Children's and Young People's Reading Habits and Preferences

The who, what, why, where and when

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Executive summary

This report, based on a recent survey of over 8,000 primary and secondary pupils in England, explores why some pupils choose to read and others do not. The research literature shows that reading for pleasure benefits children in numerous ways. Yet, research also shows that young people's reading enjoyment may be declining. Given current political concerns about reading and the clear benefits that reading for pleasure can bring, it is vital that more emphasis is placed on reading enjoyment both at school and at home. The National Literacy Trust therefore conducted a survey for Reading Connects in 2005 to collect evidence about children's and young people's reading preferences and reading behaviours with the aim of supporting parents, teachers and other literacy professionals in promoting wider reading.

Key findings

- Half the sample of pupils said they enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot and rated themselves as proficient readers.
- The majority of pupils read every day or once/twice a week.
- Almost half the sample believed that they were reading enough. A fifth of pupils stated that not only were they not reading enough, but they also would not want to read more.
- Pupils generally held positive attitudes towards reading - agreeing with statements that reading is important and disagreeing with statements that reading is boring, hard, or for girls rather than boys.
- Pupils indicated reading a diverse range of materials outside class, which included texts other than books. When asked specifically about fiction preferences, adventure, comedy and horror/ghost stories were the most frequently chosen types.
- Most pupils read in the bedroom, followed by the classroom and the living room.
- When asked why they were reading, most pupils indicated that they read because it is a skill for life, it helps them find out what they want/need to know and because it is fun. Only a fifth of pupils read because they have to.
- Pupils said that they would read more if they had more time, if they enjoyed it more, if books were cheaper and if books were about subjects they were interested in.
- When asked what activities would encourage them to read more, half the sample stated that designing websites/magazines, meeting authors/celebrity readers and reading games would motivate them. Rating books and writing book reviews were only motivating for a fifth of pupils.
- Over 80% of pupils reported that it was their mother who had taught them to read, followed by their teacher and their father.
- Almost half the pupils never or almost never talked with their family about what they were reading. Their mother, father and friend were the top three people with whom pupils discussed their reading. Their mother, teacher and father were also the most frequently cited reading partners.
- Pupils also believed that their mother spends more time reading than their father.
- A quarter of pupils reported that their father never spent any time reading.
- Pupils stated that their mother encourages them to read more frequently than their father.
- Finally, when asked who should teach them to read and who should encourage them to enjoy reading, the majority of pupils stated that these should be done by both the home and the school.

The data was also analysed in detail in terms of demographic differences, namely gender, age and uptake of free school meals.

The key findings by **gender** are:

- In line with previous studies, girls reported greater enjoyment of reading than boys and were likely to do so more frequently. Boys tended to hold more negative attitudes

towards reading than girls. Both boys and girls rated themselves to be equally proficient readers.

- Girls and boys preferred reading different types of materials and different types of fiction; findings which confirm those of earlier research.
- More boys than girls reported that they read because it will help them get a job or because they have to, while more girls than boys indicated reading because it is fun, it teaches them how other people live and because it gives them a break.
- Girls were more likely than boys to state that they would read more if they had more time or friends who read, while boys would read more if they enjoyed it more and if they found reading easier. More girls than boys were enthusiastic about a variety of reading promotion activities.
- More boys than girls said they never talk about reading with their family. Indeed, more girls than boys not only read with their mother, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant, but they also talk about reading with them.
- Both boys and girls believed that both the home and the school should not only teach them to read but should also encourage them to enjoy it, but a greater percentage of girls than boys believed this.

Key findings by **age**:

- In line with previous research, reading enjoyment declined with age, with primary pupils enjoying reading significantly more than secondary ones. More primary than secondary pupils said they read outside school every day and held more positive attitudes towards reading.
- Interestingly, primary pupils rated themselves to be more proficient readers than secondary ones.
- Primary and secondary pupils preferred different reading materials, which partly reflect their age differences and access to resources, such as computers.
- Primary pupils reported reading for a greater number of reasons than secondary ones. They also stated that they would read more if they had more time, if books were cheaper and if it was about subjects they were interested in. Secondary pupils also reported that they would read more if they enjoyed it more.
- More primary than secondary pupils were enthusiastic about reading promotion activities, including reading games, helping younger children read and meeting authors/celebrity readers. Over half of secondary pupils believed that designing websites/magazines would encourage them to read more.
- Parents and others are more likely to read with younger children. Indeed, more primary than secondary pupils reported reading with and talking about reading with a variety of people. More primary than secondary pupils not only reported being encouraged to read by their mother and father but they also reported that their mother and father spend a lot of time reading.
- Finally, although both primary and secondary pupils believe that it should be both the home and the school that teach them to read and to enjoy reading, a greater proportion of primary than secondary pupils believe this.

Key findings by uptake of **free school meals**:

- Uptake of free school meals (FSMs) had a negative relationship with reading enjoyment and self-reported reading proficiency.
- Uptake of FSMs also impacted on the frequency with which pupils read outside class, with a greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reporting that they read outside school every day.
- Consistent with previous studies, a greater proportion of pupils not receiving FSMs estimated having more books at home than pupils receiving FSMs. They also reported having greater access to a number of resources at home, including a computer and a desk of their own.

- Both groups of pupils believed that reading is important. However, pupils receiving FSMs were more likely to agree that reading is boring and hard, that reading is more for girls than for boys, and that they cannot find books that interest them.
- More pupils receiving FSMs stated that they read because it would help them get a job, while more pupils not receiving FSMs reported that they read because it is fun and because it gives them a break.
- Whether or not pupils received FSMs also had an impact on their reading choices, which may be partly due to differences in access to certain resources, such as computers and mobile phones.
- Both groups indicated that they would read more if they had more time and if they enjoyed it more. A greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs stated that they would read more if books had more pictures, if someone read aloud to them, if libraries were closer and if their family encouraged them more.
- Both groups also stated that designing websites/magazines would motivate them to read more. More pupils receiving FSMs also said that they would be encouraged to read more by reading games and by helping younger children to read.
- A greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reported that their mother, father and teacher had taught them to read, while pupils receiving FSMs reported that a sibling or friend had been their reading teacher.
- A greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their father did not encourage them to read.
- More pupils not receiving FSMs reported talking about reading with their mother and father, while their FSM-receiving counterparts stated that they talk about reading with their teacher and teaching assistant.
- The extent to which pupils reported that their parents chose to read also differed according to whether or not they received FSMs. A greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their mother or father do not spend any time reading.

Finally, the data was also explored with respect to differences between **reluctant and enthusiastic readers**. The key findings were:

- Enthusiastic readers rated themselves as more proficient readers and reported reading outside school more frequently than reluctant readers.
- Enthusiastic readers held more positive attitudes towards reading.
- More enthusiastic readers than reluctant ones stated that they read because it is a skill for life, it teaches them how other people live and feel, it helps them understand the world better, it is fun, it helps them find what they want/need to know, it gives them a break and it helps them understand themselves better.
- Whether or not pupils enjoyed reading had an impact on their preferred reading materials and their choice of fiction types.
- Enthusiastic readers said they spend time reading in a greater variety of places, including the living room, bedroom, classroom, playground and café.
- A greater proportion of enthusiastic readers believed that time constraints, cheaper books and better library facilities would make them read more.
- Both groups of readers said that designing websites/magazines would prompt them to read more. More enthusiastic readers than reluctant ones stated that meeting authors/celebrity readers and helping younger children read were activities that would help them and others read more.
- Enthusiastic readers were more likely to talk with their family about reading every day or once/twice a week. In particular, they were more likely to read with their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant. More enthusiastic than reluctant readers also talked about reading with these people.
- Enthusiastic readers also reported being encouraged to read a lot by their mother and father. More enthusiastic than reluctant readers also reported that their mother and father themselves spend a lot of time reading.

Based on these findings, this report suggests some approaches that might help schools to promote reading for pleasure, such as:

- **Create a culture in which all pupils are encouraged to be enthusiastic readers.** To support this goal, schools with effective approaches consult with students to learn of their interests and to ensure that the range of reading materials available in school reflects those interests. They recognise that a diverse range of reading materials will encourage students to read, for example websites, comics and magazines. They engage children in the planning and delivery of reading and library activities, offering them the opportunity to select and purchase reading materials for their use.

- **Consider how to engage boys with reading.** In addition to the encouragement of boys reading around their personal interests, particular attention needs to be given to the involvement of male staff, community role models and fathers. The National Reading Campaign initiative Reading Champions supports schools with this aim by sharing practices that involve boys in creating a reading culture.

- **Consider how they can support parents in encouraging reading in the home.** The role of the home is important for all children. Home-school practices that successfully involve all parents in ways they value for strengthening involvement in their children's home and school reading, need to be shared between schools. Both Reading Connects and Reading Champions can support this work.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the survey

Background

Why do some pupils choose to read when others do not? What could be done to engage reluctant readers? These are the key questions that were explored in a survey of 98 primary and secondary schools in England, conducted by the National Literacy Trust.

The research literature shows that reading for pleasure or independent reading benefits children in numerous ways. For example, the amount that children read for enjoyment and for school has been found to be a major contributor to their reading achievement (Cox and Guthrie, 2001). Similarly, independent reading volume is a powerful predictor of differences in children's vocabulary and general knowledge differences, even after controlling for relevant general abilities such as IQ or text-decoding skills (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998). Elley (1992) also found that for nine-year-old students, in 32 countries, frequency of silent reading significantly contributed to reading achievement. Elley furthermore found that this relationship held after a variety of health, wealth and school factors were statistically controlled for. Similar findings were also made by the OECD *Reading for Change* study (2002), which showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status. Thus, "the frequent admonition for children to 'Read, read, read' makes sense in that extensive reading promotes fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge" (Pressley, 2000, p. 556).

There is also evidence that the amount of reading not only impacts on reading achievement and educational attainment, but also increases general knowledge (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1997), social skills, and community participation (e.g. Guthrie, Schafer and Hutchinson, 1991). The act of reading can also help children compensate for lower levels of cognitive ability by building their vocabulary and general knowledge (Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998). Conversely, children who read very little do not have the benefits that come with reading, and studies show that when struggling readers are not motivated to read, their opportunities to learn decrease significantly (e.g. Baker, Dreher and Guthrie, 2000). It is therefore important that parents, teachers and literacy consultants examine the factors that may influence children's literary lives at home or at school (Chen, 2005).

Yet, recent research shows that while reading skills have improved in the UK (see Massey, Elliot and Johnson, 2005), there is some indication that fewer pupils nowadays read for enjoyment. An international study of reading and literacy, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS; Twist et al., 2004), compared 35 countries on a variety of literacy-related measures. It ranked England third in reading achievement of 10-year-olds, following behind Sweden and the Netherlands. However, the same study also found that primary school children were less confident about their reading ability and enjoyed reading less than children in other countries. More specifically, 13% of English children disliked reading, compared to an international average of 6%. Similarly, when asked how confident they were about reading, only 30% of English children were highly confident about their ability, compared to an international average of 40%.

A recent UK survey, Children's Attitudes to Reading (Sainsbury and Schagen, 2004), also indicated that children's reading enjoyment had declined significantly in the last five years, especially among older children (a similar decline in reading enjoyment over time has been reported in US children by McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth, 1995). Similarly, a Schools Health Education Unit (2004) survey found that fewer boys in Year 6 read for pleasure at playtime and/or dinnertime in 2003 than in 1997 (17% versus 29%, respectively).

The cause of this possible decline is unclear. Some critics would claim that it is the result of national strategies and tests; others would argue that it is the result of competing media, such as computer games and television. However, given current political concerns about reading and

the clear benefits that reading for pleasure can bring, it is vital that more emphasis is placed on reading enjoyment both at school and at home. Therefore, in summer 2005, the National Literacy Trust conducted a survey for Reading Connects, a DfES-funded National Reading Campaign initiative that supports schools in building communities that read, to collect evidence about children's and young people's reading preferences and reading behaviours. The aim was to enable parents, teachers and other literacy professionals to promote wider reading.

Methodology

All the schools (N = 422) that had signed up to Reading Connects by April 2005 were contacted by email to see whether they would like to participate in this survey. Of the 171 schools that initially expressed an interest, 123 were sent questionnaires early in July 2005. In addition to the 23-point self-report questionnaire for pupils, which has been included at the end of this report, schools were also sent guidance on how to administer the questionnaires in class. Out of the 123 schools, 98 returned their questionnaires within the specified time.

The questionnaire was constructed to mirror many of the questions that have been asked in previous studies of children's and young people's reading habits, practices and attitudes (e.g. Hall and Coles, 1999; PIRLS, OECD, Brooks et al., 1997). Because parents' own literacy practices impact on the literacy opportunities for children and influence their reading enjoyment and engagement (Bus, 2002; Snow and Tabors, 1996), a few questions relating to family reading practices were also included.

In addition to the pupils' age and gender, information on the socio-economic background was also sought. Many low-income households have fewer print resources available in their homes than those from higher income brackets. Consequently, a lack of access to books and other reading materials may result in children not being exposed to the cognitive and linguistic experiences that books and other texts provide (for a detailed account of the relationship between poor literacy skills and social exclusion, see Bird and Akerman, 2005).

There are several ways in which such information can be gathered from the children themselves, including asking them about the occupation of the main earner within the family or deducing their social standing from the postcode of their address. However, each of these methods is problematic, especially when used with younger children. After some consultation, it was decided that self-reported take-up of free school meals would be used as a crude indicator of socio-economic status. It should be noted, however, that the use of free school meals as an indicator of socio-economic background may be misleading as it excludes pupils whose parents are not in receipt of income support but who are on low incomes. However, all schools are treated equally within this measure, which allowed for broad comparisons between intake characteristics.

Survey findings are also frequently broken down by ethnicity. However, as already described by Hall and Coles (1999), children's reporting of their ethnic group is highly problematic and frequently unreliable. Furthermore, in order to do justice to the various minority ethnic groups, one would have to use a large range of categories, which was beyond the scope of the present questionnaire. The decision was therefore made not to assess this within the questionnaire. Instead, figures supplied by each school and Ofsted reports about a school's ethnic mix will be drawn on in a forthcoming publication.

Pupils were asked to indicate their age. **Table 1** shows that the pupils' ages ranged from 5 to 17. Two broad categories were identified for the purpose of the analyses – primary and secondary. While this crude categorisation may hide some important differences within primary pupils or secondary pupils, it allowed for general age differences to be obtained at this stage.

Further analyses that focus on specific age groups, corresponding to the four National Curriculum Key Stages, will be conducted for a forthcoming publication.

Table 1: Respondents' age range

Age	%	N
<6	0.4	31
6	1.0	80
7	3.3	267
8	5.2	422
9	7.1	581
10	6.6	534
11	9.2	748
12	27.9	2277
13	21.2	1728
14	13.0	1061
15	4.5	369
16	0.2	18
>16	0.4	36
Total	100	8152

Finally, since previous studies (e.g PIRLS, Twist et al., 2003) reported that children in rural schools in England tended to score more highly than those in suburban or urban schools, findings in this report were also analysed in terms of location. Following information given by Ofsted reports, schools were divided into two broad categories for the purpose of the present analyses: urban and rural. However, very few meaningful differences were found between the two groups, and these findings were therefore not included in this report. Possible regional differences may be explored in a future publication.

Some preliminary observations

Over half the pupils in this study enjoyed reading either "very much" or "quite a lot". Another 40% of pupils stated that they enjoy reading "a bit". Is this rather high degree of reading enjoyment due to a sampling bias of Reading Connects Schools, which have already publicly stated their commitment to reading for pleasure by signing up to the initiative? Comparisons with findings from other surveys suggest that this may not be the case. For example, Brooks and colleagues (1997) found that between two-thirds and three-quarters of Year 3 pupils enjoyed reading. Similarly, the Nestlé Family Monitor (2003) reported that two-thirds (65%) of 11 to 18-year-olds found reading enjoyable. Finally, the PIRLS survey of Year 5 pupils indicated that 53 percent enjoyed reading "a little" (Twist et al., 2003).

The analyses in this report are predominantly based on basic descriptive statistics (such as frequency distributions) and two-way cross-tabulations. More detailed investigations will be carried out in the future and will be reported in separate publications.

Finally, the data in this study was analysed using SPSS 11.5. Any result for which statistical significance is reported was significant at a probability level of 0.01. This means that the result would be likely to occur by chance only once in every 100 cases. In line with Hall and Coles (1999), some judgement is nevertheless needed about the educational significance of the findings, as would be the case even if a more stringent level of 0.001 had been applied.

Chapter 2: Main findings (whole sample)

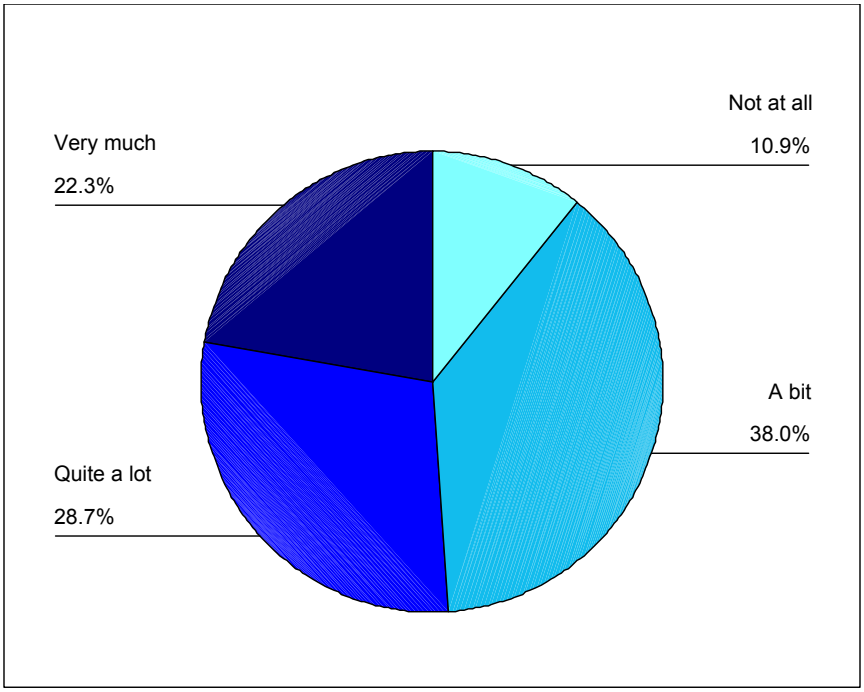
Summary of key findings

- Half the sample enjoyed reading either very much or quite a lot and rated themselves as proficient readers.
- The majority of pupils indicated reading every day or once/twice a week.
- Almost half the sample believed that they were reading enough. A fifth of pupils stated that not only were they not reading enough, they also would not want to read more.
- Pupils generally held positive attitudes towards reading – agreeing with statements that reading is important and disagreeing with statements that reading is boring, hard, or for girls rather than boys.
- Pupils indicated reading a diverse range of materials outside class, which included texts other than books. When asked specifically about fiction preferences, adventure, comedy and horror/ghost stories were the most frequently chosen types.
- Most pupils read in the bedroom, followed by the classroom and the living room.
- When asked why they were reading, most pupils indicated that they read because it is a skill for life, it helps them find out what they want/need to know and because it is fun. Only a fifth of pupils read because they have to.
- Pupils indicated that they would read more if they had more time, if they enjoyed it more, if books were cheaper and if books were about subjects they were interested in.
- When asked what activities would encourage them to read more, half the sample stated that designing websites/magazines, meeting authors/celebrity readers and reading games would motivate them. Rating books and writing book reviews was only motivating for a fifth of pupils.
- Over 80% of pupils reported that it was their mother who had taught them to read, followed by their teacher and their father.
- Almost half the pupils never or almost never talked with their family about what they were reading. Their mother, father and friend were the top three people with whom pupils discussed their reading. Their mother, teacher and father were also the most frequently cited reading partners.
- Pupils believed that their mother spent time reading more frequently than their fathers.
- A quarter of pupils reported that their father never spent any time reading.
- Pupils also stated that their mother encouraged them to read more frequently than their father.
- Finally, when asked who should teach them to read and who should encourage them to enjoy reading, the majority of pupils stated that these should be done by both the home and the school.

The final sample consisted of 8,206 pupils from 57 primary and 41 secondary schools. Overall, 2,331 primary pupils and 5,875 secondary pupils took part in this study. There was an almost equal representation of boys and girls within the sample (52.9% and 47.1%, respectively). 11.9% (N = 263) of primary pupils and 11.5% (N = 652) of secondary ones said they receive free school meals; percentages that are comparable to national take-up figures (primary: 14.5%, secondary: 10.7%; DfES, 2004). There were no significant gender differences in the number of pupils receiving free school meals.

Two-fifths of pupils enjoyed reading “A bit”, with over a quarter enjoying it “Quite a lot”. Almost a quarter of pupils enjoyed reading “Very much”, while a tenth did not enjoy reading at all (see **Figure 2.1**).

Figure 2.1: Reading enjoyment



"How one defines oneself as a learner and a reader is bound up with one's potential for further learning" (Hall and Myers, 1998, p.13). When asked how good a reader they thought they were, most pupils rated themselves as quite proficient (see **Table 2.1**). On a scale from 1-10, most pupils ranked themselves as 8, 7 or 9.

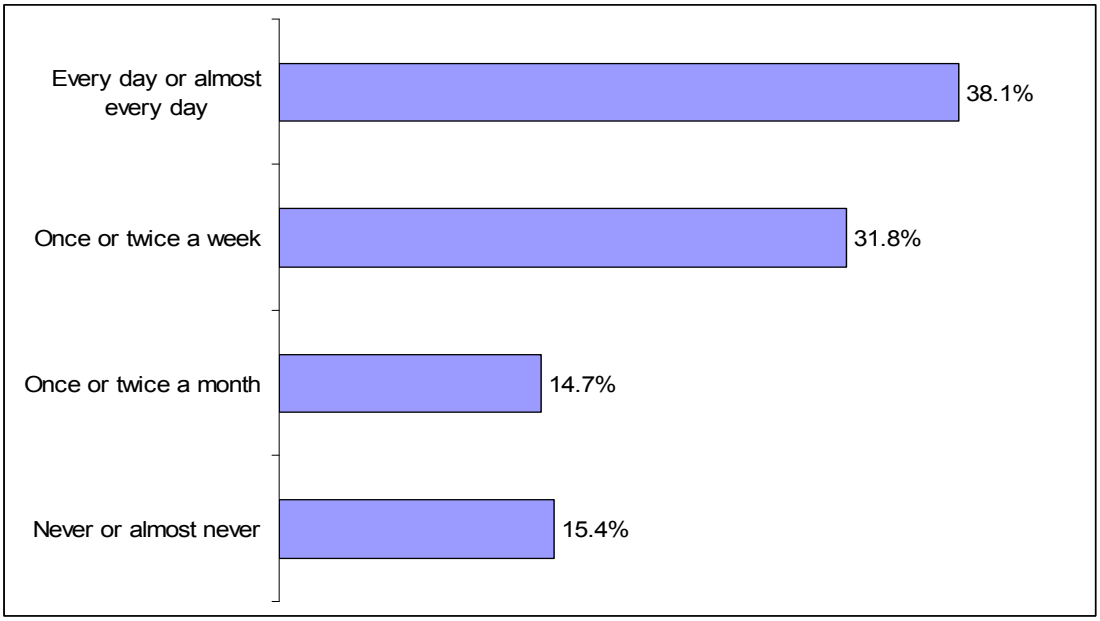
Table 2.1: Self-reported reading proficiency

	%	N
1	1.4	107
2	1.1	85
3	2.5	195
4	4.0	320
5	9.9	784
6	12.8	1018
7	18.4	1461
8	22.7	1795
9	15.8	1255
10	11.4	904
Total	*100*	*7924*

(1 = Not a very good reader to 10 = Excellent reader)

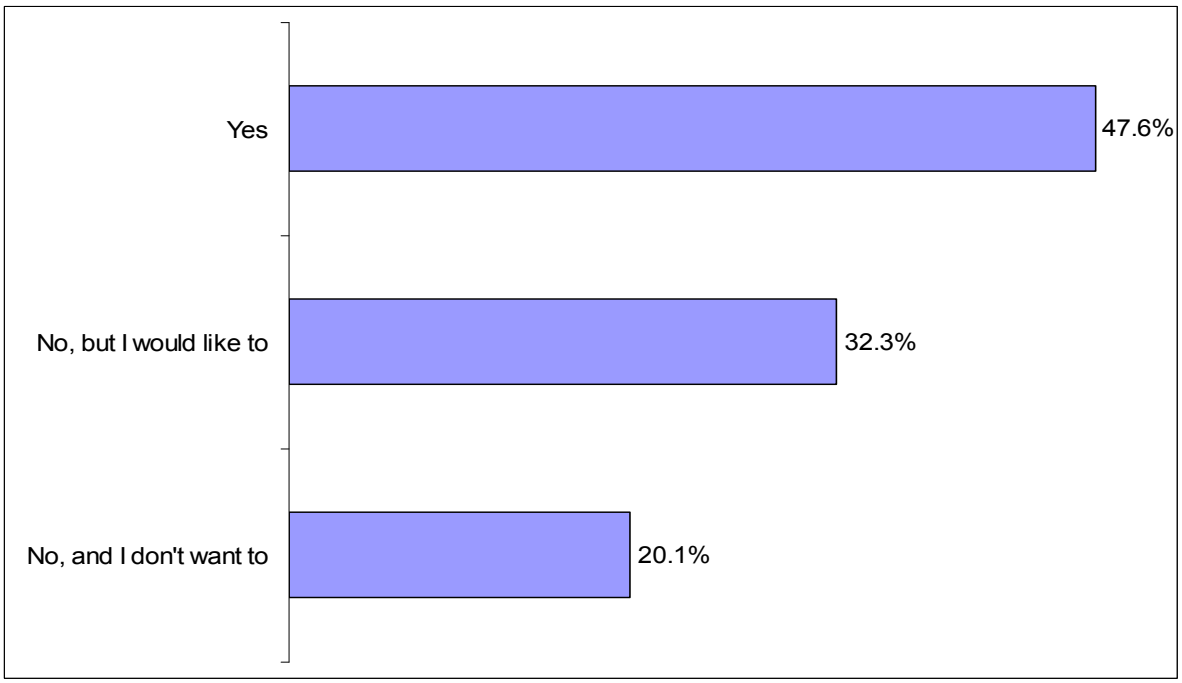
When asked how often they read outside of school, the majority of pupils stated reading “Every day or almost everyday”, while a third of pupils read outside of school “Once or twice a week” (see **Figure 2.2**). Roughly a sixth of pupils reported that they “Never or almost never” read outside of school, while a similar proportion of children only read outside of school “Once of twice a month”.

Figure 2.2: How often do you read outside school?



Pupils were also asked whether they thought that they were reading enough (see **Figure 2.3**). Almost half the pupils felt that they were reading enough. Moreover, a third of pupils felt that they were not currently reading enough but would like to read more. However, a fifth of pupils believed that they were not reading enough but they also did not want to be reading more.

Figure 2.3: Do you think you read enough?



Numerous studies show that access to books and other reading materials is particularly important in children's language and literacy development (e.g. Bus, van Ijzendorrn and Pellegrini, 1995). Shared reading is a social activity that provides an interactive context for children to learn and practise their verbal and conceptual skills (Bus et al., 1995). Pupils were asked to estimate the number of books in their home (see **Table 2.2**). Only a small percentage of pupils stated that they did not have any books at home, while over a tenth of pupils believed there to be more than 500 books in the home. The accuracy of these estimates may be questionable. However, further analyses showed that children who believe that they have large numbers of books in the home enjoy reading more. Thus, though estimated, these figures give at least an indication of the literary practices at home.

Table 2.2: Estimated number of books in the home

	%	N
None	1.2	96
1-10	8.0	641
11-50	19.7	1570
51-100	22.4	1785
101-250	21.2	1695
251-500	15.1	1203
> 500	12.4	993
Total	100	7983

To ascertain the degree of exposure to educational resources at home further, pupils were asked to indicate whether they had a computer, a desk of their own, books of their own, access to a daily newspaper and access to magazines. **Table 2.3** shows that nine out of 10 pupils had access to a computer at home. Almost nine out of 10 also had their own books at home.

Table 2.3: Access to educational resources at home

Home environment	%	N
A computer	90.7	7441
Desk of their own	72.3	5933
Books of their own	88.9	7293
Access to newspaper	70.8	5812
Access to magazines	84.2	6912

Pupils were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with nine attitudinal statements on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree; see **Figure 2.4**). Agreement with the statements that reading is important, that they read outside school, and that they would not mind receiving books as presents was generally high. By contrast, pupils tended to disagree with the statement that reading is more for girls than boys, which is contrary to some studies that show that boys perceive reading to be a female activity (e.g. Wragg, 1997). Pupils also disagreed with the statements that reading is boring, that reading is hard, that they cannot find books that interest them, and that they do not read as well as other students in their class.

Figure 2.4: Attitudes towards reading

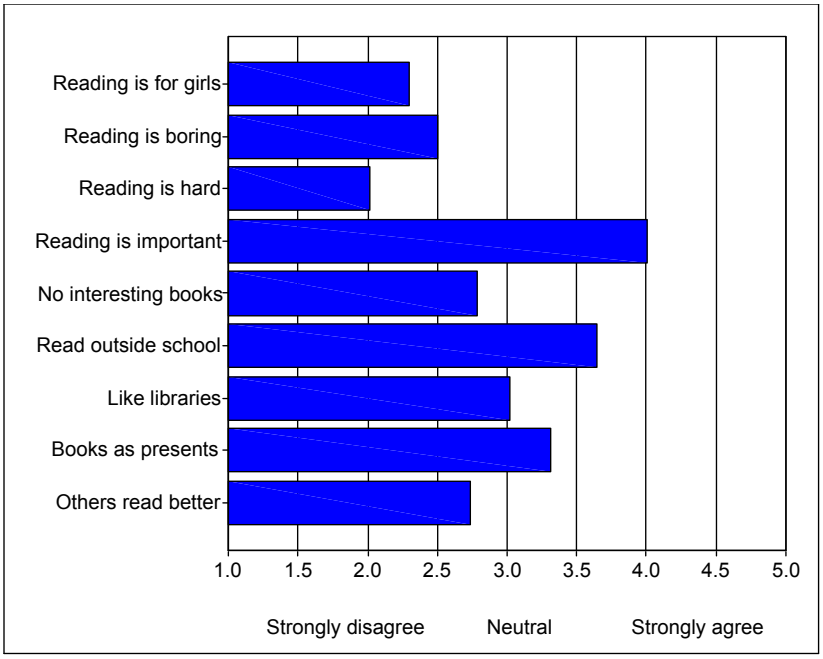
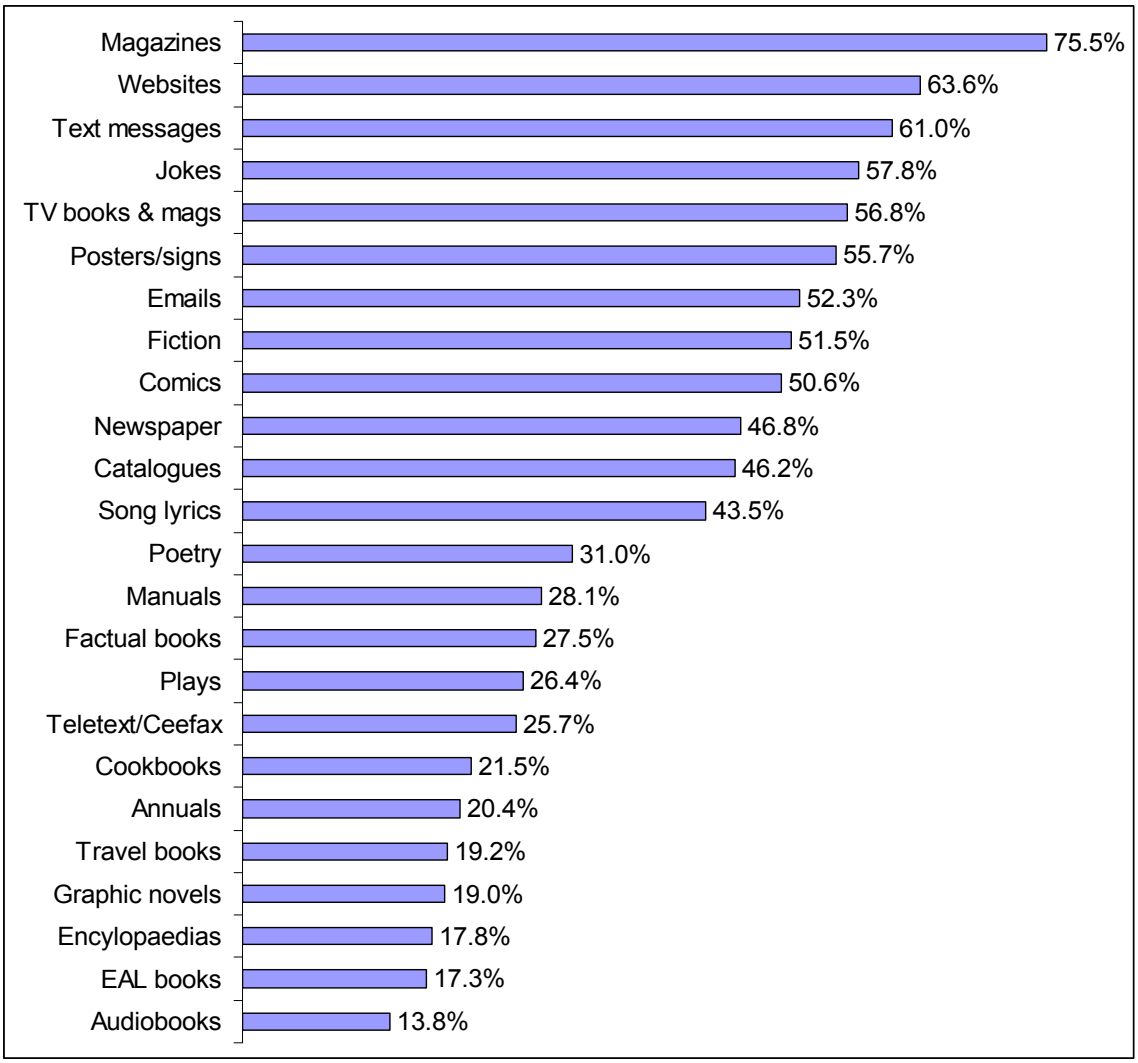


Figure 2.5: Preferred reading materials outside of school



Pupils were asked what types of material they were reading outside class. **Figure 2.5** (see previous page) shows that magazines, followed by websites, text messages, jokes, and books and magazines about TV programmes were the most popular materials read outside class. Audiobooks, books and magazines in a language other than English, encyclopaedias, graphic novels and travel books were the least preferred materials outside school.

Figure 2.6 shows that adventure, comedy and horror/ghost stories were the favourite types of fiction, while romance/relationships and poetry were the least frequently chosen types. Only 5% of pupils said that they don't read fiction.

Figure 2.6: Preferred types of fiction

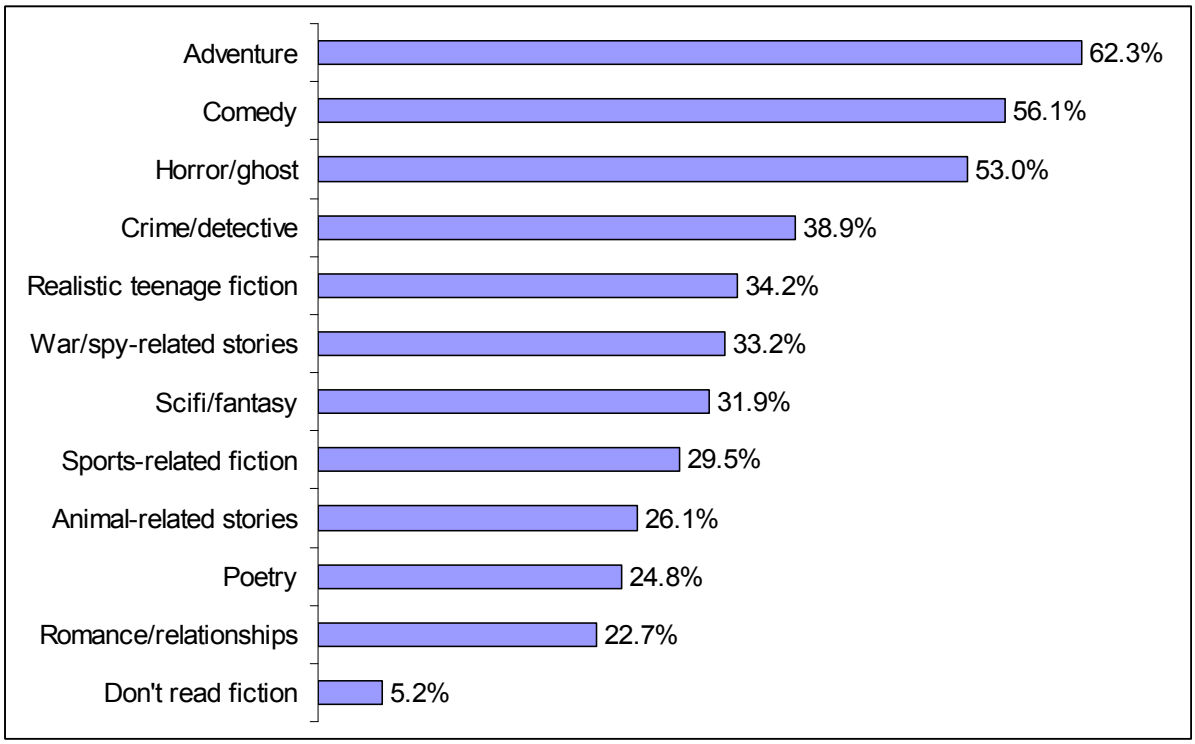


Figure 2.7 indicates the preferred reading spaces in three areas: at home, at school and in the community. The bedroom was the most frequently chosen reading space in the home, followed by the lounge/living room. At school, the classroom was the preferred reading space, with the playground being the least favourite reading space. In the community, pupils preferred reading while travelling, and in a town library.

Pupils were asked to indicate the reasons why they read. **Figure 2.8** shows that the majority read because it is a skill for life and will help them find what they need/want to know. Almost half the pupils also said that reading is fun and that it will help them get a job. Two-fifths of pupils read because it helps them understand the world better and because it teaches them how other people live and feel; a third of pupils read because it is a form of escape. However, a fifth said that they read because they have to.

In addition to giving reasons for reading, pupils were asked to indicate what would make them more likely to read (see **Figure 2.9**). Time constraints and a lack of enjoyment were the greatest barriers to pupils reading more. Almost half of the pupils said that having more free time would encourage them to read, a finding that is consistent with that made by Nestlé in 2003. The cost of books was another important barrier with almost two-fifths of pupils saying that they would read more if they books were cheaper.

