

# PIRLS 2021

## Ireland: Results

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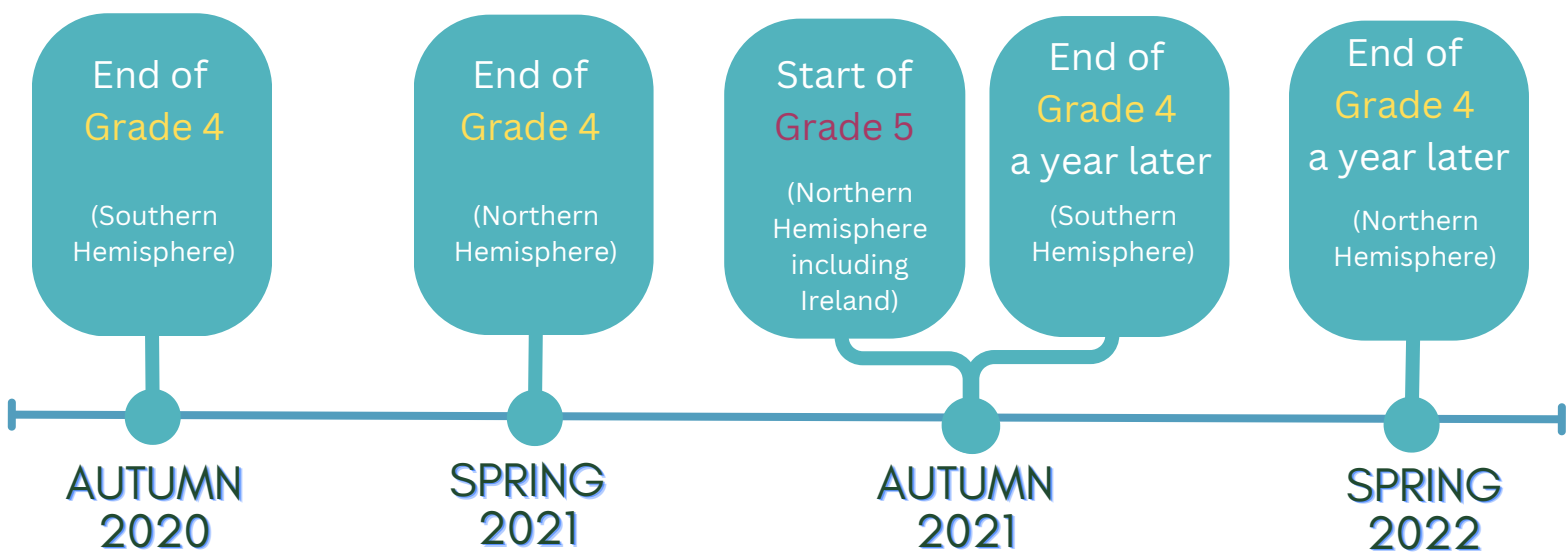
The *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* assesses the reading of pupils around the world.

In Ireland, testing was delayed to autumn 2021 due to COVID-19. Therefore, pupils in Ireland (and 13 other countries) tested at the **start of 5th Grade**, while the remaining (43) PIRLS countries tested at the **end of 4th Grade**.

