

# How does reading measure up?

Reading has an impact on every part of Canadian life. Our democracy, our economy, and the quality of our daily lives are all enhanced by reading well and critically.



Individuals demonstrating higher levels of literacy were more likely to be employed, work more weeks in a year, and earn higher wages than individuals demonstrating lower proficiencies.<sup>1</sup>

Literary readers are much more likely to perform volunteer work than non-literary readers (43% vs. 17%).<sup>2</sup>



Reading fiction predicts empathic accuracy.<sup>3</sup>

Reading books is associated with better health, volunteering and strong satisfaction with life.<sup>4</sup>

Reading was proved 68% better at reducing stress levels than listening to music; 100% more effective than drinking a cup of tea; 300% better than going for a walk; and 700% more than playing video games.<sup>5</sup>



## What does reading do for us?

### READING

- ... is a lifelong source of pleasure for individuals.
- ... empowers the critical thinking skills of every individual.
- ... is essential to being able to function. It reduces barriers to access. It helps people to make meaning of their world.
- ... lays the foundation for future learning. It increases our self-worth and gives us the capacity for critical thinking.
- ... inspires. It is a trigger for the imagination.
- ... increases an individual's health and economic wellbeing.
- ... preserves the culture for the next generation. It creates a shared connection to the community.

<sup>1</sup> Irwin S. Kirsch, Anne Jungeblut, Lynn Jenkins and Andrew Kolstad, from "Adult Literacy in America."

<sup>2</sup> National Endowment for the Arts. (2004). *Reading at risk: A survey of literary reading in America*. Research Division Report #46. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts.

<sup>3</sup> Raymond A. Mar, Keith Oatley and Jordan B. Peterson, from "Exploring the link between reading fiction and empathy."

<sup>4</sup> Hill Strategies "The Arts & Well-Being in Canada."

<sup>5</sup> Dr. David Lewis "Galaxy Stress Research," Mindlab International, Sussex University (2009).



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