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## Fact 1.

# Six in ten Finnish people think they do not read enough

Finnish people value reading and literacy (also “reading literacy”) and would like to read more. Sixty per cent of adults feel they do not read enough or have the time to listen to audiobooks. As many as 71% of adults report that an inability to concentrate is the reason for their lack of reading. Many people would also rather spend their time watching TV or films instead of reading. Moreover, 63% of parents of small children feel they do not spend enough time reading to their children. The major reason they report is lack of time. Finnish reading habits were explored in the survey ordered by the Finnish Reading Center (Lukukeskus) in the spring 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The statistics of Finnish reading habits are controversial. Finnish people often list reading as a hobby and, by European standards, are second only to the Estonians in time spent reading.<sup>2</sup> However, at the same time, the number of books read has decreased. In 2017, only 13% of Finnish people had read at least ten books in the preceding 6 months, compared with 25% of such active readers in 2002.<sup>3</sup>

Another alarming fact is the increasingly negative attitude to reading. People are aware of the advantages and benefits of reading but more and more Finnish parents no longer like to read. The parents’ reading habits, attitudes and the way in which they talk about learning play a significant role in the

formation and development of young people’s reading and writing habits and skills.<sup>4</sup>

The decreasing number of texts read is reflected in text comprehension studies and shown as low performance in literacy. The number of young with poor reading skills is growing, especially in the lower socio-economic brackets. In the 2010s, children’s learning was increasingly affected by their socio-economic background.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, reading and its importance must be recognised, and we must work for equal literacy across all social groups. About half of the Finns recognise the importance of reading about public discussions and debates, while one third feels that this has impacted their reading habits. Arranging time for reading in the busy everyday should be promoted in many ways. For example, through supplying new reading and text formats.

Reading trends and literacy developments must also be considered from a global perspective. Interesting examples of literacy work leading to increased levels of proficiency can be found in our neighbouring countries, Sweden and Estonia. With persistent work, Finland has the requisites for upholding the value of reading and literature and its position among the top countries of literacy.

## Fact 2.

# Information on early reading benefits impacts the reading habits of families

Among Finnish parents, 63% feel that they do not read enough to their children.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, studies show that the first years of a child are particularly important for the development of literacy and linguistic skills. Reading aloud to an infant has been found to provide particular benefits for the development of the brain, supporting the acquisition of linguistic skills and later learning.<sup>7, 8</sup>

When asked about the major motives for reading aloud, over half of the parents mentioned that they were aware of the benefits of reading. The second most important motivation for reading aloud was the information provided by child welfare clinics.<sup>6</sup> It is therefore important that the information on the significance of reading for benefit of the child's development and family interaction is distributed equitably to all families, starting from the very birth of the child.

Child welfare clinics have also recognised the benefits of early reading. According to the questionnaire prepared by the Finnish Reading Center, over half of the public health nurses in child welfare clinics are concerned about the linguistic development of children. Two out of three public health nurses find that the overall linguistic development has partly or clearly deteriorated during the past few years. Speech development and poor vocabulary were particularly highlighted in the responses given by the public health nurses participating in the survey. They also expressed concern for the slower development of children's interaction skills.<sup>9</sup>

Public health nurses are motivated to educate parents on the importance of reading. Among the respondents, as many as 94% of public health nurses include a reminder of the importance of reading aloud during the child's check-up appointments, and 80% find that reading aloud has a very significant impact on the child's development. As many as 98% of the respondents were interested in distributing reading-related information at the child welfare clinic and believed that a book given as a gift at the clinic might influence the family's reading habits. Similarly, over half of the families wish to gain more information from the child welfare clinic on the benefits of reading and appropriate books.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, reading education does not yet constitute a part of the official child welfare clinic programme.

The Finnish Reading Center supports families' reading habits through the three-year 'Reading Gift to Children' programme, financed by the Finnish Cultural Foundation. In 2019–2021, bags with books are distributed to all babies born during that time. In addition to a nursery rhyme book for infants and a bedtime reading book for toddlers, the bag includes information on the importance of reading for benefit of the child's wellbeing and family's interactions. This major early reading project is targeted at three entire age groups and creates equal opportunities to enjoy early childhood reading experiences.