Figure 2.7: Preferred reading spaces at home, at school and in the community

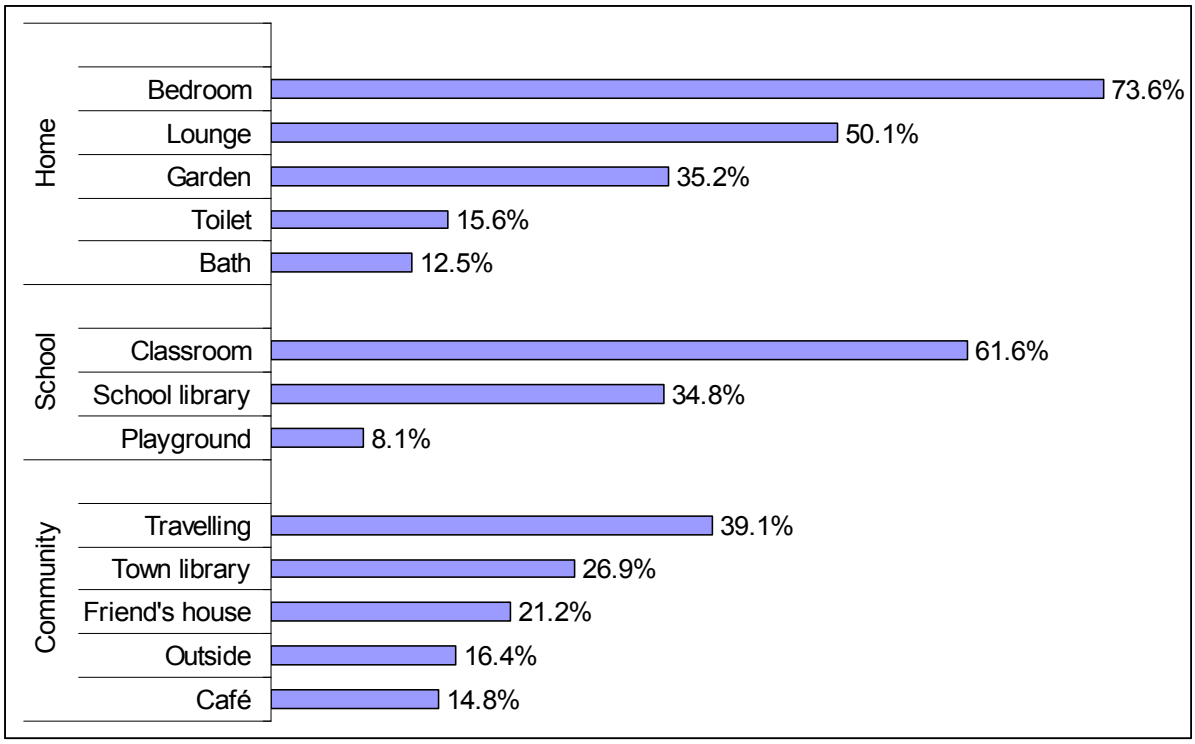


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Figure 2.8: I read because …

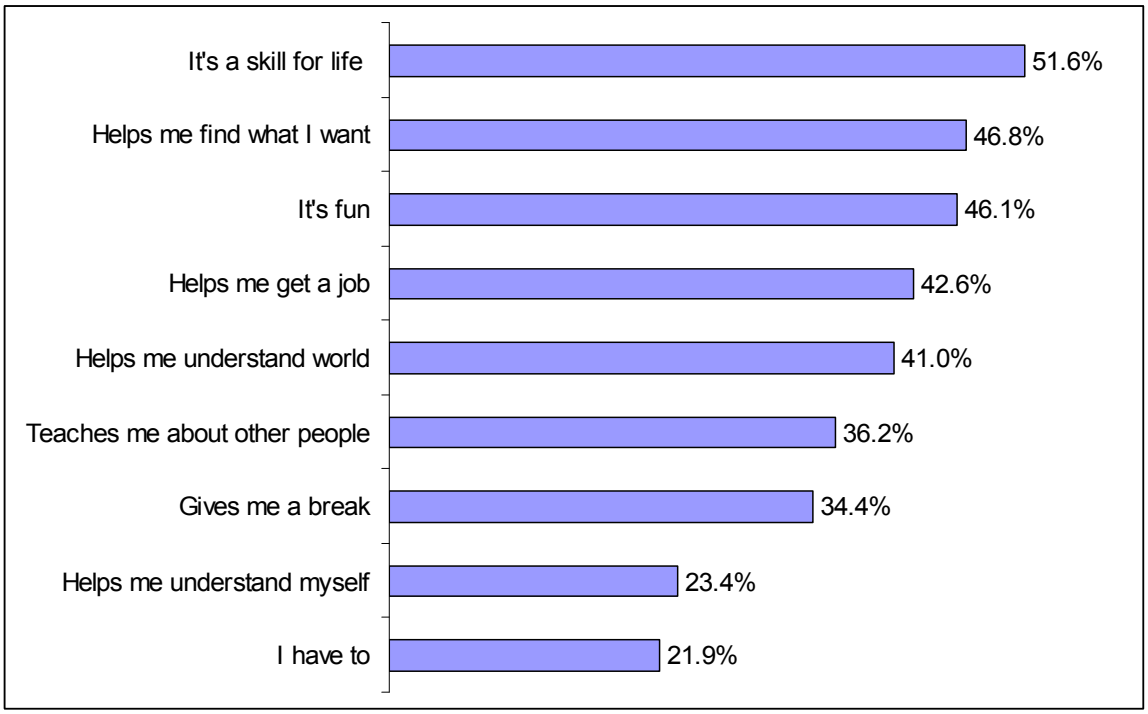


Figure 2.9: I would read more if …

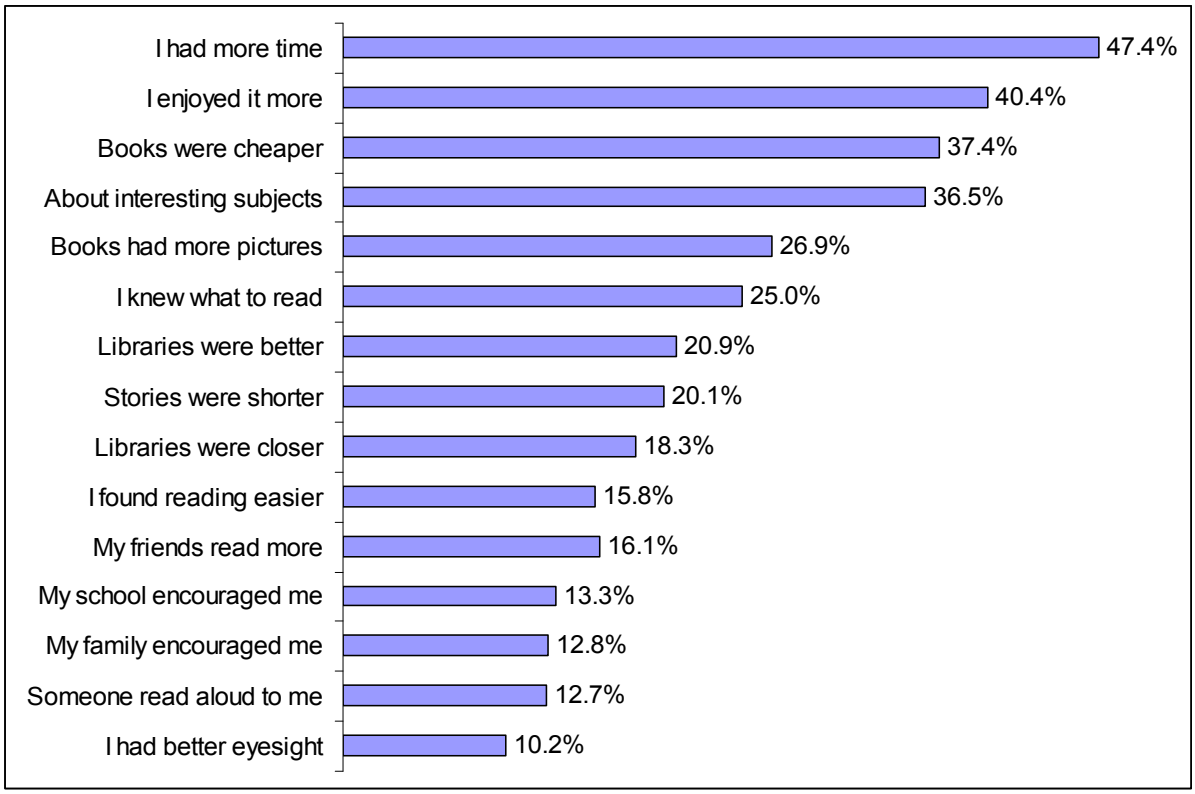
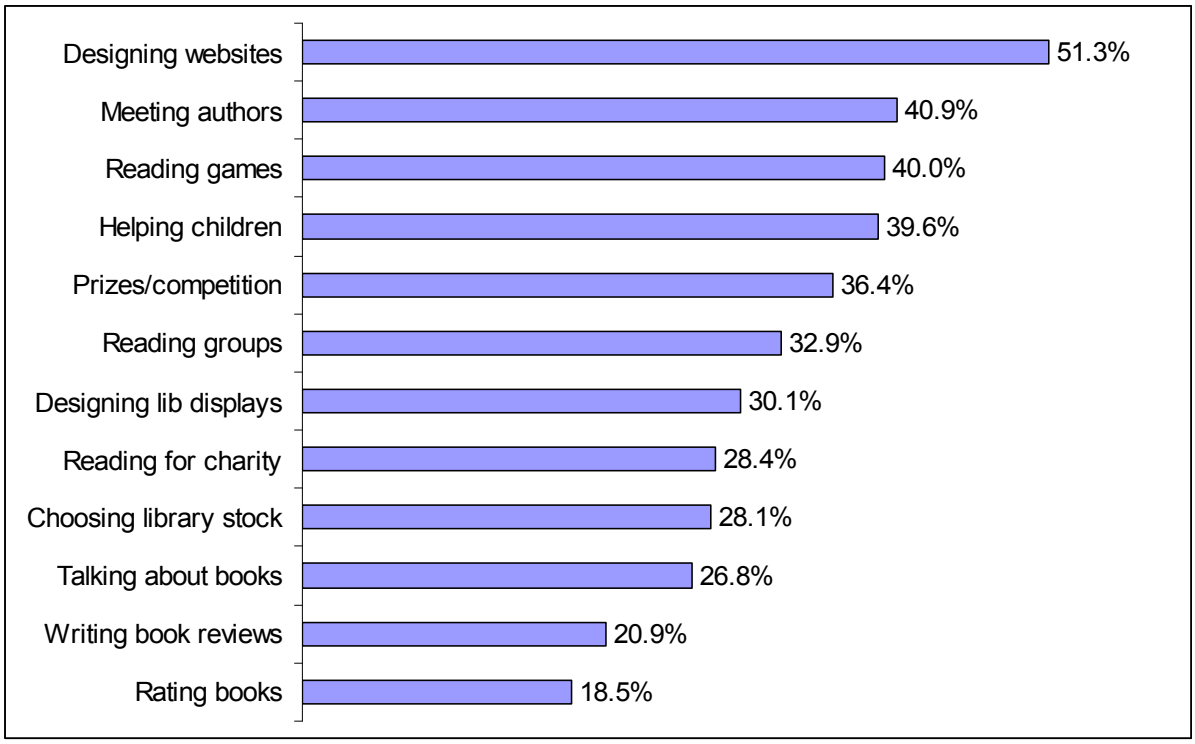


Figure 2.9 shoes that almost two in five pupils also said that they would be more likely to read if they found subjects that were of interest to them. Better eyesight and someone reading aloud were the least frequently chosen options.

Other research has shown that secondary pupils in particular believe that time-constraints, caused by pressures such as homework, interfere with their opportunities to read (e.g. Pearson, 2003). Indeed, there was a small positive association between age and choice of this option ($r = .141$, $p = .000$). However, it could also be argued that referring to a lack of time is an excuse. In support of this, there was a negative association in this study between reading enjoyment and ticking time constraints ($r = -.285$, $p = .000$), indicating that those who enjoy reading were less likely to tick this option than pupils who do not enjoy reading. Thus, this suggests that pupils will make time for an activity they enjoy.

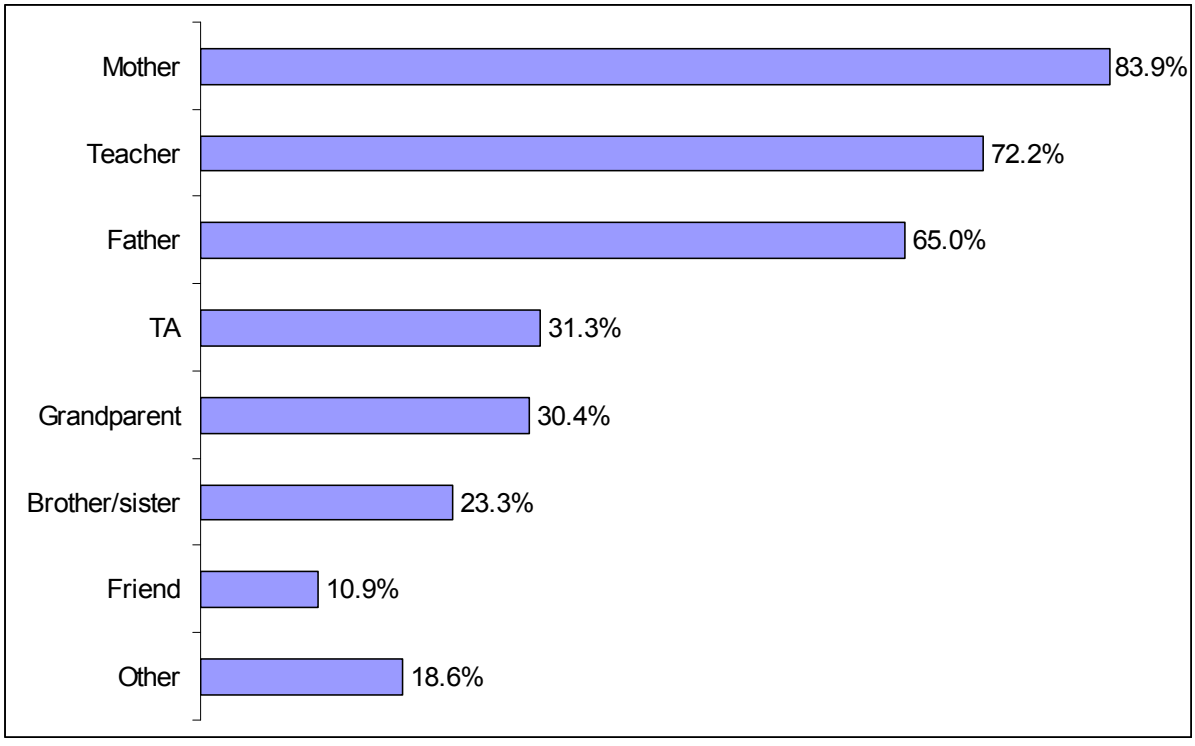
In addition, they were asked to indicate which of 12 activities would prompt them and others to read more (see **Figure 2.10**). Designing websites/magazines, meeting authors/celebrities and reading games were the most frequently chosen reading promotion activities. Rating books and writing book reviews were the least frequently chosen activities.

Figure 2.10: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more?



When asked who had taught them to read, the majority of pupils indicated that it was their mother, followed by their teacher and father, who had done so (**Figure 2.11**).

Figure 2.11: Who taught you to read?

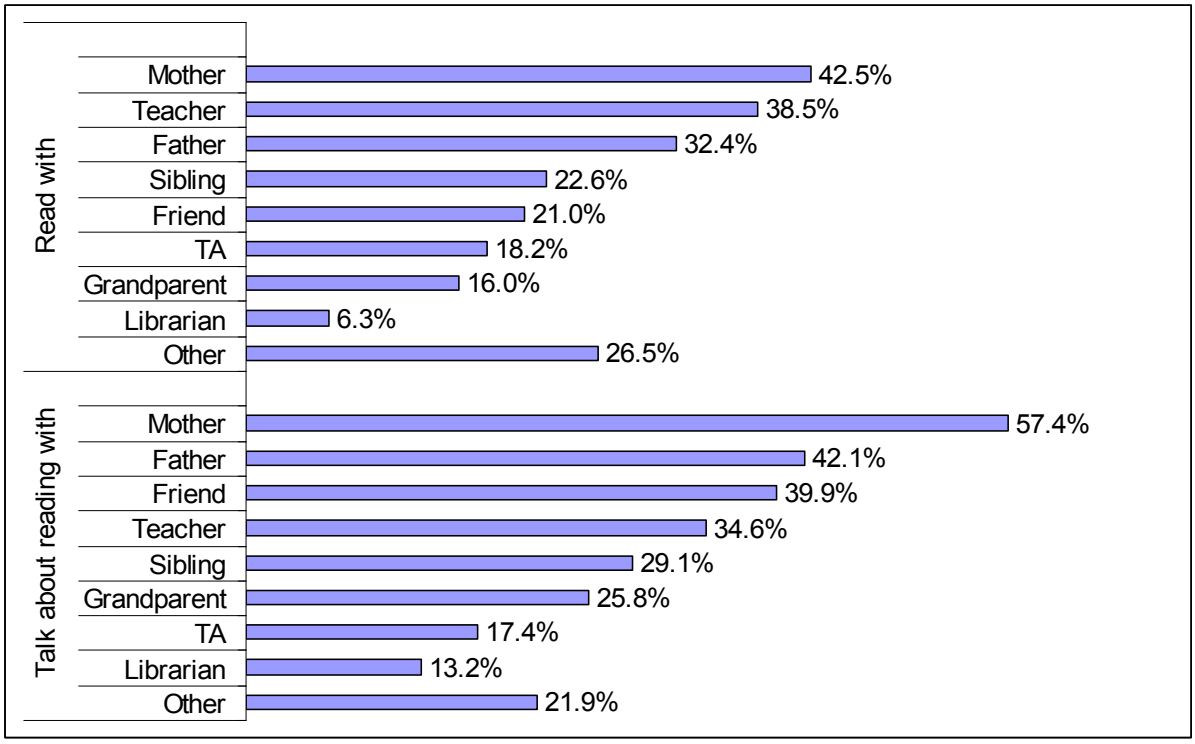


Pupils were also asked who should teach them to read, the school or the home. Over half of the pupils (53.1%) said that both the school and the home should teach children to read. Almost a fifth (19.7%) believed it should be the school, compared to 14% who said that it should be the home. 3.2% of pupils believed that it should be neither the home nor the school. This finding is in line with a previous survey by Nestlé (1999) that asked parents whether it is the job of schools alone to educate children. They found that four out of five parents believed that it is up to them and others as well as schools to educate their children.

When asked to indicate how often they talk about reading with their family, almost half the pupils (43%) stated that they never or almost never talk with their family about what they were reading, while 19% did so once or twice a month. More than a quarter of pupils (27.3%) talked about what they were reading with their family once or twice a week, while only 10.8% did so every day or almost every day.

To explore family reading patterns in more detail, pupils were asked who they read with and who they talk about reading with. The majority of pupils stated that they were reading with their mother, teacher and father (see **Figure 2.12**). Similarly, most pupils talked with their mother and father about reading, followed by friends and teachers (also see **Figure 2.12**). The choice of which adult to read with at home may be influenced partly by the adults' availability but also by the children's awareness of the people with whom they feel most at ease (Pearson, 2003).

Figure 2.12: Who do you read with and who do you talk about your reading with?



When pupils were asked whether their mum (or carer) encouraged them to read, most pupils (46.6%) indicated that their mum encouraged them to read sometimes, compared to 36.9% who said that their mother encouraged them a lot. However, 16.5% of pupils stated that their mother did not encourage them at all. Similarly, most pupils (42.4%) said that their father encouraged them to read "sometimes", while almost a third (28.7%) stated that he was doing so "a lot". However, a third of pupils (28.9%) said that their father did not encourage them at all.

To explore this issue further, pupils were asked whether the school or the home should encourage them to enjoy reading. Almost half the pupils (49%) stated that it should be both the home and the school; 16.5% indicated that it is the school's job; 11.9% stated that it should be the home. 5.7% of pupils thought that it should be neither the home nor the school.

Finally, pupils were asked to indicate how frequently their mother and father read. Again, most pupils (47%) said that their mother reads sometimes, with 39.2% saying she reads a lot. Almost a sixth of pupils (13.8%) stated that their mum does not read at all. Almost half the pupils (48.6%) stated that their father reads sometimes, with a quarter of pupils (26%) saying that he reads a lot. However, a quarter (25.4%) said that their father does not read at all.

Chapter 3: Breakdown by gender

Summary of key findings

- In line with previous studies, girls enjoyed reading more than boys and were likely to do so more frequently. Boys tended to hold more negative attitudes towards reading than girls. Both boys and girls rated themselves to be equally proficient readers.
- Girls and boys preferred reading different types of materials and different types of fiction; findings which confirm those of earlier research.

In addition, this chapter shows that

- More boys than girls reported that they read because it will help them get a job or because they have to, while more girls than boys indicated reading because it is fun, it teaches them how other people live and because it gives them a break.
- Girls were more likely than boys to state that they would read more if they had more time or friends who read, while boys would read more if they enjoyed it more and if they found reading easier. More girls than boys were enthusiastic about a variety of reading promotion activities.
- More boys than girls reported never talking about reading with their family. Indeed, more girls than boys not only read with their mother, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant, but they also said they talk about reading with them.
- Both boys and girls believed that both the home and the school should not only teach them to read but should also encourage them to enjoy it, but a greater percentage of girls than boys believed this.

Research frequently shows that there are gender differences in reading achievement and interest (for a recent review of the gender gap in academic achievement see Younger and Warrington, 2005). According to the former Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett:

> *We face a genuine problem of under-achievement among boys, particularly those from working class families. This underachievement is linked to a laddish culture which in many areas has grown out of deprivation, and a lack of both self-confidence and opportunity.* (Blunkett, 2000)

According to 2004 figures, 81% of boys and 89% of girls achieved level 2 or above in key stage 1 tests in reading, a difference of eight percentage points. Data for achievements in writing shows a greater divide. 76% of boys compared with 87% of girls achieved level 2 or above in key stage 1 tests in writing. Similarly, 2004 data shows an eight percentage point difference between boys and girls achieving level 4 or above in key stage 2 tests in reading (79% of boys and 87% of girls, respectively). Boys also lagged behind girls in writing achievement, with 56% of boys and 71% of girls achieving level 4 or above in key stage 2 tests in writing in 2004 (see Younger and Warrington, 2005 for data for reading, writing and mathematics over time).

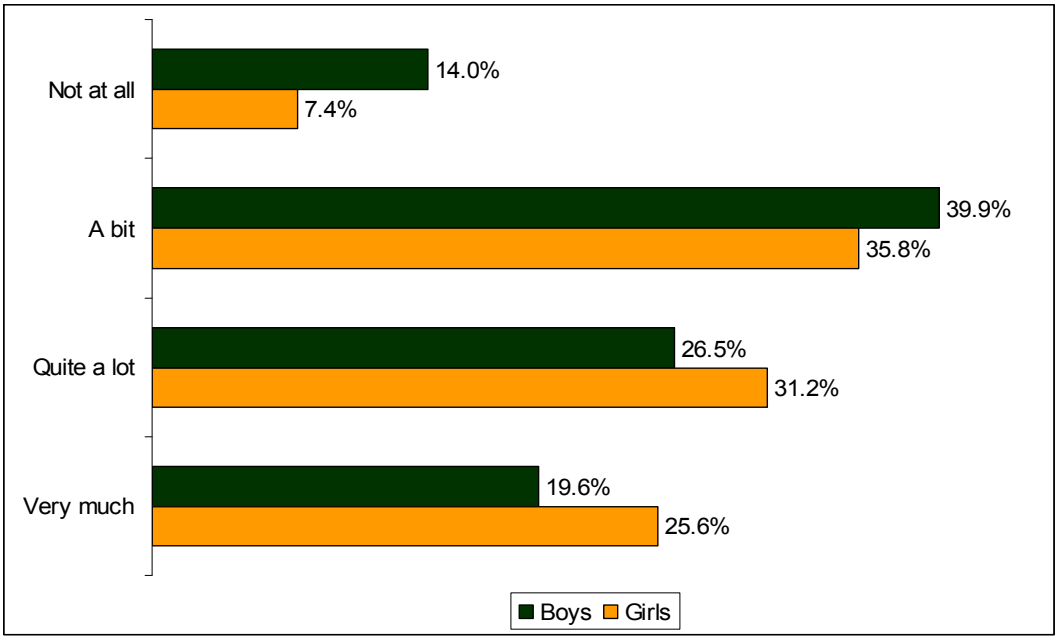
England is not the only country in which boys tend to lag behind girls in literacy attainment. International comparative studies, such as the OECD *Reading for Change* study (2002) or PIRLS (Twist et al., 2003), show that girls tend to outperform boys on literacy tasks in most countries. Although socio-economic differences in achievement are greater than gender differences (e.g. Gillborn and Mirza, 2000), the literature shows that boys tend to find it harder to read than girls, with boys being almost twice as likely to be poor readers (Rutter et al., 2004). Boys also tend to read less. For example, when asked whether they had read any book in the four weeks prior to a survey, Coles and Hall (2002) found that significantly more girls (84.1%) than boys (74.5%) responded positively. Boys also frequently say that they do not enjoy reading

(OECD, 2002). Indeed, unprompted, 24% of boys could not name a favourite book compared with 16% of girls (Prince of Wales Arts and Kids Foundation, 2004). They also tend to have less positive attitudes towards reading than girls (e.g. Sainsbury and Schagen, 2004) and frequently believe that reading is boring or a feminine activity (Millard, 1997).

These statistics are not intended to be alarmist. Hall and Coles (2001, p. 212) argued that the current debate about boys' lack of reading engagement "is often crudely formulated to suggest that boys' reading is a major national and international problem, and boys themselves are therefore to be seen as deficient and in need of remediation." However, what is worrying is that a proportion of boys do not reap the benefits that reading for pleasure brings.

Consistent with previous research, girls were significantly more likely than boys to enjoy reading "very much" or "quite a lot"[1] (see **Figure 3.1**).

Figure 3.1: Reading enjoyment



Although girls enjoyed reading more than boys, both boys and girls rated themselves as equally proficient readers (see **Table 3.1**).

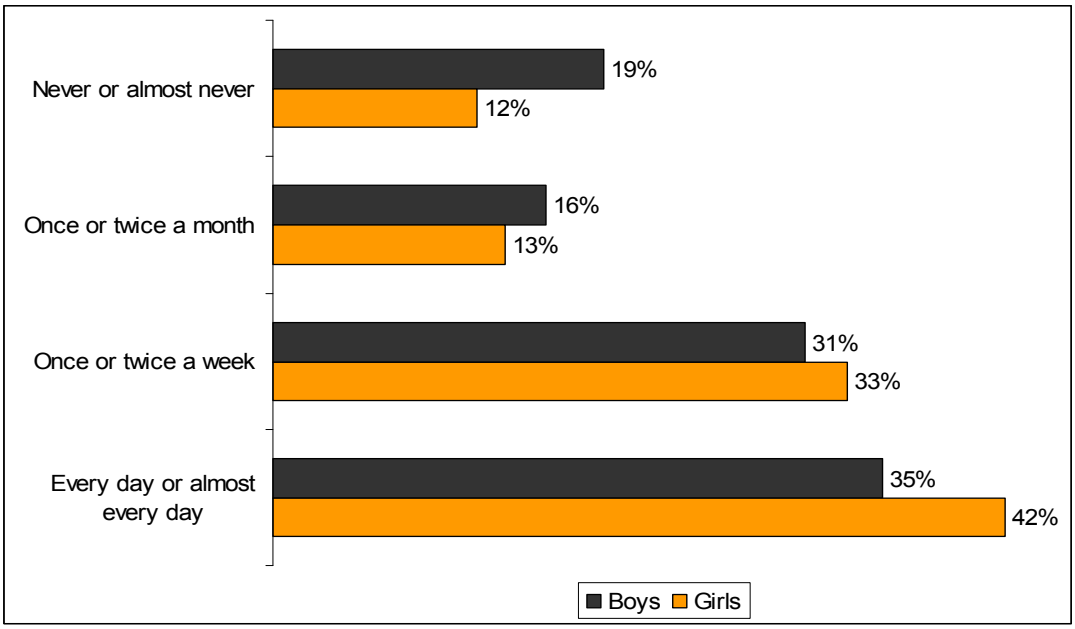
Table 3.1: Self-reported reading proficiency

Proficiency score	Girls %	Boys %
1	0.7	1.9
2	1.1	1.1
3	2.0	2.8
4	3.6	4.3
5	10.4	9.3
6	12.6	13.0
7	18.2	18.8
8	23.2	22.0

Proficiency score	Girls %	Boys %
9	16.9	15.1
10	11.3	11.6

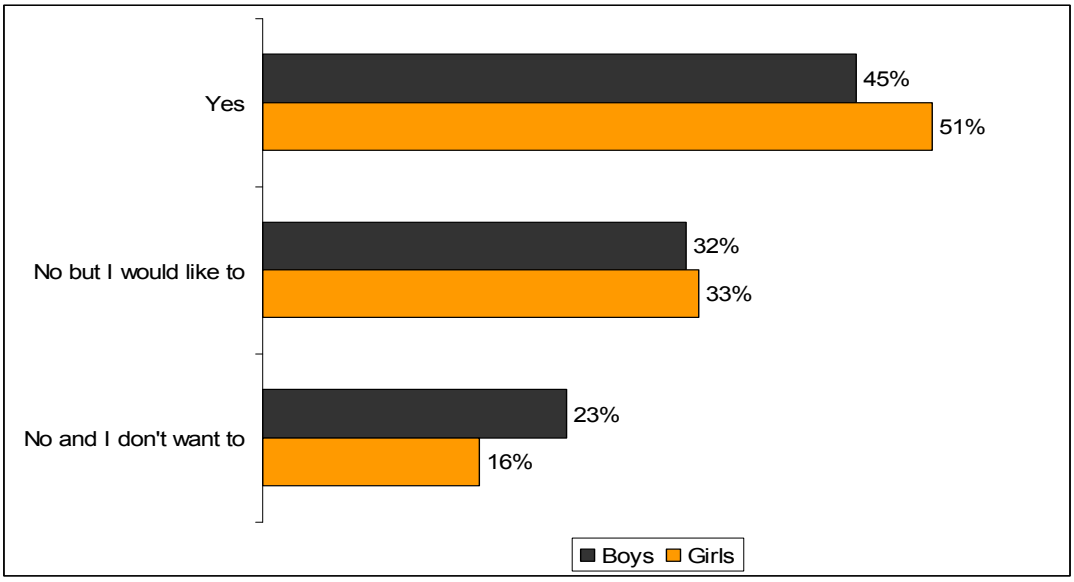
When asked how often they read outside school, girls were more likely than boys to state that they did so every day or almost every day (see **Figure 3.2**). By contrast, a greater proportion of boys than girls stated that they never or almost never read outside school. These differences were statistically significant[2].

Figure 3.2: How often do you read outside school?



A greater percentage of girls than boys also stated that they read enough, while a greater proportion of boys said that they do not read enough but also do not want to read more (see **Figure 3.3**)[3].

Figure 3.3: Do you think you read enough?

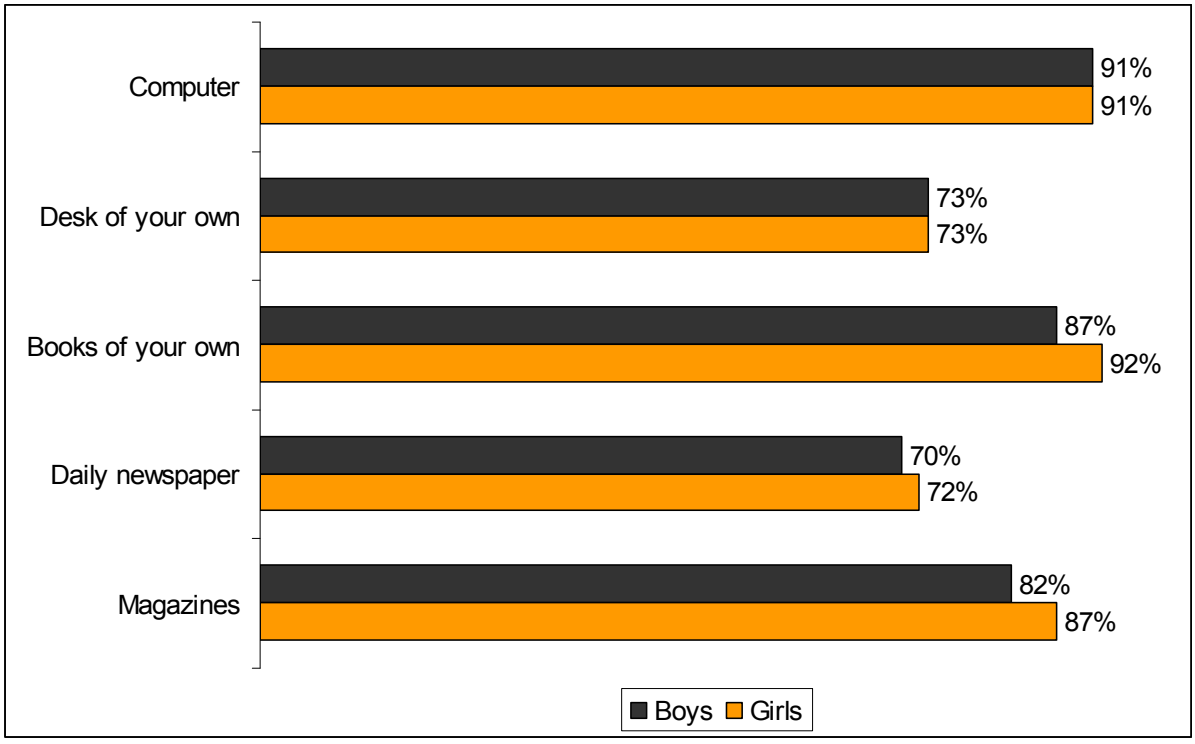


Boys estimated that they have more books at home than girls (see **Table 3.2**).[4] However, more girls than boys stated having books of their own and having access to magazines (see **Figure 3.4**)[5]. These results are in line with previous studies, which have shown that more girls than boys report owning their own books (e.g. Hall and Coles, 1999). Both boys and girls reported equal access to a computer, a desk of their own, and a daily newspaper.

Table 3.2: Estimated number of books in the home by gender

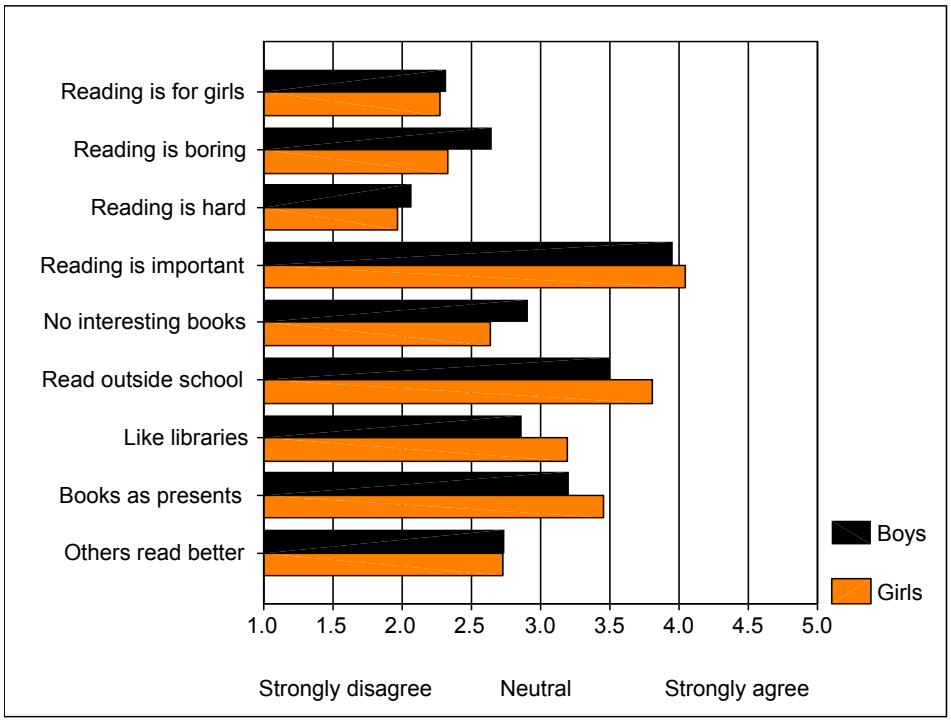
Books at home	Boys	Girls
None	1.6	0.8
1-10	8.1	7.7
11-50	17.9	21.4
51-100	21.4	23.5
101-250	21.3	21.0
251-500	16.2	14.2
> 500	13.5	11.4

Figure 3.4: Access to resources



There were significant differences in the extent to which boys and girls endorsed certain attitudes towards reading (see **Figure 3.5**). Girls were statistically more likely than boys to agree with the statements that they read outside school, that they like going to the library, and that they don't mind getting books as presents. By contrast, boys were significantly more likely than girls to agree that reading is boring and hard, and that they cannot find any books that interest them[6]. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in the degree to which boys and girls believed that reading is more for girls than for boys.

Figure 3.5: Attitudes towards reading



When asked why they read, a greater proportion of girls than boys indicated that they read because it teaches them how other people live and feel, because it is fun, because it gives them a break and because it helps them understand more about themselves (see **Figure 3.6a** and **3.6b**). By contrast, a greater percentage of boys stated that they read because it will help them get a job and because they have to[7]. There were no significant gender differences in response to the following statements: I read because it is a skill for life, I read because helps me understand the world, and I read because helps me find what I want/need to know.

Figure 3.6a: I read because… - Boys

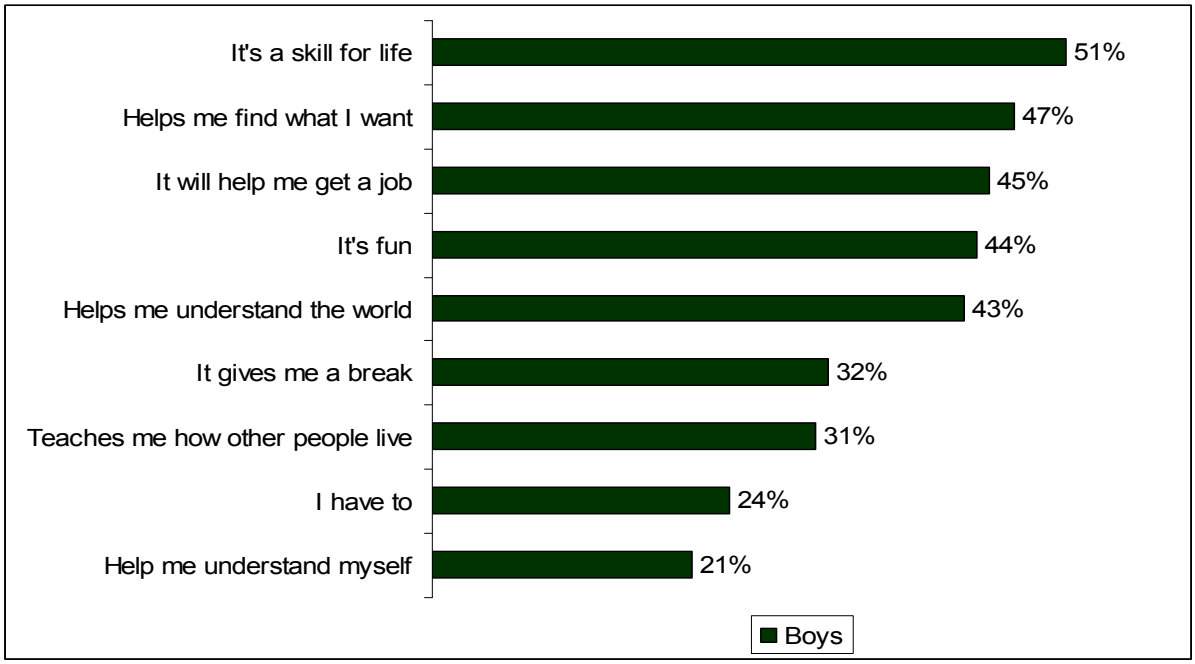
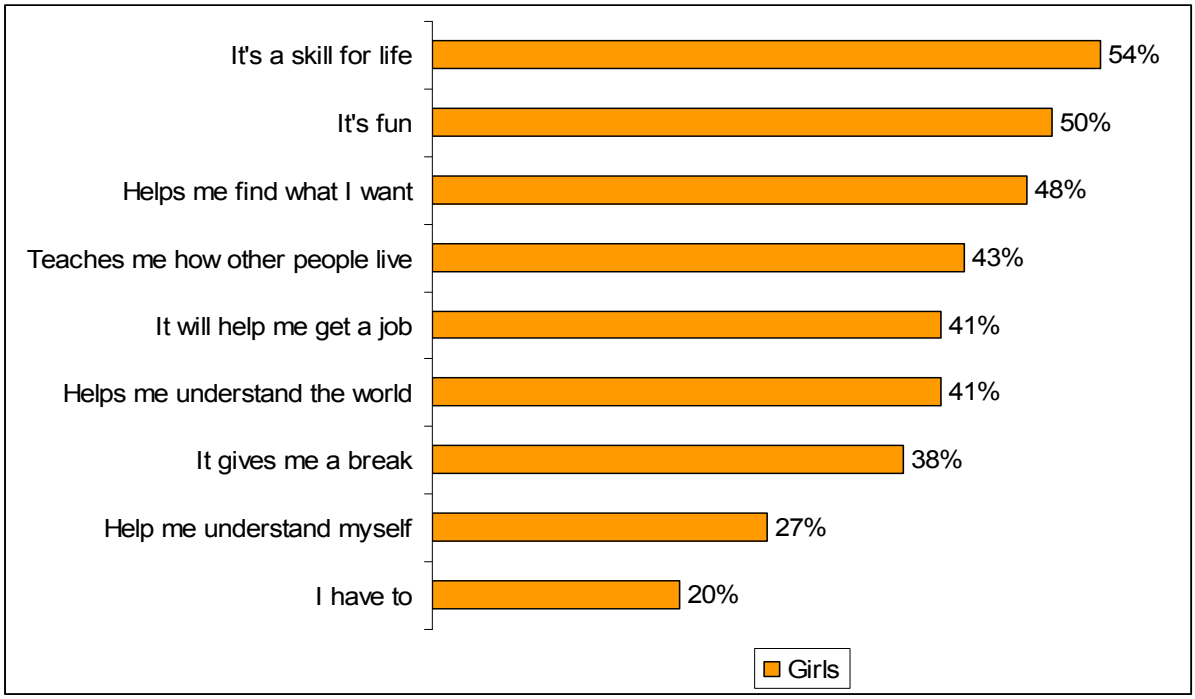


Figure 3.6b: I read because… - Girls



Figures 3.7a and **3.7b** indicate that magazines were the preferred material read outside school for both boys and girls. However, a significantly greater percentage of girls than boys reported reading magazines outside school. A greater proportion of girls than boys also reported reading fiction, text messages, emails, poetry, plays, catalogues, song lyrics, posters, cookbooks, travel books, books/magazines in a language other than English and books/magazines about TV programmes. By contrast, a significantly greater percentage of boys than girls stated reading newspapers, teletext/Ceefax, jokes, factual books, graphic novels, comics, annuals, manuals, and audiobooks outside school[8].

There were no significant gender differences in the extent to which boys and girls reported reading websites and encyclopaedias.

