



Kids and Family Reading Report™

June 2006



Research Objectives

- As a leader in children's literacy, Scholastic seeks to provide insights to the public on the key 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.

Study Highlights

- Kids enjoy reading for fun and think it is important; however, their reading drops off significantly after age eight.
 - More than 40% of kids ages 5-8 are high frequency readers, dropping to 29% among kids ages 9-11.
- When parents are frequent readers, kids tend to read more; yet only 21% of parents say they are high frequency readers themselves and this can have a direct impact on their kids.
 - Children of high frequency reading parents are more likely than other youth to regularly engage in reading for fun.
- Kids say that the #1 reason why they do not read more is because they can not find books they like to read.



Study Highlights

- Parents are a top source of book suggestions for kids who read most.
 - Children who are high frequency readers are more than twice as likely as low frequency readers to cite their parents as a top source for good books to read.
- Four in ten kids now use a technology device to read - most often a computer.
 - Contrary to what might be expected, kids who use technology platforms to read are more often high frequency readers.
- Four in ten kids report reading MORE during the summer.
 - Most kids who read more during the summer say their parents encourage them to do so.
 - Kids who read more books during the summer are more likely than others to say summer reading helps them do better in school.

Methodology

- Interviews were conducted from January 16 - 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 US. 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.
 - Be related to the child either as parent, grandparent or caretaker.
- Upon eligibility, the parent or primary guardian 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.

Methodology Cont'd

- 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 US market:
 - Region
 - Race
 - Child's Age
 - Parent's Age (by gender)
 - Parent's Marital Status
 - Parent's Education (by gender)
- Significance testing between groups has been done at the 90% confidence levels, and are designated by the following notations throughout this report:
 - Significantly higher at 90% confidence interval = 
 - Significantly lower at 90% confidence interval = 
- The margin of error is ± 4.5 percentage points.

Sample Overview*

Age Groups

5-8	32%
9-11	26%
12-14	29%
15-17	13%
<i>Average Age of children in Sample</i>	<i>10.4</i>

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%
<i>Average Age of Parent</i>	<i>39.9</i>

Household Income

Under \$50K	55%
\$50K +	45%
<i>Median Household Income</i>	<i>\$47.5K</i>

Parents' Gender

Male	25%
Female	75%

Parents Employed

80%

Parents' Educational Status

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

*Total kids sample (n = 500)

I. Kids' Relationship With Reading

Kids Are Reading And They Are Reading For FUN, But They Are Not Reading Enough

- The vast majority of kids today enjoy reading for fun and value the importance of reading. Many also feel strongly that good reading skills are linked to future academic and professional success.
- But, most kids are not reading enough. Despite the importance kids place on reading for fun, only about 3 in 10 can be classified as high frequency readers who read books for fun every day.
 - Age 8 is the critical drop-off age for reading engagement. Older kids are less likely to see benefits to reading and are less engaged in reading for fun.
 - Data also indicate girls are more likely than boys to have positive attitudes about reading and to regularly engage in reading for fun.
- The benefits of reading are evidenced by the attitudes of high frequency readers. Compared to others, they are more likely to have positive self-perceptions and to associate strong reading skills with future success.

Kids Perceive Reading As Enjoyable And Important

% Of Kids Who Report The Following:



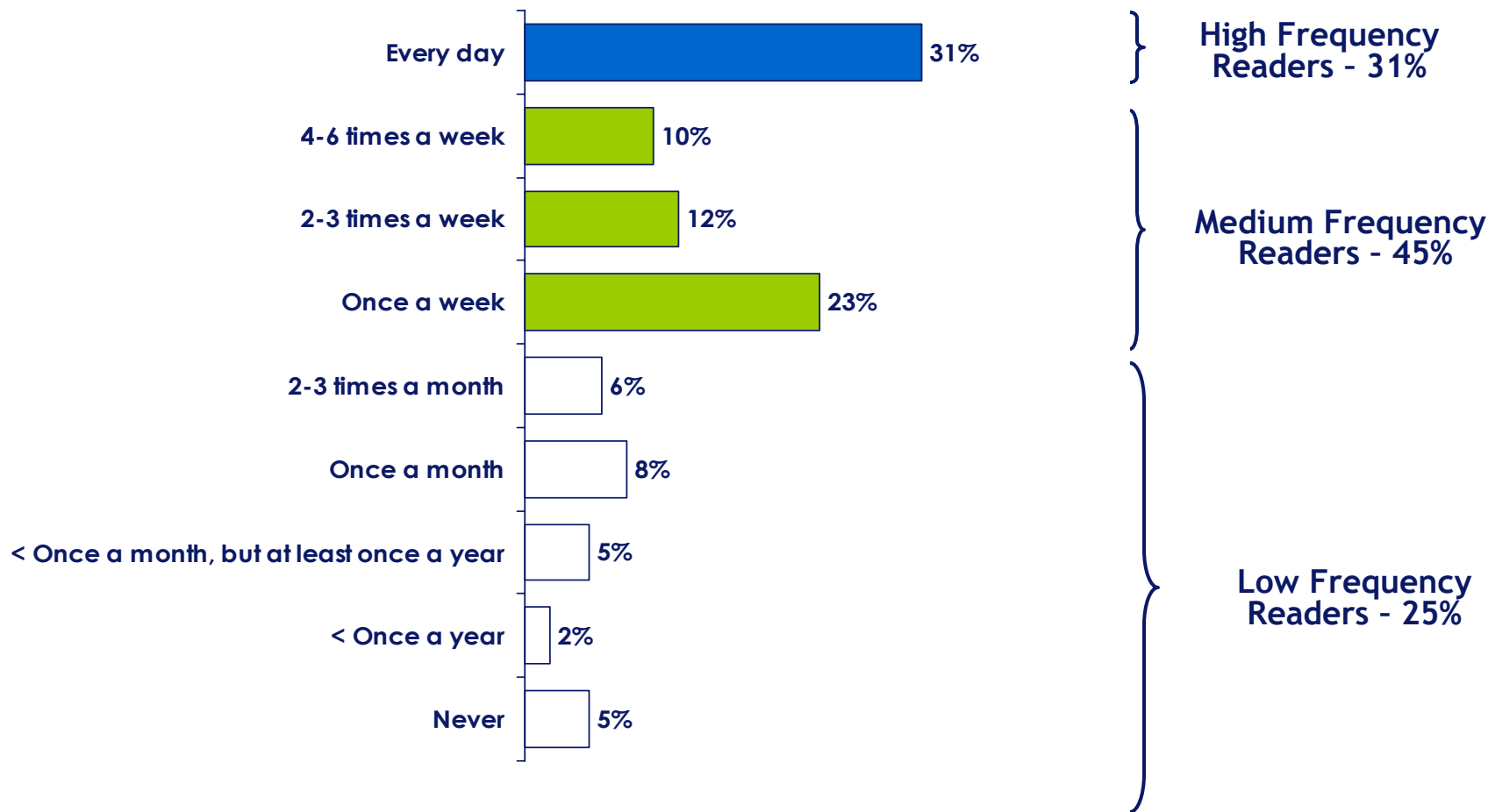
Reading books "for fun" is defined as reading books that are not part of schoolwork or homework.

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

% Of Kids Who Agree "A Lot" With The Following Statements:



However, Only 3 In 10 Kids Are High Frequency Readers



Kids 5-8 were only asked four of the options: Every day, Once a week, Once a Month, Never.

