

Thrive 365

Dragonfly: Impact Education



Did you know?

May is 'Share a Story' month and the theme this year is 'The Planet We Share'. This is very fitting because people who read have been shown to have more awareness of different cultures and society in general than non readers.

Research has also found that: "reading for just 30 minutes a week means you're 52% more likely to feel socially included than those who have not read in the past week and 72% more likely to have greater community spirit. Readers are also 37% more likely to get greater pleasure out of their social lives." [1]

[1] [Josie Billington](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/02/can-reading-improve-your-wellbeing/), Senior Lecturer and Deputy Director of the Centre for Research into Reading, University of Liverpool. Accessed at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/02/can-reading-improve-your-wellbeing/>

1

Join a club

Sharing stories for just 10 minutes a day can strengthen relationships [2] but this isn't just for parents and younger children - it actually applies to all of us! With older children and teens, reading the same book and then discussing it has huge benefits in terms of connection - which supports wellbeing.

Belonging to a book club has also been shown to be good for your mental health. Liverpool Health Inequalities Research Institute studied a reading programme for people with depression and found it significantly improved their mental health. [3]

[2] <https://www.worldbookday.com/2020/05/did-you-know-may-is-national-share-a-story-month/>

[3] <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/blog/reading-good-mental-health/>

2

Schedule time

Reading has been shown to reduce stress by as much as 60% by lowering the heart rate and causing an altered state of mind - and these effects came from reading for just 6 minutes a day! [4].

Unfortunately, when we're feeling very stressed, sitting down to read a good book might well get knocked to the bottom of the 'to-do' list. Scheduling time to read can help to prioritise it as an activity that will support your wellbeing. Aim to do this three times a week through the month of May - perhaps with the aim of sharing what you've read, either on social media or with a group of friends.

[4] <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/blog/reading-good-mental-health/>

3

Discover audiobooks

Downloading an app such as Audible and listening to books can add a whole new dimension to reading.

When time really is at a premium you can listen to a book while you walk or drive. Having an audiobook playing in the car, or while you cook dinner can also give new meaning to the notion of 'sharing a story' and might be the ideal way to foster a love of reading through the teenage years or provide discussion points for the family. Seeing the different reactions of other people to the events in the story can help young people to see things from different perspectives and increase empathy, social skills and self-esteem.

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