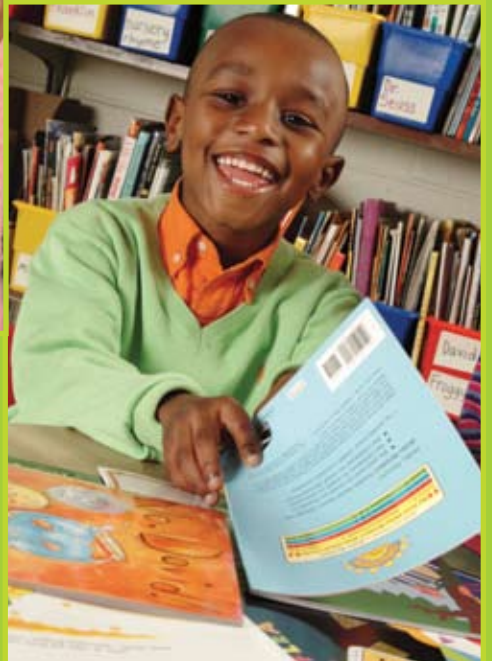
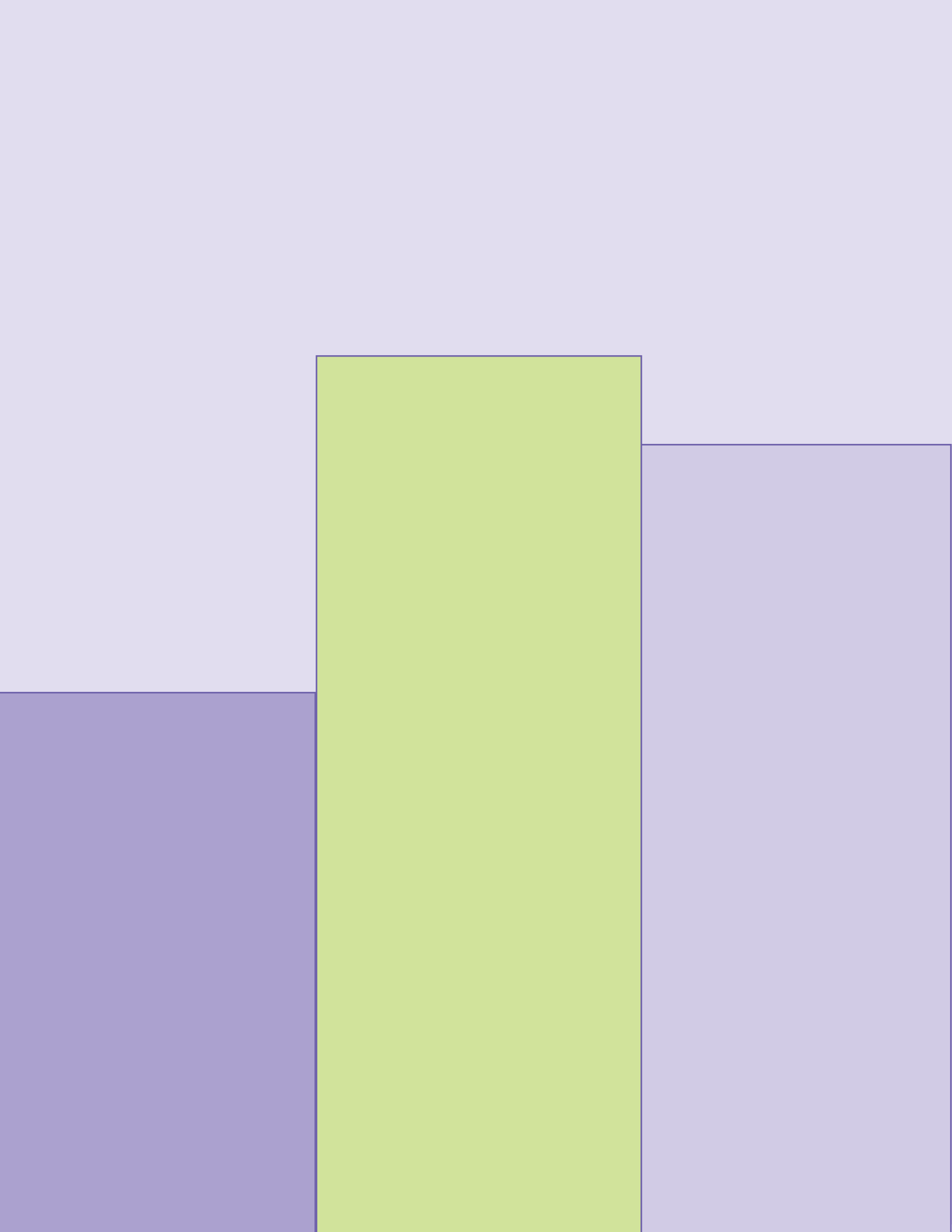


# KIDS & FAMILY READING REPORT™





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ANANSI  
a tale from  
the Aesop  
SPIDER  
by Gerald McDermott

SCHOLASTIC

by Audrey Wood

ric  
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Holidays

Dogs

Alphabet

Memory

## STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

In 2006, Scholastic and Yankelovich conducted a survey to find out about the importance children and parents place on reading for fun, to examine the factors that influence whether children become frequent readers, and to explore the effect of parental attitudes and behaviors on children's reading for pleasure.

Here are the key findings of the research, based on interviews with 500 children and their parents or guardians in 25 cities across the U.S.:

- Kids say they enjoy reading and believe it is important, but the time kids spend reading for fun declines sharply with age.
- Parents play a significant role in shaping kids' reading behaviors, but they could be doing more to encourage kids to read for fun.
- Parents and kids say that Harry Potter has a positive effect on kids' reading and their performance in school.
- Contrary to what might be expected, kids who use technology platforms to read or listen to books also tend to be high frequency readers.

The following pages contain more detailed information about the survey findings, objectives, and methodology. We hope that the insights gained from this report raise awareness about the importance of reading and encourage families to do more to foster children's love of reading.

## I. KIDS' RELATIONSHIP WITH READING

**Kids say they enjoy reading and believe it is important, but the time kids spend reading for fun declines sharply with age.**

- Although the vast majority of kids enjoy reading, the time kids spend reading for fun declines sharply after age 8 and continues to drop through the teen years.
- Overall, kids are not reading enough -- only three in ten kids are high frequency readers.
- Kids say that the number one reason they don't read more is that they can't find books they like to read.
- Frequent readers are more likely to have a positive self-image and associate reading with academic and professional success.