Note: Net percentages may not add up due to rounding.

Kids' Reading Frequency Drops Sharply After Age 8

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

Frequency With Which Kids Read Books For Fun

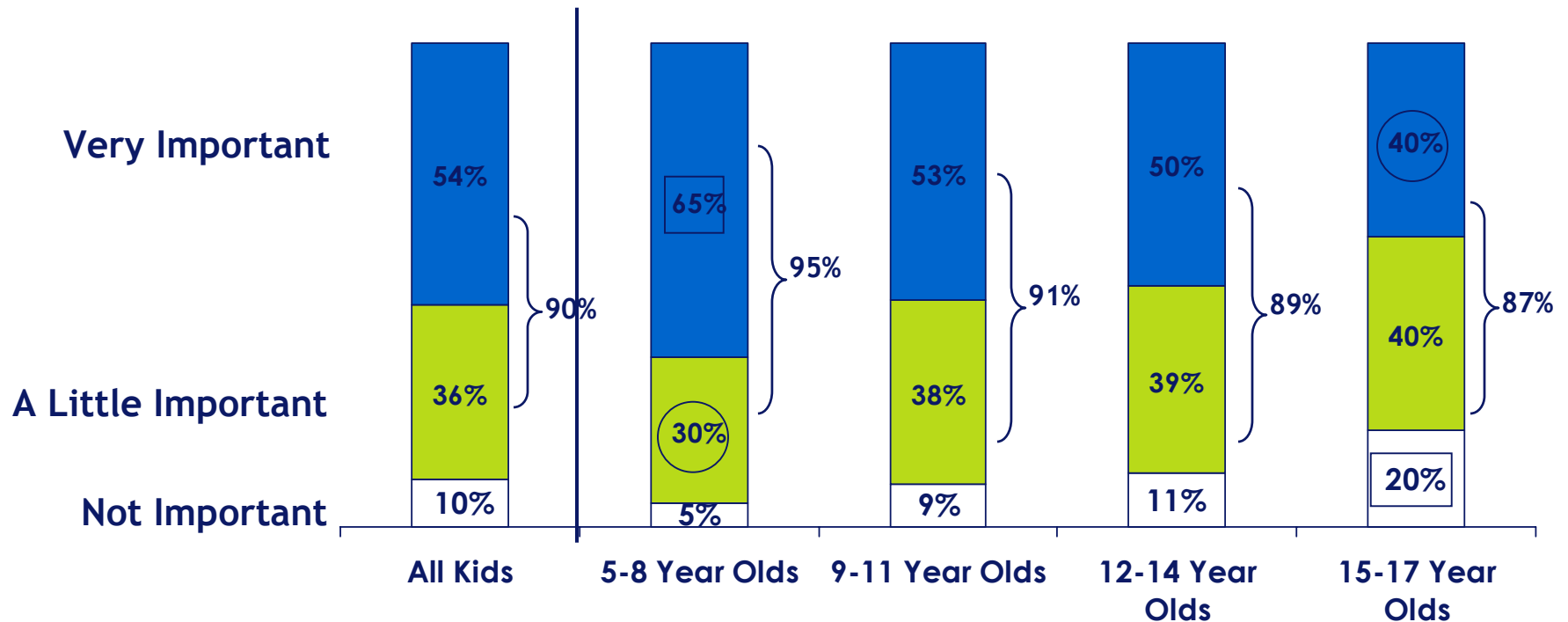
	<u>Total</u>	<u>5-8</u>	<u>9-11</u>	<u>12-14</u>	<u>15-17</u>
<i>% Answering....*</i>	500	159	109	159	73
<u>Reading Frequency Groups</u>					
High	31	44	29	25	16
Medium	45	42	51	44	38
Low	25	14	20	31	46

*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 the following responses: "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 times a month or less.

Kids Ages 5-8 Are Also 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.

How Important Kids Think It Is To Read Non-School Related Books For Fun



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

Kids' Attitudes Towards Reading

	<u>Total</u>	<u>5-8</u>	<u>9-11</u>	<u>12-14</u>	<u>15-17</u>
<i>% Who Agree "A Lot"</i>	500	159	109	159	73
I need to be a strong reader so I can get a good job when I'm older	63	67	67	55	58

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.

<i>% Answering...</i>	<u>All Kids</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
	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%

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

How Kids Describe Themselves
Frequency Of Reading*

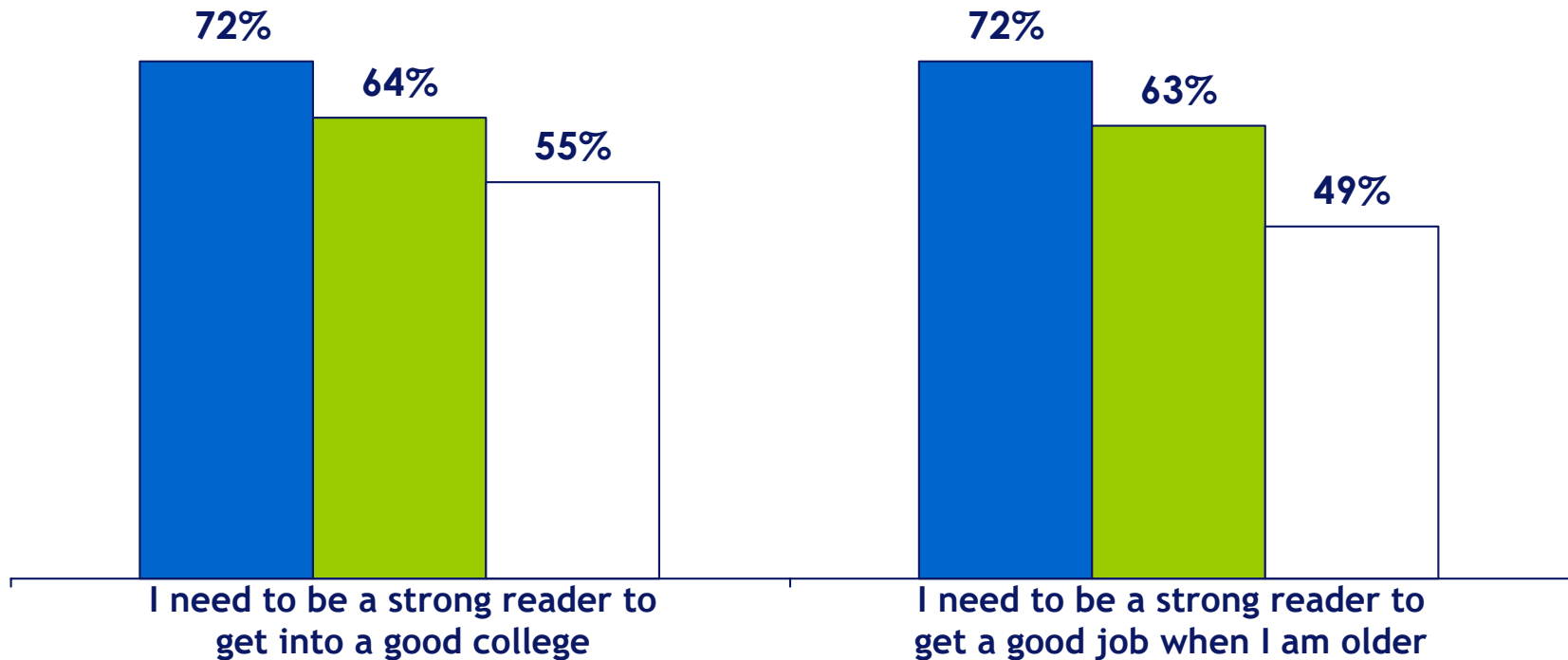
	<u>Total</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Low</u>
<i>% Answering....</i>	500	145	228	127
Friendly	79	83	79	76
Happy	76	82	75	70
Smart	73	84	72	64
Good Student	73	84	72	60
Funny	70	69	65	80
Creative	63	78	55	60
Well-Behaved	60	66	62	49
Good at sports/athletic	56	58	52	61
Popular	44	49	42	42
Leader	40	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
<i>None of these</i>	1	1	1	3

*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 their responses from the above items, 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 times a month or less.

