



***Mexico Reads: national program for the promotion of reading and the book***

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A country that reads, that writes, that listens and communicates, is a place for a better quality of life, for the generation of jobs, prepared for the changes that the demands of the world around us impose.  
PNFLL

**Abstract:**

*Mexico reads. National Program to Promote Book and Reading is in the process of taking root in Mexican society. Its effects are expected in 2012 in the second National Survey of Reading. This paper sets out the principles objectives and purposes and presents some activities related with the Program are being built in the Mexican society through the public libraries. This National Program implies new challenges for librarians, Library Science Schools and library associations.*

**INTRODUCTION**

This work presents an overview of **Mexico Reads: National Program for the Promotion of Reading and the Book**(*México lee: Programa de Fomento para el Libro y la Lectura PNFLL*)which began in 2008;including some of the activities related to the promotion of reading, in particular, those in which public libraries are involved. In addition, it mentions some of the ongoing challenges that we as librarians must face before Mexicans can truly attain the objectives set forth by the PNFLL:

- To develops skills that allow them to interact with different texts in all their formats, printed or electronic;
- To systematically turn to reading in search of answers to their concerns, their interests and their curiosity, to be aware of and exercise their rights and obligations;

- To be prepared to find quality information and content to better understand some aspect of the world in which we live, to enter into dialogue with arguments to defend their ideas, to use language to create new meanings;
- To produce their own texts to make what they think, need or want known;
- To develop critical, analytical and conceptual thinking.<sup>1</sup>

And in this way to bring about a Mexico whose people read increasingly more and better and make libraries a fundamental space in their lives.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, governments have undertaken different initiatives to eradicate illiteracy and to provide education to the entire population. A hundred years ago the illiteracy rate was 72.3%, while today it is 7.6%; Mexicans receive 8.6 years of schooling on average.<sup>2</sup>In terms of libraries, development has been limited in terms of school libraries, which have not yet achieved full coverage in quantity or quality of services. Public libraries began in early 1922, as part of the ambitious national program of literacy, education and promotion of books, by 1924 nearly 2000 libraries had been established. Later they went through periods of variable development. Starting in 1983, the president in office pushed for the quantitative and qualitative development of public libraries, so that within six years their number increased from 485 to 3347, across the nation. In addition, legal and technical bases were established in order to ensure their sustained growth. Currently there are 7319 public libraries in operation; nearly all of them offer an annual program of promotion of reading generally directed to children. Some libraries offer other activities with greater frequency and effect for other segments of the population, as we will see later on.

### **National reading programs in Mexico**

Reading is a topic that in recent years has taken on particular importance in our country and has led to national programs and initiatives. In 1995, the National Program for Reading (*Programa Nacional para la Lectura, or PRONALEES*) was the first to be constituted as such, with the following objectives:

- To develop educational materials for teachers and students (Teacher guides, student books, reference cards, etc.)
- To review programs
- To train and support teachers through consultation
- To support the work of teachers in the area of Spanish
- To implement and consolidate reading groups

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<sup>1</sup> Cfr. MEXICO LEE. Programa Nacional de Fomento para el Libro y la Lectura <http://www.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sep1/Resource/103893/1/MexLee.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. INEGI. Censo nacional de población 2010 <http://www.inegi.org.mx/Sistemas/temasV2/Default.aspx?s=est&c=21702>

Within this framework was incorporated the “Campaign for the World’s Libraries” promoted by the **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, IFLA**, to which Mexico contributed with its **Classroom and School Library Project**.

With the change of government in 2000, the National Reading Program was subsequently modified in terms of its scope and goals, and renamed **Toward a Country of Readers** (*Hacia un país de lectores*) as part of the National Education Plan. This program proposed four concrete actions for the promotion of reading:

1. Development of national continuing education courses.
2. Selection, production and distribution of 75 books a year for school and classroom library collections, for use by students and teachers.
3. Incorporation of all 32 states in the classroom library project
4. Preparation of a public campaign to generate a culture of appreciation for reading.

