

SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE BENEFITS OF READING



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MAIN POINTS OF PRESENTATION

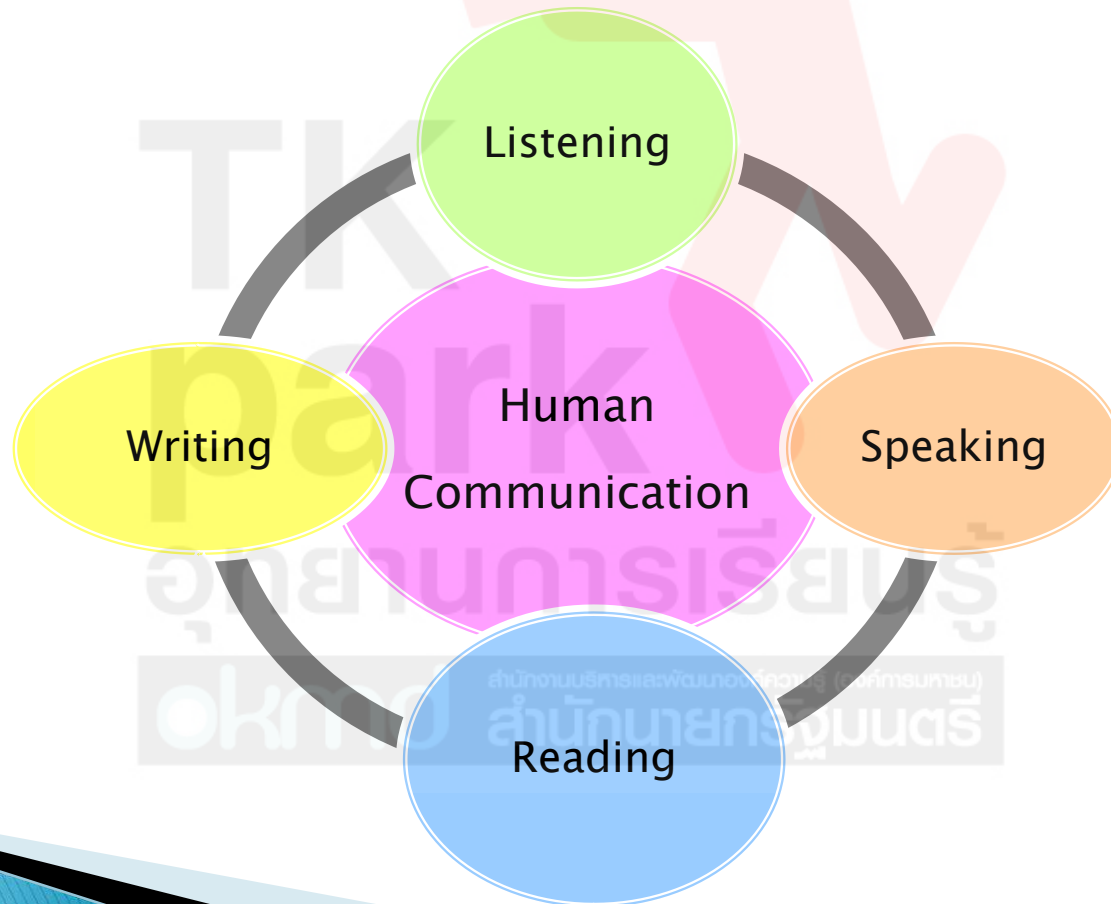
- ▶ While it is critical to develop reading skills at a very young age, it is equally important that we should not ignore promoting reading habits among adults.
- ▶ Continuous reading is necessary for lifelong learning and to slow down mental regression.
- ▶ The development of a knowledgeable society and a thoughtful community are essential for human evolution and progress towards peace and progress.

สำนักงานบริหารและพัฒนาองค์ความรู้ (องค์การมหาชน)

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Human Communication Skills

The four key human communication skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing



IT ALL STARTS WITH LISTENING

An unborn child is already listening in the womb

It likely that the baby can hear your voice when you're speaking or singing at 16 weeks pregnant. Studies have found that babies who are sung to while they're in the womb recognize the same tune when it's sung to them after they are born.



Source: www.whattoexpect.com

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Infant learning – from listening to speaking

- ▶ Babies learn by mimicking. They say what they hear and what's easiest to say.
- ▶ Touch, facial expressions, objects, toys, sounds, colors, and movement are important in early months.
- ▶ Smiles will evoke smiles; coos and words will trigger reactions.
- ▶ Hence reading to baby can be as early as possible. Babies will resonate to the rhythm of the words and language.

