

Chapter 4 Pupils' engagement

Chapter outline

This chapter focuses on pupils' attitudes towards reading. It reports their enjoyment, motivation and confidence in reading, with comparisons to outcomes of previous PIRLS surveys. It also covers pupils' self-reported engagement in reading lessons and teachers' reports of their approaches to engaging pupils in learning.

Key findings

- Over a quarter of pupils in England gave responses that showed they enjoyed reading but a fifth of pupils gave responses that placed them in the *Do not like reading* category. In England and within all other countries, pupils who reported the most enjoyment in reading also attained the highest scores.
- In contrast to what is seen within countries, between countries, those with the highest average reading scores tended to have a high proportion of pupils in the *Do not like reading* category.
- Two-thirds of pupils in England reported high levels of motivation to read. Internationally, pupils in countries with the highest average reading performance reported the lowest levels of motivation to read.
- Pupils in England were close to the international average for reported reading confidence.
- Although trends over time are difficult to identify due to changes in the analysis methodology, it appears that pupils' enjoyment of, and motivation for, reading were similar to and possibly higher than the levels seen in 2001 and 2006.
- Between countries, pupils in countries with the highest achievement reported the lowest levels of engagement in reading lessons. In England, a third of pupils reported a high level of engagement in reading lessons.
- In England, teachers' reported use of strategies intended to engage pupils in their learning was high compared to other countries.

Several countries of interest have been included in this chapter, due to their similarities with England or their high performance. These include English-speaking countries, the high performing Pacific Rim countries, Finland and Sweden. Other countries have been included where their data is of particular interest.

Interpreting the data: indices and scales

In order to summarise data from a questionnaire, responses to several related items are sometimes combined together to form an index or scale. The respondents to the questionnaire items are grouped according to their responses. Where teacher responses have been reported in an index or scale, the analysis has classified pupils as being within a particular category based on their teachers' responses. The way in which responses have been categorised is shown at the foot of the index or scale in each case. Data in an index or scale can often be more reliable and valid than the responses to individual items.

4.1 Pupils' attitudes towards reading: liking reading

Enjoyment of reading is regarded as pupils' interest in, enjoyment of and frequency of reading for pleasure. Table 4.1 shows the proportions of pupils who reported high, medium and low levels of enjoyment in reading for England and for comparator countries, along with the mean achievement of pupils in each category. Countries are listed in descending order of the proportion of pupils who expressed the most positive attitude. England's average scale score of 9.8 is within the *Somewhat like reading* category. The measure of pupils' reading enjoyment was based on pupils' responses to eight items; more details on how the scale was created can be seen below the table.

The percentage of pupils in England (26 per cent) who were categorised as *Liking reading* was close to the international mean (28 per cent). This was 20 percentage points below Portugal and nine above Qatar, the countries with the highest and lowest proportion of pupils in this category respectively. Several countries with high average reading attainment were among those where pupils reported low levels of reading enjoyment. The Republic of Ireland, however, combined both high attainment and relatively high levels of reported reading enjoyment.

In England, 20 per cent of pupils were in the lowest reading enjoyment category, five percentage points above the international mean (15 per cent). The Republic of Ireland, Canada and New Zealand were the English-speaking countries with the lowest proportion of pupils in this category (14 per cent). The United States was the English-speaking country with the highest proportion in this category (22 per cent).

As within almost all countries, pupils in England who had higher levels of enjoyment in reading had higher average achievement than their peers. The average achievement score for pupils in the highest enjoyment category was 70 scale points higher, at 589, than for those in the lowest category.

Table 4.1 Pupils like reading (comparator countries)

Reported by pupils

Pupils were scored on the *Pupils Like Reading* scale according to their degree of agreement with six statements and how often they did two reading activities outside of school. Pupils who **Like reading** had a score on the scale of at least 11.0, which corresponds to their “agreeing a lot” with three of the six statements and “agreeing a little” with the other three, as well as doing both reading activities outside of school “every day or almost every day,” on average. Pupils who **Do not like reading** had a score no higher than 8.2, which corresponds to their “disagreeing a little” with three of the six statements and “agreeing a little” with the other three, as well as doing both reading activities only “once or twice a month,” on average. All other pupils **Somewhat like reading**.

