



Associazione Agenzia Arcipelago

REPORTS INVESTIGATION CHILDREN READING HABITS

In the framework of the European sociocultural project "Readers of the future" of the Dituria association of Tirana (Albania) to be held in Albania (Tirana), Macedonia (Skopje) and Italy (Naples), financed from the European Commission ("Creative Europe" sub-program) on the support front and the promotion of reading the Arcipelago Onlus Association has activated an "Investigation cognitive on the book and reading", followed by a competition and a festival (from 12 to 14 May 2017).

Today, cultural policies to support and promote reading are particularly important for a multiplicity of factors that concern, among others, education, schools, the territory, the health and growth of young people, the total cultural capital of a territory, strengthening the critical and creative abilities of young people, the degree of openness, awareness and cohesion of the social body.

The main objective was to investigate the reading habits of 1000 students of two age groups (6-11; 12-15): stories, legends, myths, fairy tales, beliefs and attitudes of children and young people readers in Albania, Italy and Macedonia. The purpose of the survey was to support parents, the teachers and other literacy professionals in a wider reading promotion.

The following data and graphics may be useful for further progress of our project.

To build effective public policies, which achieve the goal of enlarging the dimensions of the the pool of readers of books and newspapers, we believe it is necessary to coordinate the actions carried out by the Institutions at national and local level, but also support and enhance the good practices of which the Country is rich, analyzing the factors that determine its success and creating the

conditions for one of them reproducibility, putting them on the network and encouraging the exchange of experiences.

Starting from the conviction, also supported by recent studies, that reading is a "fundamental activity":

- for the individual and for society - on which the intellectual and economic growth of a country depends, we believe that an overview of the "State of reading" in Europe and in the world is an instrument valuable to reflect better on the Italian situation, on the urgency of public intervention and on the more appropriate initiatives to start.

It is not surprising to realize that almost all industrialized countries have developed programs for spread the habit of reading, according to different ways and rhythms. In no country these Attempts are considered waste of time, energy and resources, wherever they are conceived and implemented as investments for the future; this must encourage us to do the same and to study - through analysis and the comparison of campaigns and initiatives carried out by other countries - the best way to approaching Italians to books and instilling in them a love for reading.

With this research we are sure to offer a lot of data and food for thought, both for the operators of the world of the book for both Italian public decision makers; the competence and experience of the Association, combined with intelligence and rigor, allow us to proudly present this result in the field of our institutional analysis and reflection activity.

The *Brief Report* is proposed, following the administration of 1000 questionnaires (18 questions per the age group 12-15 and 15 applications for the age group 6-11 years), aimed at different age groups (age 12-15: n. 423; age 6-11: n 577) and age in some schools and cultural centers to make this heritage of experiences an element of knowledge in order to effectively intervene and make available of political decision-makers, the analytical tools that could be the basis for an organic action incisive, aimed at a marked improvement in the reading indexes that currently statistics they register.

The picture that emerges from the Report shows the elements of difficulty but also the liveliness and the energies that many subjects, public and private, invest in the activities of promoting reading. The document offers an overview of what is being done, but also implicitly contains the reporting

of what is missing and a program of things that should be done. For each school or center yes report the summary results.

Analysis and considerations

It is widely held that reading behaviors are conditioned by the possibility of implement concrete experiences (courses, workshops, meetings with writers, artists, authors, publishers) a children's favor and numerous environmental, cultural, social and family factors. Between these, firstly, the degree of education and the socio-economic level (especially of families and others) have an impact (disadvantaged backgrounds). The increase in the number of readers registered in Italy in past decades is largely related to the increase in the number of our fellow citizens who have graduated of high school or a degree, which occurred during the same period. This figure is incontrovertible, but some contradictions that characterize the relationship between education and reading can not be ignored Italy.

Despite the strong growth in education levels, our country is still held back by the fact that the 45.2% of adults between 25 and 64 years of age have only obtained the middle school certificate.