## Kids Perceive Reading As Enjoyable And Important

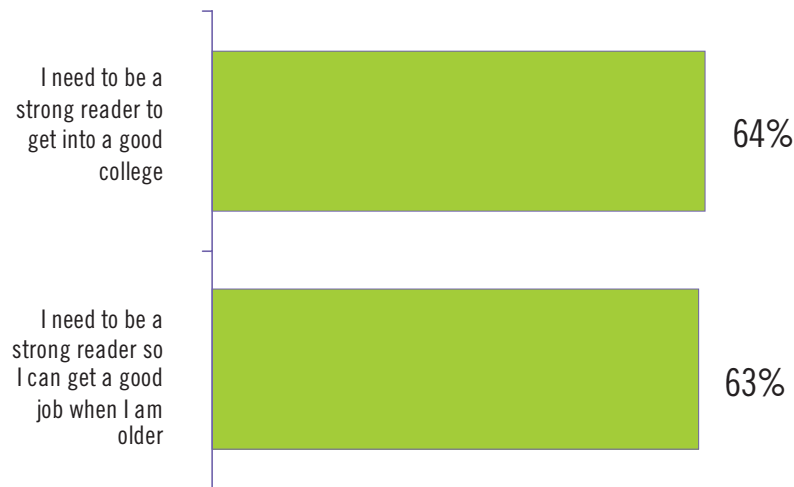
Percent Of Kids Who Report The Following



Note: Reading books "for fun" is defined as reading books that are not part of schoolwork or homework.

## Nearly Two-Thirds Of Kids Feel Reading Is Important To Future Success

Percent Of Kids Who Agree "A Lot" With The Following Statements



## Kids' Reading Frequency Drops Sharply After Age 8

- More than 40 percent of kids ages 5-8 say they are high frequency readers; by ages 9-11 that proportion drops to 29 percent.
- Almost half of the 15-17 year olds (46%) are low frequency readers, compared with 14 percent of 5-8 year olds.

### Frequency With Which Kids Read Books For Fun

% Answering...	Total	5-8	9-11	12-14	15-17
	500	159	109	159	73
Reading Frequency Groups					
High	31	44	29	25	16
Medium	45	42	51	44	38
Low	25	14	20	31	46

#### Notes:

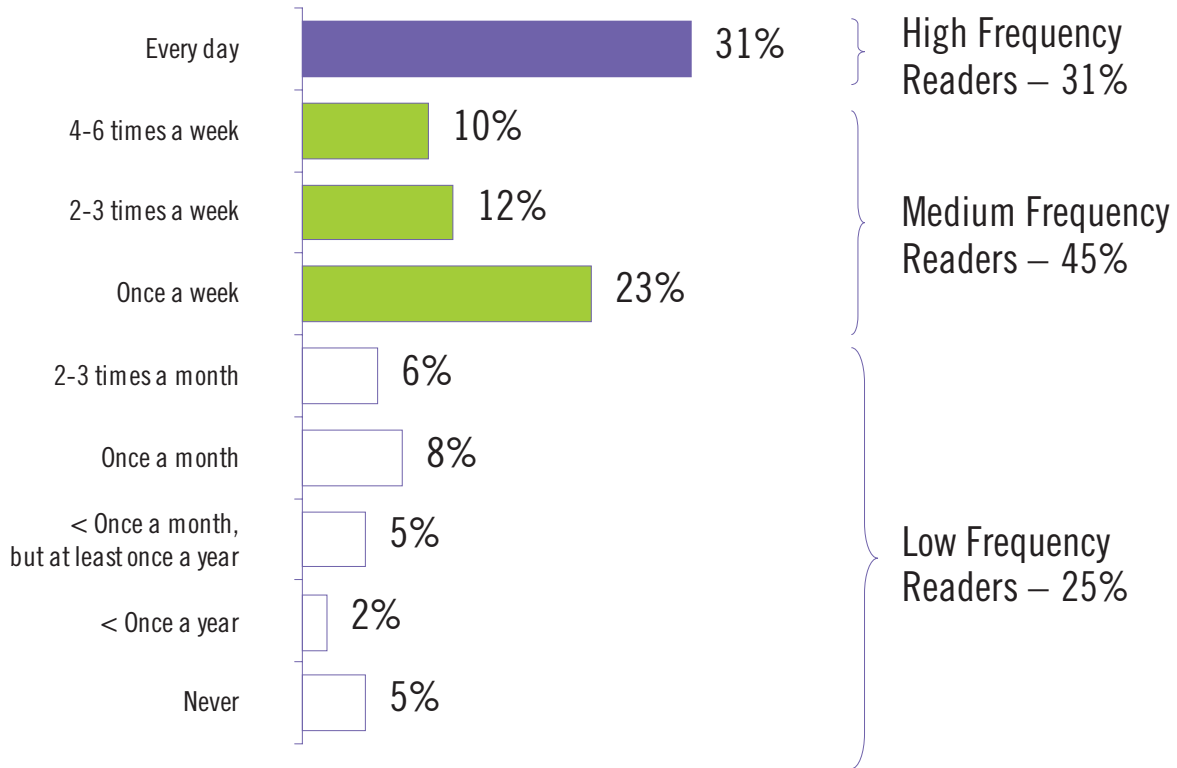
Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: "Every day," "Once a week," "Once a month," or "Never." All other kids selected from these responses, in addition to the following: "4-6 times a week," "2-3 times a week," "2-3 times a month," "Less than once a month, but at least once a year," and "Less than once a year." Reader groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

Net percentages throughout this report may not add up due to rounding.

Significance testing between groups has been done at the 90 percent confidence level, and is designated by the following notations throughout this report:

- Significantly higher at 90 percent confidence interval =
- Significantly lower at 90 percent confidence interval =

## Only 3 In 10 Kids Are High Frequency Readers



Note: Kids ages 5-8 were only given four of the options: Every day, Once a week, Once a month, Never.