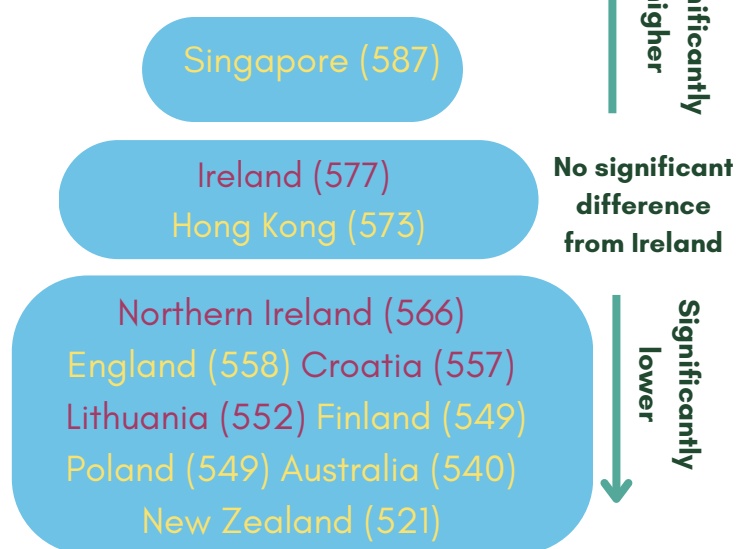
End of Grade 4

Start of Grade 5

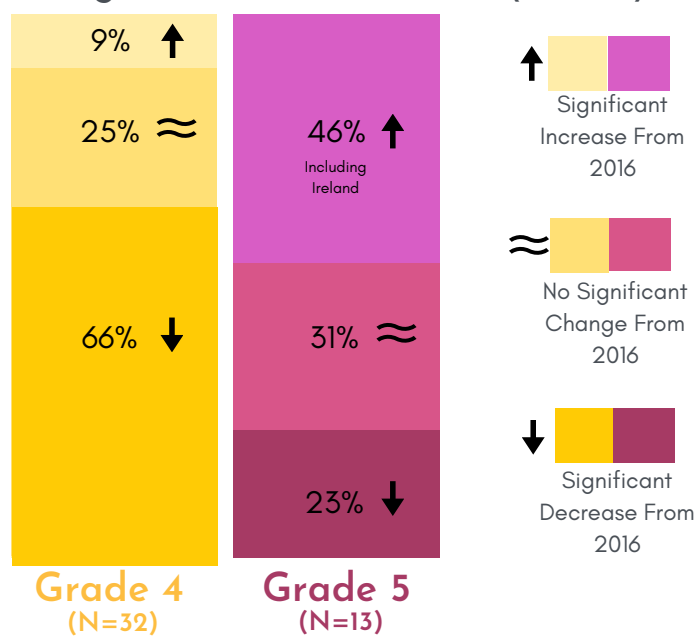
### PIRLS 2021 testing timeline



#### Mean achievement: Ireland & selected countries



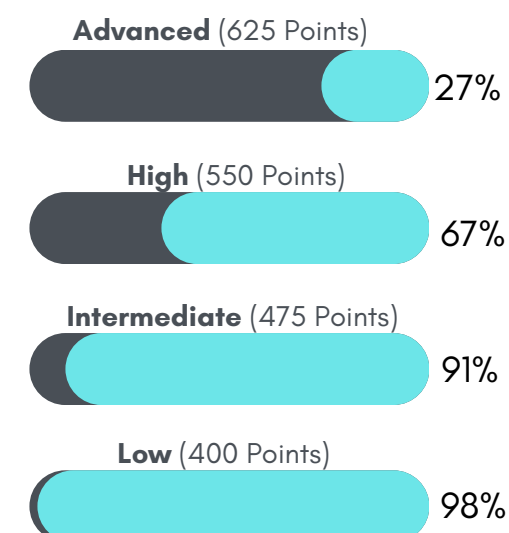
#### Percentage of countries by the direction of change in mean achievement (2016-21)



Most countries, excepting Singapore and Hong Kong, achieved significantly lower mean scores than Ireland. However, **caution** is needed when comparing Ireland's results with those of G4 countries.