Evidently it is not enough to be able to read to become readers: in Italy, even more than in other countries industrialized, there is a strong discrepancy between the rise in literacy levels and rates reading in free time. Indeed, we must note that for some decades growth Education and reading growth travel at different speeds. The economic crisis affects heavily, but let us not delude ourselves that a "turnaround in the indicators of income e of employment - an inversion that will probably be weak and slow - and hopefully a recovery in the sale of books, they will be enough to change the relationship of Italians with the reading. Not necessarily a richer society will be a society of people more sensitive to this form of communication. Rather, it would serve the re-foundation of a system of values in which culture e education returns to be appreciated not only through social networks; we should start again a quality educational and academic system capable of acting as a basis for peers opportunity and condition of social mobility, to build a real and widespread "well-being".

The school is a primary place for learning to read, to approach the book in its forms paper, mixed, digital. The centrality of the school in the process of learning and learning consolidation of reading skills makes it, necessarily, also the place where young people they approach, according to a

predisposed didactic process, texts of different complexity, of various kinds literary and editorial, in order to access the knowledge and to acquire a method to search it in autonomy.

The school represents the keystone in the process of training the reader even if many cultural associations play an important role by promoting workshops activities linked to the reading.

The attention to the reading and its centrality in the path of growth of the person is reflected in the New indications for the nursery school curriculum and the first cycle of education, issued in 2012, where reading reads: «The birth of taste for reading produces an increase of attention and curiosity, develops the imagination and the pleasure of research on its own, brings together the stories and the stories of every civilization and time, approaching the other and different from oneself.

All these experiences are essential components for the achievement of a solid competence in reading and for the development of all future knowledge "(p.28) and again:" *The custom with books lays the foundation for one reading practice as an autonomous and personal activity that lasts for a lifetime. This is why it is necessary ensure the conditions (school libraries, access to books, research itineraries, constant use both books that new media, etc.) from which arise needs and taste of exploration of written texts. There reading connected with the study and the more spontaneous learning and reading, linked to aesthetic aspects emotional, they must also be practiced as they respond to needs present in the person ... "*

Reading is therefore conceived as the key to the door that opens the way for the growth of children first, boys and young people then, to teach to be open to new things, happy to learn, ready to find solutions, capable of questioning and interpreting feelings, aware of the world that surrounds us; you read on the Internet, with a tablet, you can read text messages or e-mails.

Schools, respecting their autonomy, plan educational paths aimed at increasing the intellectual and emotional pleasure of reading and aimed at the development of identity, autonomy, skills and the exercise of citizenship.

Today the panorama of the school that is openly promoting books and reading does not appear at all homogeneous. North and South, in this regard, present both situations of excellence, which appear however employees rather than the occasional meeting of skills, passions, territorial resources rather than by a systematic coordinated and shared action at national level; even in more circumscribed territories - like Provinces or large Municipalities - schools that are very active in the area are only a

few kilometers away sector of reading promotion alongside others that do not deal with it at all. Analyzing I paths proposed by many good practices spread throughout the country, can be seen as I projects proposed by the schools are highly educational and intend to underline the potential that the book can offer in the cognitive, emotional and relational development of children.

One however is missing overall recognition (and consequently, adequate valorization), present only in some reality, of the "good practices" that many schools have been able to elaborate, often with modesty of means but with considerable creativity; there is therefore no "modeling" which, far from favoring stiffness and repetitiveness, however, provide some parameters although wide reference for schools that intend to promote adequately or initiate innovation in the field of promotion of the reading.

The marked plurality of needs that characterizes the classes of the contemporary school can be found precisely in the plurality of the editorial offer precious tools to articulate teaching individualized.

The school library is particularly important, even in a multimedia perspective, from intended as a privileged place for reading and discovering a plurality of books and texts, which supports independent study and continuous learning; a public place, between school and territory, which favors the participation of families, facilitates integration paths, creates bridges between languages, languages, religions and cultures, in our country the school library is from time to time considered one luxury or an accessory, or the flower in the eyelet of the school. To all today's experiences significant in the field of reading promotion concern schools where there is a library school in a "network and system optics".