## Kids Are Having Difficulty Finding Books They Like

### Top Ranked Reasons Why Kids Are Not Reading More

#### According To Kids

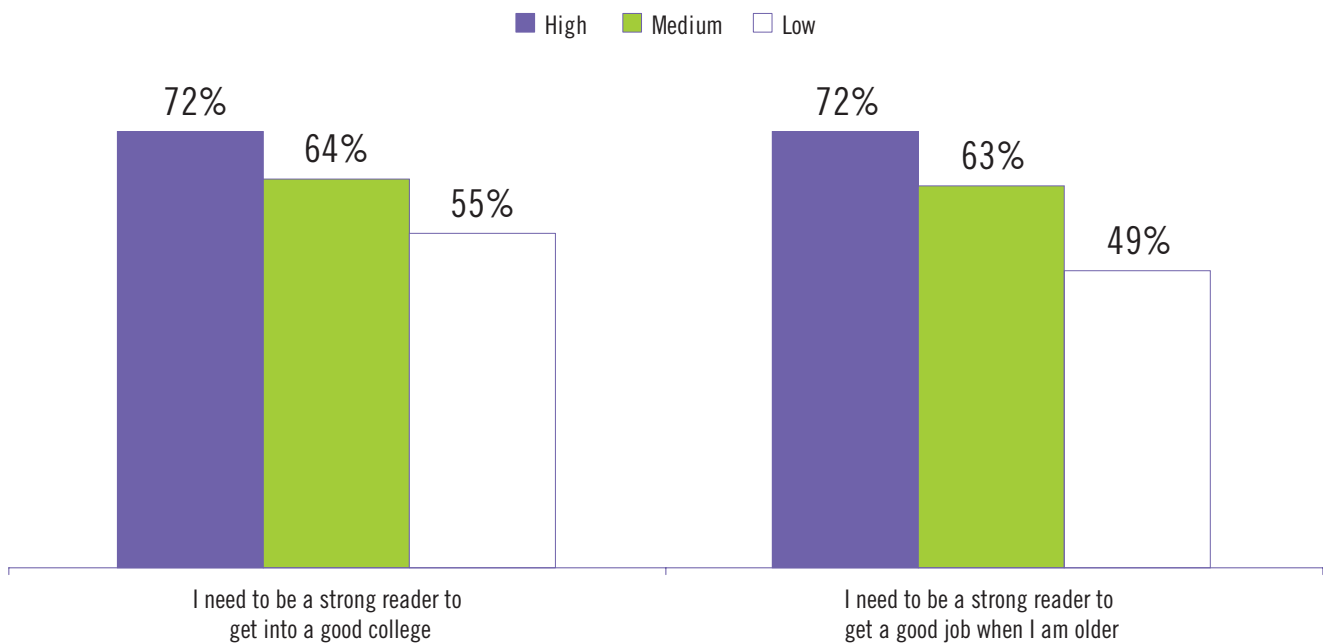
1. ***Trouble findings books I like***
2. Would rather do other things
3. Too much schoolwork/homework
4. Don't have time to read
5. Too tired to spend time reading

#### According To Parents

1. Need to work on schoolwork/homework
2. Would rather do other things
3. ***Trouble findings books he/she likes***
4. Doesn't have time
5. Too tired to spend time reading

## High Frequency Readers Are More Likely Than Others To Say Reading Is Important To Future Success

Percent Of Kids Who Agree “A Lot” With Each Of The Following Statements  
Among Reading Frequency Groups



Note: Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: “Every day,” “Once a week,” “Once a month,” or “Never.” All other kids selected from these responses, in addition to the following: “4-6 times a week,” “2-3 times a week,” “2-3 times a month,” “Less than once a month, but at least once a year,” and “Less than once a year.” Reader groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

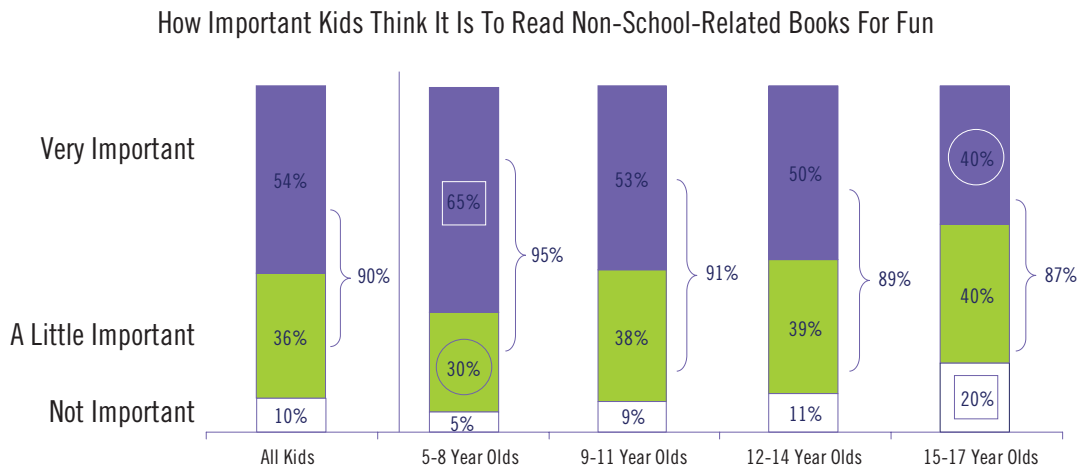
## Boys Are Less Likely Than Girls To Have Positive Attitudes About Reading

- Fewer boys than girls say they enjoy reading for fun and engage in the activity on a regular basis. Additionally, more boys than girls consider reading for fun unimportant.

% Answering...	All Kids	Boys	Girls
	500	250	250
Enjoy reading for fun "A lot"	53	49	57
Read books for fun every day (High Frequency Reader)	31	26	36
Reading is "Not at all" important	9	14	5

## Kids Ages 5-8 Are More Apt Than Others To Acknowledge The Importance Of Reading For Fun

- Although nearly all kids (90%) consider reading for fun at least “a little important,” younger kids are likely to have stronger views about the importance of this activity.



## Younger Kids Are More Likely Than Others To Link Reading To Future Success

Kids' Attitudes Towards Reading

% Who Agree "A Lot"	Total	5-8	9-11	12-14	15-17
I need to be a strong reader so I can get a good job when I'm older	63	67	67	55	58

Note: Significance testing between groups has been done at the 90 percent confidence level, and is designated by the following notations throughout this report:

– Significantly higher at 90 percent confidence interval = □

– Significantly lower at 90 percent confidence interval = ○

## High Frequency Readers Are More Likely To Describe Themselves As “Smart” And “Good Students”

### How Kids Describe Themselves

% Answering....	Frequency Of Reading			
	Total	High	Medium	Low
	500	145	228	127
Friendly	79	83	79	76
Happy	76	82	75	70
Smart	73	84	72	64
Good student	73	84	72	60
Funny	70	69	65	80
Creative	63	78	55	60
Well-behaved	60	66	62	49
Good at sports/athletic	56	58	52	61
Popular	44	49	42	42
Leader	40	39	39	40
Shy	22	23	19	24
Class clown	19	15	13	34
Stressed	8	8	6	11
Trouble maker	7	6	6	12
None of these	1	1	1	3

Note: Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: “Every day,” “Once a week,” “Once a month,” or “Never.” All other kids selected from these responses, in addition to the following: “4-6 times a week,” “2-3 times a week,” “2-3 times a month,” “Less than once a month, but at least once a year,” and “Less than once a year.” Reader groups are defined as: High = Reads every day, Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week, Low = 2-3 Reads times a month or less.