## Fact 3.

# Reading to children provides them with almost a year's head start on their educational path

Early shared reading experiences are reflected in the starting skills of a child on the first steps of their school path. Among any individual hobbies, reading has the greatest impact on the child's linguistic skills, corresponding to nearly one year of life.<sup>10</sup>

Reading preparedness and attitude towards literature originate in early childhood. Children who have acquired reading models and literary stimuli early in their life become interested in books and gain literacy often more rapidly than others. Interest in reading and books, awakened in early childhood, underpins the growth towards becoming a reader. Reading comprehension comes easier to a child who has often been read to, which also tends to spark and maintain the zeal for reading.<sup>11</sup>

It is important to encourage children to embrace the world of books and enhance their interest in books throughout their early childhood and no later than in their pre-primary school age. Children with good reading preparedness at the end of the pre-primary school year are more skilled and eager readers than others, which holds true also at the end of the first school year. Cooperation between pre-primary school teachers and parents plays an important role in supporting the child's eagerness to read.<sup>11</sup>

It is worrying that the inequality in reading and literacy is already seen in early childhood. In a study charting the back-

ground of children upon entering school, reading was seen as the hobby of highly educated families in particular.<sup>10</sup>

High-quality early childhood education can equalise the learning opportunities of children with different backgrounds. Children with several risk factors predicting a low starting level are the ones to profit most from early childhood education.<sup>10</sup> However, early childhood education is characterised with great qualitative differences as regards to linguistic interaction.

Only half of Finland's day-care centres manage to organise the daily reading moment in accordance with the early childhood education plan.<sup>12</sup>

Literature, reading aloud and linguistic interaction must be part of every child's everyday life, both at home and in early childhood education. Children need abundant daily experiences of reading as well as of spoken and written language. Reading to and with children supports the development of the learning preparedness according to their age level.

Reading can level out competence differences brought about by children's socio-economic background. For every child to have an equal opportunity to read, resources should be allocated to the support of families in their reading pursuits, paying particular attention to the parents with a lower education level.

## Fact 4.

# Literacy becomes divergent, the impact of socio-economic background on competences is growing

The signs of increased inequality in literacy are alarming. Finland is a top country in terms of literacy, but in 2018, the proficiency gap between students was the highest in the country's PISA study history.<sup>13</sup> Individual differences in linguistic skills are already visible at the beginning of primary school.<sup>14</sup>

Boys with poor reading skills account for a larger share of children with weak literacy skills than girls of the same age.<sup>13</sup> The difference in linguistic competence between boys and girls has remained unchanged throughout the two first decades of the new millennium.

Thus, in addition to gender, it is important to understand the more detailed, individual reasons and their interaction with various other factors in the literacy gap between boys and girls.<sup>15</sup>

Attitudes towards learning, writing and personal reader identity are related to the young person's competences. Linguistic skills and strengths should be made visible and encouraged both at home and at school. Girls have a more positive study attitude than boys.<sup>16</sup> The image portrayed by society of boys as readers and writers plays a role, as well as the attitude towards learning and literature that is transmitted to the young.

In the 2010s, socio-economic backgrounds began to increasingly affect learning outcomes. The most substantial growth in the number of low-performing readers is seen in the lowest socio-economic brackets, and between the lowest

and highest brackets, the gap in literacy may be up to the equivalent of two school years.<sup>13</sup> Several studies have verified that the parents' educational background, professional status and access to a computer and books at home is linked to the students' competence levels and learning attitudes.<sup>17</sup> The positive attitude shown at home towards the young person's learning and education can balance the impact of socio-economic background.

A young person's low literacy affects their further educational opportunities. Among adults with basic level or vocational education, the share of low-performing readers is 36%.<sup>18</sup> An illiterate person is easily marginalised in society and does not seek the various services available to them. Lack of sufficient literacy can prevent access to necessary assistance and support measures. According to youth workers, poor literacy will make it difficult for the young to read the documents issued by the National Insurance Institution, Kela.

Background factors regarding learning differences should be taken into account and the competence differences addressed as early as possible in early childhood and basic education. We should ensure that the basic education system continues to fulfil its mission of providing everybody with equal competences and acting as an equality enabler. As home background increasingly continues to impact learning outcomes, the significance of the first grade and basic education plays a more important and larger role in equality.

