

**LEISURE READING IN SENIOR HIGH -
HOW CAN WE MAKE IT HAPPEN?**

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ABSTRACT

Motivating students to become lifelong readers by engaging in leisure reading is one of my goals as a teacher-librarian. However, based on my daily experience at my junior-senior high school and our circulation statistics, it seems that leisure reading decreases dramatically at the senior high level.

One goal of this project was to gather information regarding the reading habits and attitudes toward reading of senior high students and factors that either discourage or motivate leisure reading at this level. Data was also collected concerning student usage and opinion of the school library. A second goal was to explore the implications of the collected data and suggest ways I, as teacher-librarian, and those senior high English teachers involved in the project can respond to this information in order to encourage our senior high students to engage in leisure reading.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Preface

I have always had a passion for reading. I remember reading *The Good Earth* (Buck, 1949) as a teen and being captivated by the image of Olan giving birth in a rice paddy in China. I remember reading *The Trial of Steven Truscott* (Le Bourdais, 1966) and being outraged at the injustice of his conviction as a young boy of fourteen. I remember reading *Caravans* (Michener, 1963) and catching a glimpse of the Afghanistan culture through the words of James Michener. I remember what it felt like to lose myself in a book even though the titles, plots and characters have long escaped my memory. It was natural, therefore, to think of reading when considering researching something close to my heart.

Reading is also an aspect of my curriculum as a teacher-librarian at my school. My day to day experience involves helping students find books to read, giving book talks in classrooms, pondering which books to order for our students, and discussing with students their reactions to books. I am surrounded by books and readers (as well as non-readers) and I share my passion for reading on a daily basis. I also feel compelled to somehow encourage this same passion to grow within my students. This combination of personal and professional interest has led me to the topic of leisure reading in my research project.

Coupled with this desire to motivate students to become lifelong readers is the jarring reality of circulation statistics taken from our newly automated school library over the first four

months of the school year. They are as follows:

Patron Usage by Grade:	Grade 7 - 1783
	Grade 8 - 1062
	Grade 9 - 714
	Grade 10 - 344
	Grade 11 - 233
	Grade 12 - 456

What do these numbers really mean? At a glance, they indicate that reading drops off markedly at the senior high level. Is this really true and if so, why? These numbers could also indicate that the senior high students stop using the library to obtain reading materials, but still maintain their reading from other sources. If this is the case, why? More importantly, is there anything that can be done by me, as a teacher-librarian, and the English teachers in our school to encourage more leisure reading and/or library usage by our senior high students? The purpose of my study is to gather information regarding the leisure reading habits of senior high students, their attitudes towards reading and their use of the school library. This information will be used to inform my own practice as teacher-librarian and the practices of the senior high English teachers at my school.

Setting

This project was undertaken at Crescent Heights High School in Medicine Hat, Alberta. This is a grade seven through twelve school, with a junior high population of 644 students and a senior high population of 506. The school draws from six middle class feeder schools with

heterogeneous clientele. I have been a full-time teacher-librarian in our school for the last three years, a position which is one of its kind in our city and, unfortunately, is increasingly rare in districts all over Alberta. Because of the high volume of activity in our school library by staff and students, the administration of our school is committed to maintaining this position within our school. Our newly constructed library has been in operation for the last three years and is in its first year of being automated. The automation allows students access to not only our own collection, but the other high school within our district and the Shortgrass Library System, consisting of five public libraries in Southeastern Alberta.

The Survey

A logical place to begin my research was to gather data from senior high students regarding various aspects of their reading experience. I decided to limit the type of leisure reading to fiction and non-fiction books for my study, even though I recognize that many of our students engage in reading of magazines and newspapers as a leisure activity. For the purposes of this study, I am concerned with the more long term engagement demanded of a student when reading a book, rather than the quick perusal of a short article.

The survey used to gather information consists of three parts: reading habits, reading motivation, and library usage (see Appendix A). It was important to ask the students questions in these three areas in order to separate their attitudes toward reading from their actual behavior since the resulting data could provide quite different information. For instance, students may indeed enjoy reading, but not engage in reading. This scenario would

suggest that as professionals, their teachers and I, do not need to stress the value of reading, only explore ways to enable the students to read more. If, however, a number of the students do not enjoy reading or see no value to reading, our responses, as teachers and teacher-librarian, would be entirely different.

Part I

Included in reading habits are basic questions regarding reading frequency, types of books and topics preferred, place and time of reading, and location of sources of books. I decided to also ask students about their public library membership in order to pass on this information to the Young Adult Services branch of the Public Library. Inclusion of questions on favourite books and authors was a decision based on my own curiosity about which books and authors had made a difference to these students in their past reading experiences.

Part II

The section on reading motivation consists of questions regarding the students' attitudes toward leisure reading and the value they place on reading books. Checklists of factors which discourage or prevent students from reading and factors which would motivate or encourage them to read more may provide direction when considering ways to change student reading behaviors. A question regarding parental influence was included in order to determine the impact of another outside group, besides teachers, upon the reading habits of these students.

Part III

The final area of the survey pertained to usage of the school library and reasons for using this facility. Feedback on various aspects of the library was requested in order to inform my own practice as teacher-librarian.

Survey Participants

I surveyed all students registered in senior high English classes in Semester II which included both the academic and non-academic streams (see Appendix B). Our senior high student population is 506, so this sample does represent just over half of the total group. It was important to survey only those students in senior high English classes at this time in order to provide teachers with a class by class set of data regarding each question on the survey. I wanted the teachers to be able to share the results with each of their classes and engage in class discussions regarding any implications of their responses. The information would, therefore, be much more personalized and the teachers and I could initiate strategies arising from the class data.

Because of this restriction to working with only the current senior high English classes, limitations of my sample group did arise. The number of students enrolled in non-academic classes (English 13, 23, 33), particularly the female population, is low and therefore loses validity as a representative group. Ideally, all grades should be equally represented so as not to skew the results when combining responses for all senior high. However, the grade 12 group is considerably smaller than the other two grades, representing only 25% instead of

33% of the total number of students surveyed, so their responses were not be weighed the same as those from grade 10 and 11. These limitations will be minimized by examining each group separately whenever possible in my reporting of student responses.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Value of Reading

Why should we care about the amount of reading adolescents do? What value does this activity hold and why is it important to encourage our students to engage in leisure reading?

According to Krashen (1993) free voluntary reading has tremendous benefits:

What the research tells me is that if children or less literate adults start reading for pleasure, however, good things will happen. Their reading comprehension will improve, and they will find difficult, academic-style texts more comprehensible. Their writing style will improve, and they will be better able to write prose in a style that is acceptable to schools, business, and the scientific community. Their vocabulary will improve and will improve at a better rate than if they took one of the well-advertised vocabulary building courses. Also their spelling and control of grammar will improve. (p.x)

Besides these skill building benefits, Gold (1990) discusses the life-altering potential of reading for pleasure:

With the help of fiction you can learn about yourself and understand your own feelings, identify the sources of your anxieties, angers, likes and dislikes. Fiction can reflect for you, like a magic mirror, the veiled parts of your self and your life. The other wonderful function of story in human cognition is its power to alter the reader's way of thinking and perceiving. Fiction can help you reorganize your thinking, resolve problems, remember the past when you need to review it and see it differently. In other words, fiction can be a powerful agent for creative and healthy change. (p.3-4)

Given the possible benefits of leisure reading, we should all be motivating students to read as much as they can.

Reading Habits and Attitudes of Adolescents

What have previous surveys revealed about the reading habits and attitudes of adolescents? Fisk (1961) and Campbell (1962) examined surveys of leisure reading in junior and senior high schools respectively. Some of their findings included: a large percentage (92%) of the students found reading enjoyable, junior and senior high students prefer mystery and detective stories regardless of grade level; short stories and magazines articles were preferred over plays, poetry, and essays; the number of books read decreased with the age of the student, and more girls than boys read daily. Another study of leisure reading habits of grade nine students conducted by Brett (1964) echoed these findings in its conclusions that girls read more than boys, mystery and adventure books appealed to both boys and girls, and a high percentage of both boys and girls reported they enjoyed reading. A survey of Canadian reading habits administered by Watson (1980) pointed out that the whole population spent an average of 6.5 hours per week engaged in leisure reading with the age group 15 to 19 year-olds averaging 5.1 hours a week. More recently, Graves and Dugas (1991) revealed in their study on reading in Canada that on the average, the population reads about 7 hours a week with 15 to 19 year-olds averaging 5.3 hours and over 90% of Canadians read for pleasure.

Some of the literature reveals more alarming trends towards a decline in reading as students get older. Bushman (1997) surveyed 380 students in grades 6 through 12 and discovered that the number of books read decreased as the students progressed through their senior year.