Benefits

- ▶ Studies have shown that language skills — and even intelligence — are related to how many words an infant hears each day.
- ▶ The more you speak to your child from the earliest, the better it is for his growth and development.
- ▶ Reading is one more fun way to add variety to your verbal interactions – when you run out of things to say, or if you are not a talkative type!

Importance of Early Reading

- ▶ We already know most of this – how early reading before the age of 7 is really important for the child's cognitive development and verbal skills.
- ▶ By grade 3, the child should have acquired basic reading skills.
- ▶ Otherwise the risk of falling behind and dropping out of school is greatly increased.
- ▶ Reading gives the child a headstart in life.



Benefits of Early Reading

- ▶ Early years (pre-school)
 - Develops child's language skills
 - Exposes child to more words and images
 - Extends the brain's power and range
 - Broadens child's vocabulary and expressiveness
 - Builds confidence, and reduces shyness
 - Improves memory development



Benefits of Early Reading

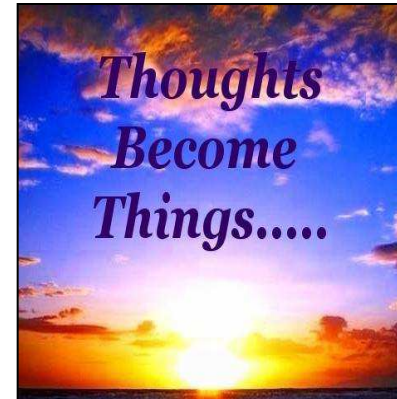
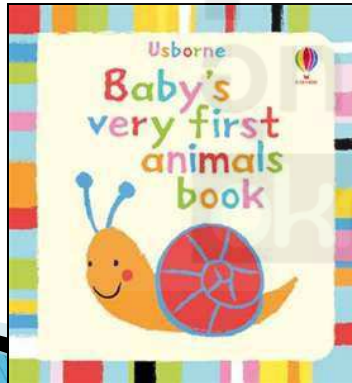
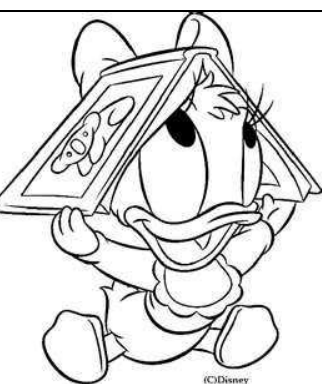
► Early Years (pre-school)

- Opens doors to stories, legends and songs
- Builds cultural roots and links to the past
- Builds moral judgement of good and bad
- Develops healthy curiosity
- Books provide fun and entertainment



Benefits of Reading

- ▶ Later Years (School years)
 - Makes basic information regarding healthcare, school, weather, safety, etc. accessible
 - Opens the door to science and discovery about the natural world



Benefits of Reading

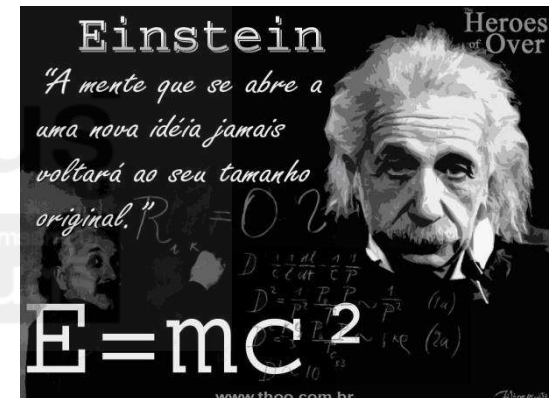
- ▶ Later years (School years)
 - Develops imagination and future possibilities
 - Stretches the mind – broadens visualisation skills
 - Develops independent learning capability
 - Develops cognitive powers of thinking and analysis
 - Deepens cultural roots





From ABC to $E=mc^2$

- We can start the reading process as early as 16th week of pregnancy
- Reading provides a child with an essential life skill for learning
- We cannot speak or write well if we cannot read as well.
- Reading gives us easy access to thoughts and ideas and knowledge that has been discovered and written down.



But what about later in life?

