SCHOLASTIC

2010 Kids & Family Reading Report™

Turning the Page in the Digital Age

Harrison Group

For a downloadable version of this report, visit:
www.scholastic.com/readingreport

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A Letter from the CEO of Scholastic

We are pleased to share with you the results from one of our initiatives this year: The **2010 Kids & Family Reading Report**. This study focuses on children's and parents' attitudes and behaviors about reading books for fun and how technology may be influencing and changing them. We all recognize that today's children are growing up in a world full of digital information. Yet reading has never been more important, for we know that for young people the ability to read is the door opener to the 21st Century: to hold a job, to understand their world, and to discover themselves.

While we were carrying out this research, we also kicked off our 90th anniversary celebration with a Global Literacy Call to Action. We call this campaign: **Read Every Day. Lead a Better Life.** The centerpiece of this campaign is our Reading Bill of Rights which sets out what we believe about reading in the second decade of the 21st Century. While these two initiatives were occurring at the same time, they were largely independent of each other, yet the core messages of each are definitely aligned. Much of what we believe at Scholastic is validated through the voices of children and their parents in the 2010 Kids & Family Reading Report. The eight key principles of our **Reading Bill of Rights** are shown below alongside some of these findings:

WE BELIEVE that literacy—the ability to read and understand—is the birthright of every child in the world as well as the pathway to succeed in school and to realize a complete life. Young people need to read nonfiction for information to understand their world and literature for imagination to understand themselves.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that 68% of kids age 9–17 say they read books to use their imagination and 66% read books to gain new information.***

WE BELIEVE that the massive amounts of digital information and images now transmitted daily make it even more important for a young person to know how to analyze, interpret and understand information, to separate fact from opinion, and to have deep respect for logical thinking.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that 84% of parents say their child must handle far more information than they had to as a child; 39% of children ages 9–17 agree with the statement, "the information I find online is always correct."*** (This suggests that there is a need for further development of children's critical thinking skills in the Internet age.)

WE BELIEVE that literature and drama, whether on printed pages, screens, on stage or film help young people experience the great stories of emotion and action, leading to a deeper understanding of what it means to be truly human. Without this literacy heritage, life lacks coherence and soul.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that 62% of kids age 9–17 say they read books for fun to be inspired by storylines and characters.***

WE BELIEVE every child has a right to a "textual lineage"—a reading and writing autobiography which shows that who you are is in part developed through the stories and information you've experienced. This textual lineage will enable all young people to have a reading and writing identity which helps them understand who they are and how they can make their lives better. In short, "You Are What You Read."

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that half of kids age 9–17 say they read books for fun "to help you figure out who you are and who you could become."***

WE BELIEVE every child should have access to books, magazines, newspapers, computers, and e-readers. Whatever way you read, you will need to figure out what the facts are and what the story tells you. No matter how and where you get access to ideas, you will need the skills of reading to understand yourself and your world.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that when asked if they would read more books for fun if they had access to eBooks, one-third of kids age 9–17 said yes, including kids who read five to seven days per week, and those who read less than once per week.***

WE BELIEVE that reading widely and reading fluently will give children the reading stamina to deal with more challenging texts they will meet in college, at work and in everyday life. And every child should be able to choose and own the books they want to read for that choice builds literacy confidence—the ability to read, write, and speak about what they know, what they feel, and who they are.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that nine out of 10 kids age 6–17 say they are more likely to finish a book they choose themselves.***

WE BELIEVE that every child has the right to a great teacher who will help them learn to read and love to read. Children need teachers who provide intentional, focused instruction to give young people the skills to read and interpret information or understand great stories they will encounter throughout life.

> ***The Kids & Family Reading Report found that while moms are the number one source of ideas about good books to read, teachers and librarians also play a key role for a majority of children.***

WE BELIEVE that in the 21st century, the ability to read is necessary not only to succeed but to survive—for the ability to understand information and the power of stories is the key to a life of purpose and meaning.

Whether you are a teacher, librarian, parent, leader in the non-profit, media or business world, or an interested member of the general public, we hope our Reading Bill of Rights and the findings of this research will inspire you to play a role in supporting a child's right to read for a better life. You can learn more about our global literacy campaign and how you can get involved at www.scholastic.com/readeveryday.

September, 2010

Sincerely,

Richard Robinson
Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer
Scholastic Inc.

Key Findings

In Spring 2010, Scholastic, in conjunction with Quinley Research and Harrison Group, conducted a survey to examine family attitudes and behaviors regarding reading books for fun in today's digital age.

The key findings of this research, based on a nationally representative sample of 1,045 children age 6–17 and their parents (2,090 total respondents) are as follows:

- Parents believe the use of electronic or digital devices negatively affects the time kids spend reading books (41%), doing physical activity (40%), and engaging with family (33%; PAGE 6).
- From age 6 through age 17 , the time kids spend reading declines while the time kids spend going online for fun and using a cell phone to text or talk increases (PAGE 7).
- When asked about the one device parents would like their child to stop using for a one or two week period, parents most often cite television, video game systems, and cell phones.
  - Parents of girls age 6-8 (41%) and 9-11 (44%) say television, while parents of boys age 6-8 are split between television (28%) and video game systems (27%; PAGE 9).
  - After age 8, parents of boys are most likely to choose video game systems (33%), while parents of girls are increasingly likely to say cell phones (24% and 41% among parents of girls age 12-14 and 15-17, respectively; PAGE 9).

- While only 25% of kids have read a book on a digital device (including computers), many more (57% of kids age 9-17) are interested in doing so. When asked if they would read more books for fun if they had access to eBooks, one-third of kids age 9-17 of kids said yes, including frequent readers (34%), moderately frequent readers (36%), and even infrequent readers (27%; PAGES 14–16).
- When asked about the most important outcome of reading books for fun, children age 9–17 say it is to: open up the imagination (43%), be inspired (36%), and to a lesser degree, to gain new information (21%). Parents express similar views (43%, 35%, and 22%, respectively; PAGE 20).
- It is clear that letting kids choose which books they want to read is key to raising a reader. Nine out of 10 children say they are more likely to finish books they choose themselves. Parents also recognize the power of choice—nearly 9 out of 10 parents say "As long as my child is reading, I just want my child to read books he/she likes." (PAGES 34–35).
- In addition to choice, parents use other tactics to encourage reading that appear to result in more frequent reading, including making sure there are interesting books at home (for kids age 9-11 and 15-17), putting limits on the amount of time spent using technology (for kids age 9-11), and suggesting books they might like (for kids age 12-14; PAGES 31–32).

Section I:

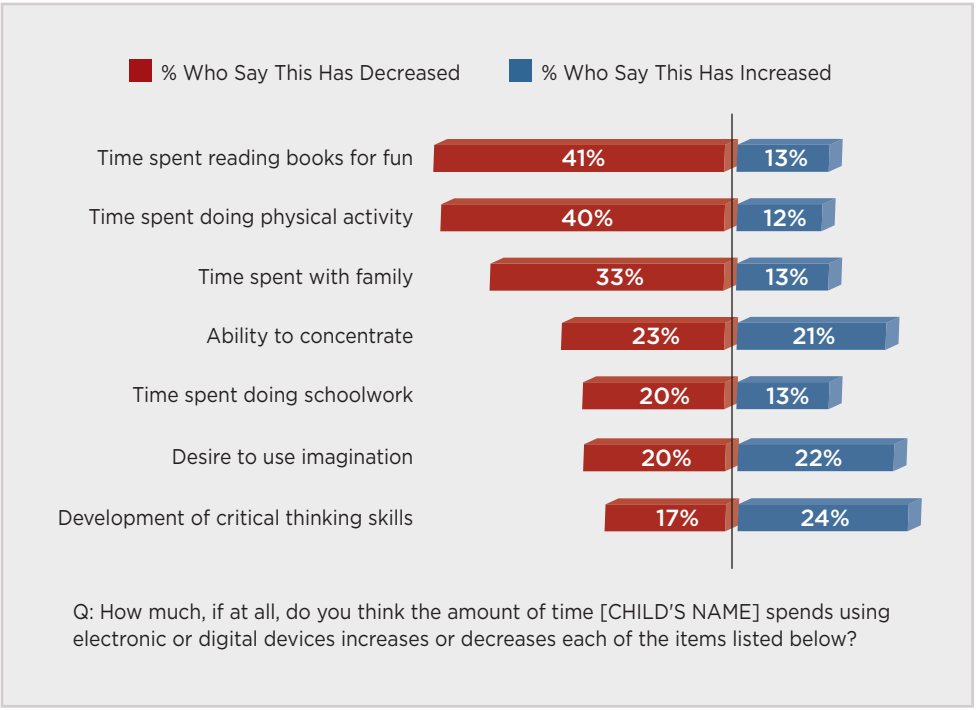
Reading Books in the Digital Age

Many parents say the time their child spends using electronic or digital devices impacts their child's life.

"Books were an important thing to me, but my son has the Internet to explore the world with."