## II. PARENTAL ROLE IN KIDS' READING

**Parents play a significant role in shaping kids' reading behaviors, but they could be doing more to encourage kids to read for fun.**

- Parents are a top source of book suggestions for kids who read frequently.
- Although reading tops the list of skills parents think are important for kids to have, only 21 percent of parents are frequent readers.
- Children of frequent readers are more likely to be frequent readers themselves.
- Parents of older kids are less likely than those of younger kids to view reading for fun as important.

## High Frequency Reading Kids Are More Likely Than Low Frequency Readers To Cite Parents As A Source For Book Ideas

Top Ranked Person/Place Kids Get Most Of Their Ideas About Books To Read  
By Reading Frequency Group

High Frequency	Medium Frequency	Low Frequency
#1 Library/Librarian (25%)	#1 Teachers (17%)	#1 Teachers (20%)
#2 Parents (21%)	#2 Library/Librarian (16%)	#2 Friends (16%)
#3 Friends (15%)	#3 Friends (14%)	#3 Library/Librarians (13%)
#4 Teachers (10%)	#4 Parents (14%)	#4 Television (9%)
#5 Book store (10%)	#5 Book store (11%)	#5 Parents (8%)

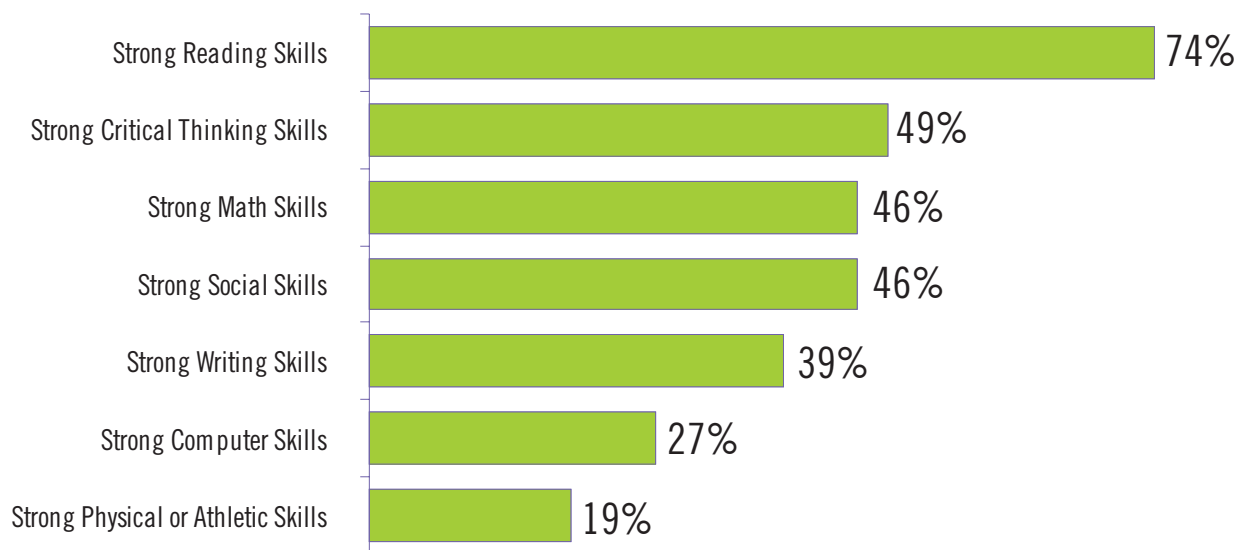
High Frequency Readers are more than twice as likely as Low Frequency Readers to mention parents as their top source for book ideas (21% vs. 8%).

Note: Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: "Every day," "Once a week," "Once a month," or "Never." All other kids selected from these responses, in addition to the following: "4-6 times a week," "2-3 times a week," "2-3 times a month," "Less than once a month, but at least once a year," and "Less than once a year." Reader groups are defined as: High = Reads every day, Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week, Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

## Parents See “Strong Reading Skills” As The Most Important Skill Their Kids Should Have

- About three-quarters of parents believe that it is important for their kids to have strong reading skills.
  - Among the other skills that they consider important are strong critical thinking (49%), math (46%), and social (46%) skills .

Important Skills Parents Believe Their Kids Should Have



Note: Parents were asked to select three items from a list of seven options.

## Parents See Many Immediate Benefits In Kids Reading For Fun

- Top benefits include doing better in school and using their imagination.

### Parents' Attitudes About Reading For Fun

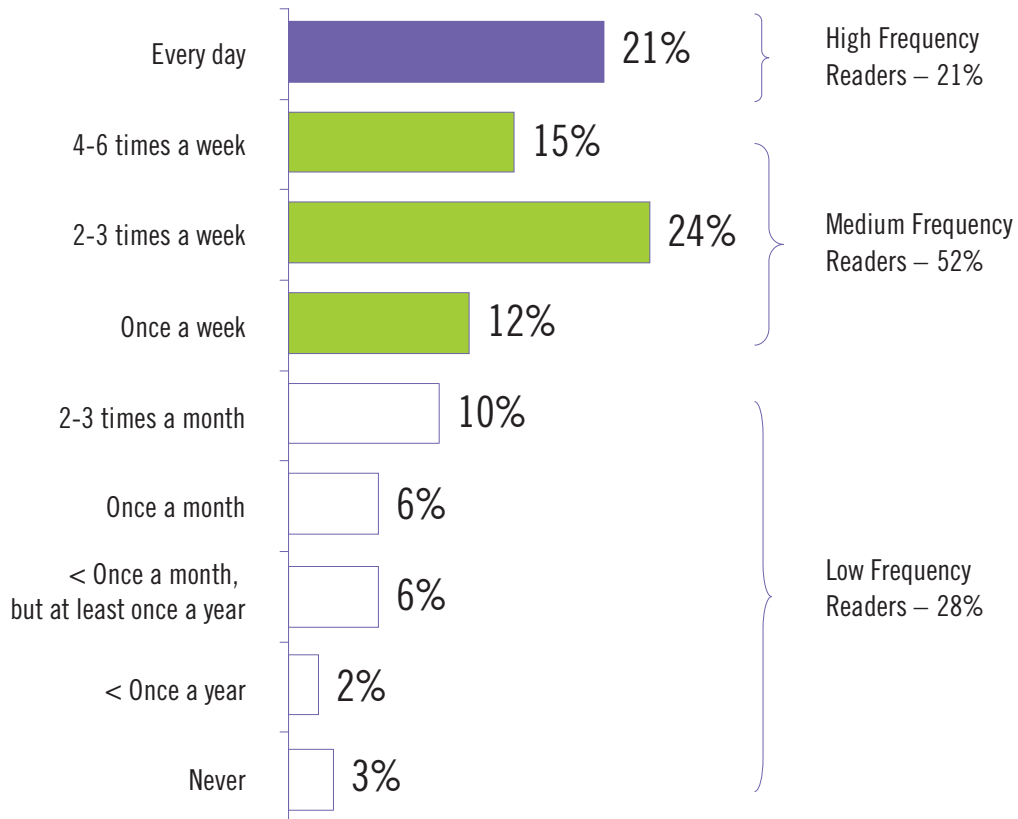
% Who Agree "Strongly"	Total
Helps my child do better in school	77
Allows my child to use his/her imagination	76
Lets my child explore areas in which he/she has an interest	71
Gives my child a feeling of accomplishment	70
Is something my child enjoys	63
Helps my child relax/calm down when stressed or upset	56

