

SLAUGHTER AND MAY

Young People's Writing in 2011

Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual literacy survey

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Table of contents

Acknowledgements	3
Tables and figures	
Young people's writing in 2011	7
A look at some key issues in 2011	8
Girls are more enthusiastic about writing than boys	
More attention needs to be paid to KS4 and KS3 pupils when it comes to enjoyment of	
writing and attitudes towards writing	8
Doubly disadvantaged?	
Writing as an equal undertaking?	
Young people from White backgrounds are the most disengaged with writing	
Why does it matter?	
Young people and writing in 2011 – Data tables	
Young people's enjoyment of writing	
Young people's self-perceived writing ability	
Young people's writing frequency	
Young people's formats of writing	
Young people's attitudes towards writing	. 24
Young people and writing in 2011 – Attainment data	
Writing attainment and young people's enjoyment of writing	
Writing attainment and young people's self-perceived writing ability	. 36
Writing attainment and young people's writing frequency	
Writing attainment and young people's writing formats	
Writing attainment and young people's attitudes towards writing	
Young people and writing in 2011 - Comparisons with 2010	
Enjoyment of writing - Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011	
Self-perceived writing ability - Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011	. 43
Writing frequency – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011	
Types of writing outside of class – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011	. 44
Attitudes towards writing - Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011	. 44
Appendix A: An introduction to the National Literacy Trust annual literacy survey	
Appendix B: Methodology	
Participation rate	
Appendix C: Sample characteristics	. 48

Tables and figures

Table 1: Enjoyment of writing and writing attainment (N = 6,850)	12 ent
(N = 6,850)	12
(N = 6,850) Table 4: Comparing young people who enjoy writing and those who do not in terms of their writing frequency and self-perceived writing ability	14
Table 5: Comparing young people who enjoy writing and those who do not in terms of their	
attitudes towards writing Table 6: Enjoyment of writing for whole sample and broken down by demographic backgrour	
Table 7: Self-reported writing ability for sample as a whole and broken down by demographic	16
backgroundbackground	18
Table 8: Writing frequency outside of class in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background	19
Table 9: Formats of writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic	
background (Part 1)	21
Table 9: Formats of writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic	23
background (Part 2)	23
Table 10.1: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – The more I write the better my writing gets	24
	24
Table 10.2: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	ΩE
demographic background – Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic	25
Table 10.3: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	26
demographic background – A pupil who writes well gets better marks	20
Table 10.4: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	27
demographic background – It is easier to read than it is to write	21
demographic background – If I am good at writing, I'll get a better job	28
Table 10.6: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	20
demographic background – I have trouble deciding what to write	29
Table 10.7: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	23
demographic background - Compared to others, I am a good writer	30
Table 10.8: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	00
demographic background – Girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys	31
Table 10.9: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	01
demographic background – Writing is cool	32
Table 10.10: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	02
demographic background – I write in "txt" speak in class	33
Table 10.11: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by	00
demographic background – I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write	34
Table 11: Enjoyment of writing and writing attainment (N = 6,850)	
Table 12: Writing attainment and enjoyment of writing (N = 6,850)	
Table 13: Self-perceived writing ability and writing attainment (N = 6,850)	
Table 14: Writing attainment and self-perceived writing ability (N = 6,850)	
Table 15: Writing frequency and writing attainment (N = 6,850)	
Table 16: Writing attainment and writing frequency (N = 6,850)	
Table 17: Types of materials written outside of class at least once a month and writing	07
attainment (N = 6,850)	38
Table 18: Writing attainment and types of formats written outside of class at least once a mo	
(N = 6,850)	
Table 19: Percentage agreement and disagreement with attitudinal items and writing attainm	00 16nt
(N = 6,850)	
Table 20: Writing attainment and attitudes towards writing (N = 6,850)	⊿1
Table C1: Sample age	
Table C2: Ethnic background	
. a.c. =	

Figure 1: Proportion of pupils from each key stage who enjoy writing either very mucl	n or quite a
ot for 2010 and 2011	9
Figure 2: Enjoyment of writing in 2010 and 2011	42
Figure 3: Self-perceived writing ability in 2010 and 2011	43
Figure 4: Writing frequency in 2010 and 2011	
Figure 5: Types of writing in 2010 and 2011	
Figure 6: Attitudes towards writing in 2010 and 2011 (% agreement)	

Young people's writing in 2011

This report only outlines findings that relate to writing, taken from our second annual literacy survey¹, which we conducted in November/December 2011. Nearly 21,000 young people aged 8 to 16 participated.

Writing is an important issue in the UK today. While children's and young people's writing standards had plateaued between 2006 and 2009, levels at KS2 (11-year-olds) had increased slightly in 2010 and have increased again in 2011. However, writing is much more than just an educational issue – it is an essential skill that allows people to participate fully in today's society and to contribute to the economy.

Because of the centrality of writing in people's lives, the survey provided us with areas that we wanted to explore annually. More specifically, it explores how much young people enjoy writing, how good they think they are, how often they write and what types of materials they write, and how they feel about writing. For information about findings from our 2010 annual literacy survey please see here: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0001/2778/Attitudes towards Writing 2010.pdf

Writing in 2011 – A snapshot

Regarding young people's writing in 2011, this survey has shown that:

- 47% of young people enjoy writing either "very much" or "quite a lot"; 14% of young people do not enjoy writing at all (see Table 6, p. 16).
- 83.7% of young people rate themselves as either average (53.2%) or very good writers (30.5%) (see Table 7, p. 18).
- 26.7% of young people write outside of class every day, with another 27% writing something a few times a week. However, 24.6% of young people say that they rarely or never write outside of class (see Table 8, p. 19).
- Technology-based formats, such as text messages (69.4%), messages on social networking sites (51.6%) and emails (47.4%), are most commonly written outside of class by a large margin, followed by notes (34.9%) and letters (28.9%) (see Table 9, p. 21).
- Most young people thought positively about writing (see Table 10.1 to 10.11, pp. 24). 75.2% agree that "the more I write, the better my writing gets"; 73.5% agree that "writing is more fun when you can choose the topic"; 57.7% agree that "a pupil who writes well gets better marks"; 47.9% agree that "if I am good at writing, I'll get a better job". 25.5% of young people also agree that "writing is cool". However, 50.4% of young people agree that "it is easier to read than it is to write" and 41.7% agree that "I have trouble deciding what to write". Gender stereotypes are relatively prevalent when it comes to writing, with 27.3% of young people agreeing that "girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys". Thankfully, only 13.8% of young people agree that "I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write".

These rates have remained relatively unchanged since 2010 (see Figure 2 to 6, pp. 42).

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¹ For more information about our annual literacy survey see Appendix A

A look at some key issues in 2011

Girls are more enthusiastic about writing than boys

Girls are nearly twice as likely to enjoy writing very much than boys (22.7% vs. 13.1%), with 56.5% of girls enjoying writing either very much or quite a lot compared with only 38.2% of boys. By contrast, boys are nearly three times more likely to say that they don't enjoy writing at all (22.2% vs. 7.7%).

Girls not only enjoy writing considerably more than boys but they also rate themselves as better writers (very good writer: girls 33.6% vs. boys 27.5%). Girls also write more frequently outside of class, with 32.7% of girls saying that they write outside of class every day compared with only 20.8% of boys. Indeed, boys are twice as likely as girls to say that they never write outside of class (9.5% vs. 4.1%).

Compared to boys, girls tend to write more technology-based formats, such as emails, text messages and messages on social networking sites. This is not simply explained by girls having greater access to computers or the internet than boys; our survey also showed that roughly the same proportion of boys and girls say that they either own a computer (boys 72.1%;,girls 74.0%), have access to one (boys 96.4%; girls 97.0%) or have internet at home (boys 96.3%; girls 96.3%). Rather, and this is something that we will explore in a future survey, it might be argued that it is not so much the writing that takes centre stage in technology-based writing but it is an act performed to communicate with others, which previous research (e.g. Clark and Dugdale, 2009²) has shown to be more important to girls than boys.

The writing patterns seem to suggest that creative writing is more the domain of girls. Regardless of technology, girls are more likely to write a variety of formats compared with boys. For example, nearly twice as many girls as boys say that they write lyrics and poems outside of school, while nearly three times as many girls as boys say that they write in a diary.

Girls not only enjoy writing more and write more often but they also think more positively about it than boys, with more boys than girls agreeing with the statement that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them write outside of class. However, boys are more likely than girls to see the utilitarian aspect of writing, namely that it will help them get a better job.

More attention needs to be paid to KS4 and KS3 pupils when it comes to enjoyment of writing and attitudes towards writing

While boys and their engagement with writing is a cause for concern, an even greater issue is KS4 pupils (14 to 16-year-old) and, to some extent, KS3 pupils (11 to 14-year-old) too. Although the differences in writing frequency among the key stages are negligible, the differences among the three key stages in terms of their enjoyment of writing are staggering. Only 10.3% of KS4 and 14.6% of KS3 pupils say that they enjoy writing very much. Compare this to 35.4% of KS2 pupils (8 to 11-year-old) who say that they find writing very enjoyable. Overall only 35.9% of KS4 pupils and 44.4% of KS3 pupils said that they enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot compared to 66.8% of KS2 pupils.

KS4 pupils, and to some extent KS3 pupils, are also considerably less likely than KS2 pupils to buy into the power of writing. They are less likely than their younger counterparts to believe in the adage that practice makes perfect as they are less likely to agree that "the more I write, the better my writing gets". They are also considerably less likely than their younger counterparts to agree that "If I am good at writing, I will get a better job". KS4 pupils are also four times less likely than KS2 pupils to agree that "writing is cool". However, KS4 pupils are nearly two times less likely than their younger counterparts to agree that "I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write".

2

² http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0771/Writing survey 2009.pdf

There is some indication that the enjoyment gap among the key stages has widened since 2010 (see Figure 1). While rates of writing enjoyment have increased for both KS2 and KS4 pupils between 2010 and 2011 (rates for KS3 pupils have remained the same), the increase in the proportion of young people who enjoy writing has been greater at KS2 than at KS4 (at KS2 there was a 5.8 percentage point increase; at KS4 there was a 1.6 percentage point increase). Whether this marks a general trend or whether it is just a "glitch" remains to be seen.

2010 KS2 61.0% 2011 KS2 66.8% 2010 KS3 44.6% 2011 KS3 44.4% 2010 KS4 34.3% KS4 35.9%

Figure 1: Proportion of pupils from each key stage who enjoy writing either very much or guite a lot for 2010 and 2011

Doubly disadvantaged?