Figure 3.7a: Preferred reading materials outside class - Boys

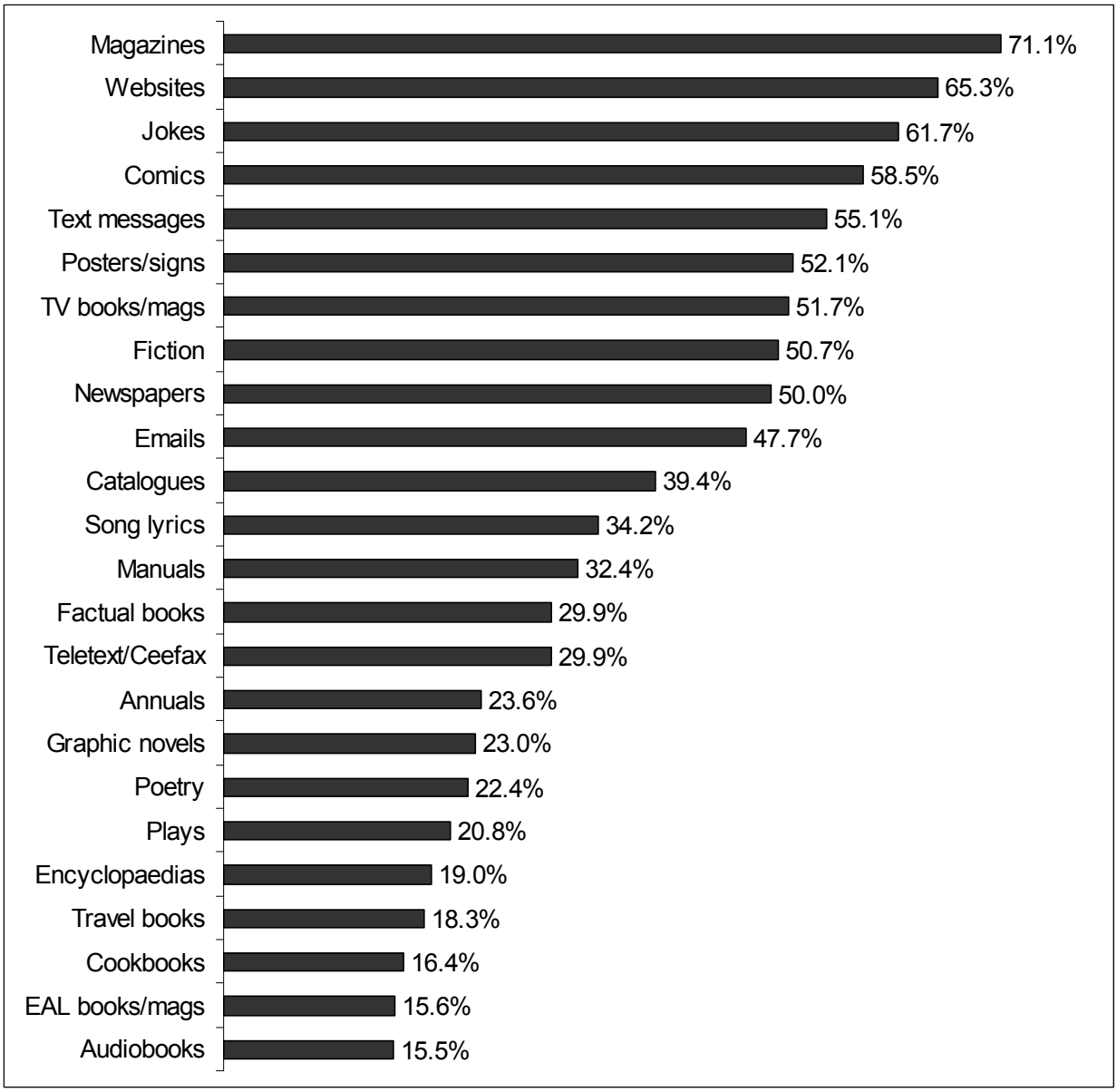
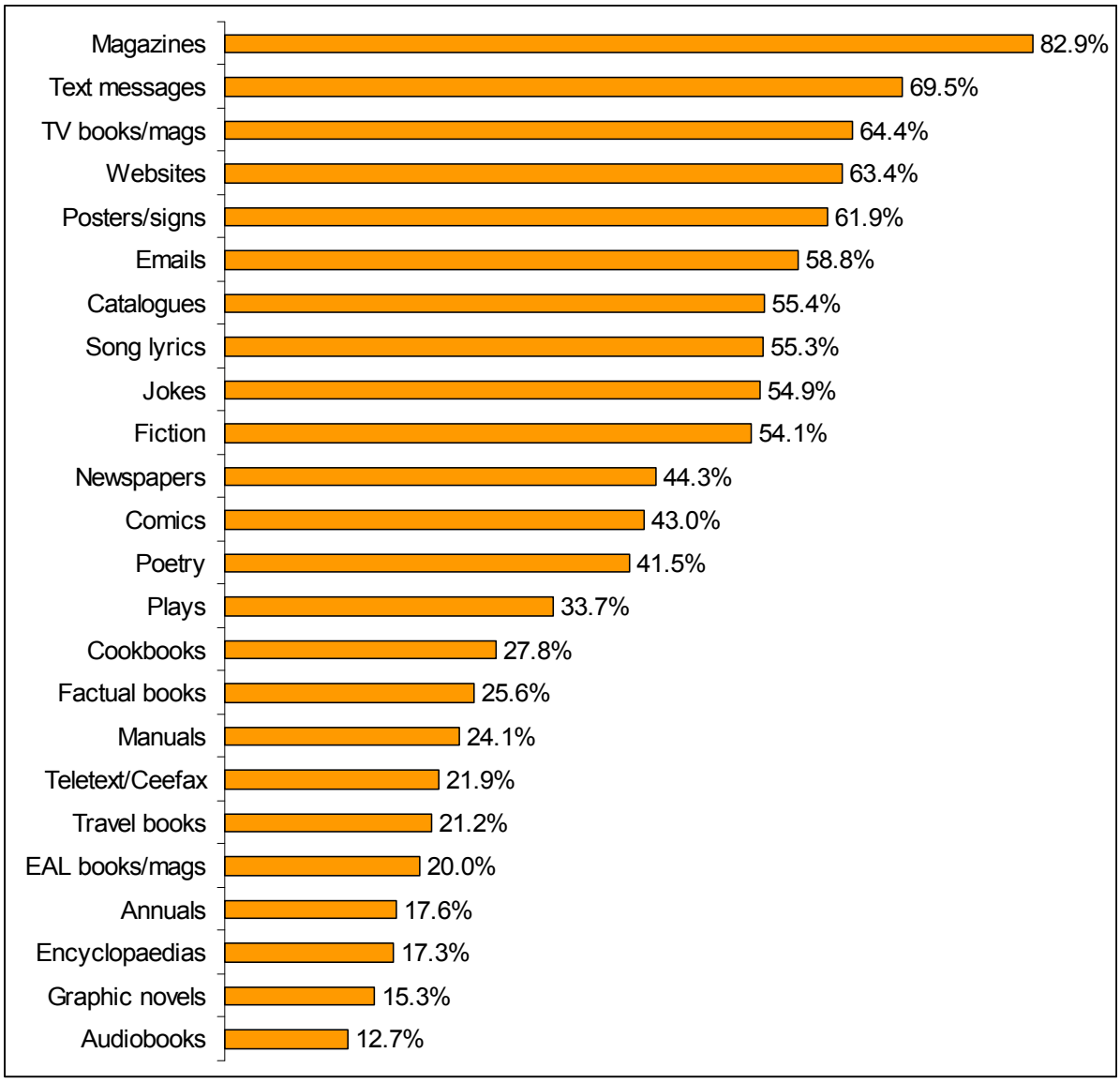


Figure 3.7b: Preferred reading materials outside class - Girls



When asked specifically what types of fiction they liked reading, an almost equal proportion of boys and girls reported that adventure, comedy and horror/ghost stories were their favourite types (see **Figure 3.8a** and **3.8b**). A significantly greater percentage of girls than boys also indicated reading fiction about romance/relationships, animals, realistic teenage fiction and poetry. By contrast, a greater proportion of boys reported reading science-fiction/fantasy, crime/detective stories, sports-related and war/spy-related fiction. A significantly greater percentage of boys than girls also stated that they do not read fiction[9]. Overall, these findings confirm those of previous studies (e.g. Sarland, 1991) that have shown that boys and girls generally opt for stereotypical preferences for fiction.

Figure 3.8a: Preferred types of fiction - Boys

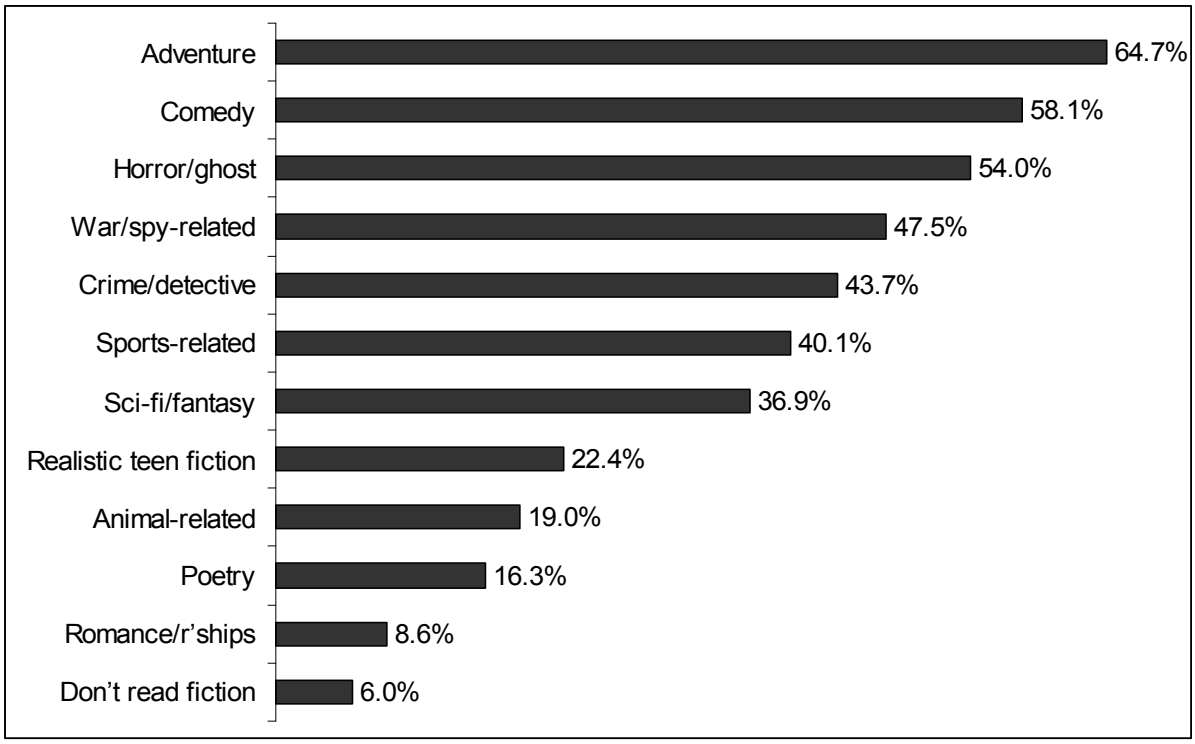
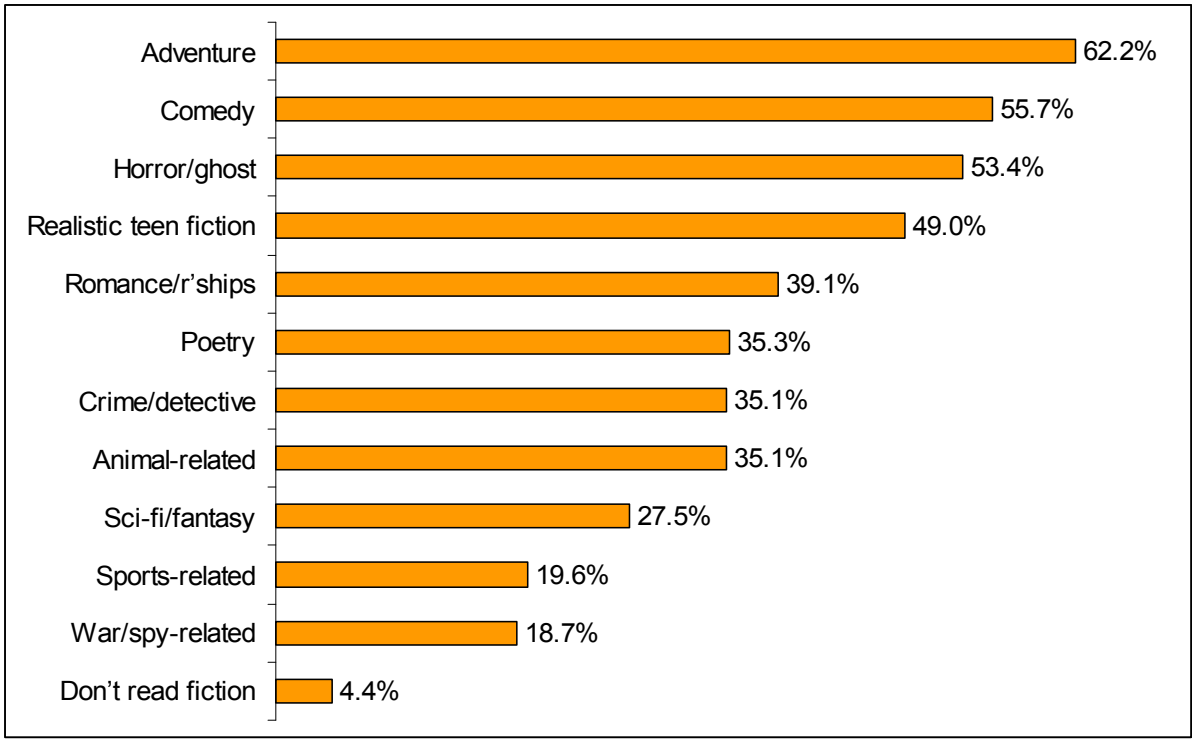
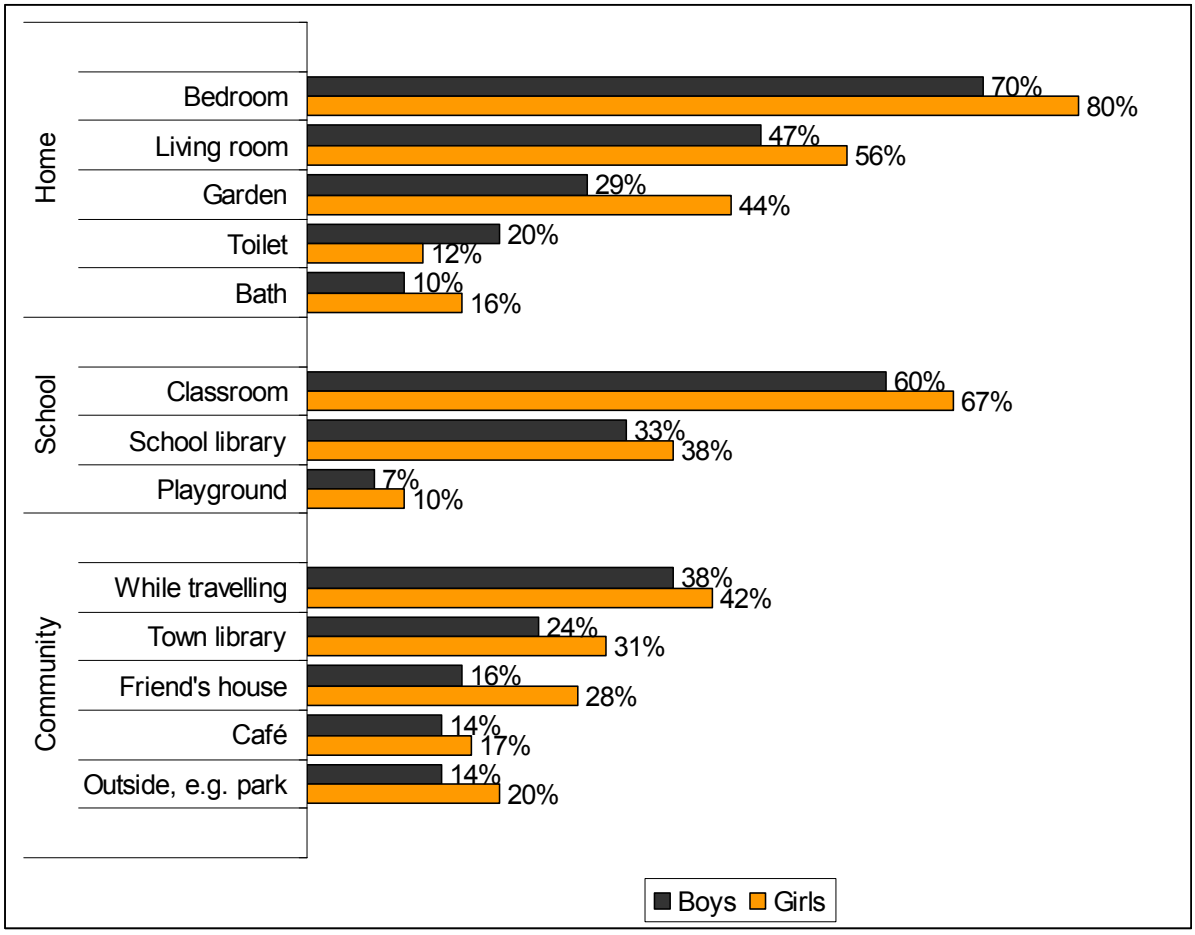


Figure 3.8b: Preferred types of fiction - Girls



With the exception of reading on the toilet, more girls than boys indicated reading in a greater variety of locations at home, at school or within the community (see **Figure 3.9**). More specifically, a greater percentage of girls than boys read in the living room/lounge, the bedroom, the bath, the garden, the classroom, the school library, the playground, the town library, communal outside spaces and a friend's house[10].

Figure 3.9: Where do you like reading?



When asked what would make them more likely to read, significantly more girls than boys stated that having more time and having friends who read more would encourage them to read more (see **Figures 3.10a** and **3.10b**). By contrast, a greater proportion of boys than girls indicated that they would read more if they enjoyed it more and if they found reading easier[11].

Figure 3.10a: I would read more if… - Boys

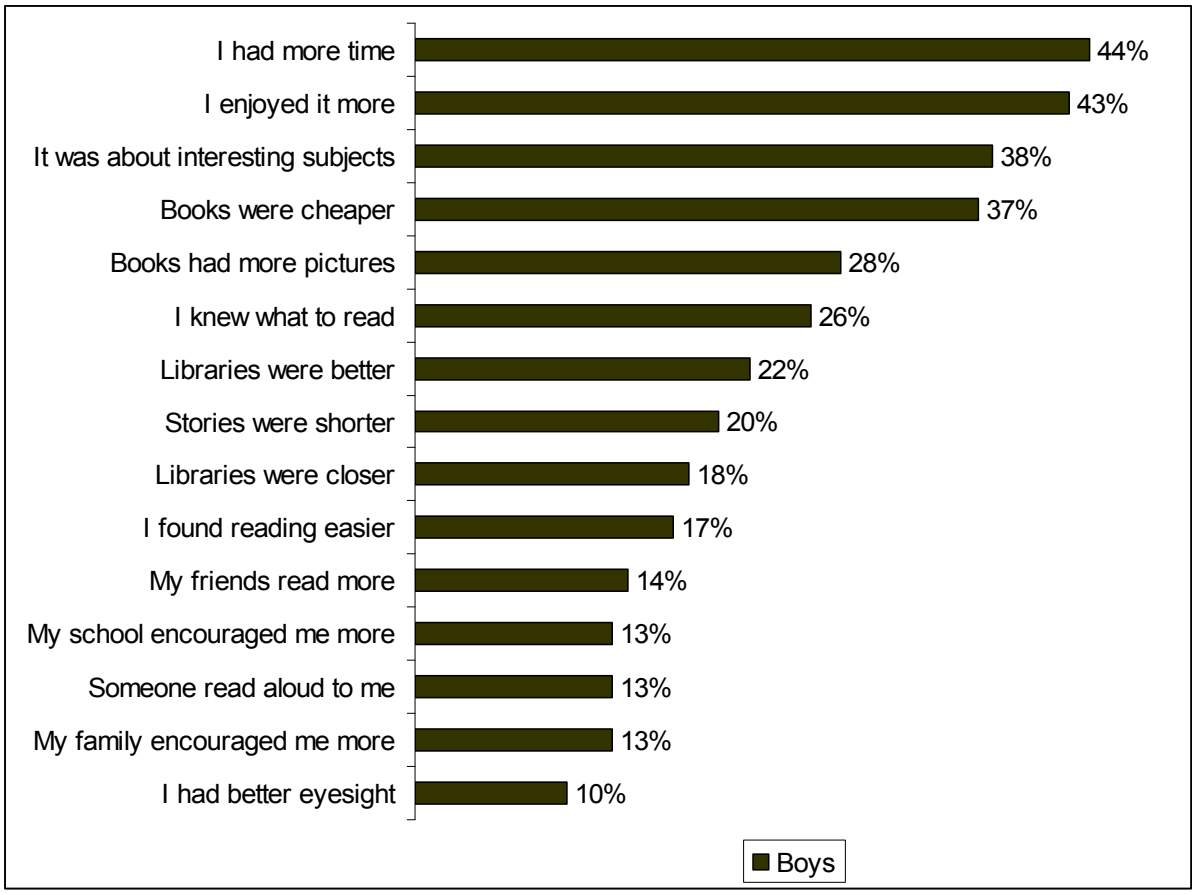
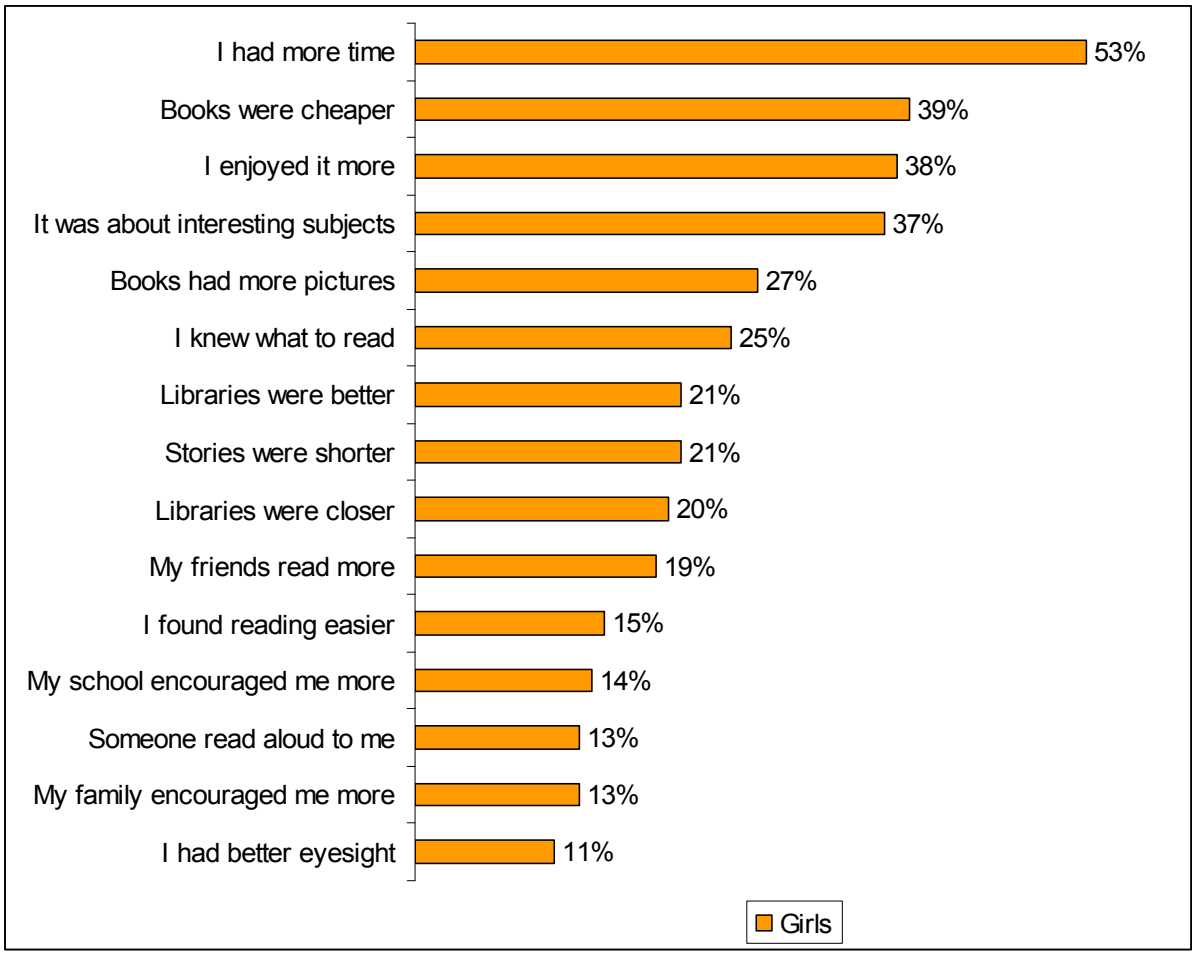


Figure 3.10b: I would read more if… - Girls



When asked which activities they would like to do to help themselves and others read more, girls were generally more enthusiastic about reading promotion activities than boys (see **Figures 3.11a** and **3.11b**). Indeed, a significantly greater percentage of girls than boys indicated that the following activities might motivate them to read more: designing websites/magazines, helping younger children read, meeting authors/celebrity readers, reading for prizes, reading groups with friends, designing library displays, reading for charity, choosing library stock, talking about their favourite reads and writing book reviews[12]. There were no significant differences between boys and girls in the extent to which they believed that reading games and rating books would encourage them to read more.

Figure 3.11a: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? - Boys

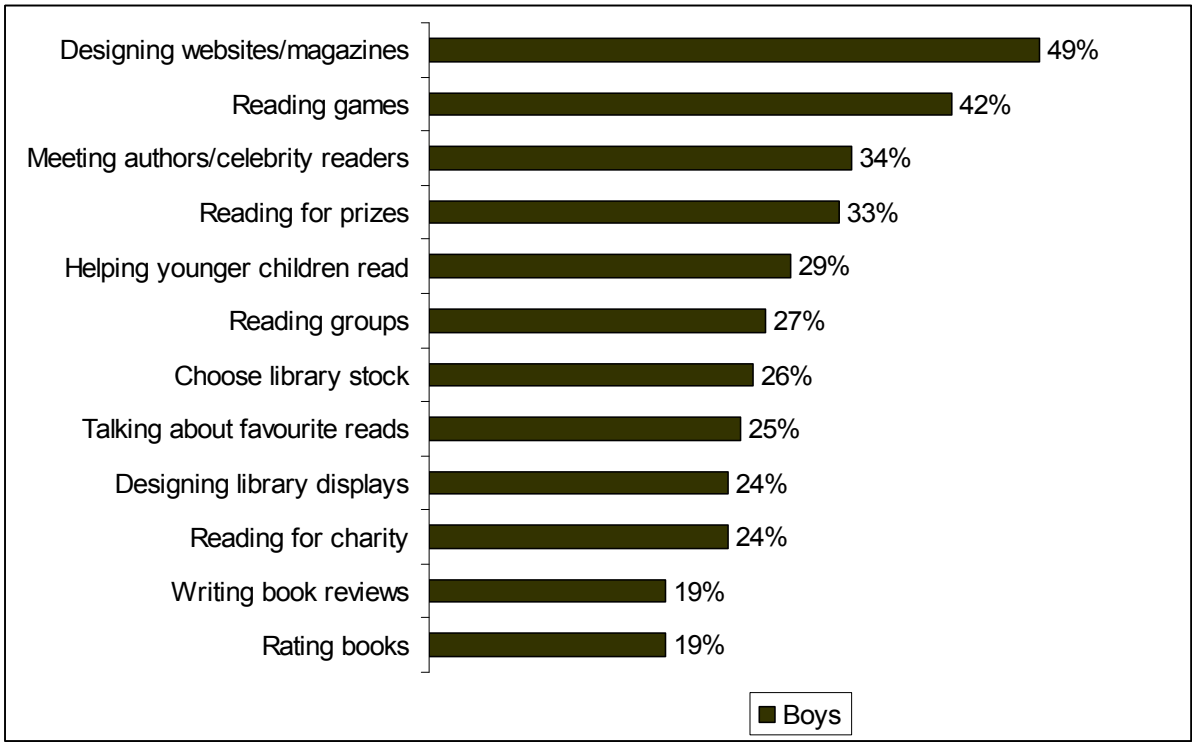


Figure 3.11b: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? - Girls

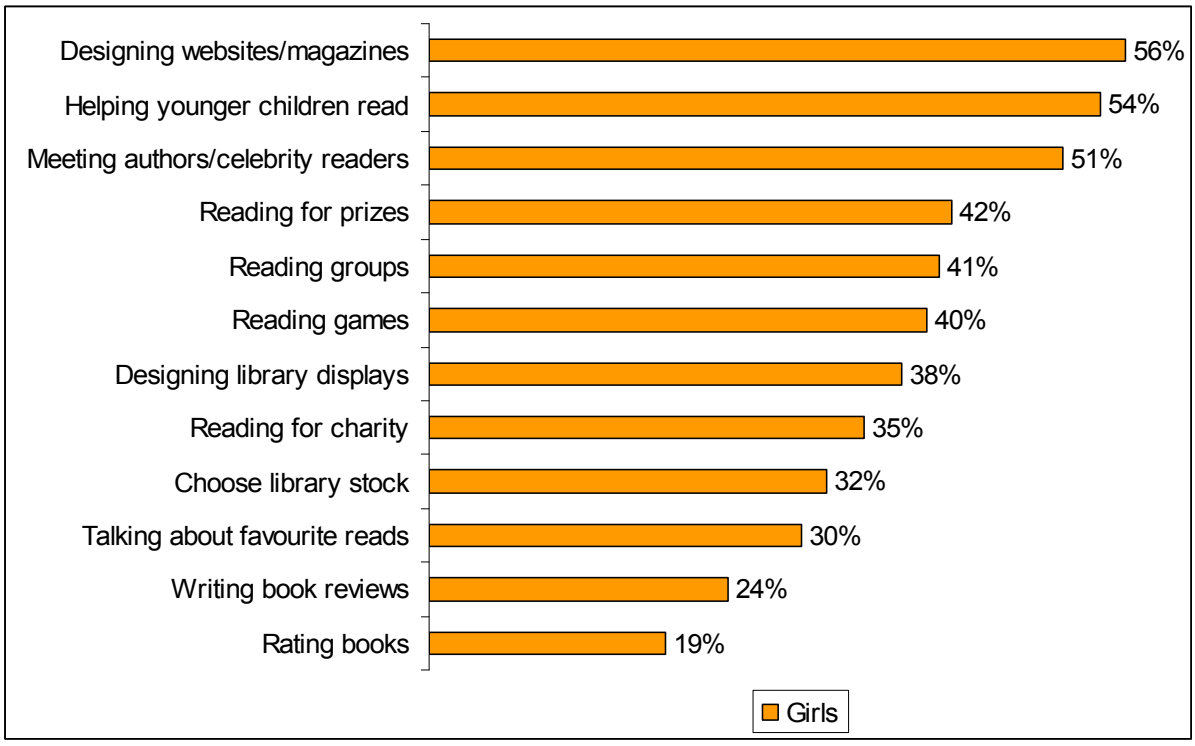
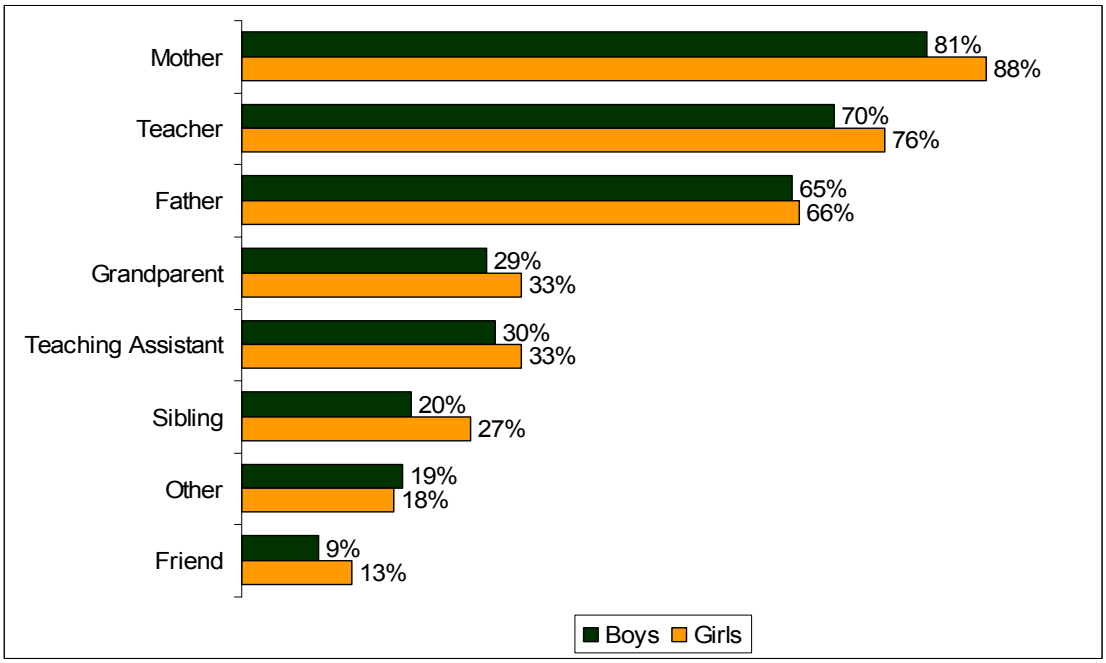


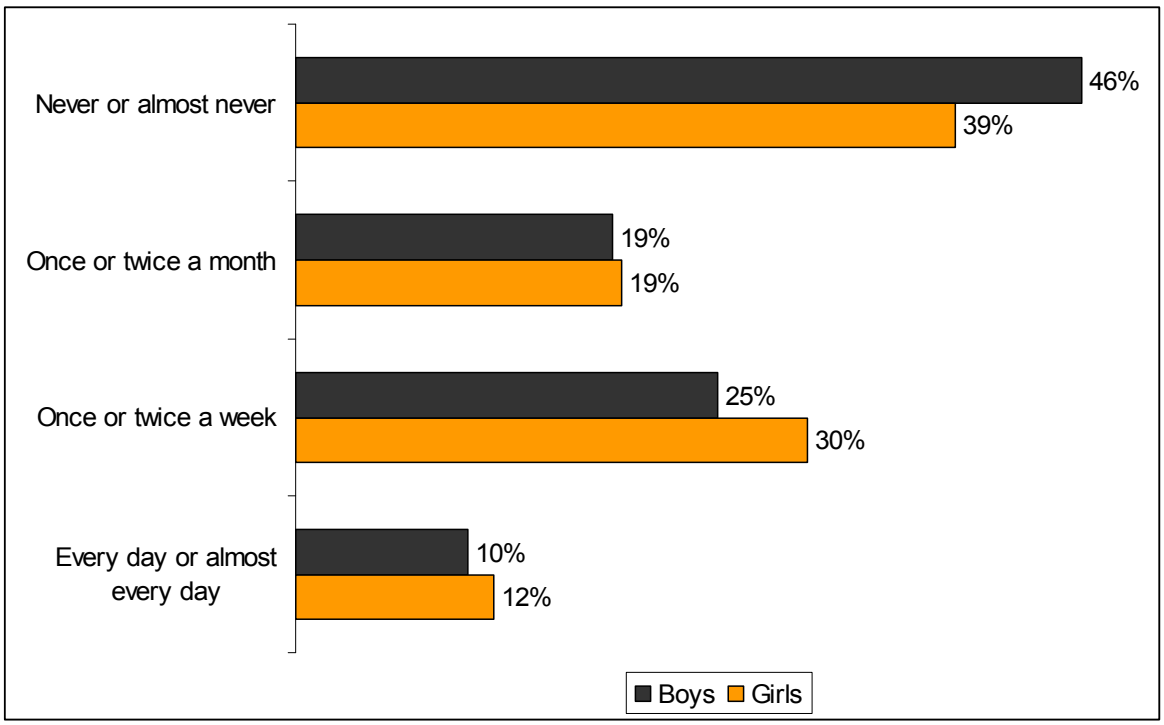
Figure 3.12 shows that both boys and girls reported that it was their mother and teacher who had taught them to read, but a greater proportion of girls than boys said this[13]. A greater proportion of girls than boys also reported that their grandparent, sibling or friend had taught them to read.

Figure 3.12: Who taught you to read?



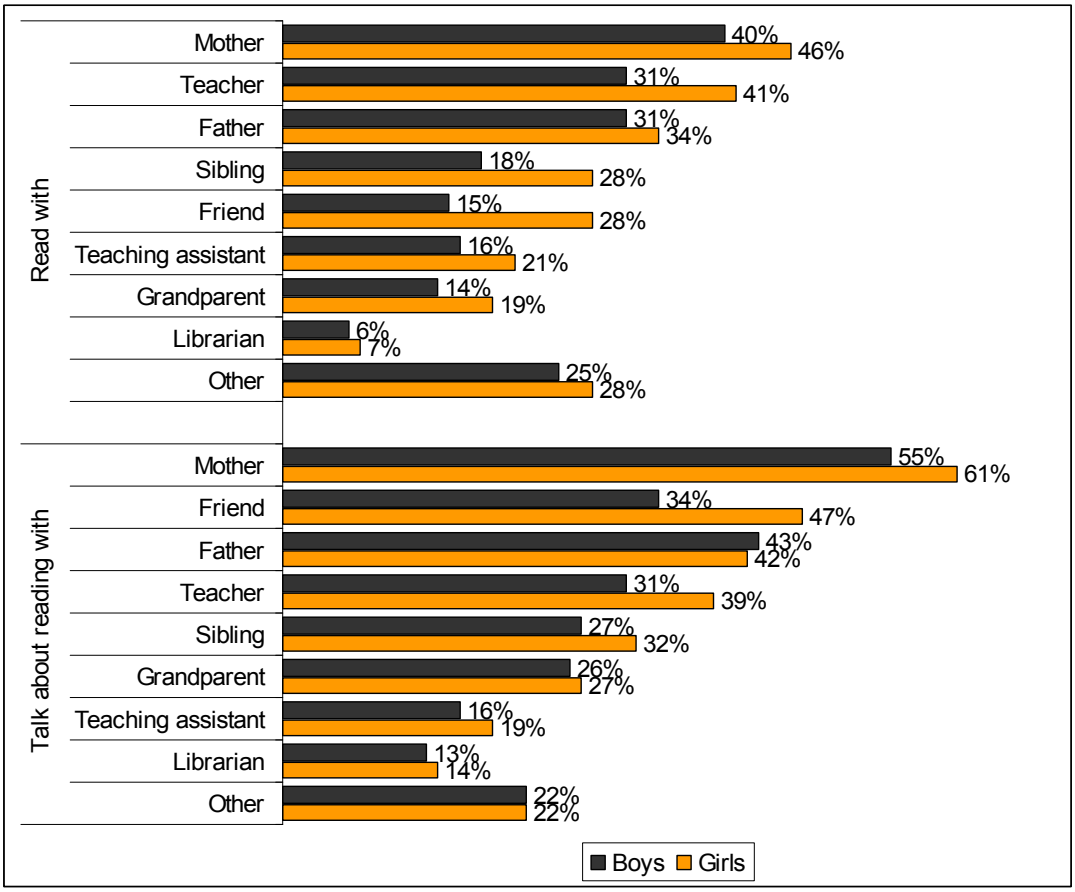
Pupils were also asked how often they talk with their family about what they are reading. **Figure 3.13** shows that a greater proportion of boys reported that they never or almost never talk about reading with their family[14].

Figure 3.13: How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?



A greater proportion of girls than boys read with their mother/carer, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant (see **Figure 3.14**)[15]. Similarly, a greater percentage of girls than boys also said that talk about reading with their mother, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant[16].

Figure 3.14: Who do you read with and who do you talk about your reading with?



There were no significant differences in the extent to which boys and girls reported being encouraged by either their mother/carer or father/carer (see **Table 3.3**).

Table 3.3: Does your mum, dad or carer encourage you to read?

	Boys %	Girls %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	17	16
Yes, sometimes	46	47
Yes, a lot	37	38
Father/carer		
No, not at all	29	29
Yes. Sometimes	42	42
Yes, a lot	28	29

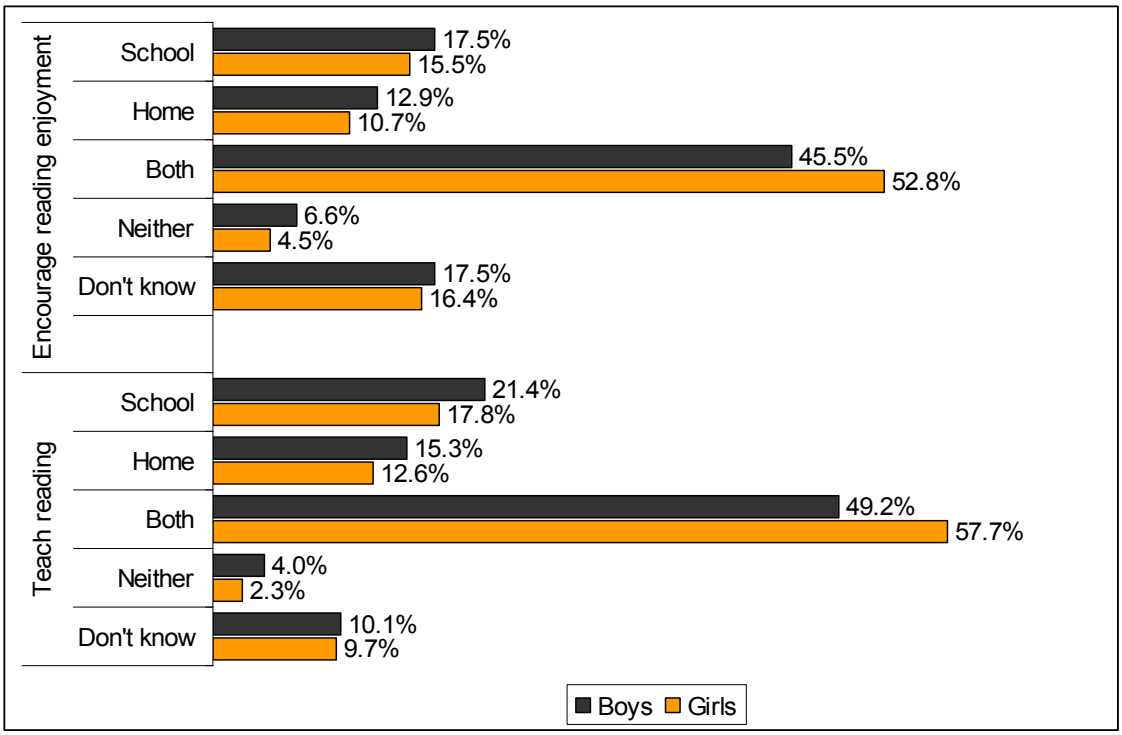
Similarly, there were no significant gender differences in the amount of parental reading as reported by the pupils (see **Table 3.4**).

Table 3.4: Does your mum, dad or carer spend time reading?

	Boys %	Girls %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	14	14
Yes, sometimes	46	47
Yes, a lot	40	39
Father/carer		
No, not at all	25	26
Yes. Sometimes	48	49
Yes, a lot	27	26

Finally, **Figure 3.15** indicates who boys and girls believe should encourage them to enjoy reading. More girls than boys stated that both the school and the home should encourage reading for enjoyment[17]. Figure 3.15 also indicates who pupils believe should teach them to read. Again, a greater percentage of girls than boys believed that it should be both the school and the home that teach reading[18].

Figure 3.15: Who should encourage you to enjoy reading and who should teach you to read?



