

Why Full Books Matter in ELA

Reading full books builds comprehension, stamina, and deeper understanding. Students can't develop these skills through excerpts alone. The curated resources below highlight research, classroom insights, and discussion tools that support whole-book reading.



Discussion Guide: Questions That Spark Thinking in Full Books

from *Great Minds*

A ready-to-use discussion guide with sequenced questions that help students notice key ideas, organize their thinking, and build deeper understanding as they read full books. Examples are drawn from Great Minds® curricula and adapt to other complete texts.



Article: Kids Rarely Read Whole Books Anymore. Even in English Class

by *The New York Times*

An examination of the shift away from full books and what students may be missing as a result, grounded in and real classroom examples.



Podcast: Helping Students Read Entire Books with Doug Lemov, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway

from *Melissa & Lori Love Literacy*

Doug Lemov, Colleen Driggs, and Erica Woolway discuss practical strategies for supporting whole-text reading, including the use of read-alouds, close reading, and classroom discussions.



Article: Helping Students Read Entire Books

by *Great Minds*

An explanation of how sustained reading helps students think deeply, build stamina, and engage with complex texts.



Article: Rethinking Read-Alouds: Why They Matter More Than Ever

by *Great Minds*

A look at how read-alouds support comprehension, vocabulary, and background knowledge across grade levels.



Article: Beyond Excerpts: Teaching with Whole Books Boosts Comprehension and Engagement

by *Natalie Wexler, AFT*

A research-based case for teaching with complete texts to build knowledge, make connections, and understand complex ideas.



Article: These Teachers Have Their Students Read Multiple Novels a Year. How They Do It

by *EdWeek*

Classroom examples showing practical approaches to pacing, discussion, and text selection make sustained reading possible.



Article: Novels vs. Excerpts: What to Know About a Big Reading Debate

by *EdWeek*

An overview of key perspectives and research Shaping the debate around novels versus short texts.



Article: Why Students Should Read Whole Books

by *Edutopia*

A research-backed look at how reading whole books supports deeper understanding and retention.

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