



PIRLS 2005/2006 in New Zealand

An overview of national findings from the second cycle of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)

Acknowledgements

This report is the second of two reports which describe the findings from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2005/2006 that were released in November 2007. PIRLS involved a large number of people working together during different phases of the study. Without the efforts from these people, the study would not have been so successful. Special thanks are extended to all the New Zealand students who participated in the study in 2005, and to parents/caregivers, teachers, and school principals involved in the study.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of colleagues in the Ministry of Education – Denise Arnerich, Kiritina Johnstone, and my colleagues in the Research Division – who contributed in many ways during the different phases of the study.

Megan Chamberlain
Principal Research Analyst
(PIRLS National Research Coordinator)

Contents

Summary	3
Section 1. Background	6
Section 2. Student Results	12
Section 3. The PIRLS International Benchmarks	22
Section 4. Purposes for Reading and Processes of Reading	30
Section 5. Students' Reading Attitudes and Home Context	36
Section 6. Schools and School Climate	52
Section 7. Overview	62
Appendix A	
Test Language and Sampling	66
Appendix B	
Reference Tables and Figures	70
Appendix C:	
Sample Passage and Questions: 'Searching for Food'	78
Appendix D	
Countries showing improvements from 2001 to 2005/2006	90
Technical Notes	92
References	97

