

# Teachers Agree: Classroom Magazines Are Vital to Student Success

**A** research study by Lesley Mandel Morrow and Joy Lesnick<sup>1</sup> examines the benefits of educational magazines like **Scholastic Classroom Magazines**, including *Scholastic News*, *Science World*, and *Scholastic Scope*. Morrow and Lesnick found that the majority of surveyed teachers said magazines are an important source of motivation, that they improve critical thinking and reading skills, and that they provide valuable support of diverse student skill levels and interests in the classroom. Ninety percent of the surveyed teachers agreed that magazines are a good educational resource for these reasons and more.

## Motivation that makes the difference.

Classroom magazines were found to be a key motivator for all students because they enjoy reading a shorter, more “adult” format with colorful pictures and kid-interest topics.

- One second-grade teacher said, “**I can hardly keep my students from tearing open the new editions of their magazines.** They are so eager to learn about science, social studies, and health... **I certainly don’t get the same response, cooperation, or enthusiasm with their textbooks.**”
- The researchers note that “no other medium can capture children’s interests or expand their worlds as effectively as magazines” and that

they were found to be “**non-threatening, inviting, manageable, and reader-friendly**”—a perfect way to engage students and get them reading.

## Timely reading materials that help students think critically.

Teachers also agreed that classroom magazines are an important way to encourage students to think critically—a key skill they need for success in their education and on standardized tests.

- As Morrow and Lesnick found, magazines “**spark communication, debate, and awareness of current events,**” and “classroom instruction using magazines can improve critical thinking and enable students to make judgments and form opinions.”

## Support for different levels of students in the same classroom.

Morrow and Lesnick’s study reports that classroom magazines help teachers meet the needs of a diverse range of student levels and abilities in the same classroom.

- “[Magazines] serve as **motivation for slow and reluctant readers, while more capable students can**

**use higher levels of reading and thinking skills.”**

- Additionally, “[Teachers] felt that having a variety of magazines in the classroom is helpful in accommodating the wide range of reading abilities of their students.”

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## Help for struggling readers.

Classroom magazines also function to encourage and support struggling students and help them become more confident in their skills.

- “92 percent of...K-6 teachers reported that **magazines are a good resource for struggling readers because they contain short articles that are motivating.** After reading the articles, struggling readers feel a sense of pride since teachers report they can understand them and share what they read with others.”
- As one teacher commented, “magazines represent a **vital tool for me in teaching students with learning problems.**”

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## An ideal way to improve reading skills.

Classroom magazines were found to improve students’ reading skills because they provide a variety of texts that children want to read.

- “[Magazines] can encourage students to become strategic readers by causing them to **employ a variety of reading strategies** for various purposes.”

- “According to reports by teachers, magazines seem to cater to different levels and interests. **They aren’t threatening to students, [and] consequently they do not feel the same pressure as when reading a textbook.** Because they are more relaxed, they become more comfortable and confident and **are able to improve their reading comprehension skills.**”

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## An important link in the home-school connection.

Classroom magazines **encourage parental involvement** in their children’s education when students bring the magazines home to share or talk about what they read.

- “Research has shown that magazines provide a valuable link between home and school.”

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## The results are clear: Classroom magazines are an invaluable resource.

The majority of surveyed teachers said classroom magazines “span a wide range of reading levels, contain current information, have a strong literacy connection within a real-world framework, provide choices in reading, encourage independent reading, and create life-long habits of loving reading.”

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