

Tate Turco – 2019 Oral – Reading

I am deep inside the trilogy of the Titanic series as the bow continues to sink into the icy Atlantic. Suddenly, I slip on an ice chunk and slide into the merciless ocean. Somebody screams – wait that’s me. The water is frigid. I can barely move. I am about to pass out, but then...”Tater...how many times have I told you to put your books away when you’re done reading them.” Sorry, Mom.” Now, where was I... Oh, hello... Sometimes I get so lost in a book that I don’t notice anything. Good morning, parents, teachers, fellow students, avid readers, authors, editors and honourable judges. I just love to read.

I’m proud to call myself an avid reader. When I wake up in the morning - I READ! Before I go to bed - I READ! On long road trips – you guessed it, I READ! And, even on a routine five minute ride to the Soo Pee Wee, I will take a book with me so that I can READ! Reading provides great entertainment. A book can be humorous and give you a good laugh. Other books can hold you in suspense as you eagerly wait to see what happens next. Different genres provide creative adventures that can take you to interesting places all around the world. Or better yet, other adventures will take you to a whole new universe! Personally, I love reading for a variety of reasons beyond entertainment. For example, I enjoy playing sports – so after running around for a while, reading is a great way for me to cool down. Another reason is that books hold lots of knowledge that is not only good for my brain, but may possess information that could come in handy for me one day. I also use reading as a technique to calm down. Sometimes if I am upset at something or someone, a good book can take me to a whole other world where adventure can replace drama.

You might wonder, how did I get into reading? When I was only one month old, my parents started reading to me in a rocking chair that was purchased specifically for reading. They would read to me every day and they also made it part of my bedtime routine. This routine continued for many years. Then I entered Junior Kindergarten where I learned to read to myself out loud. I eventually learned to read in my head, consuming books at a rapid pace.

So, I have been reading consistently for the past 8 years. Have any of you ever wondered what happens when you read consistently? By challenging yourself with books above your level, you can improve your vocabulary and start using more sophisticated words. I like the word sophisticated – I think I read it in a book somewhere. Reading consistently will also improve your spelling and help you develop as a writer using more descriptive words and elaborating on your work. Research has also show that consistent reading will improve your concentration and your memory.

When I really get into a book, I can picture myself as the characters. For example, in the novel *Treasure Hunters*, the author, James Patterson allows me to become two Russian characters in the following exchange,

“I don’t know vhut you’re talking about.” Zolin blubbered. “Cut the vatervorks. We know vhat you did.” “Vhat...vhat, vhat did I do?” “You stole the four missing masterpieces from za Hermitage Collection.”

Then, the very next day, I can become a very excited Charlie from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory when he says,

“Mother!” yelled Charlie, rushing in on them like a hurricane. ***“Look! I’ve got it! Look, Mother, look! The last Golden Ticket. It’s mine! I found some money in the street and I bought two candy bars and the second one had the Golden Ticket!”***

In the span of two days, reading let me become both Russian and English characters. I gobble up books so quickly that my mom will often say, “Did you actually read every word in that book?”

There is an expression that says “Readers are Leaders.” If you’re not a reader yet, I want you to know that reading can be for everyone and there’s a book for every interest. But, you don’t need to read an actual book to be reading. You can read a magazine, a newspaper, or the back of hockey cards. And remember what Dr. Seuss once wrote in a book, “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” And, as I say, wherever you go, don’t forget to pack a good book!