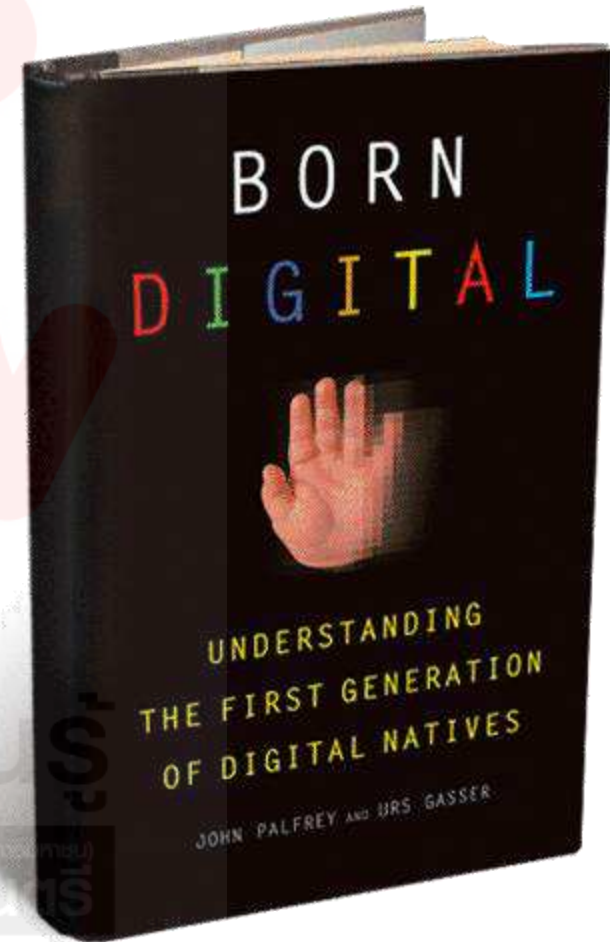
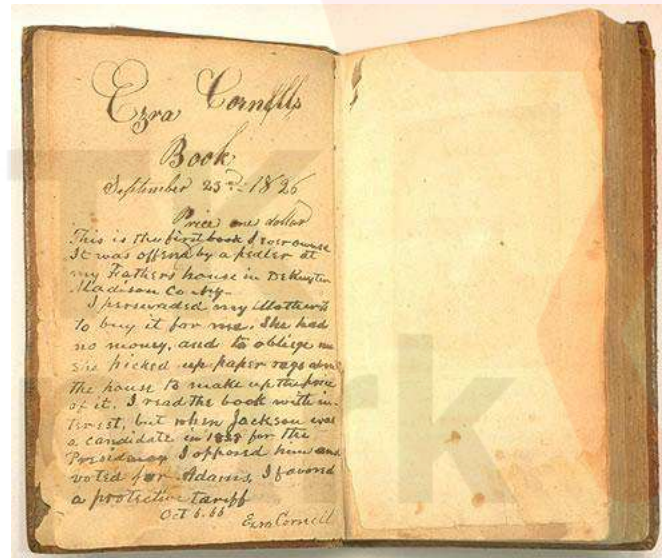
Is reading not important anymore?

- ▶ We tend to ignore the value and benefits of reading after the child starts school. We take it for granted that the habit will stay and grow.
- ▶ This is not necessarily true.
- ▶ Reading is a lifelong skill and activity with different benefits along the lifecycle
- ▶ It needs to be nurtured and motivated, even for those who can already read.

Types of Reading

- ▶ Early beginning reading
- ▶ School text books
- ▶ Newspapers and magazines – for news and entertainment
- ▶ Story books, fiction, romance
- ▶ Non-fiction – for knowledge and information
- ▶ Graphic novels, comics
- ▶ Internet reading – emails, blogs, news, discussion fora, facebook, etc

Reading thru the Ages



And today . . .



The medium is
not relevant –
the content is.

Don't get
attached to the
medium. Read
in whatever
form you get it
in.

Reading for Teens

- ▶ Leads to academic success – research shows that teens who read more than just their classroom assignments generally do well in school.
- ▶ Expands their vocabulary greatly.
- ▶ Expands their mental horizons and exposure to new ideas.
- ▶ Improves their writing skills and expressiveness. Those who read serious classics are able to grasp more complex ideas.

Reading for Teens

- ▶ The more teens read, the more information they pick up. This leads to a solid core of knowledge that is useful in a wide variety of classes.
- ▶ Biographies provide a better understanding of prominent people studied in history classes as well as their thought processes and shows them as real people with strengths and weaknesses.

Reading for Teens

- ▶ They learn more about people and the world beyond.
- ▶ Reading can show teens that everyone has problems in his or her life and may even help teens see solutions to their own problems. It helps them cope with their own angst.
- ▶ They can get addicted to reading.
- ▶ Of course they also pick up romance and some sex education along the way.

Today a reader, tomorrow a leader

Margaret Fuller



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Benefits of Developing Reading skills for homemakers and rural folk

- ▶ Can follow child's progress in school.
- ▶ Can assist child in school work.
- ▶ Can read newspapers and improve their general knowledge.
- ▶ Can access important health and nutritional messages.
- ▶ Can read contracts and prices.
- ▶ Can upgrade and learn new skills.
- ▶ Can access internet and other new technologies.
- ▶ Enhances their self-confidence and self-worth

Professionals and Working adults

- ▶ According to a Jenkins Group survey, 42% of college graduates will never read another book.
- ▶ Even if they do read, they usually read self-improvement books or best-sellers
- ▶ Hence, very few are reading broadly. The intellectual heritage of humanity is being forgotten.
- ▶ Literature is limited to school and college.