These actions were the starting point for the National Reading Program, which in turn set forth the following objectives:

- a) To promote the use and production of written materials for the formation of independent readers and writers,
- b) To recognize the ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity of Mexico,
- c) To develop mechanisms to ensure the production and distribution of library collections.

Under the current presidential administration the National Program for the Promotion of Reading and the Book changed its name in 2008 to **Mexico Reads**. This program has a broader scope, seeking the formation of a fully proficient user of written culture, that is, someone who has developed all of his or her communicative skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as the different literacies. Moreover, it prioritizes the access to information and knowledge of Mexicans as an essential measure for social and human development.<sup>3</sup>

The **Mexico Reads** Program for the Promotion of Reading and the Book recognizes:

- Reading and writing as tools for the reduction of social inequalities and the path to access to information and knowledge.
- The book as a vehicle for respect of cultural diversity and as a generator of competencies, work, and knowledge.
- School and libraries as the ideal literacy and educational spaces, associated with the social actions of promotion of reading and the book, and involving fathers and mothers at all times.
- The promotion of reading as an exercise of social and cultural democracy and s/he who reads as a participant in the development of his or her community and the country.
- A community that reads is a strong group that can propose and put into action changes around them.
- To coordinate and multiply efforts between society and government to reinforce the habit of reading and more effectively promote a Mexico that reads.
- The investment of the Government in its people becomes the best decision.

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<sup>3</sup>Programa de Fomento para el Libro y la Lectura: México lee

- Human development is closely linked to access to culture, information and knowledge.
- Full capacity of reading and writing makes the exercise of citizenship possible.

The program is guided by sixteen principles<sup>4</sup>, of which we highlight the following to give an idea of the innovative proposal and the extent of its scope in comparison to earlier programs:

- The contemporary world demands a more sophisticated mastery of reading, writing and written culture. Democratizing access to reading and the book promotes equity and reduces inequalities.
- The availability and access to a variety of materials for reading and writing, as well as access to new information technologies and those required to prepare fully proficient users of written culture.
- The participation of the media and civil associations, as well as teachers, promoters of reading, librarians, and above all fathers and mothers, in the advancement of reading and the book, is essential for the generation of fully proficient users of written culture.
- The Mexican government recognizes the existence of multiple ways of reading, different purposes for reading and a variety of bibliographic material, therefore it considers it necessary to respond to that diversity with effective strategies.
- It is a priority of the Mexican government to invest and foster greater investment in content for the promotion of reading by using new information and communication technologies, as well as through the development of mechanisms to strengthen the publishing industry, booksellers and in the modernization and improvement of library spaces.
- Evaluation and research are information generating activities necessary in the development of best practices in the promotion of reading and the book and a necessary condition for transparency and accountability, planning and appropriate decision-making.
- The Mexican government recognizes new information and communication technologies, as well as the other electronic media for reading, as an essential condition for access to knowledge.
- The reinforcement of the capacities and skills of citizens that promote reading, teachers and librarians, and all those who participate as mediators between the books and reading, is essential for the development of communities of readers and writers.

### **Sectors involved in the Program for the Promotion of Reading and the Book**

The complexities inherent in reading and its social, cultural, economic, political and technological implications, requires the participation of different sectors of society:

- The educational sector: from basic to higher education; teacher training centers, **school and classroom libraries**.
- The cultural sector: the National Public library system, reading rooms and cultural centers of the country.
- The publishing industry: publishing companies established in Mexico and their trade union organizations.
- The bookseller sector: bookstores and cultural centers.
- Additional stakeholders in the chain of the book: the paper industry, transportation and packaging, illustration, organizations in defense of the intellectual property rights.

