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Rédiger en anglais et en 500 mots une synthèse des documents proposés, qui devra obligatoirement comporter un titre. Indiquer avec précision, à la fin du travail, le nombre de mots utilisés (titre inclus), un écart de 10 % en plus ou en moins sera accepté.

Ce sujet comporte les 4 documents suivants :

- un extrait d'un article de ROSE HOROWITCH, publié sur le site *The Atlantic*, le 1^{er} octobre 2024 ;
- un extrait d'un article de JOSHUA ROTHMAN, publié sur le site *The New Yorker*, le 17 juin 2025 ;
- un extrait d'un article publié sur le site *The Conversation* en août 2026 ;
- une photo illustrant un article du journal *The Guardian* Diari Sabadell, publié le 25 avril 2025

L'ordre dans lequel se présentent les documents est arbitraire et ne revêt aucune signification particulière.

DOCUMENT 1



The Elite College Students

Who Can't Read Books

By ROSE HOROWITCH, *The Atlantic*, October 1, 2024

Nicholas Dames has taught Literature Humanities, Columbia University's required great-books course, since 1998. He loves the job, but it has changed. Over the past decade, students have become overwhelmed by the reading. College kids have never read everything they're assigned, of course, but this feels different. Dames's students now seem bewildered by the thought of finishing multiple books a semester. His colleagues have noticed the same problem. Many students no longer arrive at college—even at highly selective, elite colleges—prepared to read books.[...]

No comprehensive data exist on this trend, but the majority of the 33 professors I spoke with relayed similar experiences. Many had discussed the change at faculty meetings and in conversations with fellow instructors. Anthony Grafton, a Princeton historian, said his students arrive on campus with a narrower vocabulary and less understanding of language than they used to have. There are always students who "read insightfully and easily and write beautifully," he said, "but they are now more exceptions." Jack Chen, a Chinese-literature professor at the University of Virginia, finds his students "shutting down" when confronted with ideas they don't understand; they're less able to persist through a challenging text than they used to be. Daniel Shore, the chair of Georgetown's English department, told me that his students have trouble

staying focused on even a sonnet.

Failing to complete a 14-line poem without succumbing to distraction suggests one familiar explanation for the decline in reading aptitude: smartphones. Teenagers are constantly tempted by their devices, which inhibits their preparation for the rigors of college coursework—then they get to college, and the distractions keep flowing. "It's changed expectations about what's worthy of attention," Daniel Willingham, a psychologist at UVA, told me. "Being bored has become unnatural." Reading books, even for pleasure, can't compete with TikTok, Instagram, YouTube. In 1976, about 40 percent of high-school seniors said they had read at least six books for fun in the previous year, compared with 11.5 percent who hadn't read any. By 2022, those percentages had flipped.

The issue that Dames and other professors have observed is distinct from the problem at community colleges and nonselective universities, where some students arrive with literacy and comprehension deficits that can leave them unable to complete collegiate courses. High-achieving students at exclusive schools like Columbia can decode words and sentences. But they struggle to muster the attention or ambition required to immerse themselves in a substantial text.

55 The Columbia instructors who determine the Lit Hum curriculum decided to trim the reading list for the current school year. (It had been growing in recent years, even while students struggled with the reading, as new books by nonwhite authors were added.) Some see advantages to teaching fewer books. Even the best-prepared students have probably been skimming some of their Lit Hum assignments for years. Joseph Howley, the program's chair, said he'd rather students miss out on some of the classics—*Crime and Punishment* is now off the list—but read the remaining texts in greater depth. And, crucially, the change will give professors more time to teach students how they expect them to read.

65 But it's not clear that instructors can foster a love of reading by thinning out the syllabus. Some experts I spoke with attributed the decline of book reading to a shift in values rather than in skill sets. Students can still read books, they argue—they're just choosing not to. Students today are far more concerned about their job prospects than they were in the past. Every year, they tell Howley that, despite enjoying what they learned in Lit Hum, they plan to instead get a degree in something more useful for their career.

DOCUMENT 2

THE NEW YORKER

By JOSHUA ROTHMAN, *The New Yorker*, June 17, 2025

What do you read, and why? A few decades ago, these weren't urgent questions. Reading was an unremarkable activity, essentially unchanged since the advent of the modern publishing industry, in the nineteenth century. [...]