Clary (1991), in her article exploring ways to get adolescents to read, claims that the concern from the seventies that students show a general lack of interest, indifference or outright rejection of reading still exists today. In 1995, an extensive national survey of the reading attitudes of over 18,000 children in grades 1 through 6 hints at a trend that may continue through to senior high. Among its findings:

...recreational and academic reading attitudes, on average, were observed to become more negative gradually, but steadily, throughout the elementary school years, beginning at a relatively positive point and ending in relative indifference...the trend toward more negative recreational attitudes was clearly related to ability and was steepest for least able readers.

(McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth, 1995, p.935)

Causes of Reading Apathy

The literature offers many reasons for the decline in motivation for adolescents to read.

Pennac (1994) in his powerful book, *Better Than Life*, suggests that we, as parents and teachers, destroy the joy of reading so evident in young children by turning reading into an obligation, an assignment, a test of comprehension as the child gets older. He states unequivocally that schools have only one role: “to teach the mastery of technique and critical commentary and to cut off spontaneous contact with books by discouraging the pleasure of reading” (p.91). Another author, Bushman (1997), also places the blame squarely on the shoulders of our school system when he points out: “[Schools] have turned students off from reading rather than making them lifelong readers. Schools have failed to choose literature that enables students to become emotionally and cognitively involved in what they read”

(p.38). Cope (1997), in his study of the reading experiences of 272 grade 12 students, found the strongest memories of school reading experiences were negative. Assigned reading (particularly the “classics”), teaching methods, book reports, and fear of reading aloud topped the list of reasons for these unpleasant memories.

McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth (1995) offer another reason for the decline in interest in reading: “As they grow older and more leisure options are open to them, the prospect of reading will be weighed against available alternatives, each of which is associated with an attitude” (p.939). Therefore, adolescents may simply be lured away from reading by more attractive alternatives to passing their time.

Further insights into why students won’t read are offered by Gentile and McMillan (1977) cited in Reed (1994). These researchers identified ten factors which contribute to what they referred to as the “reluctant reader syndrome”:

1. Many students equate reading with ridicule, failure, or exclusively school-related tasks.
2. Many students are not excited by ideas but are driven to experience life directly rather than through reading.
3. Adolescents frequently do not want to sit, and in some cases are incapable of sitting for long periods.
4. Adolescence is a time of intense egocentrism.
5. Many teenagers insist on being entertained; they have little understanding or appreciation of intrinsic rewards.
6. Many students are pressured at home and at school to read. They may resist reading if they feel too much pressure.
7. Many young people grow up in an atmosphere where reading material is not available or not abundant.
8. Reading is considered an antisocial activity by some adolescents.

9. Many classroom texts and supplemental reading materials do not inspire by their content and appearance.
10. Some adolescents automatically reject reading because they see reading as part of the adult world. (p.19)

Motivating Students to Read

If there are worthwhile reasons for students to engage in leisure reading, but in reality this does not seem to be happening, what can we, as professionals, do to address this problem? The three predominate themes arising from the literature surround choice, accessibility and time.

Allowing students to choose what they read is one suggestion that appears repeatedly in the literature on this subject. Cope (1997) explains: "If we want our students to grow as readers and develop a lifelong love of reading, then we must trust them to choose literature that will inspire them to read more" (p.22). Gambrell (1996), in her research on what motivates children to read, cites five different research studies which support the idea that students are most engaged when allowed self-selection of reading materials.

Making sure books are readily available to students is another logical ingredient to motivating students to read. Krashen (1992) cites numerous studies in order to conclude that when classrooms are rich in print materials, when libraries are well stocked and accessible, and when homes are filled with reading materials, more reading happens.

Time is the perhaps the most crucial factor to be considered. Clary (1991) points out that:

Observation tells us that adolescents, particularly secondary students, have little free time outside of school for reading, and this is a major cause of decline in free reading at this age. Research shows that 70% of a student's day is filled with talk; three-quarters of that talk is the teacher's. Some time should instead be devoted to reading aloud to students and discussing books that have been read to them. More important, perhaps, is allowing time for students to read in class. (p.343)

Krashen (1992) also advises teachers to motivate students by incorporating what he calls "free voluntary reading" time into the school schedule. He claims it is "one of the most powerful tools we have in language education" (p.1). He concludes in an updated article (Krashen, 1995) that: "We have more than enough evidence to put pedal to the metal and make sure that students are flooded with books and are encouraged to read them. Free reading, it appears, is not only pleasant for teachers and students. It is an efficient way to develop literacy"(p.191).

We need to be asking ourselves questions such as: How much choice do we allow our students to have in their own reading?; Do my students have easy access to books and reading materials?; and finally, Do we give students time to read for sake of reading and not demand accountability in the form of book reports, essays, or chapter questions? Other valuable teaching strategies such as book sharing techniques, reading workshop approach, or literature circles were often mentioned in the literature and would be worth exploring when considering ways to motivate students to read.

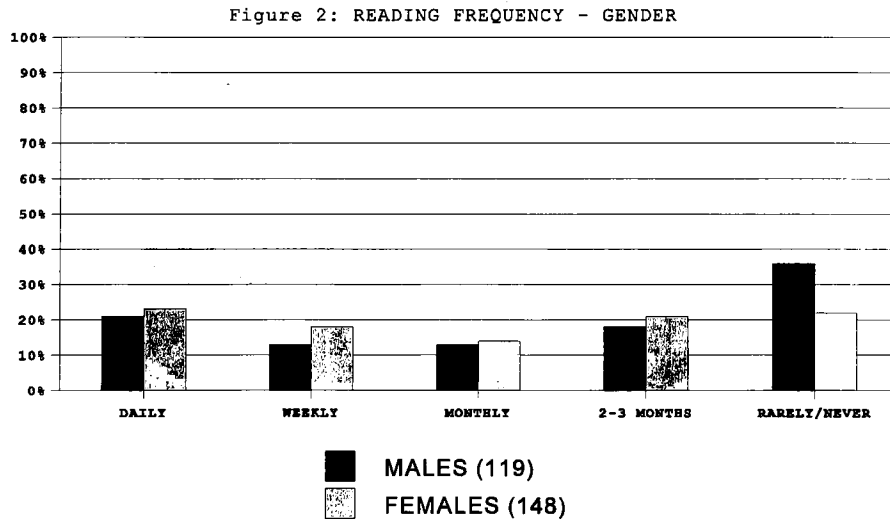
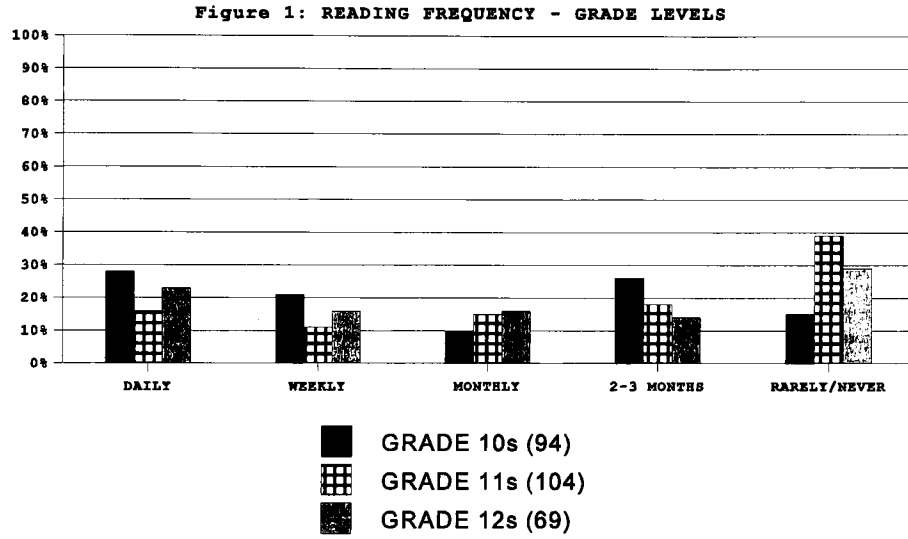
CHAPTER THREE - STUDENT RESPONSES