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<sup>4</sup> Cfr. <http://www.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sep1/Resource/103893/1/MexLee.pdf>

- The artistic, cultural and scientific community.
- Print and electronic media: the press, radio, television and Internet.
- The industrial sector and the national private enterprise.
- Civil society: civil associations and promoters of reading, academics and researchers, teachers and community leaders.
- Mexican mothers and fathers, with the support of the State.

Another change was the modification of the 2000 “Law of Promotion of Reading and the Book” which was abrogated by the publication of the new Law of 2008.<sup>5</sup> This action is a measure of the importance and the need to ensure the development of the publishing industry and educational programs for in order that Mexicans may become fully proficient users of written culture and other languages.

### **The promotion of public libraries**

The 7,319 public libraries that are members of the National Public library system are incorporated in 31 state systems and 16 division systems located in Mexico City. They are regulated by cooperation agreements between the federal government and local governments. The General Directorate of Libraries, DGB, part of the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CONACULTA), seeks to develop policies and establish procedures to facilitate equitable, free and open access for all Mexicans to knowledge and culture, and to encourage reading in the National Public Library System. Its functions include the elaboration of plans and projects for the development of readers, as well as the reinforcement of the role of public libraries as centers of reading, to update, diversify and modernize the education of quality human resources in public libraries. The DGB also administers different training programs through workshops designed for librarians responsible for developing activities for the promotion of reading in public libraries.<sup>6</sup>

As part of its activities for promoting reading in public libraries across the country, the DGB coordinates the national *My Summer Vacation in the Library Program*. It is an educational and recreational option where the mediator, the librarian/reader, through a series of activities, brings children and young people closer to books and reading in a playful way. Its goal is to create and consolidate the habit of reading in children from their earliest years. This program was initiated in 1986, and every summer since it has been and is the confirmation that the public library continues to play an essential role as a meeting place, as a space for possibilities.

Every year during the summer vacation period, approximately one million children and young people on their own initiative go to library facilities to participate in the activities including research, games, storytelling, theater, oral narrations, reading aloud, singing, painting, movies, and exhibitions that encourage reading and the use of the library collections and other materials such as new technological media. This program changes its theme each year. Thus it includes training for the librarians.

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<sup>5</sup>Ley de fomento para la lectura y el libro. DOF 24-07-2008  
[www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LFLL.pdf](http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LFLL.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Dirección General de Bibliotecas. CONACULTA.  
[http://dgb.conaculta.gob.mx/info\\_detalle.php?id=3](http://dgb.conaculta.gob.mx/info_detalle.php?id=3)

**Cultural Festivals.** This is another national program that just started recently in which the General Directorate of Libraries participates in partnership with other cultural organizations. One of the main objectives of this program is to encourage public libraries to take advantage of the surrounding public spaces (plazas, parks, esplanades) to attract new and different audiences to the knowledge and appreciation of different artistic and cultural expressions, as well as to provide greater visibility to the library and its services and reaffirm its role as a cultural center.

The activities that make up the Cultural Festival programs include: exhibitions, public readings, community readings to motivate the public to carry and share excerpts from their favorite books, film screenings, musical soirées and talks with experts. Those attending exchange books. Some programs have attendees write their own poems.

### **Reading activities in state libraries**

Some of the activities organized in state libraries in Mexico are the following:

#### **Guanajuato**

**Reading Provokes** (*Leer Provoca*)<sup>7</sup> is a campaign to promote reading that supports activities in the education, research, promotion, dissemination and infrastructure that comprise the State Crusade for Reading. The principal objective of **Reading Provokes** is to foster encounters between the people of Guanajuato and literature as a means of promoting and spreading the pleasure and appreciation of reading. It also seeks to advance the work of the state libraries as promoters of reading, to expand the scope of activities in this area, improving the distribution of *Ediciones La Rana* by making them more accessible to readers, and to reinforce library infrastructure. These activities involve libraries, state cultural centers and a legion of oral narrators.

In this crusade, **Reading Provokes**, the IEC and the University of Guanajuato join efforts and activities to reduce the obstacles to reading in the state. In addition, the State Crusade for Reading seeks to transform the concept of library as a space exclusively for research to one of the development of new educational and cultural information skills.

