



## Setting the Baseline

# The National Literacy Trust's first annual survey into young people's reading - 2010

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2011

*Transforming Lives*

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Suggested reference for this report is: Clark, C. (2011). Setting the Baseline: The National Literacy Trust's first annual survey into reading - 2010. London: National Literacy Trust.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the pupils and staff at the following schools without whom this study would not have been possible:

*Armagh School, Ashton-on-Mersey School, Attleborough High School, Birdwell Primary School, Boston Spa, Brimsham Green School, Brook Green Centre for Learning, Buttershaw School, Carlton Le Willows School, Cawston, Cheam Park Farm Junior School, Chesterton Community College, Christ Church, Cirencester Kingshill School, Claverley primary School, Cowley St Laurence CE Primary School, Cramlington Learning Village, Dagenham Park C of E School, Dobcroft Junior School, Doverpark, Ecclesfield School, Endsleigh Holy Child RC VA Primary School, English Martyrs School, Falinge Park High School and Performing Arts College, Farndon St. Peter's C of E Primary, Fortismere School, Foxhills Junior School, Goffs School, Gordon's, Greasbrough Primary School, Great Torrington Community School, Hagley Park Sports College, Hatch End High School, Henry Beaufort School, High Ercall Primary, Holloway, Houghton Kieper Sports College, Hounslow, Ibstock Place School, Lurgan High, Lyngford Park, Margaret Beaufort Middle School, Monks Walk, Netley Abbey Junior School, Newport Junior School, Northgate Primary, Northolt High School, Notley High, Oban High School, Old Palace of John Whitgift School, Pangbourne, Parish Church (CE) Junior School, Park Hall Academy, Park Junior School Wellingborough, Passmores School and Technology, Paston Ridings School, Poplar Primary School, Primrose High School, Priory College, Ryedale School, Salendine Nook High School, Shebbear College, Sheffield School, Sidegate Primary School, Sinfon Community School, South Holderness Technology College, Southwater Junior, St Andrew's CE VA Primary School, St Barnabas CE Primary, St Mary's CEVC Primary School, St Michael's CE School, St Peter's School, Stockwell Primary, Stoke Newington School, Stroud Green Primary School, Swaythling Primary School, Tanfield School, Tenbury High School, The Broxbourne School, The Burgate School and Sixth Form Centre, The Challenger Centre, The Henry Cort Community College, The Mirfield Free Grammar and Sixth Form, The Nottingham Bluecoat School, The Romsey School, Tile Hill Wood School and Language College, Tolworth Girls' School, Tudhoe Grange School, Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys, Turves Green Girls School and Technology College, Twickenham Preparatory School, University Academy Keighley, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Westborough High School, Westover Green Community School, Wheatley Park School, White Woman Lane Junior School, Wicklewood, Wildridings School, Wilmington Grammar School, Woodford Valley CE VA Primary*

Many thanks also to the pupils and teachers who helped develop parts of the questionnaire and to the 100 pupils who tested it.

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## Executive summary

18,141 young people aged 8 to 17 participated in this online survey in November/December 2010. While the survey focuses on young people's attitudes towards reading, writing, communication skills as well as technology use, this report focuses exclusively on the reading aspect of the survey. More specifically, it explores how much young people enjoy reading, how good they think they are, how often they read and how long for, what types of materials they read outside of class, how many books they read and how many books they have in the home, and how they feel about reading.

### Enjoyment of reading

- Just under half of young people enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot. Nearly 4 in 10 enjoy reading a bit; 1 in 10 does not enjoy reading at all.
- Significantly more girls than boys say that they enjoy reading, with 42% of boys and 55% of girls enjoying reading either very much or quite a lot.
- Enjoyment of reading declines with age, with KS2 pupils enjoying reading significantly more than their older counterparts.
- There is a relationship between FSM uptake and enjoyment of reading, with young people who do not receive FSMs enjoying reading more than young people who do.
- There is also a relationship between reading enjoyment and ethnic background, with White young people enjoying reading the least.
- There was no relationship between reading enjoyment and receiving additional help at school.
- Enjoyment of reading was related to reading attainment, with young people who enjoy reading the most also being more likely to be above average readers for their age.

### Self-reported reading ability: Key findings

- Most young people rated themselves to be either average at reading (40%) or very good at reading (49%).
- Girls rated themselves as better readers than boys.
- KS2 pupils were more likely to rate themselves as good readers compared with their older counterparts.
- Young people who do not receive FSMs rated themselves as better readers than their less privileged peers.
- Young people from Asian and Mixed backgrounds also rated themselves as slightly better readers compared with their peers from White or Black backgrounds.
- Nearly twice as many young people who receive additional help at school rate themselves as being not very good readers compared with those who do not receive help.
- Young people's views of their own reading ability strongly mirrored their actual reading attainment.

## Young people's type of reading: Key findings

- Text messages, magazines, emails and websites are the top leisure reading choices of young people. Fiction is read outside of class by nearly half of all young people. EBooks are read the least frequently in a month.
- Numerous gender differences exist in what types of materials are read outside of class, with more girls than boys reading technology-based materials as well as magazines, fiction, song lyrics and poems. By contrast, more boys than girls read newspapers, comics and manuals.
- Different types of materials are popular reading choices for the different Key Stages. Older pupils read more technology-based materials, while young ones read more comics, fiction, poems and non-fiction books.
- 5 in 10 young people who do not receive FSMs read fiction outside of class at least once a month, compared with 4 in 10 young people who receive free meals. More non-FSM pupils also read technology-based materials outside of class, while in line with our previous surveys, young people who receive FSMs are more likely to read poems than young people who do not receive meals.
- More young people from White backgrounds read magazines, text messages and messages on social networking sites, while more young people from Black ethnic backgrounds read poems, eBooks and newspapers.
- Young people who do not receive additional help at school are more likely to read a wider range of materials outside of school compared with young people who receive help.
- Reading any type of material outside of class at least once a month was associated with greater reading attainment.

## Young people's reading frequency: Key findings

- Most young people read outside of class every day (29%) or a few times a week (26%). Only 7% do not read outside of class.
- Girls read outside of class more frequently than boys.
- Reading frequency declines with age, with KS2 pupils reading more often than KS3 pupils, who, in turn, read more frequently than KS4 pupils.
- Young people who receive FSMs read outside of class less frequently than young people who do not receive FSMs.
- Fewer young people from Asian and White ethnic backgrounds compared with young people from Black or Mixed backgrounds say that they read every day.
- More young people who do not receive additional help at school – when compared with those who do get help – say that they read outside of class every day.
- Those who read the most frequently outside of class are more likely to be reading above the level expected for their age.

## How long young people read for: Key findings

- When young people read, most read for up to 30 minutes at a time.
- Compared with girls, boys read for shorter periods of time.

- While the frequency with which young people read declines with age, the length for which they read when they read increases with age.
- Young people who do not receive FSMs read for longer periods of time than young people who receive FSMs.
- Young people from White and Asian backgrounds tend to read for shorter periods of time compared with young people from Mixed and Black backgrounds.
- More young people who do not receive additional help at school read for sustained periods of time compared with those who do get help.
- Length of reading goes hand-in-hand with reading attainment, with those who read for longer periods at a time also being more likely to be reading above the level expected for their age.

### **How many books (fiction/non-fiction) are read outside of class in a month: Key findings**

- Most young people say that they had read one book in the past month. Nearly 1 in 10 said they have read more than 10 books in the past month.
- Compared with girls, boys were less likely to have read a book in the past month.
- Older pupils were considerably more likely to say that they have not read any book in the past month compared with their younger counterparts.
- Although young people who do not receive FSMs say that they read more frequently and for longer than young people who receive meals, there were no real differences in the number of books they read outside of class in a month.
- Young people from White backgrounds were more likely than those from the other ethnic backgrounds to say that they have not read a book in the past month.
- Young people who receive additional help at school were less likely than those who do not receive such help to say that they have not read a book outside of class in the last month. They were also more likely to say that they have read more books in the past month.
- The more books young people read in a month, the greater the likelihood that they are reading above the level expected for their age.

### **Number of books in the home: Key findings**

- Only 3% of young people do not have any books at home. Most said that they have up to 50 books in the home.
- Boys are more than twice as likely as girls to say that they do not have any books at home. Overall, girls estimate to have a greater number of books at home compared with boys.
- Older pupils are more likely than younger ones to say that they do not have any books in the home.
- Twice as many young people who receive FSMs compared with young people who do not receive meals say that they have no books in the home.
- Nearly twice as many young people from Asian backgrounds compared with White or Mixed backgrounds said that they do not have any books in the home.



- Although young people who do not receive additional help at school were less likely than those who receive help to say that they read lots of books outside of school, they were more likely to say that they have more books in the home..
- Of those young people who report having more books in the home a greater proportion read above the level expected for their age compared with those who estimate to have fewer books in the home.

### **Reading opportunities: Key findings**

- 2 in 10 young people said that they had never received a book as a present, while 1 in 10 has never been to a bookshop or a library.
- More boys than girls also agreed that they have never had a book as a present, and that they have never been to a bookshop or library.
- More KS4 pupils agreed that they have never been given a book as a present and that they have never been to a bookshop compared with their young counterparts. By contrast, slightly fewer KS3 than KS2 or KS4 pupils agreed that they have never been to a library.
- Young people who receive FSMs were more likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop and that they have never been to a library.
- Young people from Asian backgrounds were the most likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present, with nearly twice as many young people from Asian backgrounds than from White backgrounds saying this.
- More young people who receive additional help compared with those that do not agreed that they have never received a book as a present, and that they have never been to a bookshop or a library.
- A greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that they have never been given a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop or library read below the expected level for their age compared with those who disagree with those statements.

### **Attitudes towards reading: Key findings**

- Young people generally hold positive attitudes towards reading. Only a quarter of young people agreed that they do not read as well as other kids in their class, that they only read when they have to and that they cannot find things to read that interest them. However, 2 in 10 would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.
- Girls hold more positive attitudes towards reading than boys. For example, more boys than girls agreed that they prefer watching television to reading, that they cannot find things to read that interest them and that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read.
- Younger pupils hold more positive attitudes towards reading than their older counterparts. For example, more KS2 than KS3 or KS4 pupils agreed that reading is cool. By contrast, there was an increasingly greater agreement with age that they prefer watching television to reading and that they only read when they have to.
- Mirroring findings from previous studies, there were very few socio-economic differences in reading attitudes.
- Young people from White backgrounds were more likely than young people from the other ethnic backgrounds to agree that they prefer watching TV to reading and that they

do not read as well as other pupils in their class. They were also the most likely to agree with the statement that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class. Young people from Asian backgrounds were the least likely to agree with the statement that they cannot find things to read that interest them. However, they were the most likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present.

- While more young people who receive help than those who do not agreed with the statements that the more they read, the better they become at it; and that reading is cool, they were also more likely to say that reading is more for girls, that they cannot find interesting things to read, that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they only read when they have to and that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.
- A greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that their reading improves with practice and that reading is cool read above the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with these statements. By contrast, a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that they prefer watching TV to reading, that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they read only when they have to, that they cannot find anything to read that interests them, that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read and that reading is more for girls than boys read below the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with those statements.

## An introduction to the Omnibus Survey

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Do reading enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socio-economic and ethnic background or educational needs?
- Do writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socio-economic and ethnic background or educational needs?
- Do attitudes towards communication skills and their perceived importance differ according to gender, age, socio-economic and ethnic background or educational needs?
- How is technology use related to gender, age, socio-economic and ethnic background or educational needs?

### This report

Because of the broad scope of the survey, this report only outlines findings that relate to reading. More specifically, it explores how much young people enjoy reading, how good they think they are, how often they read and how long for, what types of materials they read outside of class, how many books they read and how many books they have in the home, and how they feel about reading.