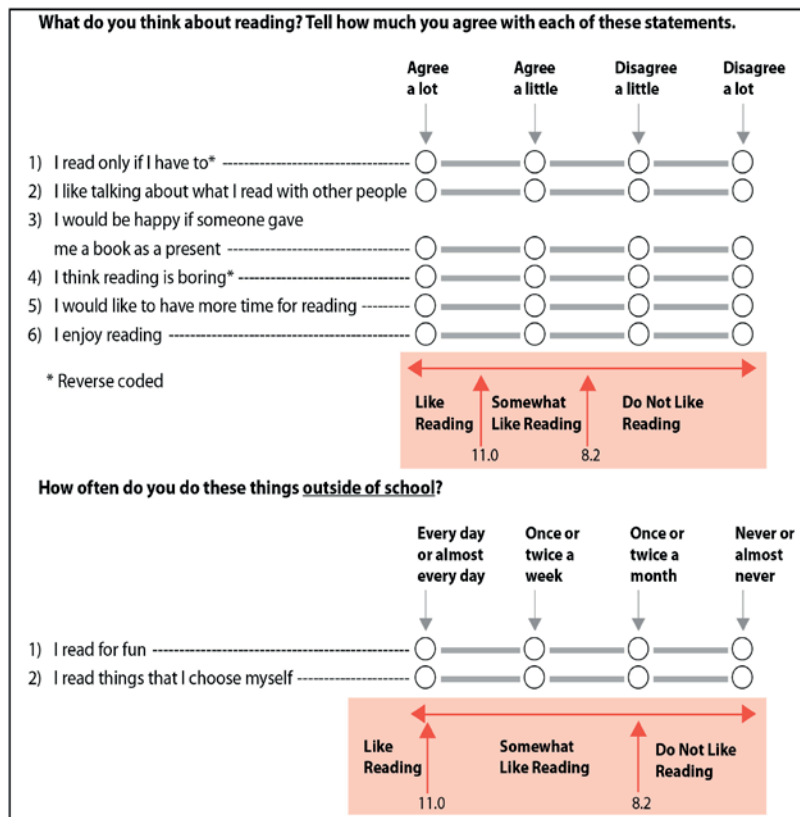
Country	Like reading		Somewhat like reading		Do not like reading		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Ireland, Rep. of	37 (1.2)	580 (2.5)	49 (0.9)	543 (3.0)	14 (0.9)	514 (4.9)	10.4 (0.07)
Canada	35 (0.6)	574 (2.1)	51 (0.6)	539 (1.9)	14 (0.5)	520 (2.7)	10.3 (0.03)
New Zealand	32 (0.9)	574 (2.7)	53 (0.8)	515 (2.4)	14 (0.6)	497 (3.6)	10.2 (0.05)
Australia	30 (0.9)	565 (2.7)	52 (0.8)	518 (2.8)	19 (0.7)	494 (4.0)	9.9 (0.05)
Northern Ireland	29 (1.3)	590 (3.3)	51 (1.0)	554 (2.7)	20 (0.9)	527 (3.5)	9.9 (0.07)
United States	27 (0.6)	586 (2.1)	51 (0.7)	551 (1.7)	22 (0.6)	536 (2.4)	9.7 (0.03)
England	26 (1.1)	589 (3.9)	53 (0.9)	545 (2.9)	20 (1.0)	519 (4.0)	9.8 (0.06)
Russian Federation	26 (1.0)	587 (3.2)	61 (0.8)	564 (3.0)	13 (0.7)	554 (3.3)	10.0 (0.05)
Finland	26 (1.0)	596 (2.6)	54 (0.9)	568 (2.3)	21 (0.9)	534 (2.2)	9.7 (0.06)
Chinese Taipei	23 (1.0)	585 (2.7)	57 (0.8)	550 (1.9)	20 (1.0)	523 (3.2)	9.7 (0.05)
Singapore	22 (0.8)	610 (3.5)	63 (0.8)	560 (3.4)	15 (0.6)	538 (4.2)	9.8 (0.04)
Hong Kong SAR	21 (1.0)	596 (2.6)	62 (0.8)	568 (2.5)	16 (0.8)	550 (3.2)	9.7 (0.05)
Sweden	21 (0.9)	571 (3.6)	58 (1.3)	541 (2.5)	21 (1.1)	516 (2.5)	9.6 (0.05)
International Avg.	28 (0.2)	542 (0.5)	57 (0.1)	506 (0.5)	15 (0.1)	488 (0.8)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

