Participating countries in PIRLS 2011

North and South America
Canada
Colombia
Honduras
Trinidad and Tobago
United States

Europe
Austria
Belgium (French)
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
England
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Romania
Russian Federation
Scotland
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Ukraine

Asia and Middle East
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Chinese Taipei
Hong Kong SAR
Indonesia
Iran, Islamic Rep. of
Israel
Kuwait
Mongolia
Oman
Qatar
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
United Arab Emirates

Africa
Botswana
Egypt
Libya
Morocco
South Africa

Australia and Oceania
Australia
New Zealand

Benchmarking participants

Abu Dhabi, UAE
Alberta, Canada
Dubai, UAE
Ontario, Canada
Quebec, Canada

PIRLS assesses reading for literary experience and for acquiring and using information. PIRLS asks students to engage in a full repertoire of reading skills and strategies, including:

- Focusing on and retrieving explicitly stated information;
- Making straightforward inferences;
- Interpreting and integrating ideas and information; and
- Examining or evaluating content, language, and textual elements.

NCES is authorized to conduct PIRLS under Section 153, of Public Law 107-279. Information collected will help the U.S. Department of Education's ongoing efforts to benchmark student achievement in the United States. Participation is voluntary. Data collected may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose (Title V, subtitle A of the E-Government Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-347) and Section 183, Public Law 107-279). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0645. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

PIRLS

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
Institute of Education Sciences

For questions about PIRLS 2011, contact the PIRLS Information Hotline at 1-888-369-5033 or email TIMSS-PIRLS@westat.com

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PIRLS

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2011

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
Institute of Education Sciences

What is PIRLS?

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international assessment and research project designed to measure both trends in fourth-grade students' reading literacy achievement as well as school and teacher practices related to reading instruction. PIRLS 2011 is the third such study in the PIRLS series of internationally comparative reading studies carried out in countries around the world every 5 years. In PIRLS 2011, students from more than 50 countries, including the United States, will participate.

PIRLS is sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and managed in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education.

Why is PIRLS important?

PIRLS provides a unique opportunity to compare the reading knowledge and skills of U.S. fourth-graders with their peers in countries around the world. PIRLS complements what we learn from national assessments by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students in reading relative to students around the world. The results inform national discussions about U.S. education performance and practice within the wider context of international competitiveness.

Moreover, by participating in PIRLS 2011, the United States will obtain data about changes in children's

reading achievement over the past 10 years, including valuable information about changes in reading instruction, how those changes relate to students' performance in reading, and about home, school, and classroom influences on reading achievement.

What type of reading assessment is PIRLS?

PIRLS is designed to reflect the reading curriculum used in participating countries. PIRLS asks students to read two texts, either two literary texts (narrative fiction, generally drawn from children's books), two informational texts (typically excerpts from biographies, step-by-step instructions, or scientific or non-fictional materials), or one of each type. It then asks students about a dozen questions—both multiple-choice and open-ended "constructed response" questions—about the texts. These questions may range from identifying the place, time, and actions of the main characters or events to interpreting how characters might feel, why events occurred, or what the passage means overall (e.g., does the story teach a lesson?). Examples of released PIRLS test items can be viewed at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008017_2.pdf.

Key findings from PIRLS 2006

- In PIRLS 2006, the average U.S. 4th-grader's reading literacy score (540) was above the PIRLS scale average of 500 but below that of 4th-graders in 7 of the other 39 participating countries and 3 of the 5 participating Canadian provinces.
- Among the 28 countries that participated in both the 2001 and 2006 PIRLS assessments, the average reading literacy score increased in 8 countries and decreased in 6 countries. In the rest of the countries, including the United States, there was no measurable change in the average reading literacy score.

PIRLS is also meant to study home and school factors associated with children's reading literacy by the fourth grade. To that end, PIRLS will also administer questionnaires to students, their teachers, and the principals of their schools. The questions are designed to measure key aspects of students' home and school environments. In this way, PIRLS provides each country with a rich source of information on the factors influencing reading literacy.