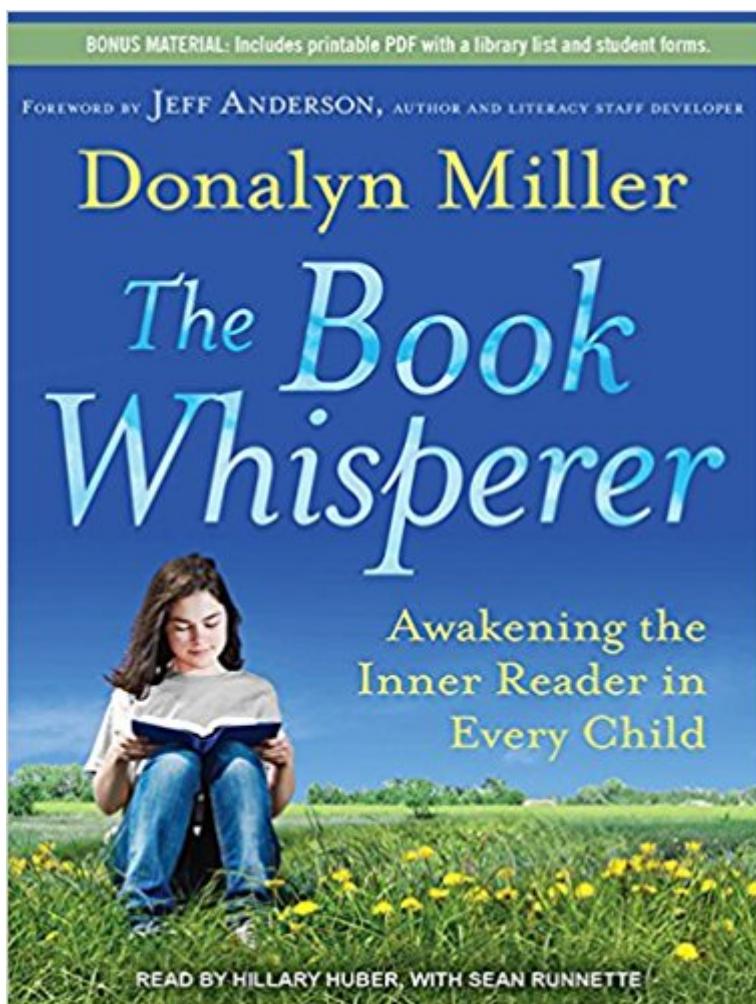


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The Book Whisperer: Awakening The Inner Reader In Every Child



Synopsis

Donalyn Miller is a dedicated teacher who says she has yet to meet a child she couldn't turn into a reader. In *The Book Whisperer*, Miller takes us inside her sixth grade classroom to reveal the secrets of her powerful but unusual instructional approach. Rejecting book reports, comprehension worksheets, and other aspects of conventional instruction, Miller embraces giving students an individual choice in what they read, combined with a program for independent reading. She also focuses on building a classroom library of high-interest books, and above all on modeling appropriate and authentic reading behaviors. Her zeal for reading is infectious and inspiring, and the results speak for themselves. No matter how far behind Miller's students may be when they start out, they end up reading an average of forty books per year, achieving high scores on standardized tests, and internalizing a love for reading that lasts long after they've left her class. Travel alongside the author as she leads her students to discover the ample rewards of reading and literature. Brought to life with Miller's passionate voice, *The Book Whisperer* will help teachers support students of all levels on their path to reading success. This book also includes a dynamite list of recommended "kid lit" to help parents and teachers find the books that students really like to read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Because she couldn't find a book that showed her how to use her own love of books to imbue her elementary students with the same love, Miller, Teacher Magazine blogger, decided to write her own. She recalls her personal journey as a teacher and the surprise and disappointment of learning that book loving cannot be automatically passed on to students. No more having the whole

class read the same novel. She gave her students questionnaires to determine their interests and personally selected stacks of books of possible interest to them, then allowed them to read independently—at least 40 books a school year. She recounts the experience of some students struggling and others exhilarated by the freedom to read. Miller's tactics resulted in improvement in her students' vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. She also saw students respect book suggestions that came from a reader's passion rather than a teacher's agenda. Miller includes reading lists, activities, questionnaires, and other resources. Although aimed at teachers, this book will also definitely appeal to parents interested in encouraging their children to read. --Vanessa Bush --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

"Miller provides many tips for teachers and parents and includes a useful list of ultimate reading suggestions picked by her students. This outstanding contribution to the literature is highly recommended for teachers, parents, and others serving young students." ---Library Journal Starred Review

This book has changed the way that I teach reading in my 5th grade classroom. This book makes so much sense and can be applied to all grade levels. My students are loving the genre studies that we are doing based on this book. They are making a lot of progress by choosing their own books. This book explains how to teach reading using genre studies. It also gives lots of real life examples. In the back there are forms that can be copied and used in the classroom. I HIGHLY recommend this book to anyone that teaches reading (especially elementary age).