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

% Kids Agree "A Lot" With Each Of The Following Statements
Among Reading Frequency Groups*

■ High ■ Medium □ Low



*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 their responses from the above items, 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 times a month or less.

II. Parental Role In Kids' Reading

Parents Rank Reading As The Most Critical Skill For Kids, Yet Most Parents Could Be Better Reading Role Models

- **Parents believe their children benefit from reading for fun.**
 - Reading tops the list of skills parents think are important for kids to have, distantly followed by strong critical thinking, math and social skills.
 - Parents value reading as the most important skill for kids to have to help them get into college and get a good job.
- **The majority of parents could be setting a better example for their children, as only 21% of parents are high frequency readers!**
 - The study suggests that children of high frequency readers are markedly more apt than others to engage in and be favorably predisposed toward reading.

Parents Play A Significant Role In Shaping Kids' Reading Behaviors

- **Parents' reading behaviors are likely to have the greatest impact on kids' involvement with books and data suggest most parents could be doing more to encourage kids to read for fun.**
 - Parents who are high frequency readers are more likely than other parents to view themselves as primarily responsible for encouraging youth reading.
 - Kids who are high frequency readers are more than twice as likely as low frequency readers to mention parents as a source for book ideas.
- **Differences in parents' attitudes and behaviors related to reading by age of child suggest that modeling appropriate reading attitudes and behaviors on a continual basis as children age is critical.**
 - Parents of older kids are less likely than parents of younger kids to view reading for fun as important.

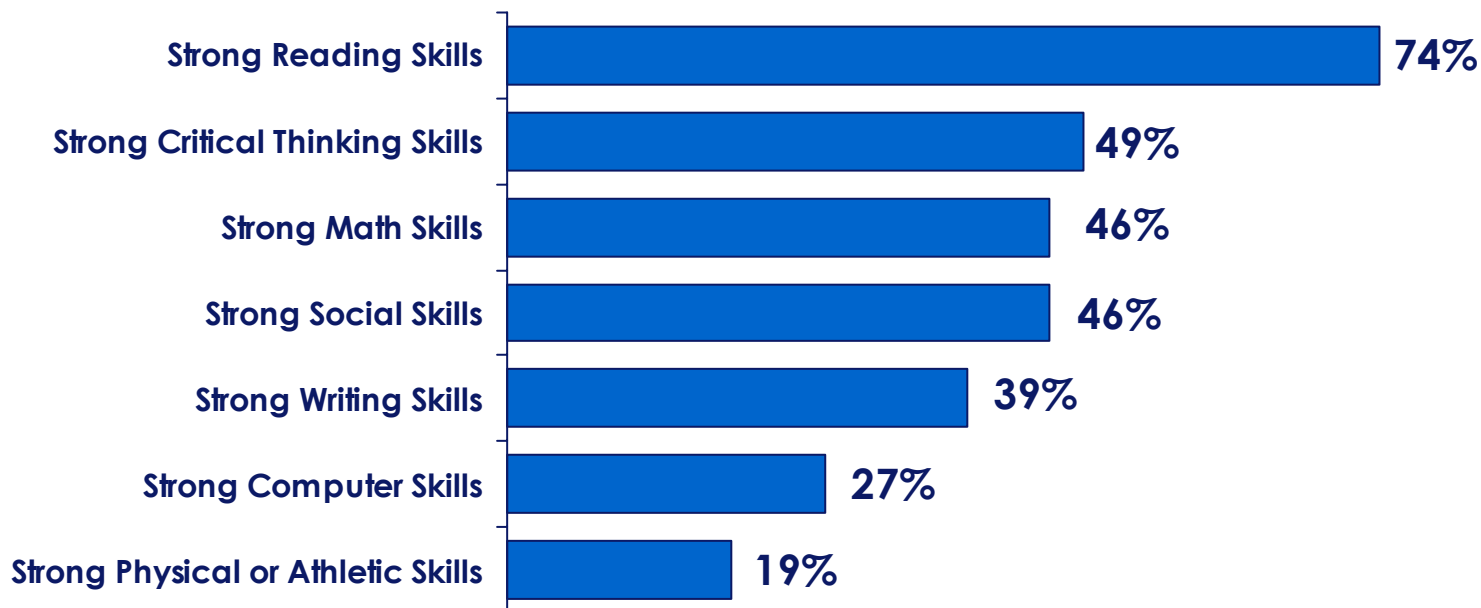
Parents And Kids Are Not On The Same “Page” When It Comes To Views About The Importance Of And Barriers To Reading

- **Differences in the perceived importance of reading among kids and parents suggest parents could do more to communicate the value of reading to kids.**
 - Significantly more parents than kids feel reading for fun is “very important”.
 - Additionally, most parents view their kids as less engaged with reading than they were as children.
- **Misperceptions about the barriers to youth reading among parents may be hampering efforts to help kids develop appropriate reading attitudes and behaviors.**
 - Parents and kids perceive different barriers to youth reading. Parents indicate schoolwork and homework as top barriers, while kids claim the top barrier is difficulty finding books they like.

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 for their kids to possess are strong critical thinking (49%), math (46%) and social (46%) skills .

Important Skills Parents Believe Their Kids Should Have*



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

Parents See Many Immediate Benefits In Kids Reading For Fun

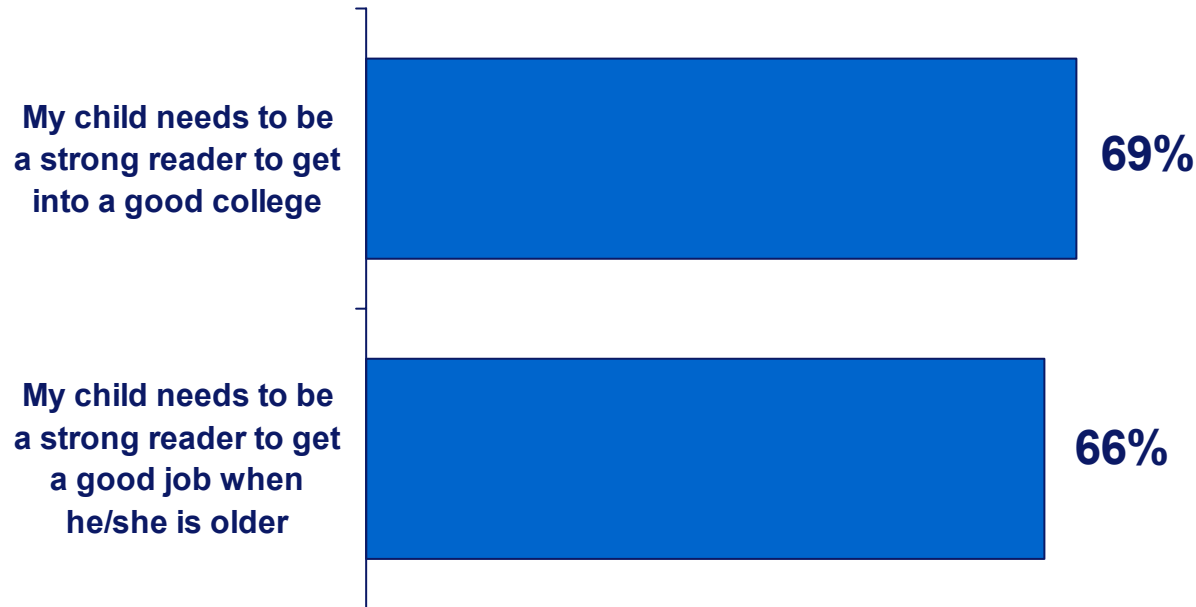
- Top benefits include doing better in school and using their imagination.