Statistical information - gender

[1] χ^2 (3, N = 7689) = 130.719, p = .000
[2] χ^2 (3, N = 7691) = 102.750, p = .000
[3] χ^2 (2, N = 7608) = 59.954, p = .000
[4] χ^2 (6, N = 7746) = 39.155, p = .000
[5] Book of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 51.304, p = .000; access to magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 37.846, p = .000
[6] Reading is boring: t(7370) = 10.672, p = .000; reading is hard: t(7237) = 4.083, p = .000; reading is important: t(7342) = -3.848, p = .000; no interesting books: t(7291) = 9.084, p = .000; read outside school: t(7305) = -10.063, p = .000; like going to library: t(7321) = -10.314, p = .000; wouldn't mind books as present: t(7320) = -8.664, p = .000.
[7] It will help me get a job: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 14.953, p = .000; helps me understand other people: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 126.605, p = .000; it is fun: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 36.087, p = .000; it gives me break: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 33.832, p = .000; I have to: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 22.014, p = .000; helps me understand myself better: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 37.140, p = .000
[8] Newspapers: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 25.880, p = .000; teletext/ceefax: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 64.279, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 152.964, p = .000; jokes: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 37.462, p = .000; factual books: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 18.356, p = .000; fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 9.353, p = .002; graphic novels: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 75.264, p = .000; comics: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 189.295, p = .000; annuals: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 42.689, p = .000; manuals: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 67.013, p = .000; text messages: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 172.148, p = .000; emails: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 95.955, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 330.318, p = .000; plays: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 165.889, p = .000; catalogues: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 202.302, p = .000; song lyrics: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 356.965, p = .000; posters: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 76.613, p = .000; cookbooks: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 150.550, p = .000; travel books: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 10.1573, p = .001; audiobooks: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 12.813, p = .000; EAL books: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 26.253, p = .000; TV books/mags: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 130.848, p = .000.
[9] Romance: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 1033.287, p = .000; animal-related fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 260.256, p = .000; science-fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 78.061, p = .000; crime/detective: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 60.080, p = .000; sports-related fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 386.686, p = .000; realistic teenage fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 612.480, p = .000; war/spy-related: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 727.032, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 372.962, p = .000; don't read fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 9.798, p = .002.
[10] Lounge: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 55.475, p = .000; bedroom: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 95.032, p = .000; bath: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 77.264, p = .000; toilet: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 78.759, p = .000; garden: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 179.242, p = .000; classroom: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 48.248, p = .000; school library: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 18.575, p = .000; playground: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 26.476, p = .000; commuting: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 12.543, p = .000; café: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 10.079, p = .001; community library: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 51.074, p = .000; communal outside space: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 59.861, p = .000; friends: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 166.876, p = .000.
[11] More time: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 57.281, p = .000; enjoyed it more: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 18.349, p = .000; reading easier: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 11.646, p = .001; friends read more: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 28.258, p = .000;
[12] Reading groups: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 166.711, p = .000; talking about favourite books: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 28.252, p = .000; choosing library stock: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 45.120, p = .000; writing book reviews: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 25.616, p = .000; helping younger kids: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 516.553, p = .000; design library display: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 163.953, p = .000; reading for charity: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 126.147, p = .000; design wegsite/magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 35.672, p = .000; reading for prizes: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 57.903, p = .000; meeting author/celebrity reader: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 244.546, p = .000.
[13] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 55.694, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 38.870, p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 14.696, p = .000; siblings: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 45.536, p = .000; and friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 45.536, p = .000.
[14] χ^2 (3, N = 7642) = 48.687, p = .000
[15] Read with mum: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 24.395, p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 34.777, p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 103.564, p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 180.300, p = .000, teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 73.833, p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 25.525., p = .000.
[16] Talk with mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 25.381, p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 24.895, p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 119.160, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 61.826, p = .000; and teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 13.233, p = .000.
[17] Encourage reading enjoyment: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 49.614, p = .000
[18] Teach reading: χ^2 (1, N = 7880) = 66.889, p = .000

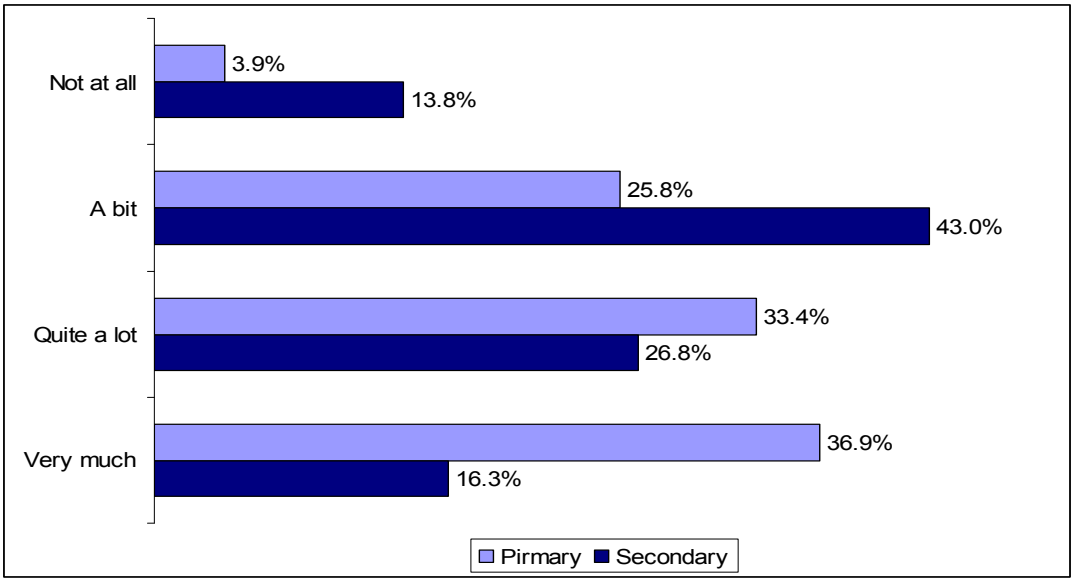
Chapter 4. Breakdown of findings by age

Summary of key findings

- In line with previous research, reading enjoyment declined with age, with primary pupils enjoying reading significantly more than secondary ones. More primary than secondary pupils read outside school every day and held more positive attitudes towards reading.
- Interestingly, primary pupils rated themselves to be more proficient readers than secondary ones.
- Primary and secondary pupils preferred different reading materials, which partly reflects their age differences and access to resources, such as computers.
- Primary pupils reported reading for a greater number of reasons than secondary ones. They also stated that they would read more if they had more time, if books were cheaper and if it was about subjects they were interested in. Secondary pupils reported that they would read more if they enjoyed it more.
- More primary than secondary pupils were enthusiastic about reading promotion activities, including reading games, helping younger children read and meeting authors/celebrity readers. Over half of secondary pupils believed that designing websites/magazines would encourage them to read more.
- Parents and other adults are more likely to read with younger children. Indeed, more primary than secondary pupils reported reading with and talking about reading with a variety of people. More primary than secondary pupils not only reported being encouraged to read by their mother and father but they also reported that their mother and father spend a lot of time reading.
- Finally, although both primary and secondary pupils believe that both the home and the school should teach them to read and to enjoy reading, a greater proportion of primary than secondary pupils believe this.

Previous research has shown that reading enjoyment declines with age (e.g. Hall and Coles, 1999). In line with this, present results show that primary pupils were significantly more likely than secondary ones to enjoy reading "Very much" or "Quite a lot" (see **Figure 4.1**)[1].

Figure 4.1: Reading enjoyment



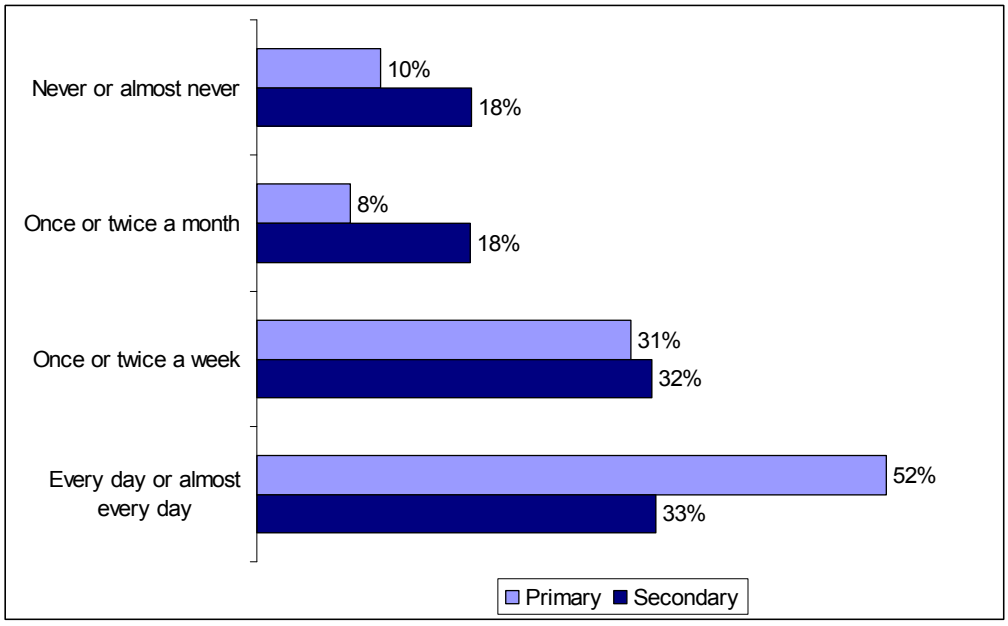
There were significant differences in the extent to which primary and secondary pupils rated themselves to be proficient readers, with primary pupils reporting themselves as better readers than secondary pupils (see **Table 4.1**)[2].

Table 4.1: Self-reported reading proficiency

Proficiency score	Primary %	Secondary %
1	1.1	1.4
2	0.9	1.1
3	1.4	2.9
4	3.3	4.3
5	8.8	10.4
6	11.2	13.5
7	15.3	19.7
8	19.5	23.9
9	18.8	14.6
10	19.6	8.1

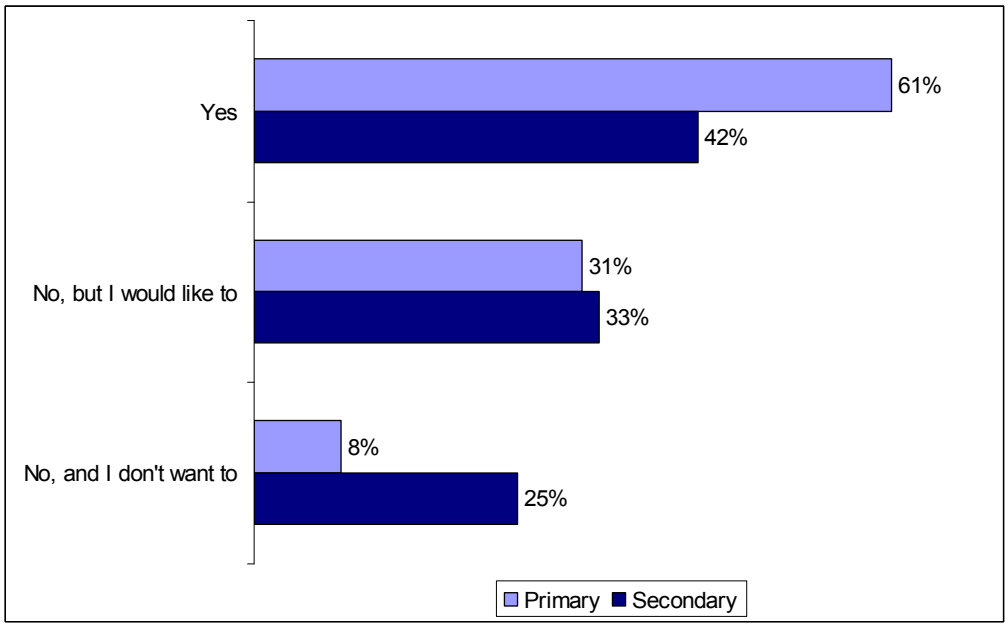
Not only did primary pupils rate themselves as better readers, they were also more likely than secondary ones to state that they read outside school every day or almost every day (see **Figure 4.2**)[3]. Secondary pupils were more likely than primary ones to report reading outside school never/almost never or once/twice a month.

Figure 4.2: How often do you read outside school?



When asked whether they thought that they were reading enough, primary pupils were more likely than secondary ones to state that they read enough, while secondary pupils were more likely to say that they do not read enough but also do not want to read more (see **Figure 4.3**)[4].

Figure 4.3: Do you think you read enough?



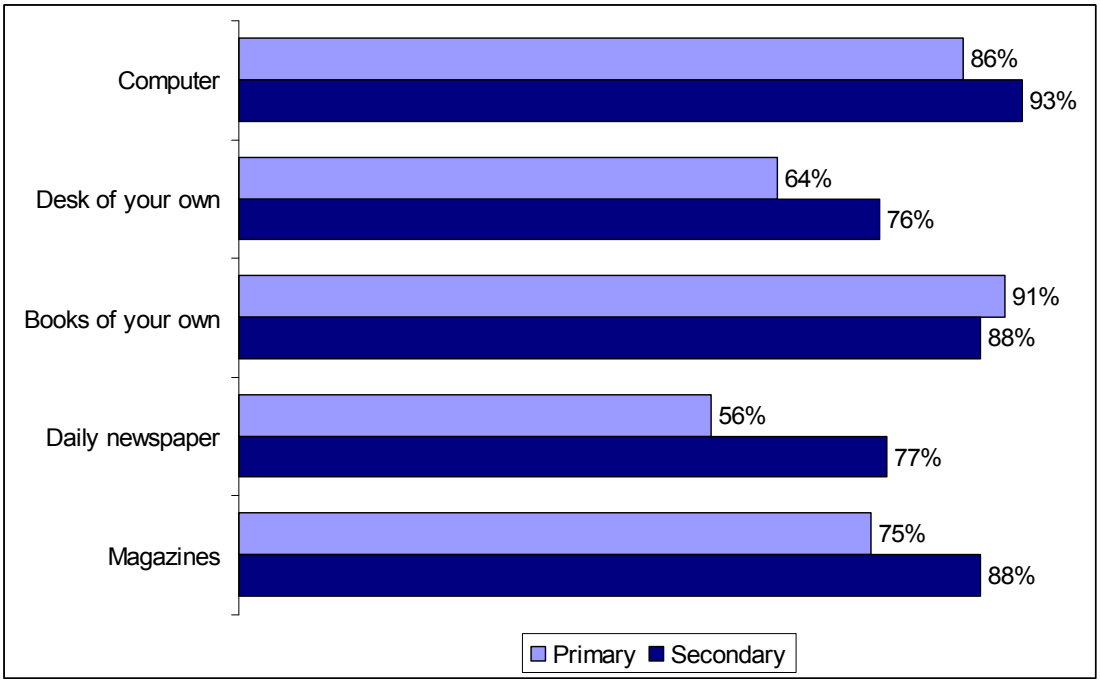
Although primary pupils estimated that they have more books at home than secondary ones (see **Table 4.2**), these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 4.2: Estimated number of books in the home

Books at home	Primary %	Secondary %
None	0.6	1.5
1-10	6.9	8.5
11-50	17.3	20.6
51-100	23.1	22.1
101-250	20.2	21.7
251-500	16.9	14.3
>500	15.1	11.4

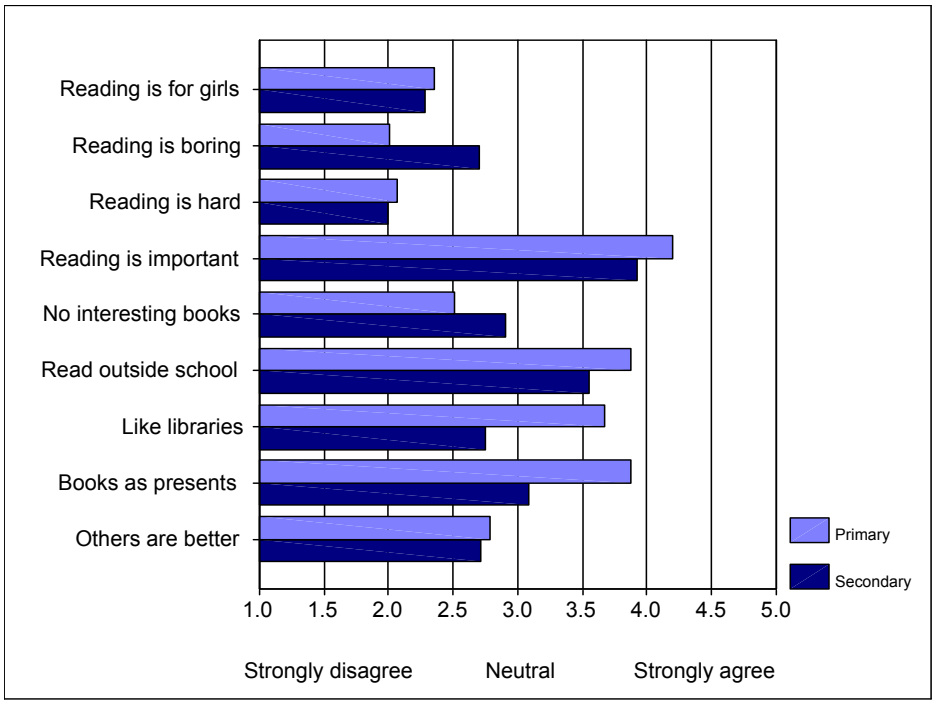
Pupils were asked to indicate what types of resources they have access to at home (see **Figure 4.4**). A greater percentage of secondary pupils than their primary counterparts reported having a computer, a desk of their own, access to a daily newspaper and access to magazines[5]. Although more primary pupils indicated having books of their own, this difference was not statistically significant.

Figure 4.4: Access to resources at home



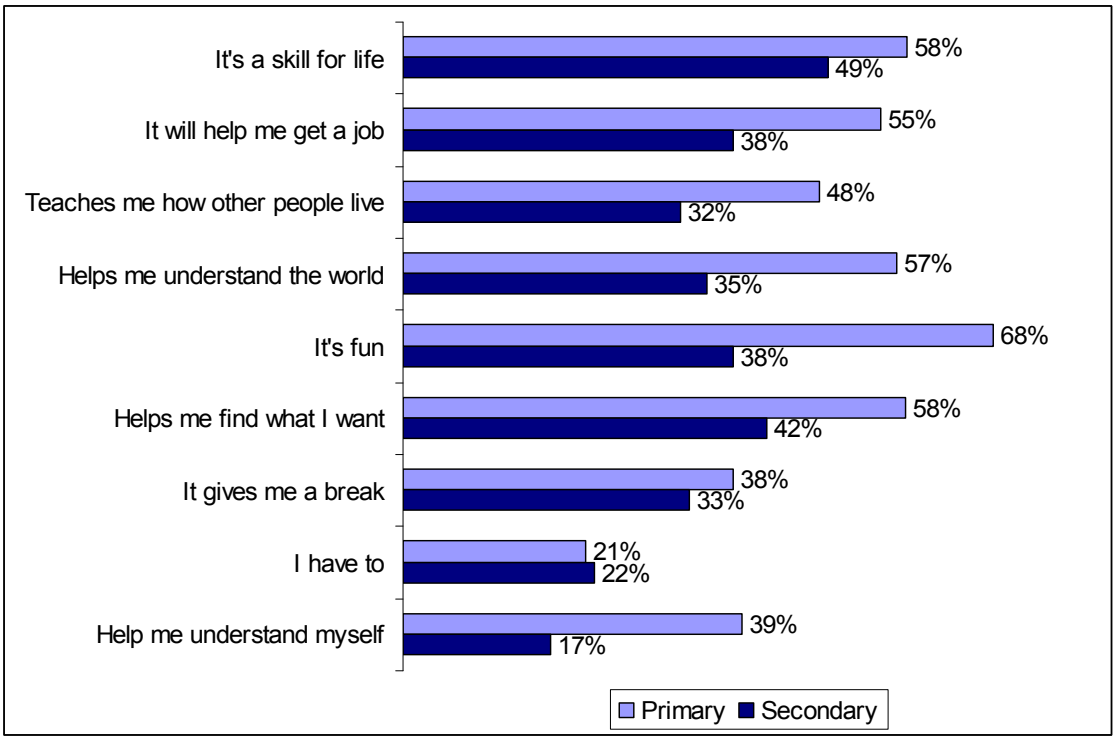
Primary pupils generally held more positive attitudes towards reading than their secondary counterparts (see **Figure 4.5**). More specifically, primary pupils were significantly more likely than secondary ones to agree with the statements that reading is important, that they read outside school, that they like going to the library and that they would be happy if someone gave them a book as a present, while secondary pupils were significantly more likely to agree with the statements that reading is boring and that they cannot find books that interest them[6]. The two groups did not differ significantly on three of the nine attitudinal statements: reading is more for girls than boys, reading is hard for me and I do not read as well as other students in my class.

Figure 4.5: Attitudes towards reading



Overall, primary pupils reported reading for a greater number of reasons than secondary ones. In particular, primary pupils were more likely to indicate that they read because it is a skill for life, it will help them get a job, it teaches them how other people live and feel, it helps them understand the world, it is fun, it helps them find what they want or need to know, it gives them a break and because it helps them understand themselves more (see **Figure 4.6**)[7]. Although more secondary pupils than primary ones reported that they read because they have to, this difference was not statistically significant.

Figure 4.6: I read because …



Primary and secondary pupils had quite different reading preferences, which partly reflect their access to resources (see **Figure 4.7a** and **4.7b**). For example, secondary pupils were more likely than primary ones to read websites, newspapers, magazines, text messages, emails and song lyrics. By contrast, primary pupils were more likely to read jokes, factual books, fiction, graphic novels, comics, annuals, manuals, cookbooks, encyclopaedias, travel books, audiobooks, books and magazines in a language other than English, and books and magazines about TV programmes[8].

Figure 4.7a: Preferred reading materials outside class - Primary pupils

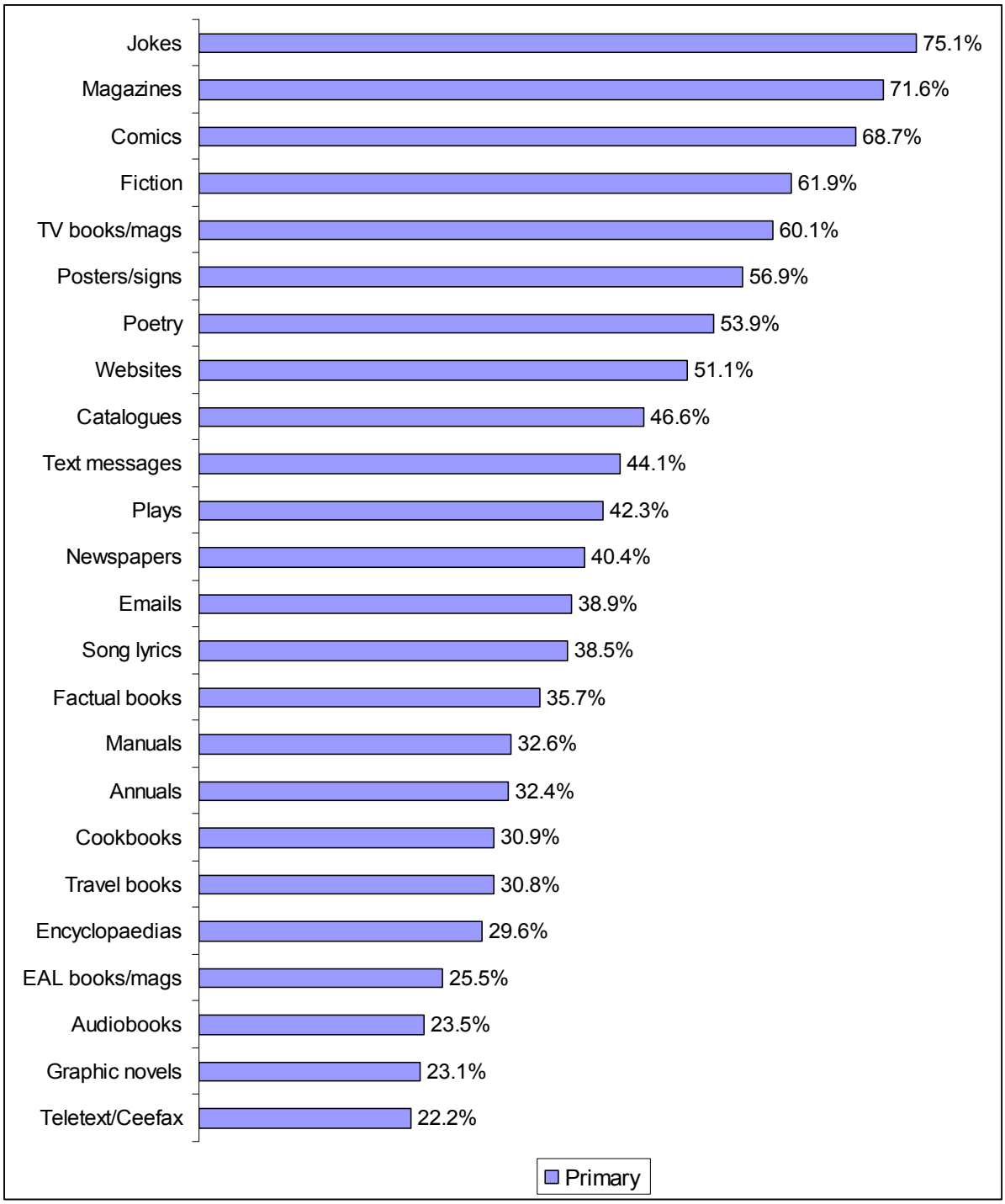
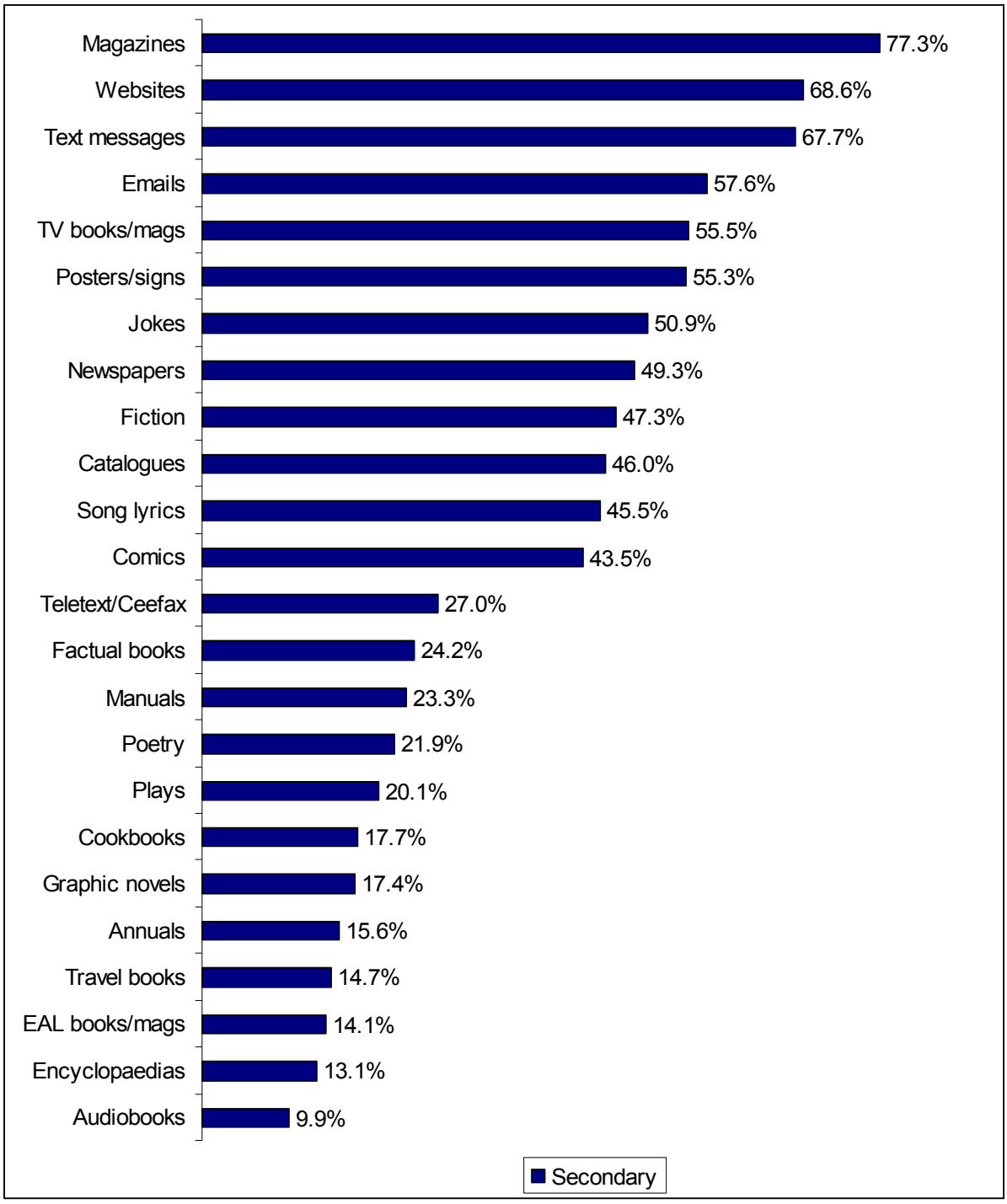


Figure 4.7b: Preferred reading materials outside class – Secondary pupils



Primary pupils were more likely to indicate that they like reading the following types of fiction: adventure, horror/ghost, animal-related, science-fiction/fantasy, comedy, crime/detective, sports-related, war/spy-related and poetry (see **Figures 4.8a** and **4.8b**)[9]. There were no significant differences in the extent to which the two groups chose romance/relationship fiction. There was also no significant difference in the degree to which the two groups chose not to read fiction. However, realistic teenage fiction was, perhaps unsurprisingly, more popular among secondary pupils.

Figure 4.8a: Preferred types of fiction – Primary pupils

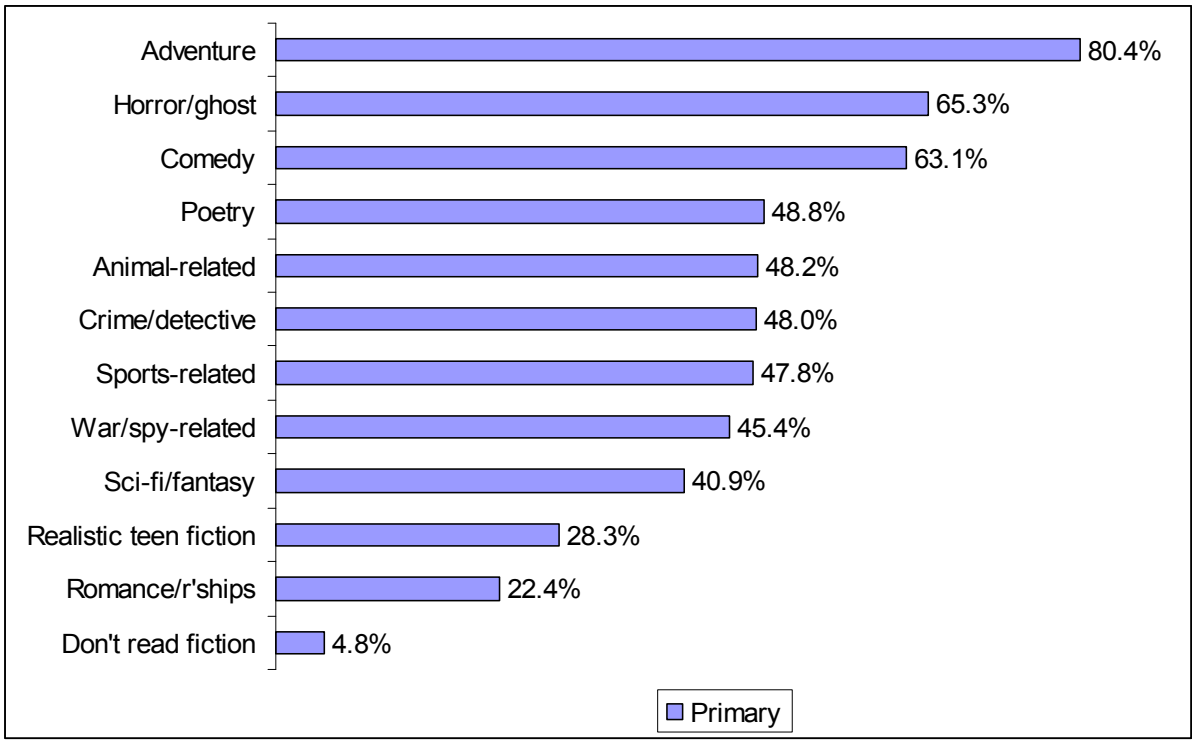
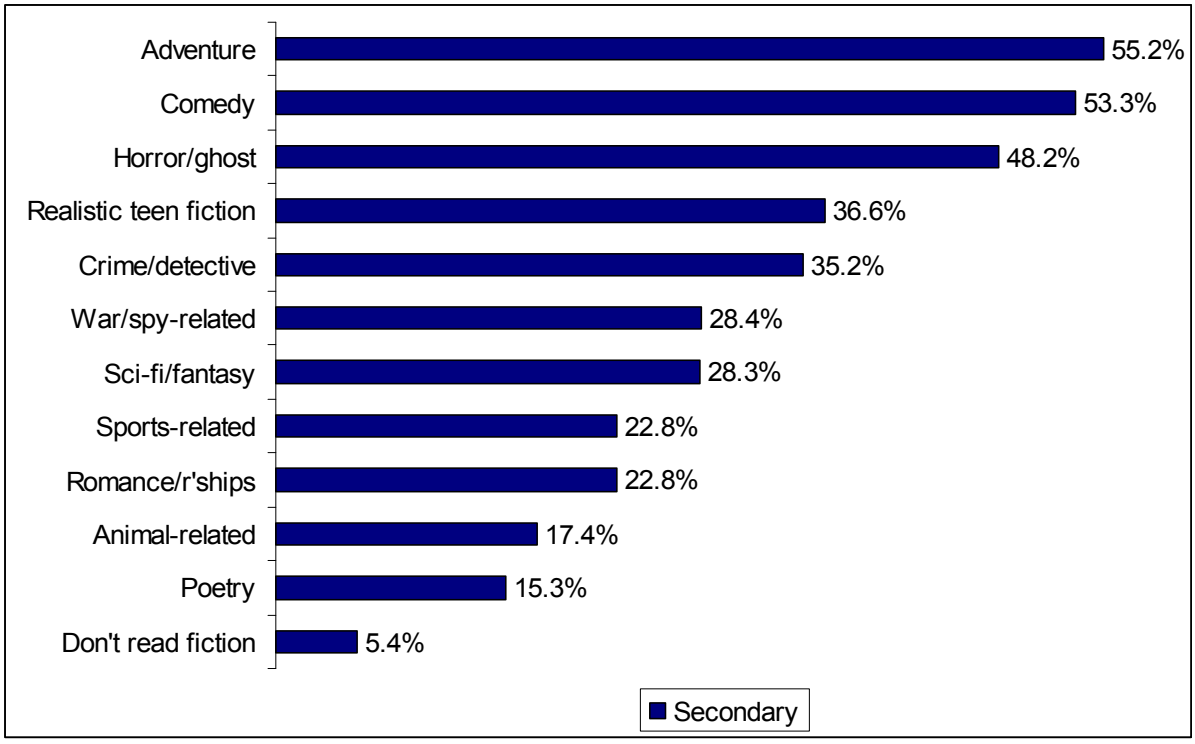
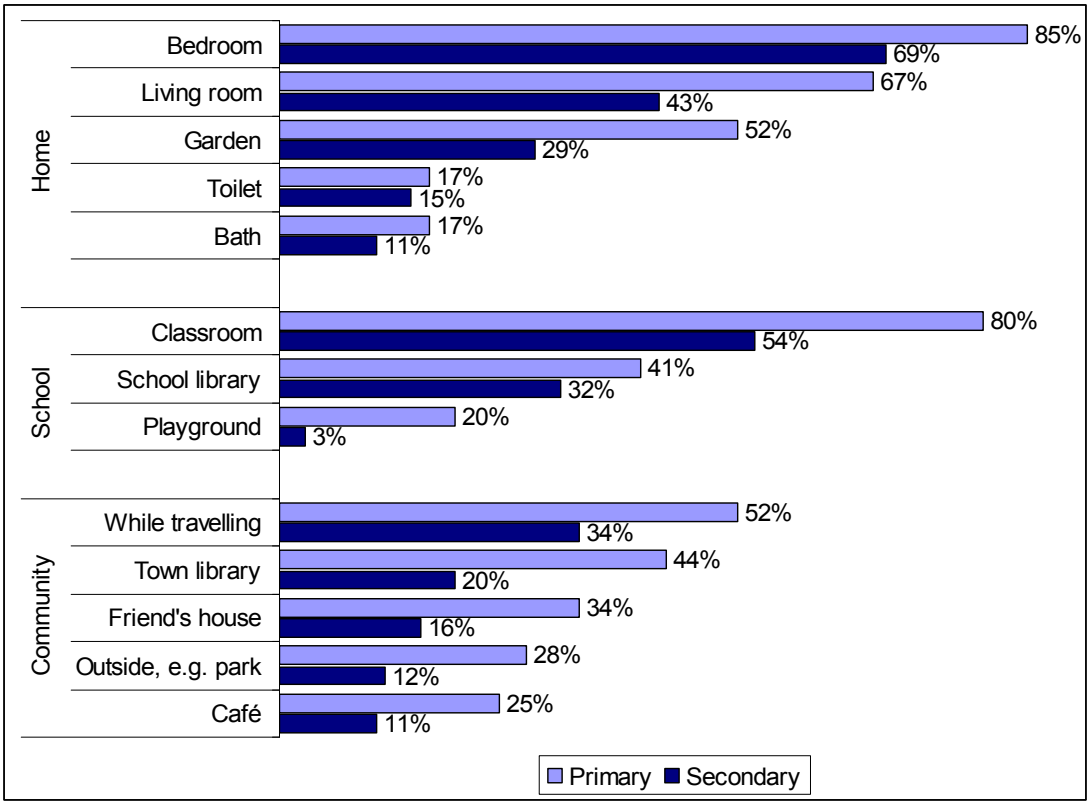


Figure 4.8b: Preferred types of fiction – Secondary pupils



More primary than secondary pupils reported that they read in a variety of places (see **Figure 4.9**). In particular, primary pupils were more likely than secondary ones to read in the living room, the bedroom, the bath, the garden, the classroom, the school library, the playground, while commuting, in a café, in a town library, in a communal outside space and at a friend's house[10]. There was no significant difference in the number of primary and secondary pupils choosing the toilet as a place for reading.

Figure 4.9: Where do you like reading?



Primary pupils were generally more likely than secondary ones to state that they would read more if they had more time, books were cheaper, reading was about subjects they were interested in, libraries were better, books had more pictures, they knew what to read, someone read aloud to them, stories were shorter, libraries were closer, they found reading easier, their friends read more, their school and family encouraged them and if they had better eyesight (see **Figures 4.10a** and **4.10b**)[11]. Although more secondary pupils than primary ones said that they would read more if they enjoyed it more, this difference was not statistically significant.

Figure 4.10a: I would read more if… - Primary pupils

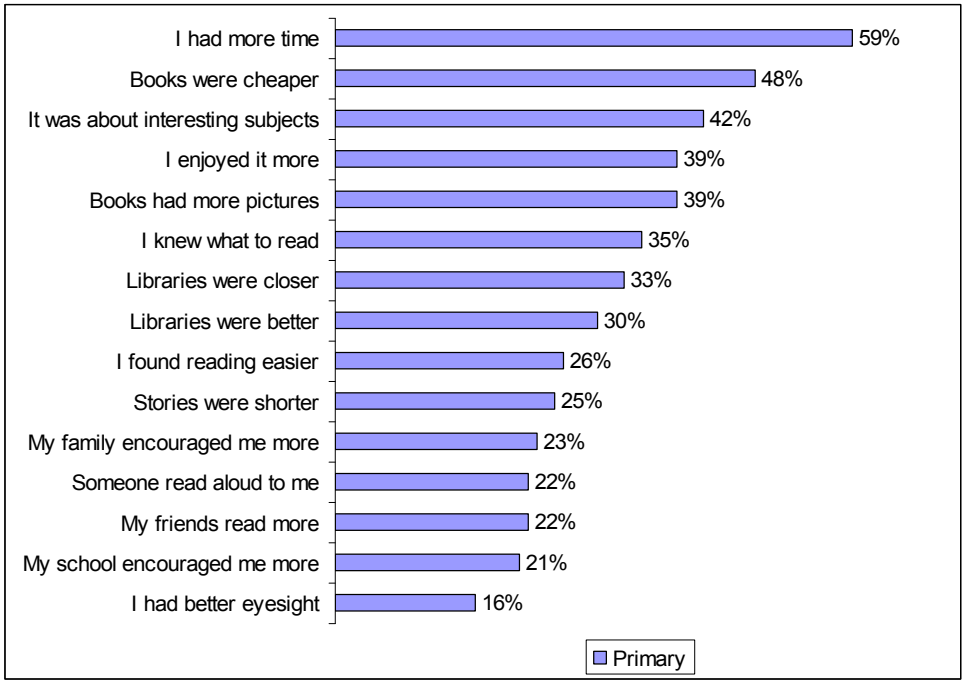
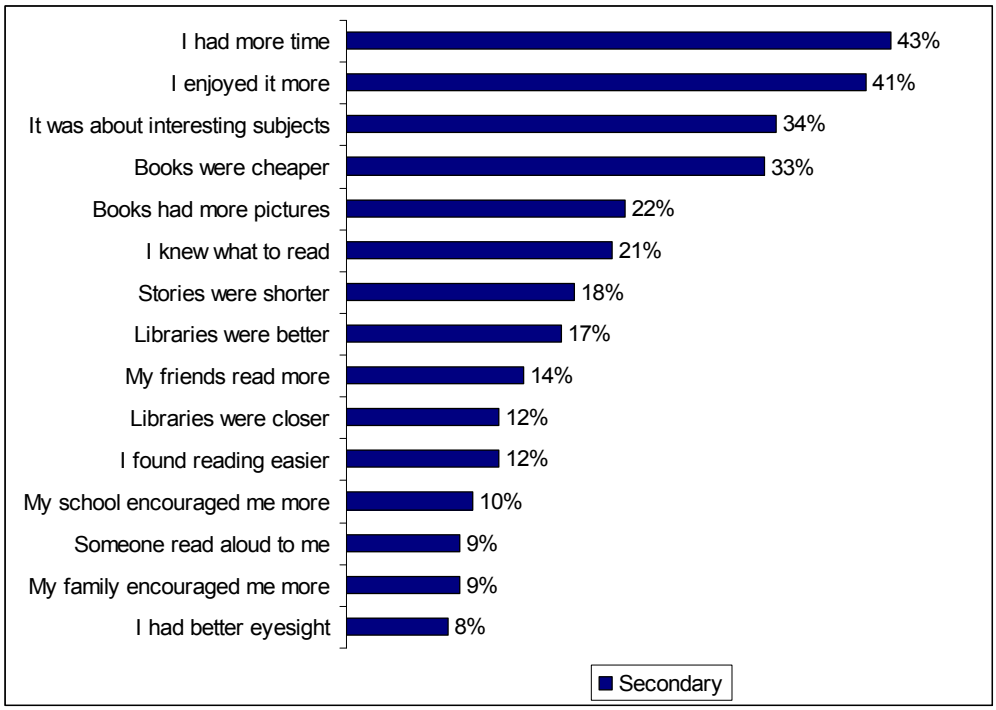


Figure 4.10b: I would read more if … – Secondary pupils



Primary pupils were generally more enthusiastic about reading promotion activities than secondary pupils (see **Figures 4.11a** and **4.11b**). In particular, primary pupils were more likely than their secondary counterparts to state that reading groups with friends, talking about their favourite reads, reading games, helping choose stock for the library, writing book reviews, helping younger children with their reading, designing library displays, reading for charity/sponsorship, rating books for peers, reading for a competition/prizes and meeting authors/celebrity readers would make them want to read more[12]. There was no significant difference in the extent to which primary and secondary pupils stated that designing websites/magazines would help them and others read more.