## Two In Three Parents Agree That Strong Reading Skills Are Critical To Future Success

Percent Of Parents Who Agree “Strongly”  
With The Following Statements About Reading

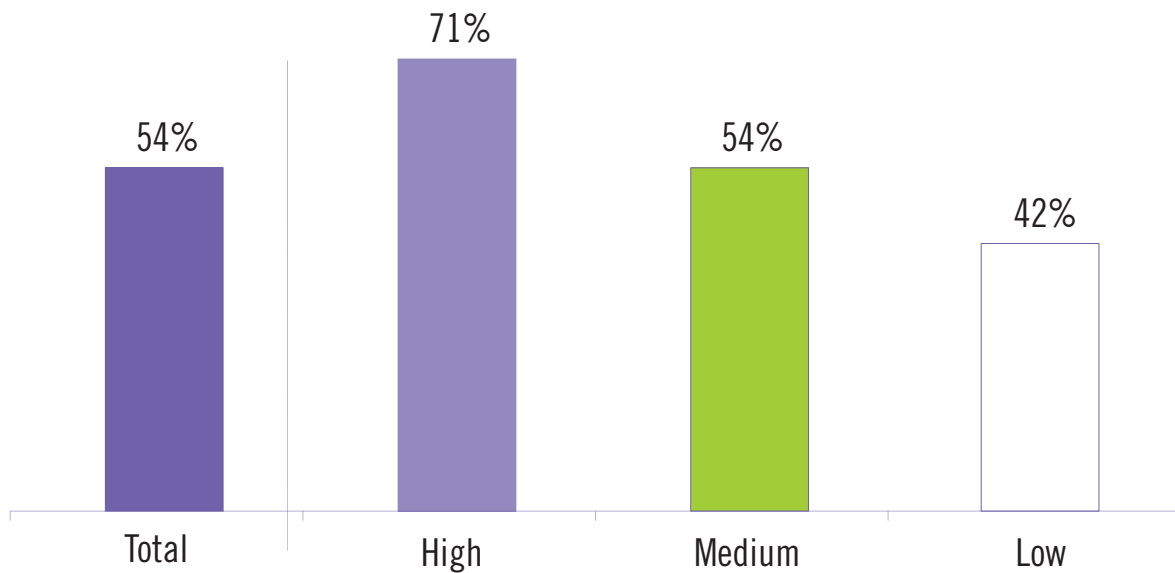


## Only One In Five Parents Is A High Frequency Reader



## Children Of High Frequency Reading Parents Are More Apt Than Other Youth To Perceive Reading For Fun As Important

Percent Of Kids Who Say Reading Books For Fun Is “Very Important”  
By Parent Reading Frequency Group

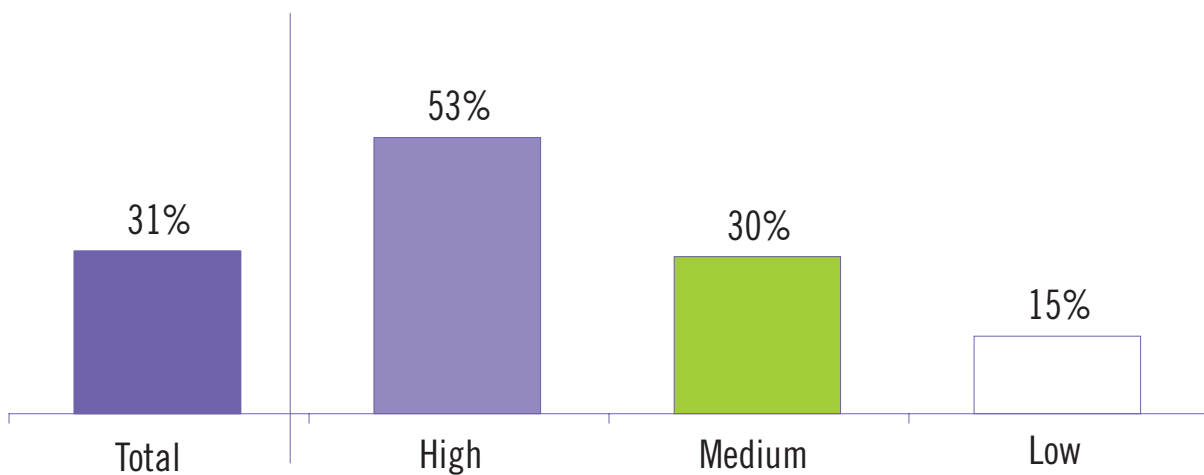


Note: Parent reading frequency groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

## Children Of High Frequency Reading Parents Are More Likely Than Other Youth To Say They Regularly Engage In Reading For Fun

- This finding indicates that parents are important reading role models for their children.

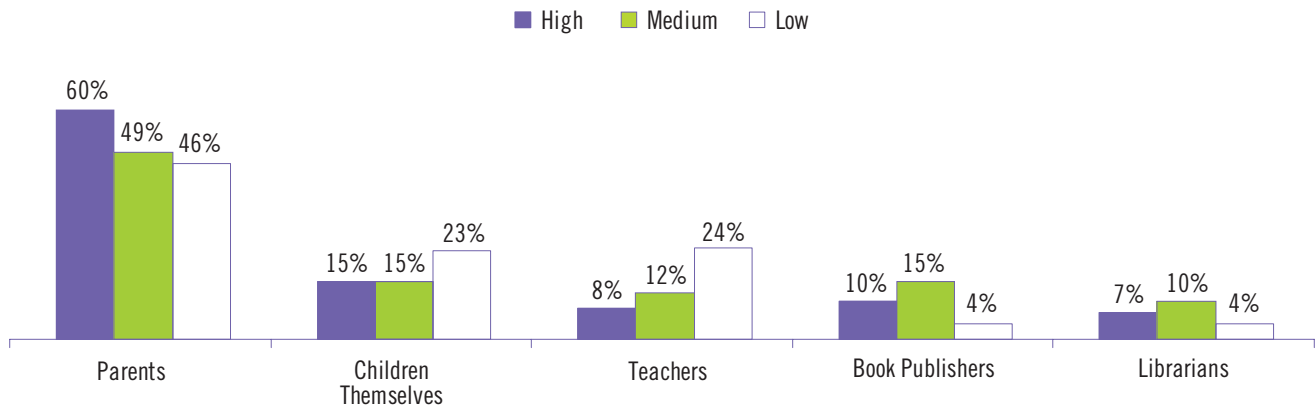
Percent Of Kids Who Say They Read Books For Fun “Every Day”  
By Parent Reading Frequency Group