—Father, 10 year-old boy, Arkansas

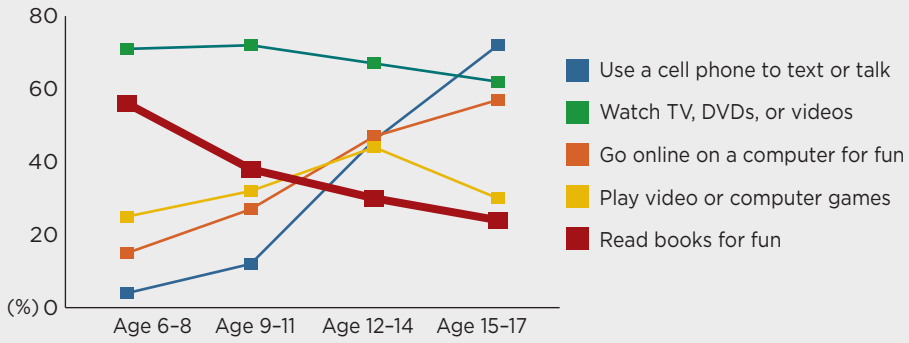
Parents' Views on the Impact That the Time Child Spends Using Electronic or Digital Devices Has on Child's Life



Q: How much, if at all, do you think the amount of time [CHILD'S NAME] spends using electronic or digital devices increases or decreases each of the items listed below?

As age increases, the time kids spend reading declines in direct opposition to the time kids spend going online for fun and using a cell phone to text or talk.

% of Children Who Do Activities 5-7 Days a Week



Q: Now we'd like to know about how many days in a week you do each of these activities. Please check one box under the column that best describes how often you do each activity in a typical week.

"My daughter is a good reader. I am not as concerned about her reading habits as I am about her physical fitness."

—Mother, 7 year-old girl, Kansas

"The need to read and comprehend video game instructions seems to have helped my son's reading ability from the start. His ability to focus on a book that interests him has always been excellent."

—Father, 17 year-old boy, Colorado

"I think technology helps my daughter learn to read. She can pick out a lot of new words on the websites she plays games on."

—Mother, 6 year-old girl, Pennsylvania

"All the kids want to do is play video games. Nobody wants to read books anymore."

—Father, 10 year-old boy, Washington

Many parents worry about the impact digital devices will have on children's book reading.

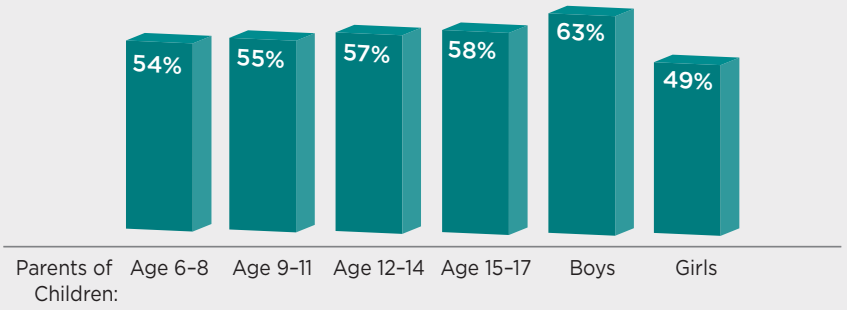
Parents' Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Parents:

As my child becomes more and more involved with electronic or digital devices, I worry that he/she will be less interested in reading books for fun.

56%

Among Parents, by Child's Age



Q: Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with each of the following statements.

87% *of parents say reading books for fun is extremely or very important in giving kids time away from technology. Children do not agree to the same extent:*

47% *of kids cite "giving me time away from technology" as a reason they read books.*

When asked, 78% of parents chose an electronic device for their children to stop using for one or two weeks.

Top Devices Parents Would Want Their Child to Stop Using for a One or Two Week Period

Parents of Boys:	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17
Television	28%	20%	17%	10%
Video game system attached to a TV	27%	31%	35%	32%
Cell phone	2%	1%	9%	13%
Handheld, portable video game device	18%	12%	11%	4%

Parents of Girls:	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17
Television	41%	44%	17%	12%
Video game system attached to a TV	6%	4%	6%	4%
Cell phone	8%	4%	24%	41%
Handheld, portable video game device	8%	12%	5%	2%

Q: If you could have a one or two week period when [CHILD'S NAME] would not use one of the electronic or digital devices listed below for any purpose other than schoolwork or for emergencies, which one of the things listed would you most like [HIM/HER] to stop using? Top items shown.

"My daughter can't stop texting long enough to concentrate on a book."

— Mother, 15 year-old girl, Texas

"Electronic devices are the way of the future. Kids who were denied access to such technologies will find themselves severely disadvantaged and behind the times."

— Father, 13 year-old boy, Arizona

"I think that the Internet and video games are too much of a distraction from reading. Children get addicted to instant gratification and don't have the patience to enjoy a long novel."

—Mother, 10 year-old boy, New York

"I am afraid my son's attention span will only include fast moving ideas, and book reading will become boring to him."

—Mother, 7 year-old boy, Michigan

Children's access to digital information brings some parental concerns.

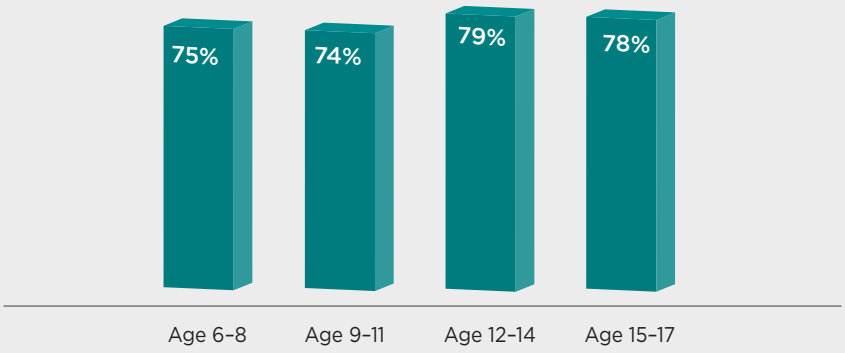
Parents' Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Parents:

I worry that because today's children can get information so quickly on the Internet, they will think that all knowledge can be obtained as quickly as a click of a mouse.

77%

Among Parents, by Child's Age



Q: Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with each of the following statements.

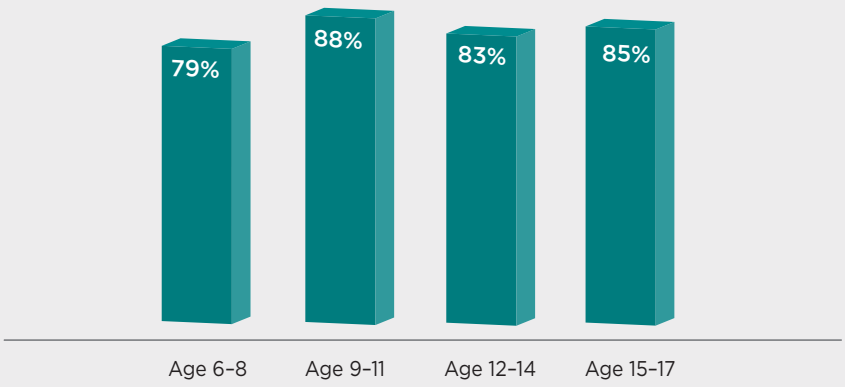
Parents' Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Parents:

Today's children have to know how to handle far more information than I did when I was a child.

84%

Among Parents, by Child's Age



Q: Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with each of the following statements.

"I needed books to get information, but my son can go to the Web for information."

—Stepmother, 16 year-old boy, Pennsylvania

"I think a lot of kids whose parents do not oversee them will have a problem staying focused on literature because it doesn't have the same instant gratification kids are used to with today's electronics."

—Father, 6 year-old girl, New York

"My son relies on information attained off the Internet as his only source material—he's too easily misled."

—Father, 16 year-old boy, Pennsylvania

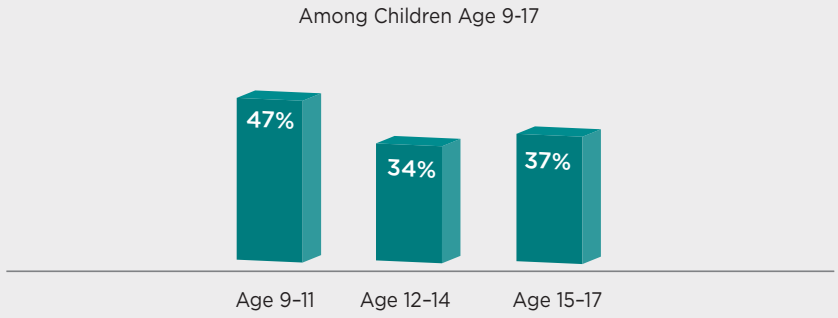
Many children fail to critically evaluate online information.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children Age 9-17:

The information I find online is always correct.

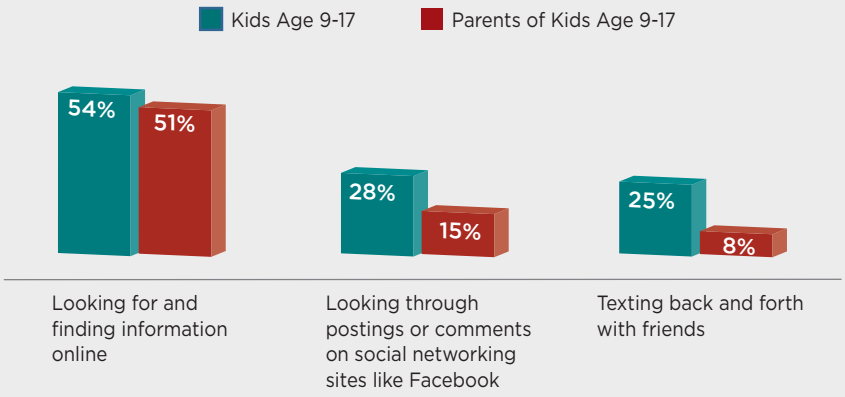
39%



Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

Most children age 9-17 and their parents have a broad definition of reading in the digital age.

