

## READERS OF OUR TIME

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**Annotation:** This article discusses the importance of reading in modern society, the distinctive features of contemporary readers, and the emerging new reading culture. It explores how the culture of reading has evolved over time, the influence of digital technologies on this sphere, and the role of books in enhancing the spirituality of young people. The article also offers suggestions for promoting reading habits. The main goal is to increase the love for books among today's youth and contribute to the development of an educated society.

The 21st century is the era of information, technology, the internet, and artificial intelligence. Humanity's progress has reached a new stage. Even in this era, the importance of books, knowledge, and reading has not diminished; instead, it is developing in new forms. The readers of our time are a generation growing up alongside the digital world, open to innovation, yet still loyal to books.

### **Reading Culture: Past and Present**

In the past, books were the primary source of knowledge. Schools, universities, and research centers all relied on books as the main means of learning. Libraries were considered centers of knowledge and were among the most beloved places for both young and old.

Today, however, the internet, e-books, and audiobooks have transformed this field. Nevertheless, the attitude towards books among today's readers has not changed—only the format has.

Contemporary readers have a wide range of choices. They can find any book online and read it on their phones or tablets. In addition to traditional libraries, they actively use electronic libraries and online resources, which provide greater convenience for readers.

### **Advantages and Challenges of Digital Reading**

Thanks to modern technologies, today's youth have access to vast amounts of information. E-books are among the greatest conveniences—they are easy to store, read, and highlight important sections. Audiobooks are also gaining popularity, allowing people to listen to books while engaged in other activities.

However, this situation brings certain challenges. Some young people have become

accustomed to reading only short posts on social media, developing impatience toward long texts. This limits their depth of thinking and critical reasoning abilities.

### **Reading as a Measure of Culture**

Books are not only sources of knowledge but also of upbringing, ethics, and worldview. No matter how modern today's readers are, they preserve their spirituality and identity through books.

It is encouraging that young people are increasingly interested in the masterpieces of Uzbek literature such as the works of Alisher Navoi, Abdulla Qodiriy, and Cho'lpon. Many are also engaging with renowned works of world literature.

A good reader is a good person. Reading fosters imagination, analytical skills, and critical thinking. Such young people develop into individuals who care about the fate of their homeland and the future of their nation.

### **Promoting Reading — A Collective Responsibility**

Today, many projects are being implemented by our government to promote a culture of reading among youth. Initiatives such as "Young Reader" competitions, expanding the network of libraries, and improving access to electronic resources are bringing reading culture to a new level.

Families, schools, and communities must work together to teach young people to read more and select quality literature. We must cultivate the habit of daily reading, even if only a few pages, and set an example ourselves.

### **Conclusion**

The readers of our time are a generation that keeps pace with modern technologies yet retains a love for books. If we want them to grow into knowledgeable, deep-thinking, and spiritually rich individuals, we must constantly introduce them to quality works and support the formation of a strong reading environment.

Indeed, a young person who reads is the foundation of a prosperous society.

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