Boys and older pupils tend to be more disengaged from writing in terms of enjoyment and attitudes when compared to girls or younger pupils. However, the issue is amplified if one combines gender and key stages in the analyses and it becomes evident that boys in KS4 present a particular problem with writing engagement.

Only 28% of boys in KS4 say that they enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot. This is half the number of KS2 boys who say that they enjoy writing (58%) and nearly half the number of girls in KS4 (44%).

The image of reading as an acceptable activity seems to be a particular issue for older boys. Only 12% of boys in KS4 agree with the statement that "reading is cool" compared with 45% of boys in KS2. What is perhaps perplexing is that twice as many boys in KS2 as in KS4 (20% vs. 12%) agree that they would be embarrassed if friends saw them read. So, although older boys are less likely than younger ones to see writing as a cool activity, they are less bothered if their friends see them writing.

Writing as an equal undertaking?

National Curriculum test results show that the writing of young people who receive free school meals (FSM) lags behind those who do not receive meals, at age 7 (Key Stage 1³), age 11 (Key Stage 2⁴) and age 14 (Key Stage 3⁵).

³ http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001022/sfr22-2011v2.pdf

⁴ http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001047/sfr31-2011.pdf, please note that writing is subsumed under "English" from KS2 onwards

⁵ http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001018/sfr18-2011v2.pdf

Our survey revealed a complex set of relationships between FSM uptake and our writing variables of interest. Firstly, there was no difference in terms of young people's enjoyment of writing (FSM pupils 46%; non-FSM pupils 47.3%), which mirrors findings from our first large-scale survey into writing in 2009⁶.

However, differences exist in relation to writing frequency, with young people who receive FSMs being slightly more likely to write outside of class daily compared with those who do not receive meals (29.6% vs. 26.2%). Yet young people who receive FSMs tend to be less confident about their writing. While roughly the same proportion of young people who receive FSMs and those who do not rate themselves as average writers, young people who receive FSMs are more likely to rate themselves as not very good writers compared with those who do not receive FSMs (21.4% vs. 14.8%). These differences in levels of confidence echo findings by Kellet and Dar (2007, p viii⁷):

An important self-development strategy uncovered in the children's reports was the need to 'practise your private confidence' before you could develop 'public confidence'. Children identified reading aloud and writing as activities requiring 'public confidence', and needed a lot of 'private' practice. A striking characteristic of children from affluent backgrounds was how easy it was for them to access opportunities for 'private confidence' building whereas children from low-income backgrounds had little, if any, opportunity for this.

There were also some notable differences in terms of the types of writing young people do outside of class, with those who do not receive FSMs engaging in more technology-based writing – most notably text messaging – compared with those who receive FSMs. While some of the internet-based writing can, at least in part, be explained by a differing access to computers (FSM pupils 93.3%; non-FSM pupils 97.5%) and the internet at home (FSM pupils 91.7%; non-FSM pupils 97.5%), the penchant of young people who do not receive FSMs to send text messages cannot be so easily explained as an almost equal proportion say that they have their own mobile phone (FSM pupils 87.4%; non-FSM pupils 89.8%). By contrast, more young people who receive FSMs write lyrics, letters and poems outside of class compared with young people who do not receive FSMs.

In terms of writing attitudes, the picture is not as straightforward. For example, more young people who receive FSMs agree that: "I have trouble deciding what to write", "girls enjoy writing more than boys" and "I would be embarrassed if my friends saw me write". However, they also agree that "writing is cool" and "If I am good at writing, I'll get a better job". And despite finding that fewer young people who receive FSMs say that they write text messages outside of class compared with young people who do not receive FSMs, they are more likely to agree that "I write 'txt' speak in class".

It is hard to know what to make of these findings. On the one hand, it is encouraging that young people's enjoyment of writing, unlike their enjoyment of reading⁸, is by all accounts not affected by their socioeconomic background. The different pattern with reading can perhaps in part be explained by writing requiring fewer (expensive) resources than reading (pen and paper vs. books, magazines, newspapers). Alternatively, young people's writing might be influenced by what is happening in school more than young people's reading, which might be affected by a greater array of factors, including cultural norms, parental encouragement and parental practice. We currently do not have data on these issues but will be collecting such information in the future.

However, young people eligible for FSMs are significantly less confident about their own writing ability than other young people, despite engaging in writing more often than young people who

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⁶ http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0771/Writing survey 2009.pdf

⁷ Kellett, M. and Dar, A. (2007). Children researching links between poverty and literacy. York: Joseph Rowntree.

⁸ Clark (forthcoming). Young People and Reading in 2011: Findings from the National Literacy Trust annual survey. London: National Literacy Trust. For 2010 information about our reading findings from our 2010 annual literacy survey see here: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0001/1393/Omnibus reading 2010.pdf

do not receive meals. Effectively, enjoyment and greater practice is not translating into higher confidence or higher attainment in this instance. In future research we will explore the degree to which writing attainment of FSM pupils and non-FSM pupils is differently influenced by enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes, and what other factors are of importance.

Young people from White backgrounds are the most disengaged with writing

The relationships between writing and ethnic background are complex, and we need to keep in mind that our crude categorisation (made necessary for comparison purposes) undoubtedly hides some important differences within ethnic backgrounds.

At a crude brushstroke (and with the above caution in mind) compared with young people from other ethnic backgrounds, young people from White backgrounds enjoy writing less (White 48%; Mixed 55%; Asian 57%; Black 59%), and write daily less often (White 26%; Mixed 32%; Asian 33%; Black 32%).

They are also more likely to agree that they have trouble deciding what to write (White 43%; Mixed 40%; Asian 34%; Black 37%). By contrast, they are less likely to agree with the statement that compared to others, they are a good writer (White 30%; Mixed 36%; Asian 34%; Black 45%) and the statement that writing is cool (White 22%; Mixed 32%; Asian 36%; Black 41%). Young people from White backgrounds are also less likely to make a link between writing skills and future employment opportunities (White 47%; Mixed 52%; Asian 53%; Black 53%),

However, while young people from White backgrounds tend to write more text messages in a month than young people from other ethnic backgrounds (White 75%; Mixed 70%; Asian 62%; Black 62%), they also are less likely to say that they use "txt" speak in class (White 13%; Mixed 18%; Asian 18%; Black 18%). Young people from Black backgrounds enjoy writing the most, rate themselves as the best writers, write more frequently (alongside young people from Asian backgrounds), and write a greater variety of formats.

Why does it matter?

Why does it matter whether young people enjoy writing, write frequently or think about writing positively? The answer is simple: there are clear relationships with writing attainment.

Young people who enjoy writing very much are more likely to write above the level expected for their age, with nearly half of young people who enjoy writing very much writing above the expected level, over two-fifths writing at the expected level and only 5% writing below the expected level for their age (see **Table 1**). By contrast and almost like a mirror image, of those young people who do not enjoy writing at all, half write below the expected level, and two-fifths at the expected level. Only 6% of young people who do not enjoy writing at all write above the level expected for their age⁹.

Table 1: Enjoyment of writing and writing attainment (N = 6,850)

	Below expected level %	pected level expected level	
Very much	5.2	45.8	49.0
Quite a lot	7.9	75.1	17.0
A bit	24.0	69.8	6.2

⁹ For more information on our attainment data and for an alternative look at the link with attainment see Attainment Data section on p. 16

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	Below	At	Above
	expected level	expected level	expected level
	%	%	%
Not at all	50.9	42.7	6.4

Similarly, young people who write outside of school daily are five times more likely to be writing above the expected level for their age compared with young people who never write outside of school (see **Table 2**). While 27% of young people who write every day write above the level expected for their age, only 5 to 8% of young people who write rarely or never write are at that level. Overall, nearly half of those who never write outside of class write below the level expected for their age.

Table 2: Writing frequency and writing attainment (N = 6,850)

	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Every day	12.0	61.2	26.8
A few times a week	15.6	15.6 66.8	
About once a week	17.4	69.5	13.1
A few times a month	18.6	68.5	12.9
About once a month	23.2	63.4	13.4
Rarely	29.9	62.2	7.9
Never	46.7	48.2	5.1

Young people who hold more positive attitudes towards writing are also the ones who are more likely to write at or above the level expected for their age compared with those who hold more negative attitudes (see **Table 3**).

Table 3: Percentage agreement and disagreement with attitudinal items and writing attainment (N = 6,850)

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
The more I write, the	Agreement	14.8	65.5	19.7
better my writing gets	Disagreement	43.3	47.0	9.7
Writing is more fun when	Agreement	15.6	65.6	18.7
you can choose the topic	Disagreement	36.4	50.8	12.8
A pupil who writes well gets better marks	Agreement	19.2	62.3	18.5
	Disagreement	19.6	63.4	17.0

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
It is easier to read than it	Agreement	21.7	64.8	13.5
is to write	Disagreement	18.8	59.8	21.4
If I'm good at writing it means I'll get a better job	Agreement	16.9	61.3	21.8
when I grow up	Disagreement	26.3	61.9	11.8
I have trouble deciding	Agreement	27.7	60.1	12.2
what to write	Disagreement	9.9	60.8	29.3
Compared with others, I am a good writer	Agreement	5.8	55.8	38.4
	Disagreement	53.3	43.3	3.4
Girls tend to enjoy writing	Agreement	21.7	59.6	18.7
more than boys	Disagreement	16.3	64.3	19.4
Writing is cool	Agreement	8.6	54.9	36.5
writing is cool	Disagreement	34.0	58.7	7.4
I write in "txt" speak in	Agreement	25.6	53.3	21.0
class	Disagreement	15.5	67.5	17.0
I would be embarrassed if	Agreement	26.5	55.6	17.9
friends saw me write	Disagreement	15.9	65.3	18.8

Please note that while enjoyment, habits and attitudes are each related to writing attainment, our research design can make no inference about causality: that is, higher attainment may lead to greater writing enjoyment, more frequent writing or more positive writing attitudes; or alternatively higher writing enjoyment, more frequent writing or more positive writing attitudes may lead to higher attainment. Indeed, the relationship might be cyclical. We have set up a longitudinal subsample within our annual literacy survey, which will hopefully give us more information about the direction of associations in the future.

However, regardless of the possible direction of these associations, it is clear that young people who do not enjoy writing, who do not write very often and who, perhaps as a result, do not have good attitudes towards writing are more likely to miss out on the benefits, including better skills and better life opportunities.