Subsequent reports will focus on the other survey topics.

## Methodology

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

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

The basic online survey consisted of 33 questions exploring young people's background, reading and writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes, attitudes towards communication skills and technology use. Due to the complexity of the questions and some concepts, the decision was made to restrict the age range of participating pupils to upper Key Stage 2 (9 to 11 years) and older.

148 schools expressed an interest in taking part in one of the three surveys. A link to the online survey alongside guidance notes for teachers was emailed to the schools at the beginning of November. The survey was online between 15 November and 10 December. It took an average of 25 minutes for young people to complete the survey. Schools were offered a school-specific summary report as an incentive to take part.

### Participation rate

Overall, 18,141 pupils from 111 schools participated in our online survey, of which 100 were schools from England, three from Wales, three from Scotland and three from Northern Ireland. Two international English-speaking schools with a UK curriculum also took part. However, data from these schools are not included in the analyses in this report.

## Sample characteristics: Demography

Overall, 18,141 young people participated in this survey in November/December 2010. There was an almost equal gender split in the sample, with 48.2% of respondents being boys (N = 8,680) and 51.8% being girls (N = 9,320).

**Table 1** shows that the majority of pupils were 11, 12 and 13 years old. To investigate the impact of age, three broad categories were identified according to key stages: KS2, KS3 and KS4. The KS2 category (22%, N = 3,704) refers to pupils aged 7 to 11, KS3 (63%, N = 10,842) refers to pupils aged 11 to 14, while KS4 (15%, N = 2,543) applies to pupils aged 14 to 16.

**Table 1: Sample age**

	%	N		%	N
8	5.1	911	13	18.1	3,258
9	6.9	1,247	14	9.5	1,717

	%	N		%	N
10	8.0	1,430	15	6.3	1,134
11	21.3	3,846	16	2.0	361
12	22.2	4,007	17	0.5	86

(based on N = 18,017)

The percentage of pupils who receive free school meals (FSM), which is frequently used in educational research as a crude indicator of socio-economic background, was 13.8%. The percentages of FSM uptake in this study are lower than the national average for primary and secondary pupils (17% and 14%, respectively; DfE, 2010).

Using additional help at school as a crude indicator of educational needs, the percentage of young people who say that they receive help at school was 25.7%, which is slightly higher than the national average. According to DfE figures from 2010, 20.9% of young people have a SEN (2.7% with statement; 18.2% without statement).

When asked how they would describe their ethnic background, most pupils said that they were White British (72.3%, N = 11,381). The second and third most frequent ethnic categories in this sample were Asian or Asian British Pakistani (5.6%, N = 877) and White other (3.0%, N = 480). See **Table 2** for a full breakdown of ethnic background.

**Table 2: Ethnic background**

	%	N
<b>White British</b>	72.3	11,381
<b>White Irish</b>	1.6	247
<b>White Traveller</b>	0.4	66
<b>White Romany</b>	0.8	127
<b>White other</b>	3.0	480
<b>Mixed White and Black Caribbean</b>	1.5	243
<b>Mixed White and Black African</b>	0.7	109
<b>Mixed White and Asian</b>	1.4	218
<b>Mixed other</b>	2.1	328
<b>Asian or Asian British Indian</b>	2.2	348
<b>Asian or Asian British Pakistani</b>	5.6	877
<b>Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi</b>	1.5	244
<b>Asian or Asian British Chinese</b>	0.6	100
<b>Asian or Asian British Other</b>	1.6	256
<b>Black Caribbean</b>	1.5	229
<b>Black African</b>	2.2	347
<b>Black other</b>	0.9	142

(based on N = 15,742)

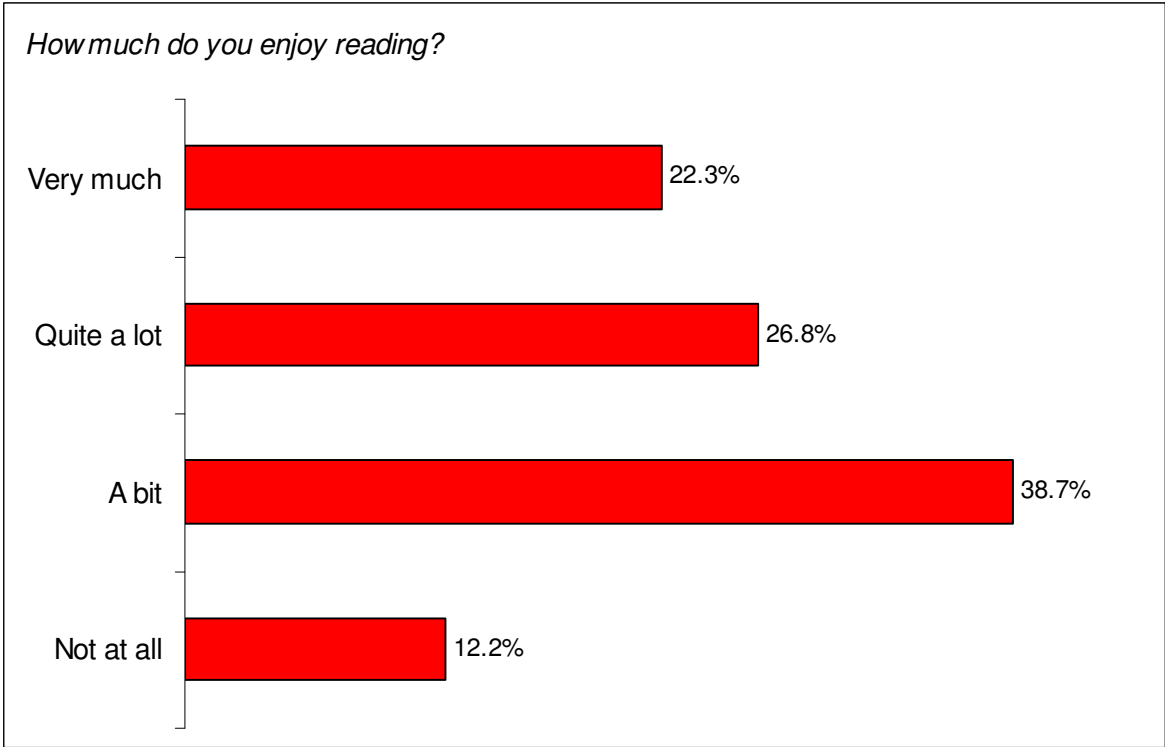
To make comparisons by ethnic group meaningful, we combined the subcategories to form "White", "Mixed", "Asian" and "Black" background categories. While this crude categorisation may hide some important differences within ethnic backgrounds, it allowed for general differences to be obtained at this stage.

## Enjoyment of reading

Enjoyment of reading is important for educational as well as personal development. Educationally, it has been related to increased reading frequency and increased reading attainment (e.g. Krashen, 2004). On a personal level, it has been associated with greater general knowledge and a greater insight into human nature (e.g. see Clark and Rumbold 2006 for a review of the importance of reading for pleasure).. Indeed, research from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2010) showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status.

Given the importance of enjoyment of reading for educational and personal development, how much do young people enjoy doing it? **Figure 1** shows that young people were ambivalent when asked in a general question how much they enjoy reading. Just under 5 in 10 young people (49.1%) said that they enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot. Nearly 4 in 10 said that they enjoy reading a bit, while 1 in 10 did not enjoy reading at all.

**Figure 1: Reading enjoyment**



**Table 3** shows that **girls** enjoyed reading significantly more than **boys**, with 4 in 10 boys compared with 6 in 10 girls saying that they enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot. By contrast, nearly twice as many boys than girls said that they do not enjoy reading at all.

**KS2 pupils** enjoyed reading significantly more than **KS3 and KS4 pupils**. Twice as many KS2 than KS3 or KS4 pupils said that they enjoy reading very much. By contrast, nearly twice as

many KS3 pupils and four times as many KS4 pupils than KS2 pupils said that they do not enjoy reading at all.

Socio-economic background, in terms of **FSM uptake**, had been found to be significantly related to reading enjoyment in a previous survey (e.g. Clark and Akerman, 2006). There was a relationship between enjoyment of reading and FSM uptake in the present survey, with young people who do not receive FSMs enjoying reading more than young people who do receive FSMs.

There was also a relationship between **ethnic background** and enjoyment of reading, with young people from White backgrounds tending to enjoy reading the least.

There was no significant difference in the degree to which young people who receive **additional help** at school and those who do not enjoy reading.

**Table 3: Enjoyment of reading by demographic background**

<i>How much do you enjoy reading?</i>				
	<i>Very much %</i>	<i>Quite a lot %</i>	<i>A bit %</i>	<i>Not at all %</i>
<b>Boys (N = 8,469)</b>	17.3	25.0	41.8	15.9
<b>Girls (N = 9,079)</b>	26.8	28.6	35.9	8.7
<b>KS2 (N = 3,506)</b>	37.6	30.5	25.7	6.2
<b>KS3 (N = 11,035)</b>	19.0	26.8	41.7	12.5
<b>KS4 (N = 3,025)</b>	14.2	18.3	45.0	22.5
<b>FSM (N = 2,396)</b>	20.5	23.6	41.7	14.2
<b>Non-FSM (N = 14,278)</b>	22.4	27.3	38.5	11.8
<b>White (N = 12,248)</b>	21.8	26.5	39.4	12.3
<b>Mixed (N = 893)</b>	27.0	28.4	34.9	9.6
<b>Asian (N = 1,812)</b>	24.0	31.1	35.1	8.8
<b>Black (N = 712)</b>	26.8	28.1	32.7	12.4
<b>Help (N = 4,487)</b>	24.0	24.7	39.7	11.6
<b>No help (N = 11,548)</b>	22.2	27.6	38.1	12.1

## Reading enjoyment and reading attainment

Attainment data for reading were available for 5,580 **KS2** and **KS3** pupils. Since our attainment data contained a varied set of levels and spanned young people aged 9 to 14, we standardised the data to form three crude categories to be applied to all ages: below expected level for their age, at expected level for their age and above expected level for their age.

In line with official attainment figures, over 8 in 10 young people read at or above the expected level for their age. However, nearly a fifth read below the expected level for their age.

**Table 4** shows that there is a clear relationship between reading enjoyment and reading attainment, with a greater proportion of young people who enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot also reading above the level expected for their age when compared with young people who only enjoy reading a bit or not at all. Indeed, young people who do not enjoy reading at all were 11 times more likely than those who enjoy reading very much to read below the level expected for their age.

**Table 4: Enjoyment of reading and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>Very much</b>	3.0	16.3	80.8
<b>Quite a lot</b>	4.5	37.8	57.7
<b>A bit</b>	13.6	54.1	32.3
<b>Not at all</b>	33.6	42.6	23.8

## Young people's self-reported reading ability

How young people feel about their reading skills is not only related to their reading attainment (see Clark and Douglas, 2011) but it is also related to their wider literacy, such as the degree to which they enjoy reading, the degree to which they engage with reading and what they think about reading.

**Figure 2** (overleaf) shows that the majority of young people (9 in 10) rated themselves as either average (40.0%) or very good readers (48.8%). However, just over 1 in 10 young people felt that they were not very good at reading.

