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Reading Habits

Reading books use to be a huge hobby of mine. Every chance I had I would pick up a book and read until it is time to go to bed. From the walk from the library to my house, with my brand new books that would last me the week, simply on the way back I would already finish half the book. However this was way back in middle school. Before my introduction to my handy dandy smartphone.

Back in middle school, I read all sorts of books. From comics and manga to level V and W style books I read all of it. However one thing about them all that was in common was that none were non-fiction. I enjoyed being lost in the realm of fantasy books from the magical sorcery books of *Harry Potter* to the silly children's book of *Geronimo Stilton*. Then came my smartphone, streaming videos everywhere I went? Sounds good of course. Weeks went by, then months, before the usual weekly visit to the library turned into monthly visits and soon, I only went to the library to get off my home computer just to go to there for their computers and play games. High school came by and reading became a more difficult task to me. Since everything on a smartphone is all sweet and to the point, reading less than a single sentence would get the point across on the smartphone. In high school there were longer texts, books that were way longer than anything I imagined on the smartphone. The texts became very difficult to read. I often lost focus and found myself rereading a single sentence because my focus was not on the

page. Therefore having empathy and sympathy towards a character, the last time I had that was actually in high school where I needed to understand this reading in order to accomplish the assignment. It was interpreting the short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* from a psychoanalytic and feminist perspective. This short story was a difficult reading and simply reading it once or twice wasn't enough.

I cannot exactly sympathize with the character from *The Yellow Wallpaper* because I have never been retained in a room for so long with nothing to do that I go mentally crazy. However I can empathize with her. In the past, society was created with only men in control and every decision is made by man. So she feels constrained already from this and now on top of that she has to be separated from her child at birth. It is as if one worked so hard for something just to find out that it is taken away from them right before that was accomplished. All that hard work was for nothing. She sits in this room unable to be with her child, only one window that has bars all over it and yellow wallpaper all around. She was a writer yet she didn't have the freedom to write either. In today's standards it is as if we locked a teenager in their room and confiscated all their electronics. They won't survive for even an hour, and would probably end up like her all mentally broken down if left in there for a longer period of time. I couldn't sympathize with the character however I could compare their situation to something I can sympathize with and try to feel how that feeling is like to the character. Understanding what the character is going through is a big part of this story because if we do not understand what the character is going through in *The Yellow Wallpaper* we would simply see her as a character that had gone mad and started seeing things out of the blue. On top of her ever so caring husband who is giving her treatment to treat her insanity. However understanding her character, makes us understand that she isn't

unstable. She is simply longing to be with her child. Giving treatment to a perfectly fine patient never ends well, it is just mother's instinct to want to be with their child. Also the husband as a doctor saying she is mentally unstable and needs treatment is not what a kind caring husband would do. Now understanding the character one would now think of the opposite, that the husband is very controlling and she was drugged to act that way.

Therefore ending on the tone, being able to sympathize with the character and being in "their shoes" makes one reader understand the text more and can even see things from a completely new perspective.