To give more ammunition to "why it matters", there are also clear relationships between enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes. There is a positive relationship between writing enjoyment and writing frequency (r = .389), with young people who enjoy writing more also writing more frequently. Young people who enjoy writing are less likely to see themselves as not very good writers (r = .448). There is also a positive link between writing enjoyment and attitudes towards

writing (r = .367) with young people who enjoy writing more also being the ones who think positively about writing.

Table 4 illustrates this in more detail. Twice as many young people who enjoy writing as those who do not say that they write outside of school every day. Conversely, three times as many young people who do not enjoy writing as those who do say that they rarely or never write outside of school.

Young people who do not enjoy writing are also four times more likely to rate themselves as not very good writers compared with young people who enjoy writing.

Table 4: Comparing young people who enjoy writing and those who do not in terms of their writing frequency and self-perceived writing ability

	Write every day %	Write rarely or never %	Not a very good writer %	Average writer %	Very good writer %
Enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot (N = 9,486)	36.5	10.7	7.5	63.6	28.9
Enjoy writing only a bit or not at all (N = 10,559)	18.0	37.1	31.7	62.1	6.2

Table 5 shows that there is also a link with attitudes towards writing. Nearly half of young people who enjoy writing agree that writing is cool compared to only 8% of young people who do not enjoy writing. Young people who enjoy writing are also more likely to agree that writing is more fun when one can choose the topic and are more likely to believe that practice makes perfect compared to young people who do not enjoy writing.

Table 5: Comparing young people who enjoy writing and those who do not in terms of their attitudes towards writing

	Writing is cool			Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic		I write the or I get
	Agree %	Disagree %	Agree Disagree %		Agree %	Disagree %
Enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot (N = 9,486)	45.4	7.9	81.6	4.1	87.0	2.5
Enjoy writing only a bit or not at all (N = 10,559)	7.6	42.1	66.4	9.2	64.8	9.7

To sum up, writing enjoyment, writing behaviour and writing attitudes are related and each of these has a positive relationship with writing attainment. In 2011 we published a report that explored the inter-relationships of reading variables and their relative importance in influencing reading attainment¹⁰. We found that reading enjoyment, which is often just seen as a "fluffy" factor, plays a pivotal part in driving reading attainment both indirectly (through its relationship with other reading variables) as well as directly. This year, we will explore whether a similar dynamic also holds true for writing or whether other factors, such as confidence, play a more important role.

¹⁰ http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0001/0025/Attainment attitudes behaviour enjoyment-Final.pdf

Young people and writing in 2011 - Data tables

The following pages contain the information for each of our writing questions in tables. Each table contains information pertaining to the sample as a whole (top purple row) as well as broken down by demographic background - gender, key stage, free school meal (FSM) uptake and ethnic background¹¹. The shaded areas at the bottom of the table contain information where two demographic background variables have been combined to provide a more detailed look into particular subgroups of young people.

Please note that due to rounding, the data in the tables do not necessarily add up to 100 in a row.

 $^{^{11}}$ See **Appendix B** and **C** for more information on the demographic breakdown of our 2011 sample

Young people's enjoyment of writing

Table 6: Enjoyment of writing for whole sample and broken down by demographic background

How much do you enjoy writing?						
		Quite a lot	Overall	A bit	Notatell	
	Very much		enjoyment		Not at all	
All (N = 20,045)	% 17.9	% 29.4	47.3	% 38.7	% 13.9	
Boys (N = 10,003)	13.1	25.1	38.2	41.7	20.2	
Girls (N = 10,042)	22.7	33.8	56.5	35.8	7.7	
KS2 (N = 3,805)	35.4	31.4		25.7	7.7	
			66.8			
KS3 (N = 13,212)	14.6	29.8	44.4	41.2	14.5	
KS4 (N = 2,957)	10.3	25.6	35.9	44.8	19.3	
FSM (N = 2,992)	19.9	26.1	46.0	38.4	15.7	
Non-FSM (N = 15,845)	17.0	30.3	47.3	39.1	13.7	
White (N = 15,112)	16.5	29.2	45.7	39.8	14.5	
Mixed (N = 980)	23.9	30.9	54.8	33.8	11.4	
Asian (N = 1,441)	23.0	34.0	57.0	32.8	10.1	
Black (N = 807)	29.4	29.6	59.0	30.1	10.9	
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,859)	28.1	29.7	57.8	30.2	11.9	
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,946)	42.3	32.9	75.2	21.3	3.4	
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,646)	10.2	24.7	34.9	44.0	21.0	
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,566)	19.0	34.8	53.8	38.3	7.9	
Boys - KS4	6.9	20.7	27.6	45.4	27.0	
(N = 1,456) Girls – KS4	13.6	30.3	43.9	44.2	11.9	
(N = 1,501) Boys – FSM	15.0	22.2	37.2	40.3	22.5	
(N = 1,422) Girls – FSM	24.3	29.6	53.9	36.7	9.5	
(N = 1,570) Boys – Non-FSM	12.2	25.7	37.9	42.3	19.8	
(N = 7,968) Girls – Non-FSM				<u> </u>		
(N = 7,877) Boys – White	21.8	34.9	56.7	35.8	7.4	
(N = 7,597) Girls – White	11.8	24.8	36.6	42.6	20.8	
(N = 7,515)	21.2	33.6	54.8	37.1	8.7	
Boys – Mixed (N = 482)	16.2	25.3	41.5	40.2	18.3	
Girls – Mixed (N = 498)	31.3	36.3	67.6	27.5	4.8	
Boys – Asian (N = 686)	18.8	28.4	47.2	36.7	16.0	
Girls – Asian (N = 755)	26.9	39.1	66.0	29.3	4.8	

How much do you enjoy writing?								
	Very much	Quite a lot	Overall enjoyment %	A bit	Not at all			
All (N = 20,045)	17.9	29.4	47.3	38.7	13.9			
Boys – Black (N = 407)	20.1	31.2	51.3	34.4	14.3			
Girls – Black (N = 400)	38.8	28.0	66.8	25.8	7.5			

Young people's self-perceived writing ability

Table 7: Self-reported writing ability for sample as a whole and broken down by demographic background

How good a writer do you thin	k you are?		
	Not a very good writer %	Average writer %	Very good writer %
AII (N = 20,950)	16.2	53.2	30.5
Boys (N = 10,484)	18.9	53.6	27.5
Girls (N = 10,466)	13.6	52.8	33.6
KS2 (N = 4,031)	15.1	42.1	42.9
KS3 (N = 13,698)	15.7	55.5	28.7
KS4 (N = 3,139)	19.6	57.8	22.6
FSM (N = 3,147)	21.4	52.1	26.5
Non-FSM (N = 16,498)	14.8	54.0	31.0
White (N = 15,211)	13.4	56.1	30.4
Mixed (N = 990)	11.3	49.9	38.8
Asian (N = 1,458)	11.4	50.2	38.4
Black (N = 815)	8.3	48.1	43.6
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,965)	16.5	45.2	38.3
Girls – KS2 (N = 2,066)	13.7	39.1	47.2
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,907)	18.8	55.6	25.6
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,791)	12.6	55.5	31.9
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,565)	22.2	55.8	21.9
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,574)	17.0	59.7	23.3
Boys – FSM (N = 1,504)	25.1	51.9	23.1
Girls – FSM (N = 1,643)	18.1	52.3	29.6
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 8,311)	17.3	54.5	28.2
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 8,187)	12.3	53.5	34.2
Boys – White (N = 7,659)	16.3	56.4	27.4
Girls – White (N = 7,552)	10.5	55.9	33.5
Boys – Mixed (N = 486)	15.2	51.4	33.3
Girls – Mixed (N = 504)	7.5	48.4	44.0
Boys – Asian (N = 698)	13.8	51.6	34.7
Girls – Asian (N = 760)	9.2	48.9	41.8
Boys - Black (N = 413)	9.2	51.6	39.2
Girls - Black (N = 402)	7.5	44.5	48.0

Young people's writing frequency

Table 8: Writing frequency outside of class in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background

	Every day	A few times a week	About once a week	A few times a month	About once a month	Rarely	Never
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All (N = 20,099)	26.7	27.4	9.4	7.9	3.9	17.8	6.8
Boys (N = 10,044)	20.8	25.4	9.6	8.5	4.5	21.7	9.5
Girls (N = 10,055)	32.7	29.3	9.3	7.3	3.4	13.8	4.1
KS2 (N = 3,838)	27.3	29.3	11.1	7.3	3.9	13.9	7.1
KS3 (N = 13,243)	27.0	27.3	9.4	8.1	3.8	18.0	6.4
KS4 (N =2,948)	25.0	25.6	7.7	7.7	4.3	21.7	8.0
FSM (N = 3,005)	29.6	27.1	8.8	6.9	3.1	16.7	7.9
Non-FSM (N = 15,869)	26.2	27.5	9.5	8.2	4.1	18.0	6.5
White (N = 15,178)	25.7	27.4	9.4	8.0	3.9	18.9	6.7
Mixed (N = 987)	31.8	25.9	9.1	8.6	4.4	14.3	5.9
Asian (N = 1,447)	33.4	29.2	8.6	7.2	3.7	11.1	6.8
Black (N = 810)	32.3	26.5	10.4	7.3	4.1	13.1	6.3
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,886)	21.3	26.9	12.1	8.3	4.7	17.2	9.5
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,952)	33.2	31.6	10.1	6.4	3.2	10.7	4.9
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,664)	20.3	25.6	9.5	8.6	4.4	22.5	9.3
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,579)	33.7	29.0	9.3	7.7	3.2	13.8	3.4
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,453)	22.0	22.8	7.2	8.1	4.2	25.3	10.5
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,495)	27.8	28.4	8.1	7.4	4.4	18.3	5.7
Boys – FSM (N = 1,435)	21.3	24.5	9.1	7.2	4.4	21.3	12.1
Girls – FSM (N = 1,570)	37.1	29.4	8.4	6.6	1.8	12.5	4.1
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,983)	20.6	25.8	9.6	8.7	4.5	21.8	9.1
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,886)	31.9	29.2	9.5	7.6	3.7	14.2	3.9
Boys – White (N = 7,614)	19.5	25.2	9.7	8.8	4.3	23.0	9.5
Girls – White (N = 7,537)	31.9	29.7	9.1	7.2	3.5	14.8	3.8
Boys – Mixed (N = 484)	24.6	24.6	9.5	7.9	5.8	19.2	8.5
Girls – Mixed (N = 503)	38.8	27.2	8.7	9.3	3.0	9.5	3.4