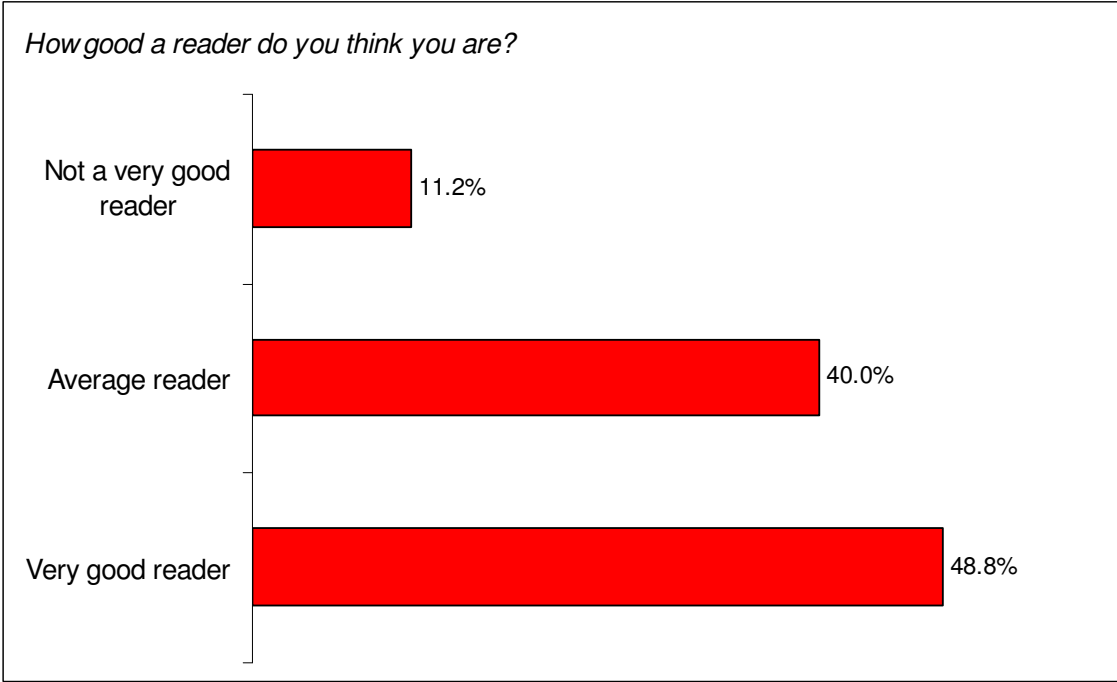
**Table 5** (overleaf) shows that **girls** rated themselves as better readers than **boys**. In line with our previous studies (e.g. Clark and Douglas, 2011), more KS2 than KS3 and KS4 pupils also rated themselves to be very good readers. Consistent with previous research, there is also a relationship between **socio-economic background** and self-reported reading ability, with young people who do not receive FSMs rating themselves as better readers than young people who receive FSMs.

There was a weak relationship between **ethnic background** and self-perceived reading ability, with young people from Asian and Mixed backgrounds tending to rate themselves as marginally better readers compared with young people from White or Black backgrounds.



There was a clear relationship between receiving **additional help** at school or not and young people’s self-perceptions of their own reading ability. Nearly twice as many young people who receive additional help at school compared with those who do not receive help do not rate themselves as good readers (2 in 10 vs 1 in 10, respectively). By contrast, 5 in 10 young people who do not receive help compared with 4 in 10 young people who receive additional help rate themselves as being very good readers.

**Figure 2: Perceived reading ability**



**Table 5: Self-reported reading ability by demographic background**

	<i>Not a very good reader</i>	<i>Average reader</i>	<i>Very good reader</i>
	%	%	%
<b>Boys (N = 8,469)</b>	12.3	40.6	47.0
<b>Girls (N = 9,079)</b>	10.0	39.4	50.6
<b>KS2 (N = 3,492)</b>	11.6	33.7	54.8
<b>KS3 (N = 11,036)</b>	11.0	41.5	47.4
<b>KS4 (N = 3,025)</b>	10.9	41.9	47.2
<b>FSM (N = 2,396)</b>	16.0	40.9	43.1
<b>Non-FSM (N = 14,266)</b>	10.1	39.9	50.0
<b>White (N = 12,238)</b>	10.9	40.2	48.8
<b>Mixed (N = 893)</b>	9.3	39.2	51.6

	<i>Not a very good reader</i>	<i>Average reader</i>	<i>Very good reader</i>
	%	%	%
<b>Asian (N = 1,803)</b>	9.9	38.4	51.8
<b>Black (N = 712)</b>	10.0	40.0	50.1
<b>Help (N = 4,473)</b>	17.9	42.5	39.6
<b>No help (N = 11,541)</b>	8.0	38.6	53.5

## Self-perceived reading ability and reading attainment

**Table 6** shows that there is a clear relationship between young people’s self-perceived reading ability and their actual reading attainment. Of those who did not rate themselves to be a very good reader, two-thirds read below the level expected for their age while a third read at the expected level. Conversely, of those who rate themselves to be very good readers, 6 in 10 read above the expected level for their age, while 4 in 10 read at the expected level.

**Table 6: Self-perceived reading ability and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level</i>	<i>At expected level</i>	<i>Above expected level</i>
	%	%	%
<b>Not a very good reader</b>	67.1	32.3	0.6
<b>Average reader</b>	25.5	63.3	11.2
<b>Very good reader</b>	1.0	40.3	58.7

## Types of materials read outside of class

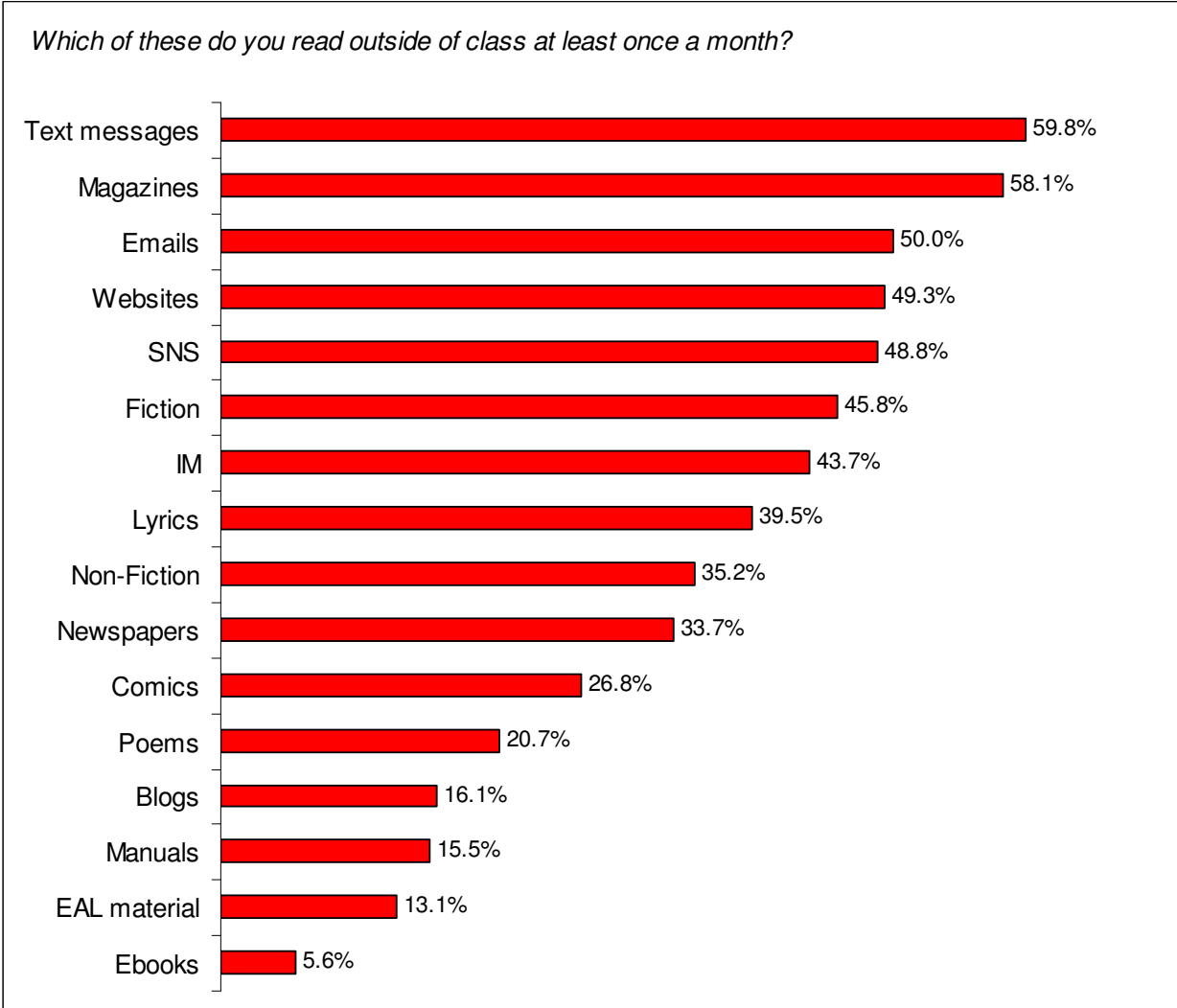
What types of reading do young people engage in at least once a month outside of class?

**Figure 3** shows that technology-based materials dominate as reading choices, with text messages, emails, websites and reading on social networking sites most commonly read by young people. Magazines were the most frequently read non-technology material. Fiction was read by less than half of the sample at least once a month. Although often touted as the new way of reading, eBooks were read the least in a month.

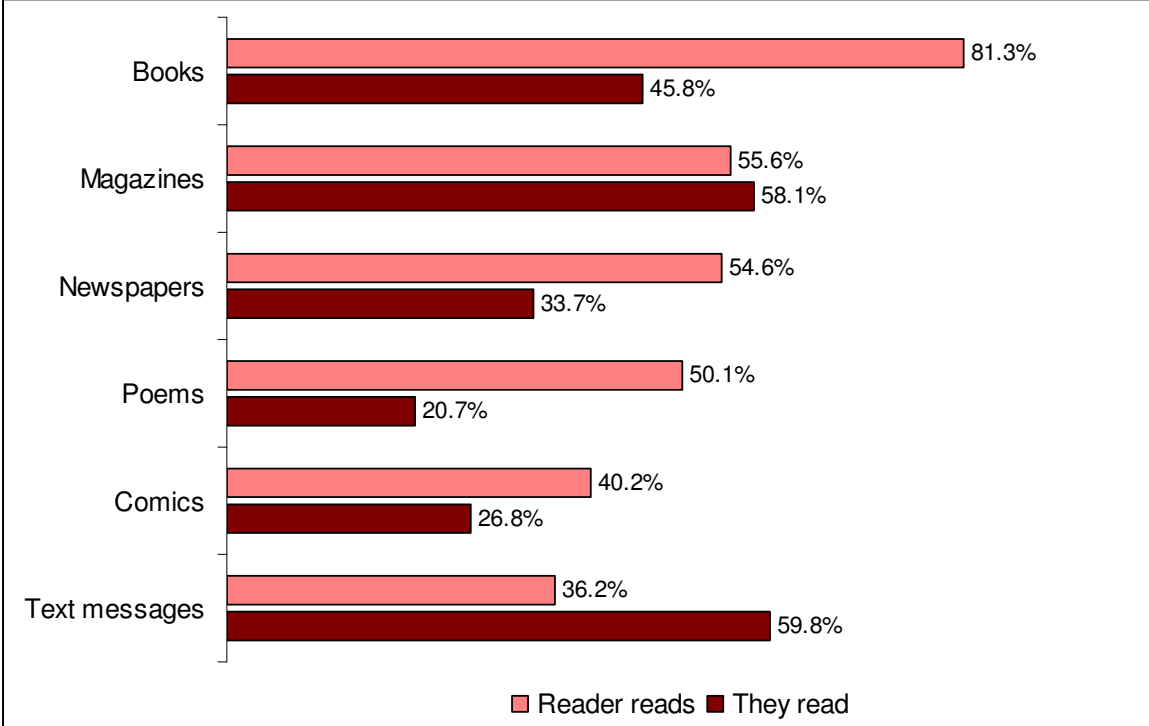
How does what young people read relate with what they think a “reader” reads? **Figure 4** compares the types of materials young people read with what they think a reader reads<sup>1</sup>. It shows quite clearly that there is a discrepancy between the types of materials they think a reader reads and the types of materials they themselves read. For example, while 8 in 10 young people believe that a reader reads books, only 5 in 10 read books themselves. Similarly, while 5 in 10 believe that a reader reads poems, less than half (2 in 10) read poems themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Reminiscent of our self-perception study of 2008, we asked “In your opinion, what does a reader read?” (Choose as many as you like) comics, magazines, poems, text messages, books (fiction, non fiction), newspapers and online texts and messages. Figure 4 only shows the materials that were common to both questions.

