Are young people still reading?

If people were to ask this question a few years ago the answer would be a definite no. It was thought that most teenagers and young people had given up on reading as a hobby, being more consumed with TV shows and movies in this new age of streaming. Older generations were never really considered to have fallen off the habit of reading but younger generations were, only picking up a book if they were forced to when completing school work.

However now, this is no longer the case.

The rise in social media has actually encouraged young people to fall back into reading as a hobby. Apps such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter have been responsible for this. These apps have been dubbed ‘BookTok’, ‘Bookstagram’, ‘BookTube and ‘BookTwt’ and involve users sharing what they have found interesting in the books they have read, encouraging others to the read the same books that they have read. People begin to make aesthetic videos on the books they have read, using pictures to show how they believe certain aspects of the book would look like. They also post reviews of books they have read either encouraging or discouraging people to read a book but either way, this enforces a conversation about that specific book with their followers.

Overtime when a certain book is circulating around these apps, it will become a trend for people to read these books and give their opinions on them. Seeing other young people their age reading books actually works to convince others to get into reading especially if it was something someone held as a hobby when they were younger but stopped. It shows them that books are not just for either young or older people anymore and there are books targeted at people their age. These social media platforms provide people with a community in reading. It gives them people to speak to when they have finished reading a book and provides them with recommendations on what to read next. This helps people know that they are not alone in their hobby and they have so many people they can speak to and enjoy it with.

Creators on these social media platforms have garnered a lot of success and attention to their profiles because of these communities. Popular ‘Booktokers’ such as Jack Edwards and Steph Broher have gained over a million followers each on the platform and youtuber, Haley Pham over 2 million. [Authors have also benefited](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-61173810#:~:text=Publishers%20say%20the%20popularity%20of,well%2C%20the%20Publishers%20Association%20said) from the popularity of sharing opinions of books on social media. Popular author Colleen Hoover has had almost all of her books become a popular point of discussion on social media and this helps in increasing her sales. Constant discussions of her book ‘It Ends With Us’ has actually helped in the book being developed into a movie due to be released sometime next year.

Ultimately, the rise in social media has proven to encourage young people to read more than it is commonly believed to deter them away from the hobby. It has in fact helped to provide young people with a community of others who share the same hobby as them, giving them a safe place to discuss and share their thoughts.