How often do you wr	How often do you write outside of class at least once a month (not counting the stuff you write for school)?								
	Every day %	A few times a week %	About once a week %	A few times a month %	About once a month %	Rarely %	Never %		
All (N = 20,099)	26.7	27.4	9.4	7.9	3.9	17.8	6.8		
Boys – Asian (N = 687)	29.1	27.7	8.6	8.2	4.2	13.1	9.2		
Girls – Asian (N = 760)	37.4	30.7	8.6	6.3	3.2	9.2	4.7		
Boys – Black (N = 410)	28.3	27.3	9.5	6.6	5.4	13.9	9.0		
Girls – Black (N = 400)	36.5	25.8	11.3	8.0	2.8	12.3	3.5		

Young people's formats of writing

Table 9: Formats of writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background (Part 1)

What do you write or	What do you write outside of class at least once a month (not counting stuff you write for school)?										
	Text messages	Social networking messages	Emails	Instant messages	Notes	Letters	Lyrics				
	<u></u> %	<u></u> %	%	<u></u> %	%	%	<u></u> %				
All	69.4	51.6	47.4	45.2	34.9	28.9	25.7				
Boys	64.9	48.9	44.7	41.0	25.6	23.8	16.3				
Girls	73.9	54.4	50.1	49.5	44.1	34.1	35.2				
KS2	37.5	18.6	30.1	18.6	34.7	45.2	31.1				
кsз	76.2	57.1	51.2	49.8	35.5	26.4	25.3				
KS4	80.7	70.3	52.9	59.6	32.3	19.1	21.0				
FSM	64.0	49.4	44.6	43.3	34.6	32.8	30.2				
Non-FSM	71.9	53.6	48.7	46.8	35.1	27.7	24.8				
White	74.7	55.9	49.5	47.6	36.6	29.6	26.0				
Mixed	69.8	52.2	47.4	46.5	37.1	33.5	31.8				
Asian	61.6	44.7	55.1	47.9	37.3	32.0	24.5				
Black	61.6	48.1	51.5	49.0	38.3	35.6	41.0				
Boys – KS2	35.2	19.8	29.8	17.8	28.2	40.1	20.2				
Girls – KS2	39.6	17.4	30.4	19.4	40.9	50.1	41.5				
Boys – KS3	70.9	53.3	47.3	44.4	25.8	21.0	15.5				
Girls – KS3	81.7	60.9	55.2	55.2	45.5	32.0	35.3				
Boys – KS4	76.0	65.5	51.8	54.4	21.8	15.8	14.9				
Girls – KS4	85.5	75.2	54.0	64.8	42.8	22.4	27.1				
Boys - FSM	57.6	45.7	41.4	38.4	23.3	25.6	18.4				
Girls – FSM	69.9	52.8	47.5	47.8	44.9	39.3	41.1				
Boys - Non-FSM	67.7	50.8	46.1	42.6	26.3	23.1	15.8				
Girls - Non-FSM	76.2	56.4	51.4	51.1	44.2	32.5	34.0				
Boys – White	69.7	52.2	46.4	42.9	27.0	24.4	16.1				
Girls – White	79.7	59.8	52.7	52.4	46.3	34.8	36.1				
Boys – Mixed	65.2	52.7	45.5	41.2	28.8	25.9	20.8				
Girls – Mixed	74.2	51.8	49.2	51.6	45.0	40.9	42.5				
Boys – Asian	61.6	48.1	52.9	46.6	27.9	26.8	19.5				

What do you write outside of class at least once a month (not counting stuff you write for school)?								
	Text messages	Social networking messages	Emails	Instant messages	Notes	Letters	Lyrics	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
All	69.4	51.6	47.4	45.2	34.9	28.9	25.7	
Girls – Asian	61.6	41.4	57.2	49.2	45.9	36.8	29.1	
Boys – Black	58.1	52.3	50.6	49.2	27.6	28.8	30.5	
Girls – Black	65.2	43.8	52.5	48.8	49.3	42.5	51.7	

Table 9: Formats of writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background (Part 2)

background (Fart 2)	Fiction	Diary	Poems	Blogs	Essays	Reviews
	%	%	%	%	%	%
All	23.7	23.2	16.0	14.2	12.6	10.5
Boys	19.1	10.9	11.1	13.1	12.2	10.6
Girls	28.4	35.6	20.9	15.2	13.1	10.5
KS2	34.0	32.8	33.1	15.1	7.5	13.9
KS3	22.9	22.2	12.7	14.0	12.5	10.2
KS4	14.4	15.6	8.3	13.9	19.4	7.6
FSM	24.6	26.2	20.6	15.0	12.4	12.1
Non-FSM	23.4	22.5	14.4	14.0	12.9	10.1
White	24.0	23.4	15.3	14.7	12.2	10.1
Mixed	28.5	27.3	20.7	15.6	15.7	13.8
Asian	29.2	29.6	21.6	15.0	18.7	16.0
Black	32.1	30.1	28.7	16.9	24.3	17.5
Boys – KS2	28.9	20.9	25.3	15.6	7.6	13.5
Girls – KS2	38.9	44.2	40.6	14.6	7.4	14.3
Boys – KS3	18.2	9.1	8.0	12.6	12.1	10.3
Girls – KS3	27.7	35.6	17.4	15.4	13.0	10.1
Boys – KS4	10.8	6.2	6.7	12.5	17.9	8.1
Girls – KS4	18.0	24.9	9.8	15.3	20.9	7.2
Boys - FSM	19.3	11.7	13.6	13.8	11.2	11.3
Girls - FSM	29.4	39.4	27.1	16.1	13.5	12.8
Boys - Non-FSM	19.0	10.5	10.2	12.9	12.6	10.4
Girls - Non-FSM	27.9	34.6	18.7	15.1	13.2	9.9
Boys – White	19.3	10.6	10.1	13.7	11.7	10.6
Girls – White	28.7	36.5	20.4	15.7	12.7	9.5
Boys – Mixed	22.6	15.2	15.2	14.4	16.5	12.5
Girls – Mixed	34.1	38.5	26.0	16.7	14.9	15.1
Boys – Asian	22.9	15.8	17.3	15.5	16.8	15.0
Girls – Asian	35.0	42.2	25.5	14.6	20.4	16.8
Boys – Black	27.1	16.5	22.5	15.7	23.7	14.8
Girls – Black	37.3	44.0	35.1	18.2	24.9	20.4

Young people's attitudes towards writing

Table 10.1: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – The more I write the better my writing gets

The more I write, the better		,	3 3 3	-
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %
All (N = 19,325)	75.2	12.7	6.5	5.7
Boys (N = 9,634)	73.3	13.9	7.5	5.3
Girls (N = 9,691)	77.2	11.6	5.2	6.0
KS2 (N = 3,612)	85.5	5.9	4.3	4.3
KS3 (N = 12,823)	75.1	13.0	6.1	5.8
KS4 (N = 2,826)	63.2	20.1	9.8	6.9
FSM (N = 2,851)	71.1	11.7	7.5	6.7
Non-FSM (N = 15,324)	75.4	13.1	6.1	5.4
White (N = 14,923)	74.4	13.3	6.6	5.6
Mixed (N = 958)	79.1	10.8	5.0	5.1
Asian (N = 1,410)	79.9	10.1	4.5	5.5
Black (N = 786)	82.6	8.3	4.8	4.3
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,761)	83.5	6.8	5.3	4.4
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,851)	87.4	5.0	3.4	4.3
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,448)	73.1	14.2	7.3	5.4
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,375)	77.1	11.8	4.9	6.2
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,386)	61.4	21.0	11.3	6.3
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,440)	64.9	19.3	8.3	7.5
Boys – FSM (N = 1,339)	69.2	13.7	9.9	7.2
Girls – FSM (N = 1,512)	78.4	9.9	5.4	6.3
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,707)	73.9	14.1	7.0	4.9
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,617)	76.9	12.0	5.2	5.9
Boys – White (N = 7,501)	72.9	14.4	7.7	5.1
Girls – White (N = 7,422)	76.0	12.2	5.5	6.3
Boys – Mixed (N = 466)	74.7	12.4	6.4	6.4
Girls – Mixed (N = 492)	83.3	9.1	3.7	3.9
Boys – Asian (N = 669)	77.0	11.4	6.4	5.2
Girls – Asian (N = 741)	82.6	8.9	2.8	5.7
Boys - Black (N = 401)	78.1	10.2	7.0	4.7
Girls – Black (N = 385)	87.3	6.2	2.6	3.9

Table 10.2: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic

Writing is more fun when y	ou can choose the	topic		
-	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %
All (N = 19,296)	73.5	13.9	6.9	5.8
Boys (N = 9,605)	73.1	13.6	8.0	5.4
Girls (N = 9,691)	73.9	14.1	5.8	6.2
KS2 (N = 3,576)	77.5	8.8	7.1	6.6
KS3 (N = 12,830)	73.9	14.0	6.6	5.5
KS4 (N = 2,826)	66.8	19.7	7.7	5.8
FSM (N = 2,843)	70.1	14.1	8.1	7.7
Non-FSM (N = 15,306)	74.2	14.0	6.6	5.2
White (N = 14,909)	74.1	13.8	6.7	5.3
Mixed (N = 958)	72.8	13.6	7.6	6.1
Asian (N = 1,406)	70.6	15.1	6.8	7.6
Black (N = 775)	74.6	13.3	7.4	4.8
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,732)	77.3	9.1	8.1	5.5
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,844)	77.8	8.4	6.2	7.6
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,447)	73.8	13.4	7.7	5.1
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,383)	74.1	14.5	5.5	5.9
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,388)	65.1	20.0	9.0	6.0
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,438)	68.4	19.4	6.5	5.7
Boys – FSM (N = 1,332)	66.7	14.9	9.8	8.6
Girls – FSM (N = 1,511)	73.0	13.4	6.6	6.9
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,689)	74.3	13.5	7.6	4.6
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,617)	74.1	14.5	5.6	5.8
Boys – White (N = 7,484)	74.3	13.4	7.6	4.7
Girls – White (N = 7,425)	73.9	14.3	5.9	5.9
Boys – Mixed (N = 469)	71.2	13.6	8.6	6.8
Girls – Mixed (N = 489)	74.2	13.5	7.0	5.3
Boys – Asian (N = 666)	66.5	14.6	10.2	8.7
Girls – Asian (N = 740)	74.2	15.5	3.6	6.6
Boys - Black (N = 391)	73.1	14.6	7.7	4.6
Girls – Black (N = 384)	76.0	12.0	7.0	4.9

