

EPISODE 43

Raising Kids Who Read

Guest: Dr. Daniel Willingham

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Meet Daniel Willingham



Daniel Willingham is currently Professor of Psychology at the University of Virginia.

He writes the “Ask the Cognitive Scientist” column for American Educator magazine, and is the author of Why Don't Students Like School? and Raising Kids Who Read.

You can read more of his work at his website danielwillingham.com.

In This Episode

Sarah talks with Dr. Willingham about the research that cognitive science has on helping our kids fall in love with books. (It's easier than you think!)

He also shares his opinions on the place of technology in the reading life and the books that formed him as a reader: Winnie the Pooh and Henry Huggins—the man has great taste!

Take your child seriously as a reader because I think you're much more likely to gain currency, gain interest from your child. - Dr. Daniel Willingham



The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 1:35 Introducing Dr. Willingham
- 2:50 More about Dr. Gillingham
- 4:30 Kids who read for the joy of it
- 6:50 Why don't teenagers read?
- 9:20 A central piece of advice
- 13:00 The bookkeeping nightmare
- 14:30 Becoming resourceful about finding something to do
- 16:40 Making space for reading
- 17:50 Reading—an opportunity for fun
- 19:00 The implicit message about reading from school
- 22:00 Developing good taste
- 25:45 Three big components of reading
- 27:10 Should we reward kids for reading?
- 29:30 An alternative to praise
- 30:50 Creating a book club atmosphere
- 33:50 Is there a downside to e-readers?
- 38:10 Dr. Willingham's favorite childhood books
- 39:00 Celebrate Drop Everything And Read Day with RAR
- 41:30 Let the Kids Speak

Quotes and Questions

* **Book baskets for the win**

If you want your kids to read more, notice when your kids get bored and put books in that location.

Dr. Willingham suggests having book baskets in the car and in the bathroom. Are there other places that might benefit from a pile of books nearby? Next to your child's bed with a book light? Or by a comfy chair with a cozy blanket?

* **Strike while the iron is hot**

If you have a Kindle and a child hears about a book that they're actually kind of curious about, you can get it immediately.

Get books quickly with an e-reader. Many libraries have books that you can borrow and access immediately from your Kindle or other device for free. Every week [Simple Homeschool](#) shares a round up of great deals for Kindle. Kara, our wonderful podcast manager, also shares Kindle links on [her Facebook page](#).

* **The limits of technology**

Access is good. Portability is obviously good. If you've got an e-reader that is web-enabled then that's a huge distraction....I think the message here is you do need to think about time limits for technology if you want to make some space for reading in your child's life.

You knew there had to be a catch! But look at the phrase Dr Willingham uses—make some space for reading. Is there a way to use limits on technology that open up new possibilities?

* **A book club atmosphere at home**

This is sort of the way adults interact with another around reading. If you've read a great book, I'm not going to, I see you finishing a book, I'm not going to praise you. But I'm going to talk to you about it. Ask your opinion about it. That's actually pretty fun to have your opinion solicited and talk about it.

Charlotte Mason said that children are born persons and are worthy of respect. Resources like the [Quickstart Guide to Great Conversations](#) and the Whole Family Book Club kits make it easy to have fun, accessible ideas right at your fingertips.

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- [Why Don't Students Like School](#) by Daniel Willingham
- [Raising Kids Who Read](#) by Daniel Willingham
- [When Can You Trust the Experts](#) by Daniel Willingham
- [Henry Huggins](#) by Beverly Cleary
- [Horton Hears a Who](#) by Dr. Seuss
- [The Magic School Bus](#) by Joanna Cole
- [Calvin and Hobbes](#) by Bill Watterson
- [Hank the Cowdog](#) by John Erickson
- [By the Great Horn Spoon](#) by Sid Fleischman
- [Winnie the Pooh](#) by A.A. Milne

Other links from today's show:

- A *NEW* read-aloud challenge is coming. Find out more [here!](#)
- [RAR #07: Build a Lifestyle of Reading Aloud, Melissa Wiley](#)
- [Series Books that Will Turn Your Struggling Reader into a Voracious Reader](#)
- [Celebrate D.E.A.R. with RAR!! #dearwithrar](#)
- Read Daniel's [articles](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.