Source Exhibit 8.1 in the 2011 international PIRLS report



4.2 Pupils' attitudes towards reading: motivation to read

Motivation to read is defined as pupils' views of reading as a learning tool and as a tool to facilitate independent thought. Table 4.2 shows the proportions of pupils in comparator countries in each of three categories on the *Motivated to read* scale, along with their average achievement. England and relevant countries of interest are listed in order of the percentage of pupils who were categorised as being *Motivated*. This scale was created from pupils' responses to six questions and more detail on how the scale was created can be seen below the table. England's average scale score of 9.4 indicates that most pupils are motivated to some extent, despite a low ranking internationally.

The percentage of pupils who were categorised as *Motivated* ranged from 92 per cent (Georgia) to 52 per cent (Hong Kong); England had 65 per cent of pupils in this category. Pupils in countries with the highest average reading performance reported the lowest levels of motivation to read. The Russian Federation is an exception, recording both high achievement and high levels of motivation. Despite many high achieving countries having the lowest levels of motivation, within most countries, the association between pupils' achievement and their motivation is positive. In England and a number of other countries, however, the average achievement of pupils in the *Somewhat motivated* category was similar to that of pupils in the *Motivated* category.

In England, for only one of the six statements comprising this scale (*I like it when a book helps me to imagine other worlds*) does the average achievement of pupils increase the more they agree with the statement. In all other cases the highest average achievement is gained by those who *agree a little* or *disagree a little* with the statement.

Table 4.2 Pupils motivated to read (comparator countries)

Reported by pupils

Pupils were scored according to their degree of agreement with six statements on the *Pupils Motivated to Read* scale. Pupils **Motivated** to read had a score on the scale of at least 8.7, which corresponds to their "agreeing a lot" with three of the six statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. Pupils who were **Not motivated** had a score no higher than 6.8, which corresponds to their "disagreeing a little" with three of the six statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. All other pupils were **Somewhat motivated** to read.

Country	Motivated		Somewhat motivated		Not motivated		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Russian Federation	83 (0.7)	571 (2.7)	15 (0.7)	565 (3.8)	2 (0.2)	~ ~	10.3 (0.04)
Ireland, Rep. of	75 (1.0)	554 (2.6)	20 (0.9)	551 (4.1)	4 (0.4)	523 (5.6)	10.0 (0.05)
New Zealand	72 (0.9)	536 (2.1)	23 (0.9)	533 (3.7)	5 (0.4)	483 (6.6)	9.8 (0.04)
Canada	72 (0.6)	551 (1.7)	24 (0.6)	549 (2.2)	4 (0.2)	530 (5.2)	9.8 (0.03)
Australia	71 (1.0)	532 (2.7)	23 (0.9)	527 (3.2)	7 (0.5)	493 (5.7)	9.7 (0.05)
United States	71 (0.6)	560 (1.5)	23 (0.5)	557 (2.3)	6 (0.3)	530 (4.5)	9.7 (0.03)
Sweden	66 (1.2)	540 (2.2)	30 (1.1)	547 (3.1)	4 (0.5)	529 (7.4)	9.4 (0.04)
Northern Ireland	65 (1.2)	561 (2.7)	29 (1.0)	561 (2.9)	7 (0.6)	533 (5.5)	9.4 (0.05)
England	65 (1.4)	551 (2.9)	28 (1.2)	559 (3.2)	7 (0.5)	531 (7.8)	9.4 (0.06)
Chinese Taipei	62 (1.3)	566 (2.0)	27 (0.9)	542 (2.6)	12 (0.7)	512 (4.0)	9.4 (0.06)
Singapore	60 (0.7)	576 (3.5)	31 (0.6)	562 (3.6)	8 (0.4)	533 (5.6)	9.3 (0.03)
Finland	59 (1.1)	570 (2.2)	34 (1.0)	571 (2.4)	7 (0.6)	543 (4.4)	9.2 (0.05)
Hong Kong SAR	52 (1.0)	577 (2.4)	34 (0.8)	570 (2.8)	15 (0.8)	551 (3.8)	8.9 (0.05)
International Avg.	74 (0.1)	518 (0.4)	21 (0.1)	503 (0.7)	5 (0.1)	474 (1.3)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