Table 10.3: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – A pupil who writes well gets better marks

A pupil who writes well gets better marks								
-	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %				
All (N = 19,310)	57.7	22.6	10.9	8.8				
Boys (N = 9,607)	60.8	21.5	10.7	7.0				
Girls (N = 9,703)	54.6	23.8	11.1	10.5				
KS2 (N = 3,604)	61.3	15.6	12.2	11.0				
KS3 (N = 12,825)	57.7	23.9	10.1	8.4				
KS4 (N = 2,817)	53.1	25.9	13.1	7.9				
FSM (N = 2,855)	57.0	19.6	12.2	11.2				
Non-FSM (N = 15,299)	57.7	23.5	10.8	8.1				
White (N = 14,924)	57.4	22.9	11.0	8.7				
Mixed (N = 962)	59.9	20.9	11.1	8.1				
Asian (N = 1,402)	60.3	21.4	10.0	8.3				
Black (N = 781)	58.8	20.2	12.3	8.7				
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,748)	63.4	15.4	12.1	9.0				
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,856)	59.3	15.7	12.2	12.8				
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,442)	61.5	22.2	9.8	6.5				
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,383)	53.8	25.6	10.3	10.2				
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,379)	54.2	35.7	13.1	6.9				
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,438)	52.1	26.1	13.0	8.8				
Boys – FSM (N = 1,337)	59.3	19.2	11.7	9.8				
Girls – FSM (N = 1,518)	54.9	19.9	12.6	12.5				
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,684)	61.0	22.0	10.6	6.3				
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,615)	54.3	24.9	10.9	9.9				
Boys – White (N = 7,488)	60.8	21.8	10.8	6.6				
Girls – White (N = 7,436)	53.9	24.1	11.2	10.7				
Boys - Mixed (N = 467) Girls - Mixed (N = 495)	62.7 57.2	19.3 22.4	10.3 11.9	7.7 8.5				
Boys – Asian (N = 666)	63.7	19.5	9.8	7.1				
Girls – Asian (N = 736)	57.2	23.1	10.2	9.5				
Boys - Black (N = 394)	58.4	18.8	13.5	9.4				
Girls – Black (N = 387)	59.2	21.7	11.1	8.0				

Table 10.4: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – It is easier to read than it is to write

It is easier to read than it is	to write			
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %
All (N = 19,283)	50.4	26.0	15.6	8.0
Boys (N = 9,601)	56.2	23.0	14.5	6.4
Girls (N = 9,682)	44.6	29.0	16.7	9.6
KS2 (N = 3,594)	55.8	19.1	14.7	10.4
KS3 (N = 12,804)	49.8	27.0	15.6	7.6
KS4 (N = 2,820)	46.3	30.6	16.4	6.7
FSM (N = 2,846)	48.7	25.1	17.0	9.2
Non-FSM (N = 15,287)	50.5	26.5	15.4	7.5
White (N = 14,909)	49.9	26.4	16.0	7.7
Mixed (N = 957)	53.9	23.9	14.7	7.4
Asian (N = 1,402)	55.6	24.3	11.3	8.8
Black (N = 778)	53.3	24.8	14.4	7.5
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,751)	62.0	16.3	13.9	7.8
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,843)	50.0	21.6	15.5	12.8
Boys – KS3 $(N = 6,427)$	56.1	23.5	14.5	5.9
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,377)	43.4	30.5	16.8	9.3
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,384)	49.6	29.0	15.0	6.4
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,436)	43.1	32.0	17.8	7.1
Boys – FSM (N = 1,331)	56.0	21.6	14.0	8.3
Girls – FSM (N = 1,515)	42.2	28.1	19.7	10.0
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,682)	56.2	23.5	14.6	5.8
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,605)	44.8	29.6	16.3	9.3
Boys – White (N = 7,489)	55.9	23.5	14.6	5.9
Girls – White (N = 7,420)	43.8	29.3	17.3	9.5
Boys – Mixed (N = 468)	59.8	19.9	13.7	6.6
Girls - Mixed (N = 489)	48.3	27.8	15.7	8.2
Boys - Asian (N = 661)	62.0	18.9	11.0	8.0
Girls – Asian (N = 741)	49.8	29.0	11.6	9.6
Boys - Black (N = 391)	57.5	22.0	14.8	5.6
Girls - Black (N = 387)	49.1	27.6	14.0	9.3

Table 10.5: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – If I am good at writing, I'll get a better job

If I am good at writing, I'll ge	et a better job			
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %
All (N = 19,345)	47.9	28.6	12.5	11.0
Boys (N = 9,613)	49.5	28.0	13.0	9.5
Girls (N = 9,732)	46.3	29.2	12.0	12.5
KS2 (N = 3,603)	62.6	16.2	9.9	11.3
KS3 (N = 12,853)	46.9	30.4	11.7	10.9
KS4 (N = 2,826)	33.8	36.1	19.0	11.1
FSM (N = 2,860)	50.9	24.7	11.9	12.4
Non-FSM (N = 15,335)	46.9	29.8	12.8	10.5
White (N = 14,934)	46.9	29.4	13.1	10.6
Mixed (N = 962)	52.0	28.0	10.1	10.0
Asian (N = 1,409)	53.1	25.1	9.5	12.3
Black (N = 788)	53.2	24.4	11.3	11.2
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,744)	63.9	16.1	10.2	9.8
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,859)	61.4	16.3	9.6	12.7
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,447)	48.8	29.3	12.3	9.3
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,406)	45.0	31.5	11.1	12.3
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,384)	34.6	37.2	19.3	8.9
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,442)	32.9	35.0	18.8	13.2
Boys – FSM (N = 1,340)	51.8	24.8	12.4	11.0
Girls – FSM (N = 1,520)	50.2	24.7	11.5	13.6
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,690)	48.8	29.2	13.2	8.9
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,645)	45.1	30.5	12.4	12.0
Boys – White (N = 7,489)	49.0	28.7	13.4	9.0
Girls – White (N = 7,445)	44.8	30.1	12.8	12.3
Boys – Mixed (N = 472)	51.9	26.7	12.5	8.9
Girls – Mixed (N = 490)	52.0	29.2	7.8	11.0
Boys – Asian (N = 662)	53.2	25.5	9.7	11.6
Girls – Asian (N = 747)	53.0	24.8	9.4	12.9
Boys - Black (N = 398)	51.8	24.4	14.3	9.5
Girls - Black (N = 390)	54.6	24.4	8.2	12.8

Table 10.6: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I have trouble deciding what to write

	Overall	Neither agree nor	Overall	Not sure
	agreement %	disagree %	disagreement %	%
All (N = 19,285)	41.7	27.6	22.8	8.0
Boys (N = 9,599)	42.5	27.8	22.6	7.0
Girls (N = 9,686)	40.8	27.3	22.9	9.0
KS2 (N = 3,574)	43.8	20.6	25.5	10.1
KS3 (N = 12,818)	40.6	29.0	22.6	7.8
KS4 (N = 2,828)	43.9	29.7	20.0	6.3
FSM (N = 2,862)	44.0	26.0	20.8	9.2
Non-FSM (N = 15,279)	41.0	28.2	23.2	7.6
White (N = 14,897)	42.8	27.6	22.0	7.6
Mixed (N = 953)	39.9	26.8	25.1	8.3
Asian (N = 1,409)	33.5	29.8	27.4	9.3
Black (N = 777)	36.9	26.0	29.5	7.6
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,734)	46.4	21.2	24.3	8.0
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,840)	41.3	19.9	26.6	12.1
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,439)	41.5	29.1	22.4	7.0
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,379)	39.6	28.9	22.8	8.7
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,387)	42.5	29.8	21.6	6.1
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,441)	45.2	29.6	18.6	6.5
Boys – FSM (N = 1,337)	45.8	25.2	20.8	8.2
Girls – FSM (N = 1,525)	42.4	26.8	20.8	10.0
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,680)	41.8	28.6	23.0	6.6
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,599)	40.2	27.8	23.4	8.5
Boys – White (N = 7,472)	43.8	28.0	21.7	6.6
Girls – White (N = 7,425)	41.9	27.2	22.3	8.6
Boys - Mixed (N = 468)	42.9	25.4	23.7	7.9
Girls – Mixed (N = 485)	36.9	28.0	26.4	8.7
Boys – Asian (N = 672)	35.7	29.2	27.7	7.4
Girls – Asian (N = 737)	31.5	30.4	27.1	11.0
Boys - Black (N = 390)	37.2	27.2	29.0	6.7
Girls – Black (N = 387)	36.7	24.8	30.0	8.5

Table 10.7: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Compared to others, I am a good writer

Compared to others, I am a good writer					
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %	
AII (N = 19,307)	31.0	33.3	17.6	18.1	
Boys (N = 9,603)	32.3	33.2	19.7	14.9	
Girls (N = 9,704)	29.8	33.5	15.5	21.2	
KS2 (N = 3,601)	47.6	22.0	13.9	16.6	
KS3 (N = 12,822)	28.1	35.2	17.9	18.8	
KS4 (N = 2,820)	22.9	39.6	20.7	16.8	
FSM (N = 2,850)	31.9	30.3	19.2	18.6	
Non-FSM (N = 15,315)	30.4	34.4	17.4	17.8	
White (N = 14,905)	29.6	33.9	18.6	17.8	
Mixed (N = 960)	36.4	31.5	13.5	18.6	
Asian (N = 1,413)	33.8	34.4	13.2	18.7	
Black (N = 783)	45.1	27.3	12.1	15.5	
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,744)	47.8	22.4	15.9	13.9	
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,857)	47.3	21.6	12.0	19.1	
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,440)	29.5	34.8	20.4	15.2	
Girls – KS3 $(N = 6,382)$	26.7	35.5	15.4	22.4	
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,380)	25.4	39.3	21.2	14.0	
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,440)	20.4	39.9	20.3	19.4	
Boys – FSM (N = 1,336)	32.6	29.3	22.2	15.9	
Girls – FSM (N = 1,514)	31.3	31.2	16.5	21.0	
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,685)	32.0	34.3	19.3	14.4	
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,630)	28.9	34.5	15.4	21.2	
Boys – White (N = 7,480)	30.7	33.9	21.1	14.3	
Girls – White (N = 7,425)	28.5	33.9	16.2	21.4	
Boys – Mixed (N = 467)	38.3	29.6	14.3	17.8	
Girls – Mixed (N = 493)	34.5	33.3	12.8	19.5	
Boys – Asian (N = 668)	37.1	32.2	14.1	16.6	
Girls – Asian (N = 745)	30.7	36.4	12.3	20.5	
Boys – Black (N = 394)	44.4	29.7	12.7	13.2	
Girls - Black (N = 389)	45.8	24.9	11.6	17.7	