## Fact 5.

# Schools have varying opportunities to engage in equal reading literacy work

Schools are where the majority of literacy issue work is done, and they play a key role in committing children to reading. Teachers impact their students' reading pursuits almost as much as their friends and parents, especially concerning those students who do not have the support of their family for their reading habit.<sup>19</sup> However, the possibilities schools can offer for accessible and equal literacy work are varied, and there is much disparity in their reading modes and practices.<sup>20</sup>

Over the past few years, several of the projects and campaigns organised to support reading have also highlighted the challenges schools face and the development needs in literacy work. Launched with the campaign *Lukuliike koulussa* (Literacy Movement in school), the Movement provides a platform for various networks in the field and aims to impact the structures through long-term sustainable means. According to teachers, the various campaigns also promote students' positive attitude towards books and reading.<sup>21</sup> However, it is important that issues raised during the campaign also lead to sustainable solutions.

According to a survey by the *Lukuklaani* (Reading Clan) project that is focused on primary level schools, as many as 22% of teachers did not assign even one full book for their pupils to read during the past school year. The most frequent reason for not reading, as reported by the teachers, was the

lacking literacy and learning skills and attitudes of the pupils. Reading done by school children is also hampered by a lack of resources.<sup>20, 21</sup>

According to the survey, access to literature and classroom visibility of topical books for children and the young is an important factor to encourage reading in schools. However, there are large differences in schools' opportunities to make use of books and library services. Developing school libraries and taking care of the municipal library network ensure equal literature education both at school and at home.<sup>20</sup>

Schools and teachers should have the time and support to look for, develop and share new pedagogical methods in literature education. Teachers should also be supported in developing their personal reader identity. In fact, the teacher's reading habits play a great role in how often literature is utilised in the teaching of various subjects.<sup>22</sup>

Reading should be allocated a set time in school. For example, by scheduling weekly reading lessons. Students of all ages should have the opportunity to read at school without any performance pressures. Cross-curricular reading projects and, for example, the use of non-fiction literature in various subjects, support multidisciplinary learning and literacy. To develop the basic education institution into a reading community, the input of the whole school is needed.

## Fact 6.

# Individual actions inspire the young to read

The methods and measures to inspire reading that have been taken over the past few years show that the young need to be introduced to literature by singular means. The young are aware of the benefits of reading and feel they do not read enough but cannot find time in their everyday or are not sufficiently interested in it. Interest in reading is often sparked by role models—such role models, or idols, are also something teachers wish for their students to find to inspire reading. And yet, only 10% of the young say that their idol is someone who reads.<sup>23 24 25</sup>

Stirring up enthusiasm for reading in the young requires adults to have an unprejudiced and open attitude towards reading and various reading modes and texts. Action orientation and personal text production using various approaches are good methods to access low-performance readers of all ages and show them the way towards writing and reading. Using different means of expression is important; although the ability to read written text is not adequate, the individual may possess other expressive skills.

Text formats which encourage the young to discover their own voice, such as poetry slams, rap and spoken word, can function as casual gateways into the world of literature. In the *Mun tarina* (My story) project, the poetry slam method awoke interest in upper secondary school students and provided a fresh approach to writing and self-expression. Among the young participating in the project, 47% wished that the school had more time for creative writing free of performance constraints.<sup>26</sup> During its four years of operation, the project *Sanat haltuun* (Mastering the words) has used

rap lyrics to inspire over 5000 young people to recognise the importance of literacy. Half of the young in the workshops felt they had learned something new, 30% became interested in new text types and over 20% adjusted their attitude towards reading.<sup>27</sup>

An integral element of action-based literature formats is their collective language attitude. The individual-centred reading tradition should be waived, especially in schools.<sup>28</sup> With the young, a social reading mode is more prevalent in various digital environments. For example, stories produced in popular chat fiction are progressed through messages using various applications.

The teaching of literary art is underpinned by a new conception of literature, enhancing the learner's linguistic, expressive and thinking abilities. Participatory literary art may involve, for example, the construction of experimental spaces or escape room games. There is great interest in literary art as a teaching method but no financing structures or any established status in the educational and literary contexts.

Because the number of young active readers has dropped from over 22% to six per cent in 15 years, open-minded actions are needed.<sup>29</sup> In the most recent PISA assessment, Finland scored among the three countries that had the greatest decline in interest towards reading. As many as 63% of boys say they read only if they have to.<sup>30</sup> Inspiring joy and interest in reading should be the most important objective in literacy work targeted at the young.