Parents' Attitudes About Reading For Fun

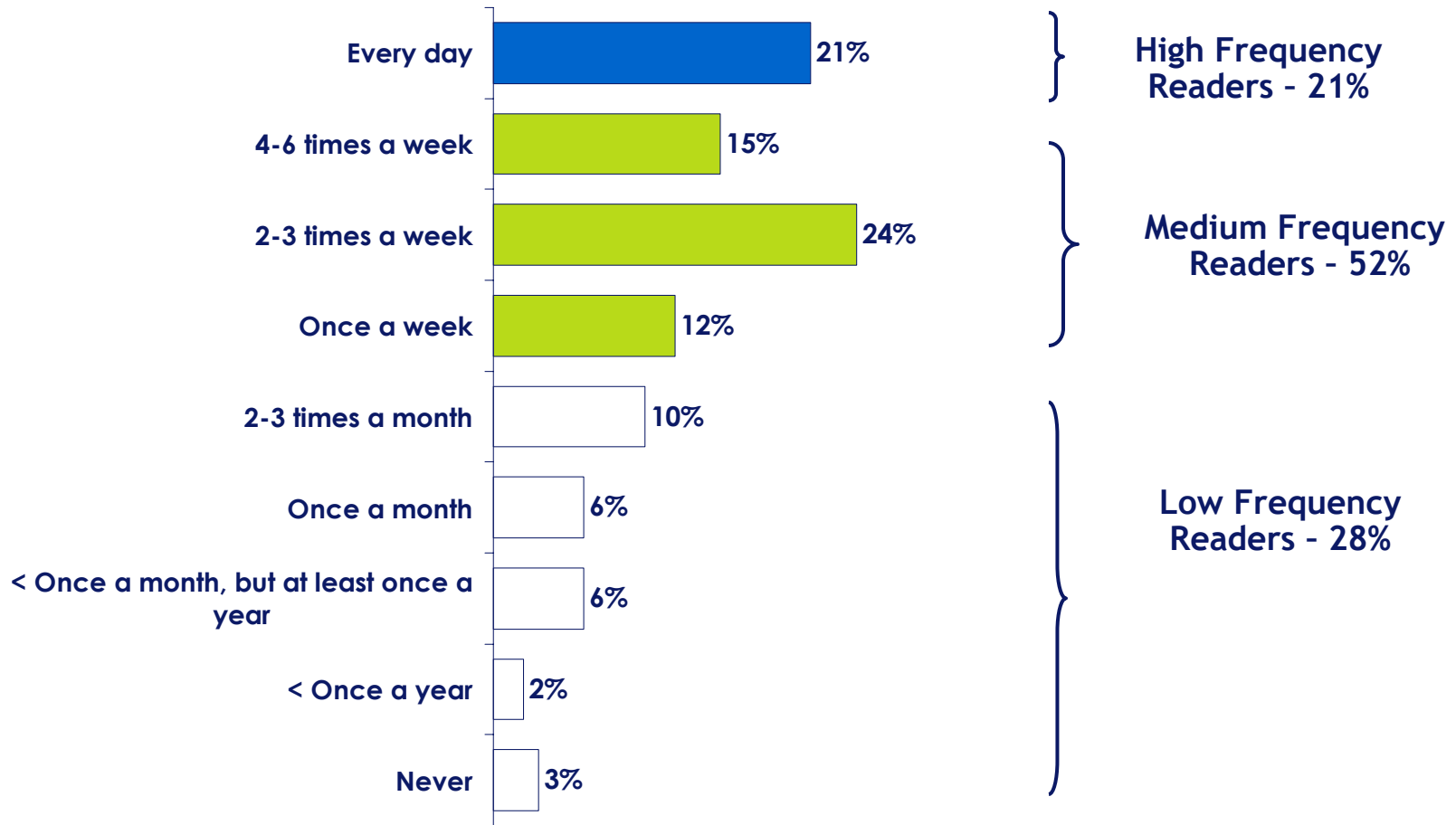
% Who Agree "Strongly"	<u>Total</u>
	<i>500</i>
Helps my child do better in school	77
Allows my child to use his/her imagination	76
Lets my child explore areas in which he/she has an interest	71
Gives my child a feeling of accomplishment	70
Is something my child enjoys	63
Helps my child relax/calm down when he/she is stressed or upset	56

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

% Of Parents Who Agree "Strongly" With The Following Statements About Reading



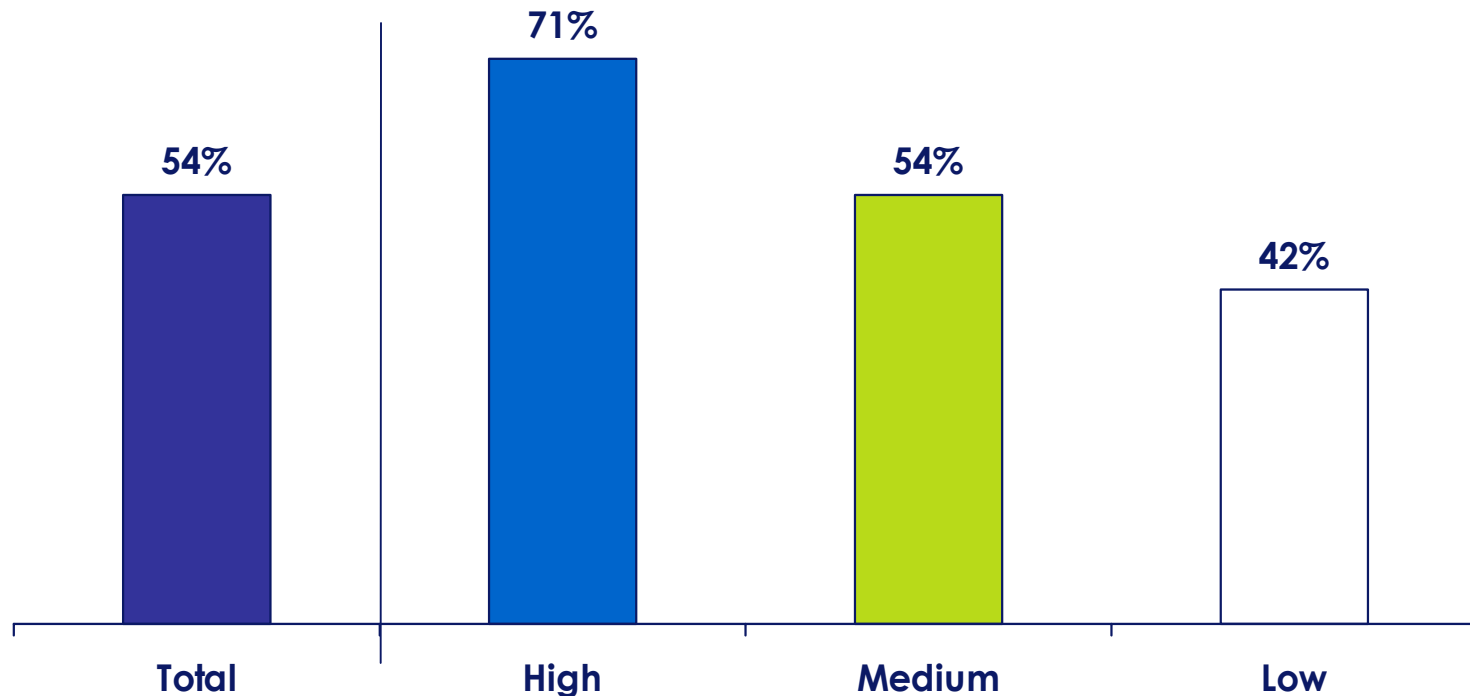
Only One In Five Parents Is A High Frequency Reader