Making a library at school or entering a library network for a school is a step important as it obliges it to make agreements with other institutions, and to guarantee a standard minimum internal service and exchange of documents with other libraries; in reality more advanced the choice of cooperation makes the whole library heritage of the schools on the net available for loan to all citizens; promotes activities for young people and training for their children operators and for its users; plans, organizes reading promotion activities in an "optics" vertical, from nursery school to high school and in collaboration with the territory and others

Reading promotion agencies (civic libraries, bookshops, reading groups, associations ...).

In schools where the library is present, reading has "multiplier effectiveness, because children and guys can have many different books available to increase their skills and abilities of approach to the complexity of the existing, to deepen, to get excited, not to stay in surface, to choose whether to become "non" readers, after understanding the potential of reading and not because you do not have access to books. Reading not only individual, but also collective, it makes young people aware of some very important issues of value, with extraordinary opportunities of deepening of the different languages. The teachers' activities are important and fundamental they realize to make the various reading paths stimulating: thanks to these activities the library scholastic becomes, in the most advanced realities, an open and pluralistic laboratory, an environment not only physical but also ideal, a place of passage of cultures, languages, teaching methods.

The library becomes the fulcrum of the didactic activity allowing every teacher, in the maximum freedom, to design interventions that pass through reading and research paths that enrich the lessons fronts and laboratories, and foster the pluralistic planning of a teaching aimed at implementing interdisciplinary connections. A well - stocked library of books for children and teenagers, renewed in editorial news, edited in annual waste of worn or no longer current works, freely available on open shelves, with faculty to borrow without having to undergo checks, oriented on the user, updated to new needs, with a "varied articulation of tools to give to the boy, promotes the student to a competent reader and later to a secure user of libraries (beyond that scholastic), who knows how it works and how a real library can best be used virtual, for its lifelong learning.

In schools where a school library is created and the reading on a wider spectrum is promoted, the connection with the territory, starting from families, is a priority and is indispensable for share the objectives to be achieved, prepare common and specific training courses, find funds for the planned activities, verify the effectiveness of the work carried out General picture 6-11 years = total 577 Headband 6-11 It should be noted, out of the total of 15 questions in the questionnaire, that there are not many differences for the two age groups (6/11 and 12/15), while we have seen reading data (like those related to others cultural consumption) show little parental attention to the topic of book promotion while the reasons given for not reading seem more uniform.

On a sample of 577 pupils the 63.3% have parents who do not read books and, among them, 48.1% have few texts at home and the 49.7% have no one when they read and 35.5% do not help in the choice of texts and books, 69.1% do not go to the library or books. Many students, or 69%, read the books several times. Wherever the lack of time results the most "gettonata" answer, even if it is probably more of a perception than of a real fact (almost identical the percentage of adult students, who instead we have seen are characterized by cultural lifestyles, respectively, very active and passive enough). Almost none of the respondents believe that the books are too expensive even if it goes noted that this motivation has more weight in the disadvantaged territories and with lower income levels. The fact leads one to believe that this is a lack of "willingness to pay" more than one response due to cover prices too high and not for everyone, also because the price average of books and dropped in recent years.

However, it should be noted, out of the total of 18 questions in the questionnaire, that there are not many differences between them two age groups (6/11 and 12/15), while as we have seen data on reading (such as those relating to other cultural consumption) show little parental attention to the topic of book promotion while the reasons given for not reading seem more uniform. On a sample of 423 pupils the 62.8% have parents who do not read books and, among them 37.5% have few books at home and the 77, 5% read many books of fairy tales and myths, 42.7% of the boys are not helped in the choice of the texts and books, 51, 5% do not go to the library or books. Many students or 58.1% read the books many times.

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The collected materials are now made available to policy makers and those interested in a wider dissemination of reading among Italians: all that remains is to hope that this work will show useful for achieving such an important goal for the growth of our community and each of its components.