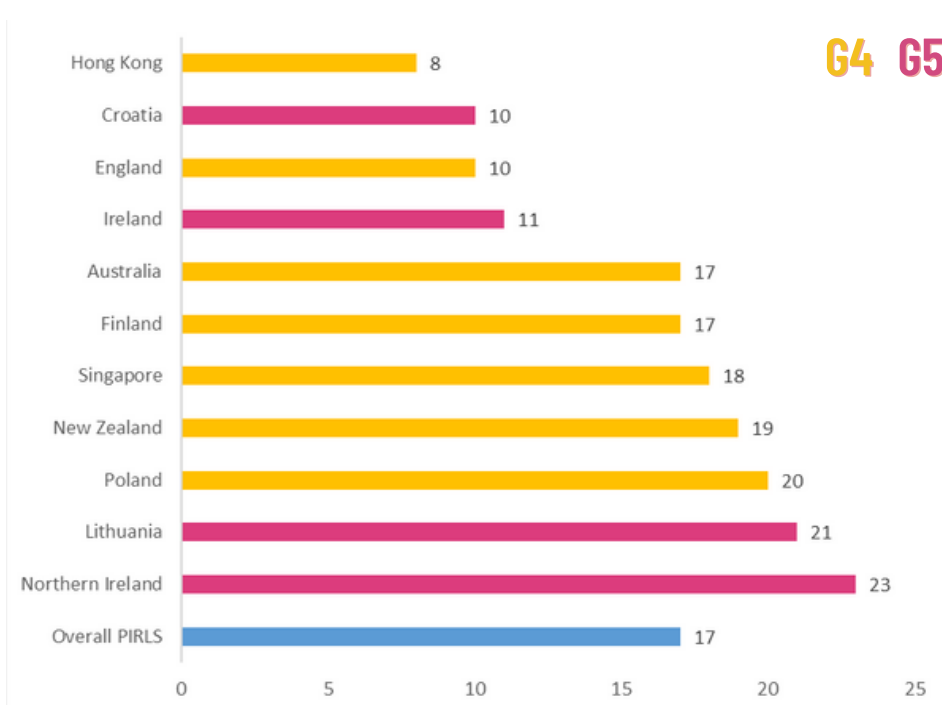
In most G4 countries, mean achievement declined relative to 2016. This was not the case among G5 countries, which suggests that, internationally, there was some advantage associated with G5 testing.

#### Benchmarks in Ireland



While most pupils in Ireland reached the Low and Intermediate Benchmarks, substantial proportions also reached the High and Advanced Benchmarks, demonstrating sophisticated critical reading skills.

#### Mean advantage of girls over boys



In Ireland, and in most PIRLS countries, girls achieved higher reading scores than boys, on average. Among selected reference countries, Ireland has one of the smaller gender gaps (11 points).

Produced by the Educational Research Centre, Dublin, 2023.

To find out more about PIRLS 2021, visit:

[www.erc.ie/pirls/reports](http://www.erc.ie/pirls/reports)

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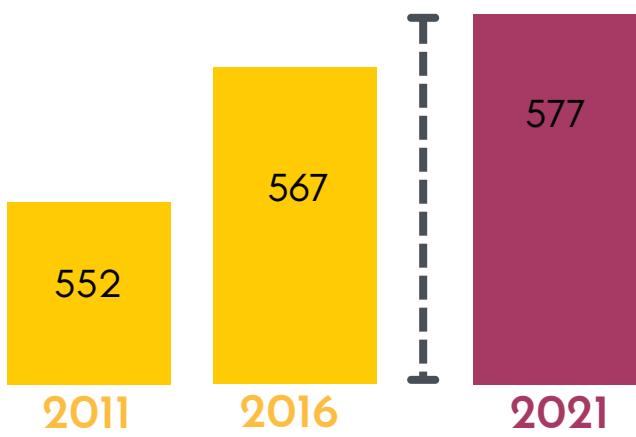
End of Grade 4

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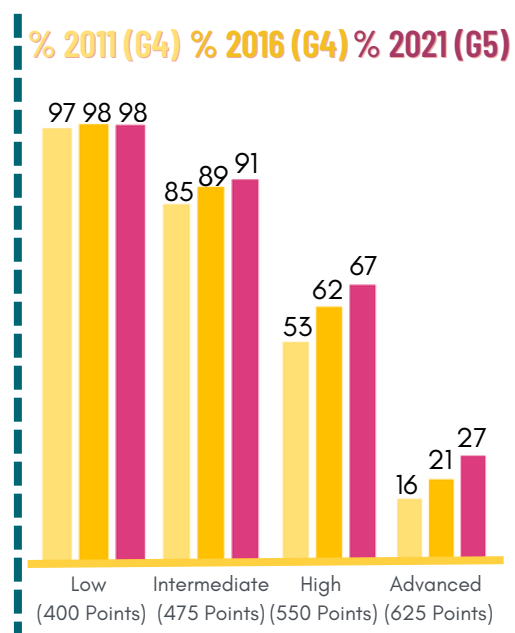
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## Ireland's achievement across cycles



