

# The Readings I Enjoy the Most

By Giancarlo Paniagua

The readings that I have enjoyed the most have been classical books. Not only are they interesting to read but they also tell you about the author's experiences and opinions.

Books such as *Animal Farm* by George Orwell (Eric Blair) or *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R Tolkien are two good examples of my favorite literature. The main themes in *Animal Farm* are related to political issues in Russian society in the 1970s. Power, control, and the revolution of the poor are also some of its major themes.

*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, although a fiction story of war, in my opinion, incorporates Tolkien's personal experiences during his 4 years as a soldier in WWI. Many authors say that Tolkien was not influenced by WWI. Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that he wasn't speaking of the great war, when you see themes in his book that talk about a battle between good and evil, fellowship and loyalty between friends, the desire for power, "a ring to rule them all", and the idea that Frodo, small Hobbit from the Shire, could end this war. One cannot help to think that Tolkien might have been inspired by his own wartime experiences.

The variety of genres in literature fascinate me. Although I have read novels, historical fiction, fables, tragedy, mythology, graphic novels, poetry, I never get bored of reading these captivating and entertaining pieces of literary work.

What intrigues me about his books is how intricately Tolkien describes the characters and the scenery. It is amazing to see how much power the author can attribute to his characters. One of the famous quotes in the book as Gandalf is fighting against a monstrous Balrog is:

“You cannot pass,” he said. The orcs stood still, and a dead silence fell. “I am a servant of the Secret Fire, wielder of the flame of Anor. You cannot pass. The dark fire will not avail you, flame of Udûn. Go back to the Shadow! You cannot pass.”

This passage shows the determination and strength of Gandalf in attempting to stop the Balrog from getting to his friends. When I read this passage, I felt excited, and I wanted to keep reading to find out what would happen next.

I have read many great works written by authors from different sides of the world, such as *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho and *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint Exupéry. In both books we can see a young narrator as the main character. These stories are similar because they teach us about the main characters' dreams and struggles wherever they live. People from around the world and of different cultural environments face common challenges. Such is the case of Esperanza, the voice of Sandra Cisneros in *Mango Street*, or Juan Preciado, the main character in *Pedro Paramo* by Juan Rulfo.

I guess, I have enjoyed reading for the past 12 years. I was 3 years old when I started reading on my own and have cherished reading ever since then. My mom and I were able to read more than the 1000 books required for kindergarten! Thanks to our

magnificent local libraries. Since I can remember, we read during the day and before bedtime all the Dr. Seuss books. Twelve years ago, I mainly read picture books, level reading books and all the book series of Geronimo Stilton, Magic Tree House, The Magic Bus, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Bad Kitty, The Basher Science books, and so many more. We also enjoy contributing to our Newport Central Bookstore where I always find something interesting to purchase.

Last year, during my first semester of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, I read *The Metamorphosis* by Kafka, *The Ramayana* by R.K Narayan. Some Haiku by Issa and Basho, and now I am reading *1984* by George Orwell. In between assigned books I finished reading the 3<sup>rd</sup> book of Tolkien, *The Return of the Kings*. This semester I will be reading *Don Quixote*, I look forward to it. A book that both of my parents have read in college, a story that has been translated into many languages, and read by people all over the world.

For me reading is a great way to relax your mind and enjoy a good story.

I hope to continue learning some interesting facts and cultural backgrounds of authors I have never read before.