Figure 4.11a: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – Primary pupils

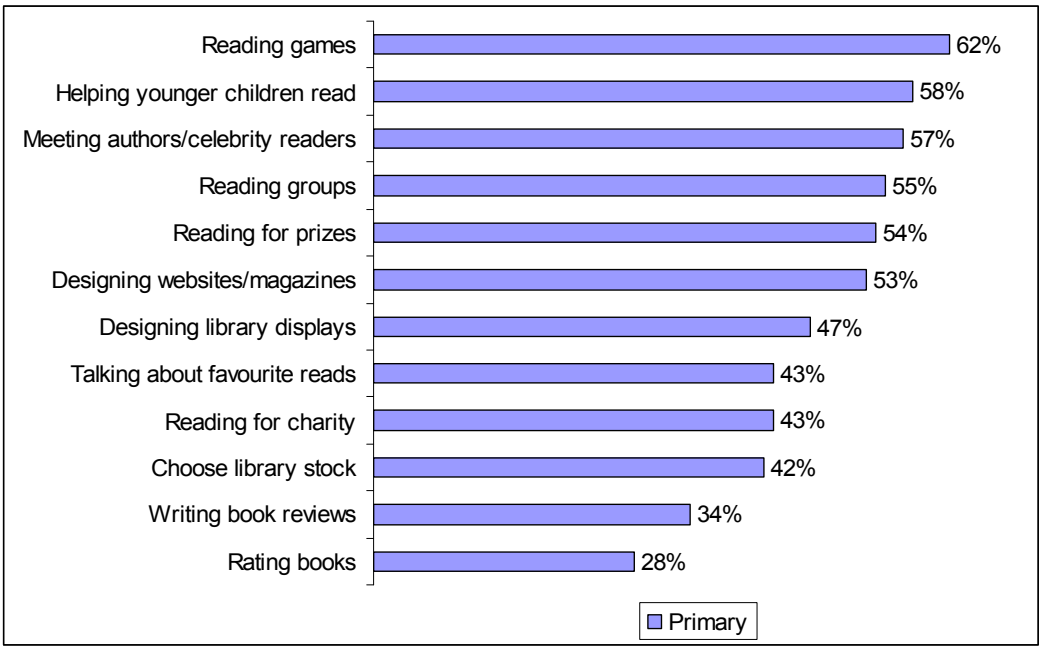
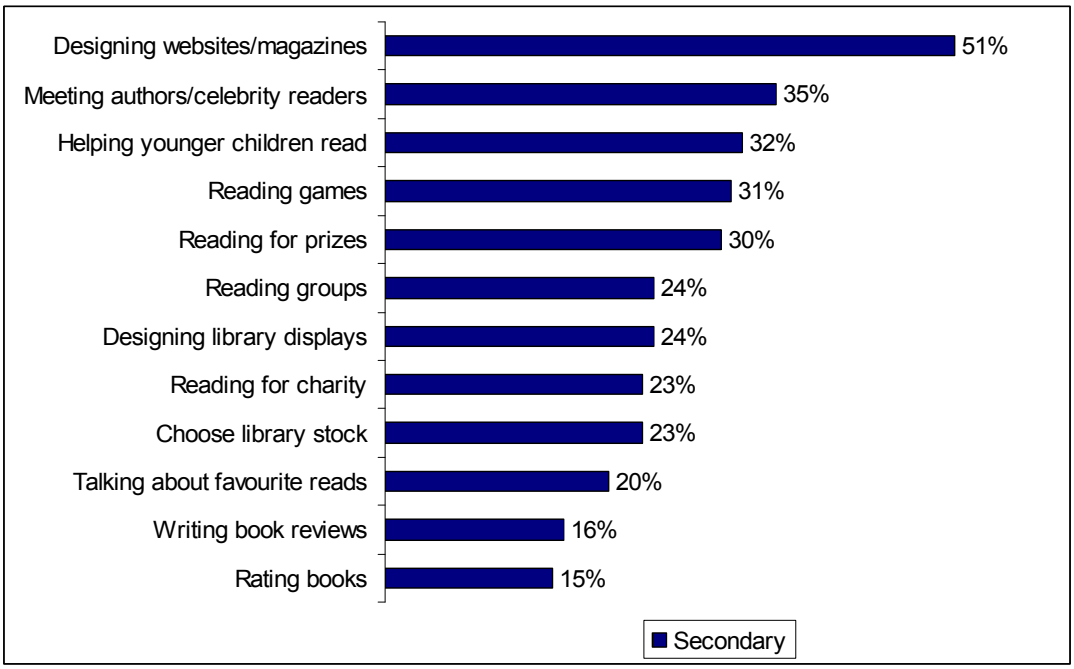
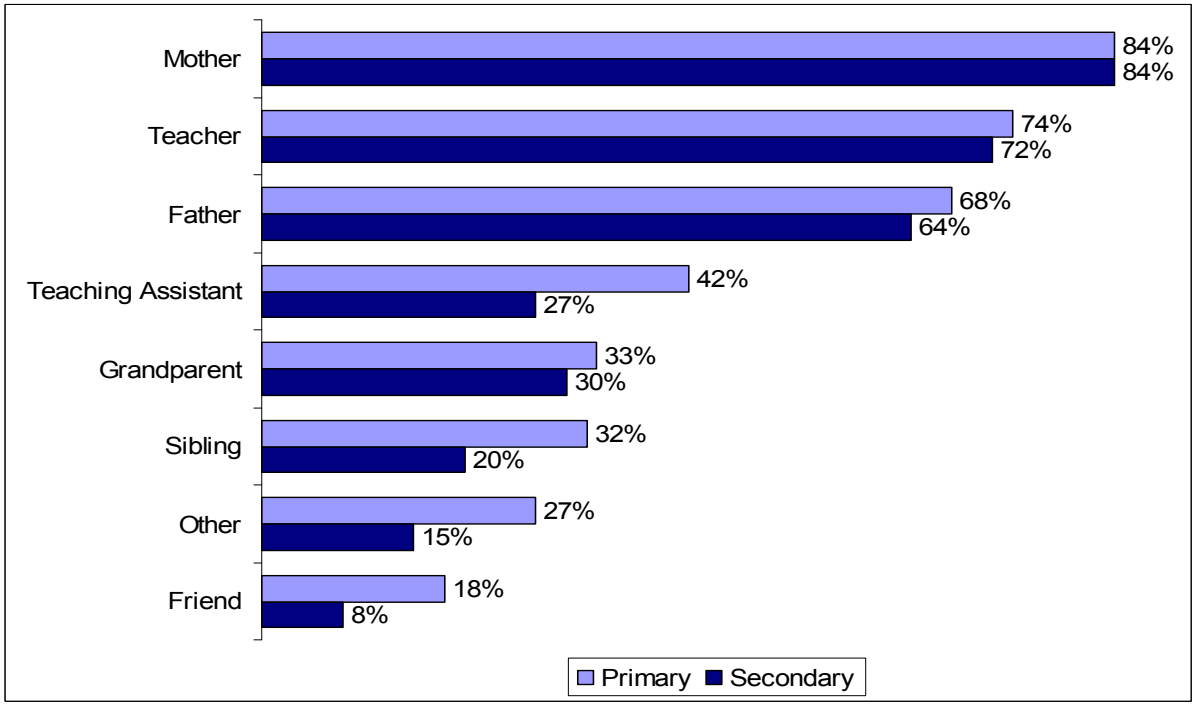


Figure 4.11b: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – Secondary pupils



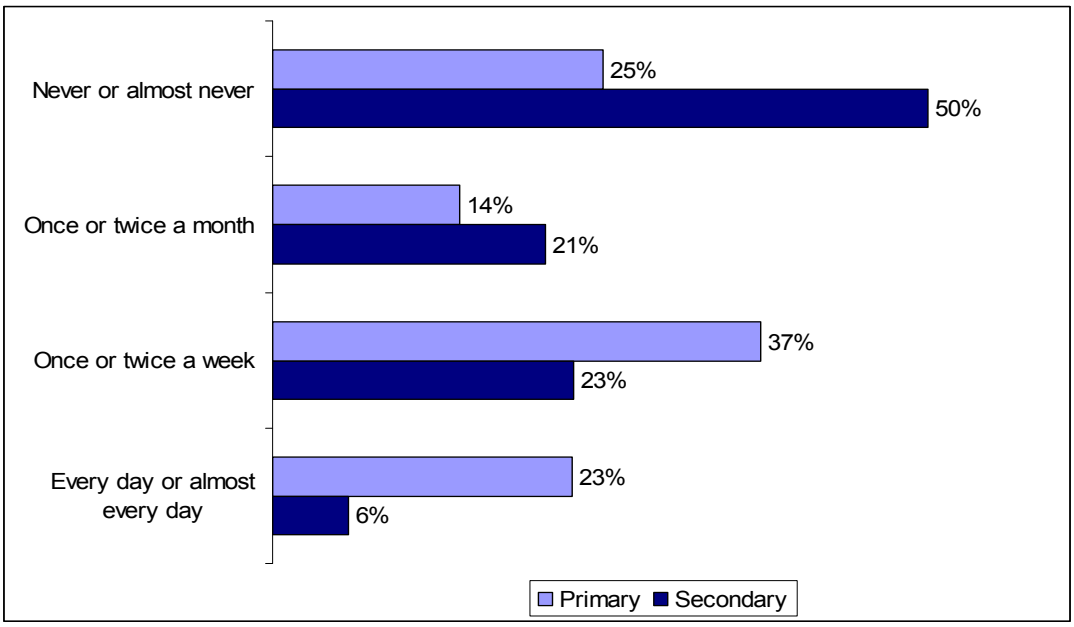
An almost equal percentage of primary and secondary pupils stated that their mother, father, grandparent and teacher had taught them to read (see **Figure 4.12**). However, primary pupils were more likely than secondary ones to report that a sibling, friend, teaching assistant or other person had taught them to read[13].

Figure 4.12: Who taught you to read?



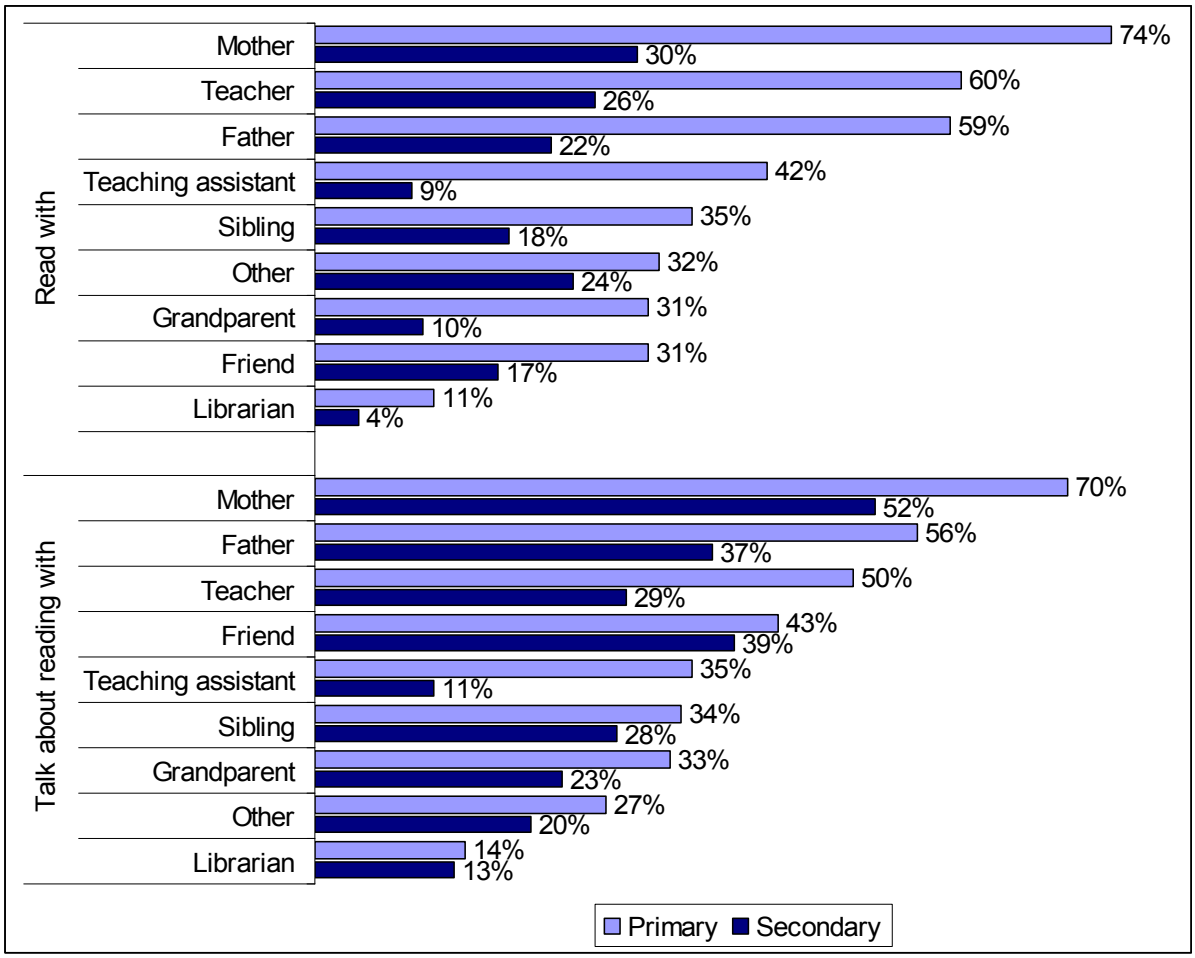
To explore the extent of family literacy practices, pupils were asked how often they talk with their family about what they are reading. **Figure 4.13** shows that secondary pupils were more likely than primary ones to state that they never or almost never talk about reading with their family[14]. Compared with secondary pupils, primary pupils were more likely to report that they talk with their family about reading every day or almost every day.

Figure 4.13: How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?



Considering that parents are more likely to read with younger children, it is perhaps unsurprising that a significantly greater percentage of primary than secondary pupils reported that they read with a variety of people, including their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, librarian, teaching assistant or other person (see **Figure 4.14**)[15]. Not only were primary pupils more likely to read with someone else, they were also more likely to talk about reading with someone else. A greater number of primary pupils than secondary ones reported that they talk about reading with their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, teaching, teaching assistant or other person.[16] There were no significant differences in the degree to which primary and secondary pupils reported that they talk about reading with their friends or a librarian.

Figure 4.14: Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?



There were significant differences in the extent to which primary and secondary pupils reported being encouraged to read by either their mother or father (see **Table 4.3**)[17]. In particular, a greater percentage of primary pupils than secondary pupils reported being encouraged by their mother *and* their father.

Table 4.3: Does your mum, dad or carer encourage you to read?

	Primary %	Secondary %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	11.0	18.6
Yes, sometimes	41.5	48.6
Yes, a lot	47.5	32.7
Father/carer		
No, not at all	21.0	32.1
Yes, sometimes	40.7	43.0
Yes, a lot	38.3	24.9

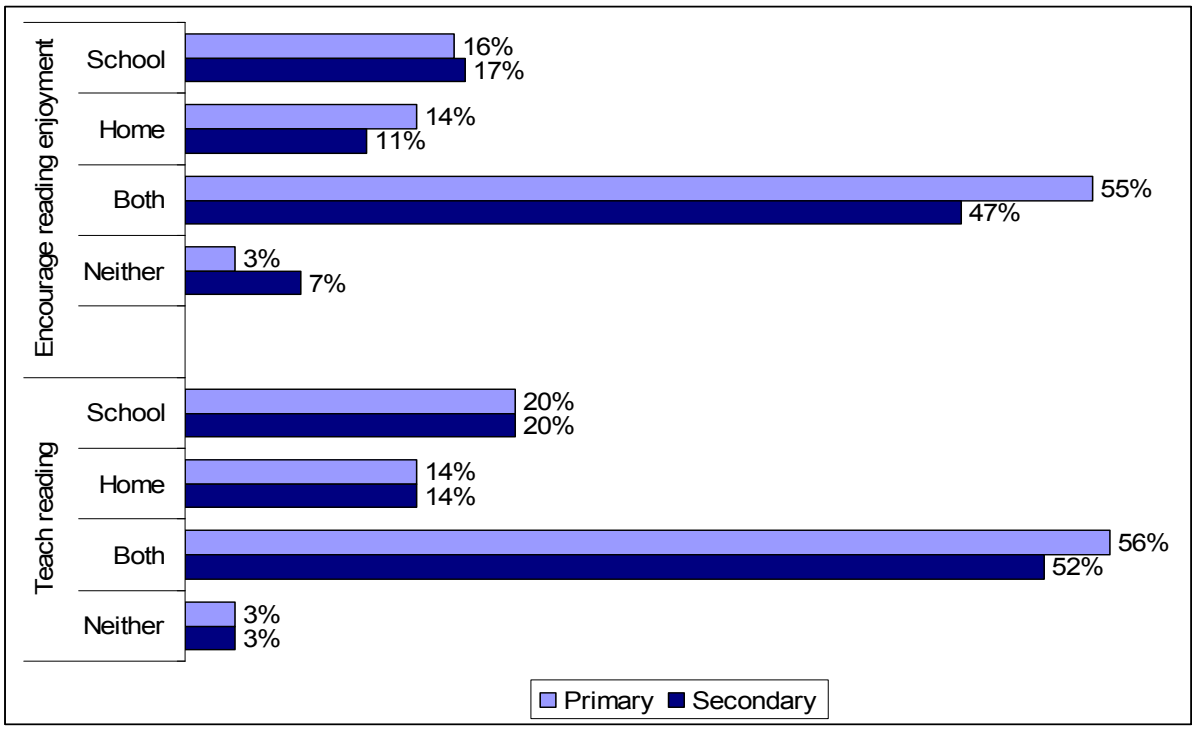
Compared with secondary pupils, a significantly greater percentage of primary pupils reported that their mother and father spend a lot of time reading (see **Table 4.4**)[18].

Table 4.4: Does your mum, dad or carer spend time reading?

	Primary %	Secondary %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	10.6	15.1
Yes, sometimes	46.4	47.3
Yes, a lot	43.0	37.6
Father/carer		
No, not at all	19.8	27.5
Yes, sometimes	48.8	48.5
Yes, a lot	31.3	24.0

When asked who should encourage them to enjoy reading, primary pupils were more likely to say that both the home and the school should encourage them, while secondary pupils were more likely to say that it should be neither[19]. Similarly, both primary and secondary pupils indicated that it should be both the home and the school that should teach them to read (see **Figure 4.15).**

Figure 4.15: Who should teach you to read and who should encourage you to enjoy reading?



Statistical information - age

[1] χ^2 (3, N = 7894) = 180.056, p = .000
[2] χ^2 (9, N = 7689) = 36.559, p = .000
[3] χ^2 (3, N = 7914) = 322.267, p = .000
[4] χ^2 (2, N = 7826) = 340.865, p = .000
[5] Computer: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 86.856, p = .000; desk of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 113.425, p = .000; newspaper: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 351.117, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 221.189, p = .000.
[6] Reading is boring: t(7591) = -22.139, p = .000; Reading is important: t(7564) = 10.875, p = .000; No interesting books t(7519) = -12.307, p = .000; Read outside school: t(7525) = 10.075, p = .000; Like going to library: t(7539) = 28.495, p = .000; Receiving books as presents: t(7541) = 26.432, p = .000.
[7] It's a skill: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 54.710, p = .000; It'll help me get a job: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 215.021, p = .000; It teaches me how other people live: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 176.805, p = .000; It helps me understand the world: χ^2 (1, N = 7874) = 341.366, p = .000 It's fun: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 304.840, p = .000; It helps me find what I want to know: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 169.820, p = .000; It gives me a break χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 18.335, p = .000; It helps me understand myself: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 432.332, p = .000.
[8] Websites: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 219.955, p = .000; newspapers: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 52.679, p = .000; teletext/Ceefax: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 20.082, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 29.823, p = .000; jokes: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 400.368, p = .000; factual books: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 109.845, p = .000; fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 140.969, p = .000; graphic novels: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 35.538, p = .000; comics: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 426.361, p = .000; annuals: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 288.239, p = .000; manuals: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 32.670, p = .000; text messages: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 389.048, p = .000; emails: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 235.598, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 99.852, p = .000; plays: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 423.890, p = .000; song lyrics: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 33.269, p = .000; cookbooks: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 171.711, p = .000; encyclopaedias: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 310.268, p = .000; travel books: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 280.002, p = .000; audio books χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 258.376, p = .000; EAL books: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 152.695, p = .000; and TV books/mags: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 14.418, p = .000.
[9] Adventure: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 450.259, p = .000; horror/ghost: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 195.087, p = .000; animal-related: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 321.292, p = .000; scifi: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 122.372, p = .000; comedy: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 65.460, p = .000; sports-related: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 500.058, p = .000; realistic teenage fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 50.968, p = .000; war/spy-related: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 217.799, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 105.159, p = .000.
[10] Living room: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 389.712, p = .000; bedroom: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 217.842, p = .000; bath: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 52.448, p = .000; garden: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 384.649, p = .000; classroom: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 453.908, p = .000; school library: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 63.461, p = .000; playground: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 317.368, p = .000; commuting: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 212.719, p = .000; Café: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 253.193, p = .000; town library: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 362.164, p = .000; outside: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 291.732, p = .000; friends: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 344.170, p = .000.
[11] More time: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 163.896, p = .000; books were cheaper: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 167.103, p = .000; interesting subjects: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 48.903, p = .000; better libraries: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 169.374, p = .000; more pictures: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 248.899, p = .000; knew what to read: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 163.822, p = .000; read aloud to: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 255.148, p = .000; stories were shorter: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 37.815, p = .000; libraries were closer: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 457.020, p = .000; friends read more: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 85.015, p = .000; schools encouraged me: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 155.105, p = .000; family encouraged me: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 274.558, p = .000; better eyesight: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 100.494, p = .000.
[12] Reading groups: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 311.626, p = .000; talking about books: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 456.716, p = .000; reading games: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 475.204, p = .000; choose library stock: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 320.257, p = .000; book reviews: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 341.258, p = .000; help younger kids: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 450.596, p = .000; designing library display: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 424.400, p = .000; reading for charity: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 321.893, p = .000; rating books: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 205.048, p = .000; reading for prizes: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 425.754, p = .000; meeting authors/celebrities: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 340.829, p = .000.
[13] Sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 138.004, p = .000; friends: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 204.846, p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 155.826, p = .000; other: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 144.187, p = .000.
[14] χ^2 (3, N = 7874) = 440.052, p = .000
[15] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 835.914, p = .000; father: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 605.697, p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 516.649, p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 286.865, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 859.630, p = .000; librarian: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 119.023, p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 444.107, p = .000; other: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 55.300, p = .000.
[16] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 220.921, p = .000; father: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 246.351, p = .000; grandmother: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 98.018, p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 30.965, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 339.259, p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 689.743, p = .000; other: χ^2 (1, N = 8206) = 50.390, p = .000.
[17] Mother encourages me: χ^2 (2, N = 7938) = 170.323, p = .000; father encourages me: χ^2 (2, N = 7279) = 157.540, p = .000
[18] Mother spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 7880) = 34.777, p = .000; father spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 7271) = 64.823, p = .000.
[19] Encourage you to enjoy reading: χ^2 (3, N = 8033) = 113.425, p = .000

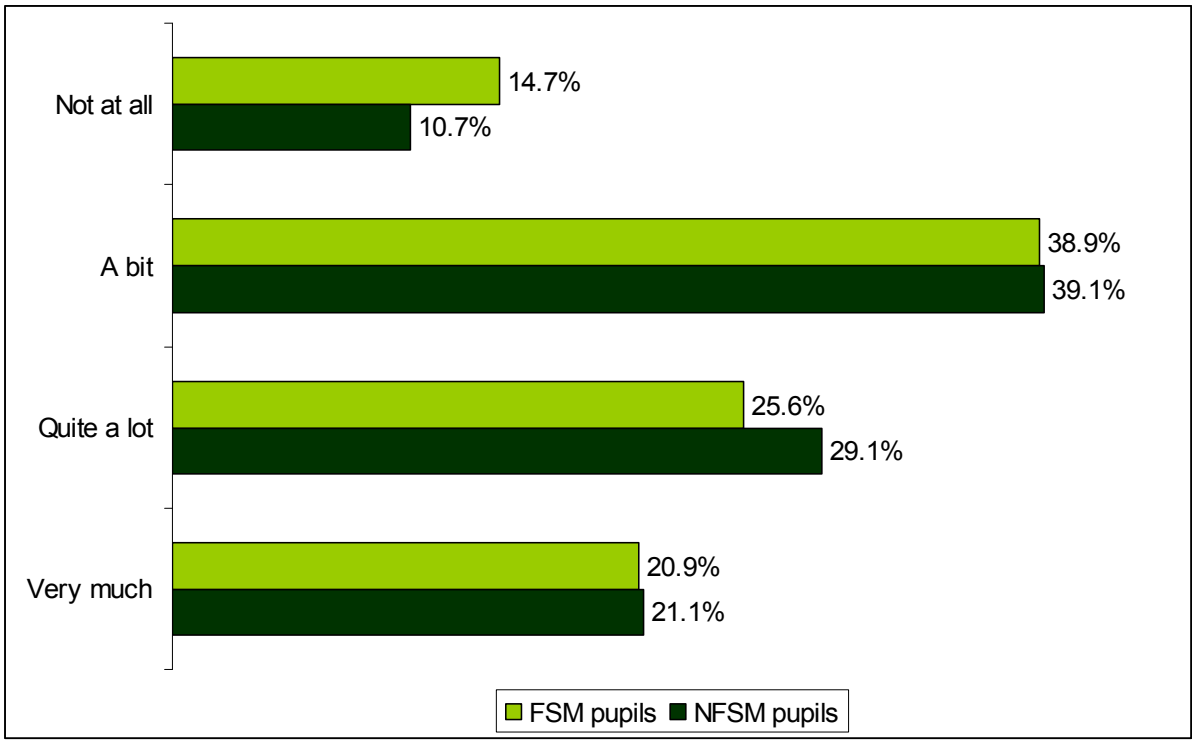
Chapter 5: Breakdown by uptake of free school meals

Summary of key findings by FMSs

- Uptake of free school meals (FSMs) had a negative relationship with reading enjoyment and self-reported reading proficiency.
- Uptake of FSMs also impacted on the frequency with which pupils read outside class, with a greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reporting that they read outside school every day.
- Consistent with previous studies, a greater proportion of pupils not receiving FSMs estimated having a greater number of books at home. They also reported greater access to a number of resources at home, including a computer and a desk of their own.
- Both groups of pupils believed that reading is important. However, pupils receiving FSMs were more likely to agree that reading is boring and hard, that reading is more for girls than for boys, and that they cannot find books that interest them.
- More pupils receiving FSMs stated that they read because it will help them get a job, while more pupils not receiving FSMs reported that they read because it is fun and because it gives them a break.
- Whether or not pupils received FSMs also had an impact on their reading choices, which may partly be due to differences in access to certain resources, such as computers and mobile phones.
- Both groups indicated that they would read more if they had more time and if they enjoyed it more. A greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs stated that they would read more if books had more pictures, if someone read aloud to them, if libraries were closer and if their family encouraged them more.
- Both groups also stated that designing websites/magazines would motivate them to read more. More pupils receiving FSMs said they would be encouraged to read more by reading games and by helping younger children to read.
- A greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reported that their mother, father and teacher had taught them to read, while pupils receiving FSMs were more likely to report that a sibling or friend had been their reading teacher.
- A greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their father did not encourage them to read.
- More pupils not receiving FSMs reported talking about reading with their mother and father, while their FSM-receiving counterparts stated that they talk about reading with their teacher and teaching assistant.
- The extent to which pupils reported that their parents read also differed according to whether or not they received FSMs. A greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their mother or father do not spend any time reading.

There is some suggestion in the research literature that children from deprived backgrounds do not enjoy reading as much as children from more privileged stratas (e.g. Neuman and Celano, 2001). Consistent with this research, the present study shows that a significantly higher proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (FSM pupils) stated that they do not enjoy reading at all compared to pupils who do not receive free school meals (NFSM pupils; see **Figure 5.1**)[1].

Figure 5.1: Reading enjoyment



There was also a relationship between self-reported reading proficiency and receiving free school meals (FSMs). Compared to pupils receiving FSMs, a greater proportion of pupils who did not receive FSMs reported themselves to be above average proficient readers (see **Table 5.1**)[2].

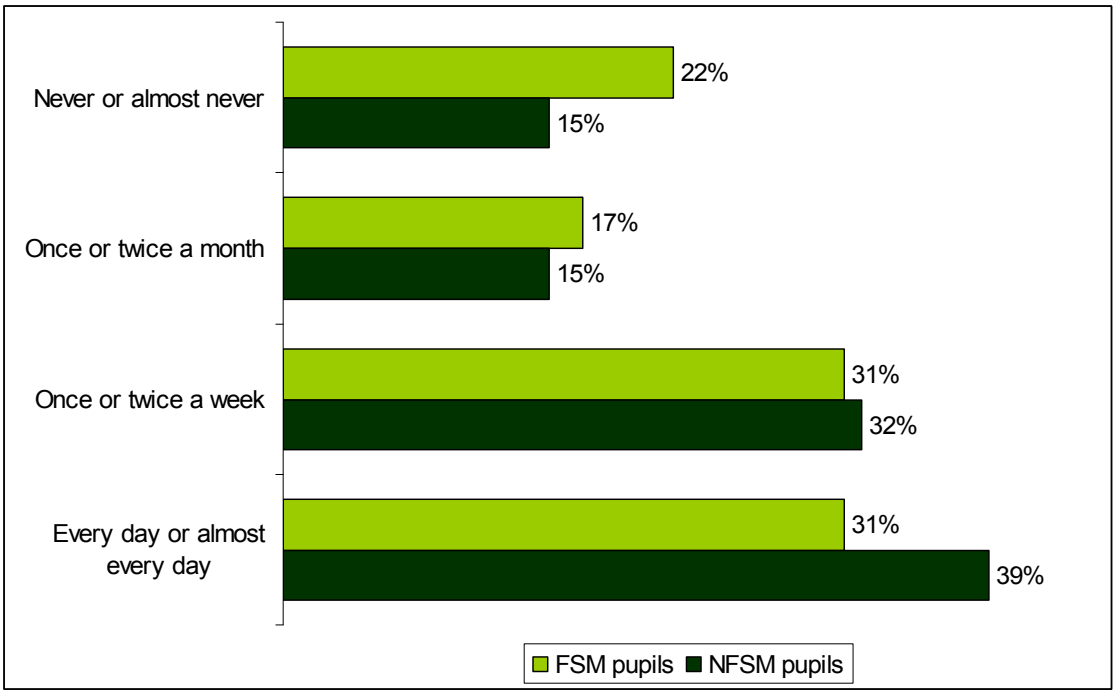
Table 5.1: Self-reported reading proficiency

Proficiency score	FSM pupils %	Non-FSM pupils %
1	2.3	1.2
2	1.4	1.1
3	4.3	2.2
4	3.8	4.0
5	15.2	9.1
6	13.3	13.2
7	15.1	19.1
8	19.3	23.3
9	13.0	16.2
10	12.3	10.5

(1 = Not a very good reader to 10 = Excellent reader)

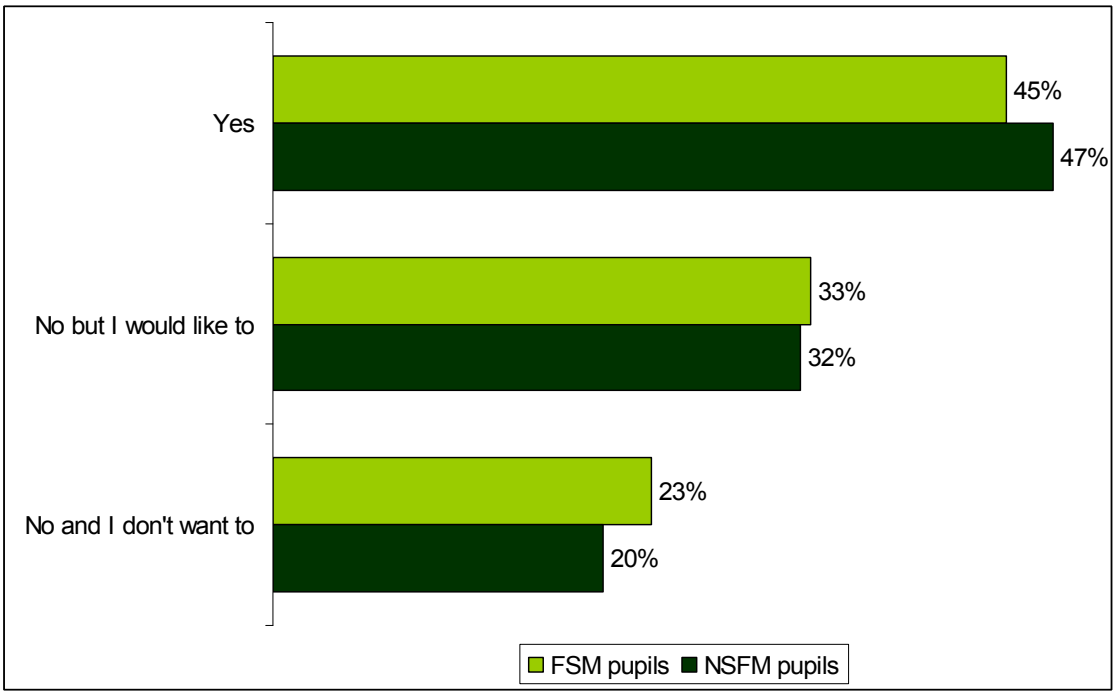
In addition to enjoying reading more and rating themselves as more proficient readers, a greater proportion of pupils who did not receive FSMs stated that they read outside school every day or almost every day (see **Figure 5.2**)[3]. By contrast, a greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs reported that they never or almost never read outside school.

Figure 5.2: How often do you read outside school?



There were no significant differences between the two groups in the degree to which they thought that they were reading enough (see **Figure 5.3**).

Figure 5.3: Do you think you read enough?



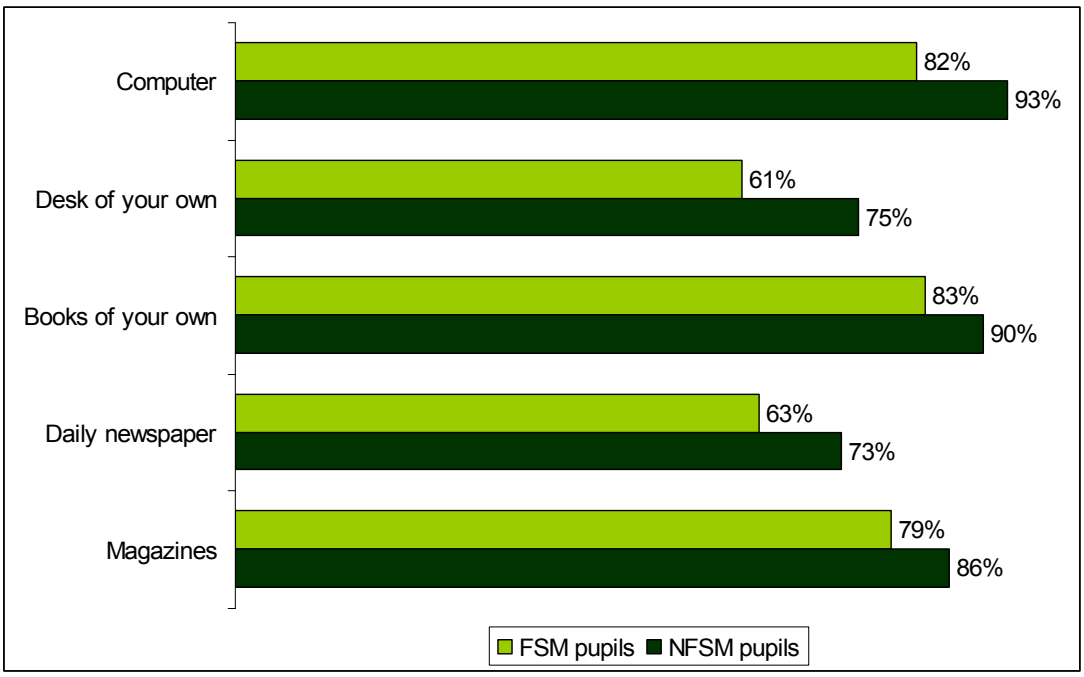
There were significant differences in the number of books pupils from the two groups reported were in their home[4]. **Table 5.2** shows that a greater proportion of pupils who do not receive FMSs reported having larger numbers of books at home than pupils who receive FSMs.

Table 5.2: Estimated number of books in the home

Books at home	FSM pupils %	Non-FSM pupils %
None	2.6	1.0
1-10	15.6	6.9
11-50	29.9	18.1
51-100	21.1	22.5
101-250	14.0	22.5
251-500	8.6	16.2
>500	8.2	12.8

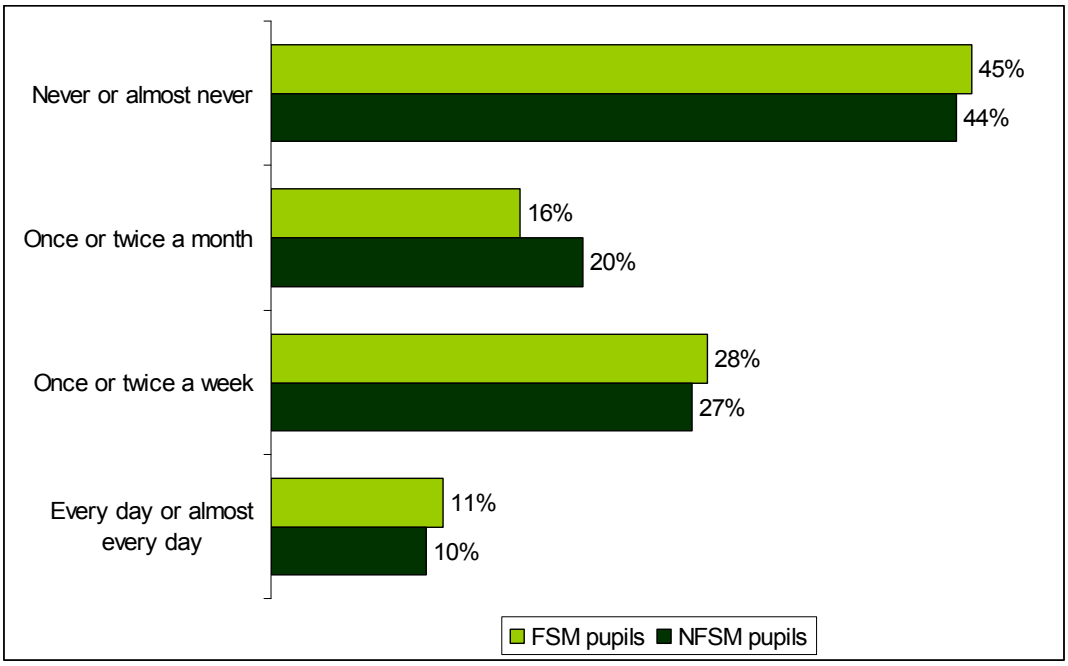
In addition to the number of books in the home, pupils were also asked to indicate whether they had access to a number of educational resources, such as a computer and a desk of their own (see **Figure 5.4**). Compared with pupils receiving FSMs, a significantly greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs indicated that they have a computer, a desk of their own, books of their own, and access to a newspaper and magazines[5].