Source Exhibit 8.2 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

Do you read for any of the following reasons? Show how much you agree with each of these statements.

Tick one box for each row.

	Agree a lot	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree a lot
a) I like to read things that make me think -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) It is important to be a good reader -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) My family like it when I read -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) I learn a lot from reading -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) I need to read well for my future -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) I like it when a book helps me to imagine other worlds -----	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4.3 Pupils' confidence in reading

Confidence in reading relates to pupils' perceptions of their own reading ability, comparisons they make between themselves and peers and with reading in other subjects. Pupils responded to seven individual items relating to their confidence in reading. These were combined to form a scale with three categories. The individual questions and the scale can be seen below Table 4.3. England's average scale score of 10.0 is within the *Somewhat confident* range.

In Table 4.3 England and comparator countries are listed in descending order of the percentage of pupils who were categorised as *Confident*. Israel had the highest proportion of pupils in this category (49 per cent) while Morocco had the lowest (17 per cent). In England, 37 per cent of pupils were categorised as *Confident*, a similar proportion to the international average, while 10 per cent were in the *Not confident* category. The average achievement score of pupils in England who were categorised as *Confident* was 100 scale points higher, at 589, than that of pupils who were *Not confident*. The proportions of pupils in England in the *Not confident* and *Somewhat confident* categories were also similar to the international average. Pupils in the Republic of Ireland reported the highest levels of confidence in reading among English-speaking pupils, with 44 per cent in the *Confident* category.

Within all countries greater reading confidence was associated with higher average achievement. However, when comparing countries, three with the highest achievement internationally (Hong Kong, the Russian Federation and Singapore) had some of the lowest percentages of pupils in the *Confident* category.

Table 4.3 Pupils' confidence in reading (comparator countries)

Reported by pupils

Pupils were scored according to their degree of agreement with seven statements on the *Pupils Confident in Reading* scale. Pupils **confident** in reading had a score on the scale of at least 10.6, which corresponds to their "agreeing a lot" with four of the seven statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. Pupils who were **Not confident** had a score no higher than 7.9, which corresponds to their "disagreeing a little" with four of the seven statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. All other pupils were **Somewhat confident** in reading.

Country	Confident		Somewhat confident		Not confident		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Finland	48 (1.2)	590 (2.0)	47 (1.1)	552 (2.3)	5 (0.5)	507 (6.7)	10.5 (0.05)
Sweden	47 (0.8)	565 (2.5)	48 (0.9)	527 (2.4)	5 (0.4)	471 (6.1)	10.5 (0.04)
Ireland, Rep. of	44 (1.1)	580 (2.1)	49 (1.1)	537 (2.9)	8 (0.6)	490 (5.0)	10.3 (0.05)
Canada	41 (0.7)	578 (1.7)	51 (0.6)	536 (1.7)	9 (0.4)	497 (3.1)	10.2 (0.04)
United States	40 (0.9)	588 (1.6)	49 (0.7)	545 (1.5)	11 (0.4)	503 (2.4)	10.2 (0.04)
Australia	37 (0.9)	568 (2.4)	53 (0.8)	515 (2.5)	10 (0.6)	451 (5.4)	10.1 (0.04)
England	37 (1.1)	589 (2.8)	53 (1.2)	539 (3.0)	10 (0.6)	483 (6.0)	10.0 (0.05)
Northern Ireland	35 (1.0)	591 (3.1)	55 (1.1)	549 (2.8)	10 (0.6)	501 (4.7)	10.0 (0.04)
Russian Federation	28 (0.8)	601 (3.0)	59 (0.8)	564 (2.8)	14 (0.6)	526 (4.0)	9.6 (0.04)
New Zealand	27 (0.8)	585 (2.9)	61 (0.8)	523 (2.2)	13 (0.6)	471 (4.2)	9.6 (0.04)
Singapore	26 (0.7)	607 (3.3)	61 (0.6)	565 (3.0)	13 (0.6)	504 (5.2)	9.5 (0.03)
Chinese Taipei	21 (0.8)	585 (2.7)	57 (0.8)	554 (1.9)	22 (0.9)	520 (2.8)	9.2 (0.04)
Hong Kong SAR	20 (0.9)	601 (2.4)	62 (0.8)	571 (2.6)	18 (0.9)	538 (3.3)	9.2 (0.05)
International Avg.	36 (0.2)	547 (0.4)	53 (0.1)	502 (0.4)	11 (0.1)	456 (0.8)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