Things That Count as Reading for Children: Children's and Parents' Point of View, Compared



Children's Q: Which of these things do you think counts as reading?
Parents' Q: When thinking about children and reading, which of these things do you personally think counts as reading? Select items shown.

39% *of kids and* **47%** *of parents do not think any of these count as reading.*

"Content on electronic and digital devices requires reading. If you can't read, you don't get on Facebook or tweet."

—Mother, 12 year-old girl, Arkansas

"Many of the video games require creative thinking but it isn't the same as a book."

—Father, 14 year-old boy, Idaho

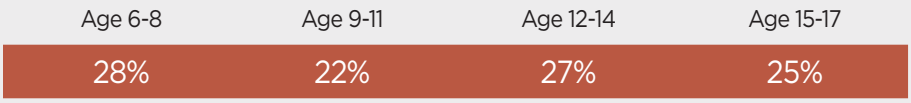
"I read a book on my Aunt's eReader. It was okay and it is good for the environment since there is no paper, but I don't think I could give up my books."

—12 year-old girl, New York

One in four children has read an eBook...

Among Children:

25% *have read a book on a digital device.*



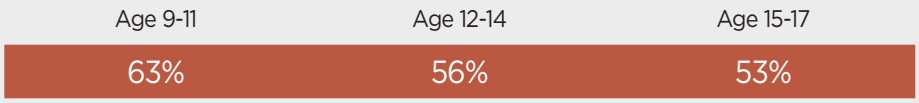
% of Kids Who Have Read a Book on Each Device:	Total
Desktop computer	17%
Laptop computer or netbook	13%
Handheld device like an iPod Touch, PSP, cell phone, Nintendo DS, etc.	8%
Electronic device made just for reading digital eBooks (that is, a device like a Kindle, Nook, or Sony Reader)	7%
Apple iPad	3%

Q: Please answer yes or no for each statement, "I have read a book on..." [ADD FOR 9-17s: Please do not include reading textbooks as you answer this question.] "Yes" responses were netted to create "have read a book on a digital device."

...and many more are interested in doing so.

Among Children Age 9-17:

57% *are interested in reading books on a digital device.*



% of Kids Who Are Interested in Reading a Book on Each Device:	Age 9–17
Electronic device made just for reading digital eBooks (that is, a device like a Kindle, Nook, or Sony Reader)	38%
Apple iPad	36%
Handheld device like an iPod Touch, PSP, cell phone, Nintendo DS, etc.	34%
Laptop computer or netbook	32%
Desktop computer	30%

Q: Please answer yes or no for each statement: "I am interested in reading a book on..." "Yes" responses were netted to create "interested in reading books on a digital device."

"On one hand technology will increase children's need to read and comprehend... on the other, if all you do with the technology is watch videos you cannot increase your ability to use and comprehend the written word."

—Mother, 13 year-old girl, North Carolina

"My daughter has a Kindle and it has increased her reading."

—Mother, 16 year-old girl, Pennsylvania

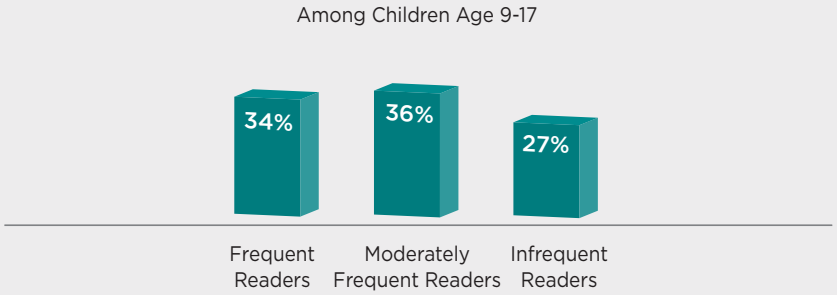
One-third of children—including 27% of children who read books for fun less than one day a week—say they would read more books for fun if they had greater access to eBooks.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children Age 9-17:

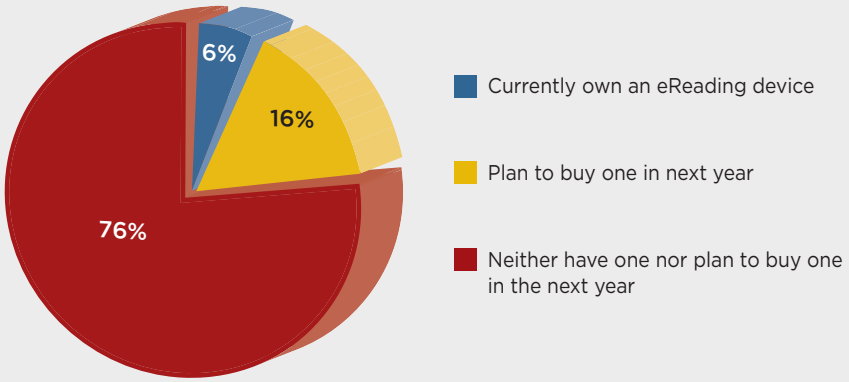
I'd read more books for fun if I had greater access to eBooks that I could read on an electronic device.

33%



Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

Twenty-three percent of parents own (6%) or plan to own (16%) a device for eReading in the next year. Eighty-three percent of these parents say they do or will allow/encourage their child to use it.



Q: Do you currently own or plan to buy an electronic device that you will use to read eBooks and other kinds of digital publications?

"My daughter reads books on her iPod just as often as paper books."

— Mother, 17 year-old girl, Connecticut

"It is not important to me which reading device my daughter uses, but sometimes there is nothing like holding a physical, page-turning book."

— Father, 6 year-old girl, Colorado

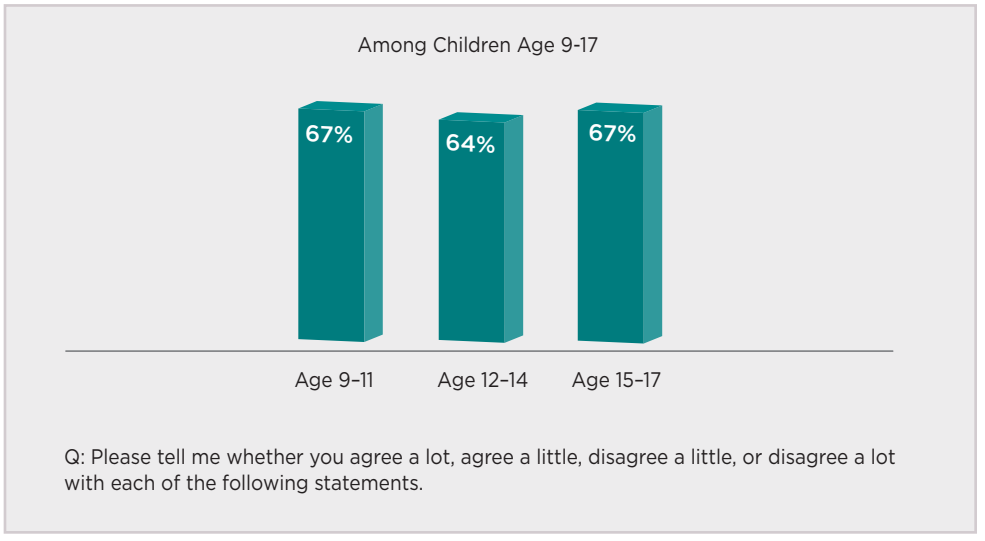
Two in three children say they will always want to read books printed on paper even though there are eBooks available. Kids who already have experience reading eBooks are just as likely as kids who have not had experience eReading to agree.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children Age 9-17:

I'll always want to read books printed on paper even though there are eBooks available.

66%



Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

"I read before I go to bed. I figure reading a book is like watching TV but using your head for the picture."

—14 year-old boy, Wisconsin

"I read for fun on the couch, in my bed, in the car, but basically I read EVERYWHERE. The last book I read made me feel excited. It was fun to read and I enjoyed it."

—11 year-old girl, Utah

Section II:

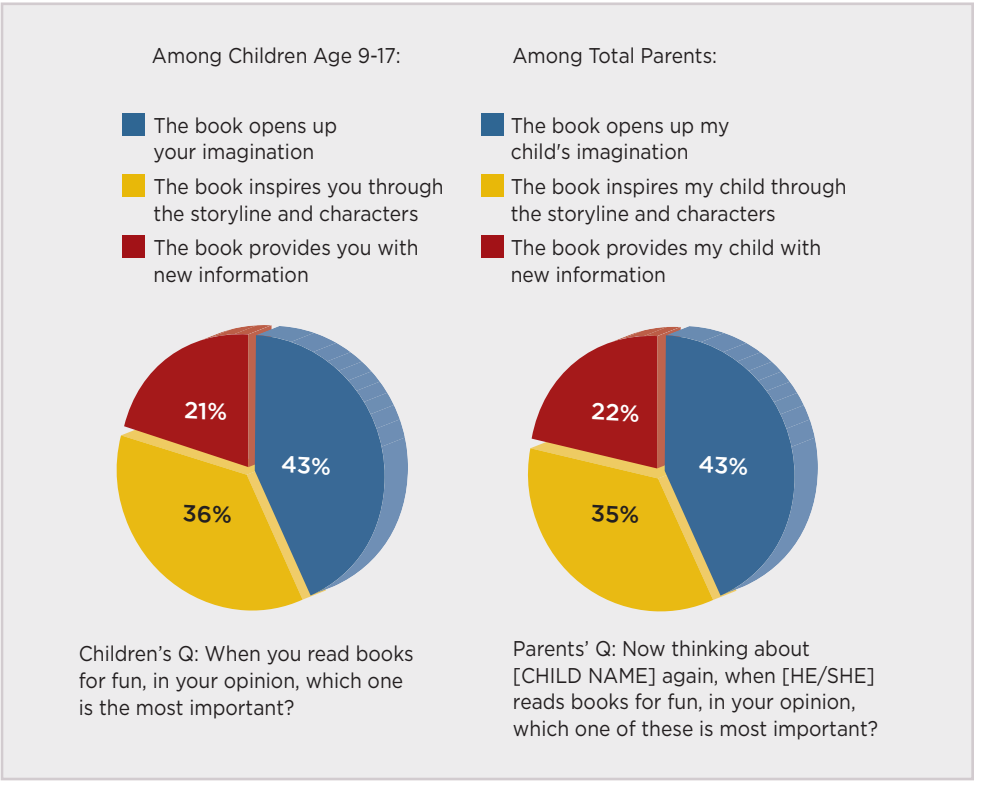
The Value of Reading

When asked the most important outcome of reading books for fun, children and parents agree that it is to open up the imagination and be inspired.

