

People Who Use E-Readers Dive Far Deeper Into Books

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Photo: Ariel Zambelich/WIRED

Digital publishing is rapidly becoming a haven for struggling writers—but it turns out the format might hold similar potential for struggling readers too.

A new [survey by UK charity Quick Reads](#) indicates that adult readers tend to read more and

stick with books longer if they're using an e-reader. According to the survey, 48 percent of UK adults who use e-readers say the technology gets them to read more. In addition to that, 41 percent of respondents reported that being able to look up words they don't know makes reading easier, and over half say that being able to change the size and appearance of text helps as well.

The survey also found that 62 percent of e-reader users say that access to free digital books has led them to titles they otherwise wouldn't have picked up. That's an important finding for Quick Reads, which since 2006 has produced free ebooks for less confident adult readers. And Quick Reads' approach doesn't stop at availability: They also commission books from bestselling authors like Barbara Taylor Bradford and James Patterson. Their lineup includes fiction and nonfiction across a range of genres, as well as two licensed *Doctor Who* novels—all tailored to beginning and intermediate reading levels. It's a notable break from the limited fare available to most who struggle with reading and often find themselves learning from children's books or what the *Guardian* describes as “patronizing pamphlets.”

But don't expect to see Quick Reads' ebooks supplant their print program. Literacy correlates closely with income, and therefore also with access to technology—as much now as three years ago, when author Seanan McGuire's impassioned argument for the persistence of print, “[Across the Digital Divide](#),” went viral. And print books, which Quick Reads' prices at a reasonably affordable £1 (about \$1.66 U.S.), are critical for expanding access to the many households without e-readers and regular internet access.

So even though a nice Kindle might not help every struggling adult reader, it could help some burgeoning bookworms stick with the habit.