# Singapore pays citizens to read daily

LEVEL A2/B1


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## I. WARM-UP

1. How often do you read books or articles?
2. Where do you like to read for 15 minutes?
3. What helps you focus when you read?

## II. KEY VOCABULARY

**scheme**
an official plan that organises how something will work

**doomscrolling**
reading a lot of bad news on your phone for a long time

**concentration**
the ability to focus your mind on one thing

**habit**
something you do regularly, often without thinking

**session**
a set period of time for one activity

**coin**
a small unit that can be collected like money in a game

**redeem**
to exchange points or coins for money or a reward

**incentive**
something that encourages you to do an activity

## III. READING

Singapore has started a new scheme to fight doomscrolling. Citizens are paid small amounts if they read for at least 15 minutes a day. The city-state says this may improve concentration, critical thinking and imagination. Under the plan, one reading session per day earns 20 virtual coins.

People must log the session on a government website. When readers collect 1,000 coins, the coins can be redeemed for S$1. That equals 50 daily sessions for one dollar. Melissa Tam of the National Library Board said good habits grow from small steps.

The government is also studying a daily time limit on social media for young people. Singapore often uses incentives, such as vouchers for walking. Despite worries about doomscrolling, its 15-year-olds topped the world for reading in the 2025 PISA tests, ahead of China and Taiwan.

*Reading text adapted from reporting by* **The Guardian***: "Singapore is paying people to read books...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

## IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How long must people read to join the scheme each day?
2. How many virtual coins does one reading session give?
3. Where do readers log their daily session?
4. How many coins are needed to redeem S$1?
5. What global test did Singapore top in 2025 for reading?

## V. DISCUSSION

1. Would a cash incentive make you read more? Why or why not?
2. What time of day is best for a reading session?
3. Should social media have a daily time limit for teens?
4. What book or topic should schools promote to build a habit?

## VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

**Should / ought to**

Use should / ought to to give advice or say what is a good idea. Both are similar; should is more common in speech.

*"Citizens **should read** for at least 15 minutes a day."*
*"Schools **ought to offer** small incentives for reading."*

## VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

**Complete each sentence with should or ought to and the verb in brackets.**

1. Teenagers (put) ___ their phones away and read a book. _____
2. Parents (encourage) ___ children to read, not scroll. _____
3. Students (try) ___ reading instead of doomscrolling. _____
4. People (log) ___ sessions each day for coins. _____
5. Readers (limit) ___ social media to improve focus. _____

# Teacher's Notes

**TEACHERS ONLY**

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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## I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8 minutes warm-up, 8-10 minutes vocabulary, 10 minutes reading, 10 minutes comprehension, 8-10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach vocabulary with quick examples and mime: session, redeem, incentive, doomscrolling, habit. Use the coin totals on the board to check understanding of numbers.
- Run the reading as a gist task first (What is the scheme?), then scan for numbers (15 minutes, 20 coins, 1,000 coins). The topic mentions social media and young people; let students answer about general policies rather than their own use if they prefer.
- Differentiate by product: stronger students predict other incentives the city could try; others list three places they could read for 15 minutes and share.

## II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Take a show of hands first, then pair students with different views to compare reasons.
2. Elicit quick options (morning, commute, bedtime), then ask for one advantage of each.
3. Because this touches young people's habits, start in pairs; allow examples from news, not personal life.
4. Ask for one concrete title or topic and a short reason; collect ideas on the board.

## III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Survey:** In groups, design and run a 5-question class survey on reading habits and share results in 5 minutes.

**Writing:** Write a 70-word message for the library website explaining how to log a session and earn S$1.

## IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

**Comprehension questions:** short factual answers from the text.

**Grammar exercise:** Should / ought to

**Discussion:** open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

# Answer Key

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## IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How long must people read to join the scheme each day?
   At least 15 minutes.
2. How many virtual coins does one reading session give?
   20 virtual coins.
3. Where do readers log their daily session?
   On a government website.
4. How many coins are needed to redeem S$1?
   1,000 coins.
5. What global test did Singapore top in 2025 for reading?
   The PISA tests for reading.

## V. DISCUSSION

**Open answers.** Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

## VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with should or ought to and the verb in brackets.

1. Teenagers ___ their phones away and read a book. **should / ought to put**
2. Parents ___ children to read, not scroll. **should / ought to encourage**
3. Students ___ reading instead of doomscrolling. **should / ought to try**
4. People ___ sessions each day for coins. **should / ought to log**
5. Readers ___ social media to improve focus. **should / ought to limit**

## VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

**Key point:** Use should / ought to to give advice or say what is a good idea. Both are similar; should is more common in speech. (Examples constructed.)

*"Citizens **should read** for at least 15 minutes a day."*

*"Schools **ought to offer** small incentives for reading."*