**Figure 3: Materials read outside of class**



**Figure 4: What young people read and what they think a “reader” reads**



There were numerous **gender** differences in the types of reading done in a month (see **Table 7**). A greater proportion of girls than boys said that they read text messages, magazines, emails, fiction, song lyrics, messages etc. on social networking sites, instant messages and poems. By contrast, a greater proportion of boys than girls said that they read newspapers, comics and manuals at least once a month. There was no significant difference in the degree to which girls and boys read websites, non-fiction, blogs, English as an Additional Language materials and eBooks.

Different types of reading were popular in different **key stages**. The biggest differences exist with regards to technology-based reading, with more KS4 pupils than KS3 pupils engaging with technology-based reading, who, in turn, engage with technology more than KS2 pupils. A greater proportion of KS4 than KS3 pupils also read newspapers, song lyrics and manuals. In turn, a greater proportion of KS3 than KS2 pupils read these materials at least once a month. By contrast, there was a gradual reduction in popularity of other reading materials, such as comics, fiction, poems, and non-fiction books, with a greater proportion of KS2 pupils reading these materials than either their KS3 or KS4 counterparts.

There were also **socio-economic differences** in the degree to which materials were being read. The biggest difference between young people who receive FSMs and those who do not relates to whether they read fiction books outside of class at least once a month, with nearly 5 in 10 young people who do not receive FSMs saying that they read fiction books compared with 4 in 10 young people who receive meals.

A greater proportion of young people who do not receive FSMs also read technology-based materials, such as websites, instant messages, emails, messages on social networking sites and text messages compared with young people who receive FSMs. A greater proportion of young people who do not receive FSMs also read magazines.

By contrast, and in line with a pattern we have observed in all of our surveys in the past 5 years, more young people who receive FSMs said that they read poems at least once a month compared with young people who do not receive FSMs. There were no significant socio-economic differences in the degree to which song lyrics, newspapers, comics, blogs, manuals, EAL materials and eBooks were being read at least once a month.

With the exception of manuals, non-fiction, emails, websites, comics, lyrics, blogs, instant messages and fiction, the popularity of certain reading materials varied according to young people's **ethnic background**.

For example, more young people from White backgrounds read magazines, text messages and messages on social networking sites, while more young people from a Black ethnic background read poems, eBooks and newspapers. Overall, fewer young people from White backgrounds read materials in a language other than English.

Young people who do not receive **additional help** at school were more likely to read a wider range of materials outside of school than those young people who receive help. The most glaring differences exist with respect to technology-based reading, such as text messages, messages on social networking sites, instant messages etc. This difference is at least partly explained by access to computers, with 7 in 10 young people who receive additional help at school saying that they own a computer or have access to one compared with 8 in 10 young people who do not receive help (this will be explored in more detail in a forthcoming report).

However, more young people who do not receive additional help also said that they read fiction, magazines and lyrics outside of class at least once a month. The only material that was read more often by young people who receive additional help compared with those who do not is poems.

**Table 7: Types of materials read at least once a month by demographic background**

	<i>Boys (N = 8,680)</i>	<i>Girls (N = 9,320)</i>	<i>KS2 (N = 3,506)</i>	<i>KS3 (N = 11,035)</i>	<i>KS4 (N = 3,025)</i>	<i>FSM (N = 2,396)</i>	<i>NFSM (N = 14,278)</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Text messages</b>	53.0	66.4	31.1	66.4	74.1	54.3	62.1
<b>Magazines</b>	47.8	67.9	51.9	59.9	59.4	54.5	59.6
<b>Emails</b>	44.2	55.7	33.9	53.7	58.7	46.8	51.6
<b>Websites</b>	47.9	50.8	35.1	51.9	62.0	44.5	51.1
<b>SNS</b>	43.7	53.8	29.9	52.4	65.1	42.9	50.9
<b>Fiction</b>	41.1	50.5	53.4	45.6	32.3	37.2	47.7
<b>IM</b>	36.5	50.6	19.7	48.9	58.5	39.1	45.5
<b>Lyrics</b>	27.8	50.6	33.6	40.7	44.8	40.7	39.9
<b>Non-fiction</b>	35.9	34.7	43.4	34.2	25.4	30.9	35.9
<b>Newspapers</b>	37.9	29.9	29.1	33.7	45.1	33.3	34.1
<b>Comics</b>	35.8	18.4	33.1	26.2	17.1	26.9	26.6
<b>Poems</b>	15.5	25.8	37.7	17.2	11.3	25.3	19.6
<b>Blogs</b>	14.2	17.8	12.6	16.5	20.5	15.9	16.4
<b>Manuals</b>	19.8	11.5	14.5	15.5	18.5	13.8	15.9
<b>EAL materials</b>	12.0	14.2	17.7	12.0	12.3	14.5	12.8
<b>EBooks</b>	6.0	5.2	7.6	5.0	6.3	7.0	5.3

**Table 7 continued: Types of materials read at least once a month by demographic background**

	<i>White</i> (N = 12,248)	<i>Mixed</i> (N = 893)	<i>Asian</i> (N = 1,812)	<i>Black</i> (N = 712)	<i>Help</i> (N = 4,487)	<i>No Help</i> (N = 11,548)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Text messages</b>	63.7	57.3	54.0	55.8	49.2	65.6
<b>Magazines</b>	62.0	57.6	53.4	52.8	53.5	61.2
<b>Emails</b>	51.9	51.4	51.8	53.6	41.3	54.8
<b>Websites</b>	52.1	47.6	48.1	51.1	40.8	53.8
<b>SNS</b>	52.2	49.2	44.3	47.6	38.3	54.3
<b>Fiction</b>	47.9	49.7	48.1	46.9	40.4	49.3
<b>IM</b>	45.3	44.2	47.5	44.8	32.5	49.5
<b>Lyrics</b>	40.5	41.5	41.8	46.5	35.7	41.7
<b>Non-fiction</b>	36.4	37.9	36.5	38.3	34.0	36.8
<b>Newspapers</b>	34.0	37.1	38.5	42.2	32.1	35.5
<b>Comics</b>	27.6	30.3	27.9	33.4	28.4	26.7
<b>Poems</b>	19.7	25.5	28.1	31.3	24.8	19.4
<b>Blogs</b>	16.5	17.1	16.8	19.5	14.3	17.2
<b>Manuals</b>	15.9	15.9	17.9	16.3	14.0	16.7
<b>EAL materials</b>	11.8	19.7	20.4	18.9	14.9	12.8
<b>EBooks</b>	5.2	6.9	7.0	9.9	5.8	5.6

## Materials read at least once a month and reading attainment

**Table 8** shows that those who read the more traditional materials, such as fiction and non-fiction, are more likely to have a higher proportion of young people who read above the level expected for their age compared with those who read text messages, websites and the like.

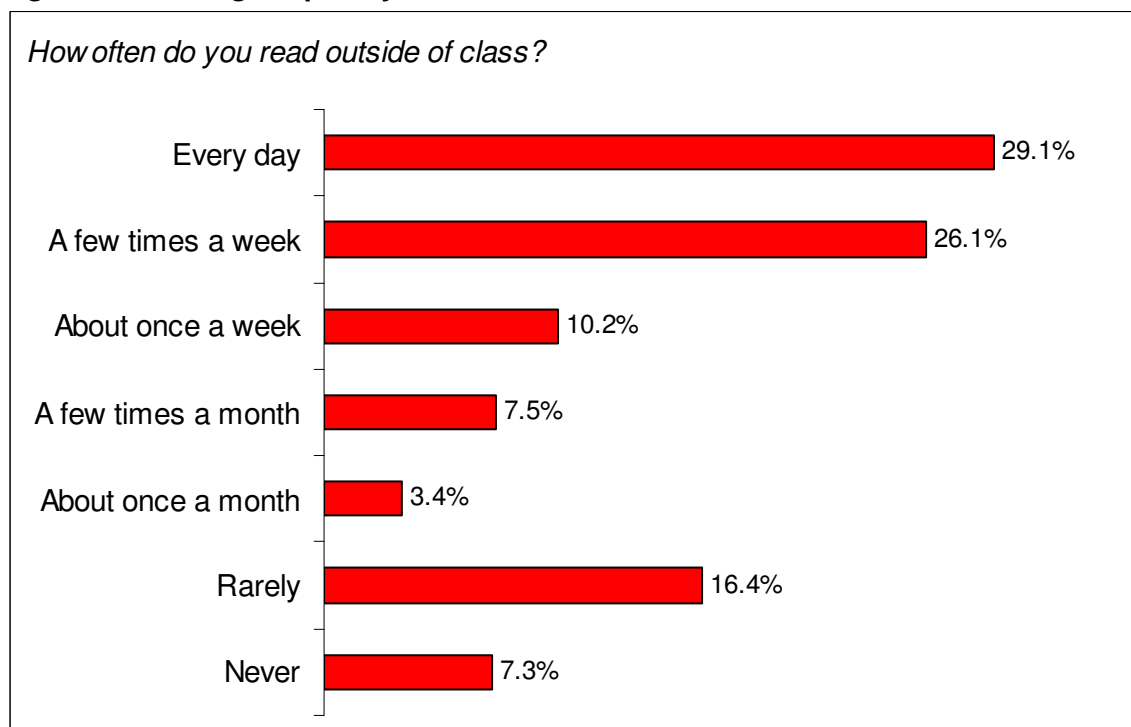
**Table 8: Materials read at least once a month and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>Text messages</b>	10.2	40.9	49.0
<b>Magazines</b>	8.8	39.9	51.3
<b>Emails</b>	8.9	39.3	51.8
<b>Websites</b>	8.5	38.5	53.0
<b>SNS</b>	8.9	39.3	51.9
<b>Fiction</b>	5.4	32.3	62.3
<b>IM</b>	9.0	39.6	51.3
<b>Lyrics</b>	8.9	37.5	53.6
<b>Non-fiction</b>	5.6	32.9	61.6
<b>Newspapers</b>	7.3	35.5	57.3
<b>Comics</b>	7.4	33.7	58.9
<b>Poems</b>	8.1	31.5	60.4
<b>Blogs</b>	9.2	36.0	54.8
<b>Manuals</b>	6.5	32.7	60.8
<b>EAL materials</b>	8.1	30.3	61.6
<b>EBooks</b>	9.8	27.9	62.3

## How often young people read

The survey found that the majority of young people read every day (29%) or a few times a week (26%, see **Figure 5**) outside of class. However, 16% said that they read rarely and 7% said that they never read outside of class.

**Figure 5: Reading frequency outside of class**



**Girls** read significantly more frequently outside of class than **boys** (see **Table 9**), with 3 in 10 girls compared with 2 in 10 of boys reading every day. Twice as many boys as girls said that they never read at all (10% and 5% respectively).

The frequency with which young people read declined with **age**. KS2 pupils read significantly more often than KS3 pupils who, in turn, read significantly more often than KS4 pupils. For example, KS2 pupils were twice as likely as KS4 pupils to say that they read outside of class every day. By contrast, KS4 pupils were nearly three times more likely than KS2 pupils to say that they rarely read outside of class, while KS3 pupils were nearly twice more likely than KS2 pupils to say this.