## Fact 7.

# Society must recognise low-performing readers in all age groups

In Finland, 11% of adults are low-performing readers.<sup>31</sup> Functional illiteracy complicates everyday situations and makes it more difficult to cope with society and the working world. It is estimated that as many as 750,000 persons, or 14% of Finnish people, need plain or simplified language. The need for easy language, i.e., the language targeted at those who have an insufficient understanding of the standard language, has increased by about 100,000 persons over the past five years.<sup>32</sup>

The multiple factors underpinning the level of literacy are intertwined but also have separate and autonomous impacts. In particular, the level of education and age are determinant factors in adult literacy: those with poor reading skills are proportionally overrepresented in older age groups with lower education levels.<sup>33</sup>

The reasons for low performance in reading vary, and not every low-performer necessarily has inherent dyslexia. About 5 to 10 per cent of the population are dyslexic. There is a strong genetic tendency here; the probability of dyslexia is four-fold in families where the same issue has already been diagnosed. Dyslexia can be predicted in early childhood, and early support measures can mitigate the impacts of the child's or young person's dyslexia in later adult life.<sup>34</sup>

The level of basic skills in adults with low performance in reading can vary. Low performance in reading does not necessarily mean being excluded from employment, and poorer readers may have other strong elements that work as substitutes for reading skill. Is society able to recognise the very variable reading and writing difficulties and the ways in which they impact the various phases of an individual's life? Rec-

ognising and supporting literacy in adults is also important from the perspective of children's literacy development.

Continuous literacy development creates conditions for life-long learning and adaptation to the changes in various spheres of operation. According to a study made in Britain, low-performing readers in employment do not normally seek literacy improvement programmes or support measures. Organisations adapt their operations to make up for the low skills of the employees instead of supporting the development and improvement of their skills.<sup>35</sup> The results of low-performance literacy are thus not visible, although they impact productivity negatively.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to competence, society should also pay attention to the skill requirements of different environments: What are the various literacy requirements in employment and during leisure? Which and what kind of support measures are needed to reach the right people in different environments? Identifying various types of learners and meeting their particular needs is increasingly important in designing the education and instruction of multilingual immigrants.<sup>37</sup>

So far, Finland has not had any literacy work focusing on adult illiterates. There is also no one party clearly responsible for helping adults improve their poor reading and textual skills. The project *Lukemattomat mahdollisuudet* (Uncounted and unread possibilities) aims at gathering information and bringing together actors in the field. The reading guidance model created in the project is a tool to support adult literacy and reading inspiration in libraries, and its various elements can be utilised by all parties working in adult guidance and support.<sup>38</sup>



## Fact 8.

# Supporting multilingualism promotes all learning

It is estimated that by the year 2035, one in four inhabitants of the Helsinki metropolitan region speaks a mother tongue other than Finnish, Swedish or Sami.<sup>39</sup> In contrast, the mother tongue or 7,5% of the Finnish population in 2019 was not Finnish, Swedish or Sami.<sup>40</sup> In 2019, the Finnish municipalities organised mother tongue education in 49 languages.<sup>41</sup>

In fact, the new national core curriculum for early childhood education and care (ECEC) and the national core curriculum for basic education also focus on linguistic awareness in education, which provides understanding of the significance of the student's languages for learning, interaction and construction of identities. Pedagogics with cross-linguistic awareness support the use of different languages in varying situations and also takes the students' and families' multicultural aspects and varying beliefs into consideration.<sup>42</sup>

Education characterised by linguistic awareness promotes the development of reading and writing skills as well as the learning of the language of schooling, which is important for the integration of the students in the Finnish culture as well as their further education opportunities. Poor skills in Finnish or Swedish are reflected in learning outcomes in basic education: the results in reading and multiliteracy skills of the students from immigrant backgrounds are lower than those of the mainstream population, while those who speak Finnish or Swedish as their second language start their school at a lower level.<sup>43</sup> 49% of immigrants have no secondary level education.<sup>44</sup>

To ensure good command of the schooling language, it is necessary to support the child's proficiency and development in their mother tongue; the more fluent they are

in their first language, the easier it is for them to learn a foreign language. The mother tongue is the basis for the child's thinking and for the balanced development of their emotions. Encountering and recognising the child's individual linguistic identity generates positive conditions for the learning of not only the language of schooling but also other school subjects.<sup>45</sup>

In supporting the child's and the young person's linguistic skills, multiprofessional cooperation between early childhood educators, the school and the parents is paramount. According to a recent study, education professionals of all levels feel that more support and resources need to be allocated to linguistic education. In addition to day-care centres and schools, important cooperation parties include, above all, libraries and immigrant support services as well as child welfare clinics.<sup>41</sup>

To support the multiliteracy of the whole family, everyone should have easy access to information regarding the importance of maintaining and developing their mother tongue, backed by concrete means to do it. Moreover, teaching circumstances should allow for the child's easy access to lessons in their own mother tongue, without excessive complications being created for the family.

