

Aunt Annie's here!

## **Believe it or not**

Hi! It's me – Annie!

I've got a fun fact for you. Believe it or not, pigeons can read!

A few years ago, a group of scientists in New Zealand and Germany discovered that pigeons could learn to “read”. Well, sort of read.

Their research\* showed that our feathered friends were able to identify more than 50 words by learning letter combinations. Not bad!

It seems that we have underestimated the intelligence of pigeons. We humans have to rethink the use of the word birdbrain: you know, it's what we call a person who seems a bit stupid because they act silly or foolish.

Make no mistake: pigeons are not stupid. For example, we all know how pigeons are masters at targeting cars. Or if you're unlucky – your new shoes.

So it's very possible that the next time your mom or dad parks the car under a tree, the pigeon sitting on the branch above it is reading B – M – W. B-M-W. That's it, BMW.

And be careful when you're out and about in your new shoes. If you're standing in the wrong place at the wrong time, a pigeon might be reading N – i – k – e. N-i-k-e. That's right, Nike.

That's it for today.

Ciao for now!

You can listen to more podcasts at [www.auntannie.ch/podcasts](http://www.auntannie.ch/podcasts).

BTW: Annie can visit you in your classroom. For more information, contact her at [info@auntannie.ch](mailto:info@auntannie.ch).

\*The findings of their research were published online in the journal [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#) on Sept. 16, 2016.