Source Exhibit 8.3 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

How well do you read? Show how much you agree with each of these statements.

Tick **one** box for each row.

	Agree a lot	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree a lot
	↓	↓	↓	↓

a) I usually do well in reading ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

b) Reading is easy for me ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

c) Reading is harder for me than for many of the children in my class*----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

d) If a book is interesting, I don't care how hard it is to read ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

e) I have trouble reading stories with difficult words*----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

f) My teacher tells me I am a good reader ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

g) Reading is harder for me than any other subject* ----- ○ ——— ○ ——— ○ ——— ○

Confident Somewhat Confident Not Confident

10.6 7.9

*reverse coded

4.4 Comparison with reported 2006 outcomes related to attitudes (where applicable)

As England participated in PIRLS in 2001 and 2006, potential trends relating to attitudes can be investigated. Due to a change in the analysis method used in PIRLS 2011, a direct comparison between the scales cannot be made. However, three of the items used to construct the enjoyment and motivation scales (*I enjoy reading*, *I think reading is boring* and *I need to read well for my future*) have remained consistent, and they can be viewed in more detail to look for trends over time. The percentages of pupils in each category across the three surveys can be seen in Table 4.4. As this table shows, positive attitudes towards reading are at levels similar to, or possibly higher than, those seen in 2001 and 2006.

Table 4.4 Pupil attitudes to reading over time in England¹

Item	Year of survey	Agree a lot Per cent of pupils	Agree a little Per cent of pupils	Disagree a little Per cent of pupils	Disagree a lot Per cent of pupils
I enjoy reading	2001	53	23	10	14
	2006	48	28	10	14
	2011	57	26	8	9
I think reading is boring*	2001	15	16	17	52
	2006	15	17	20	48
	2011	9	15	21	55
I need to read well for my future	2001	64	22	8	6
	2006	59	25	9	7
	2011	68	23	6	3

*Item reverse coded

4.5 Pupils' reported engagement in reading lessons

Pupil engagement is considered to be the ease and extent of pupils' access to lessons, in terms of the presence of mental stimulation and the absence of mental distractions. Table 4.5 shows the engagement of pupils in England and comparator countries, ranked in descending order based on the percentage of pupils in the *Engaged* category. This scale was formed from the analysis of responses to seven items in the pupil questionnaire. The questions used to make this scale can be seen below the table². England's average scale score is 9.6, well within the *Somewhat engaged* category.

The percentage of pupils in the *Engaged* category ranged from 71 per cent (Indonesia) to 15 per cent (Finland). Whilst in most countries the most engaged pupils are also the highest achieving, when countries are compared, this relationship between engagement and achievement changes. Many of the highest achieving countries internationally had the lowest proportions of pupils in the *Engaged* category; England had 34 per cent of pupils in this category, below the international mean of 42 per cent. In England, the percentage of pupils in the *Not engaged* category (9 per cent) was very similar to the international mean (8 per cent). Within most countries, including England, these were the lowest achieving pupils on average. In England and a number of comparator countries (New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Russian Federation and Sweden), pupils' achievement scores were similar in the *Engaged* and *Somewhat engaged* categories.

¹ This data is from the 2001, 2006 and 2011 almanacs containing all pupil questionnaire data and standard errors are not available.