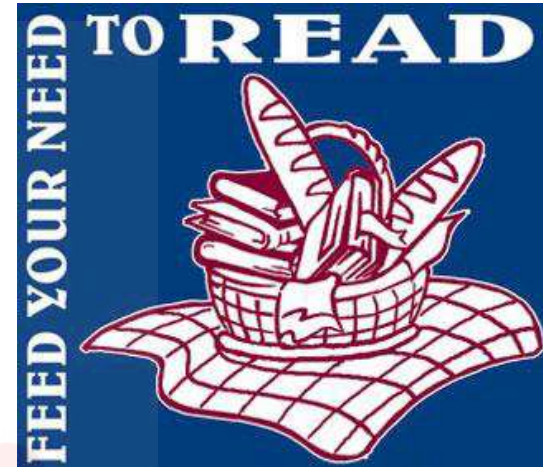
Reading for Professionals

- ▶ They are the worst readers..
- ▶ But many benefits to be reaped –
 - Improves work productivity, job performance
 - No need to re-invent the wheel or repeat mistakes made by others
 - Helps the mind to focus
 - Solves problems with access to knowledge and information
 - Opens doors to the world and its issues
 - Speeds up career progress

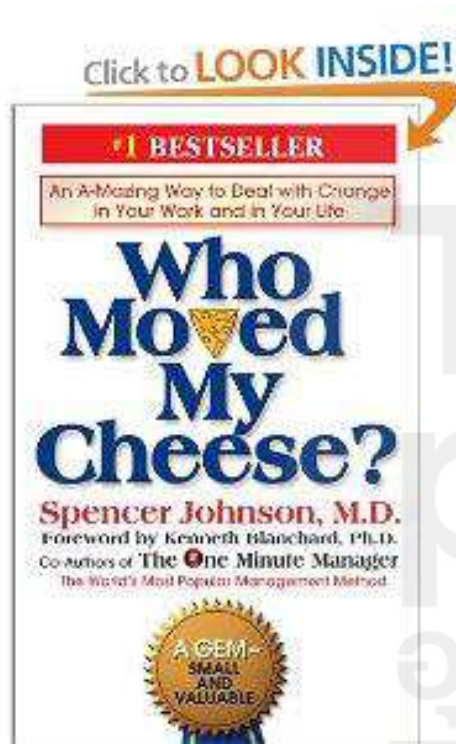


Reading for Professionals

- ✓ Reading is basic to lifelong learning and personal growth.
- ✓ Reading is critical in the knowledge-based economy as it develops the cognitive.
- ✓ From reading, comes many other skills, for example, communication, expressiveness, imagination, creative thinking, lateral reasoning, writing, and innovation.
- ✓ Develops the right brain (more creative) characteristics.
- ✓ Working People especially need to read broadly, across disciplines, to deal with real-world situations.



Reading for Managers



Storytelling as a mode of communication among management is gaining popularity and helps communicate concepts and ideas faster and more graphically.

"Reading is a joy. I read because I want to, not because I have to.

I read voraciously - fiction, non-fiction, books, magazines. Books open up your mind. Fiction excites your imagination. Non-fiction makes you think".

Peter Ho (former Head, Civil Service Singapore)

Reading for Adults

Best subjects to read

- ▶ **Science** – develop curiosity and wonder
- ▶ **Philosophy** – both for analytical logic as well as metaphysical exploration
- ▶ **Serious fiction** – elevate one's level of consciousness of the human condition
- ▶ **History and Biographies** – recognise the true nature of humanity thru great events and leaders
- ▶ **Poetry** – to experience the power of words, rhyme and rhythm and its mastery in the hands of great poets



Reading for Adults

Reading fiction allows us to become more creative and imaginative - opens up a world of new possibility.

Reading for Adults

Allows us to reflect and relate to our own experiences and environment.





Reading relieves stress!

Research from the U of Sussex that reading can reduce stress by up to 68%, as compared to listening to music (61%), having a cup of tea (54%) and taking a walk (42%) and video games (21%).

How?

- ▶ "Losing yourself in a book is the ultimate relaxation . . . we are all craving a certain amount of escapism.
- ▶ "you can escape from the worries and stresses of the everyday world and spend a while exploring the domain of the author's imagination.
- ▶ "an active engaging of the imagination as the words stimulate your creativity and cause you to enter what is essentially an altered state of consciousness."