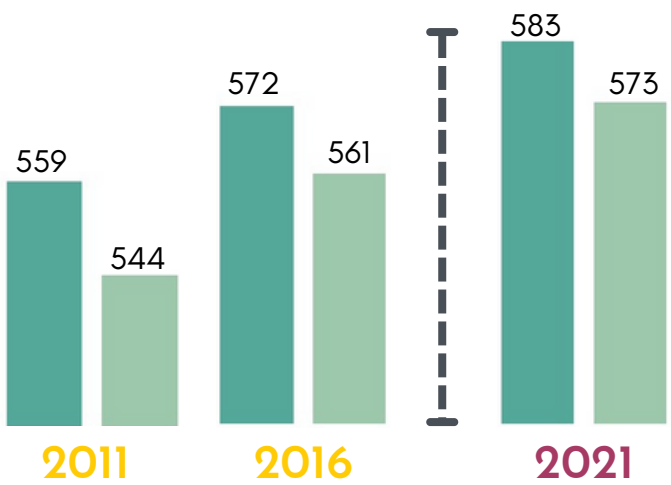
Average reading achievement in Ireland is significantly higher in 2021 than in previous cycles. However, as pupils in 2021 were 6 months older, on average, this must be interpreted **cautiously**.



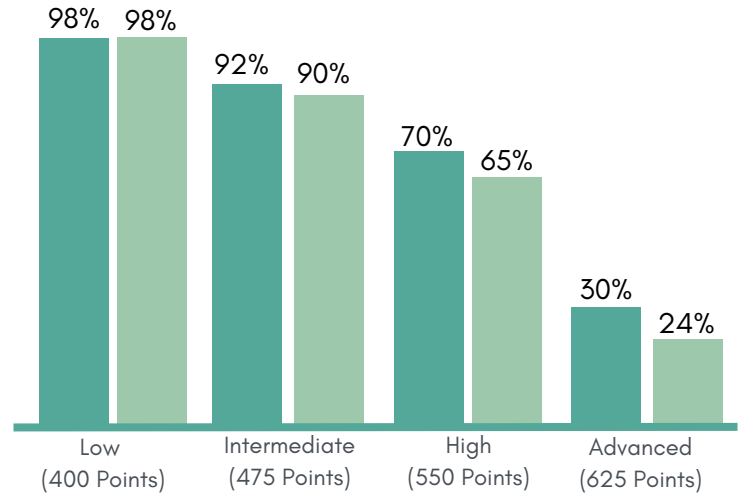
The proportion of pupils in Ireland reaching the High and Advanced Benchmarks has increased since 2016, although this may be at least partly due to Start G5 testing.

## Spotlight on gender

Girls Boys

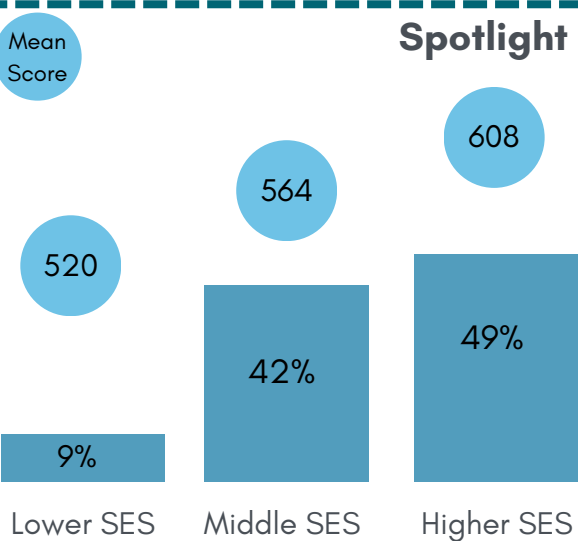


The size of Ireland's gender gap in achievement was similar in 2021 to 2016 (and was smaller than in 2011).

