

Mentor Tips:

CREATIVE READING OPTIONS

All reading is good reading: True or false?

Reading Mentors often challenge mentees to read longer, harder, “better” books. We want the student to experience the fascination of the chapter book as the plot unfolds. We want to see the student’s vocabulary expand. We want our mentee to read at grade level – even while some students are not ready or able to do so.

In Power Lunch, we present students with the option of reading at different levels...reading for comfort...reading for satisfaction. Yet it is essential to continue to challenge students to exercise their reading muscles to grow their abilities.

There are many ways to introduce varied materials that push the boundaries for our students. “We must...banish the bias that books are the only legitimate reading that students can do. Newspapers and magazines are good sources of short, interesting pieces of expository text in a variety of genres,” notes Reading Rockets. “Even comic books have their place in a student's reading repertoire, as they are fun to read and have been proven to increase vocabulary (Worthy, Broaddus & Ivey, 2001).”



Diego Beltran of Thomson Elementary selects a book to read.

So how do we foster high-interest reading?

Here are some creative approaches:

- Mentors who bring in **news articles** pertaining to a subject they discussed with the mentee the week before.
- Mentors seeking out **accessible material about complex topics** – a picture book about comets; a graphic novel about architecture.
- Mentors who use reference books (encyclopedias, handbooks, atlases) and focus on the **illustrations** and their **captions** instead of the sometimes-overwhelming text on each page.
- Mentors who tap out a beat while **reading poetry** with their mentees. Poetry can be a rich source of reading success for students, as it is both rhythmic and often employs simple vocabulary in a repetitive pattern.

The primary reason children choose books to read for themselves is due to peer influence.* Keep in mind your mentee may want to read what’s cool, and may dismiss a leveled reader as a “baby book.” Help to steer your mentee to creative materials that he or she can understand, to best ignite interest and comprehension.

*Canadian Book and Periodical Council (1998)