Figure 5.4: Access to resources at home



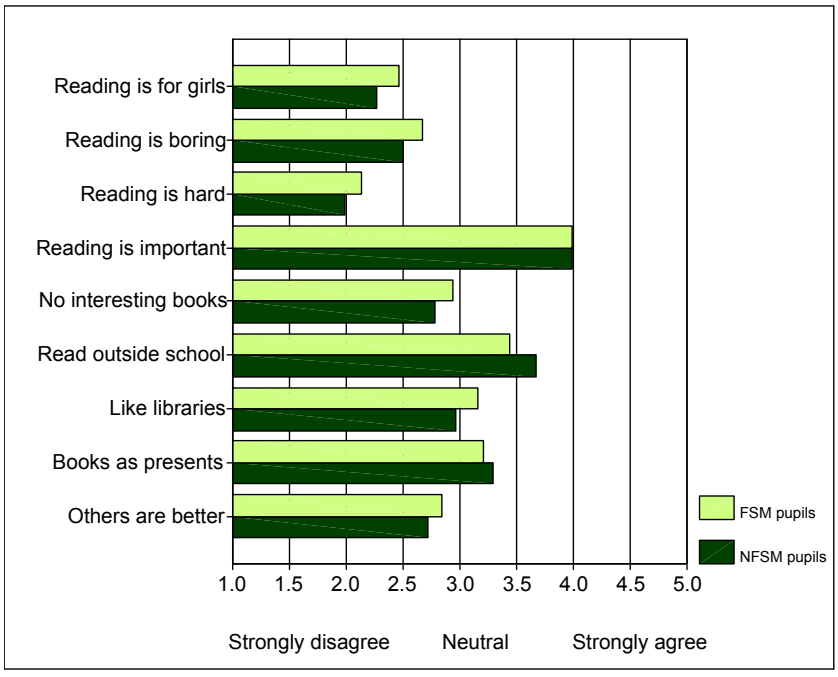
Although pupils who do not receive FSMs perceived that they have a greater number of books at home as well as greater access to educational resources, there was no significant difference in the degree to which both groups of pupils reported talking with their family about what they are reading (see **Figure 5.5**).

Figure 5.5: How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?



Both pupils who receive FSMs and those who do not believed that reading is important and said they would be happy if someone gave them a book as a present. However, pupils receiving FSMs were significantly more likely to agree that reading is more for girls than for boys, that reading is boring and hard, and that they cannot find books that interest them. These pupils were also significantly more likely to say that they like going to the library. On the other hand, pupils not receiving FSMs were more likely to agree that they read outside school (see **Figure 5.6**)[6].

Figure 5.6: Attitudes towards reading



Although an almost equal proportion of pupils stated that they read because it is a skill for life, because it teaches them how other people live and feel, because it helps them understand the world, because it helps them find what they want/need to know, because they have to and because it helps them understand themselves better (see **Figure 5.7a** and **5.7b**), there were also three important differences between the two groups. A significantly greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs stated that they read because it will help them get a job. By contrast, a significantly greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs stated that they read because it is fun and because it gives them a break[7].

Figure 5.7a: I read because … - FSM pupils

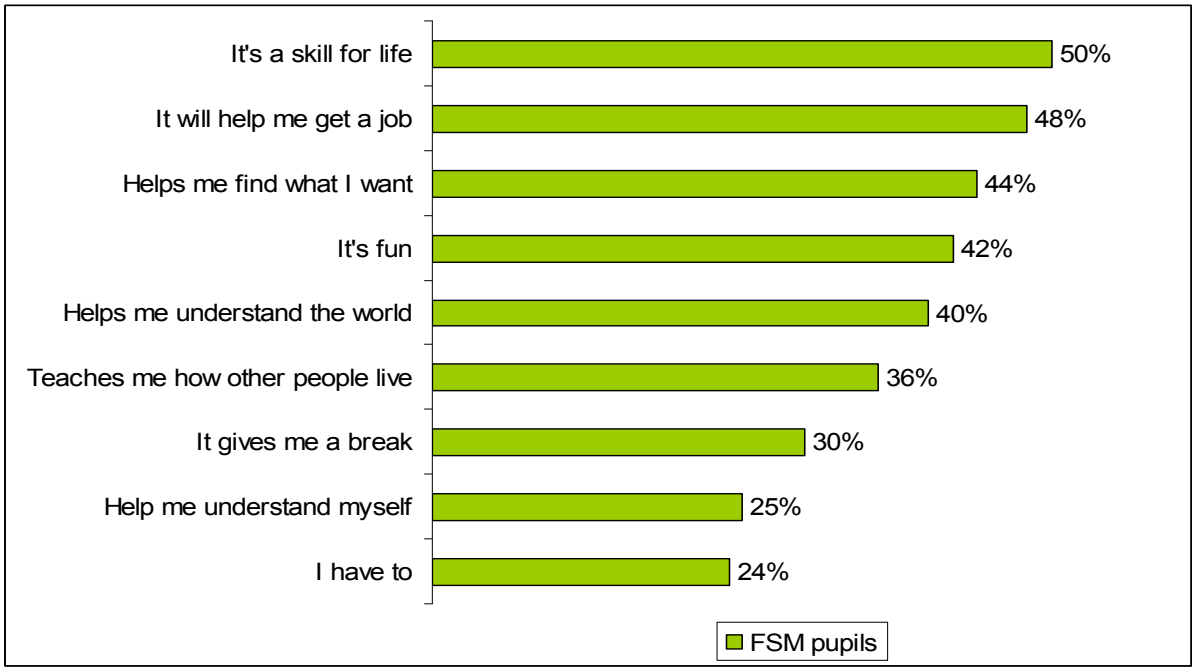
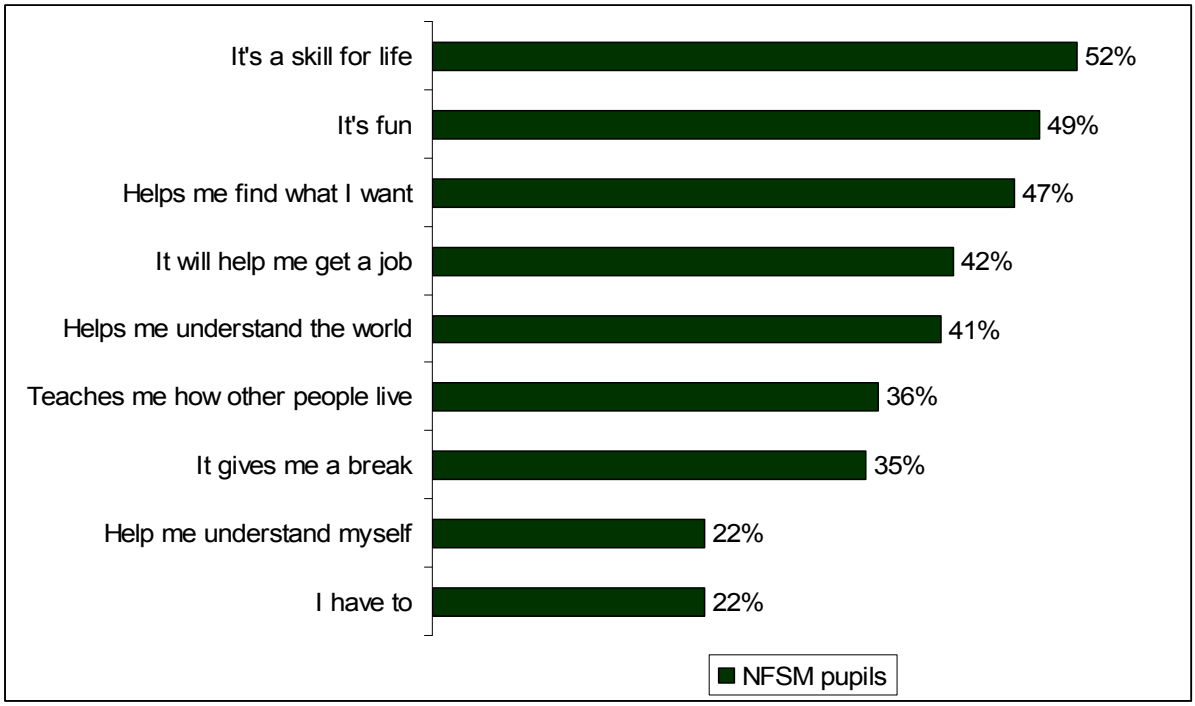


Figure 5.7b: I read because … - NFSM pupils



Figures 5.8a and **5.8b** show some significant differences in reading material preferences between pupils receiving and not receiving FSMs. In particular, pupils not receiving FSMs were more likely to read websites, magazines, factual books, fiction, manuals, text messages, emails and posters/signs. By contrast, pupils receiving FSMs were more likely to read jokes, poetry and plays[8]. However, some of these differences may be the result of varying access to certain resources, such as computers and mobile phones. As shown in **Figure 5.4**, pupils receiving FSMs were less likely to report access to a computer, a desk of their own, books of their own, and newspapers and magazines[9].

Figure 5.8a: Preferred reading materials outside school – FSM pupils

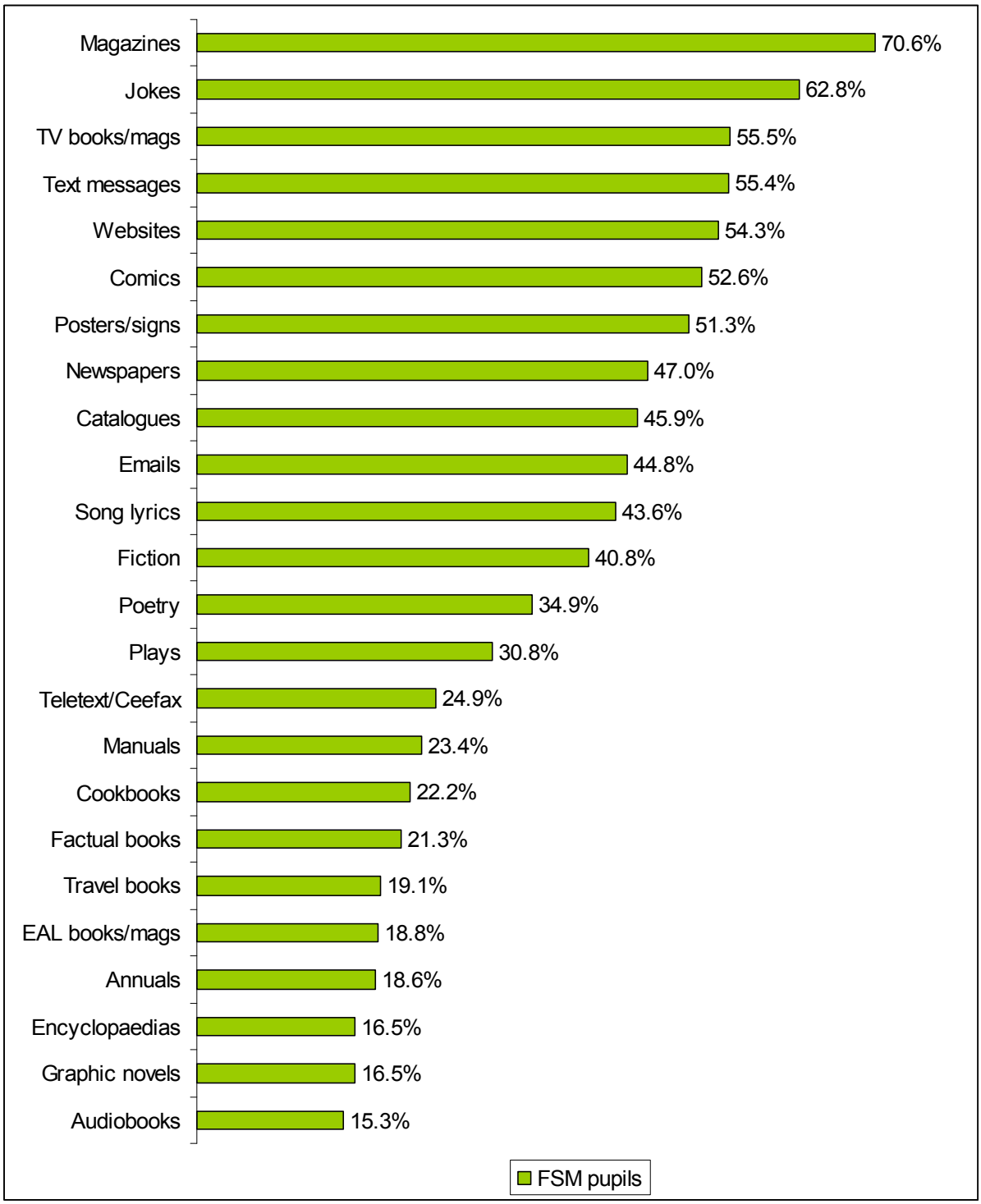
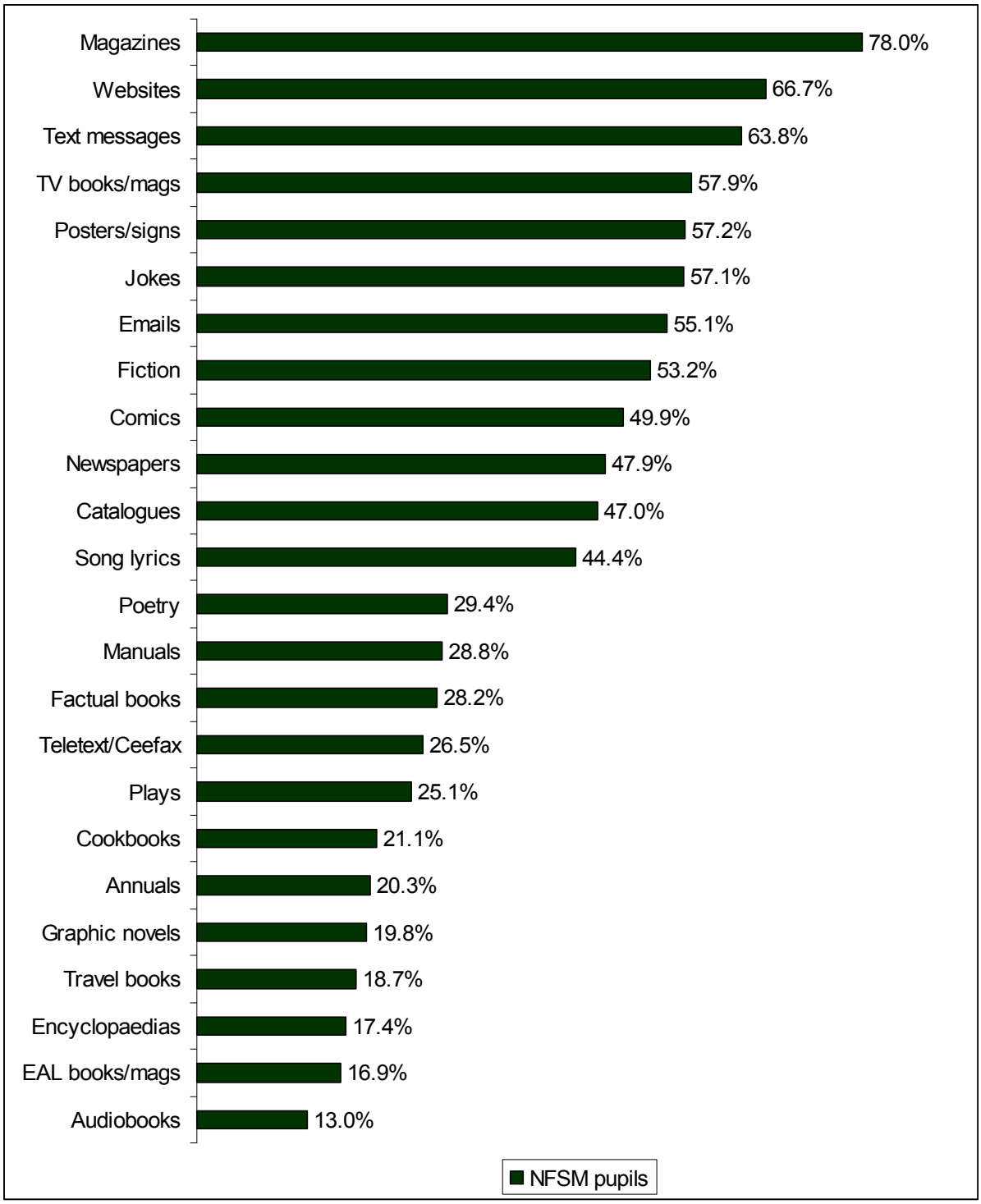


Figure 5.8b: Preferred reading materials outside school – NFSM pupils



Differences between the two groups are further found with regard to their fiction reading preferences (see **Figure 5.9a** and **5.9b**). A significantly greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs reported that they read horror/ghost stories, animal-related fiction and poetry. By contrast, a greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reported that they read science-fiction/fantasy books, realistic teenage fiction and war/spy-related stories[10].

Figure 5.9a: Preferred types of fiction – FSM pupils

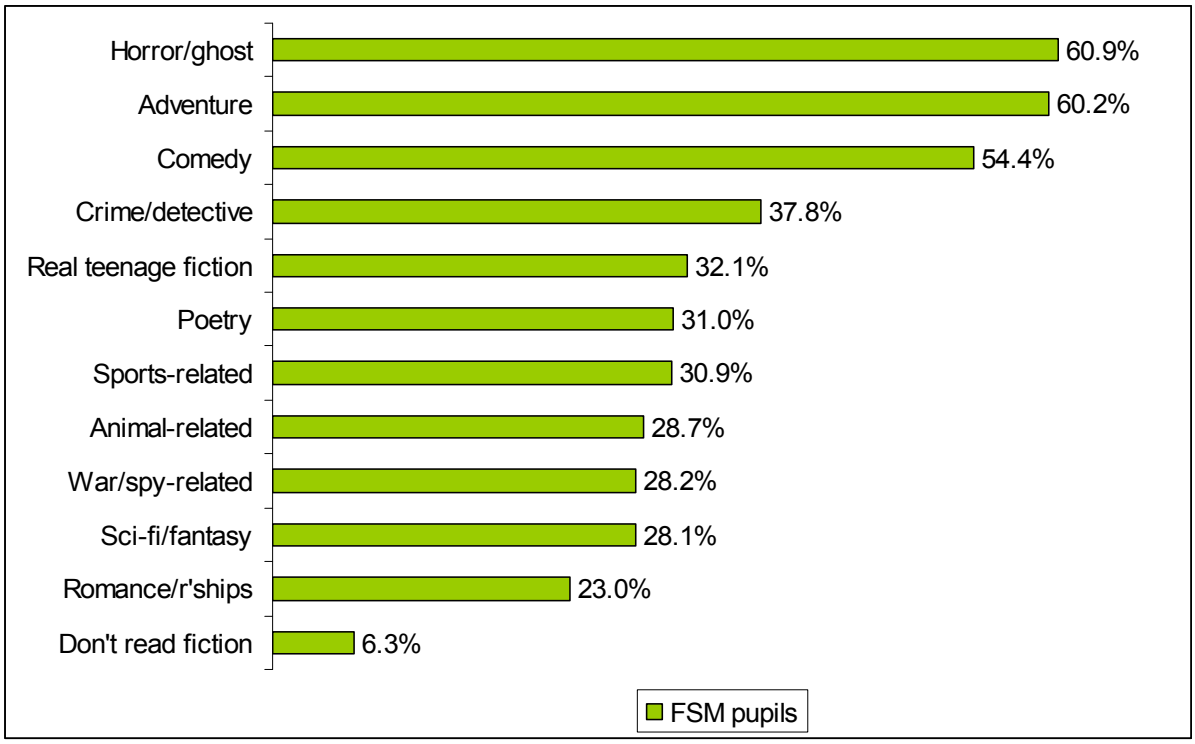
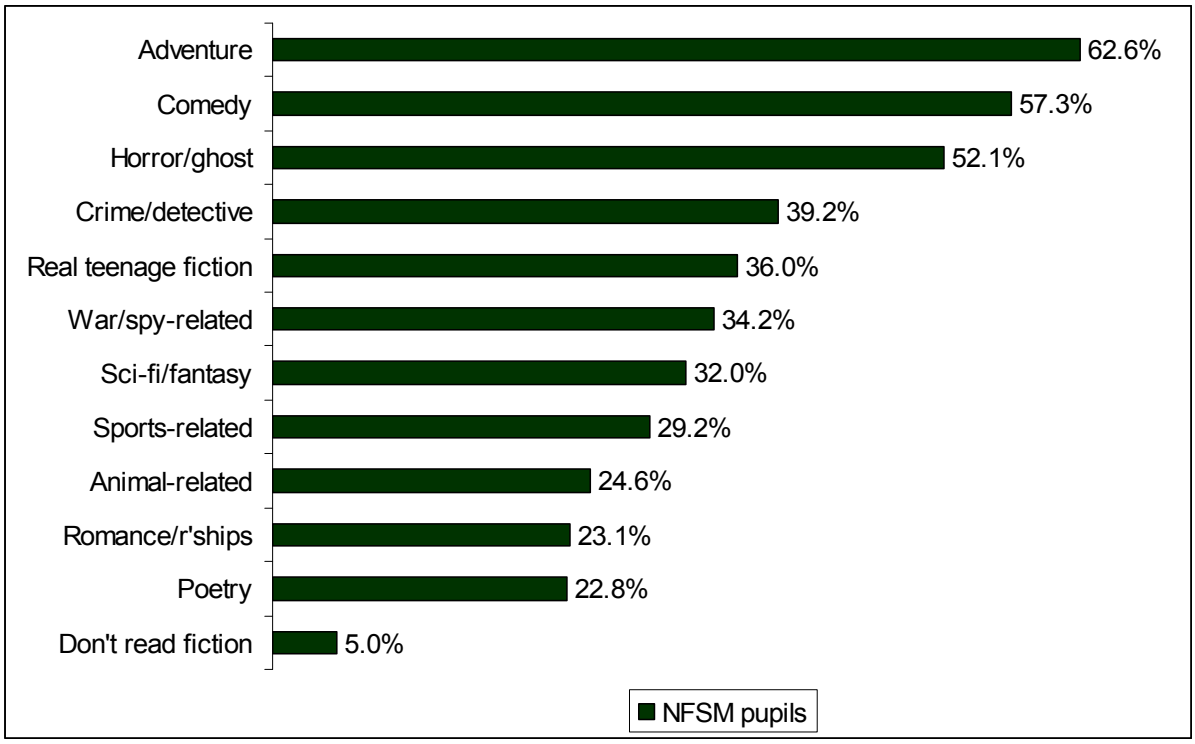


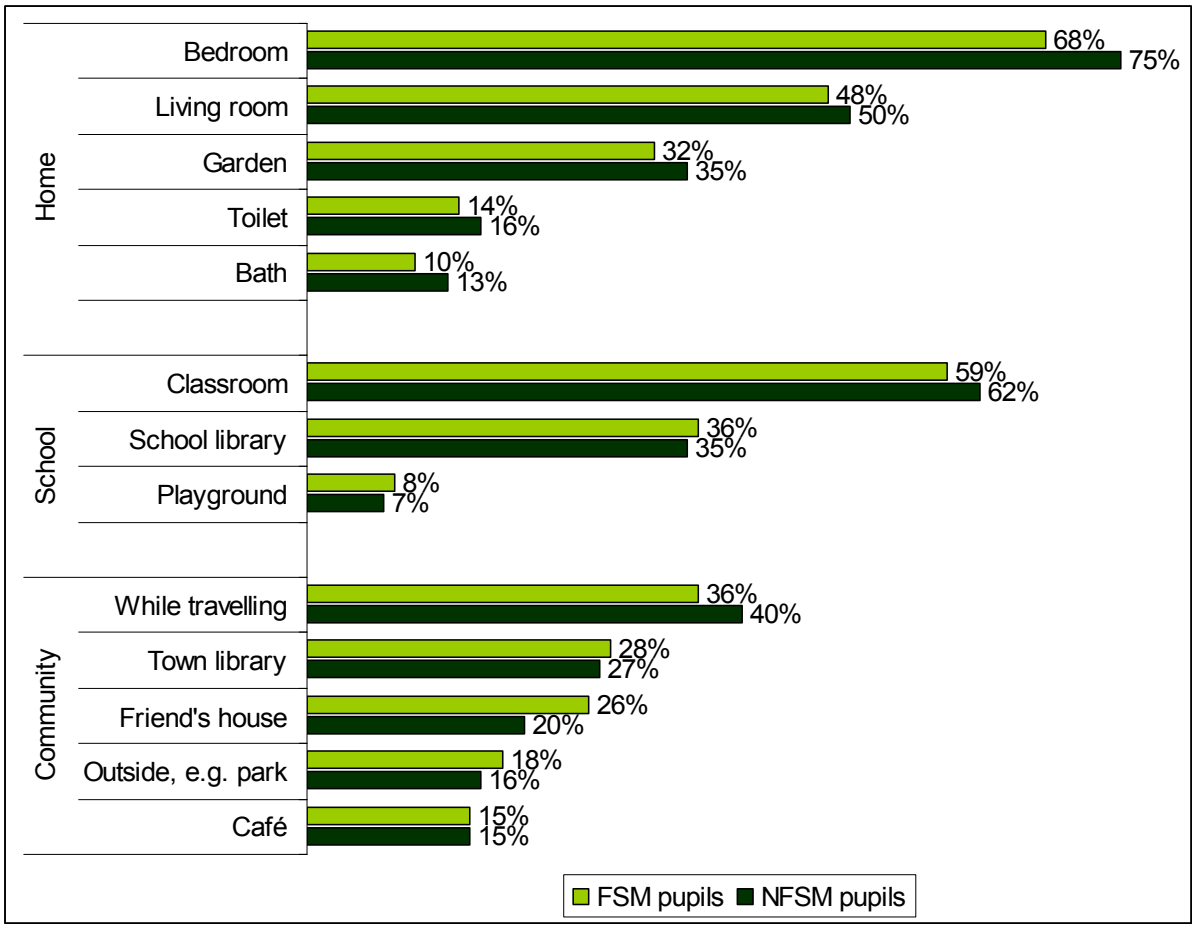
Figure 5.9b: Preferred types of fiction – NFSM pupils



With two exceptions, there were no significant differences in the extent to which pupils from the two groups preferred particular spaces for reading (see **Figure 5.10**). A significantly greater percentage of pupils receiving FSM chose a friend's house as a place where they like to read

than pupils not receiving FSMs. By contrast, a significantly greater proportion of pupils not receiving FSMs reported that they like reading in their bedroom than pupils receiving FSMs[11].

Figure 5.10: Preferred reading spaces



Pupils were also asked to indicate what would make them more likely to read (see **Figure 5.11a** and **5.11b**). A greater number of pupils receiving FSMs indicated that they would read more if books had more pictures, if someone read aloud to them, if libraries were closer, if they found reading easier, if their family encouraged them more and if they had better eyesight. By contrast, a greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reported that they would read more if books were cheaper[12]. Although both groups said that time constraints were the greatest barrier to reading, information from both groups on other barriers can be used to help encourage reading for pleasure. For example, the school and the home could provide greater access to picture books or could make available material that captures the diverse range of pupils' interests.

Figure 5.11a: I would read more if … - FSM pupils

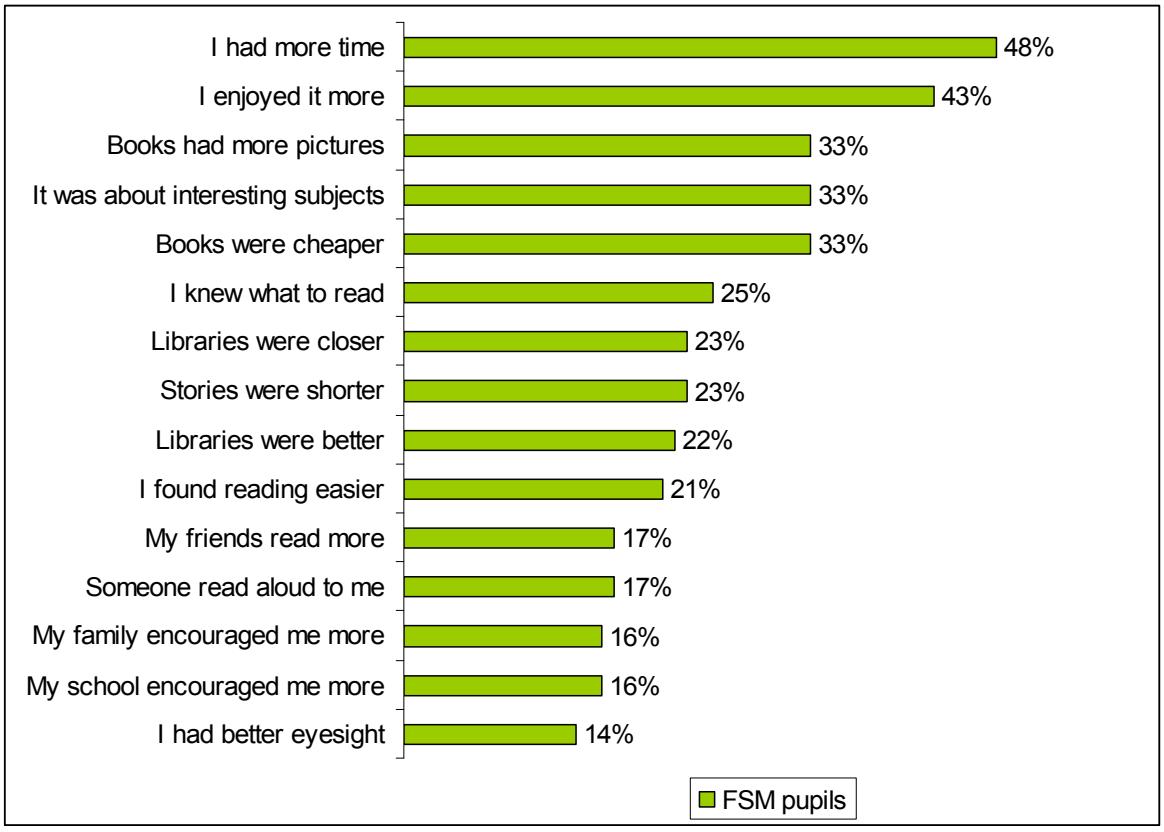
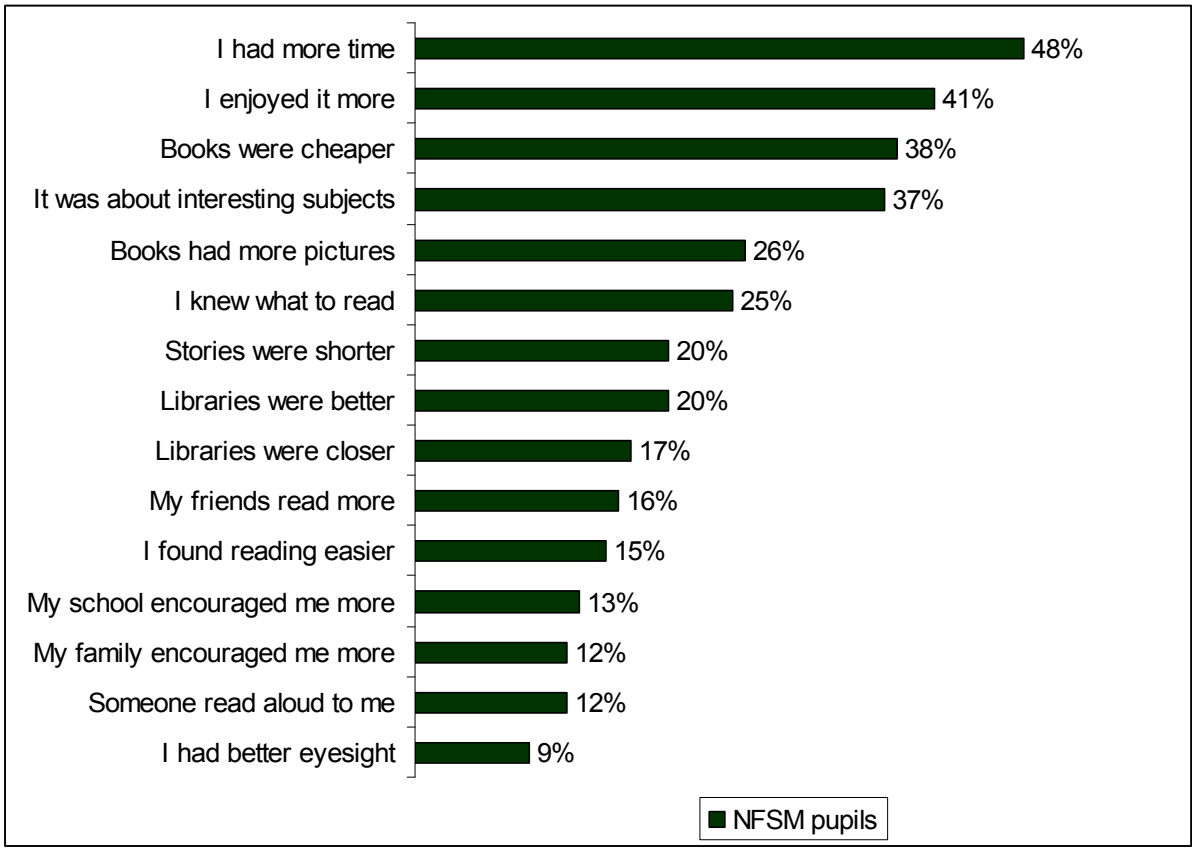


Figure 5.11b: I would read more if … - NFSM pupils



Compared to pupils who do not receive FSMs, a greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs indicated that reading groups, reading games, writing book reviews, helping younger children to read and reading books for prizes would encourage them and others read more (see **Figure 5.12a** and **5.12b**)[13]. None of the other differences was statistically significant.

Figure 5.12a: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – FSM pupils

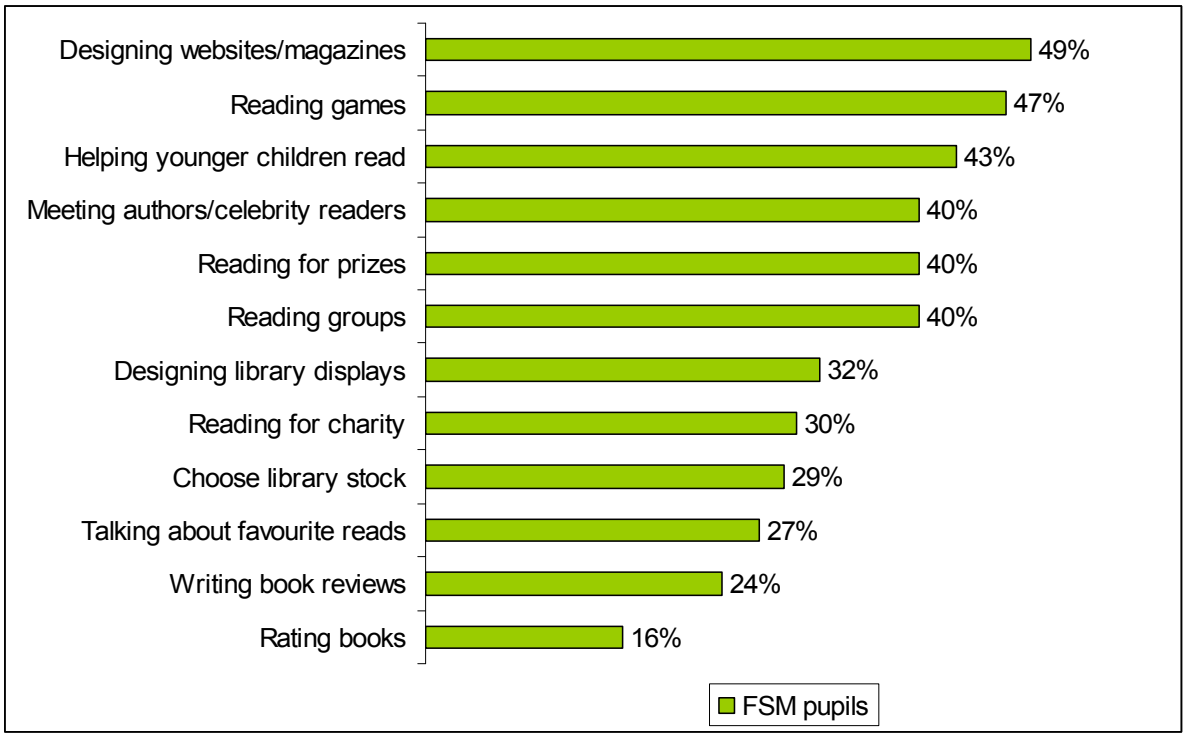
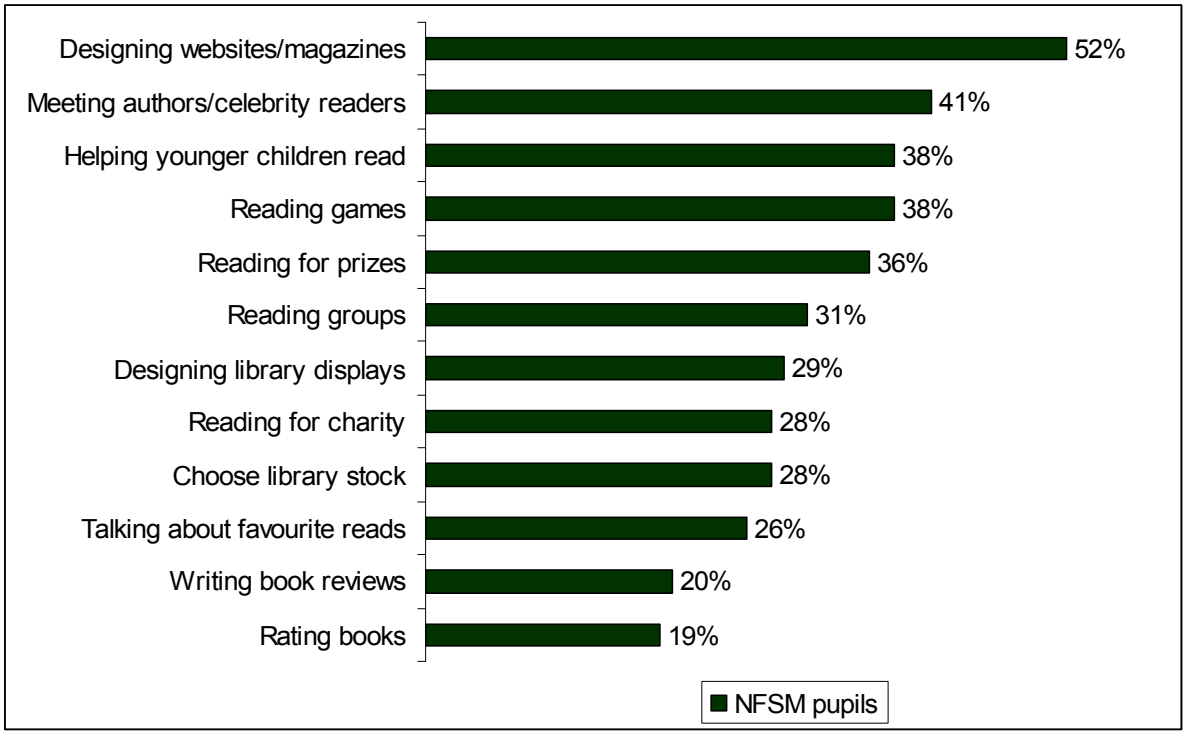
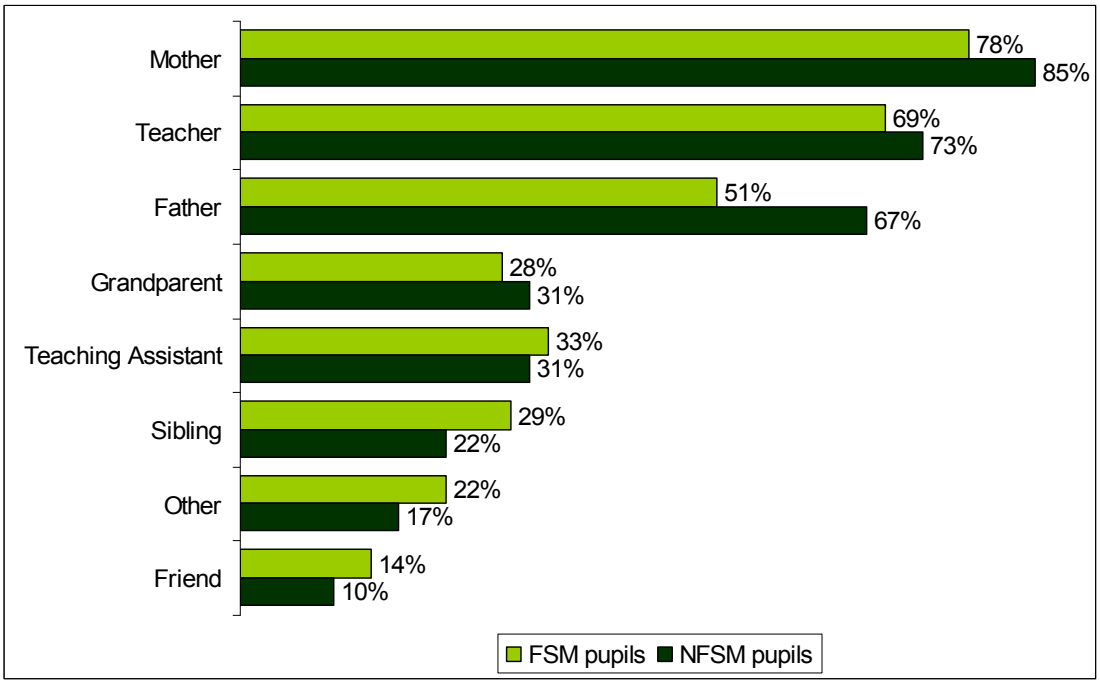


Figure 5.12a: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – FSM pupils



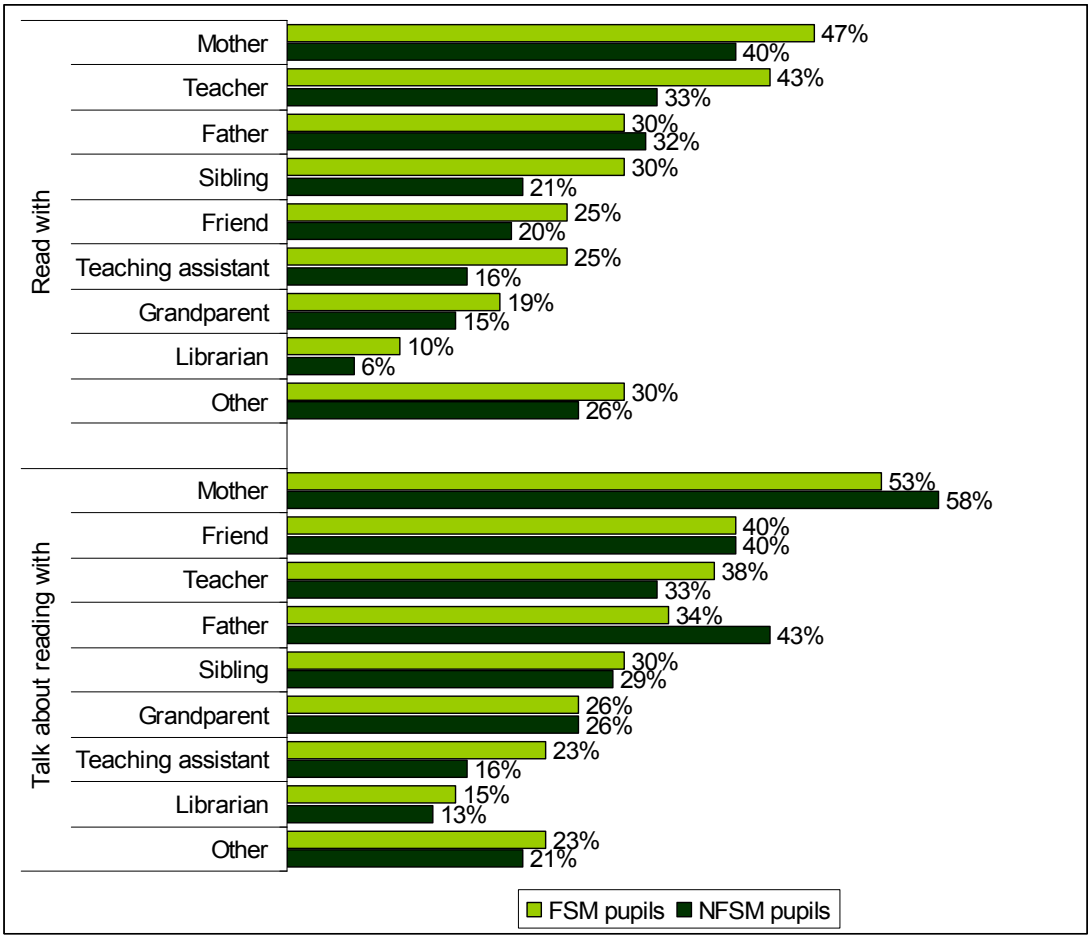
There were different perceptions between the two groups of who had taught them to read (see **Figure 5.13**). Compared with pupils receiving FSMs, a significantly greater proportion of pupils not receiving FSMs recollected that their mother, father and teacher had taught them to read. Conversely, a greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that a sibling, friend or other unspecified person had been their reading teacher[14].