A well-functioning multilingual society recognises the parallel existence of various languages in different situations. Languages are a part of social interaction, and languages can be used in an overlapping and parallel manner. A multilingual, healthy and diverse population is a resource and source of richness for the future of Finland.

## Fact 9.

# Society demands increasingly multifaceted literacy from all of us

Digital disruption also applies to reading. We encounter an increasing number of more fragmented texts on a daily basis. Multiliteracy, i.e., the analysis and production of various text types as well as verbal, visual and audio materials using various tools, is an essential competence in modern society.

30% of Finnish eighth-graders have good multiliteracy skills, whereas 28% of the young have difficulties in discovering, assessing and utilising information or producing content to distribute to others.<sup>46</sup>

Multiformat text and reading environments call for diverse reading and writing skills and strategies as well as different types of training. School should widely highlight the diverse language variants, styles and user situations in various subjects.

Short digital texts as well as introducing literature in the omnipresent smart devices lower the reading threshold. The use of versatile texts in different environments develops

language skills on a broad basis. Studies have shown that the moderate and versatile use of the various forms of digital media by the young may have a positive impact on their learning.<sup>47 48</sup> However, if they are not familiar with or trained in reading or producing longer passages, digital platforms may easily lead to short text production only, with texts by others merely glanced at.

Introduction of longer texts in digital devices should be supported and further developed. Persistent and deeper-going reading develops literacy, which is the basis for critical literacy and assessment of information. Reading literacy provides tools for navigation in versatile text environments and allows the readers to participate in the daily functioning of the digital society. Good reading skills are also a prerequisite for good writing skills. New media environments have changed both the reading and writing modes, which have become increasingly important future competences.

## Fact 10.

# One in four Finnish people did more reading during the atypical spring of 2020

Covid-19 and the atypical spring made Finnish people take up reading. One in four read more during the exceptional times, and reading to the young ones in the family also increased. Finnish people report reading more because they had more free time in their everyday.

Reading also gave people a chance to think about something else and brought solace as well. Parents with small children found that family time with books and reading made the children feel more secure. The positive effects of reading, especially in difficult times, are clearly recognised.<sup>49</sup>

Finnish people are particularly inspired to read because of their thirst for information, interest in new literature and out of sheer enjoyment. They also wish to have a break from everyday life.<sup>49</sup> As the reader needs to use their long-term memory capacity to hold the story together, reading is a counterbalance to the rapid and hectic communication of everyday.

Literature forces the reader to stay still and concentrate on the text at hand. In fact, reading develops concentration and alleviates stress. In particular, reading long texts improves long-term memory and can even protect against Alzheimer's.<sup>50 51 52</sup>

An individual reader can choose the most appropriate way for him or herself to read, as well as pick the most pleasing source material. Audiobooks and e-books are good ways of making literature accessible to all, and they tend to inspire less active readers to take up literature. Indeed, they are increasingly popular: the sales of audiobooks and e-books

continued to grow at the rate of 100% during the first part of 2020, and the corresponding library numbers also show a trend towards increase.<sup>53 54</sup> Audio books are a good choice for those with dyslexia or visual disturbances, and being able to listen to a story while doing something else may be helpful to those with learning difficulties.

Active reading is a prerequisite for good literacy skills. It is a path towards fantasy and creativity as well as a source of information. Reading helps to process difficult things and to better verbalise one's feelings. Reading deepens the understanding of complex wholes, expands one's thinking outside the familiar box and generates new ideas.