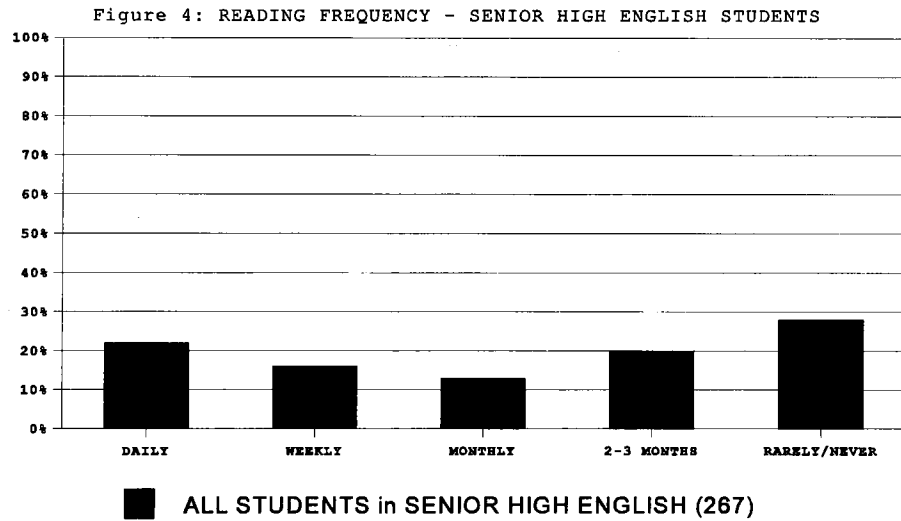
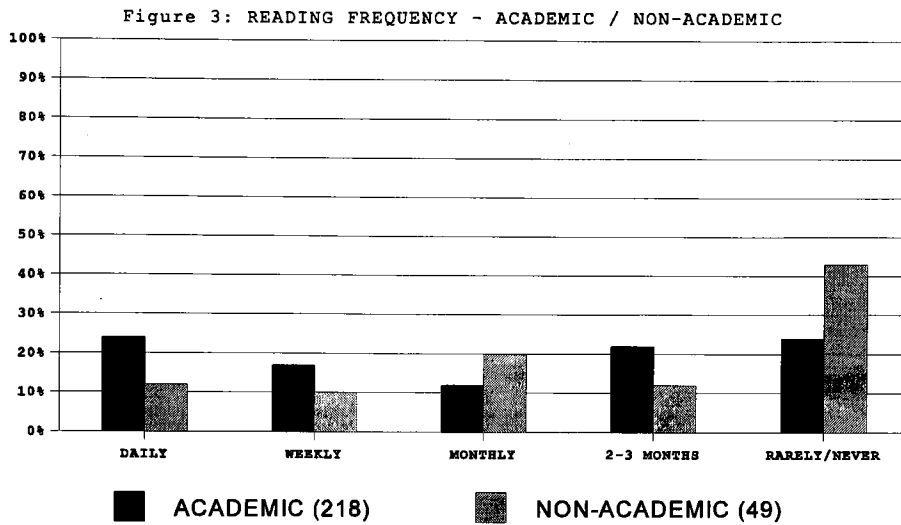
The survey was administered to 12 senior high English classes over a period of three weeks (see Appendix C for class descriptions). I explained to the students that this was a voluntary survey which would be used for my research project and the results would also be shared with their teacher in order to learn about the reading habits and attitudes of the class.

Student responses to each of the questions were then analyzed according to grade level, gender, academic vs non-academic, and total group response. The following pages show the responses to each of the closed questions on the survey in a bar graph format followed by a summary in point form of the conclusions drawn from the data. The responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed for dominant themes which occur in the various groupings.

Reading Frequency

How often do you read books for your own enjoyment?



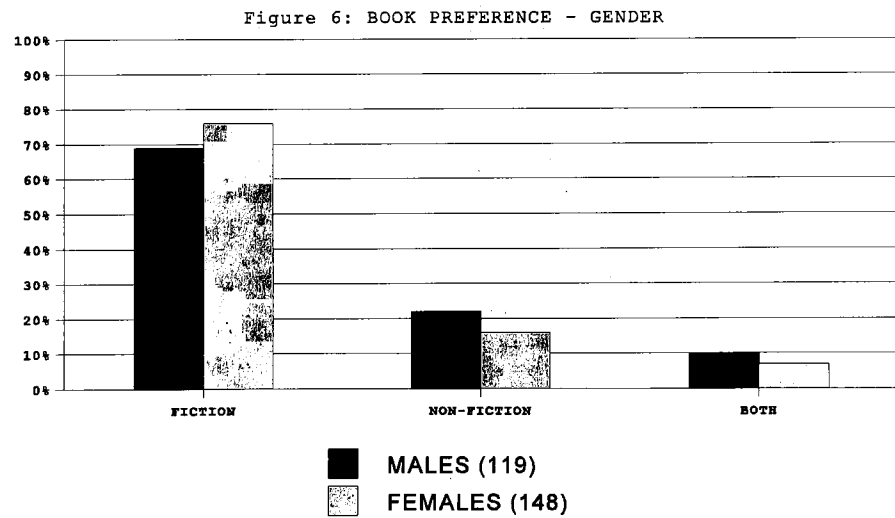
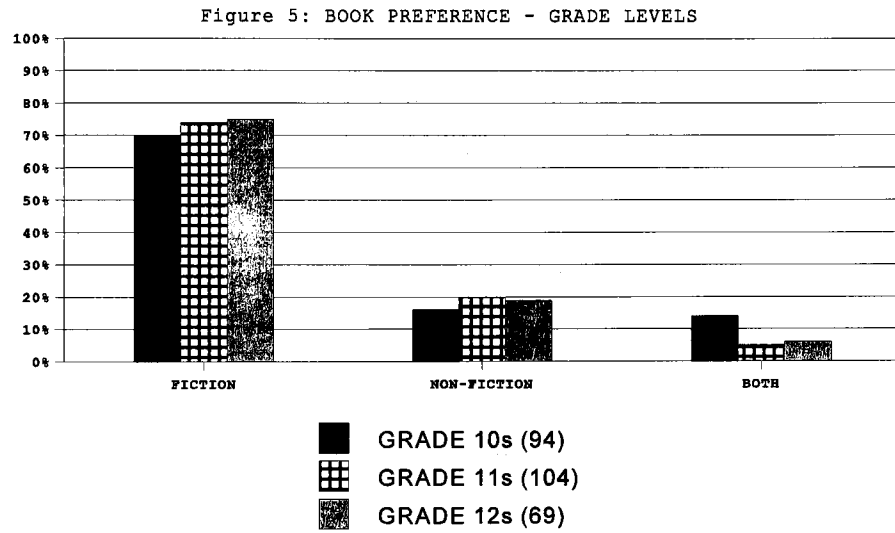


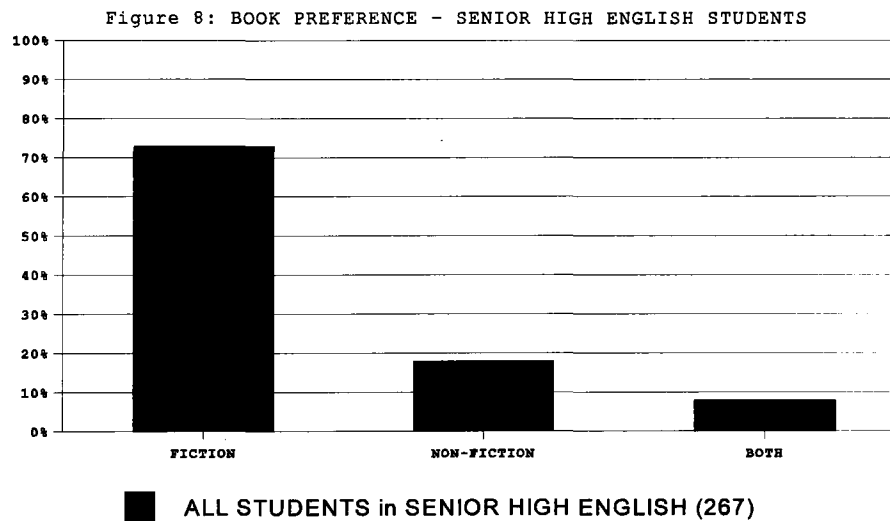
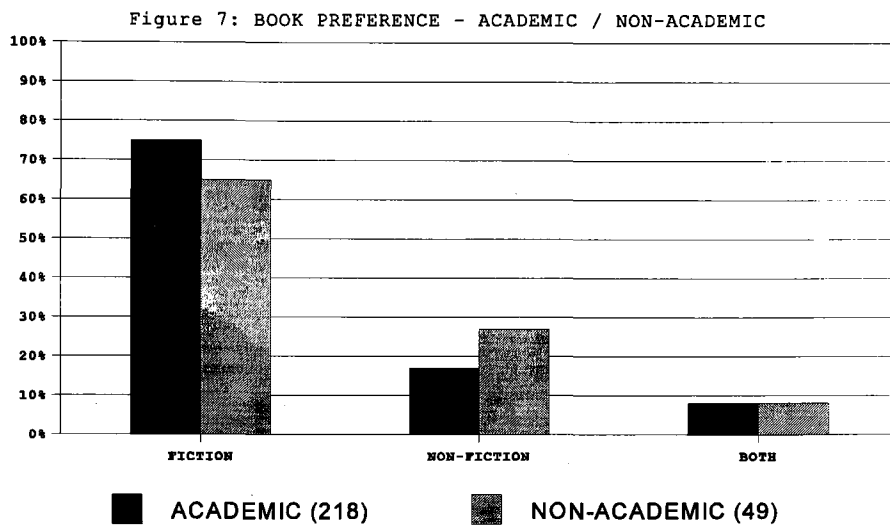
SUMMARY: (see Appendix D for numerical data)

1. More Grade 11s rarely or never read, whereas the grade 10s have the highest percentage of daily readers.
2. Males read less often than females.
3. Non-academic students rarely or never read more often than academic students.
4. The highest percentage of surveyed students rarely or never read books for enjoyment.

