



WHY IT MATTERS TO ME



United Way
of East TN Highlands

Reading is my favorite hobby.

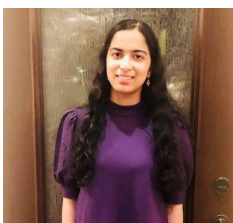
I have loved being able to explore new worlds through reading, and it has given flight to my imagination. But I have not always liked reading. When I first began reading, I detested it. It seemed to be a wearisome task assigned for academic improvement rather than for enjoyment. I disliked filling the reading logs initially required by my teacher. I loved being read to by my mother and did not dislike picture books, but reading chapter books seemed tedious.

It was in second grade when I began to like reading and found, for the first time, books that I considered to be interesting. These books include the Junie B. Jones series, the Ramona series, and the Fudge series. These books intrigued me, and after I started reading them, it was difficult for me to put them down. When I read these books, I felt that I knew the main characters. I followed them on their journeys throughout the books. I felt the concerns of the main characters, waited anxiously when they faced challenges, and cheered with them at their successes. I felt unhappy when I finished these books but had become a voracious reader and found other books to read. I grew to love both fiction and nonfiction. Currently, I like reading classics, mysteries, and biographies.

I am very glad that I developed a love of reading; it opens doors of opportunities for me. I believe that every child deserves to have access to the books that he or she wants to read. I want to share the joy of reading with other young readers so that they can also explore new worlds. In addition to providing a source of enjoyment, reading also has various other benefits for young readers. It helped reduce stress, expanded my vocabulary, improved my comprehension skills, improved my ability to concentrate, and developed my imagination.

I want to start this book drive by donating a book that I loved so that it can live on, entertain and inspire others for years to come. The book I will donate to start the book drive is *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, which is the first book in the Fudge series. It focuses on the relationship between nine-year-old Peter Hatcher and Farley Drexel, his mischievous younger brother who is nicknamed Fudge. I really loved the humor in the book and its relatable portrayal of sibling relationships. It is a book that can brighten up anyone's day. I really hope that the person who receives this book enjoys it as much as I did.

I hope you'll join me by donating one of your favorite books so that it can impact others the same way it impacted you. Our love of reading starts with one book, so why not let your book be the one that creates the love of reading for someone else.
Let's read!



Aarushi Raj

Science Hill High School, Class of 2024

United Way of East TN Highlands Volunteer