Note: Parent reading frequency groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

## High Frequency Reading Parents Are More Likely Than Other Parents To Perceive Themselves As Primarily Responsible For Encouraging Their Kids To Read

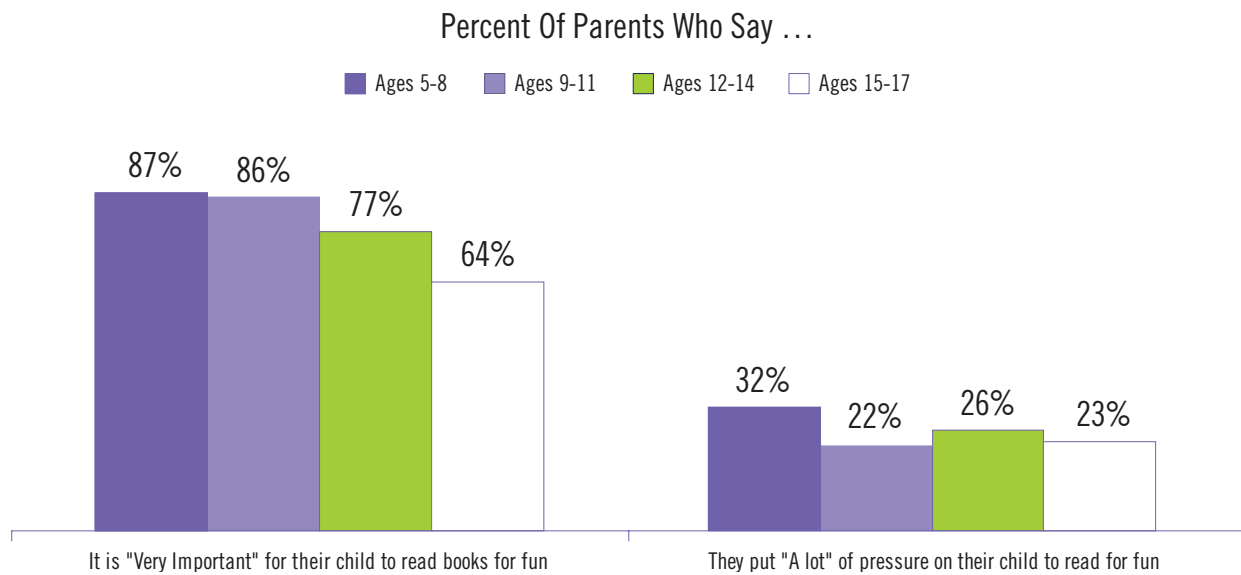
Percent Of Parents Who Say Each Of The Following Groups Is Most (Ranked #1) Responsible for Encouraging Children To Read More For Fun  
By Parent Reading Frequency Group



Note: Parent reading frequency groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

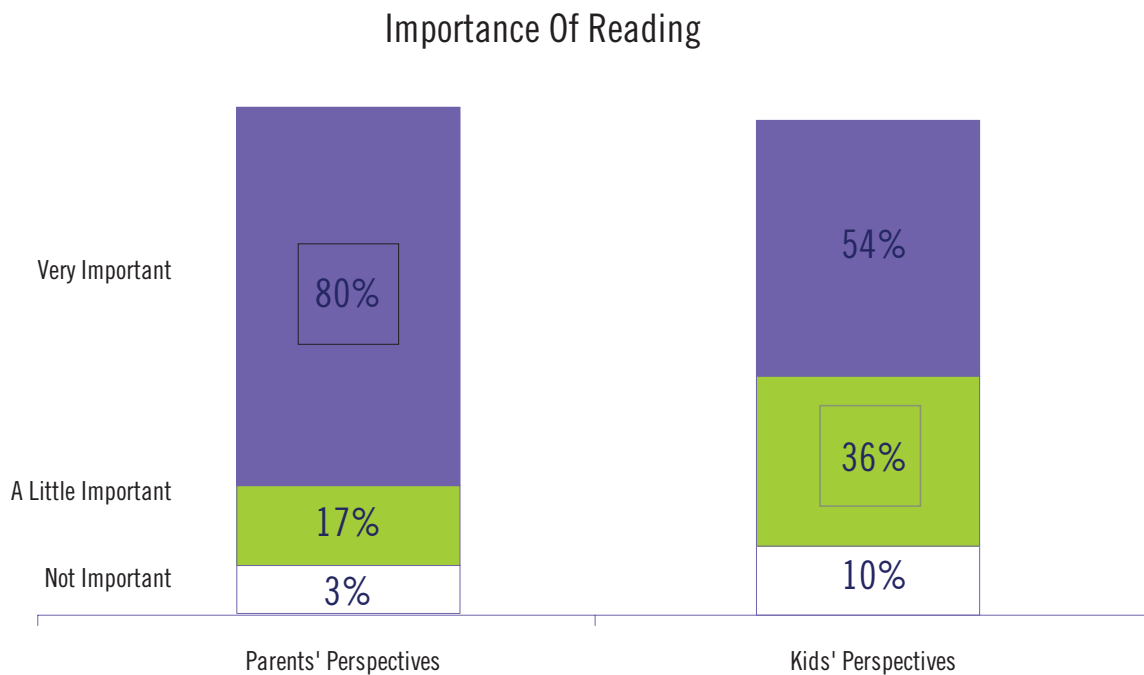
## Parents Of Older Versus Younger Kids Are Less Likely To Say Reading For Fun Is “Very Important” For Their Child

- Additionally, data suggests parental pressure on kids to read for fun wanes after children reach age 8. This is consistent with lower reading engagement among kids after this age.