"I like books about faraway people and places and about different times. I like to imagine what it would be like to live in that time... I love to get lost in the story."

—11 year-old girl, Texas

Most Important Outcome of Reading Books for Fun

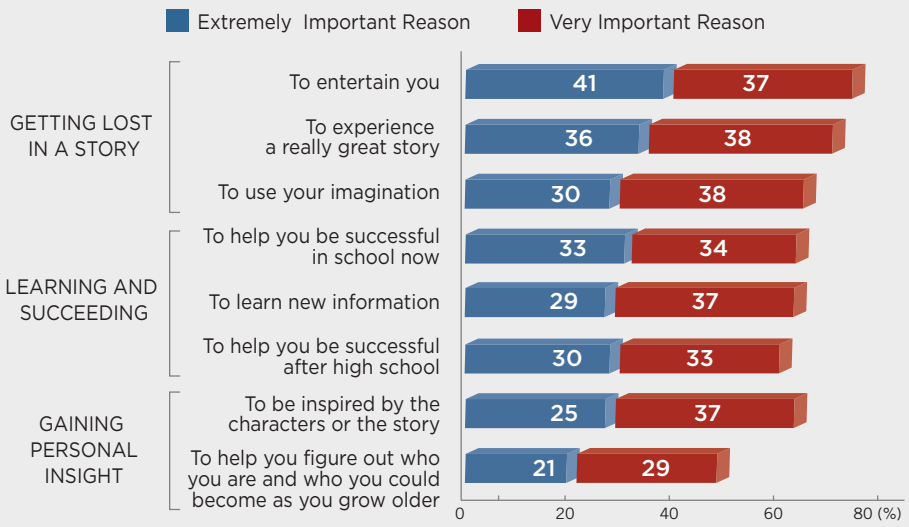


Children's Q: When you read books for fun, in your opinion, which one is the most important?

Parents' Q: Now thinking about [CHILD NAME] again, when [HE/SHE] reads books for fun, in your opinion, which one of these is most important?

Kids age 9–17 say each of the following are extremely or very important reasons that they read books for fun:

Reasons Children Read Books for Fun, Among Age 9–17



Q: The next question asks about some reasons that ["kids" FOR 9-11s/"people" FOR 12-17s] your age might read books for fun. For each, we'd like to know if it is an extremely important reason, a very important reason, a little bit of a reason, or not a reason at all for you to read books for fun.

"I read because I like to read... I read for the sheer enjoyment of the story, character, and writing styles. The book made me feel inspired and amazed."

—13 year-old boy, Utah

"The books I read for fun make me feel excited. I have a little spot outside under the tree, or I read comfortably in my room. Sometimes I read to my little brother."

—10 year-old girl, Vermont

"I was reading outside underneath the tree in my yard one day because my Internet was down. I got very absorbed into the book. I didn't put it down for at least three hours, and it made me feel good to be reading it."

—13 year-old girl, Georgia

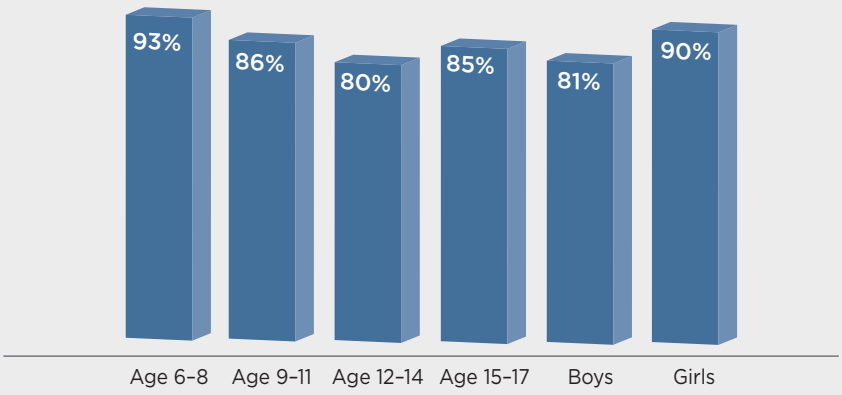
Further, a majority of children—across age and gender—say they gain a sense of pride and accomplishment after finishing a book.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children:

I feel proud and have a sense of accomplishment when I finish reading a book.

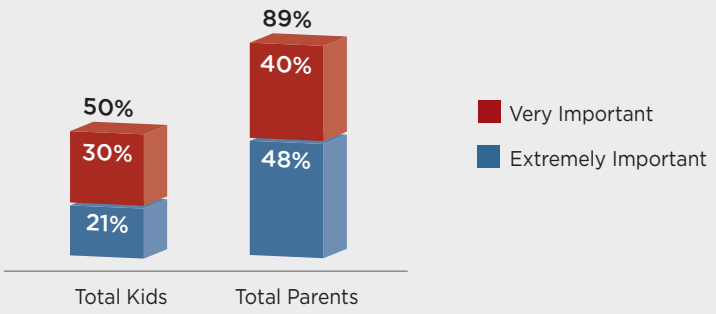
86%



Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

Although children identify many positive reasons for reading books for fun, they are far less likely than parents to say that reading books for fun is extremely or very important (50% vs. 89%).

Importance of Reading Books for Fun



Children's Q: How important is it to you to read [ADD FOR 6-8s "or look at"] books for fun? This means reading books that are not part of your school-work or homework [ADD FOR 6-8s: "and could mean reading by yourself or with someone else"].

Parents' Q: How important is it to you that [CHILD'S NAME] reads books for fun? Again, by this we mean reading books that are not part of [HIS/HER] schoolwork or homework and could mean reading on [HIS/HER] own or with someone else.

Note: An additional 36% of children say reading books for fun is "a little important" and 13% say it is "not important."

"I read in my room usually. I like to read. I feel like I am in the book and going through the same thing the characters are."

—11 year-old boy, Ohio

"I don't read for fun! I only read when I need to read in literature class. But the books that I read in class inspire me when I write."

—14 year-old boy, Ohio

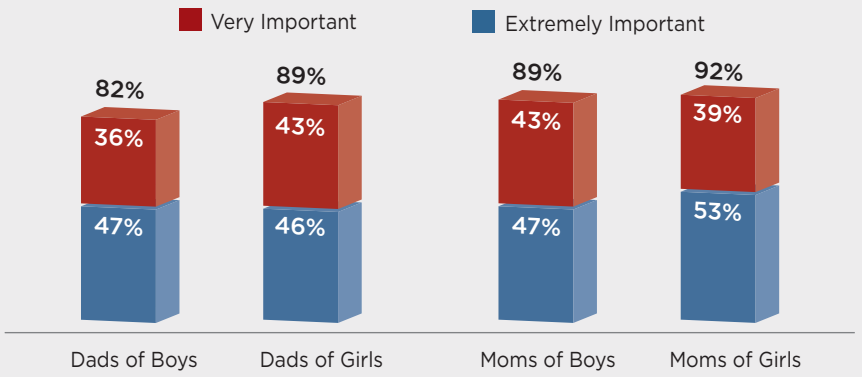
"I read at school because I have to do it for a grade. I don't like to read because it's hard for me."

—17 year-old boy, Florida

Boys see reading as less important than girls do, but parents of boys and girls value reading equally.

Only **39%** of **BOYS** say reading books for fun is extremely or very important versus **62%** of **GIRLS**.

How Important Parents Think It Is for Their Child to Read Books for Fun

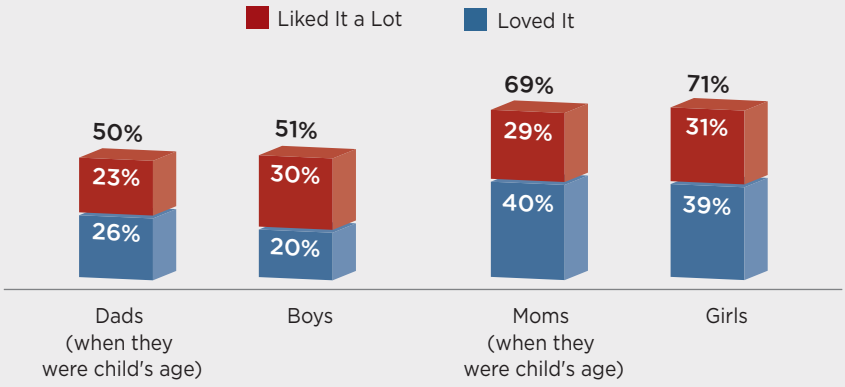


Children's Q: How important is it to you to read [ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at"] books for fun? This means reading books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework [ADD FOR 6-8s: "and could mean reading by yourself or with someone else"].