5 Today, the nature of reading has shifted. Plenty of people still enjoy traditional books and periodicals, and there are even readers for whom the networked age has enabled a kind of hyper-literacy; for them, a smartphone is a library in their pocket. For others, however, the old-fashioned, ideal sort of reading—intense, extended, beginning-to-end encounters with carefully crafted texts—has become almost anachronistic. These readers might start a book on an e-reader and then continue it on the go, via audio narration. Or they might stop reading books entirely, spending evenings browsing Apple News and Substack before drifting down Reddit's lazy river. There's something both diffuse and concentrated about reading now; it involves a lot of random words flowing across a screen, while the lurking presence of YouTube, Fortnite, Netflix, and the like insures that, once we've begun to read, we must continually choose not to stop.

25 This shift has taken decades, and it's been driven by technologies that have been disproportionately adopted by the young. Perhaps for these reasons, its momentousness has been obscured. In 2023, the National Endowment for the Arts reported that, over the preceding decade, the proportion of adults who read at least one book a year

75 The economic survival of the publishing industry requires an audience willing and able to spend time with an extended piece of writing. But as readers of a literary magazine will surely appreciate, more than a venerable industry is at stake. Books can cultivate a sophisticated form of empathy, transporting a reader into the mind of someone who lived hundreds of years ago, or a person who lives in a radically different context from the reader's own. "A lot of contemporary ideas of empathy are built on identification, identity politics," Kahn, the Berkeley professor, said. "Reading is more complicated than that, so it enlarges your sympathies."

80 Yet such benefits require staying with a character through their journey; they cannot be approximated by reading a five- or even 30-page excerpt. According to the neuroscientist Maryanne Wolf, so-called deep reading—sustained immersion in a text—stimulates a number of valuable mental habits, including critical thinking and self-reflection, in ways that skimming or reading in short bursts does not. To understand the human condition, and to appreciate humankind's greatest achievements, you still need to read *The Iliad*—all of it.

What's Happening to Reading?

had fallen from fifty-five per cent to forty-eight per cent. That's a striking change, but modest compared to what's happened among teenagers: the National Center for Education Statistics—which has recently been gutted by the Trump Administration—found that, over roughly the same period, the number of thirteen-year-olds who read for fun "almost every day" fell from twenty-seven per cent to fourteen per cent. Predictably, college professors have been complaining with more than usual urgency about phone-addled students who struggle to read anything of substantial length or complexity.

30 Some of the evidence for the drop in literacy is thin. One widely discussed study, for instance, judges students on their ability to parse the muddy and semantically tortuous opening of "Bleak House"; this is a little like assessing swimmers on their ability to cross fifty yards of molasses. And there are other reasons to be sanguine about the slide away from books, given what so many of us actually like to read. If we binge "Stranger Things" instead of reading Stephen King, or listen to self-help podcasts instead of buying self-help books, is that the end of civilization? On some level, declines in traditional reading are connected to the efflorescence of information in the digital age. Do we really want to return to a time when there was less to read, watch, hear, and learn? (...)

Still, whatever we think of these changes, they seem likely to accelerate. Over the past few decades, many

55 scholars have seen the decline in reading as the closing of
the “Gutenberg Parenthesis”—a period of history,
inaugurated by the invention of the printing press, during
which a structured ecosystem of published print ruled.
The internet, the theory went, closed the parenthesis by
60 returning us to a more free-flowing, decentralized, and
conversational mode of communication. Instead of
reading books, we can argue in the comments. Some
theorists have even proposed that we’re returning to a
kind of oral culture—what the historian Walter Ong
65 described as a “secondary orality,” in which chatting and
exchanging are enhanced by the presence of text. The
ascendancy of podcasts, newsletters, and memes has
lent credence to this view.