Book Preference

If you ever do read, what type of books do you prefer?





SUMMARY: (see Appendix E for numerical data)

1. All grades levels overwhelmingly prefer fiction to non-fiction.
2. A higher percentage of males prefer non-fiction as compared to females.
3. A higher percentage of non-academic students prefer non-fiction as compared to academic students.
4. All surveyed students strongly prefer fiction to non-fiction.

Fiction Preferences

If you were to read fiction, what type of fiction do you prefer?

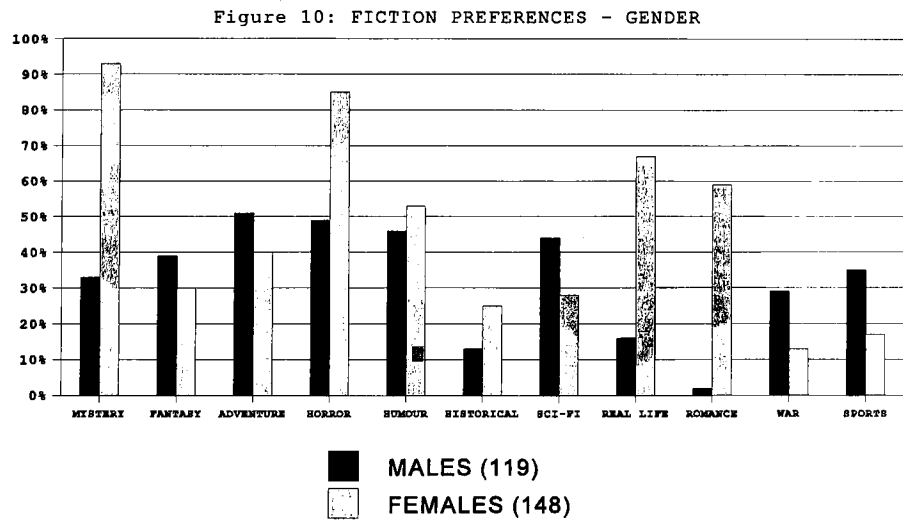
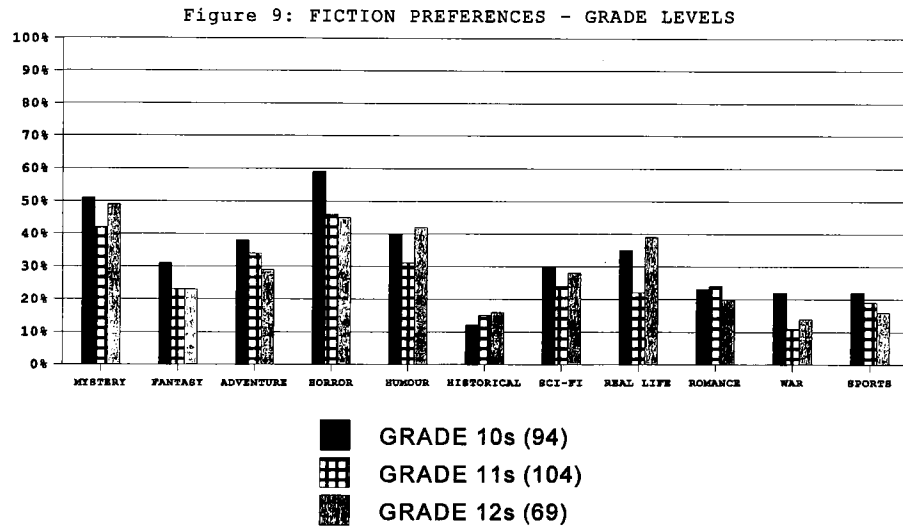


Figure 11: FICTION PREFERENCES - ACADEMIC / NON-ACADEMIC

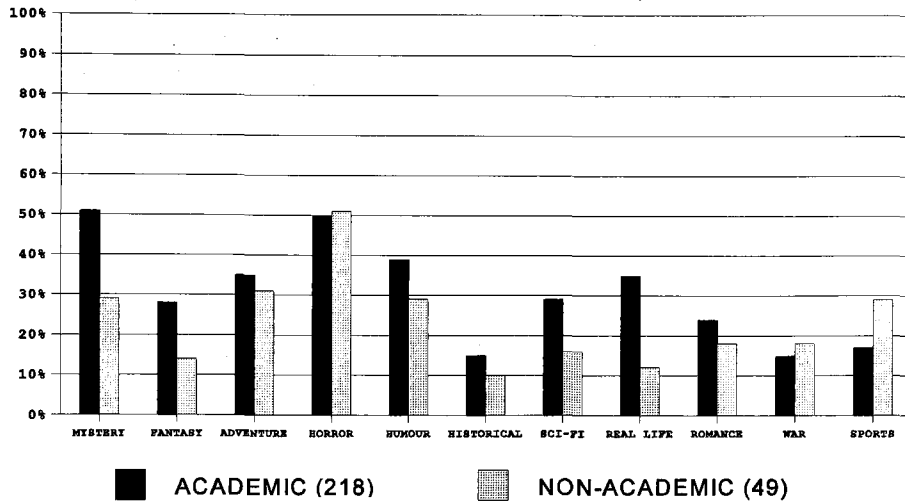
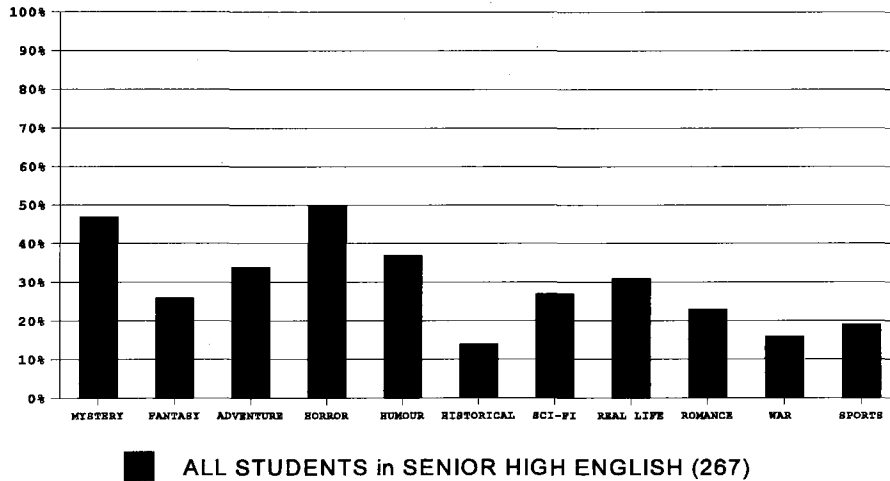


Figure 12: FICTION PREFERENCES - SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH STUDENTS



SUMMARY: (see Appendix F for numerical data)

1. The top two choices for all grades are mystery and horror. Grade 10s and 12s chose humour as their third choice, while grade 11s selected adventure.
2. Significantly more females chose mystery, horror, real life, and romance as their top choices than the males. The males dominated in the categories of science fiction, war, and sports, and their top choices included adventure, horror, and humour.
3. Non-academic students chose sports significantly more often than academic students, whereas the latter dominated in the mystery, science fiction, and real life categories.
4. The top two choices for types of fiction for all students are horror and mystery while historical and war fiction are their least favourite.

Non-Fiction Preferences

If you were to read non-fiction, what topics would interest you?

Because this question was openended, the responses covered a wide array of topics. There seemed to be no significant differences between the responses of the different grades or the academic versus non-academic groups. I did, however, discover in the male and female responses some areas of difference when comparing the topics mentioned. The top three choices for males were: sports in general or a specific sport (41%); biographies (24%) ; and war (21%). Females mentioned the following three most often: biographies (32%); historical events (19%); and sports (17%). Only 6% of the females mentioned war as a topic of interest and only 15% of the males mentioned historical events. Many topics were mentioned by both males and females such as music, animals, occult, science, but, not surprisingly, 10% of the males mentioned cars, whereas not one female named that as a topic of interest (see Appendix G for a full listing of topics and frequency of response).

Time and Place of Reading

When do you read? Where do you read?

The most common time mentioned by all students, regardless of grade, academic vs non-academic, or gender, was “at night” which included the response “before bed”. The most frequent response to the question of where reading took place was “at home”, specifically “in my room”. Rarely did the students surveyed mention reading for enjoyment in school during their school day. This certainly supports the research reviewed in Chapter Two that voluntary free reading is not happening in our schools.

Book Sources

From where do you get most of your books?