Young people who receive **FSMs** read less often outside of class than their more privileged peers. For example, while 2 in 10 young people who receive FSMs read every day, 3 in 10 of those who do not receive meals do so.

There was also a weak relationship between reading frequency and **ethnic background**. Fewer young people from Asian and White ethnic backgrounds say that they read every day. However, young people from Asian backgrounds are more likely than young people from the other ethnic backgrounds to say that they read a few times a week.

More young people who do not receive **additional help** at school said that they read outside of class every day.



**Table 9: Reading frequency by demographic background**

	<i>Every day</i>	<i>A few times a week</i>	<i>About once a week</i>	<i>A few times a month</i>	<i>About once a month</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Boys (N = 8,469)</b>	24.1	24.8	10.7	8.4	3.7	18.5	9.9
<b>Girls (N = 9,079)</b>	33.8	27.2	9.8	6.8	3.1	14.5	4.8
<b>KS2 (N = 3,510)</b>	40.9	28.5	10.1	5.1	1.8	8.0	5.6
<b>KS3 (N = 11,013)</b>	26.7	26.3	10.4	8.1	3.7	17.6	7.2
<b>KS4 (N = 3,021)</b>	21.7	18.5	8.9	9.3	4.5	25.6	11.3
<b>FSM (N = 2,401)</b>	22.9	26.5	10.5	8.2	4.0	18.7	9.3
<b>Non-FSM (N = 14,253)</b>	30.2	25.8	10.3	7.6	3.3	16.2	6.7
<b>White (N = 12,261)</b>	29.3	25.4	10.5	7.7	3.3	17.0	6.8
<b>Mixed (N = 897)</b>	32.4	27.4	9.4	7.0	2.5	14.3	7.0
<b>Asian (N = 1,817)</b>	28.6	29.8	9.7	7.6	3.9	13.2	7.2
<b>Black (N = 714)</b>	32.6	26.3	9.1	7.3	3.5	13.0	8.1
<b>Help (N = 4,487)</b>	25.0	27.6	11.0	7.0	3.2	17.3	8.9
<b>No help (N = 11,548)</b>	31.1	25.7	9.9	7.7	3.4	15.6	6.6

## Reading frequency and reading attainment

The frequency with which young people read was related to their reading skills. **Table 10** shows that 7 in 10 young people who read every day read above the level expected for their age. The proportion of young people who are in that achievement category declines as the frequency with which they read declines. Only 1 in 3 young people who read rarely or never read above the level expected for their age. Indeed, 4 in 10 of those who never read, read below the level expected for their age, while 3 in 10 read at the expected level.

**Table 10: Reading frequency and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>Every day</b>	3.7	23.4	72.9
<b>A few times a week</b>	7.2	42.1	50.7
<b>About once a week</b>	11.6	51.3	37.1
<b>A few times a month</b>	11.0	51.1	37.9
<b>About once a month</b>	14.4	55.2	30.4
<b>Rarely</b>	19.0	53.1	27.9
<b>Never</b>	36.3	33.9	29.8

## How long young people read for

**Figure 6** shows that while there is a trend for young people to read only for short periods of time (2 in 10 who read for up to 10 minutes, and another 2 in 10 who read for up to 20 minutes), the majority of young people read for up to 30 minutes. However, one in 10 young people say that they read for longer than 1 hour.

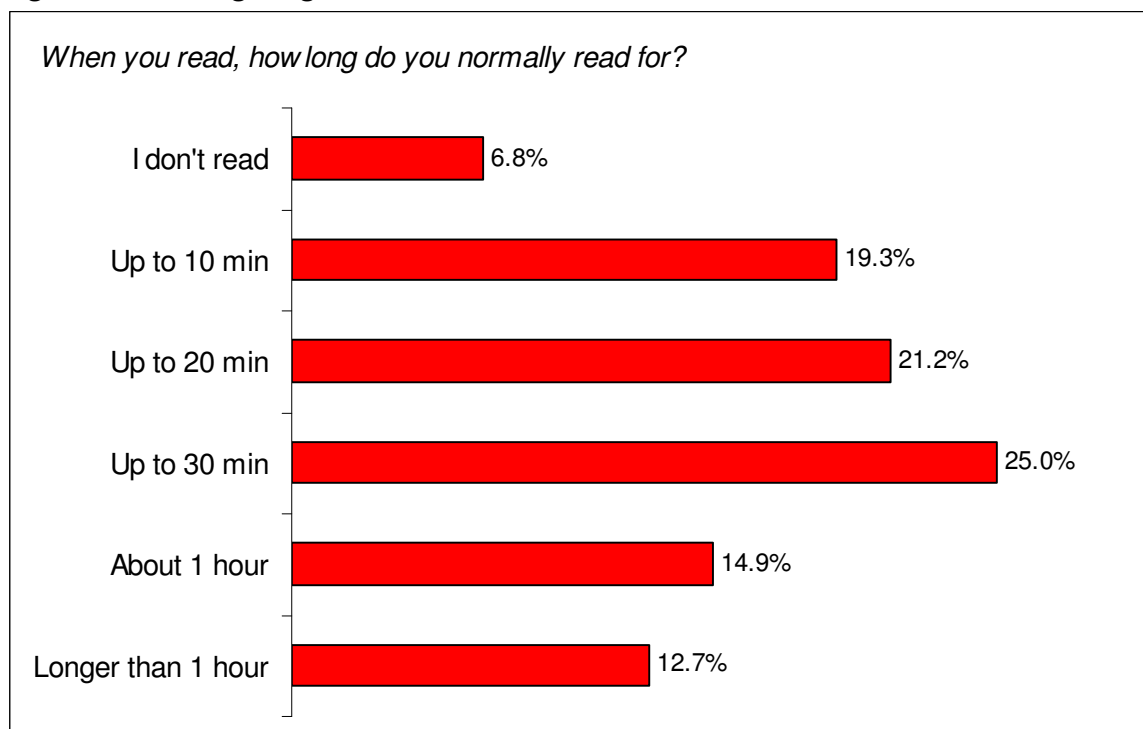
**Table 11** shows that **boys** read for shorter periods of time compared with **girls**.

While the frequency with which young people read declines with age, the length for which they read when they read **increases** with **age**. KS2 pupils were more likely than both KS3 and KS4 pupils to say that they read for up to 10 or 20 minutes at a time. By contrast, KS4 pupils were more likely than either KS3 or KS2 pupils to read for longer than 1 hour at a time. However, KS4 pupils are also four times more likely than KS2 pupils and twice more likely than KS3 pupils to say that they do not read at all.

Young people who do not receive **FSMs** were more likely than those who do receive meals to say that they read for longer periods of time.

The relationship between **ethnic background** and length of reading was complex. Fewer young people from Asian than from the other ethnic backgrounds said that they do not read. Young people from White and Asian backgrounds tended to read for shorter periods of time compared with young people from Mixed and Black backgrounds.

**Figure 6: Reading length**



Furthermore, **Table 10** shows that more young people from White and Asian backgrounds said that they read for up to 10 minutes a day, while fewer young people from White and Asian backgrounds said that they read for one hour or longer.

While there was no difference in the proportion of young people who receive **additional help** at school and those who do not receive any help who say that they do not read outside of class, young people who receive additional help were more likely than those who do not receive help to say that they read for shorter periods of time.

### Reading length and attainment

The frequency with which young people read was related to their reading skills. **Table 12** shows that the longer young people spend reading, the greater the likelihood that they are reading above the level expected for their age.

For example, of those who read for longer than 1 hour at a time, over three quarters read above the level expected for their age, while only 4% read below the expected level. Compare this to those who read up to 10 minutes at a time, where nearly 2 in 10 read below the level expected for their age and only 3 in 10 read above the expected level.

**Table 11: Reading length by demographic background**

	<i>I do not read</i>	<i>Up to 10 min</i>	<i>Up to 20 min</i>	<i>Up to 30 min</i>	<i>About 1 hour</i>	<i>Longer than 1 hour</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Boys (N = 8,426)</b>	8.9	23.2	22.1	23.0	12.8	10.0
<b>Girls (N = 9,025)</b>	4.8	15.6	20.4	27.1	16.9	15.3
<b>KS2 (N = 3,489)</b>	2.7	25.3	24.0	24.3	11.7	12.0
<b>KS3 (N = 10,977)</b>	7.1	17.6	21.1	26.2	15.6	12.4
<b>KS4 (N = 3,009)</b>	13.1	19.8	15.4	17.8	16.8	17.1
<b>FSM (N = 2,384)</b>	8.3	24.5	21.1	22.6	11.7	11.9
<b>Non-FSM (N = 14,201)</b>	6.3	18.1	21.3	25.6	15.7	12.9
<b>White (N = 12,230)</b>	6.7	19.2	21.1	25.5	15.2	12.3
<b>Mixed (N = 895)</b>	6.0	14.9	22.2	25.4	16.1	15.4
<b>Asian (N = 1,817)</b>	5.3	20.1	22.7	25.0	13.8	13.1
<b>Black (N = 712)</b>	7.3	16.7	18.4	23.7	16.2	17.7
<b>Help (N = 4,487)</b>	6.9	23.8	21.4	23.5	12.0	10.5
<b>No help (N = 11,548)</b>	6.8	16.1	21.0	25.9	16.4	13.8

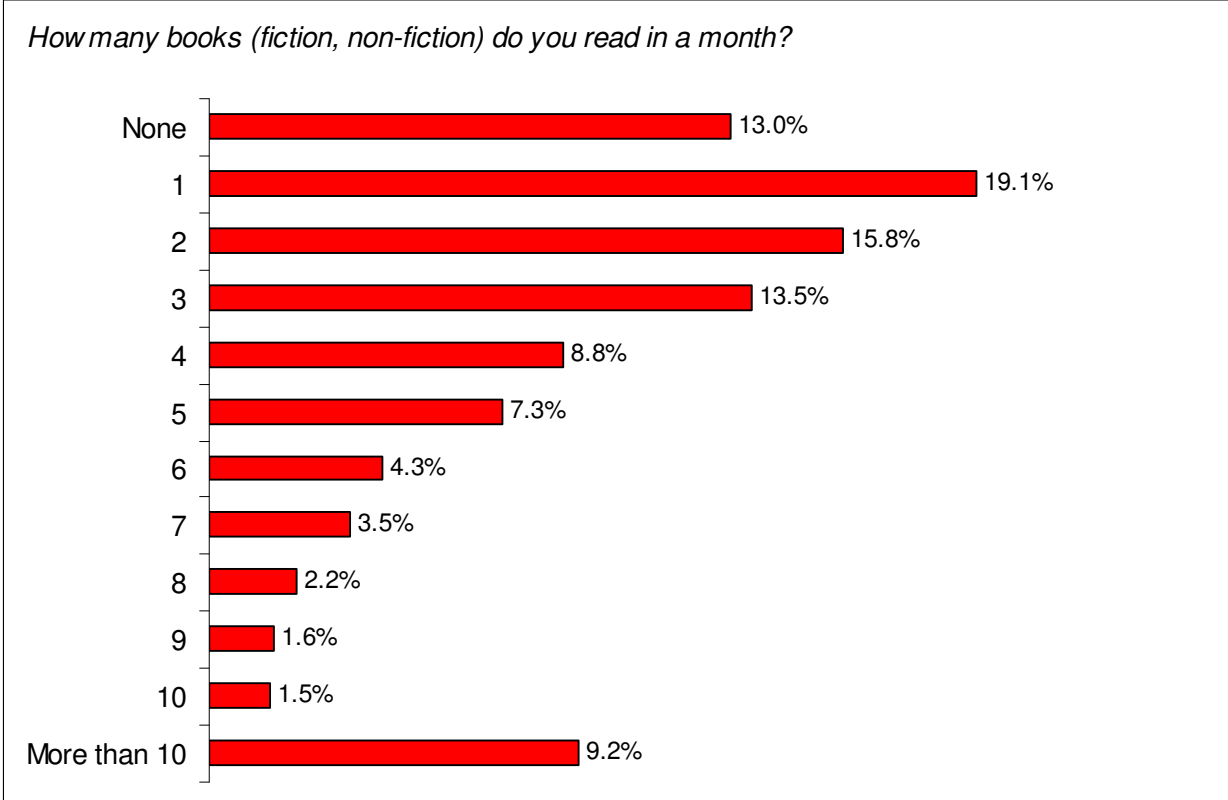
**Table 12: Reading length and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>Up to 10 min</b>	19.4	50.4	30.2
<b>Up to 20 min</b>	10.7	47.5	41.8
<b>Up to 30 min</b>	6.2	41.5	52.3
<b>About 1 hour</b>	4.4	32.1	63.5
<b>Longer than 1 hour</b>	3.7	19.6	76.7

**Number of books read<sup>2</sup>**

Most young people (20%) said that they had read one book in the past month, with 15% saying that they had read two. Nearly 1 in 10, however, said that they had read more than 10 books in the past month (see **Figure 7**).