Parents' Q: How important is it to you that [CHILD'S NAME] reads books for fun? Again, by this we mean reading books that are not part of [HIS/HER] schoolwork or homework and could mean reading on [HIS/HER] own or with someone else.

When asked how much they enjoyed reading when they were their child's age, dads and moms mirror boys and girls today.

How Much Parents Enjoyed Reading Books for Fun When They Were a Child Compared to How Much Kids Enjoy Reading Today



Parents' Q: Thinking about when you were growing up, when you were [CHILD NAME-POSSESSIVE] age, how did you feel about reading books for fun?

Children's Q: How much do you enjoy reading books for fun?

"Fiction took my imagination on fantastic journeys while nonfiction opened my eyes to amazing things from past and present."

—Father, 8 year-old boy, Connecticut

"I did not like reading books as a child. I read no more books than my child does now and I feel that I turned out okay. Everybody is different."

—Father, 9 year-old girl, Pennsylvania

"I liked to read and read a lot of different things. My son claims not to like to read, but if he likes the book, will read it straight through and move on to the next."

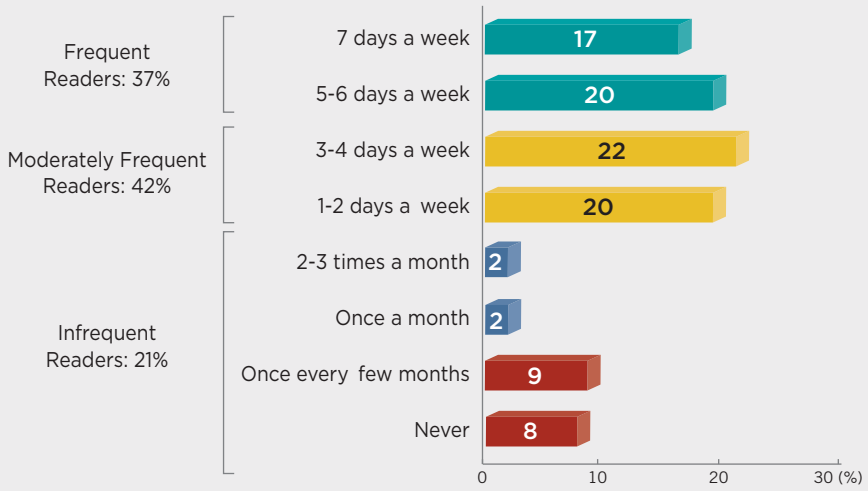
—Mother, 11 year-old boy, Virginia

"I love reading like a teenage girl loves sales at the mall!"

—13 year-old girl, New Jersey

While nearly 8 in 10 kids read for fun at least weekly (with 37% reading books for fun 5–7 days a week), 1 in 5 reads books for fun less than once a week.

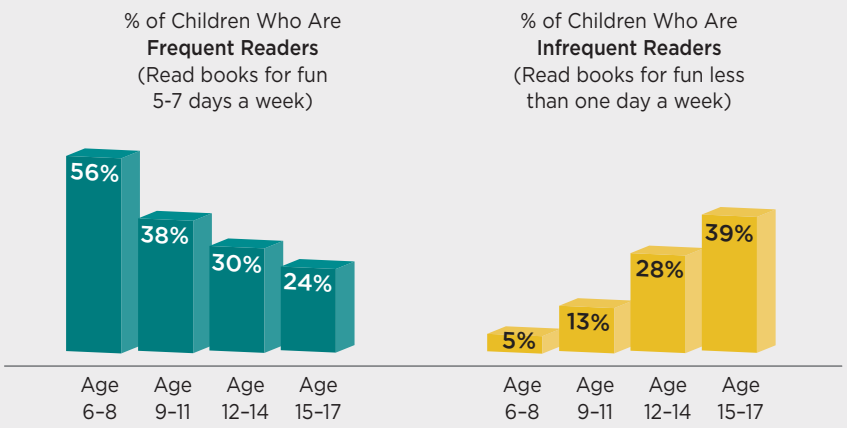
Frequency With Which Children Read Books for Fun



Q: How many days a week do you read (ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at") books for fun (ADD FOR 6-8s: "either on your own or with a family member")? [If child said "yes" to reading a book on any electronic/digital device in the previous question, child also saw: "you can include reading eBooks on an electronic device in your response."]

There is a steady decline in the frequency with which kids read books for fun after age 8.

Frequency With Which Children Read Books for Fun, By Child's Age



Q: How many days a week do you read (ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at") books for fun (ADD FOR 6-8s: "either on your own or with a family member")? [If child said "yes" to reading a book on any electronic/digital device in the previous question, child also saw: "you can include reading eBooks on an electronic device in your response."]

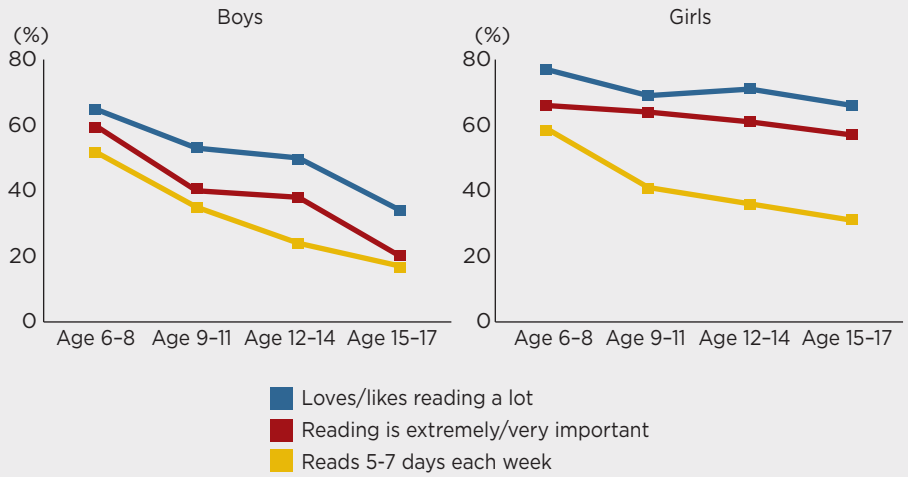
"I've always enjoyed reading a good book, but didn't read as much for fun as a teenager. My daughter is probably the same way—she has always loved books, but now as a teenager she doesn't have or take as much time to read for fun."

—Mother, 14 year-old girl, Nevada

"Most of the time I don't read for fun because of one primary reason: Schoolwork is far too much to even have much free time for anything. Stress over grades, social things (friends, etc.), college, and money are too much to even think about what book I will read."

—16 year-old boy, California

Reading enjoyment, importance, and frequency all decline with age, especially among boys.



Q: How much do you enjoy reading books for fun?
Q: How important is it to you to read books for fun?
Q: How many days a week do you read books for fun?

Parents and children recognize that kids should be reading more books for fun.

Parents' Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Parents:

I wish my child would read more books for fun.

71%

Parents of Children:

Age 6-8	Age 9-11	Age 12-14	Age 15-17	Boys	Girls
59%	75%	72%	78%	75%	67%

Parents' Q: Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with each of the following statements.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children Age 9–17:

I know I should read more books for fun.

75%

Children:

Age 6-8	Age 9-11	Age 12-14	Age 15-17	Boys	Girls
–	76%	74%	76%	77%	73%

Children's Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

"I would find the time to read a book and really enjoy it at my own pace. Today, kids search online and pull bits of information and edited stories and facts off the Internet as fast as possible."

—Father, 16 year-old boy, Massachusetts

Section III:

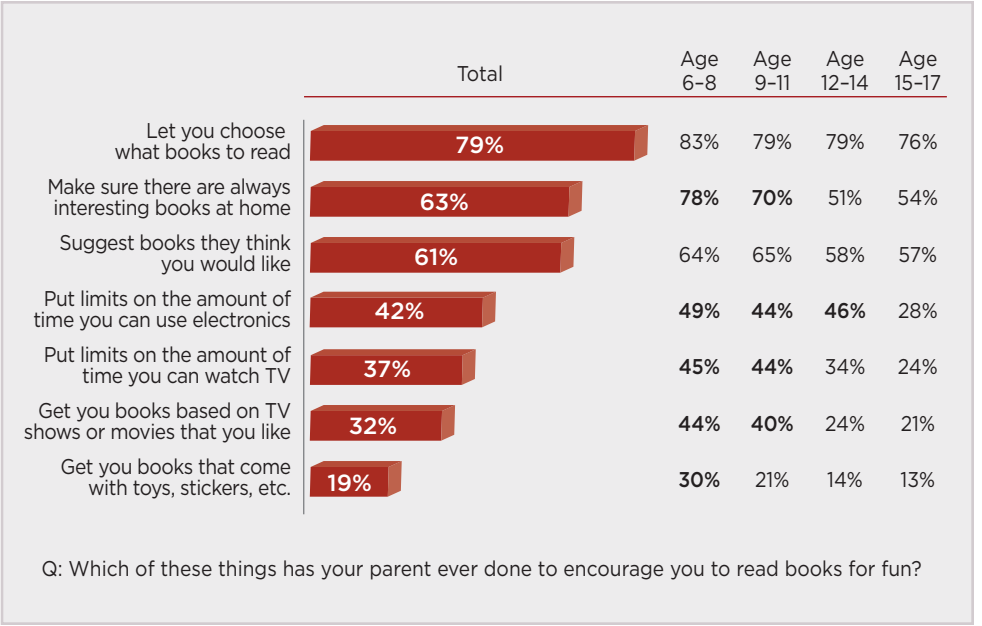
Parents' Role and the Power of Choice

"I have to make sure that I limit my daughter's time with her DS because she would choose to play with it for hours. If I didn't monitor her, she would probably show less interest in other activities like reading books."