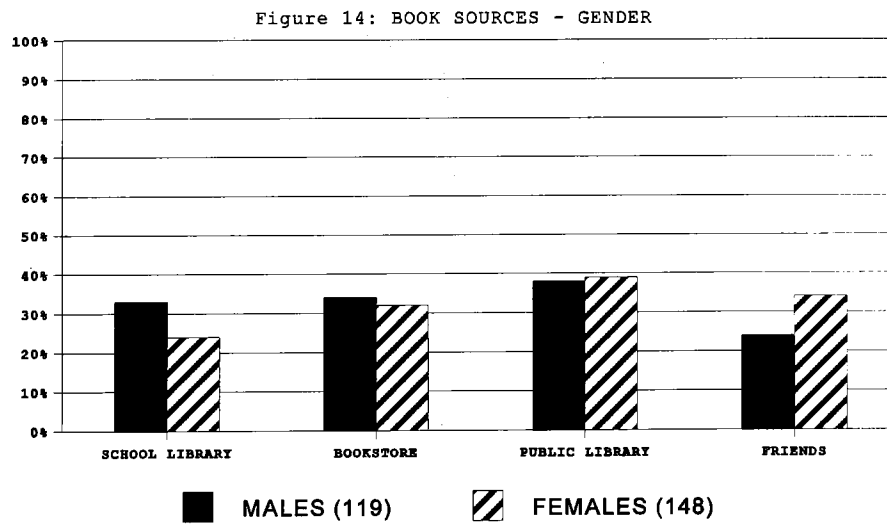
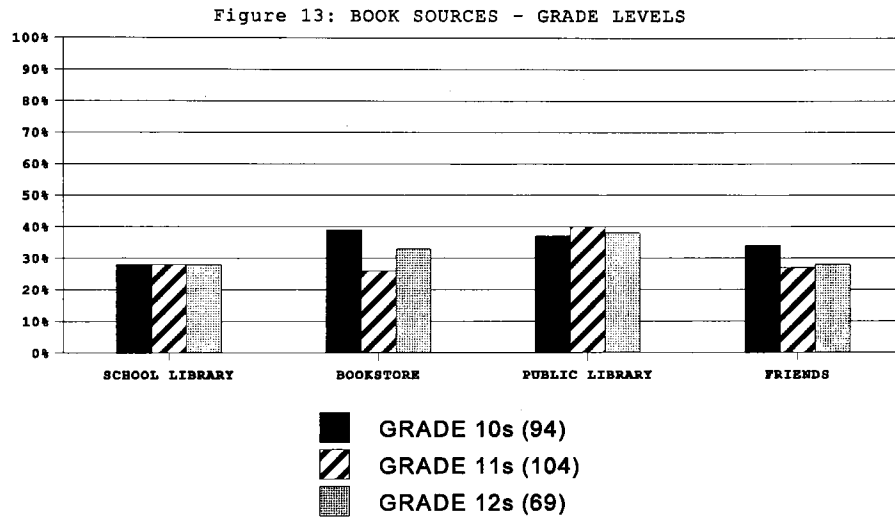


Figure 15: BOOK SOURCES - ACADEMIC / NON-ACADEMIC

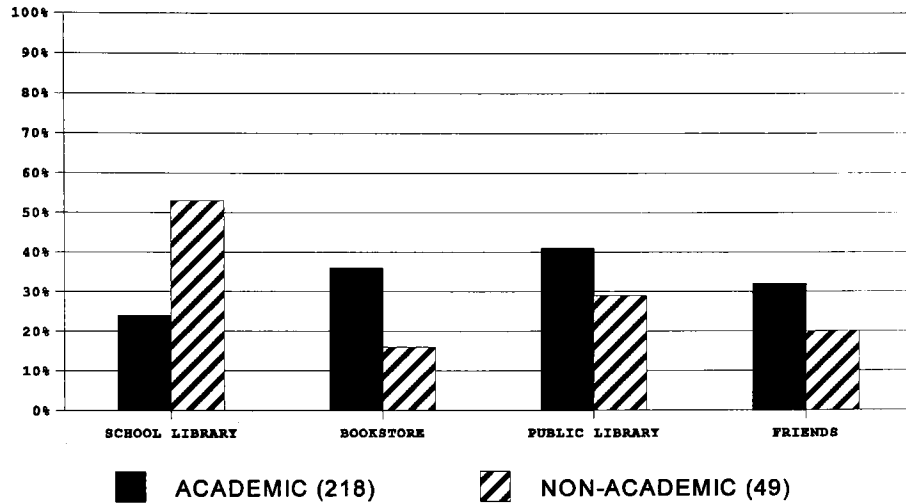
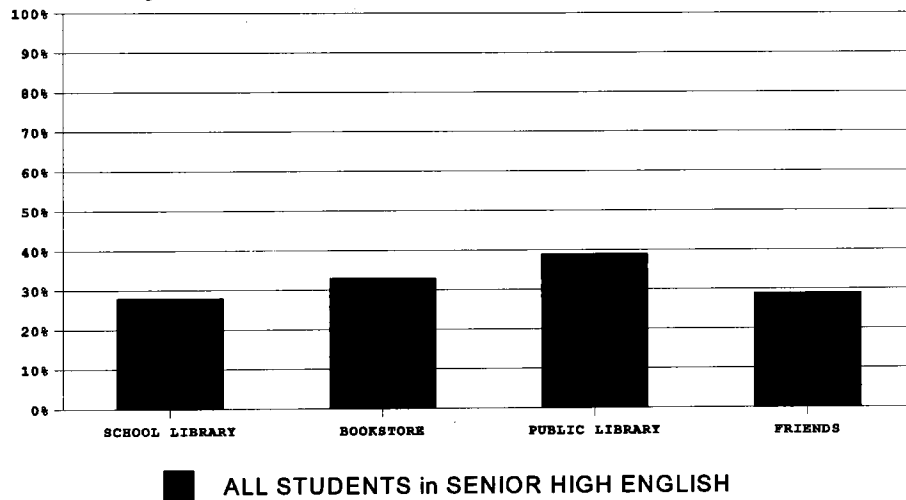


Figure 16: BOOK SOURCES - SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH STUDENTS

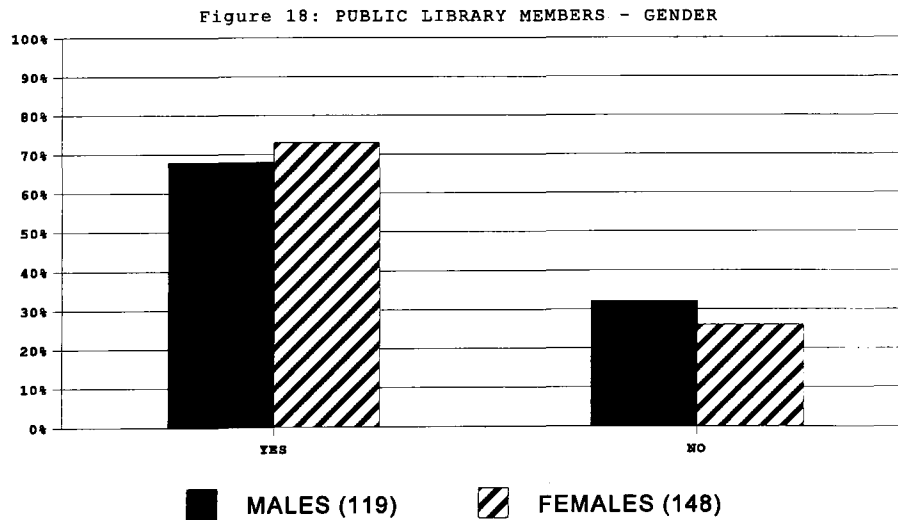
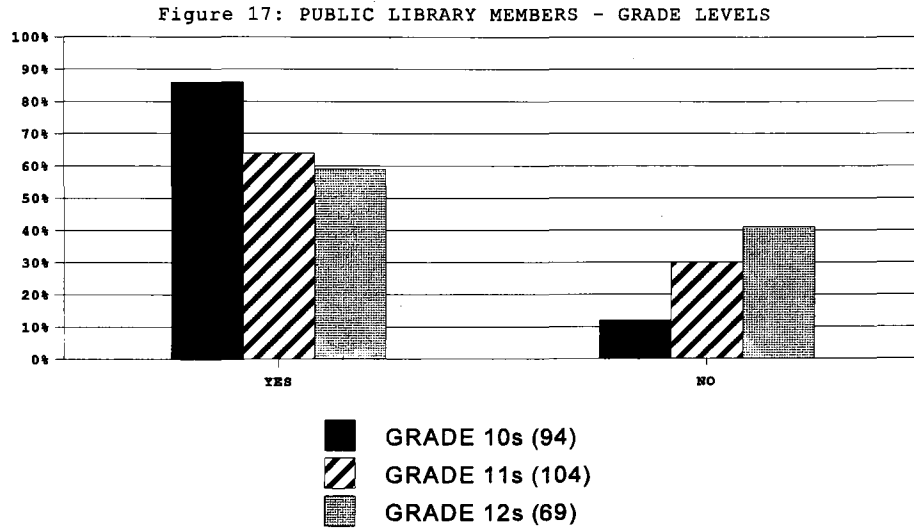