Note: Net percentages may not add up due to rounding.

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

% Of Kids Say Reading Books For Fun Is "Very Important"
Based On Parent Reading Frequency Groups

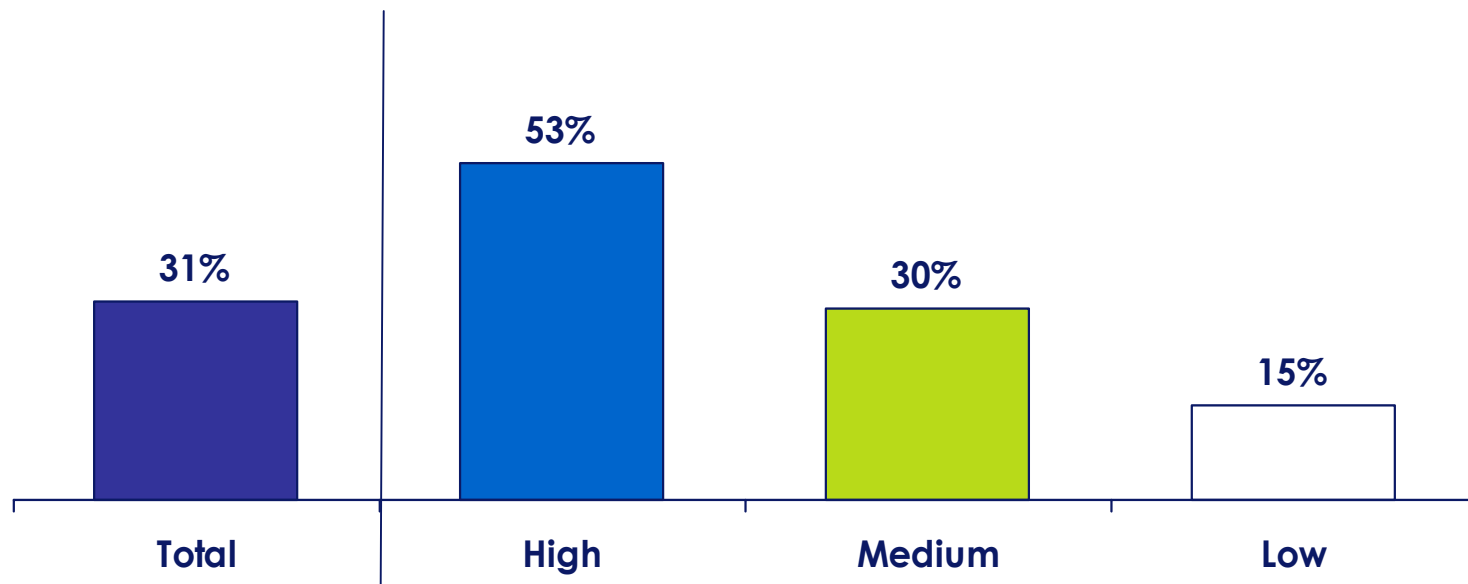


Parent reading frequency groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = 2-3 times a month or less.

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.

% Of Kids Say They Read Books For Fun "Every Day":
Based On Parent Reading Frequency Groups



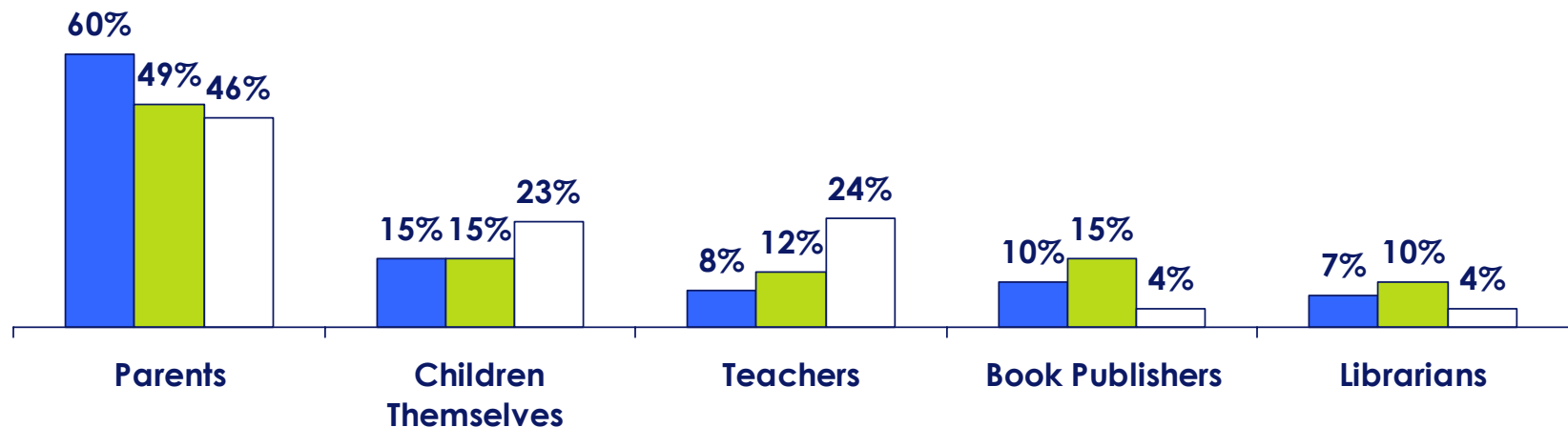
Parent reading frequency groups are defined as: High = Reads every day; Medium = Reads 4-6 times a week to once a week; Low = 2-3 times a month or less.

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

% Of Parents Who Say Each Of The Following Groups Is Most (Ranked #1) Responsible for Encouraging Children To Read More For Fun:

Among Parent Reading Frequency Groups

■ High ■ Medium □ Low



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

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

<u>High Frequency</u>	<u>Medium Frequency</u>	<u>Low Frequency</u>
#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%).