—Mother, 6 year-old girl, Maryland

Parents try a variety of tactics aimed at increasing kids' reading frequency.

According to Children, Things a Parent Has Done to Encourage Child to Read Books for Fun

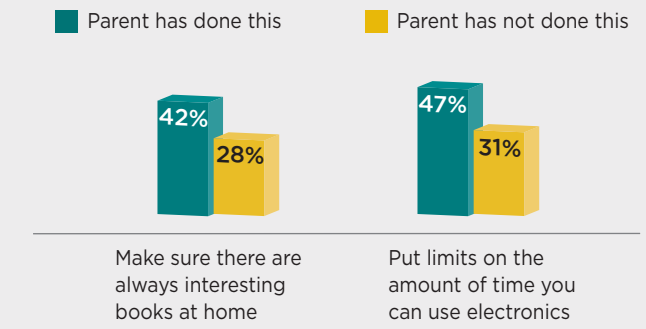


Q: Which of these things has your parent ever done to encourage you to read books for fun?

Some parental tactics seem more effective than others for children of different ages.

- For example, children age 9-11 are more likely to be frequent readers if their parent makes sure there are always interesting books at home (42% of these children are frequent readers vs. only 28% of children with parents who do not do this).
- Similarly, 47% of children age 9-11 with parents who put limits on the time they can use electronics are frequent readers versus only 31% of children with parents who do not do this.

% of Kids Age 9–11 Who Are Frequent Readers



Q: Which of these things has your parent ever done to encourage you to read books for fun?

"I used to read for entertainment almost every night. My son only reads when I tell him to take a break from TV and video games."

—Mother, 12 year-old boy, Wisconsin

"Since we limit my daughter's access to digital devices and television, she has had little choice but to read books or go outside and play for entertainment, and she has learned to love to do both."

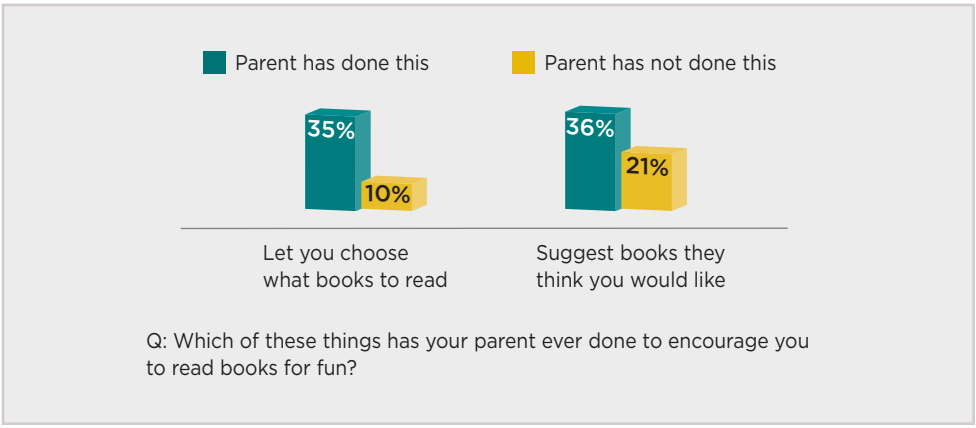
—Father, 11 year-old girl, Texas

"When I was my son's age all I did was read. My son is into many different sports, so he has less time to read. Most of his reading must be done for school. He has very little "free" reading time."

— Mother, 10 year-old boy, Pennsylvania

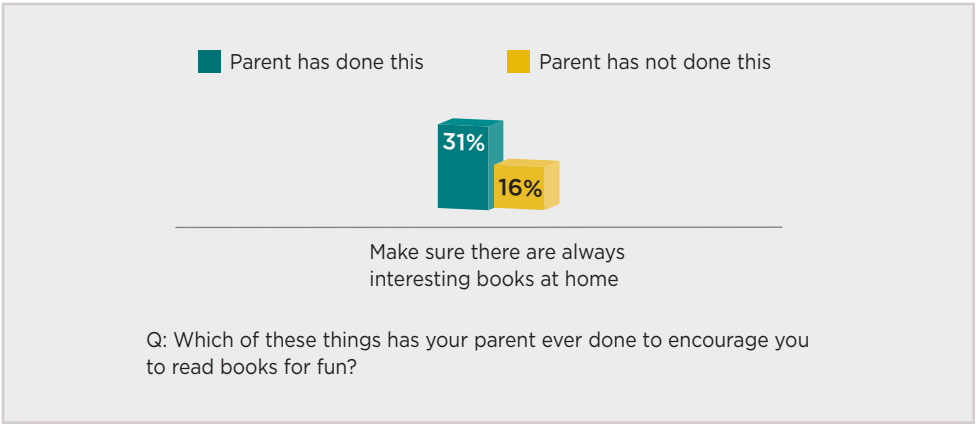
- The likelihood of children age 12-14 being frequent readers increases if their parents allow them to choose their own books or suggest books they might like.

% of Kids Age 12–14 Who Are Frequent Readers



- And for children age 15-17, making sure there are always interesting books at home doubles the likelihood of a child being a frequent reader.

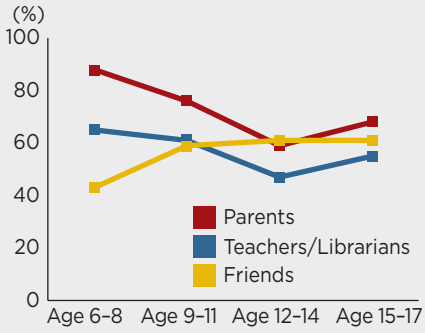
% of Kids Age 15–17 Who Are Frequent Readers



Parents are a key source of ideas for finding books to read, in addition to teachers, librarians, and friends.

People From Whom Children Get Ideas About Which Books to Read for Fun

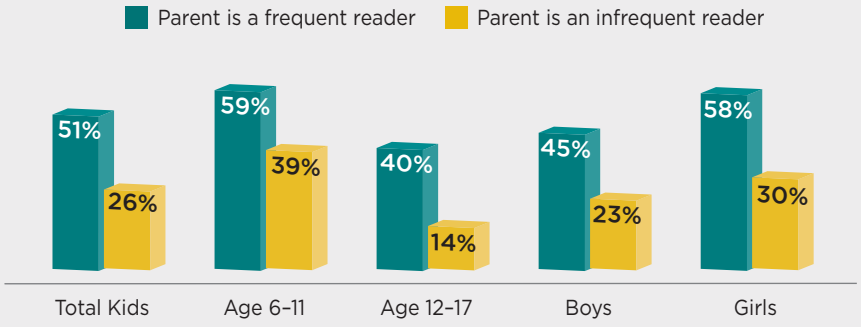
	Total
Parents (Net)	73%
Mom	68%
Dad	42%
Teachers/Librarians	57%
Friends	56%



Q: Please choose all of the people from whom you get ideas about which books to read for fun. Like we've mentioned before, this means books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework.

Parents who read books frequently are more likely to have children who are frequent readers.

% of Children Who Are Frequent Readers



Children's Q: How many days a week do you read (ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at") books for fun?

Parents' Q: How many days in a typical week do you personally read printed books or eBooks? Please do not count reading to your child.

"The last book I read was exciting and adventurous. I was reading it because my friends told me it was a good book."

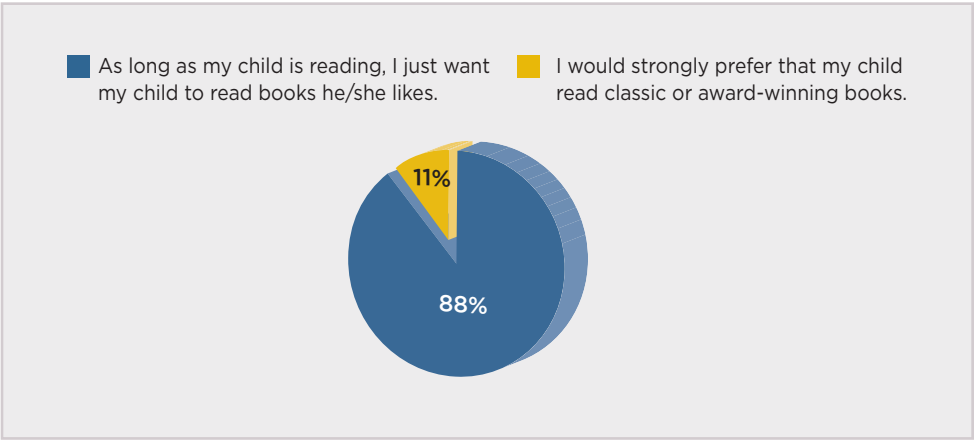
—10 year-old girl, California

"My daughter uses books for entertainment and information. As a kid, I saw books more as a punishment because they were chosen for me. I let her pick her own books."

—Mother, 9 year-old girl, Missouri

The majority of parents (88%) say *"As long as my child is reading, I just want my child to read books he/she likes."*

Parents' Views on Preferences for Child to Read What They Like or Read Classic/Award-Winning Books



Parents of Children:

Age 6-8	Age 9-11	Age 12-14	Age 15-17	Boys	Girls
91%	85%	90%	88%	90%	87%

Q: Assuming all content was age-appropriate, please choose the statement which sounds most like you when it comes to the books you want [CHILD NAME] to read for fun.

