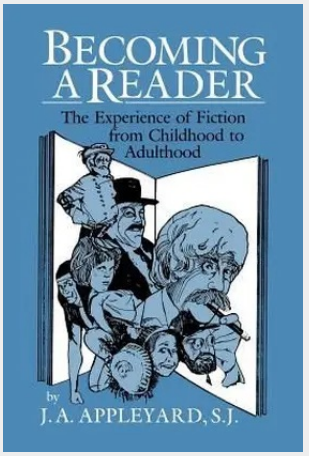
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# Becoming a Reader

The Experience of Fiction from Childhood to Adulthood




Becoming a Reader argues that, whatever our individual differences of personality and background, there is a regular sequence of attitudes we go through as we mature, which affect how we experience fiction, from the five-year-old child absorbed in the world of fantasy play, through the seventeen year old critical seeker of the truth, to the middle-aged reader recognizing their own experiences in fictional characters. Becoming a Reader argues that this sequence of responses can be worked out and described. The evidence for these claims is drawn from numerous studies of reading and from interviews with a great many readers, young and old. The developmental perspective provides a useful framework for assessing the implications of competing theories of reading and for charting the evolution of individual readers. Finally, in allowing us to predict our reading experience, the book allows us, as adults, to choose what to do with the power which reading gives us.

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