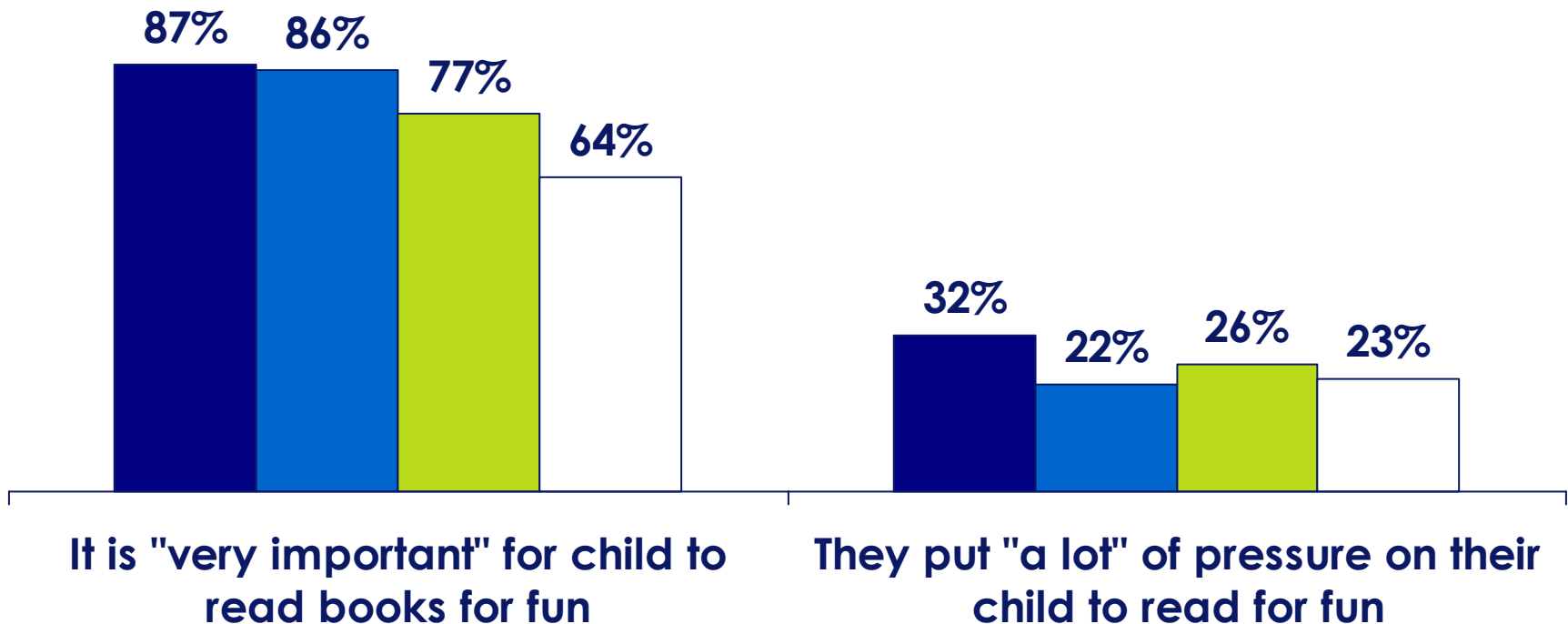
*Children ages 5-8 selected their response from the following options: "Every day," "Once a week," "Once a month" or "Never." All other kids selected their responses from the above items, in addition to the following: "4-6 times a week," "2-3 times a week," "2-3 times a month," "Less than once a month, 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 times a month or less.

Parents Of Older Vs. Younger Kids Are Less Likely To Say Reading For Fun Is "Very Important" For Their Child

- Additionally, data suggest 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.

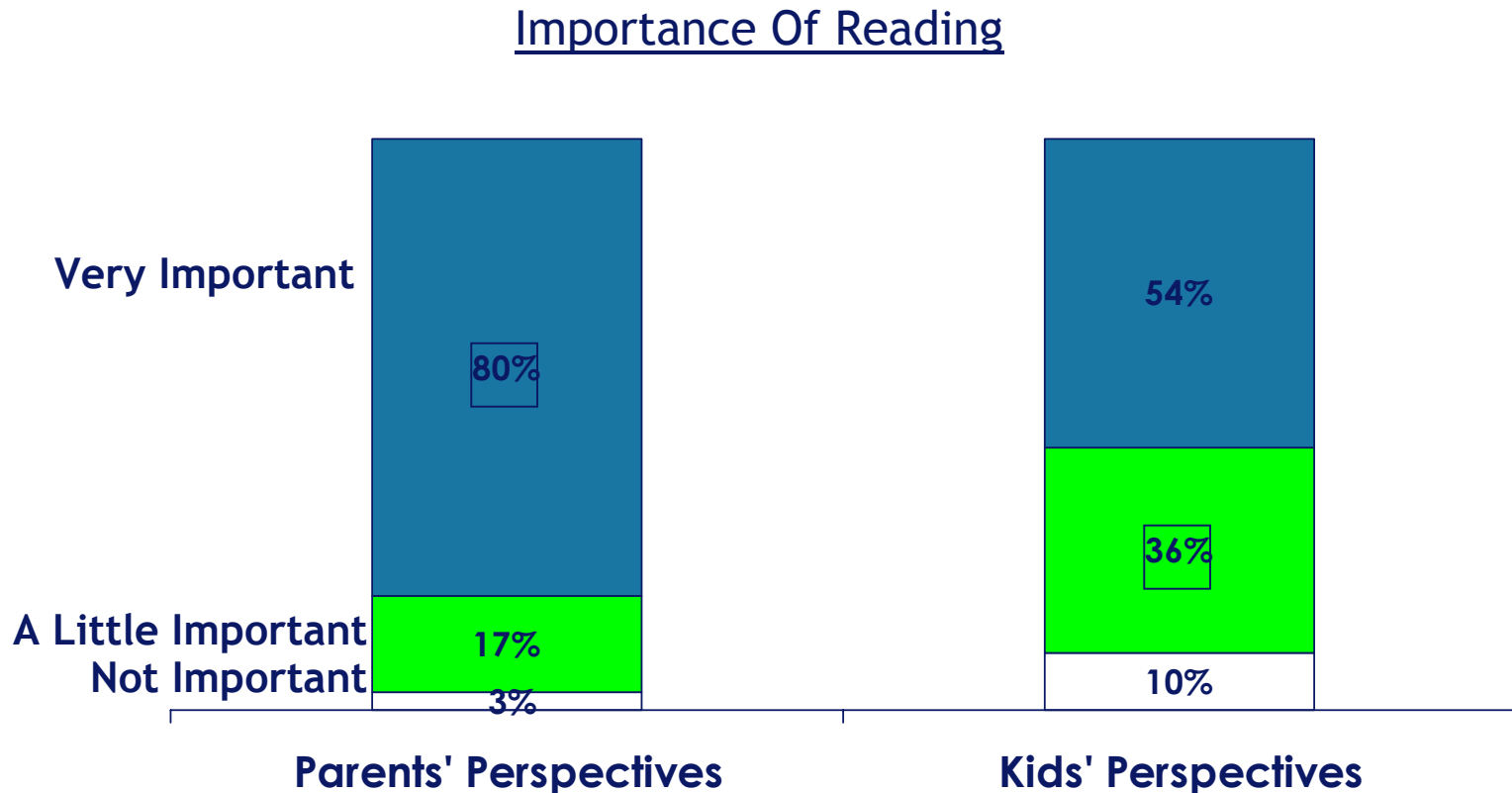
% Of Parents Who Say ...

