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READING AS A QUEST: A TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH TO ENGAGING THE YOUNG GENERATION WITH TEXTS

Abstract: The article examines the problem of the limited ability of contemporary youth to engage in sustained reading and deep cognitive analysis of texts conditioned by pervasive digitalisation. The spread of fast-paced audiovisual content has led to the emergence of so-called *clipped thinking*, which negatively affects students’ cognitive functions, working memory, and critical thinking skills.

The aim of the study is to develop and theoretically substantiate the pedagogical model of “reading as a quest”, designed to restore skills of in-depth information processing. The research methodology is based on the progressive challenge design and includes three key components: text parcellation (dividing texts into manageable segments), task scaffolding (the gradual increase of cognitive demands, in accordance with Bloom’s Taxonomy), and strategic gamification. This approach enables the transformation of passive information consumption into active inquiry, aligning with the digital competencies of contemporary learners.

The analysis demonstrates that the “reading as a quest” model facilitates the integration of intrinsic motivation and meaningful learning through game-based frameworks. Its practical implementation involves the use of digital tools



(e.g., Quizlet, Google Forms, etc.) and the creation of a narrative learning structure in which each task is perceived as a game-like level toward achieving a goal. At the same time, potential risks are identified, including the possibility of superficial knowledge acquisition when excessive emphasis is placed on game elements, which necessitates a careful balance between free exploration and deep reflection.

The conclusions and pedagogical implications point to the need for systemic changes in approaches to academic literacy. The implementation of the proposed framework not only enhances cognitive engagement but also fosters the development of metacognitive skills and students' academic autonomy. The study demonstrates that adapting reading methodologies to the cognitive and emotional characteristics of contemporary youth is crucial for cultivating a new generation of critically thinking readers.

Keywords: attention span; clipped thinking; cognitive engagement; task-based learning; transformative pedagogy

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ЧИТАННЯ ЯК КВЕСТ: ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЙНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО ЗАЛУЧЕННЯ МОЛОДІ ДО ЧИТАННЯ ТЕКСТІВ

Анотація. У статті досліджено проблему зниження здатності сучасної молоді до тривалого читання та глибокого когнітивного аналізу текстів в умовах тотальної цифровізації. Поширення «швидкого» аудіовізуального контенту призвело до формування явища «кліпового мислення», що



негативно впливає на когнітивні функції, робочу пам'ять та критичне мислення студентів.

Метою роботи є розробка та теоретичне обґрунтування педагогічної моделі «читання як квест», спрямованої на відновлення навичок поглибленого опрацювання інформації. Методологія дослідження базується на прогресивному челендж-дизайні, що включає три ключові елементи: парцеляцію текстів (поділ на керовані сегменти), скафолдинг завдань (поступове ускладнення когнітивних вимог за Таксономією Блума) та стратегічну гейміфікацію. Такий підхід дозволяє трансформувати пасивне споживання інформації в активне дослідження, що відповідає цифровим компетенціям сучасних учнів. У результаті аналізу визначено, що модель «читання як квест» забезпечує інтеграцію внутрішньої мотивації та змістовного навчання через ігрові схеми. Практична реалізація передбачає використання цифрових інструментів (наприклад, Quizlet, Google Forms тощо) та створення «наративної структури» навчання, де кожне завдання сприймається як ігровий рівень у досягненні мети. Водночас виявлено потенційні ризики, зокрема можливість поверхневого засвоєння знань при надмірному захопленні ігровими елементами, що потребує балансу між вільним дослідженням та глибокою рефлексією.

Висновки та педагогічні перспективи вказують на необхідність системних змін у підходах до академічної грамотності. Впровадження запропонованої рамки дозволяє не лише покращити когнітивну залученість, а й розвинути метакогнітивні навички та академічну автономію студентів. Дослідження доводить, що адаптація методики читання до когнітивних та емоційних характеристик сучасної молоді є критично важливою для формування нового покоління критично мислячих читачів.

Ключові слова: діяльнісне навчання; кліпове мислення; когнітивне залучення; концентрація уваги; трансформаційна педагогіка

1. Introduction. Reading long texts has become increasingly difficult for younger generations. Accustomed to rapid visual stimuli, students are increasingly exposed to a pervasive digital environment characterized by readily available, low-cost, and fast-paced audiovisual content. Research in media studies and psychology identifies a trend of diminished attention spans and preference for bite-sized content [1; 2]. This trend, termed "clipped thinking," influences students' ability to sustain cognitive engagement with extended narratives or expository prose.

