research paper or report is expected to do. Most people read editorials in the following way. If writers are defending what they believe, they praise the editorial. If writers are criticizing what they believe, they criticize the editorial. Therefore, they are unable to gain insights from people with whom they disagree. The fact is that most people are rigid in their thinking and

largely closed-minded. There are many points of view into which they cannot enter. There are many ways to look at the world that they never examine or appreciate.

By contrast, critical readers recognize that they have been wrong in the past and may be wrong now. They recognize what they would like to believe while at the same time realizing that they may be prejudiced by that very desire. It is in this spirit of open-mindedness that we should learn to read editorials — especially the ones to which we are least sympathetic. We must learn how to step outside of our own point of view and enter points of view with which we are unfamiliar.

Of course, we should not assume that the editorials in our own culture's newspapers provide us with a full range of points of view. What we can expect is merely that these newspapers provide us with the range of views held by the mainstream readers within the society. The goal of a newspaper is not to educate readers concerning international and dissenting points of view but rather to make money. And a newspaper makes money only when it caters to the beliefs and preconceptions of its readers. Thus, newspapers rarely present radically dissenting perspectives, and when they do, they emphasize that these are merely opinions.

Critical readers read all editorials with equal sympathy. They read to discover and digest a wide range of points of view, especially points of view that tend to be ignored in the mainstream of the culture. To enhance their breadth of vision while avoiding ethnocentrism and sociocentrism, critical readers search out dissenting media sources. For examples of dissenting news sources, see *The Miniature Guide to Media*

e-readers are not so black and white

Can you concentrate on Flaubert when Facebook is only a swipe away, or give your true devotion to Mr Darcy while Twitter beckons?

People who read e-books on tablets such as the iPad are realising that while a book in print or on a black-and-white Kindle is straightforward and immersive, a tablet offers a menu of distractions that can fragment the reading experience, or stop it in its tracks.

Email lurks behind the e-book, tantalisingly within reach. Looking up a tricky word or unknown fact in the book is easily accomplished through a quick Google search. And if a book starts to drag, giving up on it to stream a movie over Netflix or scroll through your Twitter feed is only a few taps away.

That adds up to a reading experience that is more like a 21st-century cacophony than a traditional solitary activity. And some of the millions of consumers who have bought tablets and sampled e-books on apps from Amazon, Apple and Barnes & Noble have come away with a conclusion: it's harder than ever to sit down and focus on reading.

"It's like trying to cook when there are little children around," said David Myers, 53, a systems administrator in Atlanta, who got a Kindle Fire tablet in December. "A child might do something silly and you've got to stop cooking and fix the problem and then return to cooking."

"These apps beg you to review them all the time," he said, adding that he was still a fan of the device.

For book publishers, who have seen many consumers convert from print books to e-readers, the rise of tablets poses a potential danger: that book buyers may switch to tablets and then discover that they just aren't very amenable to reading. Will those readers gradually drift away from books, letting movies or the internet occupy their leisure time instead?

Maja Thomas, senior vice-president for Hachette Digital, part of the Hachette Book Group, is hoping just the opposite occurs.

"Someone who doesn't have a habit of reading, and buys a tablet, is going to be offered all these opportunities for reading," Thomas said, noting that tablets tend to come with at least one e-book app. "We're hoping they will grow the number of people who will read."

Sales of e-readers surged during the Christmas holiday season, according to a Pew Research Centre report, which showed that the number of adults in the United States who own tablets and e-readers nearly doubled from mid-December to early January.

But there are signs that publishers are cooling on tablets as e-reading devices. A recent survey conducted by Forrester Research showed that 31 per cent of publishers believe that iPads and similar tablets are the ideal e-reading platform; one year ago, 46 per cent thought they were ideal.

"The tablet is like a temptress," said James McQuivey, the Forrester Research analyst who led the survey. "It's constantly saying, 'You could be on YouTube now.' Or it's sending constant alerts that pop up, saying you just got an e-mail. Reading itself is trying to compete."

Indeed, the basic menu for the Kindle Fire offers links to video, apps, the Web, music, newsstand and books, effectively making books (once Amazon's stock in trade) just another menu option. So too with the multipurpose iPad, which Allison Kutz, a 21-year-old senior at Elon University in North Carolina, bought in 2010. She says her reading experience hasn't been the same since.

She is constantly fending off the urge to check other media, making it tough to finish books. For example, in late September 2010, she bought *Breaking Night*, a memoir about a homeless girl turned Harvard student. Kutz said the only time she was able to focus on it was on a plane because there was no internet access.

"I've tried to sit down and read it in Starbucks or the apartment, but I end up on Facebook or Googling something," she said, "and then the next thing you know I've been surfing for 25 minutes."

The issue of changing reader habits has been widely discussed by executives at Amazon, maker of the Kindle and Kindle Fire. Russ Grandinetti, vice-president for Kindle content, said one reason the original Kindle, introduced in 2007 for \$399, was a dedicated e-reader – and not a multipurpose device – was precisely so that people could immerse themselves without interruption.

The new Kindle Fire, by contrast, costs \$199 and offers a variety of media options: video, internet and all the potential interruptions that come with it. But Grandinetti said the device

was not meant as a replacement for the first Kindle but, rather, a complement to it; different devices for people who want different experiences.

Many publishers believe that the market for both print books and black-and-white e-readers is not going away, despite the pull of tablets.

Voracious book buyers were the first people to latch onto e-readers, prizing them for their convenience, portability and features such as text zooming that made it easier for older people to read. Now those e-readers are lighter, sleeker and cost less than \$100 – even a cheap tablet is more than double the cost – so tech-shy consumers who want a device just for reading books and not much else have little incentive to upgrade. As long as e-readers remain significantly less expensive than tablets, there may be a market for them for a long time.

But McQuivey of Forrester said it was more likely that tablets would eventually edge out black-and-white e-readers. "The historical precedent suggests that's the case," he said, citing the Palm Pilot, digital point-and-shoot cameras and portable GPS systems for the car as items that have been gradually displaced by multifunction devices. "There's less and less reason to have these as stand-alone devices."

For Erin Faulk, a 29-year-old legal assistant and voracious reader in Los Angeles, the era of e-readers has had one major effect: She has accumulated many more books that she categorises as "DNFs" – Did Not Finish. But she is also buying more books, she said, and she thinks that all the interruptions have, in a way, made her a more discerning reader.

"With so many distractions, my taste in books has really levelled up," Faulk said. "Recently, I gravitate to books that make me forget I have a world of entertainment at my fingertips. If the book's not good enough to do that, I guess my time is better spent."