

'We Have Kindle Now. Who Has Books Anymore?'

While getting my oil changed the other day, I happened to catch a house-hunting reality program on the waiting room television. The house hunter in this case was a 25-year-old woman looking for a Manhattan apartment. While reviewing one option, she looked at the built-in bookcases which lined the wall, raised her eyebrows, and said, "That's kind of weird. I mean, we have Kindle now. Who has books anymore?"

Such a sentiment is likely to become even more common. Currently, there is a big push to get iPads and e-readers into more school classrooms. As the thinking goes, if students can have more access to the internet, they will also have more access to online materials which will boost their learning, such as the Open eBooks app. [Slate Magazine's](#) Lindsey Tepe explains this app:

"Looking through the app... my niece excitedly pointed out a number of her favorites: [Dork Diaries](#). [Goddess Girls](#). [The Spiderwick Chronicles](#). The app contains hundreds of popular book series written for the elementary grades, from [Judy Moody](#) and [Flat Stanley](#), to [Nancy Drew](#) and the [Hardy Boys](#)."

As the article goes on to explain, the app has a number of other selections such as novels, biographies, and non-fiction texts. But in spite of all these, Tepe noticed that something important was missing:

*"While the app currently provides access to an impressive array of titles, the content curators need to seek out more challenging texts. For instance, *To Kill a Mockingbird* isn't available, which [isn't totally surprising](#), but nor are public domain works like [The Picture of Dorian Gray](#), [Wuthering Heights](#), or the [complete works of William Shakespeare](#)—all*

likely to appear on an AP English reading list. Access to advanced literature for high school as well as more complex texts for the middle and elementary grades is critical to ensuring children continue to grow as readers.”

When it comes down to it, it's true. Both children and adults have a multitude of reading resources at their fingertips through the aid of Kindle and other online venues. But however much we would like to believe that access to these online sources will raise academic scores and make the population more knowledgeable, is that really possible if these sources are supplying individuals with mediocre material?

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