

OCTOBER TOOL KIT

Read to Recharge: How Books
Boost Brain, Body and Belonging



Thrive

OKLAHOMA EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

READ TO RECHARGE:

HOW BOOKS BOOST BRAIN, BODY AND BELONGING

Cold weather is just around the corner! With October being National Book Month, we'd like to explore what this event is about, why it matters and how to join the celebration.

We'll also discuss the health benefits associated with reading, how to incorporate reading into your routine and how to support local literary businesses in your area. Now, let's light up the fireplace, grab a blanket and read that book that we've been looking forward to finishing.



**TURN A PAGE AND
REDISCOVER THE TIMELESS
MAGIC OF READING**

NATIONAL BOOK MONTH:

CELEBRATING STORIES, STRENGTHENING WELLNESS



National Book Month calls on us to pause, turn a page and rediscover the timeless magic of reading. Founded in 2003 by the National Book Foundation, this month-long celebration honors the transformative power of books – how they open minds, spark creativity and foster lifelong learning.

Across the country, communities rally around reading with book-centric events hosted by schools, libraries, bookstores and local clubs. It's a nationwide tribute to the vital role literature plays in enriching lives, from childhood through every stage of adulthood.

But reading does more than entertain or educate – it nurtures wellness. Whether it's soothing stress, strengthening mental focus or offering a quiet space for reflection, the benefits of reading extend well beyond the book itself.

In a world of fast scrolling and short-form content, National Book Month is a gentle reminder to immerse ourselves in something more meaningful.

Each October, the National Book Awards finalists are announced, spotlighting some of the most powerful voices in contemporary literature. The month also sees a surge in author events, book drives and community reading initiatives across the country.

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF READING

Reading isn't just a mental escape – it's a full-spectrum wellness tool. Research has shown it can support your physical, emotional and cognitive health in the following ways:

PHYSICAL HEALTH



Lowers blood pressure and heart rate.



Lengthens lifespan.



Improves sleep quality.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH



Strengthens empathy and emotional intelligence.



Reduces stress and anxiety.



Provides a social and emotional outlet.

COGNITIVE HEALTH



Boosts brain function.



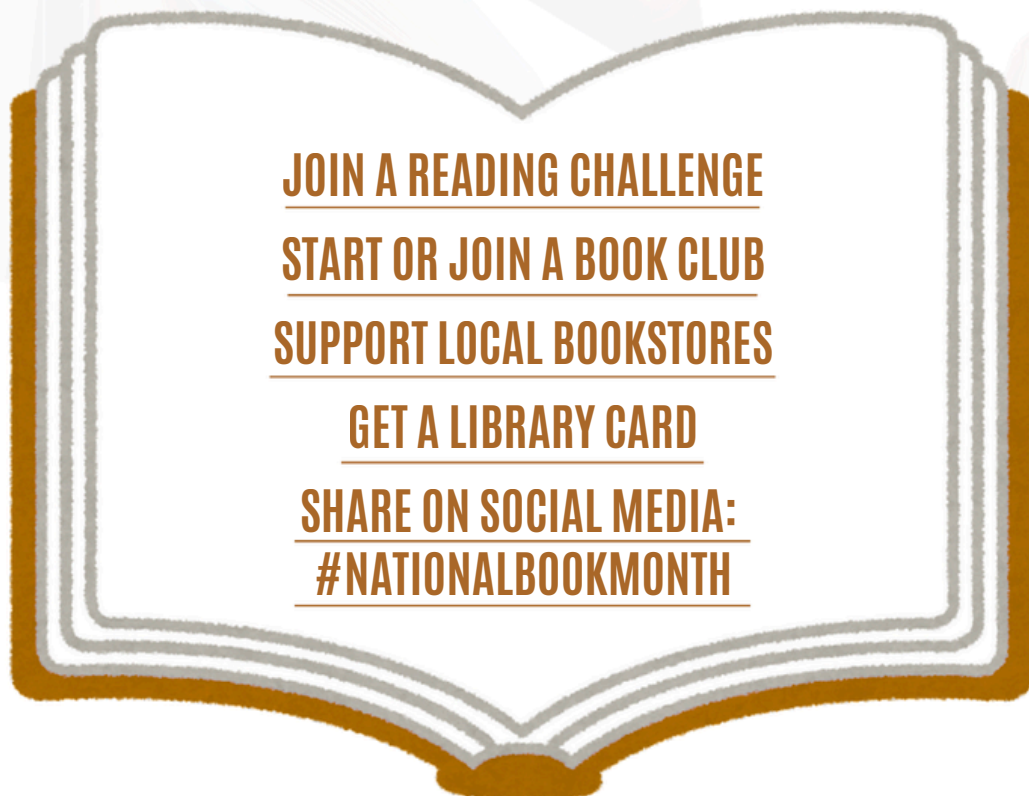
Builds vocabulary and mental agility.



Slows cognitive decline.

WAYS TO CELEBRATE

Whether you're a lifelong reader or just rediscovering the joy of books, there are countless ways to participate:



JOIN A READING CHALLENGE

START OR JOIN A BOOK CLUB

SUPPORT LOCAL BOOKSTORES

GET A LIBRARY CARD

SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA:
#NATIONALBOOKMONTH

HOW TO ADD READING INTO YOUR LIFE

You don't need hours of free time or a towering bookshelf to become a reader. With a few intentional shifts, reading can become a natural part of your wellness routine:

Start small and be consistent.

Keep a book within reach.

Join a reading challenge or book club.

Track your progress.

Replace one scroll session.

Create a reading nook.

Use audiobooks for multitasking.

Curate a reading list.

WHY WE SHOULD SUPPORT LOCAL BOOKSTORES AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Books don't just live on shelves – they live in communities. And the places that house them are vital to our collective well-being.

LOCAL BOOKSTORES: SMALL BUSINESSES WITH BIG IMPACT

Independent bookstores are more than retail spaces – they're cultural hubs. Here's why they matter:

They build community:

These spaces host author events, book clubs and story times.

They champion unique

voices: Indie shops often spotlight authors with niche perspectives.

They inspire discovery:

Personalized recommendations create a reading experience you can't replicate online.

They support local

economies: About \$68 of every \$100 spent stays in the community.

When you shop local, you're not just buying a book – you're investing in a space that values curiosity, conversation and connection.

WHY WE SHOULD SUPPORT LOCAL BOOKSTORES AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES, CONT.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES: MORE THAN JUST BOOKS

Libraries are one of the last truly free spaces in our society. They offer:

Access for all: From job seekers using free Wi-Fi to kids discovering their first favorite book.

Community connection: Libraries act as “third places” – safe, welcoming environments outside of home and work.

Essential services: Many libraries provide help with housing, citizenship, language learning and digital literacy.

Preservation: Libraries often house history archives and host programming that promotes local culture in the age of mass media.

However, despite their impact, libraries face growing threats from budget cuts. Supporting them means protecting access to knowledge and freedom of expression.

VISIT A LIBRARY NEAR YOU

Oklahoma is currently home to over 200 legally established public library sites. Get a free library card and start your journey into an endless world of possibilities!

PUBLIC LIBRARY LOCATOR