Figure 5.13: Who taught you to read?



Pupils receiving FSMs were significantly more likely to report reading with a greater range of people than pupils not receiving FSMs (see **Figure 5.14**). Compared with pupils not receiving FSMs, a greater proportion of pupils receiving FSM reported reading with their mother, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, librarian, teaching assistant and other unspecified person[15]. While pupils receiving FSMs were more likely to read with a variety of people, there were pronounced differences in the extent to which the two groups talk about reading with another person. Compared with pupils receiving FSMs, a significantly greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs reported talking about reading with their mother and father. By contrast, a greater proportion of pupils receiving FSMs stated that they talk about reading with their teacher and teaching assistant.[16]

Figure 5.14: Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?



There were no significant differences in the extent to which both groups of pupils reported being encouraged to read by their mother (see **Table 5.3**). However, compared to pupils not receiving FSMs, a greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their father does not encourage them to read[17].

Table 5.3: Does your mum, dad or carer encourage you to read?

	FSM pupils %	Non-FSM pupils %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	19.8	16.0
Yes, sometimes	45.4	47.3
Yes, a lot	34.8	36.7
Father/carer		
No, not at all	37.2	28.0
Yes, sometimes	38.1	43.2
Yes, a lot	24.7	28.8

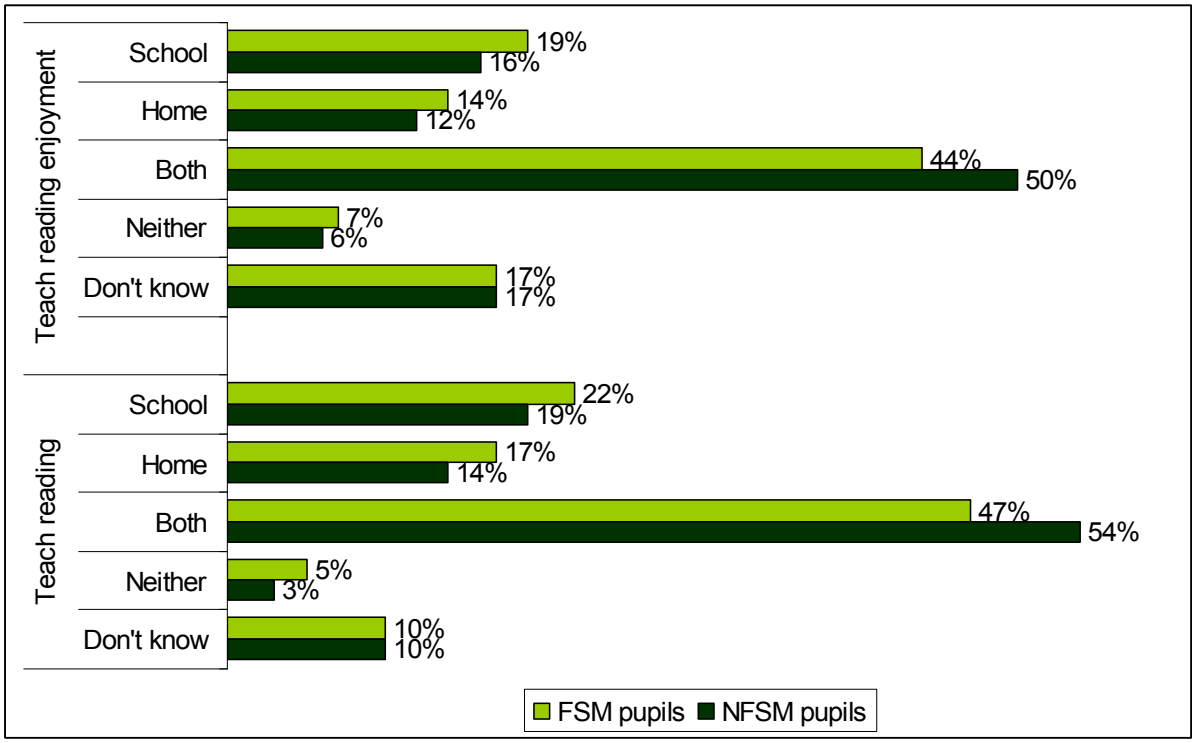
There were also significant differences in the degree to which both groups of pupils perceived their parents spending time reading[18]. **Table 5.4** shows that, compared with pupils not receiving FSMs, a greater percentage of pupils receiving FSMs reported that their mother and father do not spend any time reading, a difference that was particularly pronounced with regard to the father's perceived reading behaviour.

Table 5.4: Does you mum, dad or carer spend time reading

	FSM pupils %	Non-FSM pupils %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	19.7	13.0
Yes, sometimes	45.5	47.3
Yes, a lot	34.8	39.7
Father/carer		
No, not at all	37.1	24.0
Yes, sometimes	41.9	49.6
Yes, a lot	21.0	26.5

Although both groups of pupils believed that reading enjoyment should be promoted by both the home and the school, a greater percentage of pupils not receiving FSMs believed this (see **Figure 5.15**)[19]. Similarly, when asked who should teach them to read, a greater proportion of pupils not receiving FSMs believed that it should be both the home and the school (see **Figure 5.15**)[20].

Figure 5.15: Who should encourage you to enjoy reading and who should teach you to read?



Statistical information - FSMs

[1] χ^2 (3, N = 7250) = 14.149, p = .001
[2] χ^2 (9, N = 7274) = 69.723, p = .000
[3] χ^2 (3, N = 7264) = 37.375, p = .000
[4] χ^2 (6, N = 7317) = 216.360, p = .000
[5] Computer: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 129.190, p = .000; desk of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 76.589, p = .000; books of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 44.024, p = .000; newspaper: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 37.786, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 29.526, p = .000.
[6] Reading is for girls: Z = -4.068, p = .000; Reading is boring: Z = -2.907, p = .004; Reading is hard: Z = 3.597, p = .000; Interesting books: Z = -3.399, p = .001; Read outside school: Z = -4.668; Like going to the library: Z = -3.896, p = .000. Using the Bonferroni correction (p = .05/9 = .005), the following difference was insignificant: I do not read as well as other pupils in my class: Z = -2.304, p = .021.
[7] It will get me a job: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 11.036, p = .001; it is fun: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 14.148, p = .001; It gives me a break: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 10.251, p = .001.
[8] Websites: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 54.649, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 24.525, p = .000; jokes: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 10.935, p = .001; factual books: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 19.264, p = .000; fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 49.704, p = .000; manuals: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 11.437, p = .001; text messages: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 24.435, p = .000; emails: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 34.471, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 111.224, p = .001; plays: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 13.704, p = .000; posters: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 11.595, p = .001.
[9] Computer: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 129.190, p = .000; desk of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 76.589, p = .000; books of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 44.024, p = .000; newspaper: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 37.786, p = .000; magazines: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 29.526, p = .000.
[10] Horror/ghost: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 24.912, p = .000; animal-related fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 7.332, p = .007; sci-fi: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 5.794, p = .016; realistic teenage fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 5.342, p = .021; war/spy sotries: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 12.947, p = .000; and poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 30.180, p = .000.
[11] Bedroom: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 23.498, p = .000; a friend's house: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 16.484, p = .000.
[12] If books were cheaper: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 8.903, p = .003; if books had more pictures: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 19.100, p = .000; if someone read aloud to me: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 20.264, p = .000; if libraries were closer: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 21.313, p = .000; if reading was easier: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 24.049, p = .000; if my family encouraged me more: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 10.813, p = .001; if I had better eyesight: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 19.539, p = .000.
[13] Reading groups: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 28.435, p = .000; reading games: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 30.852, p = .000; Book reviews: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 9.414, p = .002; helping younger kids: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 8.229, p = .004; reading for prizes: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 20.040, p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 16.004, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 6.974, p = .008; other: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 11.368, p = .001.
[14] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 28.209, p = .000; father: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 97.683, p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 7.849, p = .005.
[15] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 16.879, p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 7.434, p = .006; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 36.612, p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 15.278, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 38.559, p = .000; librarian: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 25.170, p = .000; ta: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 44.828, p = .000; other: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 7.939, p = .006.
[16] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 15.658, p = .003; father: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 28.058, p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 14.564, p = .004; ta: χ^2 (1, N = 7464) = 26.757, p = .000.
[17] Father encourages: χ^2 (2, N = 6645) = 26.807, p = .000.
[18] Mother spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 29.402) = 29.402, p = .000; father spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 6647) = 59.281, p = .000.
[19] Promote reading enjoyment: χ^2 (4, N = 7331) = 13.772, p = .008.
[20] Teach reading: χ^2 (4, N = 7312) = 27.695, p = .000.

Chapter 6: Breakdown of findings by enthusiastic and reluctant readers

Summary of key findings by reading enjoyment

- Enthusiastic readers rated themselves as more proficient readers and said they read more frequently outside school than reluctant readers.
- Enthusiastic readers held more positive attitudes towards reading.
- More enthusiastic than reluctant readers stated that they read because it is a skill for life, it teaches them how other people live and feel, it helps them understand the world better, it is fun, it helps them find what they want/need to know, it gives them a break and it helps them understand themselves better.
- Whether or not pupils enjoyed reading had an impact on their preferred reading materials and their choice of fiction types.
- Enthusiastic readers indicated reading in a greater variety of places, including the living room, bedroom, classroom, playground and café.
- A greater proportion of enthusiastic readers believed that time constraints, cheaper books and better library facilities would make them read more.
- Both groups of readers said that designing websites/magazines would prompt them to read more. More enthusiastic than reluctant readers stated that meeting authors/celebrity readers and helping younger children read were activities that would help them and others read more.
- Enthusiastic readers were more likely to talk with their family about reading every day or once/twice a week. In particular, they were more likely to read with their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher and teaching assistant. More enthusiastic than reluctant readers also talked about reading with these people.
- Enthusiastic readers also reported being encouraged to read a lot by their mother and father. More enthusiastic than reluctant readers also reported that their mother and father themselves spend a lot of time reading.

So far, the data in this report has been analysed with respect to the pupils' gender, age and take-up of free school meals. However, what is of particular interest to the National Literacy Trust as well as teachers, parents and other practitioners, is to discover what can be done to engage those pupils in reading who perceive reading to be a chore.

This chapter therefore presents findings on the differences between enthusiastic and reluctant readers. This dichotomy was created by splitting the sample according to responses on the reading enjoyment question. Pupils who reported enjoying reading "very much" or "quite a lot" were combined to form the enthusiastic readers group (N = 4,030). Conversely, pupils who stated that they enjoy reading "a bit" or "not at all" were combined into the reluctant readers group (N = 3,864).

There were significant differences between the two groups in terms of self-rated reading proficiency, with a greater proportion of enthusiastic readers rating themselves as very proficient readers (level 8 and above, see **Table 6.1**)[1].

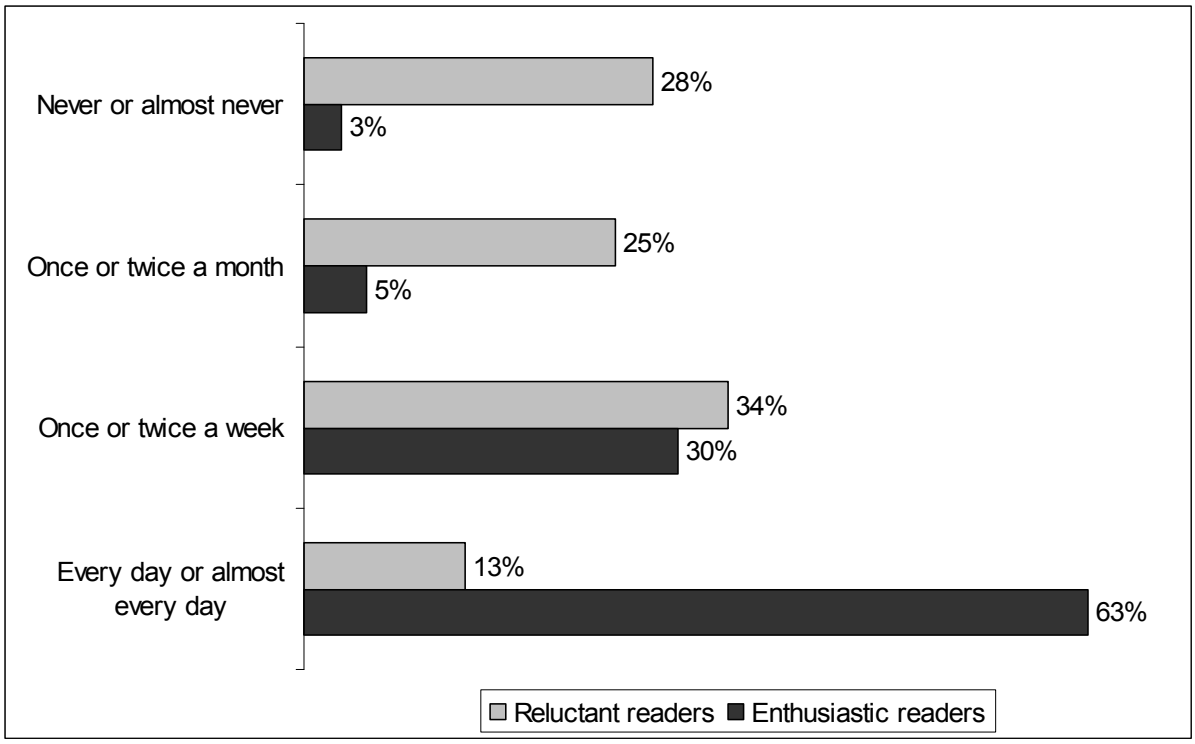
Table 6.1: Self-reported reading proficiency

Proficiency score	Reluctant reader %	Enthusiastic reader %
1	2.4	0.3
2	2.0	0.2
3	4.4	0.5
4	6.9	1.3
5	15.6	4.4
6	18.1	7.6
7	21.5	15.5
8	18.3	26.8
9	6.9	24.5
10	3.9	18.9

(1 = Not a very good reader to 10 = Excellent reader)

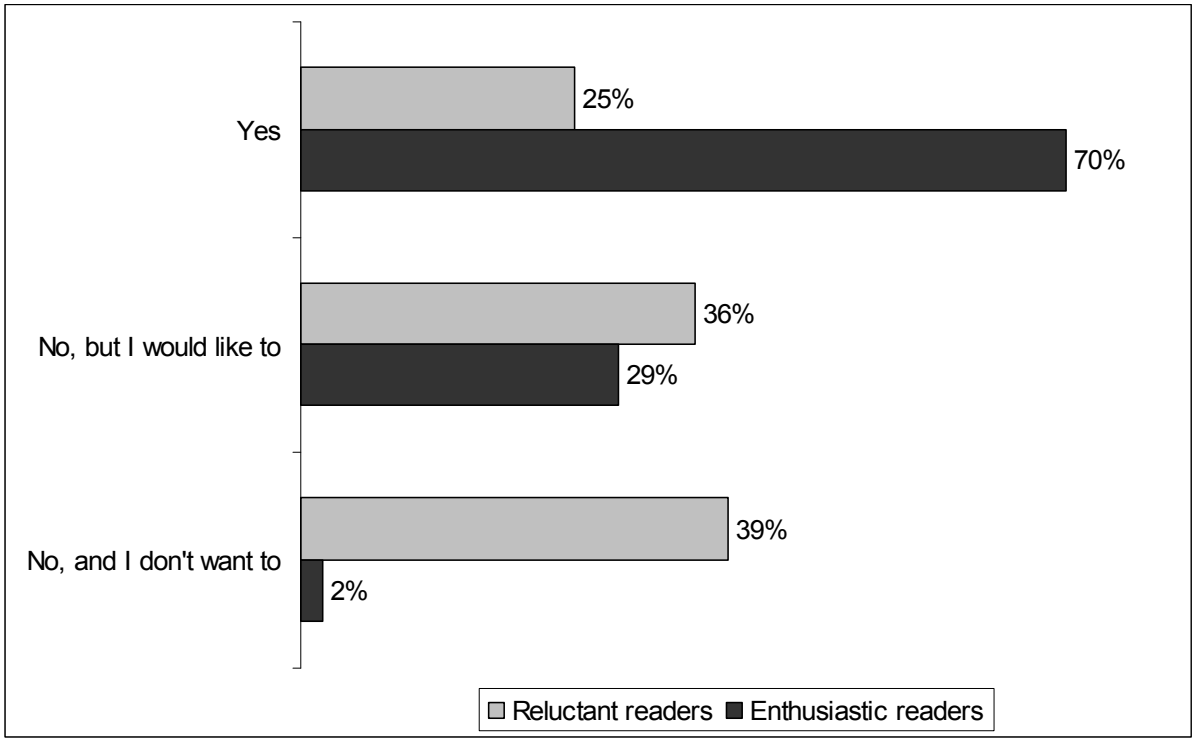
In addition to rating themselves as proficient readers, a significantly greater percentage of enthusiastic readers reported reading outside school every day or almost every day (see **Figure 6.1**)[2]. Conversely, a greater proportion of reluctant readers stated that they never or almost never read outside school or do so only once or twice a month.

Figure 6.1: How often do you read outside school



When asked whether they thought they were reading enough, a significantly greater percentage of enthusiastic than reluctant readers reported that they read enough, while a greater percentage of reluctant than enthusiastic readers stated that they do not read enough and also do not want to read more (see **Figure 6.2**)[3].

Figure 6.2: Do you think you read enough?



There were significant differences in the number of books the two groups reported were in their home (see **Table 6.2**). Compared with reluctant readers, a greater percentage of enthusiastic readers believed there were large numbers of books at home[4].

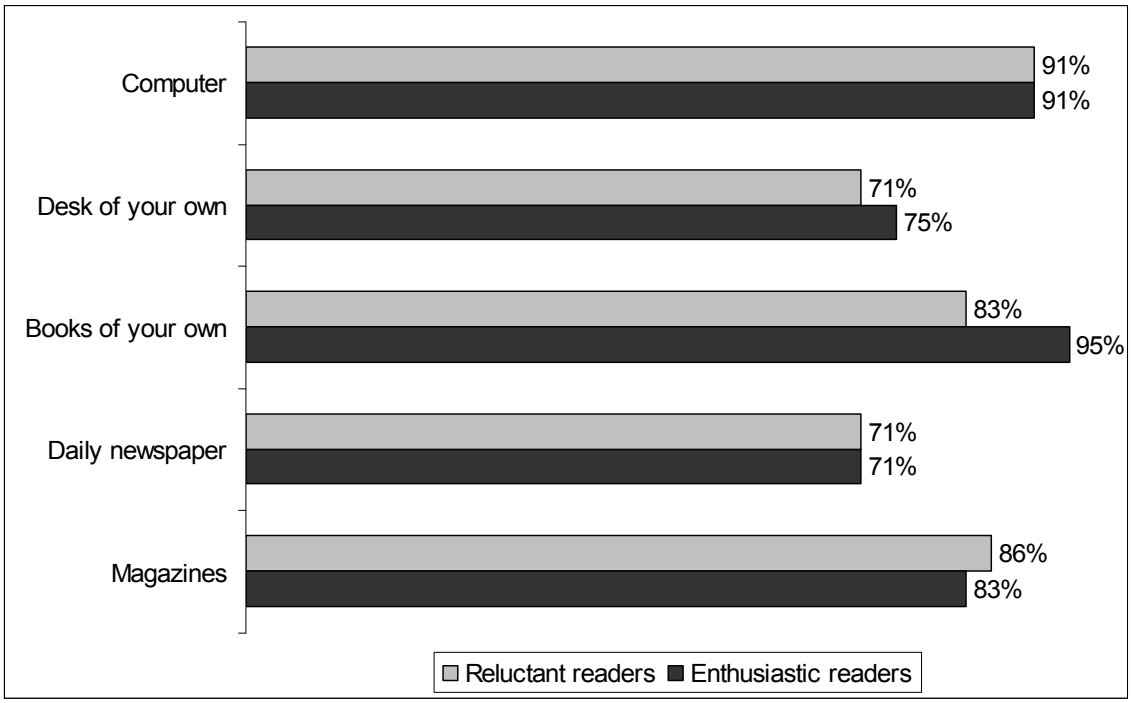
Table 6.2: Estimated number of books in the home

Books at home	Reluctant reader %	Enthusiastic reader %
None	2.1	0.4
1-10	12.0	4.0
11-50	24.4	14.7
51-100	24.1	20.8
101-250	19.1	23.6
251-500	10.4	19.7
>500	7.9	16.8

In addition to perceiving there to be more books in the home, a greater proportion of enthusiastic readers also reported owning their own books (see **Figure 6.3**)[5]. There were no

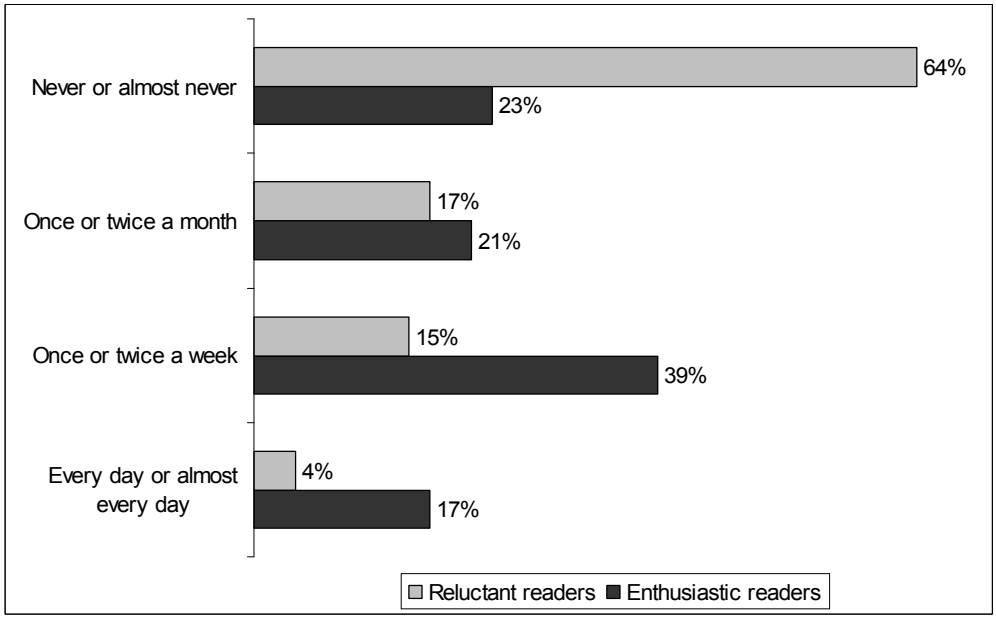
significant differences between the two groups in terms of access to a computer, desk of their own, daily newspaper or magazines.

Figure 6.3: Access to resources at home



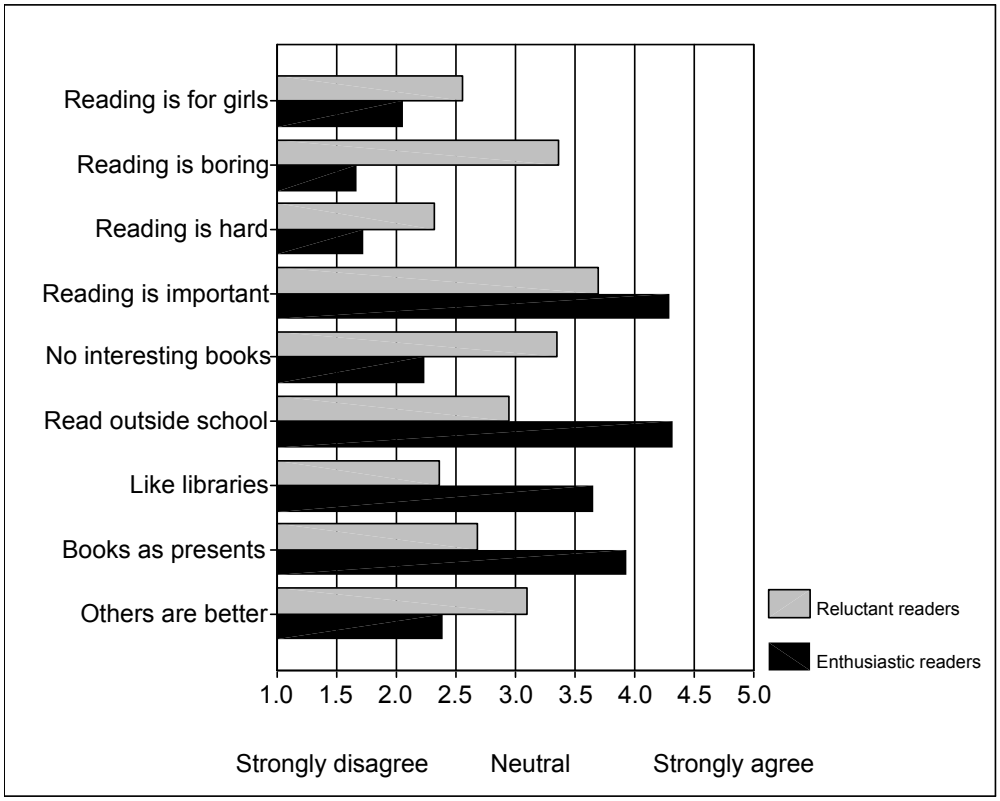
When asked how often they talk with their family about what they are reading, a significantly greater percentage of reluctant readers reported that they never or almost never talk about their reading with their family (see **Figure 6.4**)[6], a finding that is not really surprising? Reluctant readers, as implied by the term, do not like to read and do so only infrequently. Indeed, evidence presented later in this chapter shows that, among this group, reading is often not a valued family activity.

Figure 6.4: How often do you talk with your family about what you are reading?



As one would expect, reluctant readers held considerably more negative attitudes towards reading than enthusiastic ones (see **Figure 6.5**). In particular, reluctant readers were significantly more likely to agree with the statements that reading is for girls, reading is boring, reading is hard hard, that they cannot find books that interest them and that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class. Conversely, enthusiastic readers were significantly more likely to believe that reading is important, that they read outside school, that they like going to libraries, and that they would be happy to get books as presents[7].

Figure 6.5: Attitudes towards reading



Not only did enthusiastic readers hold more positive attitudes towards reading, they were also more likely to endorse a variety of reasons for reading (see **Figure 6.6a** and **6.6b**). Compared to reluctant readers, a significantly greater proportion of enthusiastic readers stated that they read because it is a skill for life, it teaches them how other people live and feel, it helps them understand the world better, it is fun, it helps them find what they want/need to know, it gives them a break and it helps them understand themselves better. By contrast, a significantly greater percentage of reluctant readers read because they have to[8]. These findings emphasise the need to stress the pleasure of reading as well as it being a functional skill.

Figure 6.6a: I read because … - Reluctant readers

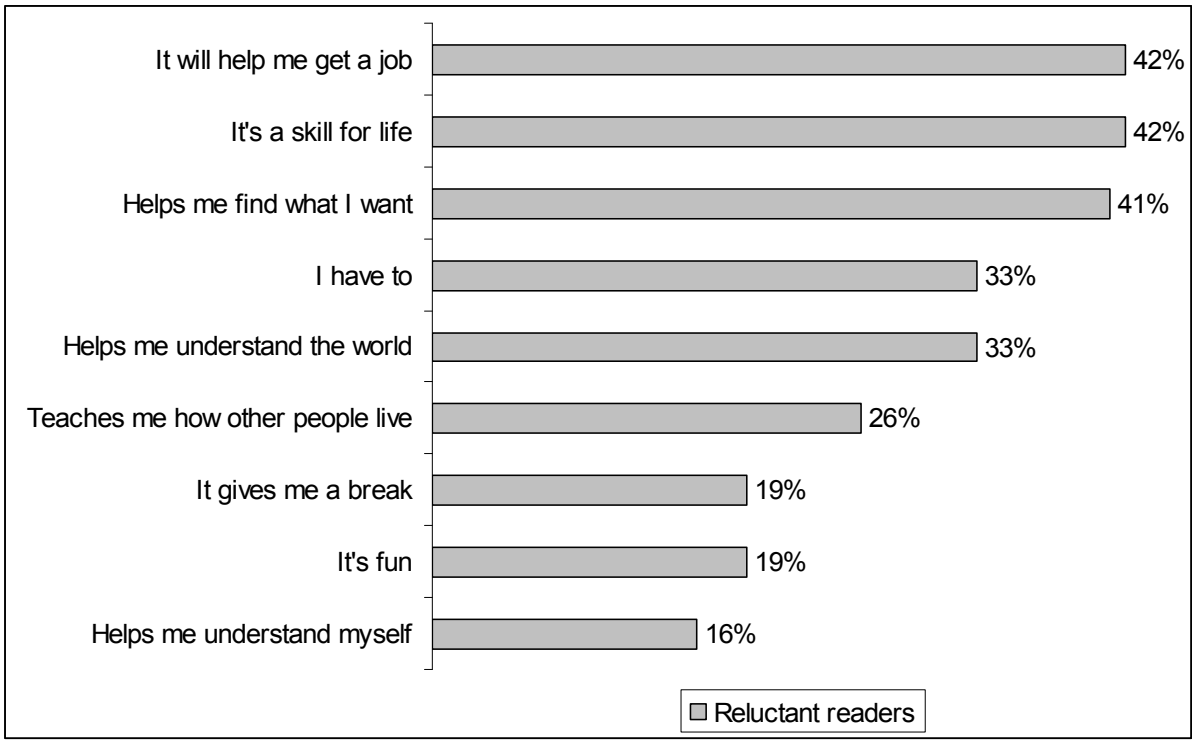
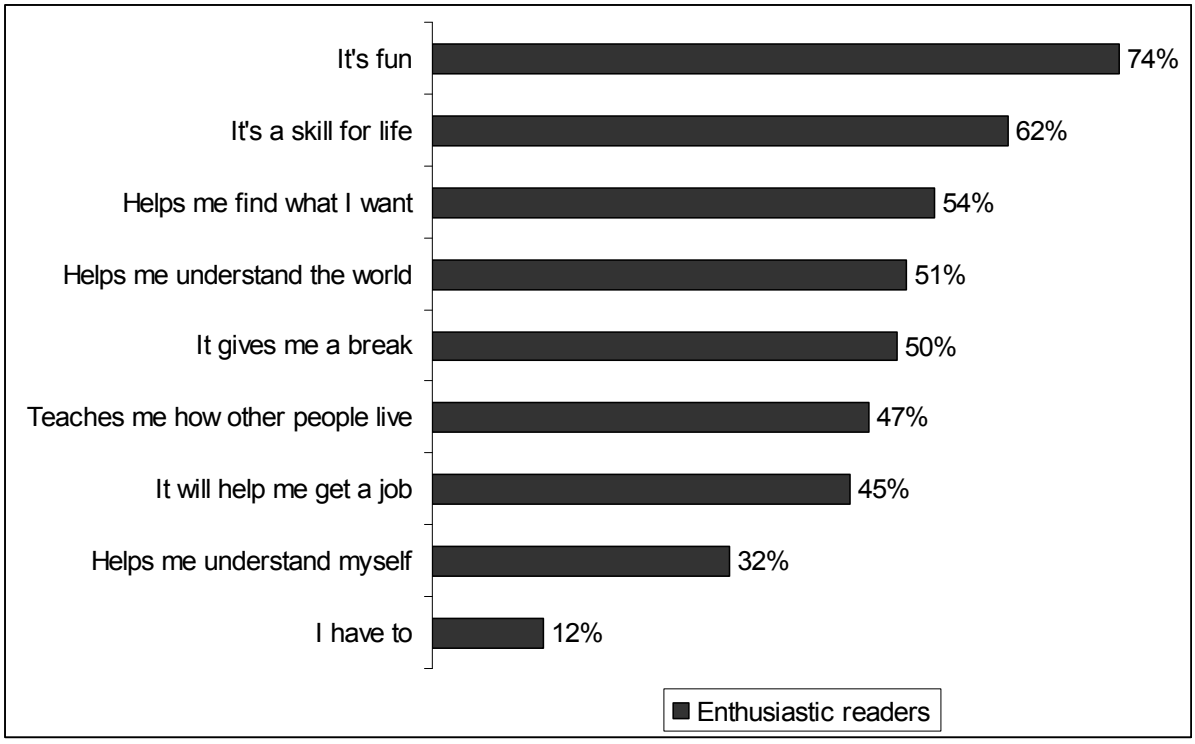


Figure 6.6b: I read because … - Enthusiastic readers



Websites, teletext, magazines and emails were read by an almost equal proportion of enthusiastic and reluctant readers (see **Figures 6.7a** and **6.7b**). However, a greater percentage of enthusiastic readers read the following outside class: newspapers, jokes, factual books, fiction, graphic novels, comics, annuals, manuals, poetry, plays, catalogues, songs, posters, cookbooks, encyclopaedias, travel books, audiobooks, EAL books and books or magazines about TV programes. A greater number of reluctant readers read text messages outside class[9].

Figure 6.7a: Preferred reading materials outside class – Reluctant readers

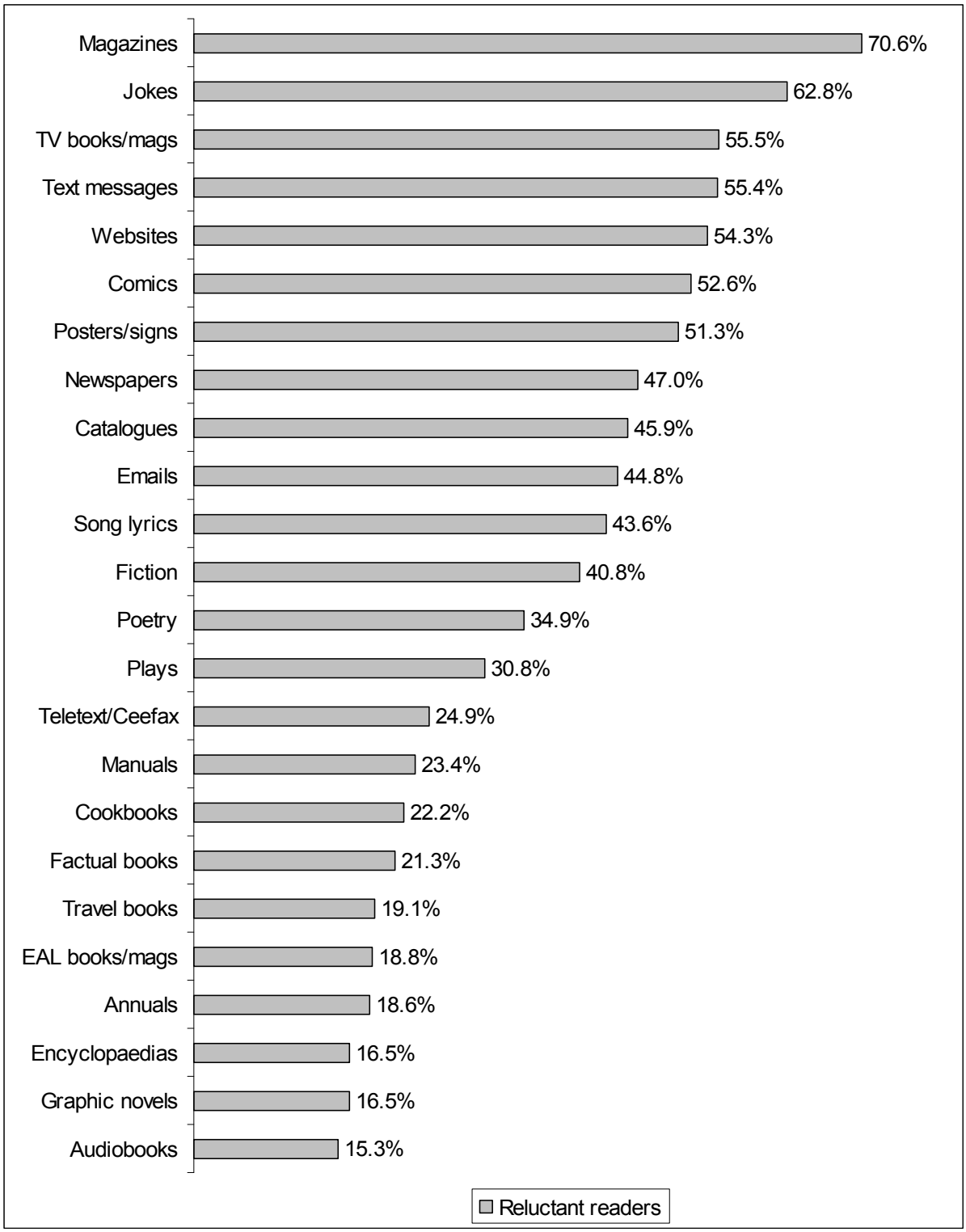
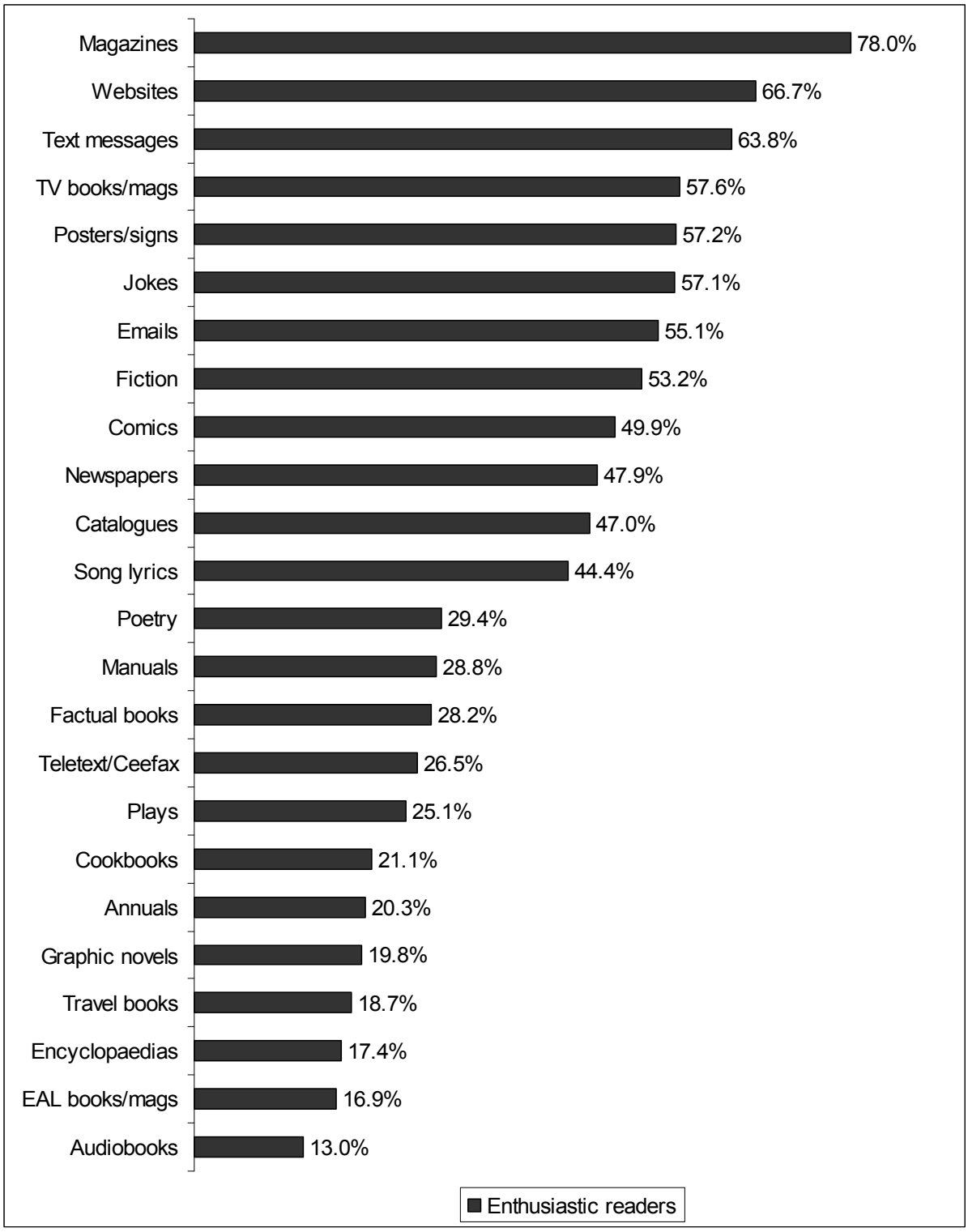


Figure 6.7b: Preferred reading materials outside class – Enthusiastic readers



Differences between the two groups are further found with regard to their fiction reading preferences (see **Figures 6.8a** and **6.8b**). A significantly greater proportion of enthusiastic readers reported reading adventure, horror/ghost stories, romance/relationships, animal-related fiction, science-fiction/fantasy, comedy, crime/detective stories, realistic teenage fiction, war/spy stories and poetry. In line with the findings reported in Figure 6.7a, a greater percentage of reluctant readers reported that they do not read fiction[10]. Differences between the two groups in reading sports-related fiction were not statistically significant.