## There Is A Disconnect Between Parents' And Kids' Views About The Importance Of Reading For Fun

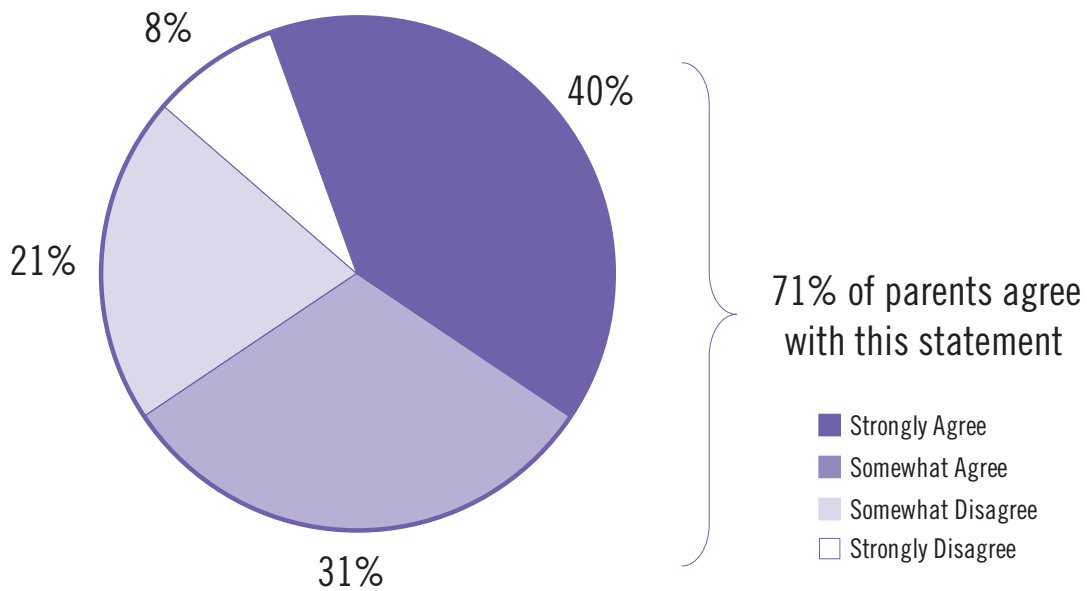
- Overall, 4 out of 5 parents think that it is "very important" for their kids to read books outside of required school reading, compared with 54 percent of kids who say they should read books for fun.



## Most Parents Say That They Read More When They Were Young Than Their Children Do Now

Percent Of Parents Who “Agree” With The Following Statement

“When I was the same age my child is now, I read for fun much more frequently than he/she does.”



## III. HARRY POTTER: THE POWER OF ONE SERIES

**Parents and kids say that Harry Potter has a positive effect on kids' reading and their performance in school.**

- Harry Potter has inspired kids to read.
  - More than half of kids and parents say that kids did not read for fun before Harry Potter.
  - More than three-quarters of Harry Potter readers say that reading the books or listening to their parents read them has encouraged them to read other books.
  - Although generally kids' reading drops off after age 8 and kids say they have trouble finding books they like, on average Harry Potter readers begin reading the series at age 9 and continue reading it as they mature.
  - More than half of all kids and parents have read Harry Potter.
- Harry Potter improves performance in school, according to kids and parents.
  - The majority of children say they have been doing better in school since reading Harry Potter and more than three-quarters of their parents agree that is the case.
  - Harry Potter readers view themselves as better students compared to other kids and are more likely to consider strong reading skills important to future success.
- The favorable effect of reading Harry Potter is particularly strong for boys.
- Harry Potter readers remain loyal to the series, even after book seven.

## Half Of Harry Potter Readers Say They Did Not Read Books For Fun Before Harry Potter; Parents Agree

% Who Agree "A Lot/A Little"	Kids
	286
I didn't read books for fun before I started reading Harry Potter	51
% Who Agree "Strongly/Somewhat"	Parents
	260
Before reading Harry Potter, my child didn't enjoy reading for fun	51

Note: Asked of kids who say they have read Harry Potter or that their parents have read Harry Potter to them. Asked of parents who say their child has read Harry Potter.

## The Majority Of Harry Potter Readers Say The Series Has Made Them Interested In Reading Other Books And Helped Them Perform Better In School

Kids' Attitudes Towards Reading Harry Potter

	Harry Potter Readers 286
Reading (or listening to my parent read) Harry Potter has made me interested in reading other books	76%
I've been doing better in school since I/my parents started reading Harry Potter books	65%

## Parents See Positive Results Of Kids' Reading Harry Potter

Parents' Attitudes Towards Their Child Reading Harry Potter

% Who Agree "Strongly/Somewhat"	Parents 260
Reading Harry Potter has helped my child enjoy reading more	89
Reading Harry Potter has made my child want to read more frequently	85
Reading Harry Potter has helped my child in school	76
Before reading Harry Potter, my child didn't enjoy reading for fun	51

Note: Asked of parents who say their child has read Harry Potter.

## Harry Potter Readers Are More Likely To Consider Reading Important And Beneficial

Reading Valuation Among Harry Potter Readers Versus Non-Harry Potter Readers

% Answering	All Kids	Read Harry Potter	Did Not Read Harry Potter
	500	286	214
Reading for fun is “Very Important”	54	58	49
% Agree “A Lot” That...			
I need to be a strong reader so I can get a good job when I’m older	63	67	56

## Harry Potter Readers Perceive Themselves As Better Students

How Readers Of Harry Potter Perceive Themselves Compared To Other Kids

% Answering	All Kids	Read Harry Potter	Did Not Read Harry Potter
	500	286	214
Their grades are "Better" than peers	39	45	30
Their reading abilities are "Better" than peers	38	43	32
Describe themselves as "Good Student"	73	81	61
Describe themselves as "Smart"	73	77	69
Describe themselves as "Leader"	40	45	33

## Harry Potter Is Popular Among Kids Nine Years Old And Older

- On average, kids say they start reading Harry Potter at age 9.

	Kids	Age			
		5-8	9-11	12-14	15-17
	500	159	109	159	73
Have read Harry Potter	54%	39%	59%	63%	57%
Interested in reading/ re-reading Harry Potter	68%	68%	70%	69%	60%

## Half Of All Parents And Kids Have Read Harry Potter

	Kids	Parents
	500	500
Percent who have read Harry Potter	54%	50%

## Boys Are More Likely Than Girls To Have Read Harry Potter

	Total	Boy	Girl
	500	250	250
Have read Harry Potter	54%	57%	51%
Interested in reading/re-reading Harry Potter	68%	68%	68%

## The Impact of Harry Potter Is Particularly Strong Among Boys

- Boys who have read the Harry Potter series are more likely than girls to agree that they did not read books for fun before Harry Potter. Findings among parents support this view.

% Who Agree "A Lot/A Little"	Boys	Girls
	150	136
I didn't read books for fun before I started reading Harry Potter	61	41
% Who Agree "Strongly/Somewhat"	Parents of Boys	Parents of Girls
	144	116
Before reading Harry Potter, my child didn't enjoy reading for fun	55	45

Note: Asked of kids who say they have read Harry Potter or that their parents have read Harry Potter to them. Asked of parents who say their child has read Harry Potter.

