

# AUSTRALIA READS



1 – 12 November 2020

Media Alert: 19 August 2020

## Announcing

- DON'T MISS OUT ON ORDERING OUR WONDERFUL AUSTRALIA READS SPECIAL BOOK RELEASES
- CALL OUT FOR AUTHORS, LIBRARIES AND BOOKSELLERS INTERESTED IN CREATING VIRTUAL EVENTS
- GOOD NEWS ON CONSUMER ATTITUDES TO READING DURING LOCKDOWN
- TOP 5 BRAIN BENEFITS OF READING BACKED BY NEUROSCIENCE FROM DR HELENA POPOVIC

**Australia Reads** takes place from 1-12 November, with our very successful headline event the Australian Reading Hour on 12 November 2020.

We would like to recruit authors, libraries and booksellers interested in creating virtual events to support the perhaps scaled back physical events (due to COVID).

This November AUSTRALIA READS are releasing four wonderful Ambassador children's books that are being published for only \$2.99. **Individual books can be ordered now by the trade directly through the publisher.** Please order in carton quantities where possible. All titles are 50% discount, firm sale. Posters and 8-pocket dumpbin are also available and these can be ordered via your Hachette Account Manager by 1 September 2020.

A July 2020 report\* into the impacts of COVID 19 delivered some **good news on consumer attitudes to reading during lockdown.** Findings revealed;

- 20% of Australians say they are reading more books due to lock downs. The other winners including cooking, hobbies, family time, at home TV and film.
- Gen Z are reading more books than pre-COVID and their reading has increased more than older generations.
- This increased engagement with reading has been fairly steady since March.
- In terms of reading more on a permanent basis post COVID, 12% of Australian say they will. Interesting, as the waves of isolation continue, the habit forming is increasing.
- Most people are planning domestic travel (unsurprisingly). The other big behavioural changes include more exercise, more online shopping, more video calling, and more working from home. Gen Z is driving these behavioural changes.

**Dr Helena Popovic is a best-selling author and leading authority on neuroplasticity and improving brain function. Here are her top 5 brain-benefits of reading backed by neuroscience.**

1. Reading a wide range of genres **creates new pathways in the brain and improves problem solving skills.** A study by Michigan State University found that Nobel Prize winning scientists are almost three times more likely (2.85 times to be precise) than the average scientist to have an artistic or crafty hobby that is unrelated to their field of expertise. The reason for this is brain cross-training. Reading and immersing ourselves in something completely different from our work, activates regions of the brain we are not in the habit of using. **The more diverse books we read, the more we are able to think in diverse ways.**
2. Research from the University of California found that when we experience awe by watching or reading something that transports us out of our day to day lives, **it quiets the critical voice in our head and reduces the production of inflammatory cytokines.** This boosts physical as well as mental health.
3. Stanford University researchers found that **when we read an awe-inspiring story,** we are subsequently more ethical and generous, more likely to help a stranger, and feel more connected to other people.
4. **Challenge** yourself with complex literature. When you put demands on your brain to figure something out, **it stimulates the growth of new brain cells.** This sharpens our thinking and reduces the risk of Alzheimer's disease.
5. Read to educate yourself. Nobel prize-winning scientist Eric Kandel demonstrated that when we **learn something new,** the connections between our brain cells are increased. This helps to build what is known as **cognitive reserve** (multiple pathways between different regions of the brain) which protects against dementia.



**Our Australia Reads Ambassador Books:**

**Peter Helliar** Frankie Fish and the Tomb of Tomfoolery  
9781760507480 | HARDIE GRANT EGMONT

**Jacqueline Harvey** Kensy and Max: Spy Games  
9781760899318 | PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

**Anna Fienberg** Tashi and the Stolen Forest  
9781760878566 | ALLEN & UNWIN

**Will Kostakis** The Greatest Hit  
9780733645464 | HACHETTE

**Australia Reads Dump Bin and Posters (below).**



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<https://bit.ly/2k6Sd7M>

**#AustraliaReads**

**[#AustraliaReadsAtHome](#)**

Visit our social posts about how reading can help you **learn, connect** and **grow**.

Register now to get involved in Australia Reads 2020. To make a pledge to read, or to host your own Australia Reads event, either physical or virtual please visit <https://australiareads.org.au/>

The project has been assisted by the Australian Government, through the Office for the Arts, and the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund.

\*Report: *GWI Coronavirus Research | July 2020 Multi-market research wave 5*

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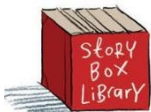


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