Most children say they are more likely to finish books they choose themselves.

Children's Agreement to Statement: Total Agree

Among Children:

I am more likely to finish reading a book that I have picked out myself.

91%

Children:

Age 6-8	Age 9-11	Age 12-14	Age 15-17	Boys	Girls
93%	91%	86%	93%	91%	91%

Q: Please tell me whether you agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, or disagree a lot with each of the following statements.

"I read every night because I have to do a reading log for school for a grade. I enjoy the books I read because I chose them."

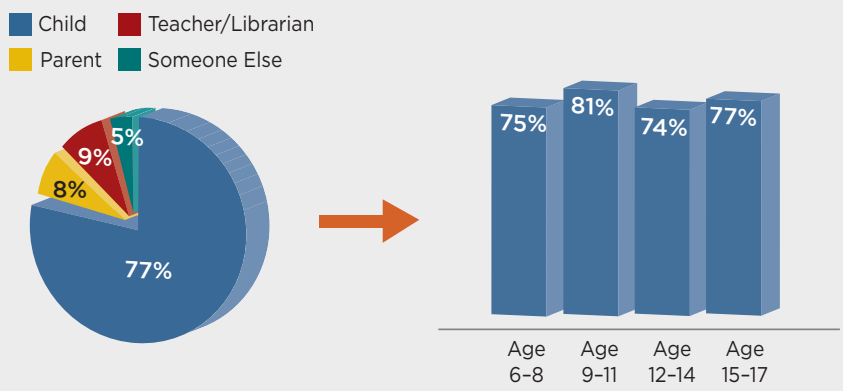
—11 year-old boy, Ohio

"I read many books and loved reading. I was encouraged to read by my parents. I think my son's experience is much the same, only there are now more books available to him so he has more choices."

—Mother, 9 year-old boy, Florida

Most children picked out the last book they read for fun...

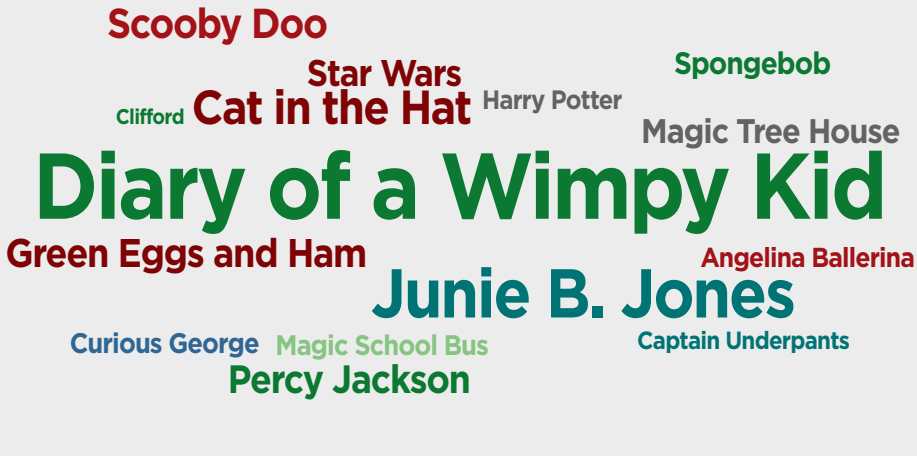
Who Picked Out the Last Book Children Read (and Finished)



Q: Thinking about the book you just mentioned, did you choose that book, or did someone else pick it out?

...and these books reflect a wide variety of children's book titles.

Top Books Mentioned, by Children Age 6–8



Top Books Mentioned, by Children Age 9–11

Top Books Mentioned, by Children Age 12–17

Q: What was the last book you read for fun that you finished?

The top 13–15 mentions for each age group are visually displayed on these maps. Titles that were mentioned more often are larger, while titles that were mentioned less often are smaller.

APPENDIX A:

Methodology

STUDY METHODOLOGY

- The fieldwork for this study was conducted by Knowledge Networks—using their nationally representative online panel—under the direction of Kristen Harmeling of Harrison Group and Hal Quinley of Quinley Research. Knowledge Networks' panel is the first online research panel that is representative of the entire U.S. population. Panel members are randomly recruited by probability-based sampling using random-digit dial (RDD) and address-based sampling methods, and households are provided with access to the Internet and hardware if needed.
- The sample consisted of parents of children age 6–17 who first completed a battery of questions before passing the survey on to one randomly sampled child in the target age range in that household.
- 1,045 pairs of children and adults completed the survey.
- The survey was fielded between April 28, 2010, and May 11, 2010.
- Final data were weighted to ensure proper demographic representation within the sample on the following dimensions:
  - Child gender within each of four age groups (6–8, 9–11, 12–14, 15–17), region, household income, and child race/ethnicity.
  - Information for these weights were obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau.

ADDITIONAL STUDY INFORMATION

- Some survey language was modified in age-appropriate ways to ensure comprehension among children age 6–8. These instances are noted throughout the report.
- Additionally, children age 6–8 were not asked some survey questions also due to comprehension limitations and limitations on the length of a survey appropriate for 6–8 year-olds.
- Parents were invited to help young children read the survey but they were asked to allow children to independently answer all questions. At the end of the survey, children were asked to record the degree to which parents helped them with the survey. Consistent with prior research, an analysis comparing the responses of children with and without parental involvement showed no significant differences.
- Virtually all (98%) adults interviewed were the parent or stepparent of the child interviewed. Therefore, throughout this report, we refer to adult respondents as "parent."
- Data may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

APPENDIX B:

Demographics of the Sample

Child's Age	
6-8	25%
9-11	24%
12-14	25%
15-17	26%

Child's Gender	
Total Boys	51%
Total Girls	49%

Parent Respondent Marital Status	
Married/Living with Partner (Net)	79%
Married	68%
Living with Partner	11%
Never Married	8%
Widowed/Divorced/Separated (Net)	13%

Parents' Highest Level of Education Completed	
High School Graduate or Less (Net)	39%
Less Than High School	13%
High School	26%
Some College or More (Net)	61%
Some College	32%
Bachelor's Degree+	29%

Parents' Age	
Under Age 30	9%
Age 30-39	37%
Age 40-44	26%
Age 45-54	24%
Age 55+	4%
Mean	40.37

Child's Race/Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic White	57%
Hispanic	20%
Non-Hispanic Black	14%
Non-Hispanic, Other	5%
Non-Hispanic, Multiple Races	2%

Adult Respondent Relationship to Child Respondent	
Parent (Net)	98%
Mother	58%
Father	35%
Stepmother	2%
Stepfather	3%
Other Guardian (Net)	2%
Total Men	39%
Total Women	61%

Household Income	
Less than $25,000	22%
$25,000 to $49,999	26%
$50,000 to $74,999	18%
$75,000 or More (Net)	34%
Mean (in 000s)	$62.17
Median	$52.89

Parents' Race/Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic White	61%
Hispanic	17%
Non-Hispanic Black	13%
Non-Hispanic, Other	5%
Non-Hispanic, Multiple Races	4%

APPENDIX C:

Subgroup Sample Sizes

This appendix shows the unweighted sample sizes of the main subgroups analyzed in this study.

Child's Age

TOTAL CHILDREN	1,045
6-8	250
9-11	275
12-14	263
15-17	257

Child's Gender

Total Boys	529
Total Girls	516

Child's Age within Gender

Boys Age 6–8	128
Boys Age 9–11	142
Boys Age 12–14	131
Boys Age 15–17	128
Girls Age 6–8	122
Girls Age 9–11	133
Girls Age 12–14	132
Girls Age 15–17	129

Children's Reading Frequency

Frequent Readers (read books 5-7 days each week)	368
Moderately Frequent Readers (read books 1-4 days a week)	438
Infrequent Readers (read books less than one day a week)	234

Parents' Gender

TOTAL PARENTS	1,045
Moms	608
Dads	437

Parents' Gender by Gender of Child*

Moms with Sons	311
Moms with Daughters	297
Dads with Sons	218
Dads with Daughters	219

* Only refers to the child that participated in the study

Parents' Reading Frequency

Frequent Readers (read books 5-7 days each week)	297
Moderately Frequent Readers (read books 1-4 days a week)	424
Infrequent Readers (read books less than one day a week)	317

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data

Parents' Views on the Impact that the Time Child Spends Using Electronic or Digital Devices Has on Child's Life: *Summary of Things that Are Decreased*

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
Time spent reading books for fun	41%	37%	38%	44%	46%	48%	34%
Time spent doing physical activity	40%	32%	37%	49%	42%	45%	35%
Time spent with family	33%	25%	26%	42%	38%	40%	25%
Ability to concentrate	23%	24%	22%	21%	27%	25%	22%
Desire to use imagination	20%	17%	21%	24%	19%	22%	18%
Time spent doing schoolwork	20%	12%	17%	25%	27%	23%	17%
Development of critical thinking skills	17%	12%	17%	20%	20%	17%	17%

Q: How much, if at all, do you think the amount of time [CHILD'S NAME] spends using electronic or digital devices increases or decreases each of the items listed below?