#### **Jalisco**

One of the most popular activities at the "Juan Jose Arreola" Jalisco State Public Library<sup>8</sup> is that of the Film and Literature series. Every Thursday afternoon, a biographical sketch of the author is presented, immediately followed by a film showing, some of the films that have been presented are *The Reader* by Bernhard Schlink, *All the Mornings of the World* by Alain Corneau and *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

**Embroidering with books.** Ladies take their knitting, embroidery, or whatever craft project in which they are engaged, and as they continue with their embroidery they listen to an audio

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<sup>7</sup>[www.guanajuato.gob.mx/cultura/leer.php](http://www.guanajuato.gob.mx/cultura/leer.php)

<sup>8</sup><http://reb.jalisco.gob.mx/index.html>

book, for example, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Treasure Island*, and *The Burning Plain*.

Participants then look for other works of literature by the authors to whom they have just been introduced. The number of adult users has increased, as they have spread the word to invite others to the activities.

**Little readers.** Children from kindergarten through high school attend once a month to support the teachers. Other activities include:

- Story hour, for all children who like fun stories, whether it be reading them, listening to them, or representing them.
- Reading groups, which propose the enjoyment of shared reading of short stories, novels and poems in a pleasant atmosphere to children, young people and adults.
- Investigative games, which seek to answer the questions that children have about different topics, through readings and games, the elaboration of murals, crosswords or puzzles.
- Reader's theater, which invites young people and adults to learn more about theater through the enjoyable reading of a play. The participants read the lines of the characters in the play and stage directions indicated by the author so that the entire group can imagine the actions taking place on stage.
- *Tertulias*, which are informal gatherings, in which entertaining readings of short stories, novels and poems are shared.

Public libraries have benefited with these programs in the increase of users and greater outreach to their community, as they are concerned with having more participation in the activities. The public library has become part of its community where parents are supporting some of the activities.

## San Luis Potosí

**Pilot Reading Aloud Program.** This activity is organized by the Directorate of Municipal Libraries and Bookstore Porrúa.<sup>9</sup> Well-known community figures are invited to read aloud. Designed for local families, around thirty to fifty people attend every Sunday from 11 to 12 noon. The municipality organizes a bicycle route which consists of a tour of the main avenue of the city, where the families make either bicycle or walk and at the end of the tour they have the reading. Some of the participants from the bike tour are included, but also families who are walking by the park.

From 2003 to 2010, the Public University Library of the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosi conducted a total of 75 activities for the Promotion of Reading for the entire San Luis Potosí community, ranging from the blind and visually impaired, to pre-school, primary, secondary, high school and university students, housewives, workers and retirees. A total of approximately 19,898 users have participated in the various spring and summer workshops: storytelling, experimenting in the library, literary snacks, play to learn math, creating your stories, book presentations, reflections for my mother poetry, interactive Mexico, renew yourself. Other workshops include: read to give to the world, reading and composition,

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<sup>9</sup>[www.sanluis.gob.mx](http://www.sanluis.gob.mx)

stories of Greek philosophy, reading aloud at the State Institute for the Blind, the book fair, Bicentennial roulette, Mexican independence in readings and on paper, promotion of reading at preparatory schools.

## Sonora

**Sonora Reads. Score a point for reading**(*Sonora Lee. Una anotación por la lectura*).<sup>10</sup>Read, score and win! The greatest gift that children and young people can receive is being introduced to reading, the book and its benefits, activities that contribute to their formation as students, increase their reading ability and textual comprehension. It's also important to involve profiles of individuals relevant to their context. The Sonora Institute of Culture, the *Naranjeros of Hermosillo* baseball team and Molina Editors participate. This program for the promotion of reading is organized and disseminated through the 17 public libraries and 30 reading rooms located in Hermosillo, the state capital, where participants receive cumulative point cards, request the books and upon returning them, they recount their content in written form and through drawings, with which they earn points according to the number of pages read. Children, young people and adults are eligible to participate to win prizes ranging from books, dictionaries and school supplies, to passes to attend the *Naranjeros de Hermosillo* baseball game, tours through its historic stadium and autographs from members of the team. The invitation: *Go to public libraries and reading rooms of Hermosillo (see the addresses on the flyer) with your library card, if you don't have one yet you can process it with an official ID; if you're a minor ask your parents to come with you with their ID and proof of address.*