... Dr David Lewis, cognitive neuropsychologist
University of Sussex

Reading for Adults

Allows us to enjoy the rich treasure trove of our different cultures as we read others' literature and appreciate our differences and celebrate our similarities.

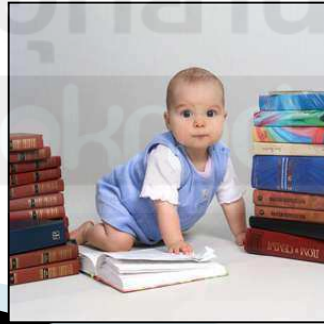


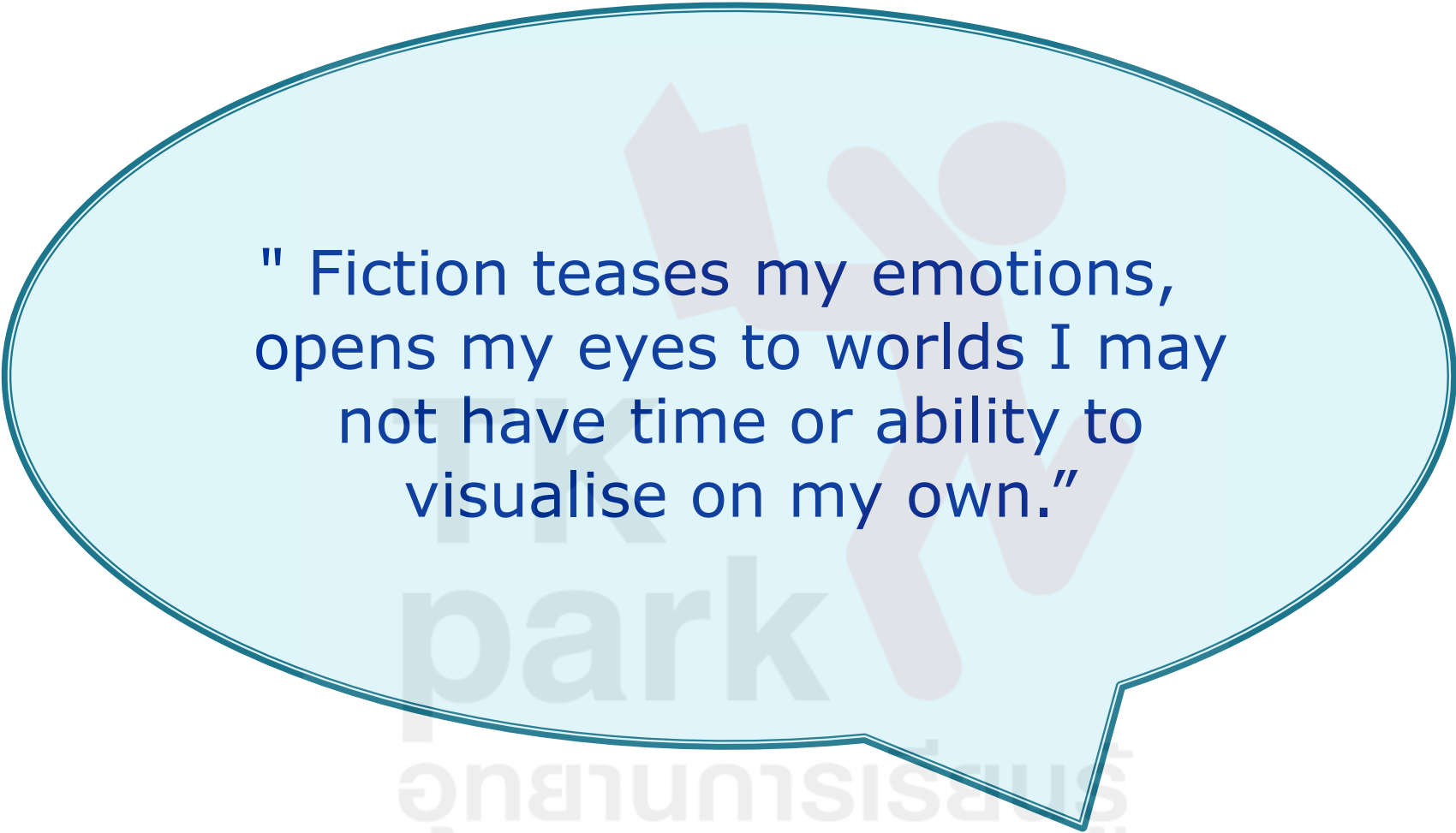
Reading for Adults

Beneficial both for work and play.

Therapeutic for the heart and soul.

Great for leisure and relaxation.





" Fiction teases my emotions,
opens my eyes to worlds I may
not have time or ability to
visualise on my own."