■ Ages 5-8 ■ Ages 9-11 ■ Ages 12-14 □ Ages 15-17



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% of kids who say they should read books for fun.

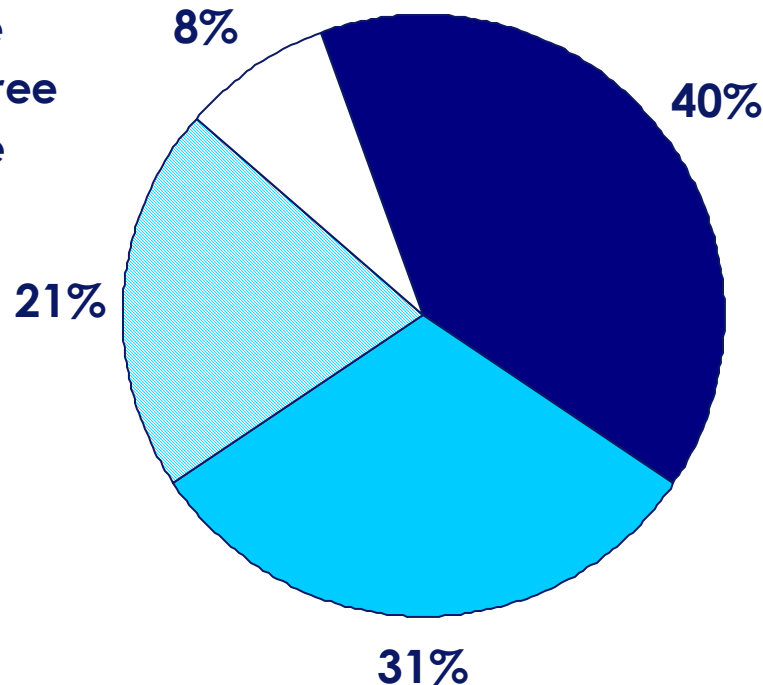


Most Parents Agree That They Read More Than Their Children Do Now When They Were Young

% 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"

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



71% of parents agree with this statement

Parents Are Underestimating The Difficulty Kids Are Having Finding Books They Like

Top Ranked Reasons Why Kids Are Not Reading More

According To Kids

1. Trouble finding 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 finding books he/she likes
4. Doesn't have time
5. Too tired to spend time reading

III. Role of Technology

Role of Technology in Youth Reading

- Four in ten kids now use a technology device to read - most often a computer.
- Contrary to what might be expected, kids who use technology devices to read or listen to books are *more* frequent and *more* engaged readers.

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

	<u>Total</u>
	500
<i>% Who Read Using A Technology Device</i>	41
Technology Platforms Used To Read	
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

Reading Frequency Groups Among Kids Who Use Tech Platforms Versus Those Who Do Not Use Tech Platforms To Read

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

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% vs. 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 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 ever listened to audio-books and/or read books using a technology device.

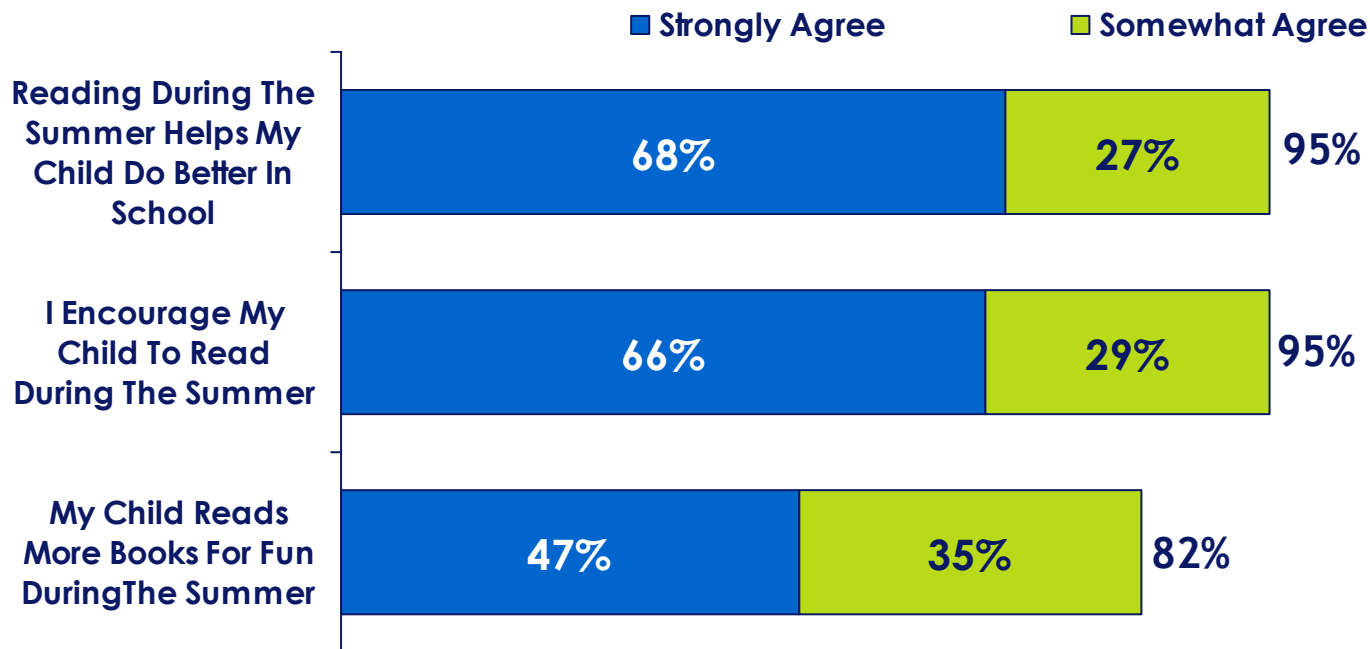
IV. Summer Reading

Kids And Parents Acknowledge The Link Between Summer Reading And Academic Success

- Kids and parents see the value in reading over the summer to help kids do better in school.
- Four in ten kids report reading **MORE** during the summer.
 - Most kids who read more during the summer say their parents encourage them to do so.
- Kids who read more during the summer are more apt than others to perceive themselves as smart and good students.