## Tabasco

**101 Reading Goals.**<sup>11</sup>This program was developed by librarians from the Central Branch of the State System, it is widely known by the 1,200 librarians working in 573 public libraries of the 17 municipalities of the State. The Reading Program began on April 23, 2008 (Day of the Book),and includes101 activities aimed at all sectors of society. Of these the most successful are:

**Reading marathons:** Take place in all the libraries in the State System and involve reading aloud from a printed and/or electronic text, students and educators from all levels participate; community leaders including the mayor, local officials and representatives, join in on the reading, as well as parents. One aspect worth highlighting is the participation of blind people who read from Braille.

**Reading soirées:** Promotion and orientation to the library, books and reading in which all members of the community participate. This activity also involves the other librarians in the community who come in support of the library in which the event is held. The activities are as follows: Guided visit to the library, bibliographical exhibition, keynote lectures, book presentations, poetry readings, wall newspaper, storytelling, presentations of plays, promotion of the library lending, exposition of abused and mutilated books, crafts and Origami, presentation of the library corner for the environment, library endowment and a local cooking demonstration. **Reading soirees** was recently recognized by CONCULTA as one of the six most successful activities at the national level.

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<sup>10</sup><http://www.isc.gob.mx/convocatorias.php?id=1756&mas=1%20y%20en%20www.bibliocultura.gob.mx>

<sup>11</sup>[http://iec.tabasco.gob.mx/programas\\_federales/fomento\\_lectura.htm](http://iec.tabasco.gob.mx/programas_federales/fomento_lectura.htm)

**Travels for reading in state schools:** Librarians from the state system visit schools at all levels to promote reading to students, teachers and parents. The activities included are: traveling bibliographical exhibition of books from the library, reading groups, mini reading marathons, reading aloud contests and promotion of library services.

**Reading activities to commemorate special days:** Set of activities for the promotion of reading to celebrate various commemorative dates in the 573 public libraries of the State of Tabasco such as: World Book Day, and National Day of the Book.

**Professional training of library staff:** Through an inter-institutional agreement the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) offers personnel working in the Tabasco State public libraries the possibility of studying for Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Library Sciences and Information Studies through distance learning, a great achievement for this state.

### **“Mexico Reads” Award for the Promotion of Reading**

The National Culture Program 2007-2012 created the *Mexico Reads Award for the Promotion of Reading* which supports, through one of its categories, reading programs being undertaken by librarians in national public libraries. Two programs that have received this award:

**Pachuca, Hidalgo. The Quiet Room of the “Ricardo Garibay” Central Library of the State of Hidalgo**<sup>12</sup> *2009 Mexico Reads Award for the Promotion of Reading in Public Libraries.* The quiet room multiplies the possibilities to get children, young people and adults closer to reading, while at the same time encouraging creativity and the description of a silent world through writing. “Ricardo Garibay” is the only library in Mexico and a pioneer in offering library services to people with hearing impairments. This space was created for deaf-mute individuals, ranging from five to 30 years of age and coming from different parts of the state. There are workshops designed to promote reading among the silent, as well as to develop language. Other workshops include computers, writing, comic books, as well as Logogenia therapies and Mexican sign language classes. Reading has proven to be a means to integrate them into society.

**Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua LET’S JOIN THE CROWD! (¡VÁMONOS CON LA BOLA!)**<sup>13</sup> *2010 Mexico Lee Award for the Promotion of Reading in Public Libraries.* **Reader’s theater** (*Lectura en atril*), by Grupo ESKILO. “Five years ago we didn’t have any funding, no costumes, makeup, or scenery; we dressed completely in black, text in hand, with three borrowed lecterns and red noses to play the clowns, to two groups of students, one primary and one secondary school, several invited professors and a large number of librarians. Everything turned out great! The kids were happy when they we saw us read and have fun at the same time, and they laughed at the funny lines in the text. The Readers Theater group started to grow in members. And so the Reader’s Theater workshop began, meeting every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. to which we invited the public in general and especially librarians. In a 1998 Ford Escort that sometimes ran out of gas or didn’t want to run, we traveled to various different libraries. At the beginning of 2010, in the working groups for the reconstruction of Ciudad Juárez and its social fabric, the culture group established the 2010 Emerging Cultural Program which supported a new project from the *Eskilo* group entitled

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<sup>12</sup> <http://bcehricardogaribay.wordpress.com/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.bibliotecasjuarez.blogspot.com/>

*Easy Reader Theater (Atrilito Facilito)*, it is one of our greatest accomplishments so that young people come to the reading and be a part of *Eskilo* so that that can “join the crowd” because *Eskilo*’s goal is to be a collective, a group united by cultural interests, to share the pleasure of reading.”

### **Campaigns**

**Read to Learn. Have Fun Reading!**<sup>14</sup>Combining efforts in favor reading:“Get Reading Mexico!” (¡México a Leer!), the Ministry of Public Education(SEP), the 32 State Educational Authorities and the Council for Communication, have begun an unprecedented effort with the slogan "Challenge: 1 of 2 Children at Good and Excellent." Promoted by the Council for Communication: Voice of the Industry through mass media—television, radio, magazines and posters—it is a social movement for the promotion of reading that seeks to foster awareness in society on the importance and the transcendence of reading with assistance from the public and private sectors, to generate policies, programs, projects, actions and events designed to promote a change in habits and a culture of reading. Several national celebrities from music, sports and film have joined the campaign. Its website provides information on libraries and ways to participate in activities promoting reading, book recommendations, and stories for play, among others.

### **Librarians flooding with books**

Three years ago, the Reading and Literacy Division (LEA) of the Mexican Association of Librarians A.C. (AMBAC) launched this campaign as part of the program of activities of the section. The objectives are to: highlight the contribution of the AMBAC to the Mexico Reads National Program for the Promotion of Reading and the Book, to encourage the involvement of librarians in the promotion of reading and the book; to foster greater contact between the public with libraries and to promote greater visibility of librarians in society. This campaign takes place in different cities where the Mexican Conference of Librarians is held each year. Participants are invited to bring a book to which they adhere a label on the back cover with a message. This book becomes a "wanderer" in search of a reader, participants leave their books somewhere in the city so that they can find their reader to captivate and motivate him or her to go to the library. So far they have held: **Librarians flood Acapulco with books, Librarians flood Zacatecas with books** and **Librarians flood San Luis Potosí with books.**<sup>15</sup>

### **Courses**

**Grandparent readers and storytellers.**<sup>16</sup>Is a workshop organized by the Cultural Promotion Office, National Autonomous University of Mexico in collaboration with Mexico IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People). They offer free training directed to all those who want to tell stories to their grandchildren or children and who later may want to perform a social service in libraries and day-care centers. One of the main objectives of Grandparent Readers and Storytellers is to encourage the pleasure for reading and for the word. The course, held through the “Get Reading” program, seeks to strengthen family ties through the reading of short stories, as well as to recuperate the figure of the grandparent.