**Figure 7: How many books (fiction, non-fiction) do you read in a month?**



<sup>2</sup> A separate paper will be available soon that draws out the relationships between number of books read a month and reading enjoyment, reading attitudes, reading behaviour and reading attainment in more detail.

**Table 13: Number of books read in the last month by demographic background**

	<i>Boys</i> (N = 8388)	<i>Girls</i> (N = 8995)	<i>KS2</i> (N = 3,496)	<i>KS3</i> (N = 10,913)	<i>KS4</i> (N = 2,995)	<i>FSM</i> (N = 2,375)	<i>NFSM</i> (N = 14,147)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>None</b>	16.8	9.4	3.0	13.3	33.8	13.2	13.1
<b>1</b>	20.5	17.8	7.8	21.5	26.0	16.9	19.8
<b>2</b>	14.6	17.1	8.7	18.1	14.1	13.9	16.5
<b>3</b>	12.5	14.5	11.6	14.7	8.3	13.4	13.7
<b>4</b>	8.6	9.1	10.4	8.8	5.2	8.6	8.8
<b>5</b>	6.6	8.0	9.2	7.3	3.5	7.3	7.1
<b>6</b>	4.2	4.4	6.6	4.0	2.0	5.7	4.1
<b>7</b>	3.3	3.8	7.0	2.9	1.0	4.3	3.4
<b>8</b>	1.7	2.7	4.5	1.7	0.9	2.4	2.1
<b>9</b>	1.3	1.8	3.8	1.1	0.2	2.0	1.5
<b>10</b>	1.3	1.7	3.6	1.0	0.7	1.4	1.4
<b>10+</b>	8.6	9.7	23.7	5.7	4.3	10.7	8.5

**Table 13 continued: Number of books read in the last month by demographic background**

	<i>White</i> (N = 12,265)	<i>Mixed</i> (N = 895)	<i>Asian</i> (N = 1,819)	<i>Black</i> (N = 712)	<i>Help</i> (N = 4,487)	<i>No Help</i> (N = 11,548)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>None</b>	13.5	10.1	9.3	10.5	11.0	13.7
<b>1</b>	20.8	15.5	14.1	10.5	16.3	20.4
<b>2</b>	16.8	14.2	12.5	8.8	15.0	16.4
<b>3</b>	13.3	14.2	14.1	15.3	12.5	13.9
<b>4</b>	8.5	9.5	10.7	9.7	9.0	8.6
<b>5</b>	6.7	7.4	10.8	19.4	8.5	6.9
<b>6</b>	4.1	6.1	5.3	5.9	5.4	3.9
<b>7</b>	3.3	4.6	4.6	5.2	4.5	3.2
<b>8</b>	2.0	2.9	3.5	2.2	2.4	2.1
<b>9</b>	1.5	1.9	2.3	2.0	2.1	1.3
<b>10</b>	1.4	1.6	2.1	2.2	2.0	1.4
<b>10+</b>	8.2	12.1	10.9	18.1	1.4	8.4

Boys were nearly twice as likely to say that they had not read a book in the past month compared with girls (see **Table 13**). Overall, girls were more likely than boys to say that they read multiple books in a month.

KS2 pupils are nearly 6 times more likely than KS3 and KS4 pupils to read more than 10 books (fiction/non-fiction) a month. While this rather large discrepancy can at least partly be explained by KS3 and KS4 pupils choosing to read texts other than fiction/non-fiction books (see next section), the books they read are also more likely to be longer, to be more complex, to have fewer pictures amongst the text etc.

Older pupils were considerably more likely to say that they have not read any book (fiction/non-fiction) in the last month compared with their younger counterparts. For example, KS3 pupils were four times more likely than their KS2 counterparts to say that they have not read a book in the last month. Even more staggeringly, KS4 pupils were 11 times more likely than KS2 pupils and twice as likely as KS3 pupils to say that they have not read a book in the last month.

Although young people who do not receive FSMs say that they read more frequently and for longer than young people who receive meals, there were no marked differences in the number of books they read outside of class in a month.

Young people from White backgrounds are more likely than those from the other ethnic backgrounds to say that they have not read a book outside of class in the last month and to say that they have read one or two books. For example, young people from White backgrounds were twice as likely to say that they have read one or two books in the last month compared with young people from Black backgrounds who were more than twice as likely to say that they have read more than 10 books.

Young people who receive additional help at school were less likely than those who do not receive such help to say that they have not read a book outside of class in the last month. They were also more likely to say that they have read more books in the past month.

## Number of books read and reading attainment

The number of books that young people report reading in a month was related to their reading skills. **Table 14** shows that the more books young people read in a month, the greater the likelihood that they are reading above the level expected for their age.

For example, of those who read more than 10 books in a month, over three quarters read above the level expected for their age, while only 6% read below the expected level. By contrast, of those who read only one book a month, 1 in 10 read below the level expected for their age and this figure jumps to 3 in 10 of those who do not read any books in a month.

**Table 14: Number of books read and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>None</b>	26.8	44.6	28.6
<b>1</b>	14.1	51.6	34.4
<b>2</b>	9.0	45.2	45.8



	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
3	8.0	39.0	53.0
4	8.3	40.1	51.7
5	6.1	37.3	56.6
6	5.9	33.5	60.6
7	6.0	32.5	61.5
8	3.9	29.9	66.1
9	4.4	25.1	70.5
10	8.7	25.0	66.3
10 +	6.1	16.2	77.7

## Number of books in the home

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; OECD, 2010).

Although the accuracy of these estimates may be questionable, they will provide an insight into the perception of number of books, rather than accurate actual numbers, which in turn can be taken to be an indicator of the value of books in the home (while this section deals with books in the home, please note that we have released a separate report on whether or not young people have books of their own and how book ownership is related to enjoyment, attitudes, behaviour and attainment:

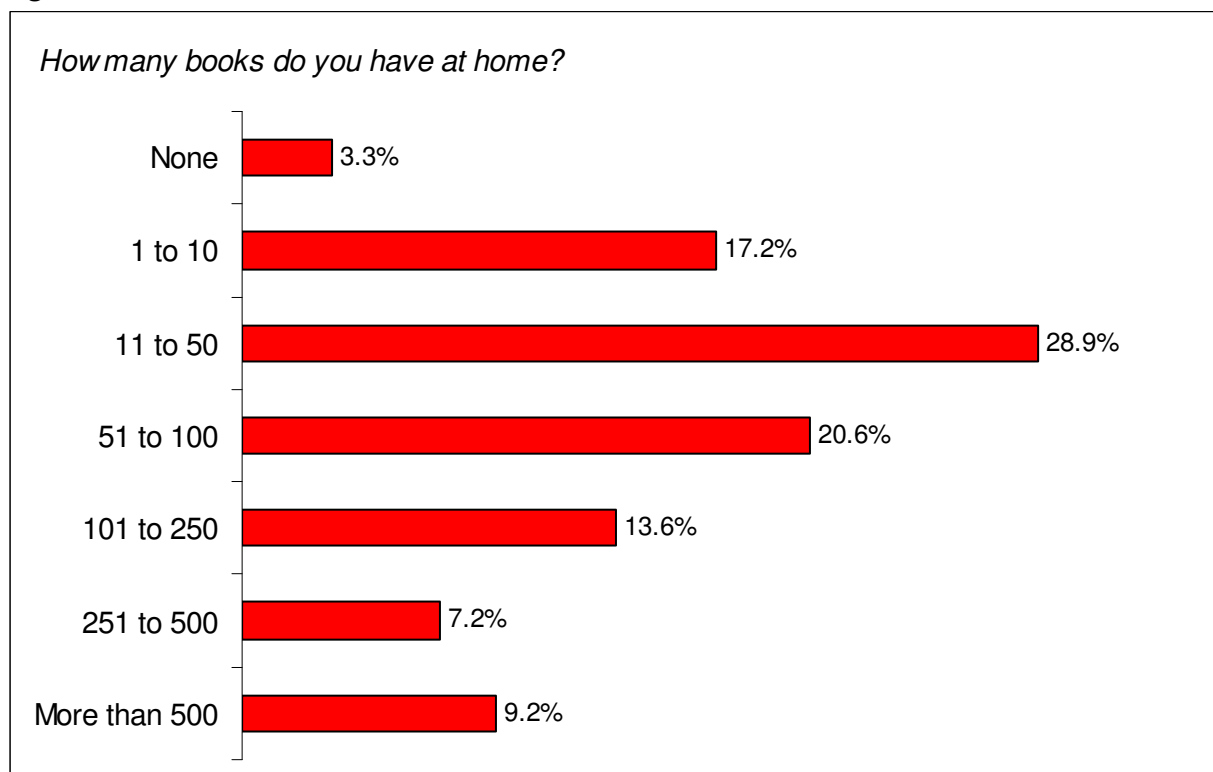
[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/research/nlt\\_research/3602\\_book\\_ownership\\_and\\_its\\_relation\\_to\\_enjoyment\\_attitudes\\_behaviour\\_and\\_achievement](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/research/nlt_research/3602_book_ownership_and_its_relation_to_enjoyment_attitudes_behaviour_and_achievement)).

Young people were asked to estimate the number of books in their home (see **Figure 8**). Only 3% of young people indicated that they do not have any books in the home. Most (3 in 10) said that they have about 11 to 50 books at home.

**Table 15** shows that over twice as many boys than girls said that they did not have any books in the home. Generally, girls were more likely than boys to say that they have many books in the home with the exception of estimates of over 500 books, which slightly more boys than girls chose.

KS3 pupils are three times more likely than KS2 pupils to say that they do not have books in the home. The gap widens even more with respect to KS4 pupils, with KS4 pupil being seven times more likely than KS2 pupils and twice more likely than KS3 pupils to say that they do not have any books in the home.

**Figure 8: Number of books in the home**



Overall, **Table 15** shows that younger pupils were more likely than their older counterparts to report having a greater number of books in the home. At the lower end of the scale, 3 in 10 KS4 pupils compared with 2 in 10 KS3 and 1 in 10 KS2 pupils said that they have fewer than 10 books at home. By contrast, KS2 pupils were nearly twice more likely than their older counterparts to say that they have 250+ books in the home.

Nearly twice as many young people who receive FSMs than young people who do not receive meals say that they have no books in the home. Overall, young people who do not receive FSMs were more likely to estimate that they have more books in the home than were those who receive meals.

