

Why do Books Still Exist?

When you consider it, it's rather weird that we still have books in our technologically advanced society. But they're here to stay. Books will live on as long as people love to see new stories unfold. As long as we're human, we will love escaping and we will love stories.

Thinking about the future, about a future job, a mortgaged house and things to put in it, one more and more often decides not to buy a television. Why would people need it, when everything they want to watch is available on Youtube or Netflix? That's when it becomes obvious: the television side of media has moved on - people don't need televisions anymore, and a piece of technology that was so modern is now considered obsolete. So why are books still so loved, still so popular despite all the distractions we face in the 21st century, when all they are, essentially, is bound pieces of paper? The answer is simple. Because they certainly are not simply bound pieces of paper.

Modern life runs amok. Sometimes, we feel like life has the wind behind it, pushing it forward, and it leaves us behind, gasping for breath and calling for it to slow down. Books are tiny pieces of magic in a constantly moving world. Books are the world's greatest and worst metaphor for life all in one. They're the worst metaphor, because you can close books. You can shut them whenever you want and go and do something else. You can stay up all night reading, get to the end of the book and put it down, shut your eyes, and return to your dreams. You can't do that with life and maybe that's the reason we love books so much. Books allow you to live a thousand lives and dream a hundred dreams, put yourself in the position of someone completely different, or someone completely similar. In real life, you only get one chance. There's no rewind button, and you never get the chance to just stop your life for a minute to do something different, and then come back to it. We get really jealous when we think about books like that. Then we remind ourselves we're being jealous of an inanimate object and go back to the page.

But the true reason we love books is because they're such a great metaphor for life. A metaphor to tell you that no matter what happens, there's always another page. No matter what awful things and events might have happened on one page, something different will happen the minute you give your fingers the chance to turn the page. A character who seems simple at the beginning develops, and you never quite know them until the very last page. And lastly, some books are great. Some books are not so great. Some books are great to certain people. Others are great to other people. And that's ok.

There's a reason people still choose reading books over watching one more episode of Suits. And it's because you can't get feeling that you get reading a good book that you get watching a program. There's something fulfilling about feeling those crisp edges on your hands, of watching scenes play out in your head, of fantasizing over characters you wish existed. There's just something truly magical about having something so simple in your hands that has the power to make you feel so much, to make you feel less alone and to make you feel worth more, as you become involved with the plot, the twists and the turns.

Adapted from www.theguardian.com

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) waiting to be used: _____
- 2) one that everybody knows about: _____
- 3) something that diverts your attention from sth: _____
- 4) simply: _____
- 5) to move sth backward: _____
- 6) sth that isn't alive: _____
- 7) a person: _____
- 8) a part of a TV series played weekly (usually): _____
- 9) satisfying: _____
- 10) complications: _____
- 11) to move in an uncontrolled way: _____
- 12) having some value: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1) sth has | sth over sth |
| 2) sth is considered | sth on your hands |
| 3) to gasp | for breath |
| 4) to stay | moved on |
| 5) a metaphor | sb feel sth |
| 6) to choose | involved in sth |
| 7) to feel | out in your head |
| 8) sth plays | up all night |
| 9) to make | obsolete |
| 10) to become | for sth |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) pomimo czegoś	7) fantazjować o czymś
2) być zazdrosnym o coś	8) rozważyć coś
3) bez względu na to ...	9) historia rozwija się
4) okropne	10) dom obciążony hipoteką
5) postać	11) urządzenie
6) wątek	12) ciągle

Grammar corner...

In informal, but also in Business English, we often help ourselves with little words that solve many of our language problems. One of them is GET, which usually means something along the lines of BECOME. Here are some useful phrases with GET: get along - work well with someone, get away - to escape, get back - to return, get going - move rapidly, get in - to enter a vehicle, get into - to have an interest, get it - to understand, get lost - to become lost, get off - to disembark from a vehicle, get on - to enter a vehicle, get out of - to leave a car, get over - to recover from, get to - to arrive at a place, get up - to stand up, get through - to finish.

Ex. 4 Fill in the gaps with a phrase with GET.

1. Margaret always tries to get _____ from the heat of the city each July.
2. You had better get _____ if you want to complete your homework by tomorrow.
3. Lisa will never get _____ the death of her husband.
4. Peter always gets _____ at 6 o'clock.
5. My daughter missed the train and couldn't get _____ school on time.
6. Grandmother got _____ and had to call me for help last week.
7. After I got _____ the red car in the showroom, I instantly wanted to buy it.
8. I was suddenly sick and had to get _____ the car.
9. Lily didn't get _____ when Emma told her joke.
10. Mr. Paterson got _____ from his trip to Florida yesterday.
11. Alex and his father don't get _____; they disagree constantly.
12. I had a very difficult task to do, but I managed to get _____ it with hard work and discipline.
13. What activities do you get _____? - I enjoy hiking and climbing.
14. Jenny gets _____ the bus at 6 o'clock each morning. Her trip lasts an hour.
15. At 7 o'clock, Jane gets _____ the bus. After a short walk, she arrives at work.

GLOSSARY	
available	dostępny
obvious	oczywisty
essentially	w zasadzie
to rewind sth	przewinąć (np. taśmę wideo)
an inanimate object	rzecz martwa
a character	postać
an episode	odcinek
fulfilling	satysfakcjonujący
the twist and turns	zwroty akcji
to run amok	mknąć bez opamiętania
worth	warty
sth has moved on	coś poszło z duchem czasu
sth is considered obsolete	coś jest uznawane za przestarzałe
to gasp for breath	chwytać oddech
to stay up all night	nie spać całą noc
a metaphor for sth	metafora czegoś
to choose sth over sth	wybrać coś w miejsce czegoś
to feel sth on your hands	czuć dotyk czegoś
sth plays out in your head	coś odgrywa się w czyjejs głowie
to make sb feel sth	sprawić, że ktoś jakoś się czuje
to become involved in sth	zaangażować się w coś
despite sth	pomimo czegoś
to be jealous of sth	być o coś zazdrosnym
no matter what happens	bez względu na to, co się stanie
awful	okropne
plot	wątek
to fantasize about sth	fantazjować o czymś
to consider sth	rozważać coś

a story unfolds	historia rozwija się
a mortgaged house	dom obciążony hipoteką
a piece of technology	urządzenie
constantly	ciągle
a distraction	coś, co rozprasza

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) available
- 2) obvious
- 3) a distraction
- 4) essentially
- 5) to rewind sth
- 6) an inanimate object
- 7) a character
- 8) an episode
- 9) fulfilling
- 10) the twists and turns
- 11) to run amok
- 12) worth

Ex. 2

- 1) sth has moved on
- 2) sth is considered obsolete
- 3) to gasp for breath
- 4) to stay up all night
- 5) a metaphor for sth
- 6) to choose sth over sth
- 7) to feel sth on your hands
- 8) sth plays out in your head
- 9) to make sb feel sth
- 10) to become involved in sth

Ex. 3

- 1) despite sth
- 2) to be jealous of sth
- 3) no matter what happens
- 4) awful
- 5) a character
- 6) plot
- 7) to fantasize about sth
- 8) to consider sth
- 9) a story unfolds
- 10) a mortgaged house
- 11) a piece of technology
- 12) constantly

Ex. 4

- 1) away
- 2) going
- 3) over
- 4) up
- 5) to
- 6) lost
- 7) in
- 8) out of
- 9) it
- 10) back
- 11) along
- 12) through
- 13) into
- 14) on

15)off