² Items h) and i) did not contribute to the scale, and item d) was reverse coded.

Table 4.5 Pupils' engagement in reading lessons (comparator countries)

Reported by pupils

Pupils were scored according to their degree of agreement with seven statements on the *Engaged in Reading Lessons* scale. Pupils **Engaged** in reading lessons had a score on the scale of at least 10.5, which corresponds to their "agreeing a lot" with four of the seven statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. Pupils who were **Not engaged** had a score no higher than 7.4, which corresponds to their "disagreeing a little" with four of the seven statements and "agreeing a little" with the other three, on average. All other pupils were **Somewhat engaged** in reading lessons.

Country	Engaged		Somewhat engaged		Not engaged		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
Russian Federation	53 (1.1)	571 (3.0)	42 (0.9)	567 (3.3)	5 (0.3)	560 (6.6)	10.6 (0.05)
United States	43 (0.8)	565 (1.9)	49 (0.6)	554 (1.6)	8 (0.4)	539 (3.1)	10.0 (0.04)
Ireland, Rep. of	43 (1.5)	557 (2.5)	49 (1.2)	550 (3.0)	8 (0.7)	541 (5.6)	10.0 (0.07)
Canada	39 (0.9)	558 (1.9)	54 (0.7)	545 (1.9)	7 (0.4)	531 (4.4)	9.9 (0.03)
Northern Ireland	37 (1.4)	561 (3.5)	55 (1.2)	559 (2.9)	8 (0.7)	551 (5.4)	9.8 (0.06)
New Zealand	34 (1.1)	534 (3.1)	57 (1.0)	533 (1.8)	9 (0.7)	520 (7.0)	9.7 (0.04)
England	34 (1.5)	551 (4.0)	57 (1.2)	554 (2.8)	9 (0.8)	541 (6.1)	9.6 (0.06)
Australia	33 (1.1)	538 (3.7)	56 (0.9)	526 (2.5)	11 (0.7)	509 (4.4)	9.6 (0.05)
Chinese Taipei	31 (1.3)	561 (2.5)	54 (0.9)	555 (2.1)	14 (1.0)	531 (4.6)	9.4 (0.06)
Singapore	31 (0.8)	575 (3.6)	57 (0.7)	568 (3.6)	13 (0.6)	554 (4.4)	9.5 (0.03)
Sweden	29 (1.3)	541 (3.1)	63 (1.0)	545 (2.4)	9 (0.8)	528 (4.4)	9.5 (0.05)
Hong Kong SAR	24 (1.0)	578 (2.5)	58 (0.7)	571 (2.5)	18 (1.0)	563 (3.8)	9.1 (0.06)
Finland	15 (0.8)	568 (3.6)	65 (1.0)	573 (2.1)	20 (1.0)	553 (2.8)	8.7 (0.04)
International Avg.	42 (0.2)	519 (0.5)	50 (0.2)	510 (0.5)	8 (0.1)	494 (1.0)	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

Source Exhibit 8.7 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

Think about the reading you do for school. How much do you agree with these statements about your reading lessons?

Tick **one** box for each row.

	Agree a lot	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree a lot
a) I like what I read about in school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) My teacher gives me interesting things to read	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) I know what my teacher expects me to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) I think of things not related to the lesson	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) My teacher is easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) I am interested in what my teacher says	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g) My teacher gives me interesting things to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h) The things my teacher asks me to read are difficult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i) My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Engaged Somewhat Engaged Not Engaged

10.5 7.4

4.6 Teachers' reported approach to engaging pupils in learning

Teachers of pupils participating in PIRLS responded to six questions relating to the use of engaging practices in their teaching, although it should be noted that this was not solely in relation to the teaching of reading. The responses to these six questions were used to form one scale; the questions can be seen below Table 4.6. In England, the average scale score of 10.5 is one of the highest scale scores and confirms that teachers reported using engaging practices in *most lessons*.