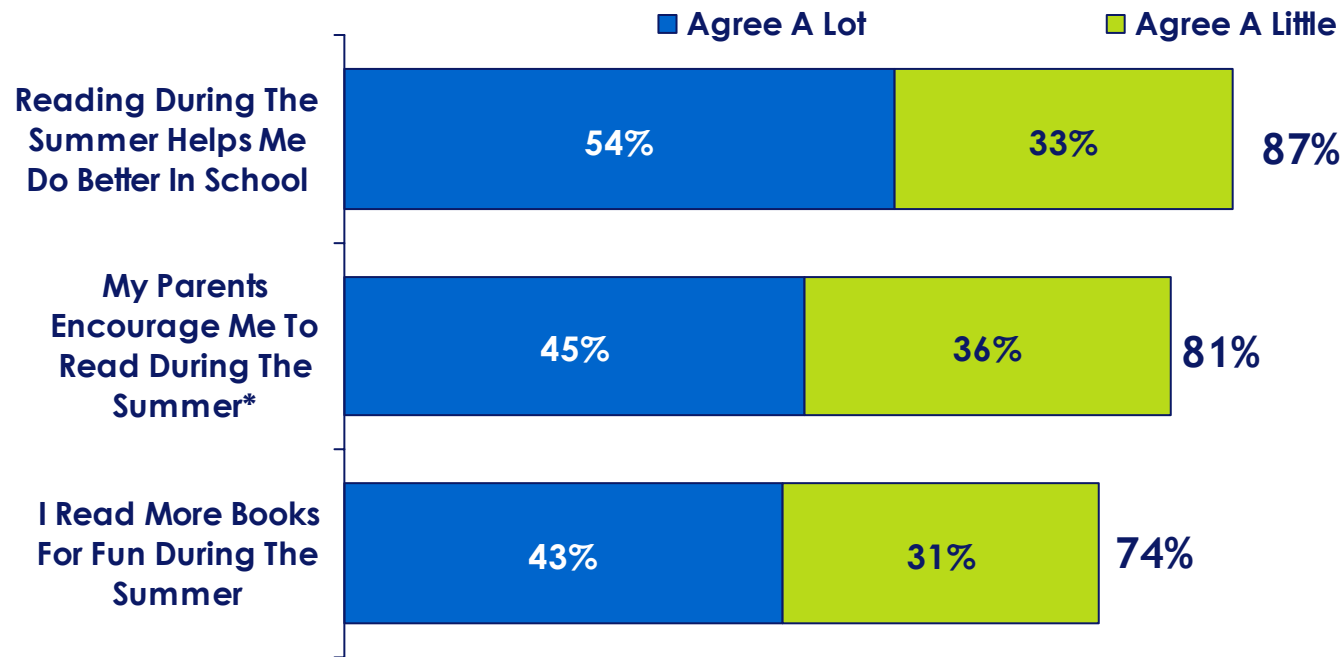
Nearly All Parents Acknowledge The Academic Benefits Of Summer Reading

% Of Parents Who Agree With The Following:



Vast Majority Of Kids Also Acknowledge Benefits Of Reading During The Summer

% Of Kids Who Agree With The Following:

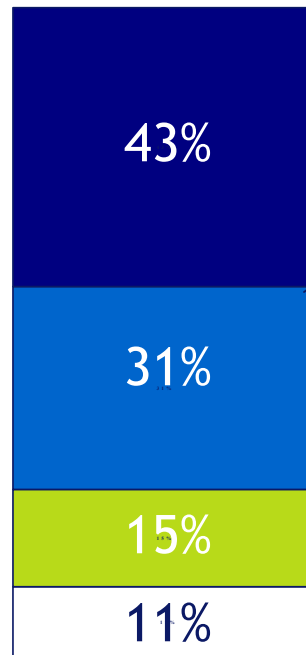


*Asked only among kids ages 9-17

Four In 10 Kids Report Reading More During The Summer

"I Read More Books For Fun During The Summer"

- % Agree A Lot
- % Agree A Little
- % Disagree A Little
- % Disagree A Lot



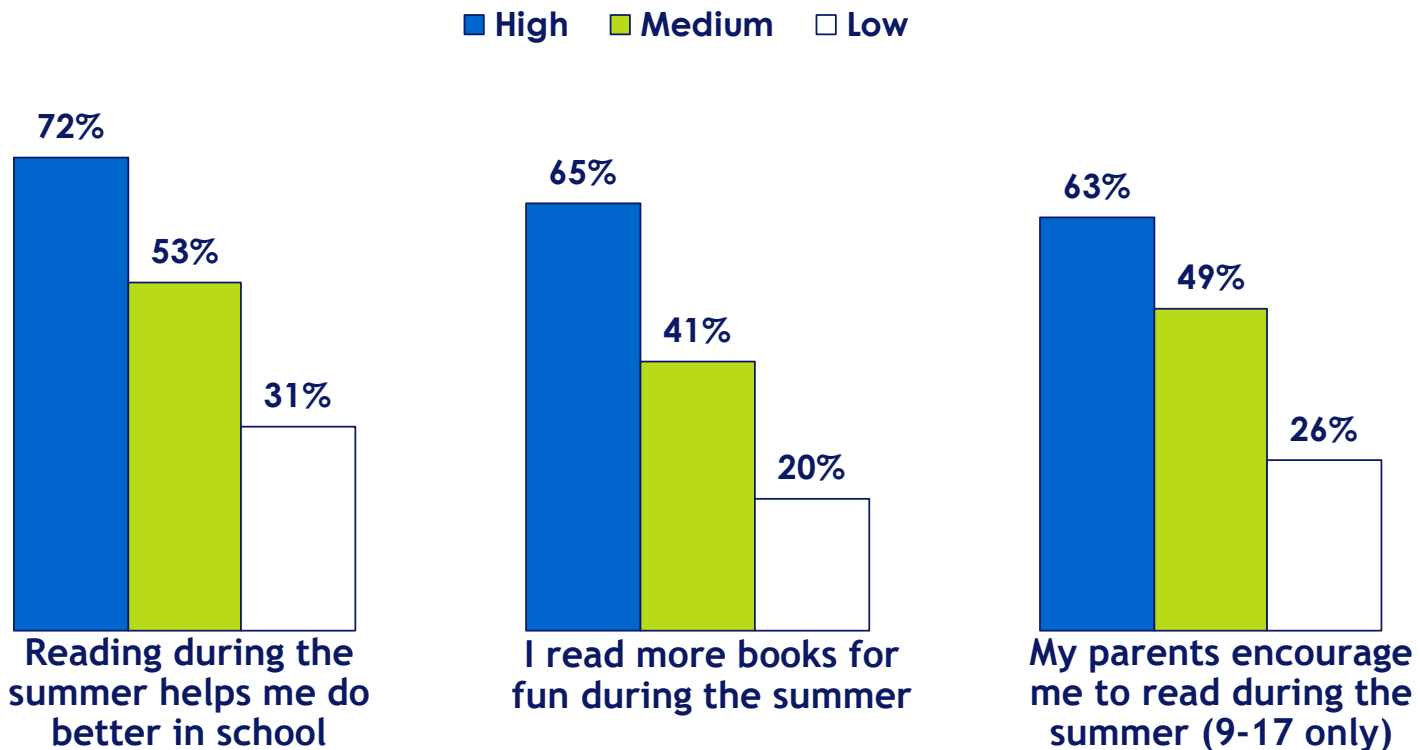
71% of these kids also agree "a lot" that their parents encourage them to do so, versus 28% of other kids.*

78% of kids who agree "a lot" that they read more during the summer also agree "a lot" that reading during the summer helps them do better in school, compared to 35% of other kids.

Based on 9-17 year olds asked statement about parental encouragement of summer reading.

High Frequency Readers Are More Apt To Perceive Benefits Of Summer Reading

% Of Kids Who Agree "A Lot" With The Following Statements
By Reading Frequency Group



*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 the following responses: "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 times a month or less.

Summer Readers Are More Likely Than Other Kids To Have Positive Self-Perceptions

	<u>All Kids</u>	<u>Read More During Summer</u>	<u>All Other Kids</u>
<i>% Describe Themselves As...</i>	500	199	301
Friendly	79	83	77
Happy	76	76	76
Smart	73	80	69
Good Student	73	80	67
Funny	70	69	71
Creative	63	65	62
Well-Behaved	60	69	53
Good at sports/athletic	56	61	52
Popular	44	47	42
<i><u>% Answering That...</u></i>			
Their Grades Are Better Than Peers	39	50	30
Their Reading Abilities Are Better Than Peers	38	50	29