



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 6

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Case for Free Reading Time

An essay by Amira Khan, Grade 6, for the Westbrook Middle School newspaper

Every day at our school is packed with assignments. We read chapters we are told to read, answer questions we are told to answer, and move on. There is nothing wrong with that. But I believe our school should set aside twenty minutes every day for free reading, a quiet time when students can read any book they choose.

The first reason is that choice helps students actually enjoy reading. When a book is assigned, many of us read it because we have to. When we pick a book ourselves, we read it because we want to. Last spring, our class tried a "choose your own book" month. Our librarian, Mr. Ortiz, said that library checkouts from our class nearly doubled during those four weeks. Students who never visited the library started asking him for book suggestions.

The second reason is that reading more makes us better readers. Think about learning to shoot a basketball or play the piano. Nobody improves by practicing once a week. Reading works the same way. The more pages we read, the more new words we meet, and the easier it becomes to understand difficult texts in every subject, from science to social studies.

The third reason is that free reading gives our busy days a calm moment. My classmate Leo put it this way: "It's the only part of the day when nobody is rushing me." A few quiet minutes can help students feel ready to focus during the lessons that follow.

Some teachers worry that free reading takes time away from important lessons. Others worry that students will only choose easy books or comics. These are fair concerns. However, twenty minutes is a small part of a six-hour school day, and the reading skills students build will help them in every lesson. As for comics and graphic novels, they still build vocabulary and teach readers to follow a story. Teachers can also meet with students once a week to talk about their books and suggest new ones.

Reading should not feel like a chore. It should feel like an open door. I am asking our principal and the student council to try free reading time for one month. If it does not help, we can stop. But I am confident that once students get to choose, they will not want to stop reading.

Part A: Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer.

1. What is the author's main claim?
 - a) Students should read only assigned books.
 - b) The school should give students daily time to read books they choose.
 - c) The school library should be open longer.
 - d) Comics should not be allowed in school.
2. What happened during the class's "choose your own book" month?
 - a) Students stopped visiting the library.
 - b) The class read only one book together.
 - c) Library checkouts from the class nearly doubled.
 - d) Mr. Ortiz removed comics from the library.
3. The author compares reading practice to which activity?
 - a) Practicing basketball or piano
 - b) Cooking a meal
 - c) Running a race
 - d) Building a model
4. Which concern from teachers does the author respond to?
 - a) Free reading is too noisy.
 - b) Books cost too much money.
 - c) Students do not like the library.
 - d) Free reading takes time away from lessons.

Part B: True or False

Write T for true or F for false.

5. The author suggests twenty minutes of free reading every day. _____
6. The author says comics and graphic novels should not count as reading. _____
7. The author asks the principal and student council to try free reading for one month.

Part C: Claim, Reasons, and Evidence

An argument has a claim (what the writer wants you to believe), reasons that support the claim, and evidence that proves each reason.

8. Write one **reason** the author gives, and the **evidence** she uses to support it.

9. A **counterargument** is an opposing view. Name one counterargument in the essay and explain how the author responds to it.

Part D: Think and Explain

10. Is the author's argument convincing? Choose the reason you think is strongest and explain why. Then describe one kind of evidence that could make the argument even stronger.
