

What is PIRLS?

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) is an international study examining reading among Fourth class primary school pupils. It takes place every five years. Last time (in 2011), 325,000 pupils took part. The 2016 study will be even bigger, as pupils in 50 countries will take part.

What about PIRLS in Ireland?

In Ireland, 150 schools were randomly chosen to represent Ireland in PIRLS 2016. Fourth class pupils in these selected schools will be asked to complete a reading test. Some pupils will also be asked to take a computer-based test called ePIRLS. As well as the test, there are questionnaires for the pupils, their teachers, parents and school principals.

A small number of other primary schools have already taken part in a field trial in 2015. This will help to ensure that the main study runs smoothly, and gave us important feedback from those taking part.

PIRLS is run by the Educational Research Centre on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. The study is supported by groups such as the National Parents Council - Primary, the IPPN and the INTO.

What do YOU have to do?

Pupils

First of all, **relax!** 😊
Your teacher will explain what to do. You'll take the test during your normal school day, and **you don't need to practice**. Some bits will be easy, and some will be hard. Try your best, and don't worry if you don't know all the answers. We also want you to tell us what you think about things like school and reading, so you will fill in a questionnaire.

Parents

- **Please let your child take part.** Studies like these are very important, because they let us compare the education system in Ireland with other countries. For such studies to give a true picture, as many pupils as possible need to take part. That is why your permission is so important.
- **Please fill in the questionnaire your child brings home.** It asks for some background information that will help us to understand how pupils do on the test.

School staff

Fourth class teachers will receive a pack well before the testing takes place. This will contain some background information about the study, pupil questionnaires, and a questionnaire for you. Please complete it to provide a "classroom context" for pupil performance on the tests. Normally, teachers do not administer the test to their own pupils, but swap classes with another teacher in the school, who administers the test. If you are a **school principal**, please facilitate the class swap and complete a questionnaire designed for principals.

What about the results?

Each school will receive information about the general performance of their pupils on the test. Other than that, test results are totally confidential. We never reveal how a particular school or pupil did on a test. The purpose of PIRLS is to compare *countries*, not schools or pupils. Your school's results will be a small, anonymous, part of a large set of numbers that will form "Ireland's results".

For more information

See www.erc.ie/pirls
Or contact the Educational Research Centre:

Eemer Eivers 01 8065203

Emer Delaney 01 8065238

Email: pirls@erc.ie