## Harry Potter Readers Remain Loyal To The Series

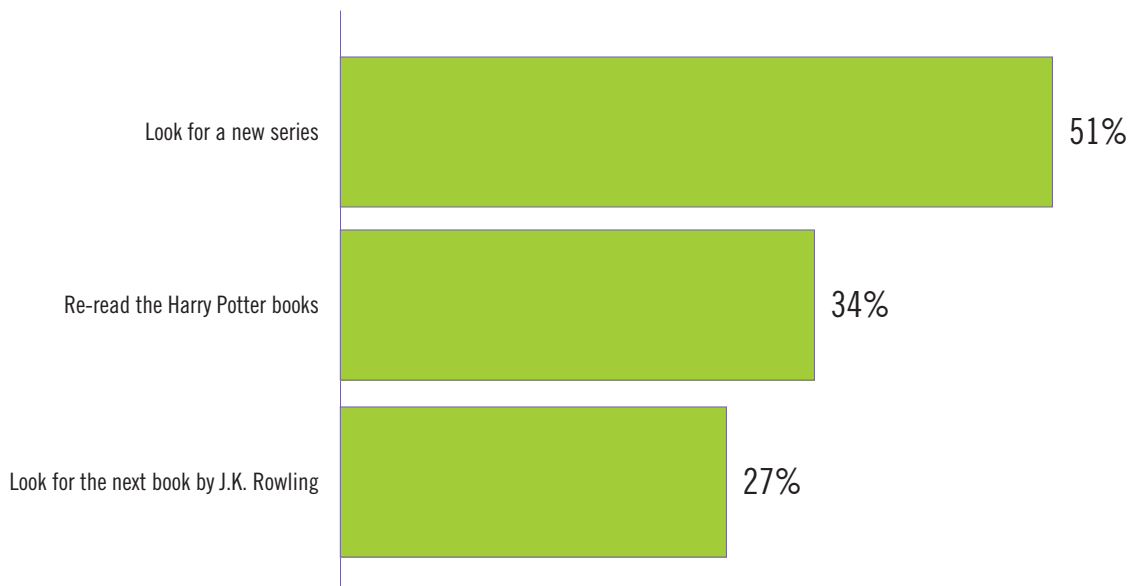
- Ninety percent of Harry Potter readers are interested in reading or re-reading books from the series in the future.
- Eighty-four percent of Harry Potter readers plan to read all the books in the series.



## After The Seventh Harry Potter Book, Many Readers Will Be In Search Of A New Book Series

- Nearly one in five (19%) Harry Potter readers say they do not believe the series will really be over after the seventh book.

### Harry Potter Readers Say They Will Do The Following When There Are No More (New) Harry Potter Books



## IV. ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN YOUTH READING

**Contrary to what might be expected, kids who use technology platforms to read or listen to books also tend to be high frequency readers.**

- Thirty-four percent of kids who use technology platforms are frequent readers, versus 25 percent of kids who don't.
- Four in ten kids use a technology device to read, most often a computer.
- Kids who use technology platforms to read are almost twice as likely as those who don't to report that parents put "a lot" of pressure on them to read for fun.

## Four In 10 Kids Today Report Using A Technology Device For Reading

- A computer is the most often used technology platform for reading.

### Types Of Technology Devices Kids Have Used To Read

% Who Read Using A Technology Device	Total
	500
Technology platforms used to read	41
Computer	23
iPod	5
Other type of MP3 player	2
PDA/Blackberry/Palm Pilot	1
Other	17

## Kids Who Use Technology Platforms To Read Are More Apt To Be High Frequency Readers

% Answering...	All Kids	Use Tech Platforms	Do Not Use Tech Platforms
	500	263	185
<b>Reading Frequency Groups</b>			
High	31	34	25
Medium	45	44	49
Low	25	22	26

### Notes:

Pressure from parents may be a factor here. Kids who use technology platforms to read are almost twice as likely as those who do not use them to report parents put "a lot" of pressure on them to read for fun (31% versus 16%).

Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: "Every day," "Once a week," "Once a month," or "Never." All other kids selected from these responses, in addition to the following: "4-6 times a week," "2-3 times a week," "2-3 times a month," "Less than once a month, but at least once a year," and "Less than once a year." Reading groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = Reads 2-3 times a month or less.

Technology platform users include children who have listened to audio-books and/or read books using a technology device.

# APPENDIX

## Research Objectives

- As a leader in children's literacy, Scholastic seeks to provide insights to the public on attitudes and behaviors of children and parents related to reading.
- The primary objectives for the research were:
  - To understand the importance children and their parents place on reading for fun.
  - To explore the factors that influence whether children become frequent readers and the role of their parents.
- Upon eligibility, parents or primary guardians completed the survey themselves using a computer.
  - Children ages 5-8 (and others as necessary) were read the survey by professional interviewers and asked to answer. All other children completed the survey themselves using a computer.
- Quotas for race, gender, and child age group were established to ensure ample base sizes for analysis purposes.
- The final data were weighted by the following variables to ensure sample representation of the U.S. market:

- Region
- Race
- Child's Age
- Parent's Age (by gender)
- Parent's Marital Status
- Parent's Education (by gender)

## Methodology

- Interviews were conducted from January 16 to February 8, 2006 with 1,000 individuals – 500 children ages 5-17 and one parent or primary guardian per child.
- Parents/primary guardians were recruited via mall-intercept in 25 major cities across the U.S. They were screened to meet the following criteria:
  - Have at least one child ages 5-17 present during the time of the intercept at the mall.
  - Are related to the child either as parent, grandparent, or caretaker.
- Significance testing between groups has been done at the 90 percent confidence level, and is designated by the following notations throughout this report:
  - Significantly higher at 90 percent confidence interval =
  - Significantly lower at 90 percent confidence interval =
- The margin of error is  $\pm 4.5$  percentage points.

## Sample Overview

### Age Groups

5-8	32%
9-11	26%
12-14	29%
15-17	13%
Average Age of Children in Sample	10.4

### Children's Gender

Male	49%
Female	51%

### Race

Caucasian	65%
African American	15%
Hispanic Origin/Decent	16%
Asian	3%
Other	2%

### Parents' Marital Status

Married/Unmarried & Living Together	78%
Never Married	11%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	11%

### Parents' Age

Under 25	1%
25-34	22%
35-44	51%
45-54	23%
55+	3%
Average Age of Parent	39.9

### Household Income

Under \$50K	55%
\$50K +	45%
Median Household Income	\$47.5K

### Parents' Gender

Male	25%
Female	75%

### Parents Employed

80%

### Parents' Educational Status

Less Than Some College	37%
Some College or More	63%

Total kids in sample: (n=500)

# Kids & Family Reading Report



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