Table 10.8: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys

Girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys					
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %	
All (N = 19,325)	27.3	27.5	31.4	13.8	
Boys (N = 9,628)	31.5	26.8	29.1	12.5	
Girls (N = 9,697)	23.2	28.1	33.7	15.0	
KS2 (N = 3,595)	34.4	18.9	33.6	13.1	
KS3 (N = 12,849)	26.3	29.0	30.8	14.0	
KS4 (N = 2,817)	23.3	31.6	31.6	13.5	
FSM (N = 2,856)	31.1	24.3	28.9	15.7	
Non-FSM (N = 15,321)	26.2	28.3	32.2	13.3	
White (N = 14,924)	26.9	28.1	31.4	13.6	
Mixed (N = 954)	27.0	28.1	31.4	13.4	
Asian (N = 1,408)	28.1	24.5	33.0	14.5	
Black (N = 784)	33.0	22.7	31.9	12.4	
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,742)	35.3	18.7	34.1	11.9	
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,853)	33.5	19.2	33.1	14.2	
Boys – KS3 $(N = 6,468)$	31.3	28.0	28.0	12.7	
Girls – KS3 $(N = 6,381)$	21.2	29.9	33.6	15.3	
Boys – KS4 $(N = 1,379)$	27.7	31.5	28.2	12.5	
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,438)	19.1	31.6	34.9	14.4	
Boys – FSM (N = 1,341)	34.9	23.7	26.3	15.1	
Girls – FSM (N = 1,515)	27.8	24.9	31.2	16.2	
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,700)	30.8	27.6	29.6	12.0	
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,621)	21.5	29.0	34.9	14.6	
Boys - White (N = 7,488)	31.6	27.7	28.6	12.1	
Girls – White (N = 7,436)	22.2	28.5	34.2	15.1	
Boys - Mixed (N = 468) Girls - Mixed (N = 486)	27.1 27.0	24.8 31.3	34.6	13.5	
Boys – Asian (N = 671)	32.5	23.5	30.3	13.4	
Girls – Asian (N = 737)	24.0	25.4	35.4	15.2	
Boys - Black (N = 399)	33.1	21.8	32.6	12.5	
Girls – Black (N = 385)	33.0	23.6	31.2	12.2	

Table 10.9: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Writing is cool

Writing is cool	a Witting 13 C			
- ,				
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure %
All (N = 19,330)	25.5	37.3	25.9	11.3
Boys (N = 9,638)	20.7	37.1	32.4	9.9
Girls (N = 9,692)	30.2	37.5	19.5	12.8
KS2 (N = 3,614)	52.1	20.4	17.2	10.3
KS3 (N = 12,828)	20.5	39.8	27.8	12.0
KS4 (N = 2,823)	13.9	47.5	28.7	9.9
FSM (N = 2,858)	29.4	31.3	27.9	11.5
Non-FSM (N = 15,324)	23.9	39.1	25.8	11.2
White (N = 14,918)	23.3	30.5	27.2	11.0
Mixed (N = 960)	32.0	32.6	22.2	13.2
Asian (N = 1,411)	36.2	35.0	16.9	11.8
Black (N = 779)	41.1	31.1	18.0	9.9
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,755)	45.1	21.9	23.0	10.0
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,859)	58.7	19.0	11.7	10.7
Boys – KS3 $(N = 6,460)$	15.9	39.7	34.4	10.0
Girls – KS3 $(N = 6,368)$	25.1	40.0	21.0	13.9
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,384)	11.6	44.6	34.8	9.1
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,489)	16.2	50.2	22.9	10.6
Boys – FSM (N = 1,343)	24.7	29.4	35.4	10.5
Girls – FSM (N = 1,515)	33.5	33.0	21.2	12.3
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,709)	19.0	39.0	32.2	9.7
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,615)	28.7	39.3	19.3	12.7
Boys – White (N = 7,502)	18.8	38.1	33.8	9.3
Girls – White (N = 7,416)	27.9	38.9	20.5	12.7
Boys – Mixed (N = 468)	24.4	31.4	30.8	13.5
Girls – Mixed (N = 492)	39.2	33.7	14.0	13.0
Boys – Asian (N = 669)	29.6	36.9	23.6	9.9
Girls – Asian (N = 742)	42.2	33.3	10.9	13.6
Boys – Black (N = 396)	36.4	31.6	22.5	9.6
Girls - Black (N = 383)	46.0	30.5	13.3	10.2

Table 10.10: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I write in "txt" speak in class

I write in "txt" speak in class					
-	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure	
All (N = 19,223)	14.0	14.4	58.2	13.4	
Boys (N = 9,557)	14.8	16.0	55.2	14.0	
Girls (N = 9,666)	13.1	12.7	61.2	12.9	
KS2 (N = 3,542)	19.5	13.0	42.7	24.7	
KS3 (N = 12,788)	13.4	15.1	59.9	11.6	
KS4 (N = 2,828)	9.5	12.6	70.1	7.7	
FSM (N = 2,841)	22.0	16.3	45.2	16.5	
Non-FSM (N = 15,244)	12.3	16.3	45.2	16.5	
White (N = 14,853)	13.0	13.9	60.3	12.8	
Mixed (N = 950)	18.0	16.0	50.5	15.5	
Asian (N = 1,397)	17.8	16.5	51.7	14.0	
Black (N = 773)	18.4	15.1	54.1	12.4	
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,722)	20.8	14.1	39.7	25.5	
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,820)	18.3	12.0	45.7	24.0	
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,412)	14.2	16.5	57.2	12.1	
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,376)	12.6	13.8	62.5	11.1	
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,384)	10.4	16.3	64.8	8.5	
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,444)	8.7	9.0	75.2	7.1	
Boys – FSM (N = 1,334)	22.3	19.0	41.8	17.0	
Girls – FSM (N = 1,507)	21.7	14.0	48.3	16.0	
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,640)	13.4	15.5	58.5	12.6	
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,604)	11.1	12.4	64.8	11.6	
Boys – White (N = 7,444)	13.6	15.7	57.4	13.4	
Girls – White (N = 7,409)	12.4	12.1	63.3	12.3	
Boys – Mixed (N = 464)	20.5	17.0	46.8	15.7	
Girls – Mixed (N = 486)	15.6	15.0	54.1	15.2	
Boys – Asian (N = 663)	21.0	16.9	48.1	14.0	
Girls – Asian (N = 734)	14.9	16.2	54.9	14.0	
Boys - Black (N = 393)	19.6	15.3	52.4	12.7	
Girls - Black (N = 380)	17.1	15.0	55.8	12.1	

Table 10.11: Attitudes towards writing in 2011 for whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write

I would be embarrassed if f	vould be embarrassed if friends saw me write				
	Overall agreement %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Overall disagreement %	Not sure	
All (N = 19,309)	13.8	18.3	59.3	8.7	
Boys (N = 9,611)	16.4	20.3	54.7	8.6	
Girls (N = 9,698)	11.2	16.4	63.8	8.7	
KS2 (N = 3,604)	17.3	11.8	62.4	8.5	
KS3 (N = 12,818)	13.8	19.5	57.8	8.9	
KS4 (N = 2,823)	9.3	21.2	62.1	7.4	
FSM (N = 2,856)	16.6	16.2	58.1	9.2	
Non-FSM (N = 15,299)	13.0	18.9	59.8	8.2	
White (N = 14,928)	14.1	19.0	58.3	8.6	
Mixed (N = 959)	13.3	17.2	60.9	8.6	
Asian (N = 1,404)	11.3	14.1	66.8	7.8	
Black (N = 777)	10.4	14.5	68.2	6.8	
Boys – KS2 (N = 1,748)	20.2	12.7	58.3	8.8	
Girls – KS2 (N = 1,856)	14.6	10.9	66.2	8.2	
Boys – KS3 (N = 6,445)	16.4	21.5	53.3	8.7	
Girls – KS3 (N = 6,373)	11.1	17.5	62.2	9.2	
Boys – KS4 (N = 1,380)	11.7	24.3	56.4	7.7	
Girls – KS4 (N = 1,443)	7.0	18.3	67.6	7.1	
Boys – FSM (N = 1,340)	19.5	18.1	54.0	8.7	
Girls – FSM (N = 1,516)	14.1	14.4	61.6	9.9	
Boys – Non-FSM (N = 7,688)	15.7	21.0	55.1	8.2	
Girls – Non-FSM (N = 7,611)	10.3	16.8	64.6	8.3	
Boys – White (N = 7,485)	16.6	21.2	54.0	8.2	
Girls – White (N = 7,443)	11.6	16.8	62.6	9.0	
Boys - Mixed (N = 455)	18.2	16.5	54.7	10.5	
Girls – Mixed (N = 493)	8.7	17.8	66.7	6.7	
Boys - Asian (N = 668)	13.9	17.1	60.0	9.0	
Girls – Asian (N = 736)	8.8	11.4	73.0	6.8	
Boys - Black (N = 395)	13.9	16.2	62.4	7.6	
Girls - Black (N = 381)	6.8	12.9	74.3	6.0	

Young people and writing in 2011 – Attainment data

Attainment data for writing were available for 6,850 KS2 pupils (aged 8 to 11 in our sample) and KS3 pupils (aged 11 to 14). Since our attainment data contained a varied set of levels and spanned young people aged 9 to 14, we standardised the data to form three crude categories to be applied to all ages: below expected level for their age, at expected level for their age and above expected level for their age.

Nearly 8 in 10 young people write at the expected level for their age (63.2%) or above the expected level for their age (17.1%). However, 2 in 10 (19.7%) write below the expected level for their age, which is slightly lower than the national average (81% achieved the expected level in writing at KS1¹² and 75% achieved the expected level in writing at KS2¹³ in 2011).

The relationships with writing attainment are displayed in two ways. The first table in each section takes the writing variable as a starting point and explores how it is related to writing attainment. The second table in each section then takes the writing attainment categories as a starting point and explores how each are related to the writing variable.