Interestingly, nearly twice as many young people from Asian than White or Mixed backgrounds said that they do not have any books in the home. More young people from Asian backgrounds estimated that they have between one and 10 books. Young people from Asian backgrounds were also the least likely to estimate they have 250 + books in the home.

Although young people who do not receive additional help at school were less likely than those who receive help to say that they had read loads of books outside of school in the last month, they were more likely to say that they had more books in the home than those who receive help at school.

**Table 15: Number of books in the home by demographic background**

	<i>Boys</i> (N = 8,393)	<i>Girls</i> (N = 8,979)	<i>KS2</i> (N = 3,506)	<i>KS3</i> (N = 11,035)	<i>KS4</i> (N = 3,025)	<i>FSM</i> (N = 2,374)	<i>NFSM</i> (N = 14,128)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>None</b>	4.7	2.0	1.3	3.4	7.3	5.9	2.7
<b>1 to 10</b>	18.8	15.5	9.1	18.3	26.6	27.3	15.5
<b>11 to 50</b>	27.5	30.2	25.7	29.9	28.4	30.0	28.8
<b>51 to 100</b>	19.4	21.7	22.3	20.9	14.3	16.7	21.4
<b>101 to 250</b>	13.4	13.9	16.3	13.5	8.3	8.8	14.5
<b>251 to 500</b>	6.4	8.1	10.9	6.3	6.0	5.0	7.6
<b>More than 500</b>	9.9	8.5	14.4	7.7	9.0	6.3	9.5

**Table 15 continued: Number of books in the home by demographic background**

	<i>White</i> (N = 12,248)	<i>Mixed</i> (N = 893)	<i>Asian</i> (N = 1,812)	<i>Black</i> (N = 712)	<i>Help</i> (N = 4,455)	<i>No help</i> (N = 11,425)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>None</b>	2.8	2.8	5.1	4.4	3.9	3.0
<b>1 to 10</b>	15.3	15.8	26.4	18.4	20.6	15.4
<b>11 to 50</b>	28.4	30.0	33.6	28.5	30.0	28.4
<b>51 to 100</b>	21.7	17.8	16.9	19.1	18.9	21.2
<b>101 to 250</b>	14.8	14.6	8.3	11.9	11.7	14.0
<b>251 to 500</b>	7.8	7.6	3.6	8.0	5.9	7.9
<b>More than 500</b>	9.2	11.5	6.2	9.7	9.2	9.4

### Number of books in the home and reading attainment

The survey revealed a relationship between estimated number of books in the home and reading attainment. **Table 16** shows that of those who report having more books in the home a greater proportion read above the level expected for their age compared with those who estimate to have no or fewer books in the home.

Of those who report having no books in the home, over a third read below or at the level expected for their age, while a quarter read above the expected level. Even having just a few books in the home has a benefit. Of those who report having up to 10 books in the home, a fifth read below the level expected for their age, while half read at the expected level and over a quarter above the expected level. By contrast, of those who estimate to have more than 500 books in the home, only 10% read below the expected level for their age, a fifth read at the expected level while over two-thirds read above the level expected for their age.

**Table 16: Number of books in the home and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

	<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>None</b>	37.7	37.5	24.9
<b>1 - 10</b>	19.7	51.6	28.7
<b>11 - 50</b>	9.8	46.7	43.5
<b>51 - 100</b>	8.1	39.7	52.3
<b>101 - 250</b>	5.7	31.5	62.8
<b>251 - 500</b>	6.0	25.5	68.5
<b>More than 500</b>	9.7	22.1	68.2

### Interrelationships between reading frequency, reading length, number of books read and books in the home

We now know that 3 in 10 young people read every day, and 3 in 10 young people read up to 30 minutes at a time. While the majority (2 in 10) say that they have only read one book in the past month, most (3 in 10) estimate that they have up to 50 books in the home. Are the ones who read the most also the ones who read for the longest periods of time? Are the ones that reading the most also the ones who read the most books and who have the most books in the home?

While the relationship between reading frequency and reading length is weak ( $r = .027$ ), there is a positive association between reading frequency and number of books read ( $r = .433$ ) and number of books in the home ( $r = .347$ ), indicating that young people who read more often also

report to read more books and to have more books in the home than young people who read less frequently.

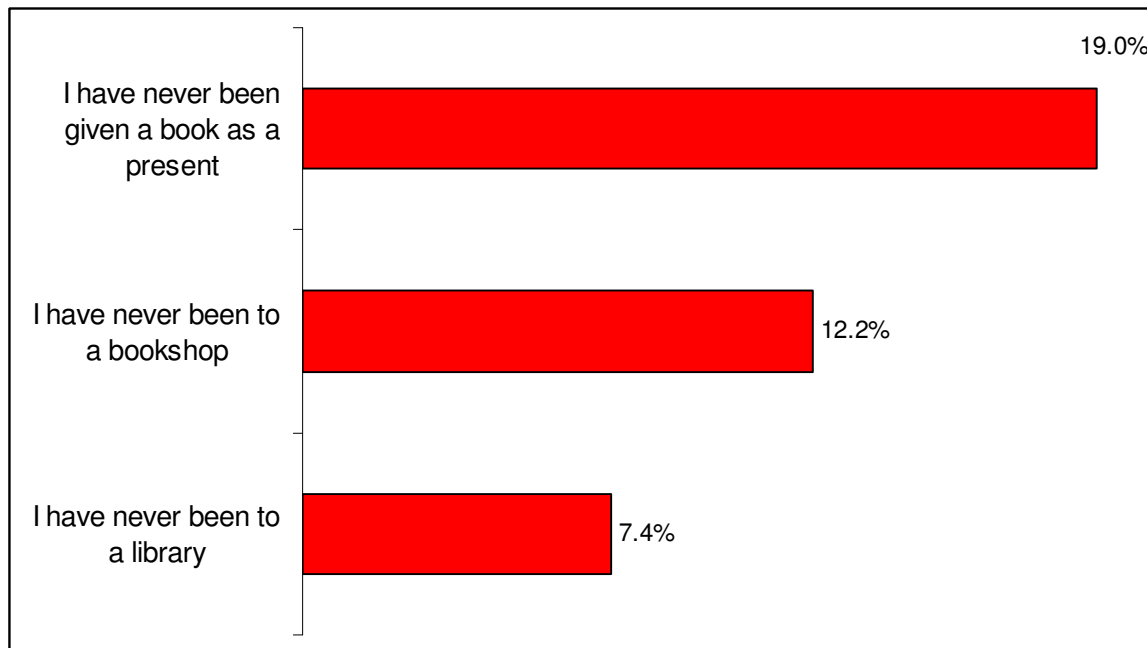
There was also a positive relationship between number of books read in a month and number of books in the home ( $r = .344$ ).

Compared with the frequency with which young people read, the length of time young people spent reading at any one time was only weakly related to number of books read ( $r = .127$ ) and number of books in the home ( $r = .115$ ).

## Young people's reading opportunities

Young people were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with 3 items that explored their reading opportunities (see **Figure 9**). 2 in 10 young people agreed that they had never been given a book as a present. 1 in 10 also agreed that they have never been to a bookshop or a library.

**Figure 9: Reading opportunities**



**Table 17** shows that more **boys** than **girls** agreed that they never had a book as a present, and that they have never been to a bookshop or a library.

There were significant **age** differences in the degree to which young people reported reading opportunities. More KS4 than KS3 and KS2 pupils agreed that they have never been given a book as a present. More KS4 pupils also agreed that they have never been to a bookshop compared with their young counterparts. By contrast, slightly fewer KS3 than KS2 or KS4 pupils agreed that they have never been to a library.

Young people who receive **FSMs** were also more likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop and that they have never been to a library.

**Table 17: Reading opportunities by demographic background**

	<i>Boys</i> (N = 8,468)	<i>Girls</i> (N = 9,079)	<i>KS2</i> (N = 3,506)	<i>KS3</i> (N = 11,035)	<i>KS4</i> (N = 3,025)	<i>FSM</i> (N = 2,396)	<i>NFSM</i> (N = 14,278)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>I have never been given a book as a present</b>	22.2	16.0	17.6	18.6	25.7	27.7	17.3
<b>I have never been to a bookshop</b>	15.7	9.0	12.5	11.5	17.6	17.7	11.1
<b>I have never been to a library</b>	9.1	5.7	9.9	6.4	10.1	10.3	6.7

**Table 17 continued: Reading opportunities by demographic background**

	<i>White</i> (N = 12,248)	<i>Mixed</i> (N = 893)	<i>Asian</i> (N = 1,812)	<i>Black</i> (N = 712)	<i>Help</i> (N = 4,288)	<i>No help</i> (N = 11,548)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>I have never been given a book as a present</b>	16.6	21.2	30.2	22.3	22.8	17.4
<b>I have never been to a bookshop</b>	12.0	12.4	12.1	14.1	17.3	10.3
<b>I have never been to a library</b>	7.4	16.3	6.5	6.6	11.3	5.9

Young people from Asian **ethnic backgrounds** were the most likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present. Nearly twice as many young people from Asian backgrounds than from White backgrounds said this (30% vs 17%).

More young people who receive **additional help** with reading agreed that they have never received a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop or a library.

**Reading opportunities and reading attainment**

Reading opportunities were related to reading attainment. **Table 18** shows that a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that they have never been given a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop or library read below the expected level for their age compared with those who disagree with those statements.

**Table 18: Percentage agreement and disagreement with items and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

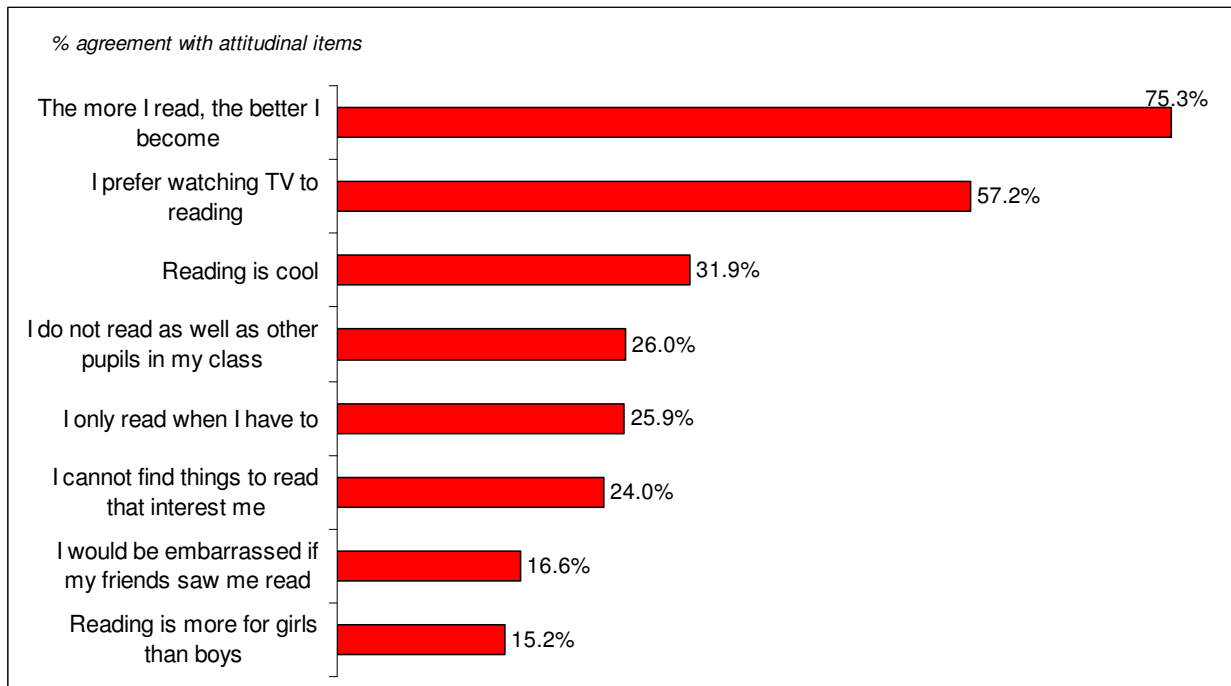
		<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>I have never been given a book as a present</b>	Agreement	18.4	43.9	37.9
	Disagreement	7.7	38.0	54.3
<b>I have never been to a bookshop</b>	Agreement	21.6	44.4	34.0
	Disagreement	8.1	38.5	53.4
<b>I have never been to a library</b>	Agreement	21.4	41.0	37.6
	Disagreement	8.9	39.4	51.7

**Young people’s attitudes towards reading**

Young people were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with eight attitudinal statements (see **Figure 10**). 8 in 10 young people agreed that their reading improves with practice. It is perhaps comforting to know that only a quarter of young people agreed that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they only read when they have to and that they cannot find things to read that interest them. “Only” 16% of young people agreed that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.