Table 4.6 shows the percentage of pupils in each category based on their teachers' responses, ranked in descending order of the percentage of pupils whose teachers reported using engaging teaching strategies in *most* of their lessons. The country scoring highest on this scale was Romania, with 94 per cent of pupils taught by teachers who reported using engaging teaching strategies in *most lessons*. At the other end of the scale, only 23 per cent of pupils in Denmark were placed in this category. The international mean was 71 per cent. In England, teachers of 91 per cent of pupils reported using engaging teaching strategies in at least *most* of their lessons. This is higher than in all comparator countries, where proportions ranged from 88 per cent (United States) to 33 per cent (Finland).

Table 4.6 Teaching to engage pupils in learning (comparator countries)

Reported by teachers

Pupils were scored according to their teachers' responses to how often they used each of six teaching practices on the *Engaging Pupils in Learning* scale. Pupils with teachers who used engagement practices in **Most lessons** had a score on the scale of at least 9.1, which corresponds to their teachers using three of the six practices "every or almost every lesson" and using the other three in "about half the lessons," on average. Pupils with teachers who used engagement practices in **Some lessons** had a score no higher than 5.9, which corresponds to their teachers using three of the six practices in "some lessons" and using the other three in "about half the lessons," on average. All other pupils had teachers who used engagement practices in **About half the lessons**.

Country	Most lessons		About half the lessons		Some lessons		Average scale score
	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	Per cent of pupils	Average achievement	
England	91 (2.2)	551 (3.0)	9 (2.2)	548 (11.5)	0 (0.2)	~ ~	10.5 (0.14)
United States	88 (1.6)	556 (1.7)	11 (1.5)	560 (6.6)	0 (0.3)	~ ~	10.8 (0.08)
Russian Federation	82 (3.0)	569 (2.8)	17 (2.9)	565 (6.7)	1 (0.7)	~ ~	10.7 (0.16)
Northern Ireland	r 78 (3.7)	559 (3.1)	21 (3.8)	565 (6.6)	1 (0.6)	~ ~	9.8 (0.13)
Australia	r 77 (3.3)	534 (3.0)	23 (3.3)	523 (4.7)	0 (0.2)	~ ~	10.0 (0.13)
Canada	76 (1.6)	549 (1.7)	23 (1.7)	546 (4.0)	1 (0.5)	~ ~	10.1 (0.09)
Singapore	71 (2.4)	569 (4.2)	27 (2.4)	560 (6.3)	2 (0.8)	~ ~	10.0 (0.12)
Ireland, Rep. of	67 (3.2)	552 (2.8)	32 (3.2)	552 (4.6)	1 (0.5)	~ ~	9.8 (0.14)
New Zealand	66 (3.0)	537 (2.6)	34 (3.0)	527 (5.0)	0 (0.2)	~ ~	9.6 (0.09)
Hong Kong SAR	60 (4.6)	567 (3.4)	35 (4.7)	576 (4.5)	5 (1.9)	572 (15.1)	9.5 (0.19)
Sweden	r 47 (4.0)	542 (3.1)	52 (4.1)	544 (3.4)	1 (0.8)	~ ~	8.9 (0.15)
Chinese Taipei	39 (4.3)	551 (3.2)	46 (3.8)	556 (2.7)	15 (3.1)	549 (5.5)	8.5 (0.22)
Finland	33 (3.2)	570 (2.9)	61 (3.2)	566 (2.3)	6 (1.4)	574 (7.0)	8.3 (0.11)
International Avg.	71 (0.5)	513 (0.5)	27 (0.5)	509 (1.1)	2 (0.1)	~ ~	

Centre point of scale set at 10.

() Standard errors appear in parentheses. Because of rounding some results may appear inconsistent.

A tilde (~) indicates insufficient data to report achievement.

An "r" indicates data are available for at least 70% but less than 85% of the pupils.

Source Exhibit 8.6 in the 2011 international PIRLS report

SOURCE: Adapted from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study – PIRLS 2011

How often do you do the following in teaching this class?

Tick **one** circle for each row.

	Every or almost every lesson	About half the lessons	Some lessons	Never
a) Summarise what pupils should have learned from the lesson	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Relate the lesson to pupils' daily lives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Use questioning to elicit reasons and explanations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Encourage all pupils to improve their performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Praise pupils for good effort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) Bring interesting materials to class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