While offering numerous benefits, this digital exposure has cultivated habits of passive consumption and minimal cognitive effort. Consequently, the development of crucial skills such as executive functioning, working memory,



and attention span, vital for engaging with complex texts, is often impaired. Documented trends in media psychology and cognitive research indicating reduced attention spans and a preference for bite-sized content necessitate a reconsideration of the role of reading in contemporary education. This represents a critical **research problem** within modern pedagogy, threatening the foundational literacy skills necessary for critical thinking and academic success.

The **importance of the research** lies in substantiating pedagogical approaches aimed at restoring and strengthening deep reading skills as a core component of academic literacy. By integrating insights from media studies, psychology, and educational methodology, the study offers a conceptual basis for developing effective instructional strategies that foster sustained cognitive engagement with extended texts. The findings contribute to improving learning outcomes, enhancing critical thinking, and supporting students' academic autonomy in the context of ongoing digitalization of higher education.

The goal of this paper is to propose and outline a pedagogical framework to counteract these challenges, fostering a renewed engagement with sustained reading and deeper cognitive processing. Thus, this paper addresses this challenge by introducing a pedagogical framework for "reading as a quest," combining parcellation of texts and incremental task-based engagement. The approach is intended to help students to reconstruct fragmented reading experiences into meaningful cognitive and reflective practices.

To achieve this, the paper sets forth several **objectives**:

- To draw the theoretical substantiation that informs this framework, proceeding from cognitive psychology and educational research;
- To outline a progressive, challenge-based methodology that integrates diverse learning and assessment activities;
- To specify the types of quizzes and cognitive tasks within this design;
- To discuss the broader implications for literacy development.

The presented **methodology** adopts a progressive, challenge-based design focused on the following core elements: text parcellation into manageable segments, scaffolding of tasks to gradually increase cognitive complexity, and the strategic application of gamification to align with students' inherent digital literacies. By deliberately sequencing activities that range from concise quizzes providing immediate feedback to more advanced cognitive tasks demanding sustained intellectual engagement, this approach aims to reorient students towards active learning and the progressive development of metacognitive skills.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Reading as a Cognitive Activity. Reading involves complex cognitive processes, including decoding, inference, attention, and comprehension



monitoring [3; 4]. Sustained engagement in reading contributes to knowledge acquisition, empathy, and critical reasoning [5].

2.2. Psychological and Social Barriers to Extended Reading. Recent studies in cognitive psychology attribute young people's resistance to extended reading to digital multitasking, dopamine-driven content consumption, and reduced cognitive patience [6; 7]. The habit of constant media switching fragments attention and discourages deep reading [8].

2.3. Causes for the Decline in Youth Reading Engagement. Several overlapping factors contribute to the decline in the youth's interest and ability to engage with extended texts. In particular, early reading experiences—such as bedtime stories—play an important role in building vocabulary, narrative competence, and motivation to read. A lack of these experiences in early childhood correlates with poor reading outcomes in later years [9; 10]. Research confirms that early exposure to printed content not only boosts technical reading skills but also fosters emotional engagement and internal motivation [10]. When children lack such experiences, they often perceive reading as an alien or tiring task, rather than a source of enrichment or pleasure.

Another factor is Inflexible or outdated school curricula. Many school systems still emphasise rote memorisation, standardized testing, or overly canonical texts disconnected from students' lives. Willingham [11] argues that reading instruction focused solely on surface-level comprehension fails to cultivate deep knowledge and analytical skills essential for critical literacy. Guthrie and Wigfield [12] emphasise that motivation and engagement are vital for reading development, and that these thrive in contexts where reading is treated as exploration rather than performance.

Media overload with low-cost, fast-paced audiovisual content causes shallow processing habits of passive consumption and minimal cognitive effort, linked to reduced attention span, diminished narrative complexity, and difficulty processing linear sequences typical of written texts [13]. Passive media encourages a "receiver" rather than the "interactor" mindset required for active reading comprehension [8], which leads to a growing resistance to continuous mental effort.

Social media trends and language simplification in digital communication have significantly altered linguistic norms. The popularity of abbreviations (e.g., *LOL*, *BRB*, *ASAP*) and emoji-based interactions erode syntactic awareness and reduce understanding of complex linguistic structures [14]. While emojis can simplify emotional expression [15], their frequent substitution for words may lead to reduced exposure to full, coherent sentences. Encouraged by platforms like *TikTok* or *Instagram*, users expect quick feedback and gratification, in contrast to patience and slower cognitive rewards of extended reading [16].



