

# Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain

By Maryanne Wolf

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"Human beings were never born to read," writes Tufts University cognitive neuroscientist and child development expert Maryanne Wolf. Reading is a human invention that reflects how the brain rearranges itself to learn something new. In this ambitious, provocative book, Wolf chronicles the remarkable journey of the reading brain not only over the past five thousand years, since writing began, but also over the course of a single child's life, showing in the process why children with dyslexia have reading difficulties and singular gifts.

Lively, erudite, and rich with examples, *Proust and the Squid* asserts that the brain that examined the tiny clay tablets of the Sumerians was a very different brain from the one that is immersed in today's technology-driven literacy. The potential transformations in this changed reading brain, Wolf argues, have profound implications for every child and for the intellectual development of our species.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

*Starred Review.* Wolf, a professor of child development at Tufts University, integrates psychology and archaeology, linguistics and education, history and neuroscience in a truly path-breaking look at the development of the reading brain—a complicated phenomenon that Wolf seeks to chronicle from both the early history of humanity and the early stages of an individual's development ("unlike its component parts such as vision and speech... reading has no direct genetic program passing it on to future generations"). Along the way, Wolf introduces concepts like "word poverty," the situation in which children, by age five, have heard 32 million less words than their counterparts (with chilling long-term effects), and makes time for amusing and affecting anecdotes, like the only child she knew to fake a reading disorder (attempting to get back into his beloved literacy training program). Though it could probably command a book of its own, the sizable third section of the book covers the complex topic of dyslexia, explaining clearly and expertly "what happens when the brain can't learn to read." One of those rare books that synthesizes cutting edge, interdisciplinary research with the inviting tone of a curious, erudite friend (think Malcolm Gladwell), Wolf's first book for a general audience is an eye-opening winner, and deserves a wide readership.  
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### Review

"[Maryanne Wolf] displays extraordinary passion and perceptiveness concerning the reading brain, its miraculous achievements and tragic dysfunctions." (BookForum)

"Everything Wolf says makes sense....She clearly knows her stuff." (Washington Post Book World)

"Brilliant and eye-opening." (Philadelphia Inquirer)

"...intriguing..." (New Scientist)

"Brilliant and eye-opening." (Albany Times Union)

"Fascinating....Wolf restores our awe of the human brain." (Associated Press)

"[Wolf's] conversational style, reflective comments and insights from work with children...create a narrative flow and bright tone." (Minneapolis Star Tribune)

"The squid of Wolf's title represents the neurobiological approach to the study of reading....Given the panic that takes hold of humanists when the decline of reading is discussed, her cold-blooded perspective is opportune." (The New Yorker)

"A book worth talking about." (U.S. News & World Report)

"Enjoyable....Wolf, with remarkable agility in a relatively compact book (intended for both aficionados and the uninitiated), transitions seamlessly between disciplines as diverse as linguistics, neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and archeology, among others. Her voice comes through clearly; she is fascinated by reading and shares that energy." (New England Journal of Medicine)

“Wolf’s alarm about the spread of semi- literacy among the young is obviously justified, and her book provokes thought about it as only reading can.” (Sunday Times (London))

“This humane and fascinating book...is a paean to what Proust, über-reader, called ‘that fruitful miracle of a communication in the midst of solitude,’ to all that has been and can be achieved for individuals and for mankind through literacy.” (The Evening Standard (London))

“Blindingly fascinating...detailed and scholarly....There’s a lot of difficult material in here. But it’s worth the effort....For people interested in language, this is a must. You’ll find yourself focusing on words in new ways. Read it slowly--it will take time to sink in.” (The Sunday Telegraph)

“Proust and the Squid is an inspiring celebration of the science of reading....Wolf’s insights are fascinating....Proust and the Squid has much to offer on this important--perhaps the most important--subject” (The Guardian (London))

From the Back Cover

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## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Rose Waldman:**

Here thing why this specific Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain are different and dependable to be yours. First of all examining a book is good nonetheless it depends in the content of computer which is the content is as delightful as food or not. Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain giving you information deeper as different ways, you can find any guide out there but there is no guide that similar with Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain. It gives you thrill studying journey, its open up your own eyes about the thing which happened in the world which is perhaps can be happened around you. You can easily bring everywhere like in area, café, or even in your means home by train. For anyone who is having difficulties in bringing the published book maybe the form of Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain in e-book can be your alternative.

**David McCabe:**

The actual book Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain has a lot of information on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was published by the very famous author. Mcdougal makes some research just before write this book. That book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after perusing this book.

**Stephen Morgan:**

The reason why? Because this Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will shock you with the secret that inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such remarkable way makes the content interior easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any more or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of advantages than the other book have such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking method. So , still want to delay having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the e-book store hurriedly.

**Luis Gazaway:**

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