Boxes, tables, and figures

Box 1.1:	Pre-primary education practices for selected countries
Box 1.2:	Literary texts versus informational texts
Box 3.1:	The PIRLS-05/06 international reading benchmarks for Grade 4 (Year 5 equivalent)
Box 4.1:	The PIRLS-05/06 purposes for reading
Box 4.2:	The PIRLS-05/06 processes of reading comprehension
Box D.1:	Context for changes in achievement in four countries in PIRLS-05/06
Table 1.1:	Countries and Canadian provinces participating in PIRLS-05/06
Table 1.2:	Age of New Zealand Year 5 students, 2001 and 2005/2006
Table 2.1:	Year 5 students' mean reading literacy scores in 2001 and 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table 2.2:	Mean reading literacy scores for New Zealand Year 5 students and the 26 trend countries in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender
Table 2.3:	Year 5 girls' mean reading literacy scores in 2001 and 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table 2.4:	Year 5 boys' mean reading literacy scores in 2001 and 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table 3.1:	Percentage of students reaching the PIRLS international reading benchmarks in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table 5.1:	Year 5 students' reports on reading for fun in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table 5.2:	Students' level of agreement to statements on self-concept in reading in 2001 and 2005/2006
Table 5.3:	Year 5 students' mean reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by New Zealand-born and ethnic grouping
Table 6.1:	Percentage of students reaching PIRLS international reading benchmarks in 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Table 6.2:	Principals' estimates of their time spent on various school-related activities in 2005/2006, by location and school decile band*
Table 6.3:	Percentage of Year 5 students reporting their agreement with statements about aspects of school life in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table A.1:	Countries assessing in more than one language in PIRLS-05/06
Table A.2A:	A summary of New Zealand's achieved school and student samples at Year 5 in PIRLS-05/06
Table A.2B:	A summary of New Zealand's achieved parent, teacher, and school principal samples in PIRLS-05/06
Table A.3:	A summary of New Zealand's exclusions in PIRLS-01 and PIRLS-05/06
Table B.1:	Standard deviations and percentiles for Year 5 students in 2001 and 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table B.2:	Mean effect sizes in the reading literacy scores for Year 5 students in 2001 and 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table B.3:	Standard deviations and percentiles for Year 5 students in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender
Table B.4:	Mean differences between Year 5 girls' and boys' reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table B.5:	Percentage of students reaching the PIRLS international reading benchmarks in 2001, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.6A:	Odds ratio for the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Table B.6B:	Odds ratios for the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.7:	Absolute mean differences between Year 5 girls' and boys' achievement in the purposes for reading and the processes of comprehension in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table B.8:	Year 5 students' mean scores for <i>reading for literary purposes</i> in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.9:	Year 5 students' mean scores for <i>reading for informational purposes</i> in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.10:	Year 5 students' mean scores for the retrieving and straightforward inferencing processes in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.11:	Year 5 students' mean achievement scores for interpreting, integrating and evaluating processes in 2001 and 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Table B.12:	Mean reading literacy scores for Year 5 students who were assessed in English in 2005/06, by frequency with which they spoke English in the home
Table B.13:	Year 5 students' reports of the number of books in the home in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Table B.14:	Mean reading literacy scores for Year 5 students in 2001, by school decile band*
Table B.15:	Standard deviations and percentiles for Year 5 students in 2001 and 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Table B.16:	Percentage of Year 5 students reaching PIRLS international reading benchmarks in 2001, by school decile band*
Figure 2.1:	Distribution of countries' reading achievement in PIRLS-05/06
Figure 2.2:	Estimated Year 5 student population in each ethnic grouping in PIRLS-01 and PIRLS-05/06 (weighted percentages)*
Figure 2.3:	Distribution of Year 5 students' reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure 2.4:	Distribution of Year 5 students' reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by gender
Figure 2.5:	Mean differences between Year 5 girls' and boys' reading literacy achievement scores in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure 3.1:	Gender composition of the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 3.2:	Ethnic composition of the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 3.3:	Ethnic and gender composition of the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 3.4:	Percentage of Year 5 girls and boys who were in the lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 3.5:	Percentage of Year 5 students from each ethnic grouping who were in the lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 4.1:	Relative differences in achievement between the two purposes for reading in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Figure 4.2:	Relative differences in achievement between the two reading comprehension processes in 2005/2006, by gender and ethnic grouping
Figure 5.1:	Year 5 students at each level of the Students' Attitudes Towards Reading (SATR) Index in 2005/2006, by gender
Figure 5.2:	Year 5 students at each level of the Students' Attitudes Towards Reading (SATR) Index in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure 5.3:	Year 5 students' reports of reading for fun and their reading literacy scores in 2005/2006
Figure 5.4:	Year 5 students at each level of the Students' Reading Self-Concept (SRSC) Index in 2005/2006, by gender
Figure 5.5:	Year 5 students at each level of the Students' Reading Self-Concept (SRSC) Index in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure 5.6:	Year 5 students at each level of the Early Home Literacy Activities (EHLA) Index and reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by gender
Figure 5.7:	Composition of the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006 by their reports of speaking the language of the PIRLS assessment at home
Figure 5.8:	Percentage of Year 5 students who spoke the language of the PIRLS assessment at home and were in the lower-achievers group in 2005/2006
Figure 5.9:	Household income and Year 5 students' reading literacy achievement in 2005/2006
Figure 5.10:	Parents'/caregivers' ratings of household financial well-being and Year 5 students' reading literacy scores in 2005/2006
Figure 5.11:	Year 5 students' reports on the number of books in their homes and their reading literacy scores in 2005/2006
Figure 5.12:	Year 5 students' reports of three educational aids in the home and their reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure 5.13:	Year 5 students' reports of three educational aids and their reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by household income
Figure 6.1:	Distribution of Year 5 students' mean reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Figure 6.2:	Year 5 students' mean reading literacy scores in 2005/2006, by size of school and decile band*
Figure 6.3:	Composition of the Year 5 lower-achievers group in 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Figure 6.4:	Percentage of Year 5 students in each school decile band* who were in the lower-achieving group in 2005/2006
Figure 6.5:	Principals' Perception of School Safety (PPSS) Index in 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Figure 6.6:	Year 5 students at each level of the Student Safety in School (SSS) Index and reading literacy achievement in 2005/2006, by school decile band*
Figure B.1:	Relationship between Year 5 students' reading literacy achievement and parents' reports of household income in 2005/2006, by ethnic grouping
Figure B.2:	Relationship between Year 5 students' reports on the number of books in the home and their reading literacy achievement, by ethnic grouping