Cognitive overload and multitasking behaviors promoted in the digital age are particularly damaging to reading. Studies show that media multitasking significantly reduces memory retention and comprehension [6; 7]. When students read while simultaneously texting, scrolling, gaming, or listening to music, cognitive fragmentation occurs, reducing deep processing. Disrupted mental coherence needed to follow extended arguments or narratives reduces reading to a shallow scan rather than a deep interpretive process.

Finally, in conditions of war, economic instability, or personal trauma, students often face significant challenges, including chronic stress and emotional burnout, which can impact their cognitive functioning [17; 18]. These challenges can lead to stress-related neurological responses; for instance, increased cortisol levels have been shown to affect working memory and attention span [19]. Additionally, research on children in conflict zones, such as Bosnia and Palestine, provides evidence of noticeable reductions in cognitive performance, impacting their executive functioning—the ability to plan, make good decisions, and effectively navigate daily life [18]. These cognitive difficulties are linked to attention and logical thinking, directly affecting students' ability to engage with complex or lengthy texts, as sustained focus and working memory capacity are essential for reading comprehension.

2.4. Research-Based Approaches to Reading Instruction. Empirical studies support active reading strategies and prove that multimodal, task-based, and interactive learning increases engagement and retention [20]. Parcellation has also been shown to reduce cognitive overload, especially for struggling readers [21].

Pearson, Palincsar, Biancarosa, Hurt, and colleagues' [22] comprehensive synthesis of the decade-long, federally funded *Reading for Understanding (RfU) Initiative* highlights several critical cross-cutting themes for advancing reading comprehension from pre-K to 12. Their significant findings underscore the necessity of viewing comprehension as a tool for knowledge-building rather than merely a literacy skill, emphasising the vital role of integrating oral and written language development across all grade levels. Furthermore, the report stresses the value of reshaping classroom environments to foster collaborative meaning-making, critical discussion, and generative thinking. The authors also conclude that sustained instructional support is crucial, asserting that comprehension growth extends beyond isolated strategy instruction, thriving instead within a coherent, knowledge-rich curriculum framework.

Webber and colleagues [23] conduct a narrative and scoping review of 38 peer-reviewed articles to synthesise existing approaches for supporting adolescents' (12-16 years old) reading motivation, categorising interventions into five types, and identifying critical gaps and priorities for future research and practice.



Webber et al. [24] advocate for the adoption of participatory research approaches with children and young people to address the consistent decline in volitional book reading, arguing that such methods are crucial for understanding how technology shapes contemporary reading practices and for fostering collaborative advancements in the field.

Fu and Hiniker [25] investigated the impact of AI tools on students' reading processes, observing an initial shift towards higher-order thinking within sessions that paradoxically led to passive engagement over time, thereby advocating for AI design principles incorporating structured scaffolds, proactive prompts, and adaptive human-in-the-loop features to foster deeper cognitive engagement.

This grounding supports the quest-based “parcellation” methodology as a meaningful response to contemporary reading challenges.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Study Design and Qualitative Approach. This study utilizes a qualitative, practice-inspired observational design. By focusing on a naturalistic setting rather than a controlled experiment, the research collects the details of "clipped thinking" and real-time behavioral responses to digital vs printed stimuli. The structured observation targeted specific indicators of cognitive engagement, including gaze persistence, physical restlessness, and digital device interaction frequency.

3.2. Participants. The study involved a convenience sample of 138 first-year students.

- *Demographics:* Participants aged 18–19 y.o.
- *Inclusion Criteria:* Students of humanities, social science, and international relations courses where deep reading is a core requirement.
- *Ethical Standards:* Participants were provided with informed consent; observations were conducted anonymously to respect personal information.

3.3. Procedure. The study followed a non-interventional, observational protocol:

1. *Setup:* Participants were provided with long-form academic texts (~3,000 words) in both digital and print formats.

2. *Observation:* Instructors monitored participants for [insert time] using a standardized Observation Protocol Sheet. Observations focused on "reading as a quest" indicators: break frequency, frustration markers, and natural "text parcellation" points.

3. *Inferences:* Post-observation interviews were conducted to cross-reference behaviours with the students' subjective experiences of cognitive load.

3.4. Data Collection and Pilot Processing. As a pilot study, the focus was on testing framework feasibility:



- *Data Collection*: Field notes and behavioral checklists were compiled using a time-sampling technique at five-minute intervals to track attention decay.
- *Processing*: Qualitative data underwent Thematic Analysis to categorize distraction triggers and cognitive fatigue markers.