Writing attainment and young people's enjoyment of writing

Table 11 and 12 show that there is a clear relationship between writing attainment and enjoyment of writing.

Young people who enjoy writing very much are more likely to write above the level expected for their age, with nearly half of young people who enjoy writing very much writing above the expected level, over two-fifths writing at the expected level and only 5% writing below the expected level for their age (see **Table 11**).

By contrast and almost like a mirror image, of those young people who do not enjoy writing at all, half write below the expected level and two-fifths at the expected level. Only 6% of young people who do not enjoy writing at all write above the expected level for their age.

Table 11: Enjoyment of writing and writing attainment (N = 6.850)

	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Very much	5.2	45.8	49.0
Quite a lot	7.9	75.1	17.0
A bit	24.0	69.8	6.2
Not at all	50.9	42.7	6.4

Similarly, of those young people who write below the expected level for their age nearly half enjoy writing a bit, while over a third don't enjoy writing at all (see **Table 12**). Only 5% of young people who write below the expected level enjoy writing very much compared with ten times as many young people who write above the expected level for their age. Overall, over 80% of young people who write above the expected level for their age enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot. However, 14% only enjoy writing a bit, while 5% of those who write above the expected level do not enjoy writing at all.

¹² http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001022/index.shtml

http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001018/index.shtml

Table 12: Writing attainment and enjoyment of writing (N = 6,850)

	Very much %	Quite a lot %	A bit %	Not at all %
Below expected level	4.7	11.8	47.4	36.1
At expected level	12.9	35.0	42.7	9.4
Above expected level	51.4	29.4	14.0	5.2

Writing attainment and young people's self-perceived writing ability

Table 13 shows that young people's own perceptions of their writing ability generally tend to mirror their actual writing attainment. Of those who did not rate themselves as very good writers, 72% write below the level expected for their age, while over a quarter actually write at the expected level. Over half of young people who rate themselves as very good writers write above the expected level for their age, while 46% write at the level expected for their age.

Table 13: Self-perceived writing ability and writing attainment (N = 6.850)

	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Not a very good writer	71.9	27.8	0.3
Average writer	24.1	67.7	8.2
Very good writer	0.5	45.5	54.0

Similarly, **Table 14** shows that young people who write below the expected level for their age are more likely to say that they are not a very good writer, and those who write at or above the expected level are more likely to say that they are average or very good writers.

Table 14: Writing attainment and self-perceived writing ability (N = 6,850)

	Not a very good writer	Average writer	Very good writer	
	%	%	%	
Below expected level for their age	58.9	38.6	2.5	
At expected level for their age	3.1	76.6	20.3	
Above expected level for their age	0.6	16.8	82.6	

Writing attainment and young people's writing frequency

Young people's writing skills are related to the frequency with which they write.

Table 15 shows that the proportion of young people who are in the highest achievement category declines as the frequency with which they write outside of class declines. While 27% of

young people who write every day write above the level expected for their age, only 5 to 8% of young people who write rarely or never write at that level. Overall, nearly half of those who never write outside of class write below the level expected for their age.

Table 15: Writing frequency and writing attainment (N = 6,850)

	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Every day	12.0	61.2	26.8
A few times a week	15.6	66.8	17.7
About once a week	17.4	69.5	13.1
A few times a month	18.6	68.5	12.9
About once a month	23.2	63.4	13.4
Rarely	29.9	62.2	7.9
Never	46.7	48.2	5.1

Similarly, **Table 16** shows that 2.5 times as many young people who write above the expected level write every day compared with young people who write below the expected level for their age. Conversely, young people who write below the expected level for their age were three times more likely to say that they rarely or never write (41.5%) compared with young people who write above the level expected for their age (13.5%).

Table 16: Writing attainment and writing frequency (N = 6,850)

	Every day %	Few times a week %	Once a week %	Few times a month %	Once a month %	Rarely %	Never %
Below expected level	16.4	21.7	8.3	7.5	4.6	27.1	14.4
At expected level	25.9	28.9	10.4	8.6	3.9	17.5	4.8
Above expected level	41.9	28.3	7.2	6.0	3.1	8.3	5.2

Writing attainment and young people's writing formats

Table 17 shows that there are certain types of material that were associated with higher writing attainment. These are writing poems, fiction and reviews outside of class as well as keeping a diary.

Table 17: Types of material written outside of class at least once a month and writing attainment (N = 6.850)

attainment (N = 0,0	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Text messages	18.9	65.8	15.3
Social networking messages	18.4	66.9	14.7
Emails	17.4	65.4	17.2
Instant messages	18.0	66.5	15.5
Notes	14.9	64.2	20.8
Letters	15.1	59.7	25.2
Lyrics	15.6	59.9	24.5
Fiction	10.9	60.1	29.0
Diary	12.4	60.5	27.1
Poems	13.0	54.5	32.5
Blogs	16.1	60.3	23.6
Essays	13.0	63.7	23.3
Reviews	13.1	58.1	28.8

Similarly, **Table 18** shows that young people who write above the level expected for their age are nearly twice as likely to say that they write notes, letters, lyrics, blogs, essays and reviews as young people who write below their expected level, and three times as likely to say that they write fiction, poems and write in a diary outside of class.

Table 18: Writing attainment and formats written outside of class at least once a month (N = 6,850)

	Text messages	Social network messages	Emails	Instant messages	Notes	Letters	Lyrics
Below expected level	69.1	50.3	43.7	43.2	27.5	23.1	21.2
At expected level	75.2	56.9	51.0	49.6	36.9	28.4	25.3
Above expected level	64.8	46.1	49.6	42.7	44.4	44.4	38.3

	Fiction	Diary	Poems	Blogs	Essays	Reviews
Below expected level	13.7	15.2	10.9	12.0	8.7	7.3
At expected level	23.5	23.2	14.2	14.0	13.3	10.0
Above expected level	42.0	38.4	31.4	20.3	18.0	18.4

Writing attainment and young people's attitudes towards writing

Table 19 shows that young people who hold more positive attitudes towards reading are also the ones who are more likely to read at or above the expected level for their age. For example, a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements" "Writing is more fun when one can choose the topic", "The more I write, the better my writing gets", "Compared with others I am a good writer" and "Writing is cool", write above the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with these statements.

Conversely, a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements: "I have trouble deciding what to write", "I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write" and "I write in "txt" speak in class", write below the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with those statements.

Table 19: Percentage agreement and disagreement with attitudinal items and writing attainment (N = 6,850)

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
The more I write, the	Agreement	14.8	65.5	19.7
better my writing gets	Disagreement	43.3	47.0	9.7
Writing is more fun when	Agreement	15.6	65.6	18.7
you can choose the topic	Disagreement	36.4	50.8	12.8
A pupil who writes well	Agreement	19.2	62.3	18.5
gets better marks	Disagreement	19.6	63.4	17.0
It is easier to read than it	Agreement	21.7	64.8	13.5
is to write	Disagreement	18.8	59.8	21.4
If I'm good at writing it means I'll get a better job	Agreement	16.9	61.3	21.8
when I grow up	Disagreement	26.3	61.9	11.8
I have trouble deciding	Agreement	27.7	60.1	12.2
what to write	Disagreement	9.9	60.8	29.3

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Compared with others, I	Agreement	5.8	55.8	38.4
am a good writer	Disagreement	53.3	43.3	3.4
Girls tend to enjoy writing	Agreement	21.7	59.6	18.7
more than boys	Disagreement	16.3	64.3	19.4
Writing is cool	Agreement	8.6	54.9	36.5
Writing is cool	Disagreement	34.0	58.7	7.4
I write in "txt" speak in	Agreement	25.6	53.3	21.0
class	Disagreement	15.5	67.5	17.0
I would be embarrassed if	Agreement	26.5	55.6	17.9
friends saw me write	Disagreement	15.9	65.3	18.8

Similarly, **Table 20** shows that young people who write above the expected level for their age are more likely than young people who write below the expected level to agree with the statements: "The more I write, the better my writing gets", "Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic", "A pupil who writes well gets better marks", "If I am good at writing, I will get a better job", "Compared with others, I am a good writer" and "Writing is cool". By contrast, young people who write below the expected level were more likely than those who write above the expected level to agree with the statements: "It is easier to read than it is to write", "I have trouble deciding what to write" and "I would be embarrassed if my friends saw me write".

Table 20: Writing attainment and attitudes towards writing (N = 6,850)

	The more I write writing	e, the better my g gets		e fun when you e the topic		rites well gets marks		ead than it is to ite
	Agee	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Below expected level	57.1	14.0	58.9	12.8	56.7	11.0	56.0	15.0
At expected level	77.6	4.7	76.0	5.5	56.6	10.9	51.4	14.7
Above expected level	87.3	3.6	81.2	5.2	62.8	10.9	40.0	19.6

Table 20 continued.

		writing means better job		deciding what vrite		n others, I am a writer		enjoy writing an boys
	Agee	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Below expected level	41.5	16.8	59.1	11.6	9.2	48.1	30.3	26.2
At expected level	46.1	12.2	39.4	21.8	27.1	12.0	25.6	31.8
Above expected level	61.2	8.7	30.0	39.4	70.0	3.6	30.1	35.9

Table 20 continued.

	Writing is cool I write in "txt" speak in class		I write in "txt" speak in clas		I would be en friends say	nbarrassed if w me write
	Agee	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Below expected level	11.1	45.1	18.2	46.1	18.5	48.1
At expected level	21.9	24.0	11.7	61.9	12.0	61.0
Above expected level	54.6	11.3	17.4	59.0	14.5	66.0

Young people and writing in 2011 – Comparisons with 2010

This section provides information in graph form that compares broad level data for the sample as a whole from 2011 with the equivalent data from 2010¹⁴. It illustrates that levels of enjoyment of writing, writing frequency and attitudes towards writing have remained comparatively stable in the past two years.

Enjoyment of writing – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011

Figure 2 shows that the degree to which young people enjoy writing has remained relatively unchanged between 2010 and 2011. The proportion of young people who say that they enjoy writing very much has increased by half a percentage point in 2011 compared with 2010 and the proportion of young people who say that they do not enjoy reading at all has decreased by the same amount. These changes are not statistically significant.

