

Libraries and What they mean to me

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What do you think of when you hear the word reading? Do you think of reading a novel on your iPad, What about teens sitting around listening to a podcast. Maybe you think of buying a book from a bookstore? Personally, I cannot visualize any other situation than sitting in a place that is like a second home. That place is a library.

Libraries are a great place to read, a skill that we all need. The libraries are a place we all grew up as children. I learned to read my first full book at a library in my small hometown. After that I went there at least once a week, usually even more! I could not stay away from books, my personal favorite being the *Fly Guy* series. I met one of my best friends at the library where every Thursday, at the children's reading session, I would see them. We started elementary school together and loved reading more than anyone else. I was able to do good in school because of the library. It also helped many of the other kids in my classes.

We all worked hard in school and after, went to the library to learn even more. We gradually moved our way up to small chapter books and then to full novels. The library evolved from the story time corner to a place of study. The library was a great place to find information. With class presentations, I always tried to list off at least one book in my credits. Books contain some of the best knowledge we can find and libraries hand them to us for free.

Lots of my classmates did not own printers and/or did not have internet access. Some of these people were some of the hardest workers I know. They came to the library lots of days and worked diligently on their work with the computers that the library provides. The library gives the community many great resources besides books and helps make students get to the point of success that I have seen them and me achieve.

Apart from school I learned many other skills here. The library helped me become a more outgoing person and gave me the ability to talk to other people around me. I developed lots of important social skills at the library and met lots of friends that helped me excel in academics. I could not imagine my life without the library because it gave so much to me. The libraries, like a parent, taught me many things growing up. I learned so much while reading the books at the library and I got a lot out of all the words put in those books.

These books gave me a wondering curiosity for the world and all it has to offer. Learning history from the library books was one of my favorite things to do. The books also helped me grow my strong passion for science. The books helped me decide what path of a career I want to do when I grow up and the books set me up for the success in that career. On top of that, the librarians that worked there helped me find these books and always wore a smile while helping me get more out of each book than just reading it. The children's librarian worked with many programs to get us involved with reading. We did lots of arts and crafts after reading each book to get our creativity going, getting the most out of each book. With these programs we learned skills as simple as using scissors to cut something out all the way up to important life skills.

On top of the education I got from the library, I got a sense of magic from each book. Many books would leave me in amazement after reading them. They always lead way to me wanting to dig deeper into each subject and expand my learning. The books taught me how to cope with different situations and gave me an understanding to everything in the world. These books from the library also take me away from the world, spending hours in each book not reading about the character but being the character. I had a huge craving for imagination and the books fed that craving. One of my favorite series of books to do this was *The Magic Treehouse* series. This series of books transported me to another world each time and taught me many things along the way.

The books of the library are great for me but other people too. The libraries are more than just for kids and students, they are for all people, especially the people I see in the great state of North Carolina. When volunteering with the TLC program at the Wake County Public Library I see many people at the library who are regulars. One lady in particular always has a smile on her face and speaks to the librarians regularly. She is always happy to read a book in the library and check out a few for home. She is one of the most pleasant people I know.

Another Lady comes in and is always excited to discuss the most recent books she read. She talks to the librarians about the books and help get some recommendations for her other reads. The librarians have also started reading the same books she checks out so they can discuss further with her. I also know one man that takes his grandson to the same Thursday program that I grew up with. He says that it is one of his favorite times of the week and that it is a great way for him to connect with his grandson.

All of these people are examples of people who use the library. They come in and not only use the resources given by the library but enjoy them. For many people I know, the library is the only person they can depend on. The libraries are the caretakers of these people, their best friend. Any community needs a library and a library needs a community. Libraries are the heart of a town that turn it from a group of building to a community of people, all united together. For me and many other people, libraries bind us together like a family. Then from a family to a community and finally from a community to a state, the great state of North Carolina. All of this put together is a library and that is what they mean to me.