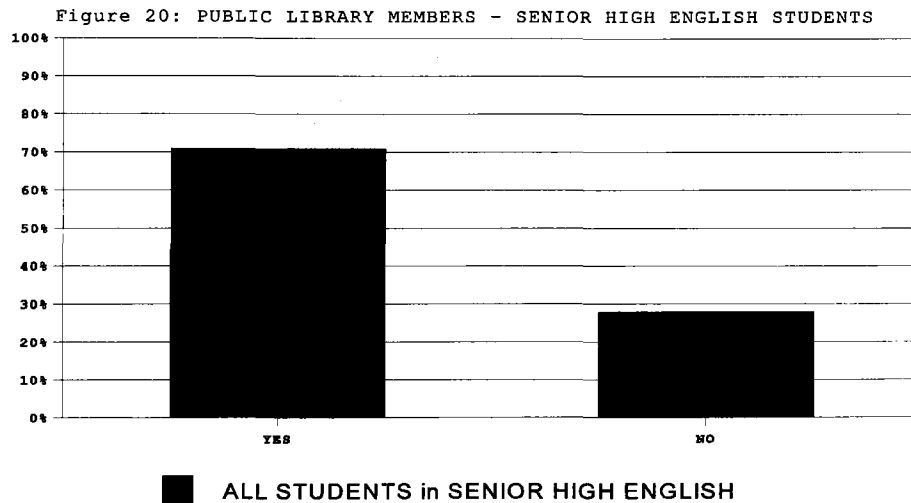
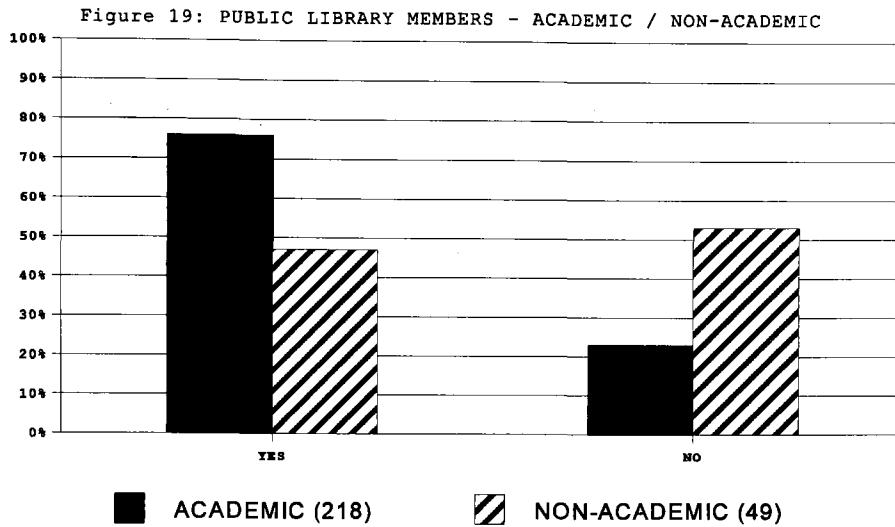
SUMMARY: (see Appendix H for numerical data)

1. There is a fairly even distribution of sources of books across the three grade levels.
2. Fewer males than females get books from friends, whereas fewer females access the school library to get books.
3. The school library is a significant source of books for non-academic students, while the academic students rely on bookstores and public libraries more often.
4. Taken as a whole group, the surveyed students prefer the public library as a source of books, followed by the bookstore, friends and then, the school library.

Public Library Membership

Are you a member of the Public Library?





SUMMARY: (see Appendix I for numerical data)

1. Public Library membership decreases with each grade surveyed. Significantly more (+20%) grade 10s belong to the Public Library, whereas only slightly more grade 11s than grade 12s belong.
2. About the same number of males as females hold a Public Library membership.
3. Far more (~30%) academic students belong to the Public Library when compared to non-academic students. Approximately three-quarters of the academic students belong whereas less than half of the non-academic students have a membership.
4. A large majority (~70%) of all students surveyed belong to the Public Library.

Last Book Read for School

What was the name of the last book read for school? In what grade?

The results of the first question did not reveal any significant information regarding titles of books. Most students were able to name a book with only a very small number (8%) not able to recall a title. However, this does not necessarily mean that this small group didn't read the assigned book. It may simply indicate that the book was not a memorable reading experience. It is interesting to note, though, that this small group was eighty per cent male possibly indicating that either a greater number of males didn't read the assigned book or didn't find it very memorable.

All those students who named a title claimed to have read a book for school in their present grade or the grade previous to this.

Last Book Read for Enjoyment

What was the last book read for enjoyment? In what grade?

The titles mentioned were extremely varied with only a few being mentioned more than once (see Appendix J for a complete listing).

There were a number of students who could not recall or did not know a title to name (23%) indicating either a lack of reading or lapse of memory.

A very small number of students (3%) indicated that the last time they had read a book for enjoyment was two or more years earlier. Only a few of those revealed that it was as early as elementary school that they last read a book for enjoyment.

Favourite Book

What has been one of the best books you have ever read? Why?

The varied responses to this question satisfied my curiosity as to what senior high students remember as being their favourite books. Some were adult fiction titles such as, *Rainmaker*, *Jurassic Park*, *Schindler's List*, *Prayer for Owen Meany* and *Horse Whisperer*. Others mentioned children's classics such as, *The Hobbit*, *Little Women*, *Number the Stars*, *Wrinkle in Time*, *Where the Red Fern Grows*, and *Bridge to Terabithia*. The majority of students, however, named titles which are typical young adult literature: *Star Wars*, *The Outsiders*, *Homecoming*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Giver* and *Island of the Blue Dolphin*. Biographies and *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* were the top choices in the non-fiction category.

A number of students (21%) responded that couldn't remember or didn't know a favourite book to name, but this response was not given by any particular group of students.

The reasons for their choices generally fell into the following categories: interesting or suspenseful plot (e.g. *Needful Things*), realistic story or characters (e.g. *Chrysalids*), unusual or unique point of view (e.g. *Clockwork Orange*), or good, descriptive writing (e.g. *Dark Side*). Some students referred to being able to personally connect with the book in some way: "*The Outsiders* because it reminded me of my life", "*Number the Stars* because it made me think", "*S.T.A.R.S.* because it was an inspirational book that I loved", "*Pool of Radiance* because it provides good raw material for my own fantasies" (see Appendix K for a complete listing of students' responses).

Favourite Author

Who is or was one of your favourite authors? Why?

Again, a wide variety of responses were given, but some top favourites did emerge from the data. Stephen King was the most often mentioned author (chosen by 18% of all students) with both males and females across all grades and classes. When all students were combined, the next favourite was John Grisham (chosen by 6% of all students). The third choice for males was Michael Crichton and for females, R.L. Stine. Michael Crichton and J.R.R. Tolkien, another author receiving multiple mentions from the males, interestingly enough, were not mentioned once by the females surveyed. By the same token, V.C. Andrews, a popular choice for females, was not selected by any males. A few children's authors were named such as Robert Munsch, Dr. Seuss, Beverly Cleary, and Roald Dahl, but, by and large, the choices were writers of young adult or adult fiction.

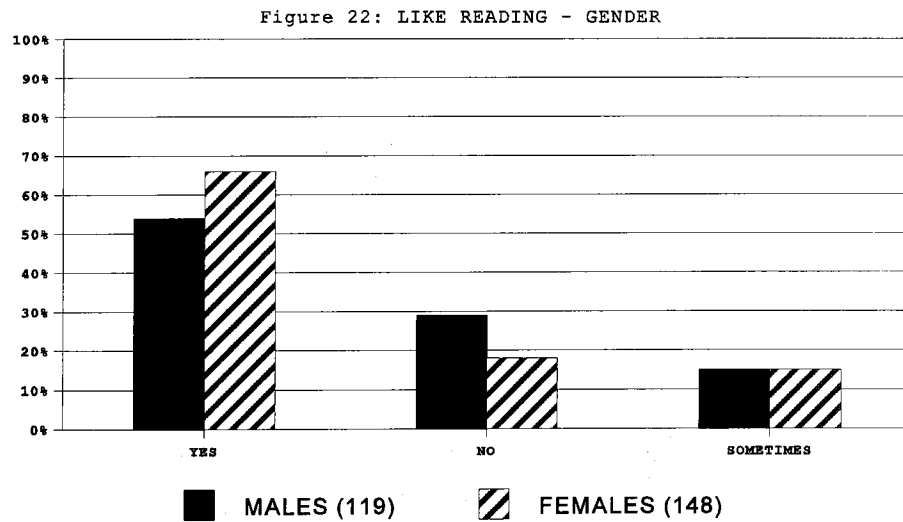
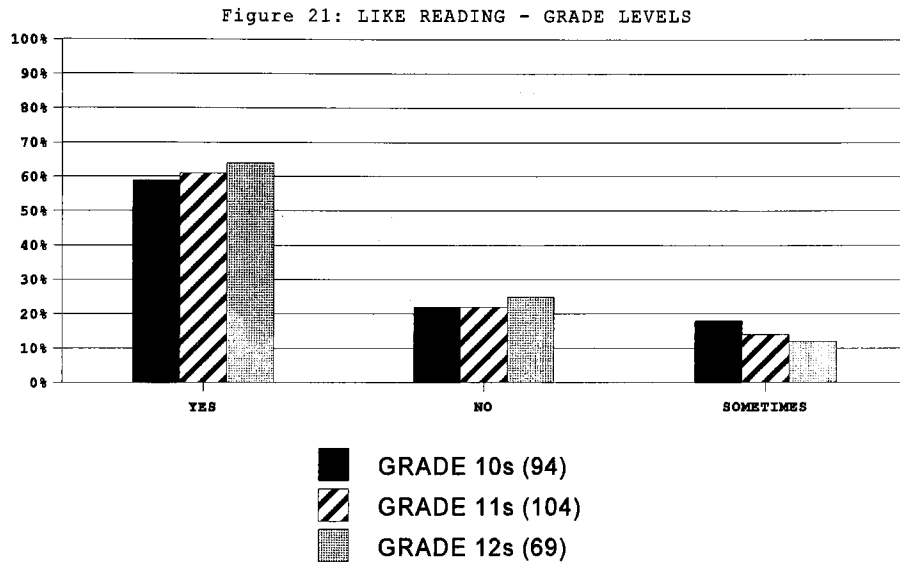
Approximately one third of the students said they had no favourite author or didn't know one, but, again, the type of student or grade level were not factors in the frequency of this type of response.