In particular, reading fiction helps us understand other people's thoughts and feelings—brain scan studies have shown that parts of the brain interpreting the emotions of others are activated in people who are reading fiction. It has been shown that when we plunge emotionally into what we are reading, the same parts of the brain are activated as would in real-life situations.<sup>55 56</sup>

Experiencing and participating in arts, such as reading, writing and literary events, help to promote mental health and prevent many diseases.<sup>57</sup> The value of literature and culture are growing in our society. As society becomes more prosperous in material terms, people seek new meaning and significance through the possibilities of self-realisation and spiritual riches. Reading, literature and culture in their versatile forms meet these needs.



# Work to promote reading literacy takes place on a wide front

During the past few years, various levels of the Finnish society have come to realise the importance of reading and literacy. Lower literacy has become a significant political theme of discussion, even by international standards. Established in 2017, the National Literacy Forum's work was continued by the Literacy Movement, which is a continuous government programme. The aim is to promote literacy among those living in Finland, with the needs of children and the young spearheaded. The Reading movement network has the long-term aim of supporting the work done by organisations, libraries, literary art schools and government representatives.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education and Culture allocated four million euro of special state subsidies to measures to enhance reading culture and literacy in early childhood education, pre-primary education and starting education of grades 1 and 2.

To support reading in early childhood, the Reading Gift to Children programme, run by the Finnish Reading Center with the financial support of the Finnish Cultural Foundation, donates books and distributes information about the importance of reading to all families of babies born in 2019–2021. The books and information are distributed during check-ups at child welfare clinics. Thus, the project reaches all Finnish families equally.

The project also provides early childhood education professionals with materials written in various languages on the importance of reading. Many municipalities and cities provide services targeted at multilingual families. For example, the *Moniku* (Multicult) service in Espoo provides preventive support at child welfare clinics for multilingual families with babies. In Vantaa, the *Ädit mukana* (Mothers involved) project develops a model to promote the integration and employability of immigrant mothers through measures to enhance their reading and writing skills. Throughout Finland, multilingual libraries offer literature in about 80 languages.

Studies show that various campaigns, projects and author visits inspire children and the young to read more. The operations of the Literacy Movement were launched in 2019

through the Literacy Movement in schools project, coordinated by the Finnish Reading Center. The aim was to provide schools with more and newer means to inspire children to read: role models, reading tips, author visits, events, challenges and other content. The permanent operations of the Finnish Reading Center, such as the annual Reading Week and author visits, provide reading inspiration to all age groups. Fully produced by the young themselves, the *Lukufillis* (Reading mood) magazine highlights young people's reading tips and experiences. The Finnish Institute for Children's Literature and the portal called *Lukemo*, maintained by the Institute, provide services to bring recent literature to children and the young.

The Reading Clan project, financed by the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the copyright organisation Kopiosto, supported the work done in schools by providing books and doing research in the methods of school literary education. The needs of teachers' further education in literacy and writing skills are met by the *Lukiloki* programme financed by the Finnish National Agency for Education and coordinated by the Niilo Mäki Institute and University of Jyväskylä.

The Niilo Mäki Institute is engaged in the research, development and practical teaching of people with learning difficulties. The site *Lukimat* contains information and materials on reading development, teaching and learning difficulties as well as aids to prevent problems with reading.

The expert centre of accessible literature and publication, Celia, produces books in accessible formats, such as audiobooks. The Finnish Centre for Easy Language promotes information, communication and culture in easy Finnish in the country. *Erilaisten oppijoiden liitto* (The association for people with learning difficulties) provides advice, peer support, training and events for both learners and professionals.

Individual learning and operating models can create decisive moments and experience in a young person's life and lower the threshold for picking up texts and autonomous reading. The *Sanat haltuun* (Mastering the words) project run by the Finnish Reading Center highlighted the significance of literacy

among young men with low literacy skills by presenting them with texts inspired by their own interests. In the *Pojat lukevat pojille* (Boys reading to boys) model, teens studying in vocational institutes read to primary school boys—the various age groups benefit from the encounters, and reading is motivated through personal encounters and peer activities.

Many libraries collaborate with youth centres and actors to make literacy and the young—who do not feel the library is for them—meet in natural surroundings. The extensive Finnish library network plays a significant role in promoting and maintaining equal literacy.

As literacy becomes more versatile and various textual universes increase, the need for more research focusing on, for example, the role of the various formats in reading and literacy as well as on the impact of various reading modes on the willingness to read becomes obvious. In fact, the importance of reading and literacy, learning and the feasibility of various methods is the object of extensive research done by various universities.

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