

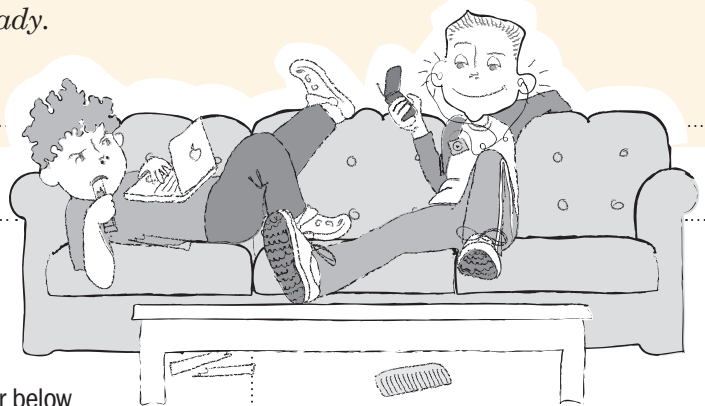
BAILIWICK PRESS PRESENTS

# READING: THE BAD NEWS

In the digital age, it's not often you come across a person who dedicates a large portion of each day to curling up on a comfy couch with a book in hand. In fact, in many U.S. households, the activity of reading for pleasure has essentially become a remnant of the past, replaced by obsessions with social networking, gaming, and indulgence in media.

We pay for this shift in cultural values, however, at a pretty significant price. Recent studies show that the less we read (and the less we enjoy reading), the less likely we are to cultivate our cognitive capacities and hence the more likely we are to struggle, as individuals and as a society.

*(Fortunately, there's a simple cure for this malady.  
See the reverse side for details.)*



## The Flabbergasting Facts:

### CHOOSING NOT TO READ

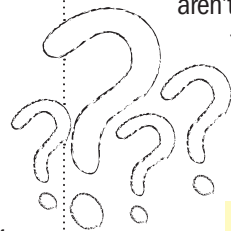
The older kids get, the less they read for fun. Just half of 9-year-olds, a third of 13-year-olds, and a quarter of 17-year-olds choose to read in their spare time. A 2006 study showed that teens and young adults spent two hours a day watching TV but only seven minutes reading. Boys, who have lower reading and writing scores, read the least.

### READING DROP-OUTS

Here in America, we spend LOTS of money on students who repeat a grade because of reading problems—more than two billion dollars a year. But the real cost to society comes later. More than a quarter of 12th graders read below what the National Department of Education calls a “basic” level, meaning they can’t make connections between what they read and their own lives. Half of these below-basic high-schoolers drop out.

### NON-READERS DON'T PLAN AHEAD

About 20% of adults read at or below a 5th-grade level. Reading develops the brain, but when the brain isn't developed fully, people aren't cognitively equipped to make good choices.



How do we know this? Research shows that 75% of people on welfare, 85% of unwed mothers, and 60% of prisoners are illiterate. In

fact, the state of Arizona actually looks at its number of poor-reading fourth-graders to determine how many prison beds to buy.

### VOCAB MATTERS

The bigger vocabularies we have, the better readers we are. But when we're not pushed to experiment with new words, we can fall into a rut.

Reading and writing studies show that the lowest-performing 12th-graders have about the same size vocabularies as the highest-performing 3rd-graders.

### READING ON THE JOB

Many companies gauge how valuable we are as workers by how well we understand what we read. But since America's high-school reading scores rank only 15th out of 31 developed nations, lots of our big businesses are now looking for workers beyond our borders.



# READING: THE GOOD NEWS

## Why Reading for Fun is...Commendable!

Lots of people think that reading for entertainment (especially comic novels) is just a form of escapism with no real value. This is a myth! Research shows that reading for fun is linked to:

- High academic achievement
- Vocabulary growth
- Advanced reading and writing skills

What's that mean? You got it! *Any* form of reading counts as *quality* reading.

On top of that, engaging with a wide variety of texts, fiction and nonfiction alike, builds character. For one, it teaches kids all about respecting other people's

points of view. But, perhaps more importantly, it also teaches them how to become active and responsible members in their communities so that they can strive to make this world a better place.

As you can see, then, it's crucial that we encourage kids



to read. But how, you might be wondering, does somebody accomplish this without shoving books down kids' throats and making reading a chore? The answer is surprisingly simple:

Make books and other reading materials *accessible* to kids!

U.S. Department of Education studies show that the number of books in a home correlates with a student's level of academic achievement.

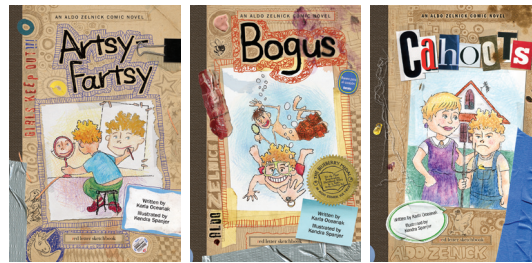
Plus, kids are much more likely to associate positive experiences with reading—and hence make it a hobby—when they've chosen the books themselves.

## The Feel-Good Facts!

- ✗ 86% OF KIDS REPORT FEELING PROUD AND HAVING A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT WHEN THEY'VE FINISHED READING A BOOK.
- ✗ READERS ARE MORE THAN THREE TIMES AS LIKELY AS NON-READERS TO VISIT MUSEUMS, ATTEND LIVE PERFORMANCES, AND CREATE ARTWORKS OF THEIR OWN.
- ✗ READERS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY AS NON-READERS TO VOLUNTEER AND PARTICIPATE IN CIVIC ACTIVITIES SUCH AS VOTING.
- ✗ PROFICIENT READERS ARE 2.5 TIMES AS LIKELY AS BASIC READERS TO BE EARNING AT LEAST \$850 A WEEK.

## BAILIWICK PRESS IS STRIVING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ONE LETTER AT A TIME

Here at Bailiwick Press, we recognize the importance of providing cognitive challenges to children in ways that are both engaging and illuminating. Our alphabetical comic novels, sprinkled with silly drawings and a pinch of potty humor, are designed not only to encourage good reading habits, but also to enrich kids' vocabularies and increase reading comprehension.



But why, you're probably wondering, did we choose comic novels? Research shows that illustrated texts foster brain development.

Kids' brains are still learning how to make connections. This means that many of them need images in order to visualize (and hence comprehend) what it is they're reading.

Our main reason for using comic novels, though, is pretty simple. We want kids to love books. We want them to continue reading throughout their lives so that they can become confident and successful in whatever they choose to do.