

**SPEECH BY MRS JOSEPHINE TEO, MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION, FOR THE DIGITAL LAUNCH OF NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD'S READ!
FEST 2021 ON 25 JUNE 2021**

Introduction

1 Hi everyone, the National Library Board (NLB) has organised Read! Fest annually since 2014. This year, for the very first time, it's going digital. And the theme is "Reboot".

2 You must be familiar with the idea of "reboot" – if you have a device that seems to have "hung", you reboot. Well, this past year, some parts of our lives have felt like they were suspended. How about a "reboot" with some new books and fresh ideas as we figure out "what next?".

Read! Fest 2021 Reboot

3 To help you, NLB has selected 12 books. Besides reading them in private, you can also join new communities of people with similar interests to share and learn together. You can look forward to talks and panel sessions featuring international writers.

4 From the middle of July, NLB will also bring reading to our beloved parks. There will be three literary trails that are immersive and interactive. They are located at East Coast Park, West Coast Park and the ground floor Plaza of the National Library Building. As you walk along these self-guided trails, you will come across a range of physical installations, digital challenges and multi-sensorial story telling. Enjoy the experience!

5 Our libraries have also "re-booted" to give you more digital offerings. As a result, the number of digital loans has grown by almost 30% since 2019. Can you imagine that on average, almost one million digital resources were loaned out every month last year?

6 Our libraries also have novel ways to interact with you, including digital storytelling videos by librarians and volunteers, and virtual workshops. To make sure we don't leave our

seniors behind, we organise Library Learning Journeys to help them learn how to access NLB's digital resources.

Conclusion

7 Over the past seven years, Read! Fest has inspired hundreds of thousands of people to build and keep up their reading and learning. While last year's edition was cancelled due to COVID-19, I am hopeful that this year's "re-booted" event will inspire more people to discover the joys of reading and learning.

8 I hope you enjoy Read! Fest 2021!