Ms Lim Soo Hoon
(First female Permanent Secretary in Singapore)

Reading for Retirees and Seniors

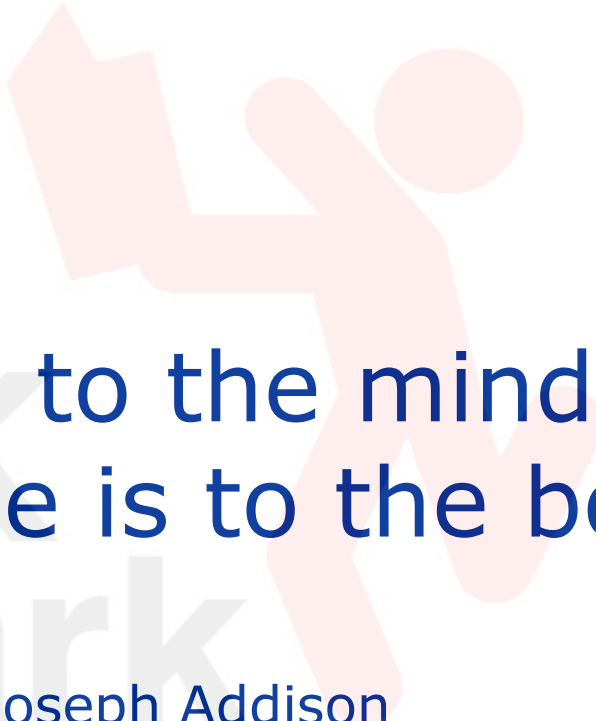
- ▶ For older people, senior citizens, reading delays memory loss and onset of dementia.
- ▶ Reading creates a bond between generations.



Restroom reading

- ▶ “Restroom reading reaps results. People commonly read in their toilets to assist in “doing their business.” A third of all (US) women read in the toilet, with most doing so to relax or to be distracted. African-American females read more (54%), Caucasians less (32%).”

. . . . Dr Patricia Raymond



Reading is to the mind what
exercise is to the body

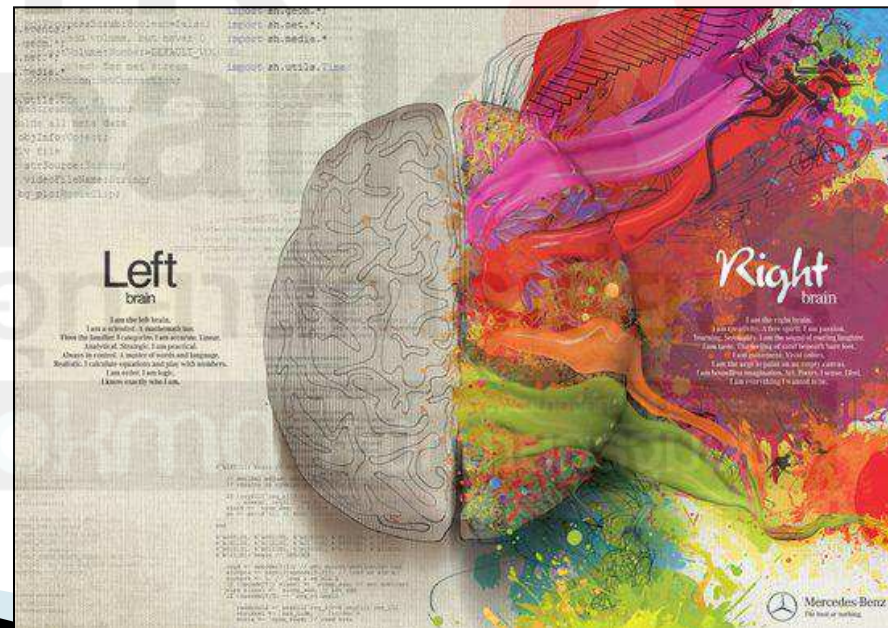
Joseph Addison

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Reading is a means of thinking with another person's mind, it forces you to stretch your own

