

**Australian
Reading Hour**
Thursday 13 September P2

Dear parents and carers,

Next week, people across Australia will join the Joeys community in celebrating the importance of reading by participating in **The Australian Reading Hour**. During assembly, Mrs Roden spoke to the boys about the benefits of reading, outlined below.

Over time, thousands of books have been written by the most powerful, intelligent and insightful people who have ever lived. By reading books, we are able to crawl into their minds and discover their insights, learn from their successes and failures and develop empathy for individuals who have lived lives different from your own.

Reading also helps increase your ability to stay focused. Countless research studies have found that spending large amounts of time online has negatively affected our ability to concentrate and stay focused.

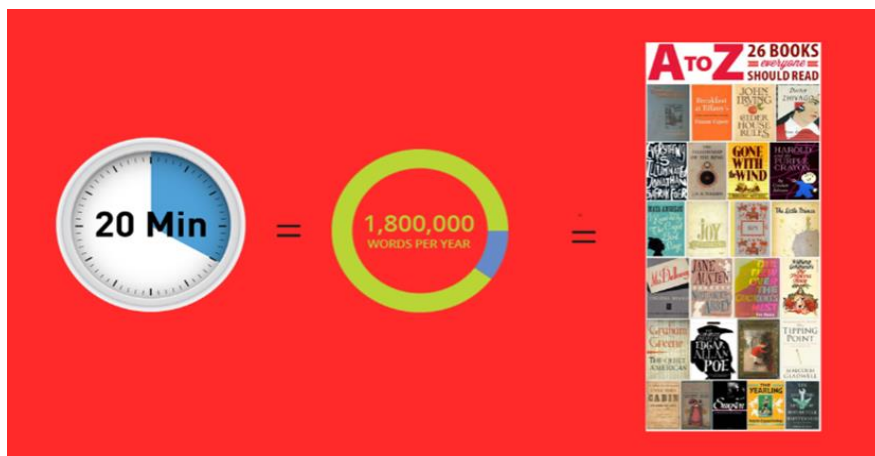
Reading is in many ways an antidote to spending excessive time online. It not only helps to calm us down and makes us less distracted; it also causes our brain structure to change making us more intelligent by building and strengthening pathways. No other activity fires up the brain like deep sustained reading.

Reading also helps improve your ability to express yourself – Your future success will be dictated by your ability to communicate effectively. Reading regularly will greatly improve your ability to articulate your thoughts, have intelligent conversations and connect with people on a much more profound level.

Boys at Joeys often tell me that they do not have enough time to read. However, when you consider that average Australian teenager spends over 33 hours per week online, excluding school work, it really comes down to priorities.

We would like to challenge staff, students and Joey's families to embrace the **20-minute reading challenge**. By increasing your reading by a mere 20 minutes a day, you will be reading an additional **1,800,000 words per year**, which translates to an impressive **26 novels**. All the research demonstrates that reading helps improve your spelling, grammar, comprehension, creative writing, emotional wellbeing, stress levels and ultimately, will place you in the best possible position to achieve success both at school and later in life.

There really is no down side to committing to reading 20 minutes a day. Everyone can do it, and it will benefit you enormously.



How can we help create a culture of reading?

- **Set the scene** – Create an environment at home that encourages reading. Have books and other material visible. Give books as gifts and dedicate regular screen free time for the family.
- **Be a role model** – Teenagers need to see that men read and value reading. Let your son see you reading and chat to him about it. Bring your son to Books & Blokes Breakfast event.
- **Make a habit** – Help develop a lifelong habit of reading by encouraging a regular reading time each day. Try the **20 Minute Reading Challenge**: 20 minutes each day = 1,800,000 words = 26 books per year. Everyone can find 20 minutes a day and bedtime is a great time to read.
- **Just Read** – Encourage your son to read what interests him, no matter what form or genre: novels, non-fiction, biographies, blogs, newspapers, magazines, eBooks. All reading helps improve his skills as a reader.
- **Talk about it** – Make time to discuss what your son is reading. Read the same book, even if it's a school set text. Praise his efforts in reading