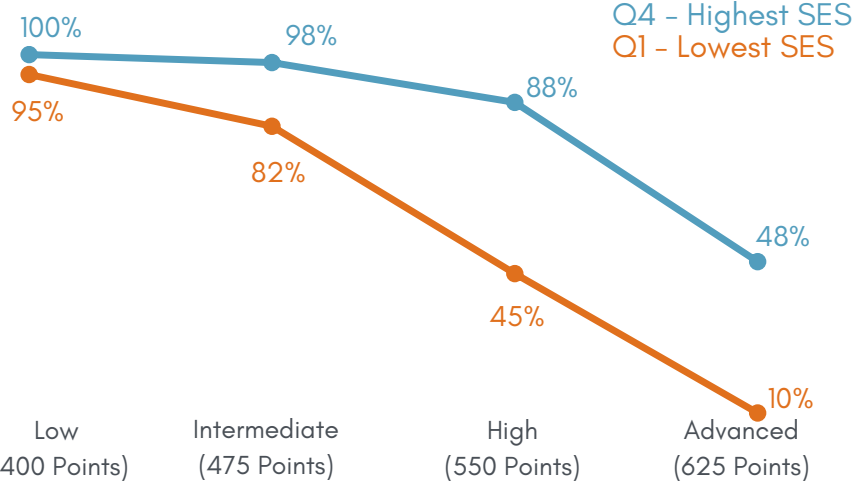


In Ireland, girls were significantly more likely than boys to reach the High and Advanced Benchmarks, although there was no notable gender gap at the lower benchmarks.

## Spotlight on socioeconomic status (SES)



The overall level of SES was relatively high in Ireland with most pupils having "Middle" or "Higher" SES (as defined internationally).



Within Ireland, pupils with lowest SES were less likely than peers with highest SES to reach all four benchmarks. At the High and Advanced Benchmarks, these gaps were very pronounced.

## Reading purposes & processes in Ireland



Literary Purpose  
Mean 584



Informational Purpose  
Mean 574



Retrieve/Infer Process  
Mean 571



Interpret/Evaluate Process  
Mean 582

Relative to their own overall mean score (577), pupils in Ireland performed particularly strongly when reading Literary texts and using Interpret/Evaluate processes.