% of Children Who Do Each Activity

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
Watch TV, DVDs or videos	89%	88%	92%	91%	85%	89%	88%
Play video or computer games on any kind of electronic device	78%	73%	81%	85%	72%	89%	65%
Go online and use the Internet using a computer for fun, not for school	74%	58%	74%	80%	85%	76%	72%
Listen to music on an iPod, cell phone, or other similar device	58%	25%	48%	76%	83%	55%	62%
Use a cell phone to text or talk	47%	15%	26%	63%	81%	40%	53%
Visit social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, etc.	39%	3%	19%	56%	75%	34%	43%
Use a cell phone or other handheld device for going online	21%	1%	10%	32%	40%	21%	21%

Q: Which of the things listed below do you do?

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

% of Children Who Do Activities 5-7 Days a Week

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
Watch TV, DVDs or videos	68%	71%	72%	67%	62%	70%	65%
Go online and use the Internet using a computer for fun, not for school	37%	15%	27%	47%	57%	35%	38%
Listen to music on an iPod, cell phone, or other similar device	35%	8%	16%	50%	64%	34%	37%
Use a cell phone to text or talk	34%	4%	12%	46%	72%	29%	40%
Play video or computer games on any kind of electronic device	33%	25%	32%	44%	30%	46%	19%
Visit social networking sites like Facebook, Myspace, etc.	24%	2%	9%	34%	49%	20%	28%
Use a cell phone or other handheld device for going online	13%	1%	4%	19%	28%	13%	14%

Q: Now we'd like to know about how many days in a week you do each of these activities. Please check one box under the column that best describes how often you do each activity in a typical week.

Frequency With Which Children Read Books for Homework or Schoolwork

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
Every Day/Almost Every Day (Net)	32%	-	37%	25%	34%	30%	34%
7 days a week/every day	8%	-	12%	5%	6%	7%	8%
5-6 days a week	24%	-	25%	21%	28%	22%	27%
1-4 days a week (Net)	51%	-	54%	53%	47%	51%	52%
3-4 days a week	31%	-	36%	30%	29%	28%	35%
1-2 days a week	20%	-	19%	23%	19%	23%	18%
Less than one day a week/zero	16%	-	9%	22%	19%	19%	13%

Q: How many days a week do you read books you are required to read for homework or schoolwork (but not including textbooks that you use for school)? [If child said "yes" to reading a book on any electronic/digital device in the previous question, child also saw: "you can include reading eBooks on an electronic device in your response."]

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

Reasons Children Read Books for Fun: *Summary of Extremely/Very Important Reasons*

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
To entertain you	78%	-	77%	79%	78%	74%	82%
To experience a really great story	74%	-	78%	73%	72%	64%	85%
To use your imagination	68%	-	72%	65%	68%	58%	79%
To help you be successful in school now	67%	-	81%	61%	60%	63%	71%
To learn new information	66%	-	70%	65%	64%	61%	72%
To help you be successful after high school	63%	-	67%	59%	63%	60%	66%
To be inspired by the characters or the story	62%	-	64%	58%	64%	51%	73%
To help you figure out who you are and who you could become as you grow older	50%	-	60%	50%	41%	45%	55%
To give you time away from technology (like the TV, video games, cell phones and things like that)	47%	-	51%	46%	45%	43%	52%

Q: The next question asks about some reasons that ["kids" FOR 9-11s/"people" FOR 12-17s] your age might read books for fun. For each, we'd like to know if it is an extremely important reason, a very important reason, a little bit of a reason or not a reason at all for you to read books for fun.

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

Children's Reading Enjoyment

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17
Love/like reading a lot (Net)	60%	71%	61%	61%	50%
I love it	30%	35%	29%	31%	24%
I like it a lot	31%	36%	32%	30%	26%
I like it a little	28%	25%	32%	27%	29%
I do not like it at all	11%	3%	8%	13%	21%

Q. How much do you enjoy reading books for fun?

Boys' Reading Enjoyment

	Total Boys	Boys Age 6–8	Boys Age 9–11	Boys Age 12–14	Boys Age 15–17
Love/like reading a lot (Net)	51%	65%	53%	50%	34%
I love it	20%	31%	23%	18%	9%
I like it a lot	30%	34%	30%	33%	25%
I like it a little	32%	29%	36%	32%	32%
I do not like it at all	17%	6%	11%	17%	34%

Q. How much do you enjoy reading books for fun?

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

Girls' Reading Enjoyment

	Total Girls	Girls Age 6–8	Girls Age 9–11	Girls Age 12–14	Girls Age 15–17
Love/like reading a lot (Net)	71%	77%	69%	71%	66%
I love it	39%	39%	35%	45%	38%
I like it a lot	31%	38%	34%	27%	27%
I like it a little	24%	21%	27%	20%	26%
I do not like it at all	5%	1%	4%	8%	8%

Q. How much do you enjoy reading books for fun?

Children's Views on Importance of Reading Books for Fun

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17
Extremely/Very Important (Net)	50%	63%	52%	49%	39%
Extremely Important	21%	26%	19%	18%	20%
Very Important	30%	37%	32%	31%	19%
Not too important	36%	31%	42%	36%	37%
Not important	13%	5%	7%	15%	24%

Q: How important is it to you to read [ADD FOR 6-8s or "look at"] books for fun? This means reading books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework [ADD FOR 6-8s: "and could mean reading by yourself or with someone else"].

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

Boys' Views on Importance of Reading Books for Fun

	Total Boys	Boys Age 6–8	Boys Age 9–11	Boys Age 12–14	Boys Age 15–17
Extremely/Very Important (Net)	39%	60%	40%	38%	20%
Extremely Important	15%	24%	13%	14%	8%
Very Important	24%	35%	27%	23%	12%
Not too important	41%	31%	50%	42%	41%
Not important	19%	9%	10%	20%	38%

Q: How important is it to you to read [ADD FOR 6-8s "or look at"] books for fun? This means reading books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework [ADD FOR 6-8s: "and could mean reading by yourself or with someone else"].

Girls' Views on Importance of Reading Books for Fun

	Total Girls	Girls Age 6–8	Girls Age 9–11	Girls Age 12–14	Girls Age 15–17
Extremely/Very Important (Net)	62%	66%	64%	61%	57%
Extremely Important	27%	28%	26%	22%	31%
Very Important	35%	38%	38%	38%	26%
Not too important	32%	32%	32%	29%	33%
Not important	6%	2%	4%	10%	9%

Q: How important is it to you to read [ADD FOR 6-8s "or look at"] books for fun? This means reading books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework [ADD FOR 6-8s: "and could mean reading by yourself or with someone else"].

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

Boys' Frequency of Reading Books for Fun

	Total Boys	Boys Age 6–8	Boys Age 9–11	Boys Age 12–14	Boys Age 15–17
Read books for fun 5-7 days a week (Frequent Readers)	32%	52%	35%	24%	17%
Read books for fun 1-4 days a week (Moderately Frequent Readers)	39%	41%	47%	41%	29%
Read books for fun less than one day a week (Infrequent Readers)	29%	6%	18%	35%	55%

Q: How many days a week do you read [ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at"] books for fun [AD FOR 6-8s: "either on your own or with a family member"]? [If child said "yes" to reading a book on any electronic/digital device in the previous question, child also saw: "you can include reading ebooks on an electronic device in your response."]

Girls' Frequency of Reading Books for Fun

	Total Girls	Girls Age 6–8	Girls Age 9–11	Girls Age 12–14	Girls Age 15–17
Read books for fun 5-7 days a week (Frequent Readers)	42%	59%	41%	36%	31%
Read books for fun 1-4 days a week (Moderately Frequent Readers)	44%	36%	50%	44%	45%
Read books for fun less than one day a week (Infrequent Readers)	14%	4%	9%	20%	23%

Q: How many days a week do you read [ADD FOR 6-8s: "or look at"] books for fun [AD FOR 6-8s: "either on your own or with a family member"]? [If child said "yes" to reading a book on any electronic/digital device in the previous question, child also saw: "you can include reading ebooks on an electronic device in your response."]

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

People From Whom Children Get Ideas About Which Books to Read for Fun

	Total	Age 6–8	Age 9–11	Age 12–14	Age 15–17	Boys	Girls
Parents (Net)	73%	88%	76%	59%	68%	70%	75%
Mom	68%	84%	72%	56%	58%	64%	71%
Dad	42%	59%	41%	29%	37%	46%	37%
Teacher or librarian	57%	65%	61%	47%	55%	55%	59%
Friends	56%	43%	59%	61%	61%	51%	61%
Grandparents	21%	28%	20%	20%	14%	22%	19%
Brothers, sisters, cousins	34%	41%	33%	36%	27%	35%	34%
Other adults	18%	17%	15%	18%	20%	19%	16%
None of these	7%	3%	8%	9%	8%	9%	5%

Q: Please choose all of the people from whom you get ideas about which books to read for fun. Like we've mentioned before, this means books that are not part of your schoolwork or homework.

APPENDIX D:

Additional Survey Data (continued)

% of Parents Who Have Read an eBook

	Total Parents	Dads	Moms
Have read an eBook	14%	16%	13%

Q: Have you read an eBook? By eBook "we mean a digital book that is typically purchased and downloaded from the Internet and can be read on a computer, a handheld device or an eBook reader."

Parents' Frequency of Reading Books

	Total Parents	Dads	Moms
Every Day/Almost Every Day (Net)	28%	24%	31%
7 days a week	12%	12%	12%
5-6 days a week	16%	12%	19%
1-4 days a week (Net)	41%	34%	45%
3-4 days a week	22%	17%	25%
1-2 days a week	19%	17%	21%
Less than one day a week	30%	42%	22%

Q: How many days in a typical week do you personally read [ADD: "printed" if answered "yes" to having read an eBook] books [ADD: "or eBooks" if answered "yes" in having read an eBook]?

Notes

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