Figure 6.8a: Preferred types of fiction – Reluctant readers

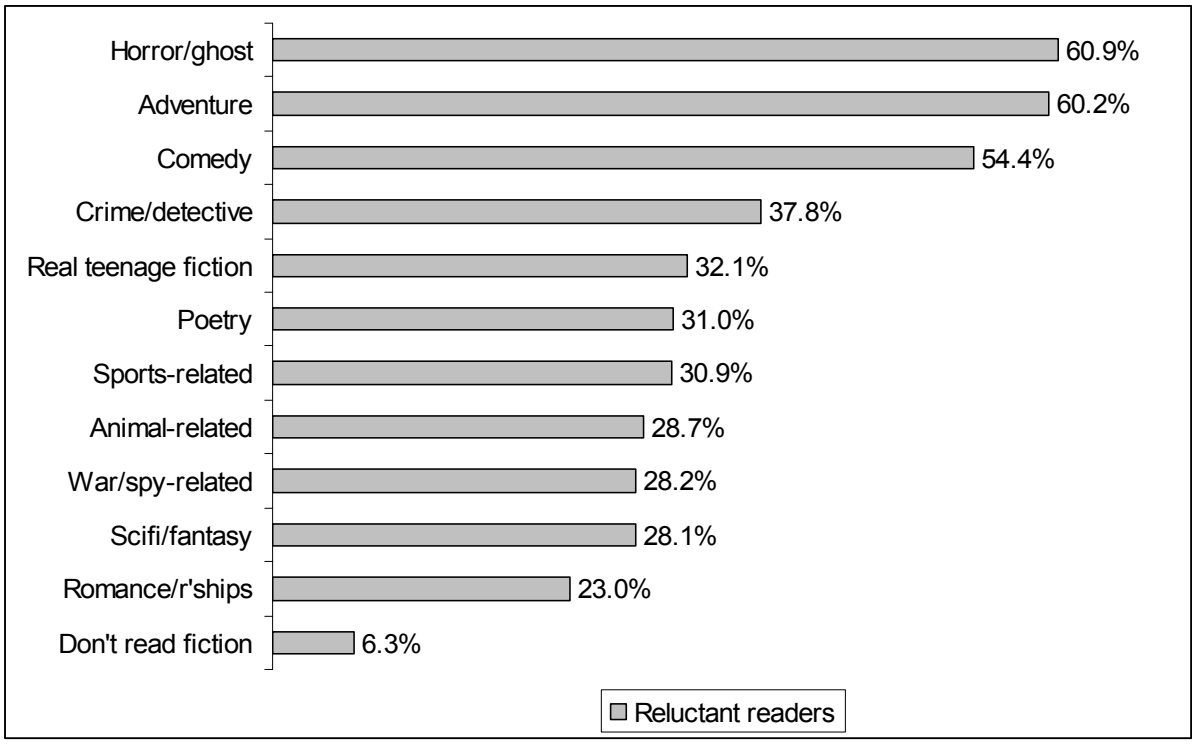


Figure 6.8b: Preferred types of fiction – Enthusiastic readers

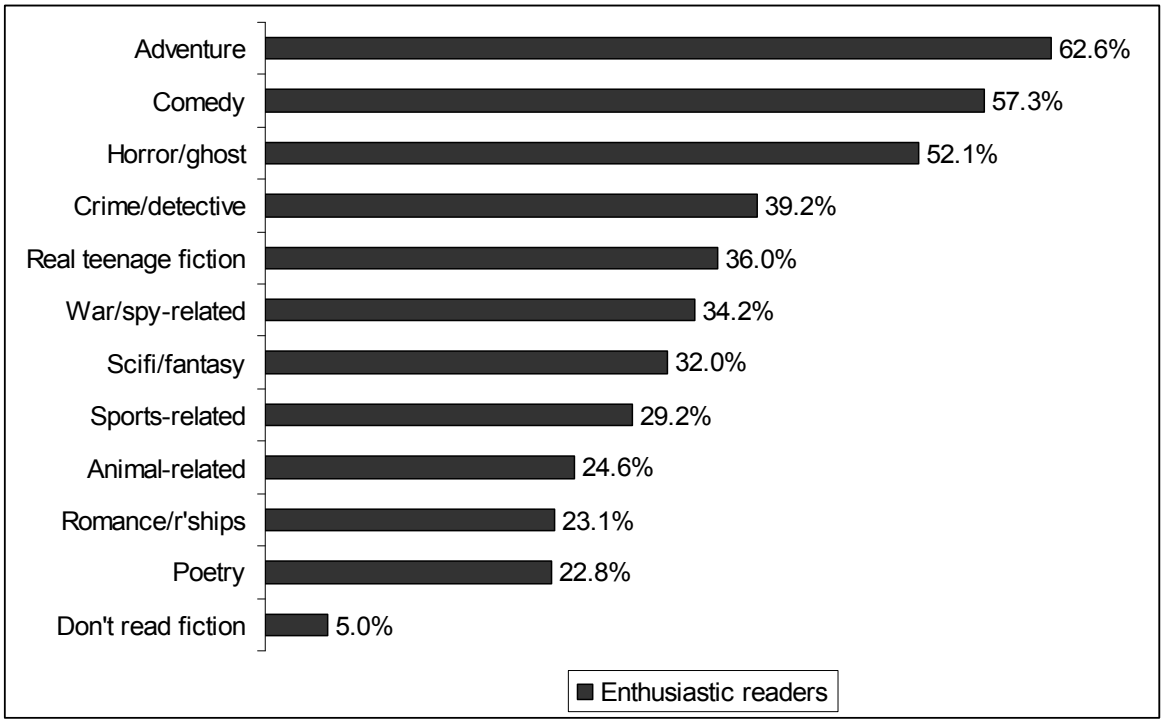
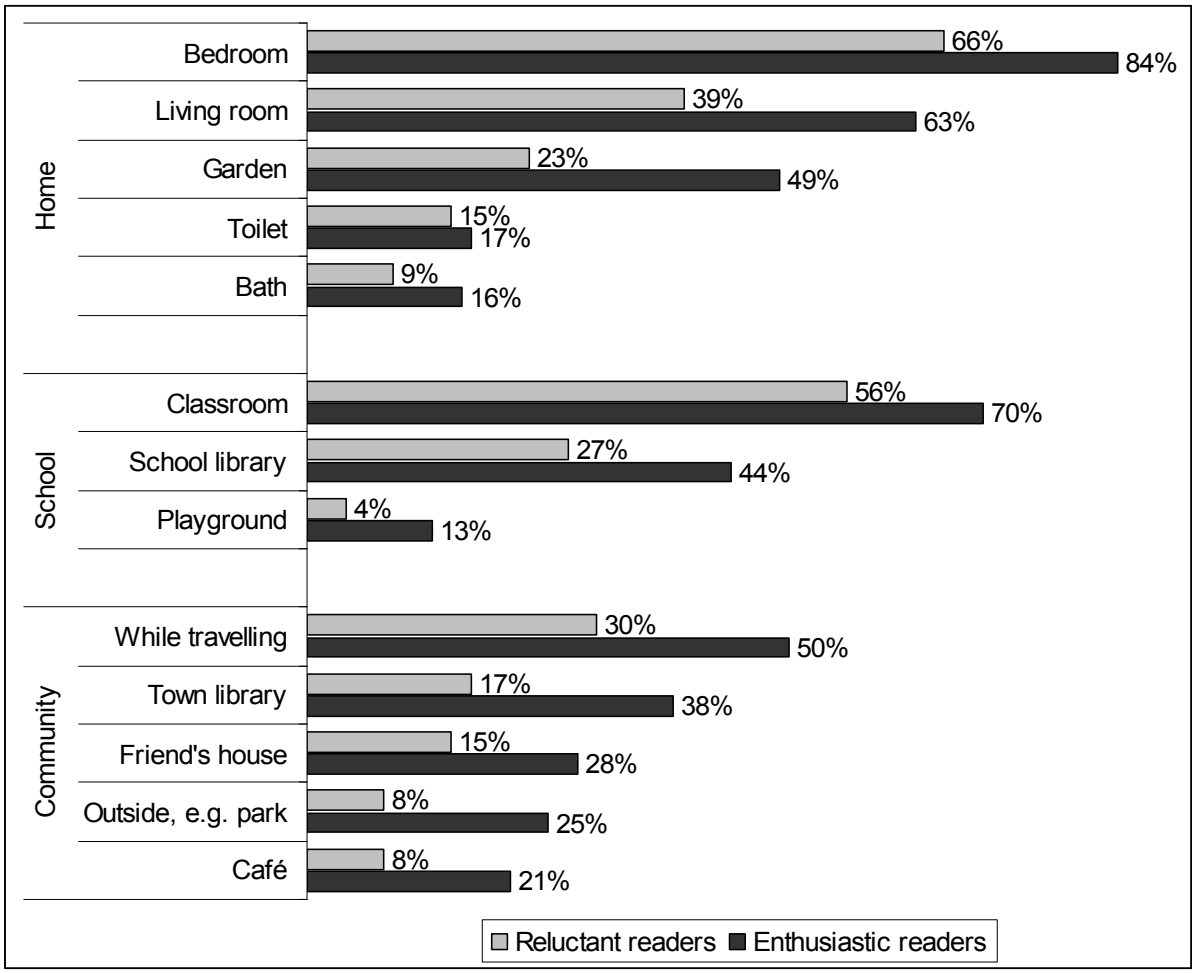


Figure 6.9 shows that enthusiastic readers spend time reading in a variety of places. Indeed, a significantly greater percentage of enthusiastic readers than reluctant readers reported reading in the living room, bedroom, bath, garden, classroom, school library, playground, while travelling, in a café, at a town library, in a communal outside space and at a friend's house[11]. There were no significant differences between the two groups in the extent to which they reported reading while on the toilet.

Figure 6.9: Where do you like reading?



Pupils were asked to indicate what would make them more likely to read. Time constraints were one of the greatest barriers to reading, both for pupils who enjoy reading and those who do not. Figures 6.10a and 6.10b show that a third of reluctant readers and two-thirds of enthusiastic readers said that having more free time would encourage them to read more books, a finding that is consistent with that made by Nestlé in 2003.

A greater proportion of reluctant readers said that they would read more if they enjoyed it more, if books had more pictures and if stories were shorter (see **Figure 6.10a**). The latter two points are reflected in the reading choices of reluctant readers (see **Figure 6.7a**). While they were less likely to read fiction outside class, a higher percentage of reluctant readers indicated reading comics, magazines, websites and other materials that are more visual and less text-heavy.

By contrast, enthusiastic readers were more likely to say the cost of books was a barrier, with almost half saying that they would read more if books were cheaper (see **Figure 6.10b**). A greater proportion of enthusiastic readers also reported that they would read more if libraries were better and closer. None of the other differences between the two groups was statistically significant[12].

Figure 6.10a: I would read more if … - Reluctant readers

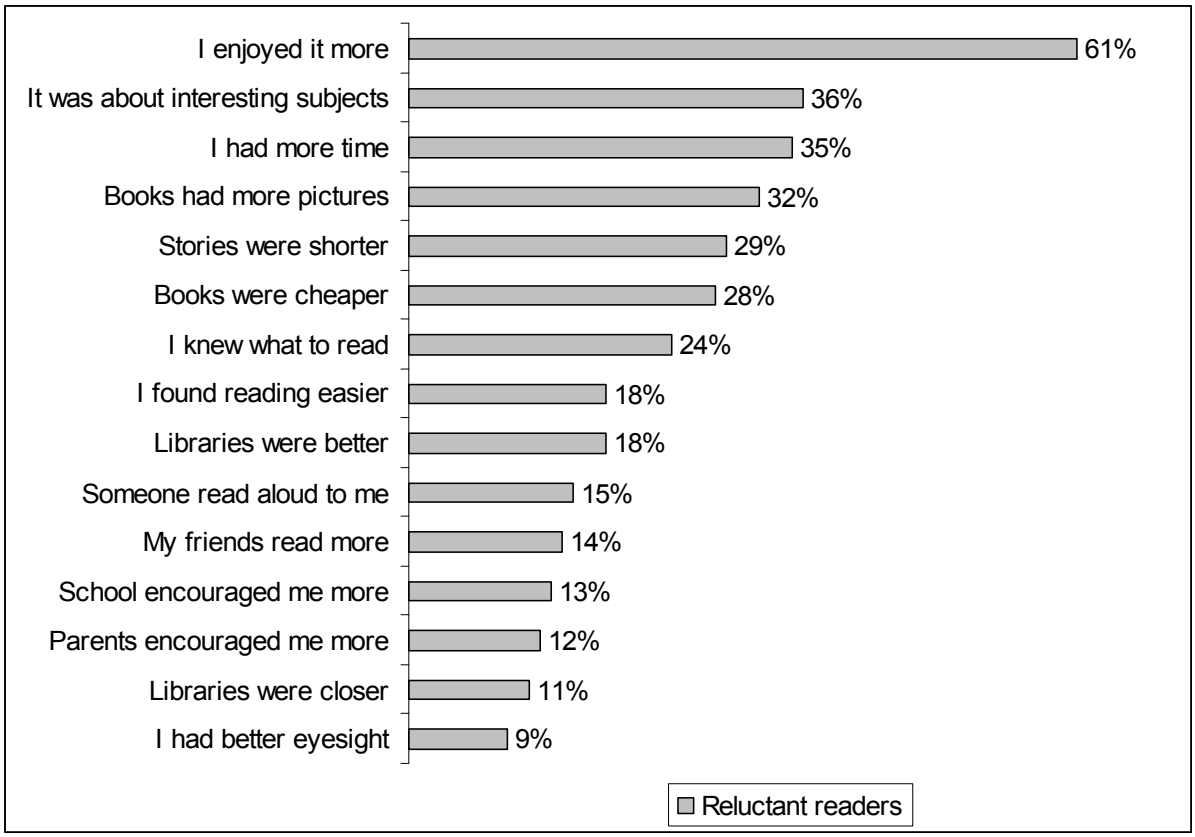
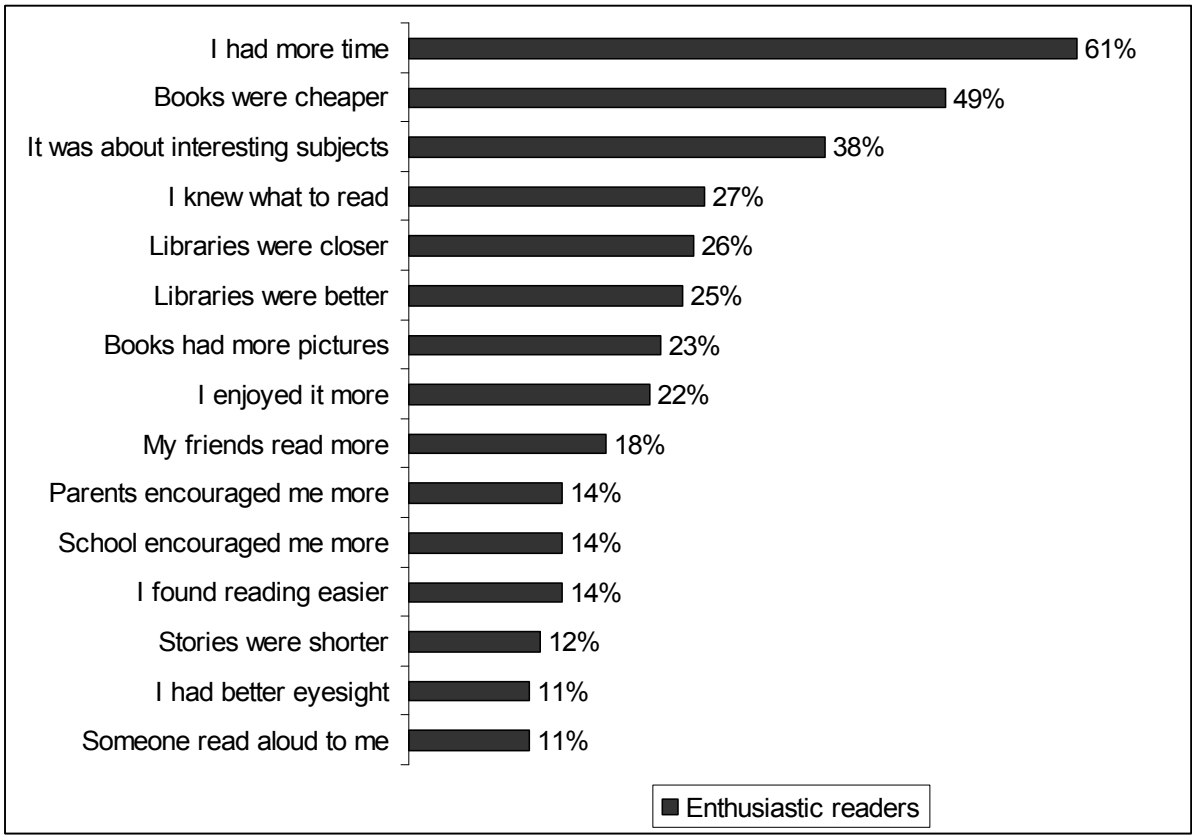


Figure 6.10b: I would read more if … - Enthusiastic readers



Pupils who enjoy reading and those who do not were equally likely to say that designing websites/magazines and reading games would be activities that would help them and others to read more (see **Figures 6.11a** and **6.11b**). Meeting authors/celebrities and helping younger children with their reading were chosen as motivating activities by a third of reluctant readers but more than half of enthusiastic readers – differences that were statistically significant. A significantly greater proportion of enthusiastic readers also chose talking about favourite reads, choosing library stock, designing library displays, reading for charity and reading for prizes as activities that would help them and others read more. Although rating books and writing book reviews were the least frequently chosen activities by both groups, enthusiastic readers were significantly more likely to choose these options[13].

Figure 6.11a: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – Reluctant readers

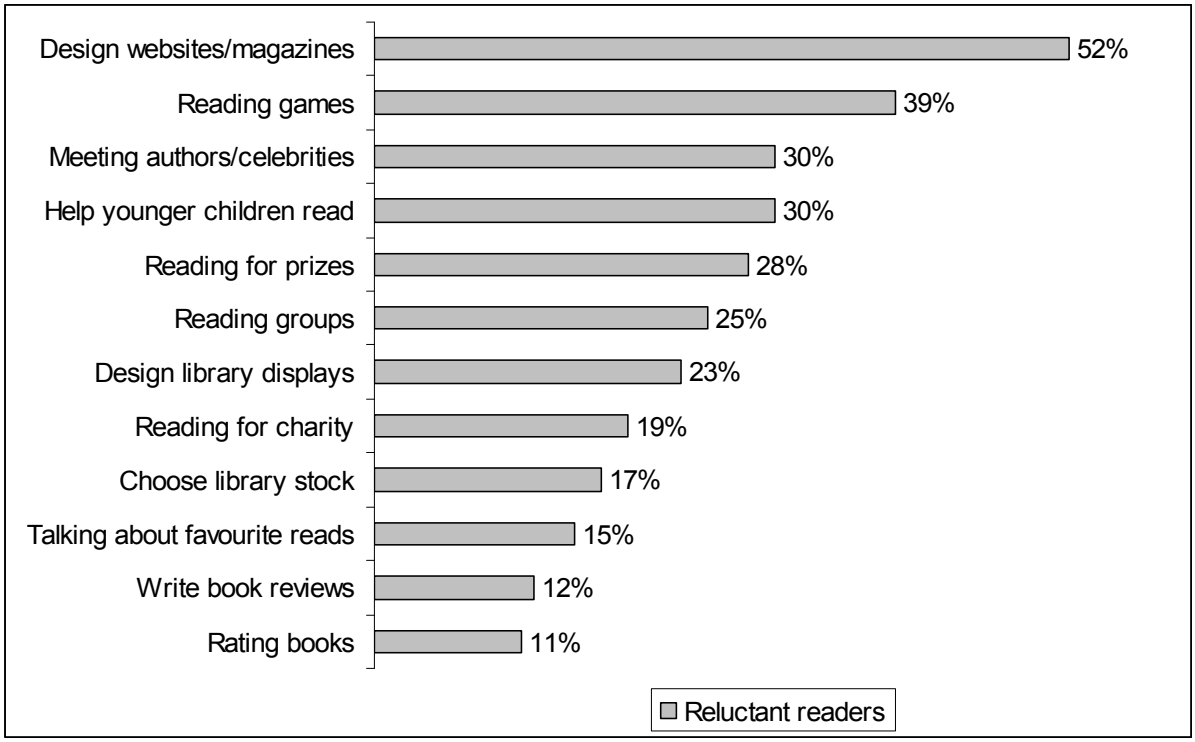
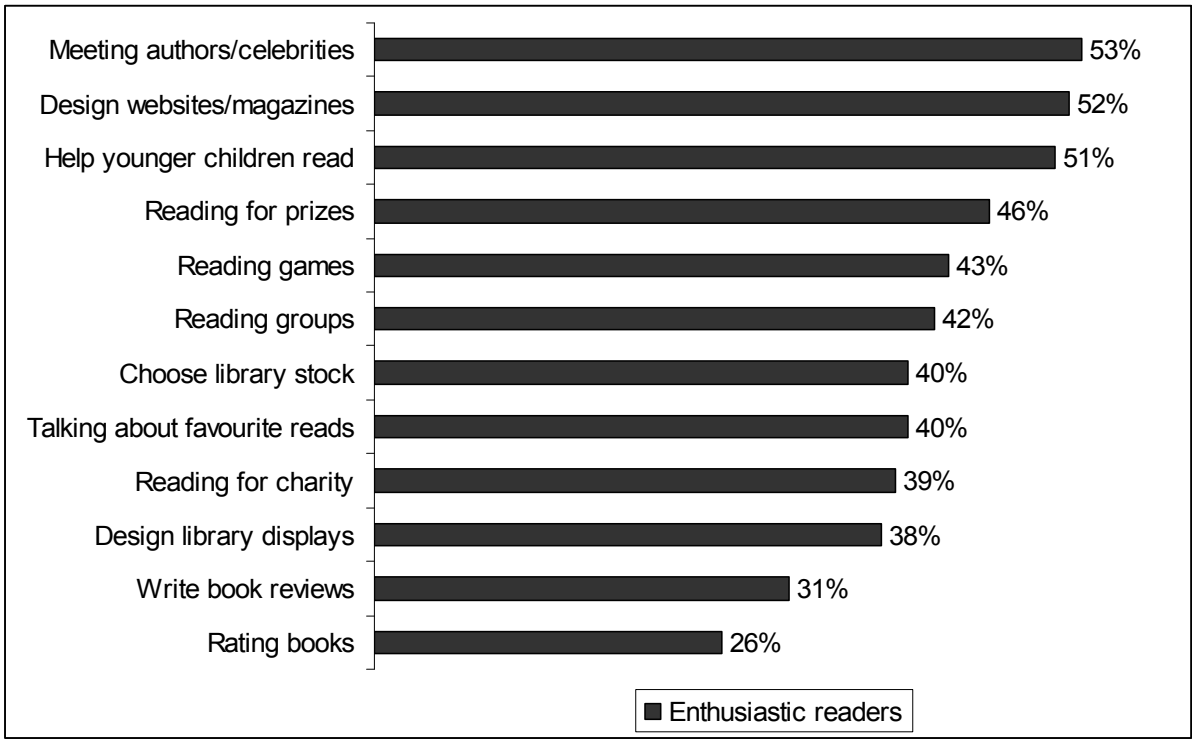
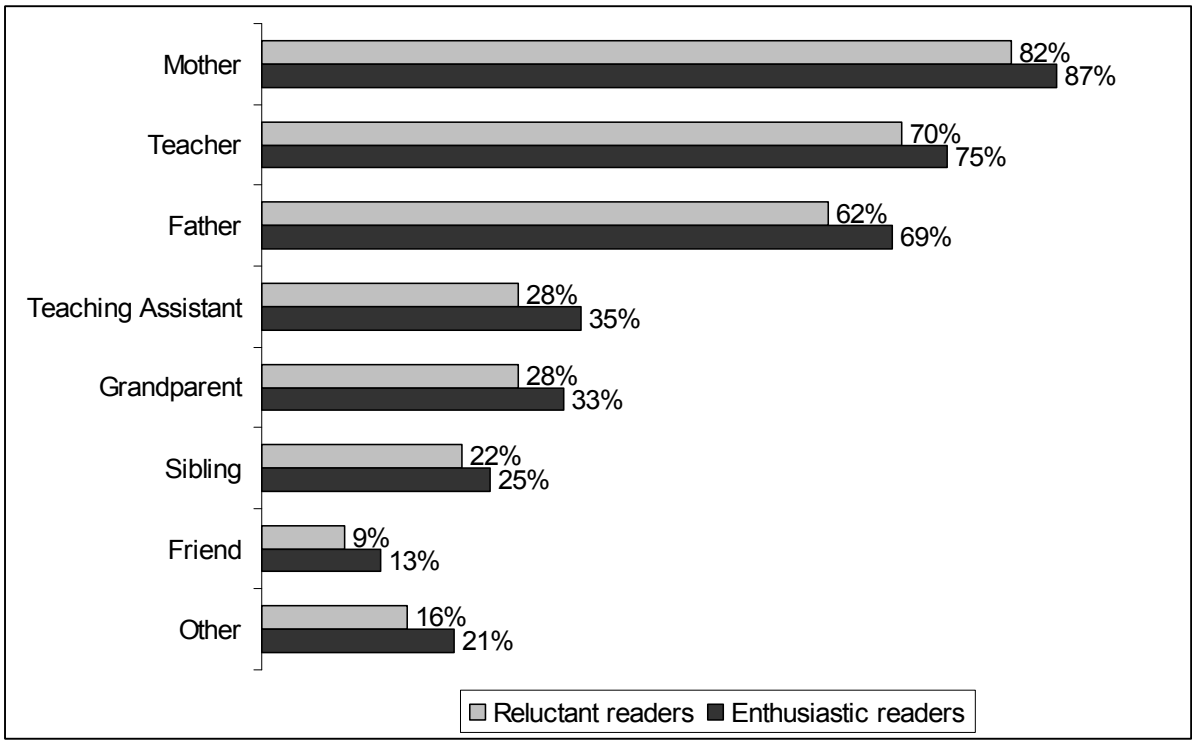


Figure 6.11b: Which activities would you like to do to help yourself and others read more? – Enthusiastic readers



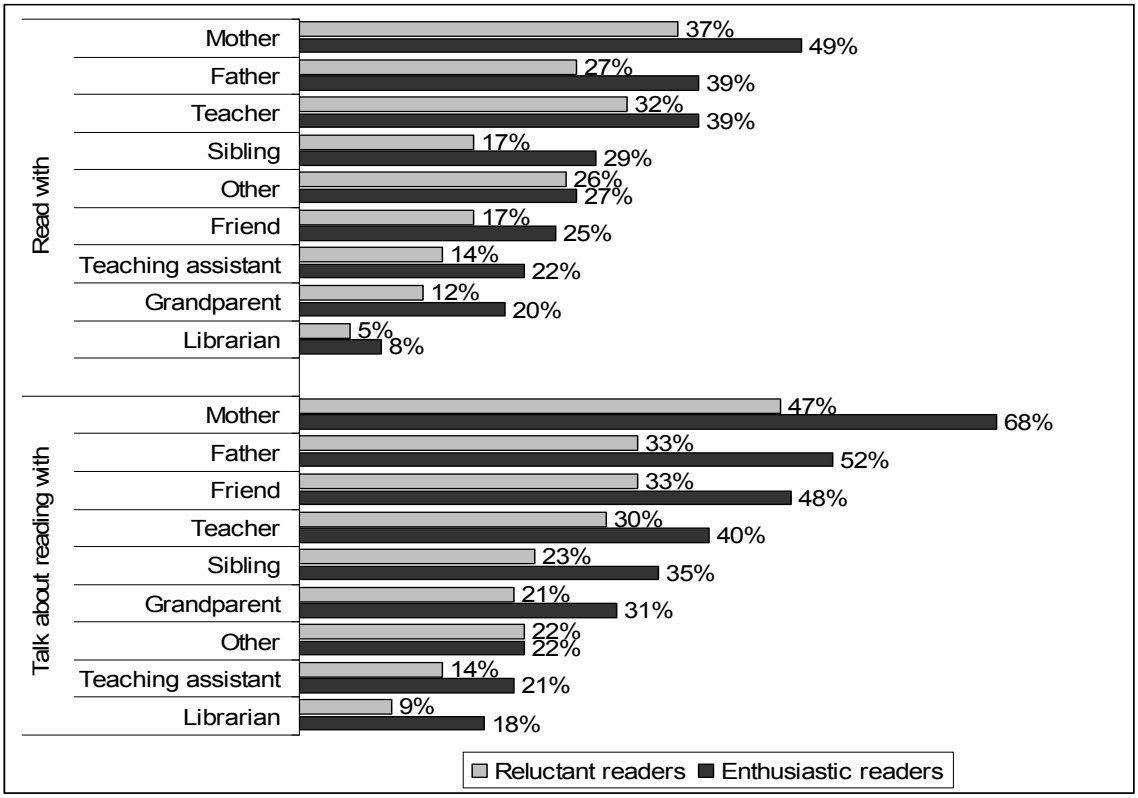
Although a greater proportion of enthusiastic readers reported having been taught to read by their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, teaching assistant or other unspecified person, the differences between the two groups were not statistically significant (see **Figure 6.12**).

Figure 6.12: Who taught you to read?



A significantly greater proportion of enthusiastic readers reported reading with their mother, father, grandparent, a sibling, a friend, their teacher and teaching assistant (see **Figure 6.13**)[14]. Not only was a greater proportion of enthusiastic readers more likely to report reading with a variety of people, a significantly greater percentage also talked about reading with a number of people, including their mother, father, grandparent, sibling, friend, teacher, librarian and teaching assistant[15].

Figure 6.13: Who do you read with and who do you talk about reading with?



There were significant differences in the extent to which both groups of readers reported being encouraged to read by their mother and father (see **Table 6.3**). Compared with reluctant readers, who generally reported being encouraged by their parents sometimes, a greater percentage of enthusiastic readers reported that both their mother and father encouraged them a lot[16].

Table 6.3: Does your mum, dad or carer encourage you to read?

	Reluctant reader %	Enthusiastic reader %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	21.9	11.1
Yes, sometimes	53.4	39.7
Yes, a lot	24.6	49.2
Father/carer		
No, not at all	37.8	20.3
Yes, sometimes	43.6	41.2
Yes, a lot	18.6	38.5

There were also significant differences in the amount of time that both groups of pupils reported that their parents spend reading[17]. **Table 6.4** shows that a greater percentage of reluctant readers stated that their mother and father did not spend any time reading.

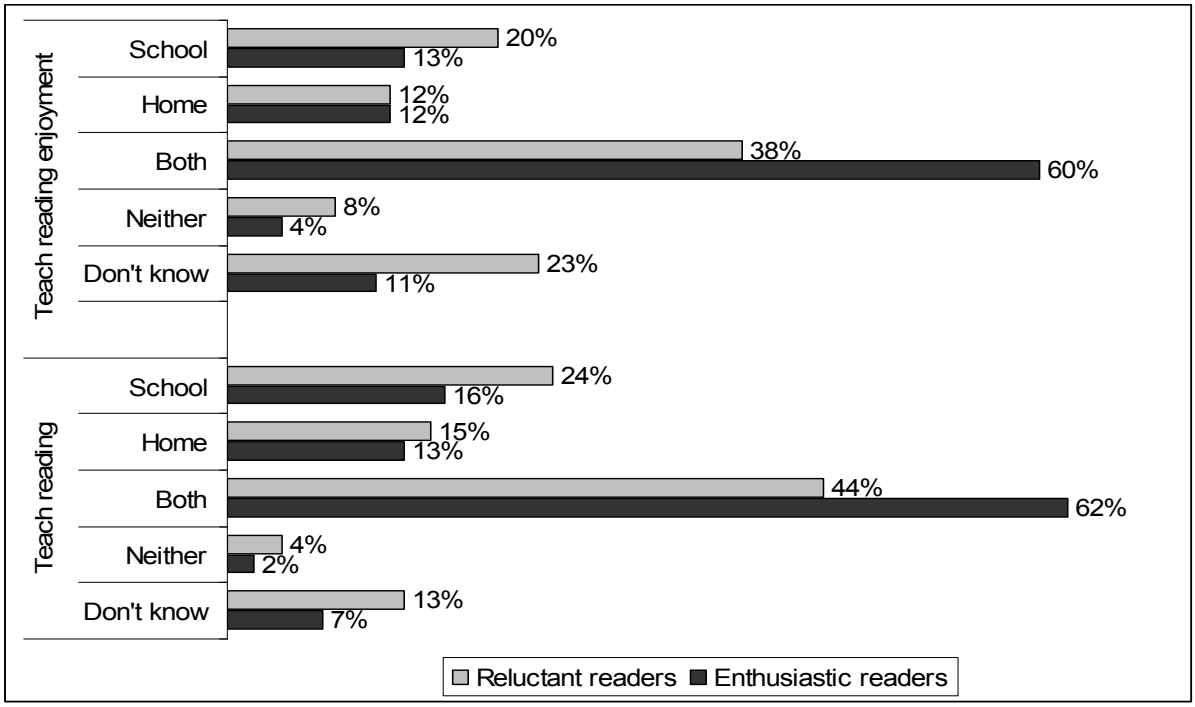
Table 6.4: Does your mum, dad or carer spend time reading

	Reluctant reader %	Enthusiastic reader %
Mother/carer		
No, not at all	18.3	9.3
Yes, sometimes	48.7	45.2
Yes, a lot	33.0	45.5
Father/carer		
No, not at all	32.5	18.4
Yes, sometimes	47.8	49.3
Yes, a lot	19.7	32.3

There were significant disagreements about who reluctant and enthusiastic readers believed should be responsible for encouraging them to enjoy reading (see **Figure 6.14**). Although the majority of both groups of readers indicated that reading enjoyment should be promoted by both the home and the school, a greater percentage of enthusiastic readers believed this. Compared with enthusiastic readers, a greater proportion of reluctant readers stated that it should be the school's responsibility, while almost a quarter did not have an opinion[18].

Again, there were disagreements about who reluctant and enthusiastic readers believed should be responsible for teaching them to read. Although a majority of both groups of readers indicated that reading should be taught by both the home and the school, a greater percentage of enthusiastic readers believed this. A greater proportion of reluctant readers stated that it should be the school's responsibility[19].

Figure 6.14: Who should encourage you to enjoy reading and who should teach you to read?



Statistical information – Reluctant/enthusiastic readers

[1] Reading proficiency: χ^2 (9, N = 7718) = 1646.463, p = .000. These differences were confirmed in an independent t-test, which showed that pupils who enjoyed reading (M = 8.07, SD = 1.552) rated themselves as more proficient than pupils who did not enjoy reading (M = 6.32, SD = 1.964; t(7716) = -43.639, p = .000).
[2] Read outside school: χ^2 (3, N = 7710) = 2580.388, p = .000.
[3] Read enough: χ^2 (2, N = 7625) = 2152.540, p = .000.
[4] Books in the home: χ^2 (6, N = 7760) = 560.274, p = .000.
[5] Books of their own: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 283.406, p = .000
[6] Family talk: χ^2 (3, N = 7660) = 1442.351, p = .000
[7] Reading is for girls: t(7499) = 18.487, p = .000; reading is boring: t(7402) = 74.768, p = .000; reading is hard = t(7257) = 25.520, p = .000; reading is important: t(7370) = -26.242, p = .000; cannot find any books of interest: t(7326) = 41.468; read outside school: t(7338) = -53.205, p = .000; I like going to the library: t(7350) = -46.254, p = .000; I don't mind receiving books as presents: t(7356) = -49.133, p = .000; I don't read as well as other pupils: t(7332) = 25.007, p = .000.
[8] Skill for life: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 315.374, p = .000; teaches me how other people live: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 370.444, p = .000; helps me understand the world: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 255.700, p = .000; it's fun: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 2344.161, p = .000; it helps me find what I want: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 117.517, p = .000; it gives me a break: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 839.737, p = .000; I have to: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 515.141, p = .000; helps me understand myself: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 258.672, p = .000.
[9] Newspapers: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 16.107, p = .000; jokes: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 71.76, p = .000; factual books: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 744.902, p = .000; fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 1461.561, p = .000; graphic novels: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 307.384, p = .000; comics: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 219.469, p = .000; annuals: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 307.895, p = .000; manuals: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 173.107, p = .000; text messages: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 56.582, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 635.915, p = .000; plays: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 330.080, p = .000; catalogues: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 27.485, p = .000; song lyrics: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 23.893, p = .000; posters: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 56.511, p = .000; cookbooks: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 172.553, p = .000; encyclopaedias: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 422.339, p = .000; travel books: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 190.126, p = .000; audiobooks: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 148.534, p = .000; EAL books: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 207.163, p = .000; TV books/mags: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 64.778, p = .000.
[10] .Adventure: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 626.679, p = .000; horror/ghost: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 47.843, p = .000; romance: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 122.342, p = .000; animal-related: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 374.257, p = .000; scifi/fantasy: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 690.852, p = .000; comedy: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 88.743, p = .000; crime: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 208.076, p = .000; realistic teenage fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 197.002, p = .000; war/spy: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 181.739, p = .000; poetry: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 454.716, p = .000; don't read fiction: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 160.158, p = .000.
[11] Living room: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 442.562, p = .000; bedroom: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 339.045, p = .000; bath: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 100.250, p = .000; garden: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 564.942, p = .000; classroom: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 160.382, p = .000; school library: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 244.973, p = .000; playground: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 227.067, p = .000; travelling: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 312.943, p = .000; café: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 246.542, p = .000; public library: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 444.183, p = .000; outside: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 377.732, p = .000; friends: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 191.170, p = .000.
[12] More time: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 502.277, p = .000; books were cheaper: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 354.874, p = .000; enjoy it more: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 1273.763, p = .000; libraries were better: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 66.383, p = .000; books had more picture: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 94.486, p = .000; stories were shorter: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 321.335, p = .000; libraries were closer: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 300.623, p = .000.
[13] Reading groups: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 252.977, p = .000; talking about favourite reads: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 629.730, p = .000; choose library stock: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 496.278, p = .000; book reviews: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 437.381, p = .000; helping younger kids: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 374.322, p = .000; design library displays: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 228.772, p = .000; reading for charity: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 405.224, p = .000; rating books: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 309.477, p = .000; reading for prizes: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 261.475, p = .000; meeting the author: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 408.406., p = .000.
[14] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 117.545., p = .000; father: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 124.237., p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 78.079., p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 143.188., p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 82.905., p = .000; teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 41.597., p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 86.537., p = .000.
[15] Mother: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 363.171., p = .000; father: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 273.608., p = .000; grandparent: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 114.785., p = .000; sibling: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 126.300., p = .000; friend: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 189.905., p = .000, teacher: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 77.505., p = .000; librarian: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 146.628., p = .000; teaching assistant: χ^2 (1, N = 7894) = 76.582., p = .000.
[16] Mother encourages: χ^2 (2, N = 7662) = 525.892, p = .000; father encourages: χ^2 (2, N = 7026) = 428.509, p = .000.
[17] Mother spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 7609) = 192.806, p = .000; father spends time reading: χ^2 (2, N = 7018) = 245.619, p = .000.
[18] Encourage reading enjoyment: χ^2 (4, N = 7758) = 493.435, p = .000.
[19] Teach reading: χ^2 (4, N = 7738) = 310.493, p = .000.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

Promoting reading with the aim of inspiring all children to read for pleasure is a responsibility of all schools. The benefits for literacy skills, wider learning and personal development are supported by substantial research evidence.

The findings from this survey confirm the need for schools to:

7.1. Create a culture in which all pupils are encouraged to be enthusiastic readers. To support this goal, schools with effective approaches consult with students to learn of their interests and to ensure that the range of reading materials available in school reflects those interests. They recognise that a diverse range of reading materials will encourage students to read, for example websites, comics and magazines. They engage children in the planning and delivery of reading and library activities, offering them the opportunity to select and purchase reading materials for their use.

Reading Connects will continue to support schools in developing a reading culture by disseminating practical ideas, funding advice, case studies and resources aimed at helping schools with the practices that can create school communities that read.

7.2. Consider how to engage boys with reading. In addition to the encouragement of boys reading around their personal interests, particular attention needs to be given to the involvement of male staff, community role models and fathers. The National Reading Campaign initiative Reading Champions supports schools with this aim by sharing practices that involve boys in creating a reading culture.

7.3. Consider how they can support parents in encouraging reading in the home. The role of the home is important for all children. Home-school practices that successfully involve all parents in ways they value for strengthening involvement in their children's home and school reading, need to be shared between schools. Both Reading Connects and Reading Champions can support this work.

The **Reading Connects** and **Reading Champion** websites will continue to bring together tried and tested practical ideas and resources to support schools in developing effective practice in these areas. See www.literacytrust.org.uk for more information.

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