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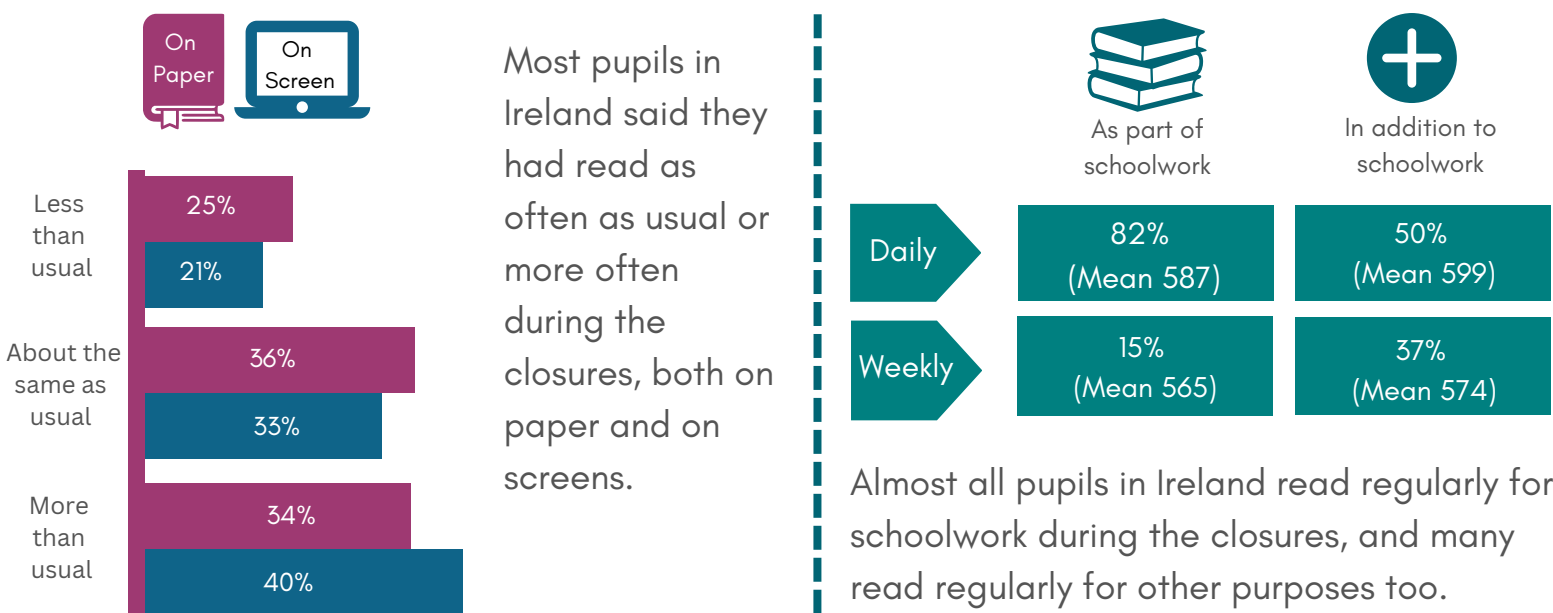
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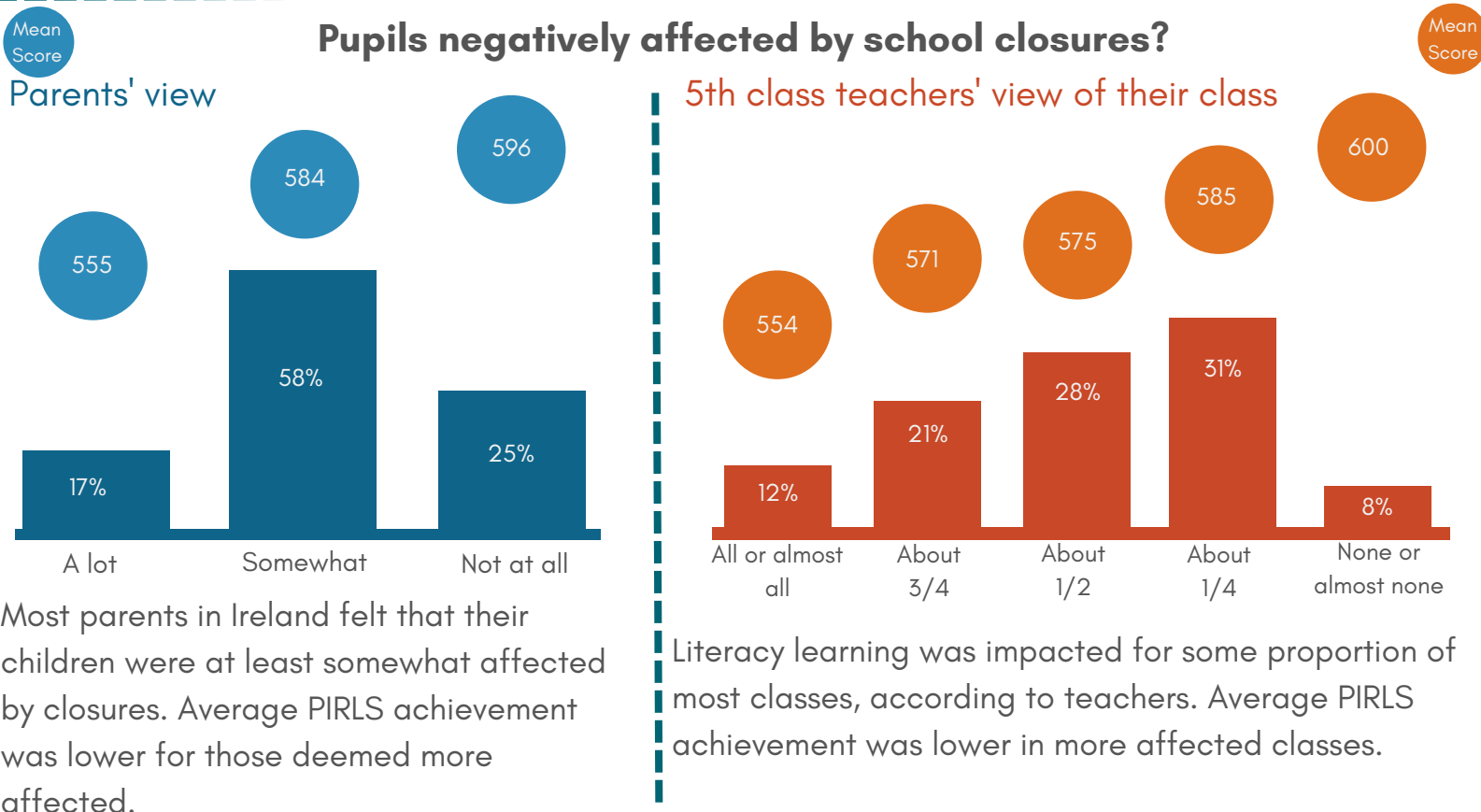
3 of 3

