



Reading Clubs, Workshops, Reading in the Park

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ABSTRACT

Reading clubs are networks made up of book lovers who read the same book at the same time and then share their ideas and feelings inspired by that reading. This short paper discusses the benefits of reading clubs and reading workshops.

Keywords: Reading clubs, Reading workshops, Stimulating creativity.

I. Introduction

According to the definition, a reading club is a network made up of book lovers who read the same book at the same time, sharing afterwards ideas and feelings inspired by that reading. The members of such a reading club meet regularly, in order to comment the literary style, the intrigue and the characters of a certain book. The books are chosen by mutual agreement and the reading is planned according to a certain calendar. However the reading is still an individual and personal experience, but it could also be combined with the collective reading, to be more specific, there is the possibility of comparing different points of views on reading (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2011). Naturally, there are different categories of reading clubs – for kids, teenagers, adults, using e-books, etc. (Guthrie and Wigfield, 2000). Despite of the different types, a reading club gathers readers and librarians altogether, it could use the holdings and the services of the public library, even its space, and it is meant to develop a reading practice based on previous accumulation. Its members have a real experience in reading so its activity is not necessary an initiatory one, but a deepening of the senses towards the new books.

II. Details

Often, a reading club is led by a teacher, a chief librarian or a writer and it gathers a small exclusive reading community. Such a reading club, named reading circle (cercul de lectură), is functional in the “George

Baritiu” Brasov Public Library, based on a partnership among the library, a local NGO – The Porcelain Doll (Păpușa de porțelan) – and a secondary school. The aim is to bring the students among the books, to keep in touch with them, materially and ingeniously, in order to make the reading attractive. The objectives are as follows: to offer alternative choices for spending the spare time, to cultivate the taste for reading, to stimulate the creativity, to develop the imagination, the language and the communication skills. The activities are very different – readings, debates, bibliographies, workshops, poetry marathons, book launches, contests and exhibitions. The final result is a young person interested in reading, educated so to appreciate a book, the library and the school because he have received values and practical abilities useful in his entire life from now on.

The reading workshop (from October, 2010, 2012), in French, organized by The French Media Library and entitled “Terrifying Tales”, has offered different kinds of readings from a series of books belonging to this genre to the public. The reading of some fragments was followed by a challenge addressed to the participants in the workshop, namely: telling their own experiences related to the proposed theme. People of different ages from 10 year-old kids to teenagers, French residents and 40 year-old adults have come. They dared to face the experience of reading in French even if they have not recently read in this language and did not practice the language in a long time. They ventured even into the realm of narrating personal experiences and found out what a good opportunity to practice the French language it could be. They were really attracted by the new concept, and were also interested in books. They liked the decor, in semi

dark, reading with flashlights or lamps, and some of them came costumed and masked like for a celebration. The evening of the terrifying tales ended watching a movie, "Harry, un ami qui vous veut du bien" whose topic was meant to fit perfectly in the Halloween atmosphere especially created into the library by the decoration made with various materials and lights.

En attendant Noël - A story every day: Just as the title suggests, I read a story every day, until Christmas. Who was interested, listened with pleasure the adventures of two friends, a bunny and a teddy bear that has started on the road to Nazareth, guided by the advice provided by a dam. Addressability of the workshop was directed toward the children, in particular, but I surprisingly found that others older children, have followed with the same interest the 24 stories to make them easier to pass the time until Christmas Eve feast. It was an openly challenge for reading, the public being interested to discover not only the story of the day but the other ones, too, from the previous or the next day. Interestingly, they were not limited to those 24 stories, but being more curious, they wanted to read something more, related, of course to the same theme of the Christmas stories. The favorable reception of the workshop, gave us once again the confirmation that children love stories, that they are curious to discover by themselves more titles from our collections, they just need some guidance in that direction.

The Storytelling Club: During the entire month of July, in the N. Titulescu Central Park from Brasov, a large campaign has been developed, in order to promote the reading for children. The campaign aims to involve children in various activities, pleasant and instructive, during their holiday. In brief, we read stories to the children, we draw with them, with colored chalk on the pavement, we played together, we have created new stories, and we imagined new adventures for our characters. The audience (about 100 participants) proved to be extremely responsive and interested in the proposed activity, most participants returning faithfully to the all five meetings during the month of July. The event sought to bring them together on the smallest of the book and reading, but at the same time, it was also a good opportunity to promote library activities and services offered during the summer holidays. The event was supported by the local newspapers and television, which made the event public, along with the library website and blog that kept the interested people informed about the weekly events, publishing photos from the place where the activities have taken place.

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