Charles Scribner



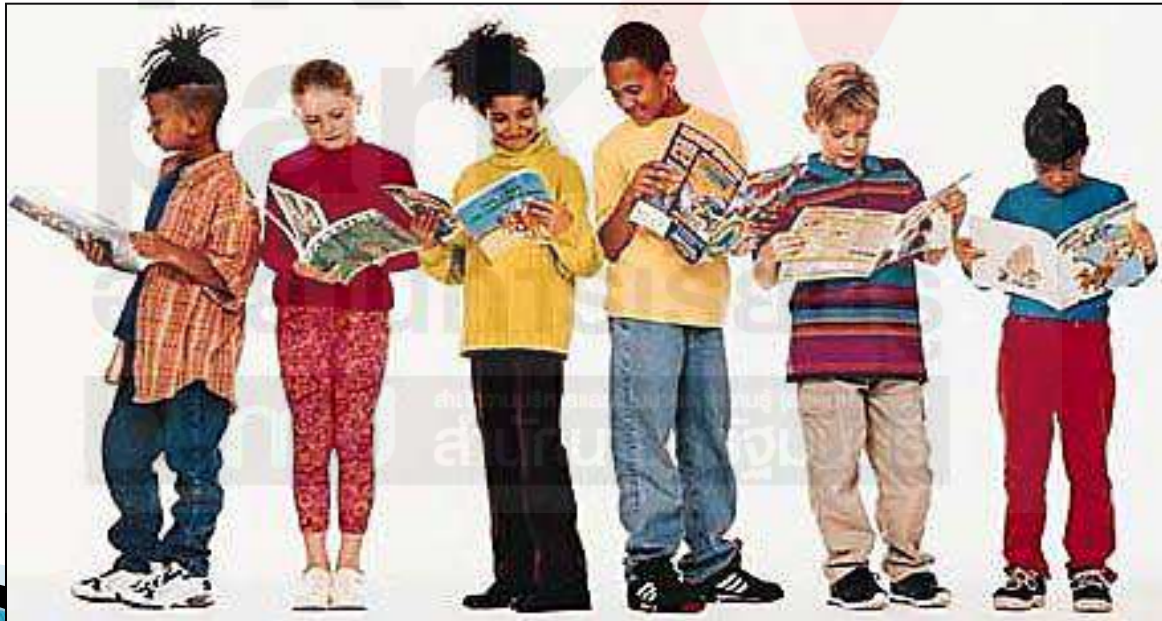
The greatest gift is a passion for reading. It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts, it excites, it gives you knowledge of the world and experience of a wide kind. It is a moral illumination.

Elizabeth Hardwick



How to Promote Reading Nationally

»» Some strategies



A National Reading Council

- ▶ An NGO to promote reading across all age-groups not, just for the young.
- ▶ Patron who is a popular member of the Royal family or a well-known non-political persona.
- ▶ Representing all sectors of society.
- ▶ Develops national strategies, garners resources, initiates activities across the nation.
- ▶ An opportunity for companies and investors to demonstrate their social responsibility or CSR.

Launch a National Reading Week or Month

- ▶ Determine a week or month as National Reading Week or Month
- ▶ Create a nationwide series of reading-related activities around libraries and schools
- ▶ Involve many stakeholders – government offices, schools, colleges and universities, community centres, book-sellers, authors
- ▶ Select some book titles and distribute them cheaply
- ▶ Create many activities like story-telling and drama to promote interest in literature



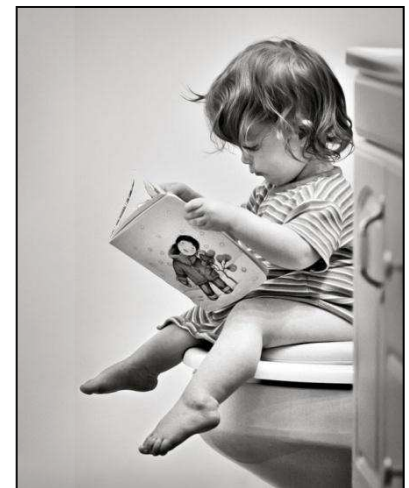
World Book Day – 1st March

- ▶ Website: <http://www.worldbookday.com/>
- ▶ A good time to promote books and reading
- ▶ Website will provide resources, toolkits and samples for printing out
- ▶ Can organise “book exchange” and “spot the reader” in public places.



Other suggestions

- ▶ Create common reading spaces – shelters with free books available
- ▶ Encourage parents to read to their children
- ▶ Set up reading circles or reading clubs in schools and colleges
- ▶ Encourage reading beyond the textbooks – encourage reading of good literature
- ▶ Invite writers and authors to speak
- ▶ Encourage writing of short stories for compilation into books as local literature.