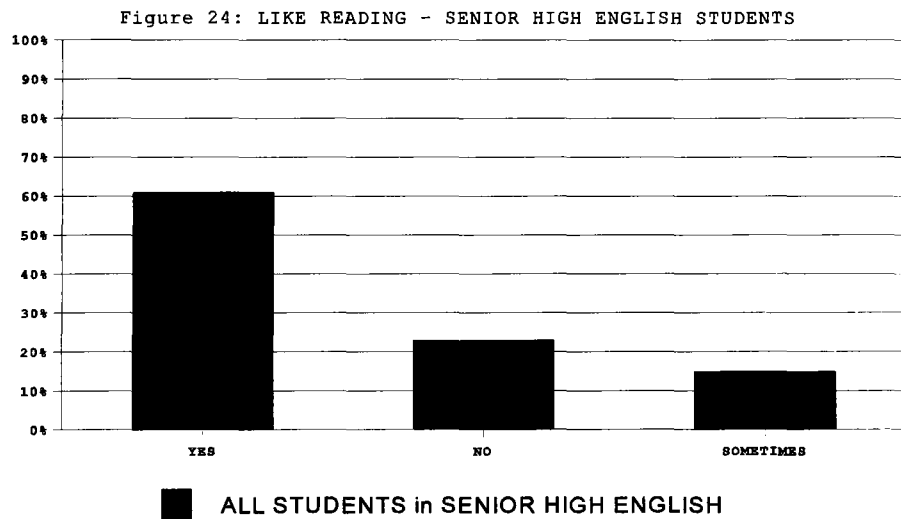
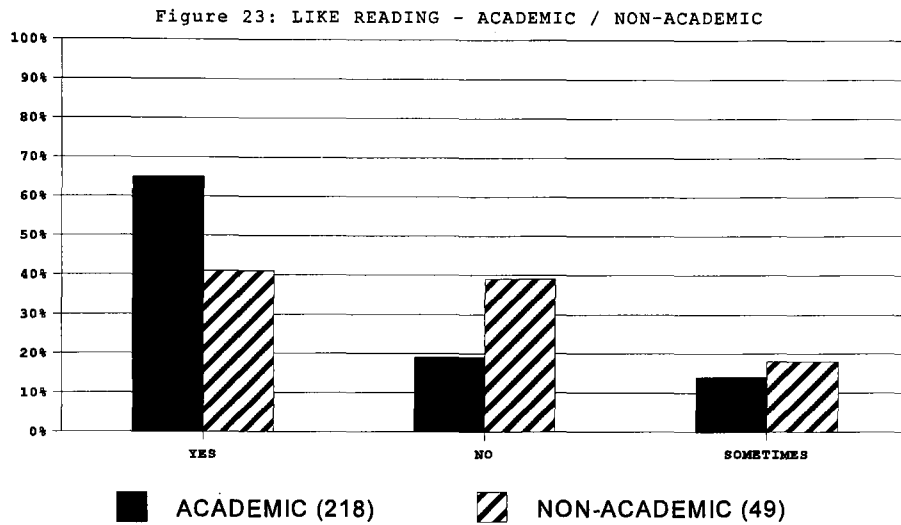
Typical reasons for selecting their favourites were: "good writer", "interesting", "very descriptive", or "realistic". Some distinctive responses did stand out, such as when describing John Grisham - "His plots are thick, intricate and interesting", or Gordon Korman - "I grew up on him" or Stephen King - "His writing gives me the creeps" and "His writings

are like deranged, twisted tales from the mind of a lunatic”. No wonder he is so popular!
It was encouraging to note that all authors mentioned, with the exception of seven, were familiar to me and are represented in our school library (see Appendix L for a complete listing of students’ responses).

Attitude toward Reading

Do you like to read? Why or why not?





SUMMARY: (see Appendix M for numerical data)

1. Approximately the same percentage of students in each of the grades like or dislike reading.
2. More females (~10%) than males like reading. More males (~10%) dislike reading.
3. A significant amount (>20%) of academic students like reading more than non-academic students.
4. Close to sixty percent of all students surveyed like reading, twenty percent do not, and about fifteen percent sometimes like reading.

The reasons given for liking reading fell into five main categories which reflected the book's ability to entertain, to relax, to teach the reader, to help the reader escape, and to pass the time. The reason named most often by students surveyed and by the males, when taken as a group, was that reading is entertaining and enjoyable, while the females' top reason was that books taught you about people, the world and life in general. The females second most often mentioned reason was that reading is relaxing, Only a small number of males cited this as one of their reasons, possibly reflecting a different type of reading more often done by males. Different grade levels or academic vs. non-academic classes were not factors in types of reasons given. The students were particularly articulate and thoughtful in expressing their views, as can be seen in the following quotations:

“It enriches me with knowledge, I gain something whether it be intellectually or philosophically.”

“Reading is like a free ticket to another life.”

“Literature can touch you in so many ways.”

“It allows me to safely let my imagination run wild.”

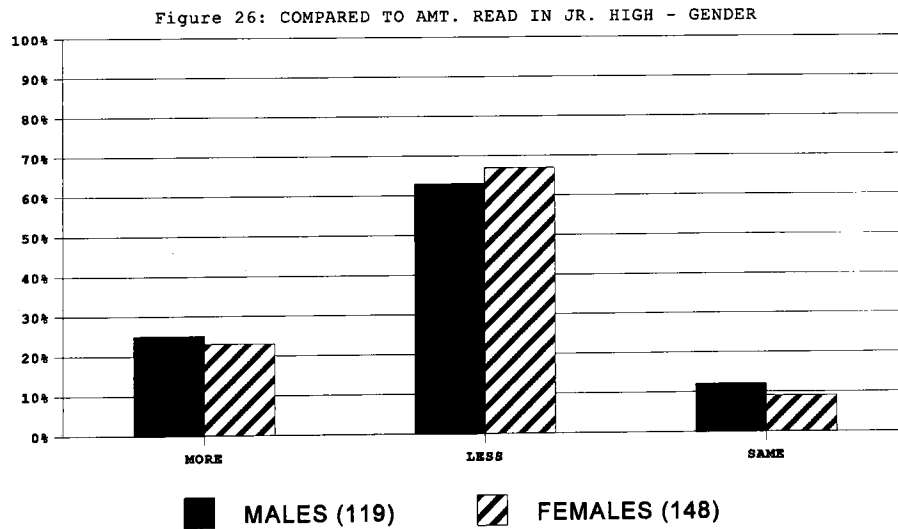
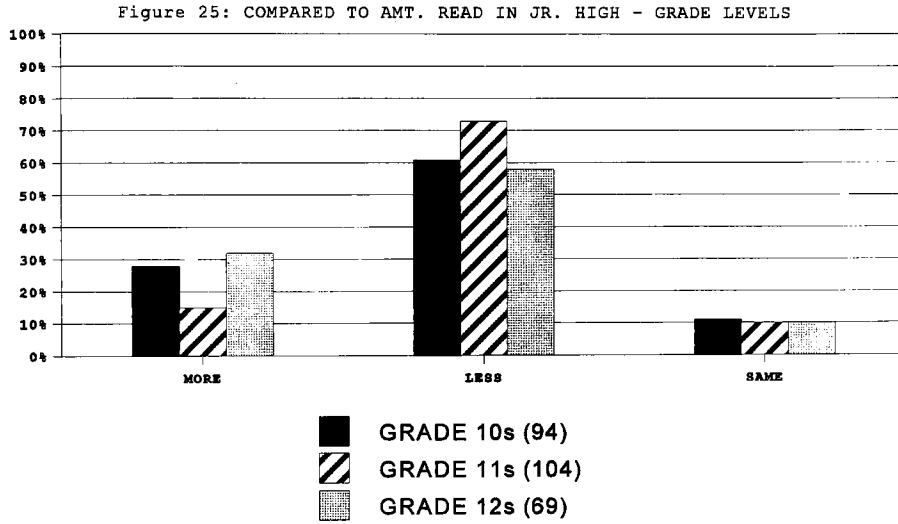
“I learn about life and it helps me forget about mine.”