4. Results. The pilot observations and subsequent thematic analysis led to the development of a progressive, challenge-based pedagogical framework. This framework is designed to transition students from passive "clipped thinking" to active, sustained engagement.

4.1. The "Reading as a Quest" Framework. The primary result of this pilot study is the validation of the methodological design:

- *Text Parcellation*: To manage cognitive load and facilitate focused processing, the assigned texts are systematically divided into smaller, digestible segments. This initial step ensures that students are not overwhelmed by the length or complexity of the full text.

- *Scaffolding*: Each segment is paired with a specific task that increases in cognitive complexity. Following parcellation, each text segment is strategically paired with a specific task designed to increase progressively in cognitive complexity. This scaffolding approach. This directs the student from basic comprehension toward higher-order analytical skills.

- *Gamification (The "Quest" Schema)*: To leverage students' existing familiarity and engagement with digital environments, tasks are creatively reframed as "levels" within a cohesive "quest." This gamification element aims to appeal to students' inherent gaming schemas, transforming the often-perceived chore of academic reading into an intrinsically motivating and rewarding challenge. Through this design, students are encouraged to actively pursue knowledge and demonstrate mastery as they advance through each stage of the reading quest. This framework transforms academic reading into an intrinsically motivating challenge where students "unlock" deeper meanings.

4.2. Behavioral Observations and Feasibility. The data confirmed that students' natural reading habits are fragmented. However, the analysis of interviews suggested that:

- *Managed Segments*: Students reported lower levels of cognitive fatigue when texts were perceived as modular (parcellated).

- *Immediate Feedback*: The inclusion of "level-based" tasks provided the rapid feedback loops that digital natives are accustomed to, successfully re-orienting them toward active learning.

- *Metacognitive Development*: The scaffolding approach allowed participants to consciously track their own progress, supporting the development of academic autonomy.



5. Discussion: A Progression of Quiz and Cognitive Tasks Design.

Proceeding from theoretical studies and teaching experience, this paper presents a working design for learning and assessment activities. Encouraging active learning and progressively building students' metacognitive skills, these activities are designed to range from concise quizzes offering immediate feedback to more complex cognitive tasks aimed at fostering deeper engagement.

5.1. Formative Quizzes: Facilitating Immediate Feedback and Engagement. Quizzes within this framework are primarily designed as formative assessment tools, providing students with instant feedback and a sense of accomplishment. These shorter, lower-stakes evaluations serve several key purposes: to assess immediate comprehension of smaller text segments, reinforce recently acquired information, and offer rapid gratification, a characteristic often sought by contemporary learners influenced by digital media. Examples of quiz formats include multiple-choice questions focusing on explicit details, true/false statements, or brief fill-in-the-blank exercises. Their design aligns with the "quick feedback and gratification" aspect of modern digital interactions, making initial steps into more demanding academic content less intimidating and more rewarding.

5.2. Cognitive Tasks: Cultivating Deeper Processing and Metacognition. In contrast to the quick checks offered by quizzes, cognitive tasks are meticulously crafted to stimulate higher-order thinking and promote sustained intellectual engagement. These tasks go beyond simple recall, requiring students to actively process, analyse, synthesize, and evaluate information. They are designed to encourage:

- *Summarization and Synthesis:* These tasks challenge students to condense information from a single text segment or combine ideas across multiple segments. This requires more than just identifying key points; students must understand the relationships between different pieces of information and reformulate them concisely. For instance, students might be asked to write a 50-word summary of a paragraph, create a concept map connecting ideas from two different sections, or explain how a specific detail supports the main argument of a chapter. This process forces them to identify the most crucial information and articulate it in their own words, fostering a deeper understanding of the material's core message.

- *Analysis and Interpretation:* Moving beyond surface-level comprehension, these tasks require students to break down complex concepts, identify patterns, or interpret implicit meanings. Students might analyze character motivations, explain the significance of a particular literary device, or identify cause-and-effect relationships within a historical account. Activities could include explaining why an author chose a certain word, identifying underlying biases in a



news article, or discussing how different elements of a scientific experiment relate to its conclusion. This encourages critical examination of the text's components and their broader implications.

