

Could We Be Doing Less for Literacy?

How reading for pleasure translates to academic results

Presented by Brooke Donabie, School Library Officer

This lightning talk challenges the assumption that improving literacy requires more programs, more resources, and more teacher time. Instead, I argue that strategic use of three high-impact approaches can produce stronger reading engagement and comprehension with less effort: student choice, graphic novels, and purposeful read-alouds.

Drawing on current research and school-based data, I will demonstrate:

- Why student choice significantly increases reading engagement and stamina
- How graphic novels support vocabulary growth, inference skills, and reluctant readers
- The overlooked cognitive and wellbeing benefits of regular read-alouds

I will conclude with a practical “cheat sheet” of time-saving tools, including effective ways to partner with school library staff.

This session offers an optimistic provocation: perhaps the most powerful literacy improvement can come not from doing more, but from doing less – deliberately.