As part of PIRLS 2021, pupils, their parents, their teachers, and their principals were asked questions about reading habits and the impact of the COVID-19 school closures.

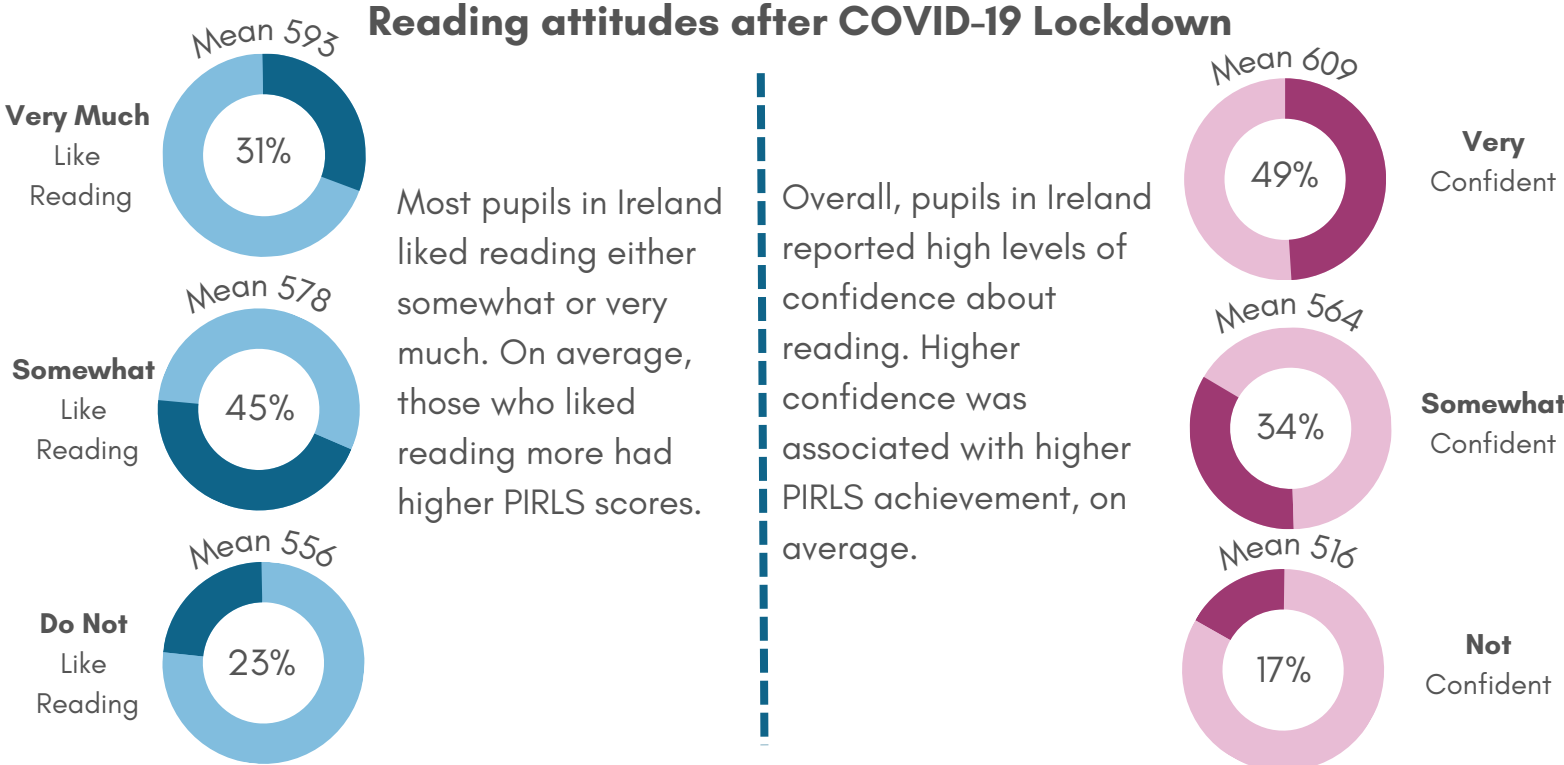
## Reading during COVID-19 school closures



