

## New UAE law gives workers time off to read

3rd November, 2016



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has introduced a new law to get people to read more. The law includes a large number of measures to support the

government's wish for a higher literacy rate. Government employees will have paid time during working hours to read books. The law encourages private companies to create libraries at their offices, factories and other workplaces. It will also encourage shopping centres to offer spaces to set up public libraries so people can read when they go shopping. These libraries will be easy to use for people with reading disabilities. Even coffee shops at shopping malls will have to offer books and other reading materials to their customers.

The UAE's National Reading Law was issued by President Sheikh Khalifa. In May of this year, he launched the National Strategy for Reading, which has a 10-year goal to create a nation of "avid readers". It aims to make reading a lifelong habit for 50 per cent of the nation's adults and 80 per cent of school students. It also aims to get students to read an average of at least 20 books a year. Hussain Al Hammadi, Minister of Education, said the new law is: "A road map for building a reading, civilised society capable of change, and a world leader in development." Dr Tod Laursen, President of Khalifa University, said that in the age of the Internet, it was still important for books and libraries to have their place in society.

Sources: *GulfNews.com / TimeOutDubai / thenational.ae*

## Writing

Reading from a book is better than from a digital device. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

new law / number / measures / literacy / libraries / shopping / malls / books / disabilities / strategy / avid readers / lifelong habit / average / society / development / Internet

## True / False

- a) A new law in the UAE says people must read for 2 hours every day. T / F
- b) Government workers will be able to read and get paid at work. T / F
- c) The UAE wants shopping centres to create public libraries. T / F
- d) Coffee shops will have to have books for customers to read. T / F
- e) The law is part of a 25-year strategy for reading in the UAE. T / F
- f) The UAE wants reading to be a lifelong habit for 80% of school students. T / F
- g) UAE students read an average of 20 or more books a year. T / F
- h) A university president said libraries no longer have a place in society. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>introduced</b> | a. create     |
| 2. <b>measures</b>   | b. brought in |
| 3. <b>encourages</b> | c. provide    |
| 4. <b>set up</b>     | d. time       |
| 5. <b>offer</b>      | e. custom     |
| 6. <b>avid</b>       | f. plan       |
| 7. <b>habit</b>      | g. actions    |
| 8. <b>nation</b>     | h. keen       |
| 9. <b>road map</b>   | i. supports   |
| 10. <b>age</b>       | j. country    |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of having a law that gets people to read?
- b) What can governments do to encourage reading?
- c) What is the benefit to society if people read more?
- d) Why do some people dislike reading?
- e) Is it better to read from a book or the Internet?
- f) Why do we still need libraries?
- g) How does reading change people?
- h) What questions would you like to ask an author?

## Phrase Match

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. introduced a             | a. libraries        |
| 2. get people to read       | b. least 20 books   |
| 3. literacy                 | c. materials        |
| 4. set up public            | d. of the Internet  |
| 5. reading                  | e. rate             |
| 6. create a nation of avid  | f. place in society |
| 7. make reading a lifelong  | g. new law          |
| 8. read an average of at    | h. habit            |
| 9. in the age               | i. readers          |
| 10. libraries to have their | j. more             |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How long should people read each day?
- How important are libraries?
- What is your favourite library and why do you like it?
- What do you think of having libraries in shopping malls?
- Where is your favourite place to read, and why?
- What's your favourite book, and why?
- What do you think about what you read?

## Spelling

- a large number of rauesmse
- a higher cretialy rate
- offices, siotcfrea and other workplaces
- public silrireab
- people with reading litabseiisid
- reading raelmtais to their customers
- dsuies by President Sheikh Khalifa
- he haucndle the National Strategy for Reading
- make reading a lifelong ihbta
- read an aeavegr of at least 20 books
- lvsieiidc (UK) / icidielvz (USA) society
- have their place in osyctie

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. b	2. g	3. i	4. a	5. c
6. h	7. e	8. j	9. f	10. d

## Role Play

### Role A – Biographies

You think biographies are the best things to read. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are not so good about their reading material. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): travel guides, novels or manga or comics.

### Role B – Travel Guides

You think travel guides are the best things to read. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are not so good about their reading material. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): biographies, novels or manga or comics.

### Role C – Novels

You think novels are the best things to read. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are not so good about their reading material. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): travel guides, biographies or manga or comics.

### Role D – Manga or Comics

You think manga or comics are the best things to read. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are not so good about their reading material. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): travel guides, novels or biographies.

## Speaking – Reading material

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • encyclopaedia  | • biographies     |
| • blogs          | • travel guides   |
| • newspapers     | • fantasy fiction |
| • manga / comics | • romance         |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.