In retrospect, though, there’s something almost

70 quaint about the oral-culture hypothesis. We might say
that it was largely developed during the Zuckerberg
Parenthesis—a period of history, inaugurated by the
invention of Facebook, in which social media ruled. No
one inside this parenthesis imagined how much of a
75 threat artificial intelligence would soon pose to the
conversational internet. We have already entered a
world in which the people you encounter online are
sometimes not actually people; instead, they
are conjured using A.I. that’s been trained on
80 unimaginably vast quantities of text. It’s as though the
books have come to life, and are getting revenge by
creating something new—a marriage of text, thought,
and conversation that will revise the utility and value of
the written word. (719 words)

DOCUMENT 3

THE CONVERSATION

What the panic over Gen Z’s reading habits gets wrong

By Kathi Inman Berens and Rachel Noorda, *The Conversation*, August 6, 2026

A trove of recent articles bemoan the collapse in recreational reading among younger Americans, with COVID-related reading declines, artificial intelligence and social media often described as causes.

5 But as the authors of “How Gen Z Discover and Consume Books,” we think many claims about Gen Z’s reading behaviors miss the mark.

Some long-standing, influential studies aren’t designed to capture how Gen Z often reads: multimodally –
10 bouncing between print, e-book and audiobook for the same book – and on web platforms such as Wattpad, Webtoon, Kindle Unlimited, DC Universe Infinite and Marvel Comics online.

In fact, according to our 2025 data, a growing
15 proportion of Gen Z – 66% – is identifying as readers, up 14 percentage points from 2022. In the previous 12 months, 65% of Gen Z read at least one print book, up from 59% in 2022.

In other words, Gen Z shows us that reading isn’t dying.
20 It’s changing.

Gen Z is the first generation to grow up with internet access from an early age. Kids born from 1997 to 2012 came of age during what researchers describe as the postdigital condition, where the option to be online is
25 constantly and pervasively available. Nowadays, no matter your age, engaging with printed books and other physical media – vinyl records, film cameras, DVDs – represents a deliberate choice rather than the only way to access media.

30 To Gen Z, physical books carry a different meaning than they do for older generations.

A longing for “digital detox” is a part of why print books

are Gen Z’s top preferred reading format, according to our data. Perhaps that’s because printed books don’t ping or
35 track you. You can loan books or give them as gifts. And used books bear the traces of other humans. You could argue that these physical qualities actually make books more alluring than they were in the days before the internet and social media.

40 Across three nationally representative surveys – conducted in 2020, 2022 and 2025 – we collected data about a wide swath of Gen Z’s reading behavior. It ranged from reading text messages, game chats and emails to reading printed books, manga and fan fiction.

45 In 2025, Gen Zers visited bookstores and public libraries more than they did in 2022. About 36% of Gen Zers said they found a book through a librarian, up from 15% in 2022. Gen Zers who didn’t visit libraries had higher loneliness scores than those who did.

50 Current methods to measure recreational reading aren’t capturing data that reveals the full scope of how Gen Z reads. (...)

They don’t capture platform-based reading or the book-related activities that happen online: reading and
55 writing fan fiction; BookTok and Bookstagram; and reading or writing online reviews for Goodreads. These activities are known as postdigital reading practices, and they’re almost never addressed in reading surveys.

In her August 2026 cover story, “The End of Reading is
60 Here,” Atlantic staff writer Rose Horowitch goes further, arguing that the U.S. has become “postliterate.” Horowitch focuses on one very specific form of literacy: sustained close reading of complex literary texts. Throughout the essay, she treats this ability as

65 encompassing all forms of literacy.

When she points to a study of students who struggled to interpret the opening pages of Charles Dickens' "Bleak House," she concludes that many "didn't even know how to go about figuring out what they didn't understand, or
70 they didn't bother."

But literacy researchers have long argued that literacy involves far more than reading novels or parsing Victorian prose. It includes the ability to interpret, evaluate and create meaning across a range of texts, media and social
75 contexts.

Identifying as a reader used to mean sitting alone with a book. That is less true for Gen Z than any previous generation. Gen Zers are more likely to experience reading as a social activity. (...) The growing popularity of
80 silent reading parties, where groups of people come together to read quietly and independently, suggests that Gen Zers enjoy finding community around books, even as they immerse themselves in a largely solitary act.

Reading is certainly changing but it's far from dead.

85 (671 words)

DOCUMENT 4



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