- *Problem-Solving and Application*: Here, students are presented with scenarios where they must apply textual knowledge to solve problems or connect it to real-world contexts. This could involve using information from a science text to propose a solution to an environmental issue, applying a historical concept to analyse a current event, or using a literary theory to interpret a new story. These tasks move knowledge from theoretical understanding to practical use, demonstrating comprehension through active engagement with relevant situations.

- *Critical Evaluation and Argumentation*: These more advanced tasks challenge students to evaluate claims, form reasoned arguments, or consider different perspectives presented in the text. Students might be asked to critique an author's evidence, compare and contrast conflicting viewpoints, or develop a counter-argument to a stated position. This pushes them to assess the validity and strength of information, articulate their own informed opinions, and engage in logical reasoning.

- *Reflection and Connection*: These prompts aim to cultivate a personal and emotional link with the content, encouraging personal reflection on the material and linking it to prior knowledge or personal experiences. Examples include journaling about their emotional response to a story, discussing how a historical event relates to their community, or connecting a scientific principle to an everyday phenomenon. This not only deepens understanding but also fosters emotional investment, making the learning experience more meaningful and memorable.

These tasks are structured to deliver "slower cognitive rewards," where the gratification comes from the intellectual challenge and the deeper understanding achieved, rather than instant validation. By requiring greater mental effort and sustained focus, these cognitive tasks are instrumental in developing the metacognitive skills essential for comprehending lengthy and complex academic texts.

5.3. Integration within the Challenge-Based Task Design. The deliberate sequencing of quizzes and cognitive tasks is central to the progressive, challenge-based design, ensuring that students gradually develop the complex skills necessary for advanced literacy. This methodological approach systematically increases cognitive demands, moving learners through various levels of textual engagement.

Each task type is carefully chosen to align with specific cognitive processes, drawing directly from established educational taxonomies.



The progression of tasks develops as follows:

- *Vocabulary and Grammar*: Initial tasks focus on key linguistic elements, employing formats such as cloze tasks for contextual word acquisition and synonym/antonym identification to refine lexical understanding. These exercises are crucial for building the basic scaffolding necessary for comprehension and correspond to the lower levels of cognitive processing, such as remembering and understanding, within Bloom's Taxonomy [26].

- *Comprehension*: Building upon vocabulary, these tasks assess students' understanding of explicit and implicit information within text segments. This includes such formats as true/false and multiple-choice questions, which test both literal understanding and the ability to make basic inferences. These activities target the understanding level of cognitive processing.

- *Structure and Logic*: As students progress, tasks shift to analysing the organisation and coherence of the text. Activities such as "odd-one-out" exercises, jumbled sentences or paragraphs and ordering tasks require that students identify logical connections and textual structures. This moves them into the applying and analysing stages, necessitating a deeper engagement with how information is presented and organised.

- *Critical Analysis*: At more advanced levels, students are challenged to analyse the deeper meanings and rhetorical strategies of the text. Tasks include identifying the author's intent, analysing tone, defining the narrative perspective, and mapping arguments. These activities are designed to develop skills at the analysing and evaluating levels, encouraging students to critically assess the content and its underlying messages.

- *Reflection*: To promote personal involvement and deeper meaning-making, we introduce open-ended questions, personal response essays, and exercises exploring thematic connection. These tasks encourage students to relate the text to their own experiences, prior knowledge, and the broader world, thereby engaging the evaluating and creating aspects of cognition and establishing emotional connections to the material.

- *Synthesis*: High-level tasks require that students integrate information from various parts of the text or multiple texts. Examples include creating visual summaries (infographics; mind-maps), constructing timelines, or developing alternative endings, implying that students restructure and combine information in novel ways. These tasks are aimed at the creating level, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding and the ability to create new content.

- *Metacognition*: Throughout the process, embedded metacognitive tasks encourage self-awareness of learning strategies. This includes using self-assessment checklists for monitoring comprehension and providing peer review commentaries that prompt reflection on both their own and others' reading



processes. These activities are important for developing students' ability to monitor their own learning, representing a form of evaluating their cognitive processes.

These tasks align with Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and are aimed at engaging multiple levels of cognitive processing. Namely, as quizzes provide supportive, regular checkpoints, students advance through the "levels" of a reading "quest," with the proportion and complexity of cognitive tasks increasing. This systematic escalation of challenge, coupled with the gamified presentation, aims to bridge the gap between students' media consumption habits and the demands of academic literacy, ultimately helping them to merge the cognitive and emotional benefits associated with deep, sustained reading.

