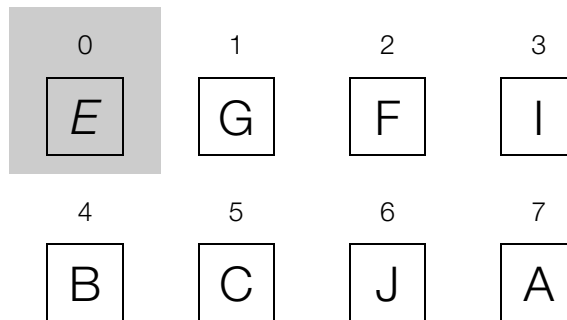


Korrekturhinweise

The power of public libraries



Begründungen

0

The speaker says: "The oldest free-lending library in Scotland, at Innerpefferay in Perthshire, was started in 1680 by the local laird, who believed that books and the knowledge they contained should be freely available to everyone." The first library in Scotland was therefore established to offer access to reading without any cost for everybody.

1

The speaker says: "In the 19th century a network of working men's libraries sprang up, offering access to books and newspapers, opening their members' eyes to the political systems they lived under. They were a space for debate, for visiting speakers and for fuelling a deeper understanding of the world." Later, libraries therefore became places that invited one social group to gain insights into different opinions.

2

The speaker says: "Even robber barons, like the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, understood the value of libraries. He said his aim was to support the industrious and ambitious, not those who need everything done for them, but those who being most anxious and able to help themselves deserve and will be benefitted by helpful others. His foundation endowed more than two and a half thousand libraries, many of them in his native Scotland." A famous person of the time therefore wanted to help those willing to improve their lives.

3

The speaker says: "A library card is a powerful weapon to change lives. With it we can learn about other places, other ways of seeing the world, other lives. We learn how to value what we have, to mourn what we've lost and to dream of what we might become." The possibility to access a library is therefore considered to be a means to discover all sorts of new things.

4

The speaker says: "But just when we need it most, these are dark days for libraries. Seen as a soft target for hard-pressed local authorities in a time of austerity, we are told that libraries are an unnecessary luxury." Nowadays, in the eyes of decision makers, libraries are therefore not essential.

5

The speaker says: "When we go into a bookshop or a library, we genuinely browse. We pick up books whose covers intrigue us, often placed in our path by a bookseller who loved the book and thinks more people should read it. We read the cover blurbs, the opening pages. And more often than not, we walk out with books we'd never have thought of buying when we walked in the door." Upon entering a place that offers books, people therefore look at books at random.

6

The speaker says: “But those bargain retailers short-circuit the browsing process. They make it easy for us. They offer us titles to tempt us. Their complex algorithms are designed to draw us to what we already like, rather than throwing something in our path that challenges us, and even makes us uncomfortable.” Places selling cheap books therefore provide customers with mainstream products.

7

The speaker says: “But modern public libraries are so much more than that. They have become our agoras – people come there for advice, for training and studying, for all kinds of support, for companionship, for conversation, for book groups, local history societies, jigsaw puzzle clubs, board game afternoons, mother and toddler groups that breed the next generation of people who read and think.” Nowadays, libraries are therefore places which serve a variety of purposes.