**Figure 10: Percentage agreement with reading attitudinal statements**



**Table 19** shows that in line with previous research (Clark and Douglas, 2011; Clark and Foster, 2005; Twist et al., 2007), **girls** tended to have more positive attitudes towards reading than **boys**. More boys than girls agreed with the statements that they prefer watching TV to reading, that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they only read when they have to, that they cannot find things to read that interest them, that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.

There were significant **age** differences in attitudes towards reading, with KS2 pupils generally holding more positive attitudes towards reading than their older counterparts. More KS2 pupils than KS3 or KS4 agreed with the statements that reading is cool. Younger pupils were also more likely than older ones to agree that their reading improves with practice. By contrast, there was increasing agreement with age to statements such as I prefer watching TV to reading, that they only read when they have to, that they cannot find things to read that interest them.

Interestingly, more KS2 than KS3 or KS4 pupils agreed that reading is more for girls than boys. They were also more likely than their older counterparts to agree that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class

There were very few differences between young people who receive **FSMs** and those who do not in terms of their attitudes towards reading. Young people who receive FSMs were more likely than their non-FSM counterparts to agree with the statements that reading is more for girls than for boys, that they cannot find anything to read that interests them and that they only read because they have to.

The relationship between attitudes towards reading and **ethnic background** is complex. Young people from White backgrounds were more likely than young people from the other ethnic backgrounds to agree that they prefer watching TV to reading and that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class. They were also the most likely to agree with the statement that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.

**Table 19: Types of materials read at least once a month by demographic background**

	<i>Boys</i> (N = 8,468)	<i>Girls</i> (N = 9,079)	<i>KS2</i> (N = 3,506)	<i>KS3</i> (N = 11,035)	<i>KS4</i> (N = 3,025)	<i>FSM</i> (N = 2,396)	<i>NFSM</i> (N = 14,278)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>The more I read, the better I become</b>	73.2	77.3	85.3	74.3	59.9	74.8	75.5
<b>I prefer watching TV to reading</b>	66.2	48.8	47.4	58.8	66.1	58.5	57.3
<b>Reading is cool</b>	28.2	35.3	56.1	26.7	20.4	33.2	31.2
<b>I do not read as well as other pupils in my class</b>	28.8	23.2	30.2	25.0	24.0	28.6	25.4
<b>I only read when I have to</b>	32.1	20.1	24.9	24.8	37.3	31.7	24.7
<b>I cannot find things to read that interest me</b>	27.9	20.4	19.8	24.5	29.6	27.5	23.5
<b>I would be embarrassed if my friends saw me read</b>	19.1	14.3	14.5	17.4	15.2	18.8	17.1
<b>Reading is more for girls than boys</b>	20.0	10.6	20.8	13.9	12.8	18.1	14.3

**Table 19 continued: Types of materials read at least once a month by demographic background**

	<i>White</i> (N = 12,248)	<i>Mixed</i> (N = 893)	<i>Asian</i> (N = 1,812)	<i>Black</i> (N = 712)	<i>Help</i> (N = 4,288)	<i>No help</i> (N = 11,548)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>The more I read, the better I become</b>	74.7	76.3	78.7	79.7	78.5	74.5
<b>I prefer watching TV to reading</b>	58.0	55.4	54.2	53.2	57.3	57.1
<b>Reading is cool</b>	30.2	37.5	38.3	42.6	38.4	29.9
<b>I do not read as well as other pupils in my class</b>	27.3	22.2	19.5	20.9	34.4	22.1
<b>I only read when I have to</b>	25.5	23.1	25.8	26.2	32.4	23.3
<b>I cannot find things to read that interest me</b>	24.5	23.1	20.8	23.3	26.6	23.0
<b>I would be embarrassed if my friends saw me read</b>	17.1	14.1	14.9	13.0	20.3	15.2
<b>Reading is more for girls than boys</b>	14.8	12.8	17.0	16.5	20.6	13.1

Young people from Asian backgrounds were the least likely to agree with the statement that they cannot find things to read that interest them. Young people from Black backgrounds were most likely to agree that reading is cool.

The attitudes of young people who **receive additional help** at school tended to be more complex than those of young people who do not receive additional help. For example, while more young people who receive help than those who do not agreed with the statements that the more they read, the better they become at it and that reading is cool. They were also more likely to say that reading is more for girls, that they cannot find interesting things to read, that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they only read when they have to and that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.

**Attitudes towards reading and reading attainment**

Attitudes towards reading were also related to reading attainment. **Table 20** shows that a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that their reading improves with practice and that reading is cool read above the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with these statements.

By contrast, a greater proportion of those who agree with the statements that they prefer watching TV to reading, that they do not read as well as other pupils in their class, that they read only when they have to, that they cannot find anything to read that interests them, that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read and that reading is more for girls than boys read below the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with those statements.

**Table 20: Percentage agreement and disagreement with attitudinal items and reading attainment (N = 5,580)**

		<i>Below expected level</i> %	<i>At expected level</i> %	<i>Above expected level</i> %
<b>The more I read, the better I become</b>	Agreement	8.3	39.4	52.4
	Disagreement	24.0	34.7	41.3
<b>I prefer watching TV to reading</b>	Agreement	14.4	45.9	39.6
	Disagreement	5.5	24.6	70.0
<b>Reading is cool</b>	Agreement	5.2	28.8	66.0
	Disagreement	19.5	47.3	33.2
<b>I do not read as well as other pupils in my class</b>	Agreement	28.0	51.6	20.4
	Disagreement	2.8	25.5	71.7
<b>I only read when I have to</b>	Agreement	22.0	47.9	30.1
	Disagreement	5.2	33.3	61.5

		<i>Below expected level %</i>	<i>At expected level %</i>	<i>Above expected level %</i>
<b>I cannot find things to read that interest me</b>	Agreement	21.9	47.7	30.4
	Disagreement	5.0	32.9	62.0
<b>I would be embarrassed if my friends saw me read</b>	Agreement	18.2	42.6	39.2
	Disagreement	8.0	37.1	55.0
<b>Reading is more for girls than boys</b>	Agreement	18.4	39.0	42.7
	Disagreement	8.0	37.8	54.1

## Summing up

So, what have we found out regarding young people's reading in 2010?

- 5 in 10 young people enjoy reading either “very much” or “quite a lot”.
- 9 in 10 young people also rated themselves as either average or very good readers.
- Technology-based materials prevail as the reading materials of choice, while magazines are the most frequently read non-technology genre outside of class.
- 3 in 10 young people read every day, and 3 in 10 young people read up to 30 minutes at a time.
- While the majority say that they have only read one book in the past month, most (3 in 10) estimate that they have up to 50 books in the home.
- Overall, young people who read more often also read more books and say that they have more books in the home compared with young people who read less frequently.
- Young people generally have positive attitudes towards reading, with only a minority of young people agreeing that they only read when they have to or that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class.
- 2 in 10 young people agreed that they had never been given a book as a present, while 1 in 10 had never been to a bookshop or library.

With each of these there were clear relationships with reading attainment, with young people who enjoy reading the most, who rate themselves as better readers, who read most frequently and for the longest periods of time, who think about reading more positively and who have greater reading opportunities tending to read above the expected level for their age.

### Reading and gender

Girls enjoy reading more than boys and rate themselves as better readers. Girls are more likely than boys to read technology-based materials and magazines, while boys are more likely to read newspapers and comics. Girls are also more likely than boys to read every day or a few times a week and to read for longer periods of time. Girls read more books in a month than boys and estimate to have more books at home. Girls also tend to have more positive attitudes towards reading.

## Reading and age

Not only do KS2 pupils enjoy reading more than KS3 and KS4 pupils, but they are also more likely than their older counterparts to rate themselves as very good readers. Although KS2 pupils are more likely than KS3 and KS4 pupils to read fiction, non-fiction and poems outside of class, older pupils are more likely to read a variety of materials outside of class, including technology-based ones. KS2 pupils read more frequently than KS3 or KS4 pupils but older pupils reading for longer periods of time compared with KS2 pupils. KS2 pupils not only say that they read more books in a month compared with their older counterparts but they also estimate having more books at home. Finally, KS2 pupils also tend to hold more positive attitudes towards reading compared with KS3 and KS4 pupils.

## Reading and FSM uptake

Young people who do not receive free school meals (FSMs) enjoy reading more and rate themselves as better readers compared with young people who are in receipt of meals. More young people who do not receive FSMs say that they read fiction compared with those who receive meals. They are also more likely to read technology-based materials and magazines. In line with our previous research, more young people who receive FSM say that they read poems compared with those who do not receive meals. Young people who do not receive FSMs read outside of class more frequently than young people who receive meals. They are also more likely to read for longer periods of time. Although there were no marked differences between young people who receive FSMs and those who do not in the number of books they read outside of class a month, those who do not receive meals are more likely to estimate to have a higher number of books at home than their FSM-receiving peers. Overall, there were very few differences between young people who receive FSMs and those who do not in their attitudes towards reading. However, young people who receive FSMs are more likely than those who do not receive meals to say that they have never had a book as a present, never been to a bookshop or library.

## Reading and ethnic background

There were no clear-cut patterns in the relationships between reading and ethnic background. Young people from White backgrounds enjoy reading the least while they and young people from Black backgrounds rate themselves as marginally poorer readers than young people from Asian and Mixed backgrounds. Young people from White backgrounds are more likely to say that they read magazines, text messages and messages on social networking sites than young people from the other ethnic backgrounds. More young people from Black than from the other backgrounds read poems, eBooks and newspapers. Young people from Mixed and Black backgrounds are more likely to read every day and to read for long periods of time compared with young people from White or Asian backgrounds. Young people from White backgrounds read fewer books while more young people from Asian backgrounds say they do not have books at home.

The relationship between ethnic background and reading attitudes is the most complex. Amongst other things, more young people from White than from the other backgrounds agree that they prefer watching TV to reading and that they would be embarrassed if their friends saw them read outside of class. By contrast, young people from Asian backgrounds are the most likely to agree that they have never been given a book as a present, while young people from Black backgrounds are most likely to agree that reading is cool.

## **Reading and educational needs**

There were no marked differences between young people who receive additional help at school and those who do not in the degree to which they enjoy reading. However, young people who do not get additional help rate themselves as better readers than those who receive help. They also tend to read a greater variety of materials outside of class than those who receive help. The only material that more young people who receive help than those who do not read outside of class are poems. Young people who do not receive additional help say that they read more frequently and for longer periods of time compared with those who do get additional help. While young people who do not receive help at school read fewer books outside of class in a month, they are more likely to report to have a greater number of books in the home. More young people who receive help at school agree that they have never received a book as a present, that they have never been to a bookshop or library.

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