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<sup>14</sup><http://www.divierteteleyendo.com/>

<sup>15</sup>[www.ambac.org.mx](http://www.ambac.org.mx)

<sup>16</sup>[www.difusioncultural.unam.mx/cuentacuentos/](http://www.difusioncultural.unam.mx/cuentacuentos/)

Children learn that grandparents can also be fun. The goal is to modify the models of coexistence and communication between grandparents, children and young people, through reading and storytelling. The program has professional specialists both of reading aloud and oral storytelling, with topics such as: group work; reading history; reading aloud: posture, breathing, ranges of voice, emphasis and emotion; literary genres; storytelling: reading aloud and orality; among others.

### **Library challenges so that Mexicans may read more and better**

#### Reading and education

1. Illiteracy. 12% of the population between 6 and 14 years old cannot read or write. 7 of every 100 men and 10 of every 100 women aged 15 and over, do not read or write.

2. Schooling and reading. 94 out of every 100 Mexican children (from 6 to 14 years of age) attend school. And speakers of indigenous language attending school have increased, in 1990: 70 of every 100; in 2000: 83 of every 100.

3. Limited literacy. A high percentage of the population that has attended school nonetheless has difficulties using reading to understand and create meaning. The age group between 12 to 17 has the highest rates of daily reading (49.7%), and the percentage decreases as age increases.

4. Textbooks are the most frequently read genre with a percentage of 30.8%.<sup>16</sup> 56.4% of Mexicans read books, 42.0% newspapers, 39.9% magazines and 12.2% illustrated texts<sup>17</sup>. The highest level of reading of newspapers occurs among young people aged 18 to 22 (49.0%) and gradually decreases as age increases.

According to the data on the use of public libraries from the 2010 National Survey of Cultural Practices and Consumption:<sup>17</sup>

Of the total population, nearly one-third (29.8%) has visited a library in the last year. 50.7% of the population uses public libraries.

68.6% of the population 15 years and older has gone to the library at some time.

Of those who have visited a library, approximately one in four has done so in the past two months and 43.3% in less than a year.

Greater use of libraries is associated with higher levels of education, the three upper levels of schooling are above the national average in attendance at some time, and high school and university students are above the national average in attendance over the past 12 months.

Attendance in the past year for the students over 15 years of age recorded the highest levels (80.6%), while the rest of the occupational groups are below the average.

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<sup>17</sup> Encuesta nacional de prácticas y consumos culturales 2010. CONACULTA  
<http://www.conaculta.gob.mx/>

Library users state that they visit the library: 1<sup>st</sup> for information, 2<sup>nd</sup> to study with library books, 3<sup>rd</sup> to borrow books from the library, 4<sup>th</sup> to use reading rooms, 5<sup>th</sup> to find books for pleasure reading.

The 57.7% of respondents who had not visited a library stated the following reasons: 1<sup>st</sup> lack of time, 2<sup>nd</sup> lack of interest in reading, 3<sup>rd</sup> lack of knowledge of the location of the libraries, 4<sup>th</sup> the distance is too far, 5<sup>th</sup> the hours are not convenient, 6<sup>th</sup> don't find the books that interest them, 7<sup>th</sup> health problems, 8<sup>th</sup> prefer to get books by other means, 9<sup>th</sup> don't know where the libraries are.

The most frequently visited cultural spaces in the past 12 months, (2009-2010) are: cinemas for three out of four respondents (75%), followed by bookstores (40.6%), spaces for presentations of music (32.2%), libraries (29.7%) and museums (23.7%).

Given the above, the challenges that associations of librarians and library science schools must undertake is to reinforce initiatives for promoting library reading through:

1. A professionalization of the formation of readers working in libraries, so that they have the necessary skills to:
  - a) Design and innovate programs to promote reading that are appropriate to their communities
  - b) Develop projects that foster the incorporation of different social organizations and stakeholders
  - c) Research to design, improve and evaluate the strategies of promoting reading
  - d) Promote the social role and leadership of librarians to build comprehensive and permanent social ties between the libraries with their communities.
  - e) Marketing to publicize libraries and their activities promoting reading.

We the librarians have to remain every day that one of our mission is to help our community to read more and better.

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