I read this book in one night, on a whim. As someone who has been bogged down by required reading myself after finishing a degree and trying to slog through pages of our newly adopted curriculum, this book was like a breath of fresh air. Or a visit from an old friend. It was also a challenge to read. Be prepared for your paradigm to shift and your world to get rocked. I am that teacher who has faithfully taught the whole class novel year in, and year out. I didn't notice "the wallpaper" on the wall. I'm so excited to get my students reading and do the 40 book challenge with them! How important to rediscover the things that make us love reading, the freedom of choice. Great book! Every teacher needs to read it!

I adored this book. My mother was a reading teacher and just as she was retiring a lot of the new standards came in. She was frustrated about how much time everything took and how she couldn't

teach reading the way she wanted to. My husband has aunts that taught reading as well and shared this view. We all talked after I read this book and they were so excited to hear that free choice is "coming back." "Of course kids need to choose their own books!" they both exclaimed. "Isn't that obvious?" The problem is, in most classrooms, it's not. Donalyn does an EXCELLENT job in this book showing the reader examples of how giving her kids time to read in class, building a community of readers, and letting them choose their own books makes them SO EXCITED about reading, and isn't that the goal? I loved the parts where she shows traditional strategies teachers are probably using and alternatives that will pump up reader's enthusiasm. I'm not a reading teacher or a teacher of anyone at this point except my own daughter, but I'm a book lover, writer, avid reader, and bookseller. I loved learning from this book and found myself saying, "yes, yes, this is so true!" on nearly every page. I finished reading it and wanted to hug Donalyn for her very important work.

Heading into my 20th year in the classroom in a few weeks, I was feeling discouraged about everything: the kids (high school juniors and seniors at an alternative school), the curriculum, my own lack of motivation. And then I read *The Book Whisperer* from cover to cover in one sitting, and I've gained a whole new perspective on teaching! I've got ideas swirling through my head about implementing Miller's tips and methods, and for the first time in a long time, I'm EXCITED about the start of a new school year. If you teach English, or any subject, read this book, then pass it along to your co-workers and principal! Who would have thought that a "no-brainer" concept could be so revolutionary or invigorating, but it is...you'll see... Excellent book, hands down! UPDATE ONE YEAR LATER: It's been almost a year to the date since I posted this original review, and I'm still raving about this book. I went into my high school classroom and challenged my students to read TEN books over the course of a semester. Almost everyone read ten, or more! Some kids only read 2-5 books, but at least they were reading. I implemented the program by meeting individually with each student each week, just for a few minutes, to update their reading lists, ask them questions about the books, suggest other books they might enjoy...AND--a major component--I not only gave students one day a week of in-class reading, but I required them to carry their books with them throughout the day. The accountability worked well. I honestly didn't know how this whole initiative was going to "go over," but within the first three weeks of school, when I had students coming into class saying, "Miss, can we please read today?"...I knew it was a hit. I'm SO proud of my kiddos, and I think that this exercise will really make an impact in their lives going forward.

This book has changed my teaching more than any book I have ever read. I'm a veteran HS English teacher (with almost 20 years in the classroom), and for years, my students have been telling me that they loved reading in elementary school but that in middle school in HS, their English teachers have committed "Readicide" (which is another great book, by the way!). So, the very people who entered the profession to promote a love of literacy are the ones who are killing these students' love of reading. Gulp. They are worksheeted to death, spend 4 weeks beating one book into the ground, and do what Miller calls "literary arts and crafts" instead of discussing great literature. This book had more takeaways for my teaching than any other book, and believe me: I went into it thinking that a 6th grade reading teacher wouldn't have a thing for this busy high school teacher that has to follow a set curriculum and hit all of the standards. Thankfully, I couldn't have been more wrong. My SMART goal this year is to help my students fall back in love with reading (because they all loved going to the library every week and getting new books--even the struggling, reluctant readers that I have now in HS). The biggest change is that I now have my students read for the first 10 minutes of every class. They say they look forward to coming to class, because they get to either read what I've assigned for that week or read a book they've been dying to tear into but always had to put off until summer. I have Miller's follow-up book on its way (which is reviewed as being fabulous but just not as fabulous as this one). I can't say enough about this book!

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