Such an approach reframes reading from a passive reception of information into an interactive cognitive quest. It addresses current psychological realities and develops literacy skills in their traditional sense. Importantly, it fosters a habit of structured engagement that can translate into other academic disciplines.

However, challenges remain, including the design of tasks that are both cognitively demanding and emotionally engaging, which will require special teacher training and resource development. Furthermore, an over-reliance on quizzing poses risks of mechanical learning if not balanced with open-ended analysis.

6. Conclusions and Implications for Teaching Practice

The conducted research allows us to make the following inferences.

6.1. The Challenge Facing Young Readers. Research in cognitive science, media studies, and educational psychology highlights a growing problem in schools today: young people are finding it harder to engage with reading for long periods. This is not just about reading less; it also affects their ability to think critically, understand others' feelings, and be aware of their own learning processes. This situation creates a big challenge for education.

6.2. Introducing "Reading as a Quest." To address this problem, we propose a new way of teaching: "reading as a quest." This idea changes how we see reading. Namely, instead of it being a passive task, it becomes an active exploration—a journey with a purpose. When students approach texts this way, they navigate them through mental, emotional, and thoughtful effort. This method helps to connect teaching strategies with how today's students, who grew up with digital technology, tend to learn.

6.3. Conceptual Rationale of the Model. The "reading as a quest" model offers the following **theoretical benefits**. Specifically, this framework builds upon traditional reading approaches by integrating principles of student



motivation, progressive learning support, and gamification. It also questions old teaching ideas that just see reading as a skill to be tested, rather than a cognitive experience.

As a **practical tool**, this framework offers teachers workable ways to create tasks that are both mentally challenging and emotionally interesting. It uses ideas from Bloom's Taxonomy (a system for classifying learning goals) and principles of how people learn from different types of media. The way this teaching is put together—breaking texts into smaller parts, gradually increasing task difficulty, and using a story-like structure—helps teachers adapt to a world with so much media.

6.4. Overcoming Obstacles. Putting "reading as a quest" into practice is not always self-evident. Instructors need training and resources to design learning activities that are both cognitively demanding and emotionally engaging. Also, if we rely too much on quizzes that feel like games, students might just learn things by heart without truly understanding them. We need to ensure a good balance between activities that allow for open-ended exploration and deeper thought.

6.5. Putting 'Reading as a Quest' into Practice. To get the most out of this framework, instructors should:

- *Use digital tools:* For example, create interactive quizzes with platforms like Quizlet or Google Forms to help students to learn step-by-step.
- *Choose diverse texts:* Include different types of texts and media to match students' interests and backgrounds.
- *Design learning as a story:* Structure reading assignments as progressive journeys with a clear goal, so students feel a sense of achievement as they move forward.
- *Give students a choice:* Allow students to choose how they creatively reflect and respond, which helps them to feel a stronger connection to what they are learning and motivates them from within.

These methods are expected to lead to clear improvements, such as students sticking with longer texts, better critical reading skills, and improved ability to control their own learning.

When used together, this model can bring the joy of reading and help students to develop a habit of strong mental effort.

6.6. Pedagogical Implications and Future Directions. The reasons why young people are less engaged with reading are complex. Such issues as stress from war, financial issues, or personal trauma can make it hard for them to deeply focus on a reading assignment. Also, early reading skills might not be fully developed, as lessons sometimes focus too much on tests instead of real engagement. On top of that, being surrounded by excessive media encourages quick, shallow reading habits, and social networks often simplify language and



reduce the context for developing patience. These overlapping factors reduce attention spans and make long-form reading seem less attractive.

Therefore, making changes across the whole educational system is what we see as a solution to the problem. Families should be encouraged to read together from an early age. Schools should choose texts and teach them in ways that not only meet academic goals but also connect with students emotionally and encourage critical thinking. Most importantly, educators need the right tools to guide students through reading, keeping in mind the mental and emotional realities of today's learners.

In conclusion, the "reading as a quest" framework offers a solution that is both based on theory and promises to be practical. By focusing reading instruction on purpose, interaction, and self-reflection, we can prepare students not just to read words, but to truly understand and engage with what they read. This new direction has the potential to renew the importance of reading in education and help to bring up a new generation of thoughtful and adaptable readers.

Note on the use of artificial intelligence: This article was proofread with the help of an AI-powered language model GPT (OpenAI), retrieved October 31, 2025, to assist non-native English authors in improving clarity and language quality. While the tool offered suggestions to enhance the text, the authors reviewed and approved the final content and assumed full responsibility for any errors or inaccuracies.

Література:

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