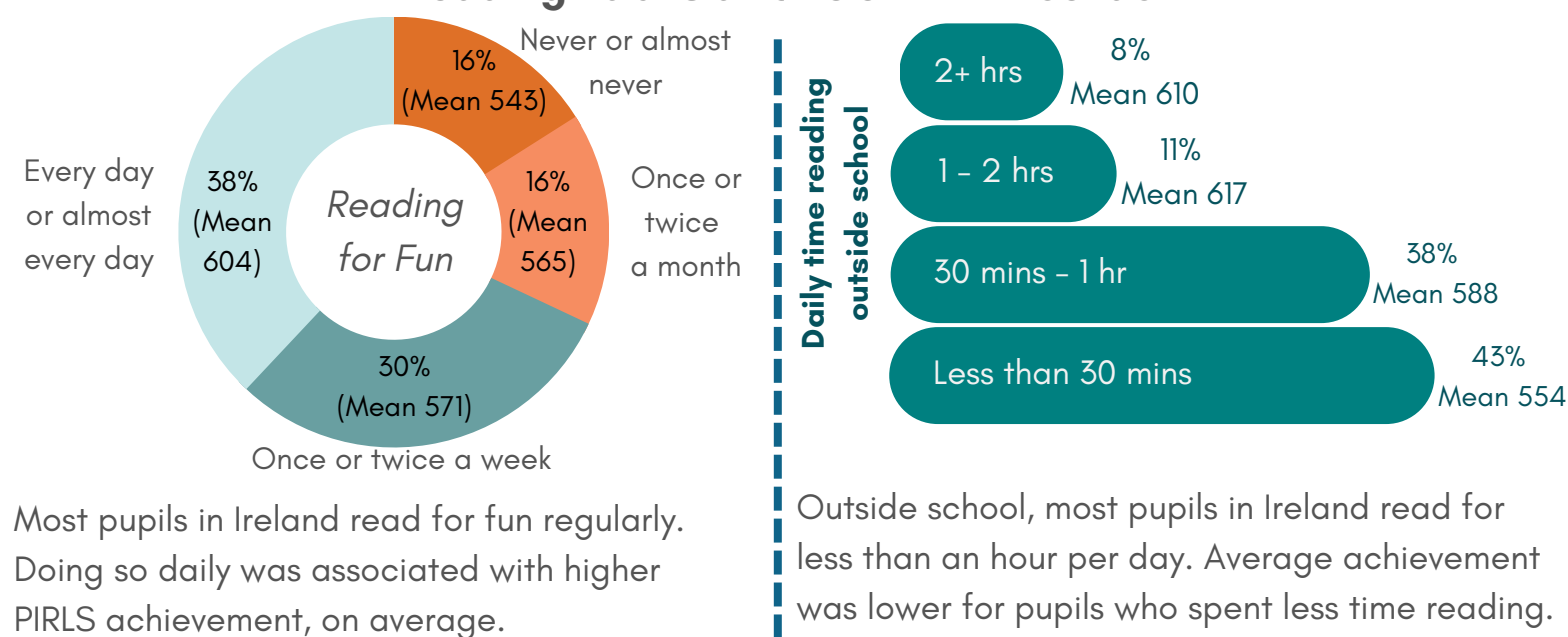
## Pupils negatively affected by school closures?



## Reading attitudes after COVID-19 Lockdown



## Reading habits after COVID-19 Lockdown



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