Highlights

Thirty-five countries participated in PIRLS 2001, IEA's new state-of-the-art Progress in International Reading Literacy Study. Conducted at the fourth grade, PIRLS assessed a range of reading comprehension strategies for two major reading purposes – literary and informational. PIRLS collected extensive information about home, school, and national influences on how well students learn to read. Of special interest, parents and caregivers completed questionnaires about their children's early literacy activities. System-level information provided by each participating country can be found in the *PIRLS 2001 Encyclopedia*.

- Sweden was the top-performing country, followed by The Netherlands, England, and Bulgaria.
- In all countries, fourth-grade girls had significantly higher average achievement than boys.
- Sweden and England had the highest achievement in reading for literary purposes. In reading for informational purposes, Sweden, The Netherlands, and Bulgaria were the top-performers.
- In every country, there was a positive relationship between reading achievement and early literacy activities before starting school.
- According to principals in each country, reading was emphasized more than any other area of the primary-school curriculum.
- Teachers reported daily instruction based on a textbook or reading series accompanied by at least weekly exercises in workbooks or worksheets was used for the majority of students (international average 53%).
- Students in all countries had generally positive attitudes toward reading, and students with the most positive attitudes had the highest average achievement. More girls than boys had positive attitudes in all countries.
- More girls (70%) than boys (55%) reported reading stories or novels weekly, while comparable percentages of girls (62%) and boys (59%) read weekly for information.

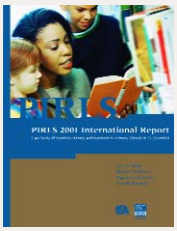
Countries	Average Scale Score
Sweden	561
Netherlands	554
England	553
Bulgaria	550
Latvia	545
Canada (O,Q)	544
Lithuania	543
Hungary	543
United States	542
Italy	541
Germany	539
Czech Republic	537
New Zealand	529
Scotland	528
Singapore	528
Russian Federation	528
Hong Kong, SAR	528
France	525
Greece	524
Slovak Republic	518
Iceland	512
Romania	512
Israel	509
Slovenia	502
International Avg.	500
Norway	499
Cyprus	494
Moldova, Rep. of	492
Turkey	449
Macedonia, Rep. of	442
Colombia	422
Argentina	420
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	414
Kuwait	396
Morocco	350
Belize	327

Significantly Higher than International Average

Significantly Lower than International Average

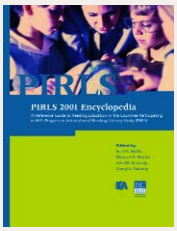
PIRLS 2001 Publications

Available on the PIRLS website: pirls.bc.edu



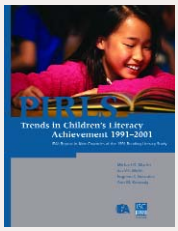
PIRLS 2001 International Report: IEA's Study of Reading Literacy Achievement in Primary Schools, Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Gonzalez, E.J., & Kennedy, A.M. (2003), Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

Presents the reading achievement results for the 35 participating countries and data about pertinent home, school, and classroom contexts for learning to read.



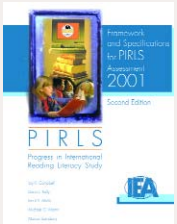
PIRLS 2001 Encyclopedia: A Reference Guide to reading Education in the Countries Participating in IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Kennedy, A.M., & Flaherty, C.L. (2002), Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

Describes primary/elementary schooling focusing on reading within each of the 35 PIRLS countries, including teacher education and training, reading curricula, classroom organization and instruction, and assessment practices.



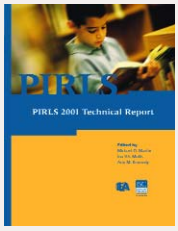
Trends in Children's Reading Literacy Achievement 1991-2001: IEA's Repeat in Nine Countries of the 1991 Reading Literacy Study, Martin, M.O., Mullis, I.V.S., Gonzalez, E.J., & Kennedy, A.M. (2003), Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

Presents trends in reading achievement for the nine PIRLS countries that replicated IEA's 1991 Reading Literacy Study of primary/elementary-school students: Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, and the United States.



Framework and Specifications for PIRLS Assessment 2001 – 2nd Edition, Campbell, J.R., Kelly, D.L., Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., & Sainsbury, M. (2001), Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

Describes the range of comprehension processes and two major purposes for reading – literary and informational – assessed by PIRLS 2001, as well as elements of the study design.



PIRLS 2001 Technical Report, Martin, M.O., Mullis, I.V.S., & Kennedy, A.M. (Eds.) (2003), Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College.

Describes the instrument development, data-collection procedures, and analytic methods used in PIRLS 2001 and the trend study.

PIRLS is an ongoing project of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Planning is underway for PIRLS 2006. The IEA is an international cooperative of national research institutes and government agencies that has been conducting studies of cross-national achievement for more than 40 years.

The PIRLS and TIMSS International Study Center at Boston College, in the Lynch School of Education, is dedicated to conducting international comparative studies in educational achievement. Principally, it is responsible for the conduct of IEA's studies in reading, mathematics, and science – the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

Funding

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