

Teaching supplementary reading in the English language at Czech grammar schools seems to be seriously underestimated due to the prevailing communicative aims of teaching foreign languages in general. If students do come across some supplementary reading materials which teachers bring for them, these are most likely to be articles from magazines which are then used for reading round the class, practising reading comprehension or speaking about the text in the time left after the obligatory subject matter has been covered.

Still, most students seem to enjoy supplementary reading. It seems however, that they do not appreciate supplementary reading so much for the benefits which it might bring to their English language improvement. Rather, they appreciate the escape which supplementary reading provides from the routine of the textbook - the obligatory course material. Compared to textbooks which comprise the grammar and vocabulary that students need to learn in order to succeed in examinations, the role of supplementary reading is second-class and students are not willing to dedicate too much time and effort to it outside classroom. At the same time, teachers confirm the minor role of secondary reading by using techniques aimed primarily at the development of language skills and not setting any other meaningful and clear-cut objectives which reading in the English language should help attain. Thus the question arises, what are other reasons why to teach reading in the English language? Looking for the answer to this question, it soon becomes apparent that supplementary reading in the English language has a lot more to offer to grammar school students than the present practice makes us think at first sight.