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ENG 538 Adolescent Literature

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During this course, I have learned about many different things like reader’s rights, required reading, classroom libraries, and diversity in reading to name a few. I have taken away many strategies from the book we have been reading in the class. The book title is Book Love developing depth, stamina and passion in Adolescent Readers by Penny Kittle. In high school students, you find that students either love to read or absolutely hate to read. While reading Book Love by Penny Kittle, it helped me personally understand ways to help students find the passion in reading. Penny Kittle really sparked my interest to do more research on required reading. I started to talk to my colleagues to get their thoughts on required readings. Some shared with me that they love doing a choice reading and getting students to read more of what they enjoy. Independent reading is all about capacity building and stamina so the students can read more at a time. Kittle compared reading to sports. We wouldn’t throw an athlete right into a mile race without practice and building stamina, so why would we throw a student straight into a book at the beginning of the year? Being a special education teacher, sometimes my colleagues ask if something might be too hard for a particular student. I think it’s hard for teachers to understand what reading is like for some of their students. As teachers, we need to help students find the love for reading. Having classroom libraries or lists of books that students can look through for suggestions helps ease the burden of looking for a book. Once students start to have success with reading and see that it’s not that bad and actually enjoyable, then required text can be brought in and students will be more likely to read what is assigned. Finding the passion to read shouldn’t fall on the English teachers as educators, every course deals with some kind of reading and it should be a group effort in helping students find the passion of reading.

In this class, there has been many different strategies that I could try using in my everyday class. Before COVID-19 took us to online learning, I was trying to implement a book club in my classroom. The class is called communication foundations. This is a class for students in special education to assist in creating a baseline for effective communication. We go into social skills and speeches. I felt that a book club would help in class discussion and show students something they could do with friends and family members. We started out slow instead of jumping into a book; we started with ACT passages. The students did seem to like the idea at first. I chose ACT passages because they are short for the students, and they would have some practice with ACT questions. After the first couple passages, the students started to come around to the idea. I started by reading the passage to them and then we discussed the content. Next, we started getting to the point that they would take it home and then we came back and it read together. At first, some didn’t take it home to read. They soon realized that they didn’t like not being able to add to the in-classroom discussion. We were at the point that I thought we could start a book as a class. With COVID and the library being closed, this caused accessibility issues, therefore I didn’t want to require a book to be read. I look forward to implementing this sooner in my classroom next year.

I look forward to using the strategies I learned from Adolescent Literature and implementing them into my classrooms to help my students grow to have a passion for reading. This will take time, but once a student finds fun in reading, I hope I can help lead them to become life time readers.