Role of Libraries

- ▶ Promote **Reading and Literacy** throughout the whole population and for all ages
- ▶ Provide equal access to **information services** to enable citizens to be more productive and make better decisions
- ▶ Preserve **literary and cultural heritage** of the nation

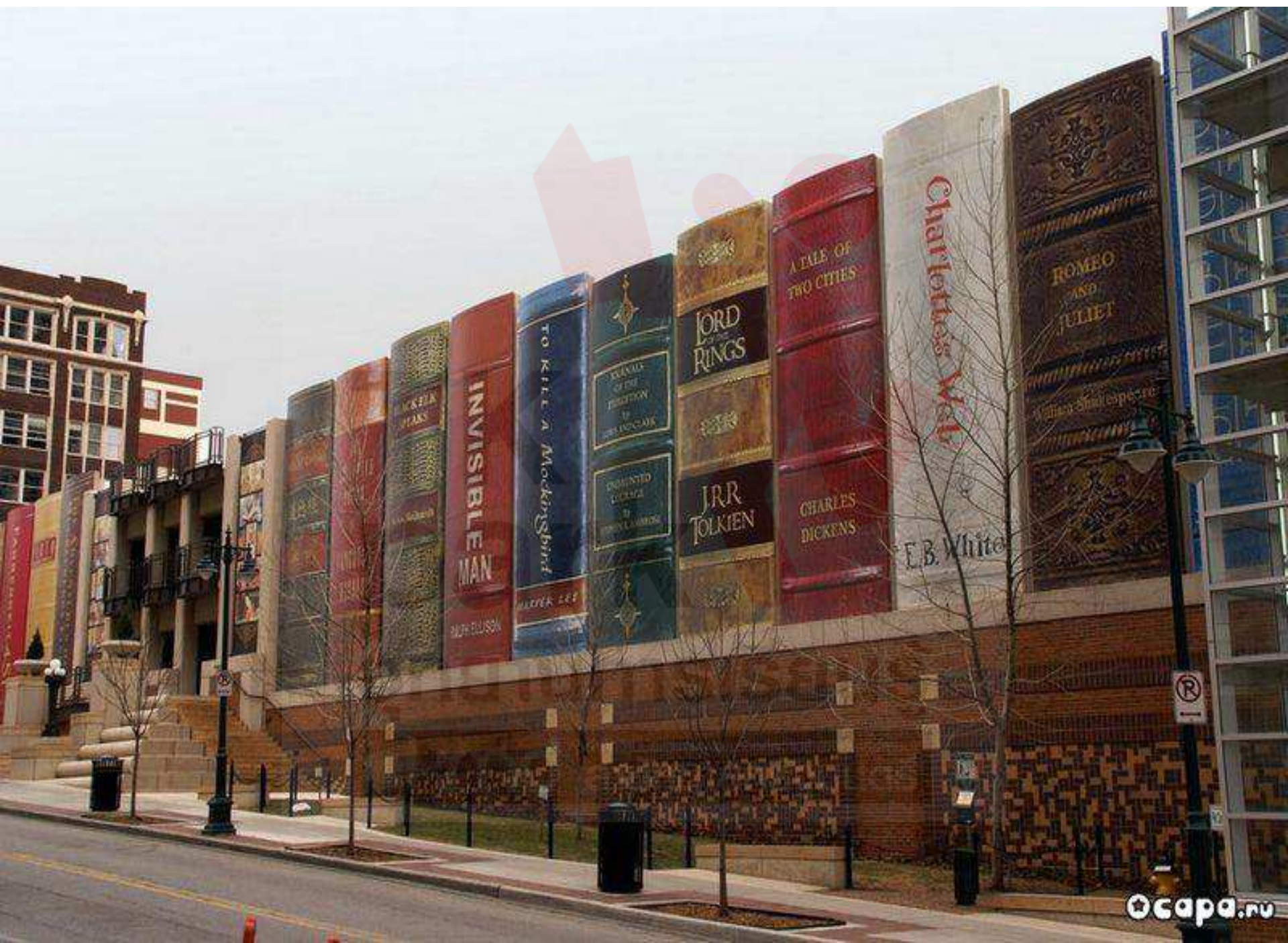
LIBRARIES ARE FOR LIFE!

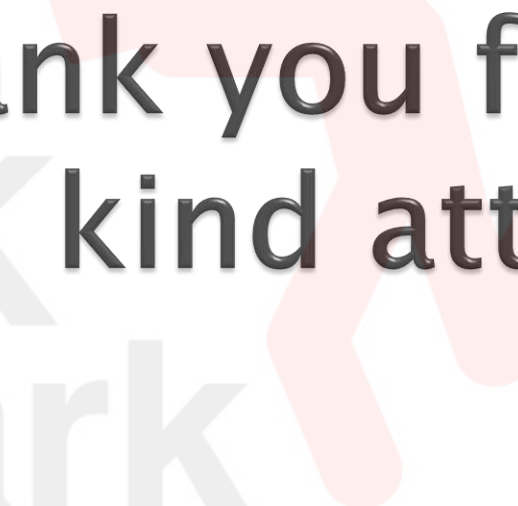
Not just for kids



from
Literate People
to a
Reading Nation
to a
Knowledgeable Society
to a
Thoughtful Community
to achieve human progress, peace and equality

Progress of Human Evolution





Thank you for your
TK kind attention!
park

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