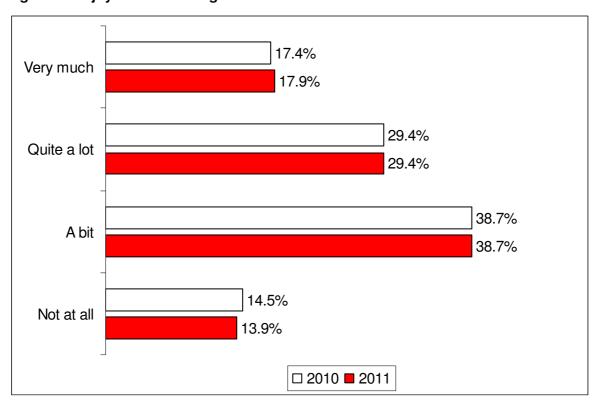


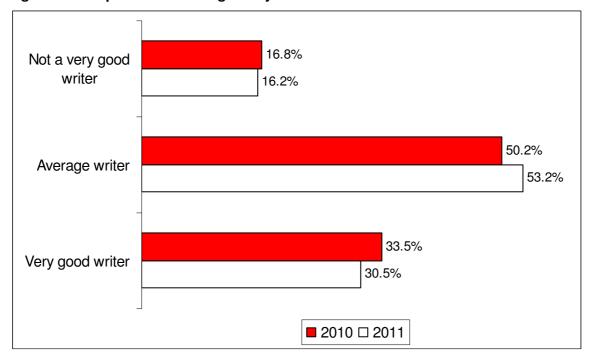
Figure 2: Enjoyment of writing in 2010 and 2011

¹⁴For 2010 data see here: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0001/2778/Attitudes towards Writing 2010.pdf

Self-perceived writing ability - Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011

Figure 3 shows that in 2011 a slightly greater proportion of young people saw themselves as an "average writer" compared with young people in 2010. Conversely, the proportion of young people who rated themselves to be "very good writers" in 2011 decreased slightly compared with young people in 2010.

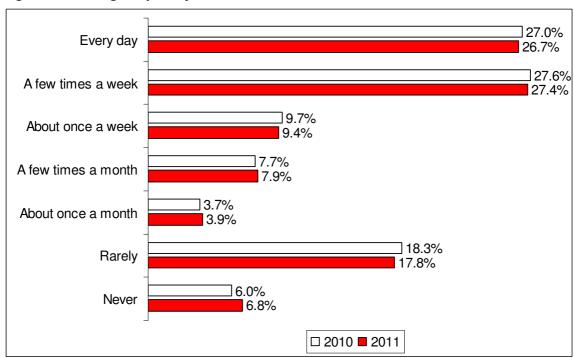
Figure 3: Self-perceived writing ability in 2010 and 2011



Writing frequency – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011

Figure 4 shows that in 2011 young people engaged in a similar amount of writing as in 2010.

Figure 4: Writing frequency in 2010 and 2011



Types of writing outside of class – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011

There were some noticeable changes in the types of writing done by young people outside of class between 2010 and 2011. **Figure 5** shows that young people in 2011 were slightly more likely to say that they write text messages compared with 2010. However, fewer young people in 2011 said that they write emails, instant messages and notes than in 2010.

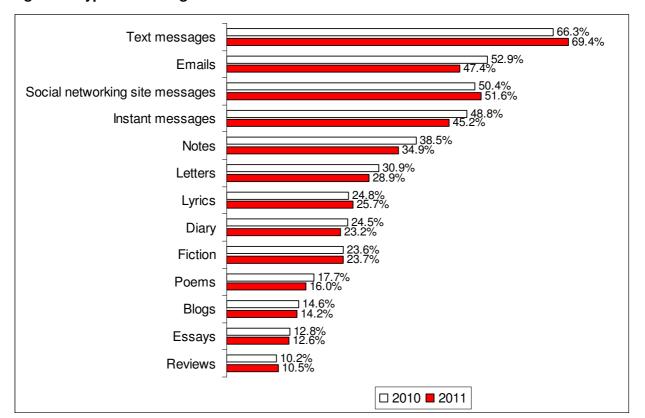
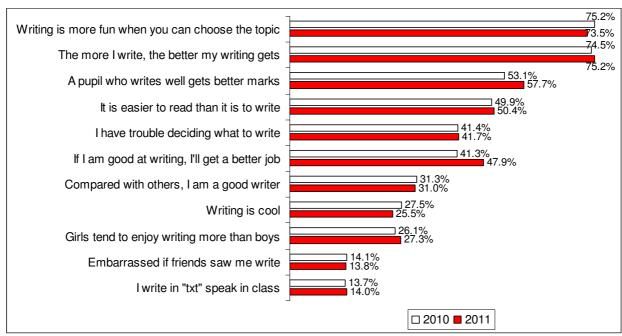


Figure 5: Types of writing in 2010 and 2011

Attitudes towards writing – Comparative analyses 2010 and 2011

Figure 6 shows that while most of the attitudes have remained stable between 2010 and 2011, there were two notable exceptions. Young people in 2011 were more likely than young people in 2010 to agree with the statement: "A pupil who writes well gets better marks". Young people in 2011 were also more likely than young people in 2010 to see a relationship between their writing skill and later chances of finding employment, with a greater proportion in 2011 agreeing with the statement: "If I am good at writing, I'll get a better job".

Figure 6: Attitudes towards writing in 2010 and 2011 (% agreement)



Appendix A: An introduction to the National Literacy Trust annual literacy survey

We have been surveying children and young people on all sorts of literacy matters since 2005. This has given us great insight into the views and attitudes of youngsters on reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, home resources, role models, perception of themselves as readers as well as technology use.

However, what is still lacking in the attitudinal landscape in the UK is annual data on how young people feel about literacy to help us build a continuous picture of their attitudes year-on-year. It is the purpose of the National Literacy Trust annual literacy survey to plug this gap in the evidence base.

Combining previous National Literacy Trust survey topics, the annual literacy survey explores young people's attitudes towards reading, writing and communication skills as well as their technology use. More specifically, the key objectives of the annual literacy survey are to explore:

- Whether young people enjoy reading, how good they think they are at reading, how often they read and for how long, what types of material they read outside of class, how many books they have in the home and what they think about reading.
- Whether young people enjoy writing, how good a writer they think they are, what
 makes a good writer, what types of material they write and what they think about
 writing.
- What they think are good communication skills, how they feel about them and how important they are to succeed.

Two additional areas were included in the second annual literacy survey, which are family involvement in reading and young people's perceptions of themselves as readers.

In addition to exploring children and young people's attitudes towards reading, writing and communication, we will also explore their link to attainment in a subsample of pupils for whom attainment data are available.

These objectives were further broken down into a number of questions. These included the following:

- Do reading enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?
- Do writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?
- Do attitudes towards communication skills and their perceived importance differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?

Appendix B: Methodology

An invitation to participate in this online survey was sent out in National Literacy Trust newsletters at the beginning of September 2011. Schools were invited to express their interest to participate in one of three surveys:

- 1) A simple survey (without attainment data or name field)
- 2) An amended survey with two attainment questions for pupils to fill in
- 3) An amended survey with a name field; schools were asked to send us the reading and writing attainment data for participating pupils

The basic online survey consisted of 43 questions exploring young people's background, reading and writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes, attitudes towards communication skills as well as questions about family involvement and being a reader (these latter two were new areas for the 2011 survey).

Due to the complexity of the questions and some concepts, the decision was made to restrict the age range of participating pupils to upper Key Stage 2 (9 to 11 years) and older. However, some schools felt that their 8-year-olds would be capable of completing the survey.

210 schools expressed an interest in taking part in one of the three surveys. A link to the online survey alongside guidance notes for teachers was emailed to the schools at the beginning of November. The survey was online between 14 November and 9 December 2011. It took an average of 25 minutes for young people to complete the survey. Schools were offered a school-specific summary report as an incentive to take part.

Participation rate

Of the 210 schools that had originally expressed an interest to take part 128 schools participated in our online survey; a participation rate of 61%. Of these, 115 were schools from England, four from Wales, three from Scotland and two from Northern Ireland. Four international English-speaking schools with a UK curriculum also took part. However, data from these international schools are not included in the analyses in this report.

Appendix C: Sample characteristics

Overall, 20,950 young people participated in this survey in November/December 2011. There was an equal gender split in the sample, with 50% of respondents being boys (N = 10,484) and 50% being girls (N = 10,466).

Table C1 shows that the majority of pupils were 11, 12 and 13 years old. To investigate the impact of age, three broad categories were identified according to key stages: KS2, KS3 and KS4. The KS2 category (31.1%, N = 6,468) refers to pupils aged 7 to 11, KS3 (54.2%, N = 11,261) refers to pupils aged 11 to 14, while KS4 (14.6%, N = 3,045) applies to pupils aged 14 to 16. Although some young people aged 17 (N = 94, 0.4%) and 18 (N = 82, 0.4%) took part too, the sample was too small and they are therefore not part of the analyses by key stage.

Table C1: Sample age

	%	N		%	N
8	5.6	1,180	13	17.1	3,702
9	6.7	1,410	14	8.5	1,785
10	6.9	1,441	15	4.5	950
11	23.6	4,937	16	1.5	310
12	24.1	5,059			

The percentage of pupils who receive free school meals (FSM), which is frequently used in educational research as a crude indicator of socioeconomic background, was 15.2%. The percentages of FSM uptake in this study are similar to the national average for primary and secondary pupils (19.2% and 15.9% respectively; DfE, 2011¹⁵).

When asked how they would describe their ethnic background, most pupils said that they were White British (76.7%, N = 14,176). The second and third most frequent ethnic categories in this sample were Asian or Asian British Pakistani (3.3%, N = 604) and White other (3.2%, N = 593). See **Table C2** for a full breakdown of ethnic background. Please note that 11.8% (N = 2,476) of the sample chose not to answer this question.

Table C2: Ethnic background

	%	N
White British	76.7	14,176
White Irish	1.5	270
White Traveller	0.3	58
White Romany	0.6	115
White other	3.2	593
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1.3	243
Mixed White and Black African	0.8	146
Mixed White and Asian	1.2	214
Mixed other	2.1	387

¹⁵ http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001012/sfr12-2011.pdf

	%	N
Asian or Asian British Indian	2.1	379
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	3.3	604
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1.0	190
Asian or Asian British Chinese	0.6	105
Asian or Asian British Other	1.0	180
Black Caribbean	1.1	205
Black African	2.5	463
Black other	0.8	147

(based on N = 18,474)

To make comparisons by ethnic group meaningful, we combined the subcategories to form "White", "Mixed", "Asian" and "Black" background categories. While this crude categorisation undoubtedly hides some important differences within ethnic backgrounds, it allowed for general differences to be obtained at this stage.