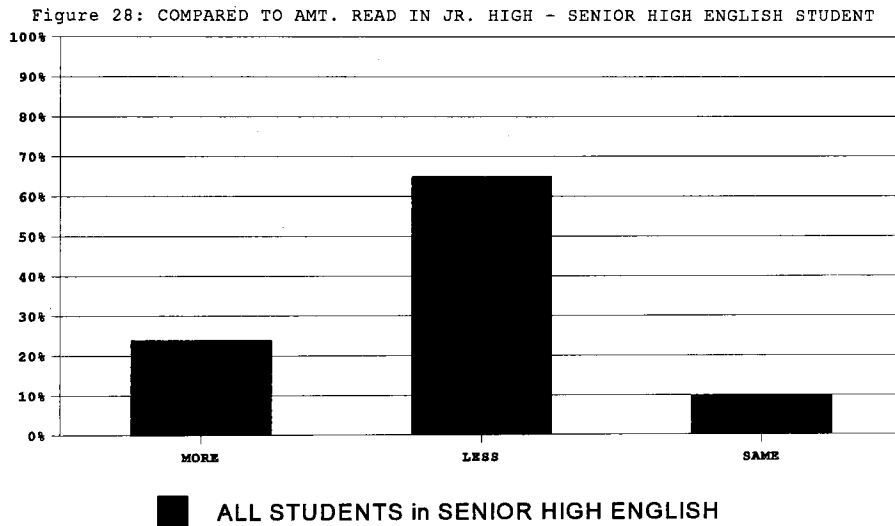
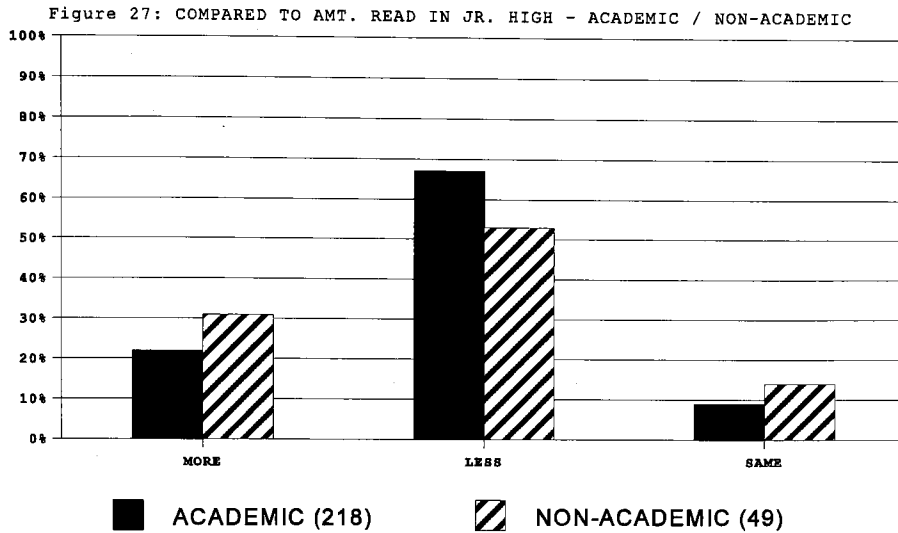
The most common reason for disliking reading was that it is boring or uninteresting, followed closely by the comments that it is a waste of time and the respondents prefer doing other things such as, watching movies or being active. One student put it very bluntly when he replied: “I don't like reading because I have a life”. The next most often mentioned

reason reflected the students' own lack of skills or abilities as readers: "I can't read well and I have to concentrate too hard and miss most of the plot line", "I'm a slow reader so it takes me forever to finish a book", "I'm too impatient and can't sit there long enough to get into a book". Other reasons given by a smaller number of the students surveyed were the unavailability of good books to read and the fact that reading puts them to sleep. Grade level, gender or types of classes were not factors in the types of reasons given for disliking reading.

Amount of Reading in Junior High versus Senior High

Do you read less or more than you did in your junior high school years?





SUMMARY:

1. All grade levels surveyed read far less than they did in Junior High, with grade 11 students showing the greatest decrease.
2. There was no significant difference between males and females in the decrease in the amount of reading done now compared to Junior High.
3. A higher percentage of academic students read less now than the non-academic students.
4. Approximately sixty-five percent of all students surveyed read less now and only twenty-five percent read more. About ten percent read the same amount.

Factors which Discourage / Prevent Reading

What discourages or prevents you from reading? (Check any of the following)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> schoolwork | <input type="checkbox"/> no free reading during class time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> job | <input type="checkbox"/> don't know what books to read |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lack of interest | <input type="checkbox"/> don't like going to the library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> don't like reading | <input type="checkbox"/> extracurricular activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> too lazy | <input type="checkbox"/> social life |

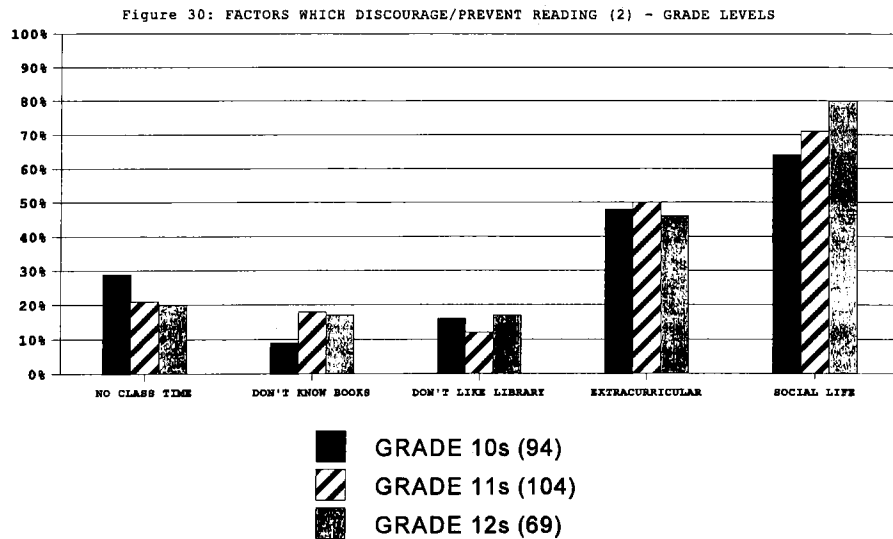
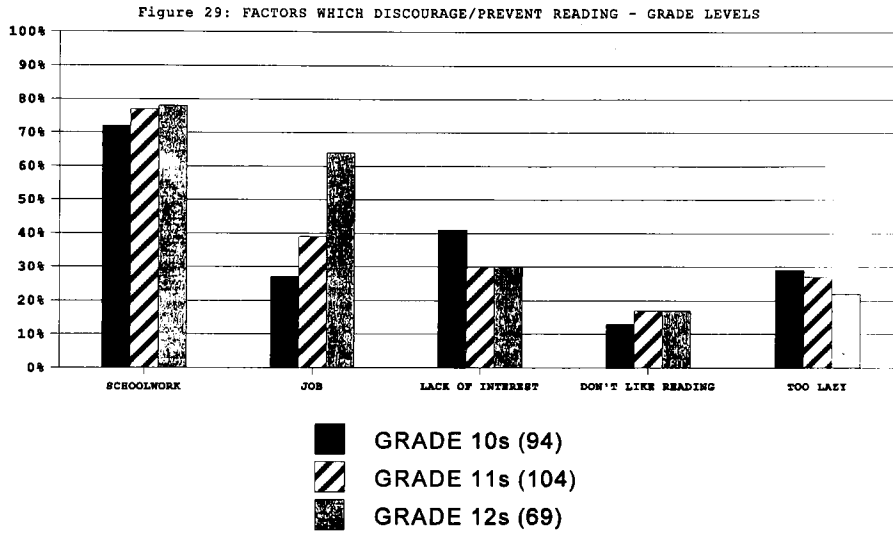


Figure 31: FACTORS WHICH DISCOURAGE/PREVENT READING - GENDER



Figure 32: FACTORS WHICH DISCOURAGE/PREVENT READING (2) - GENDER



Figure 33: FACTORS WHICH DISCOURAGE/PREVENT READING - ACADEMIC / NON-ACADEMIC

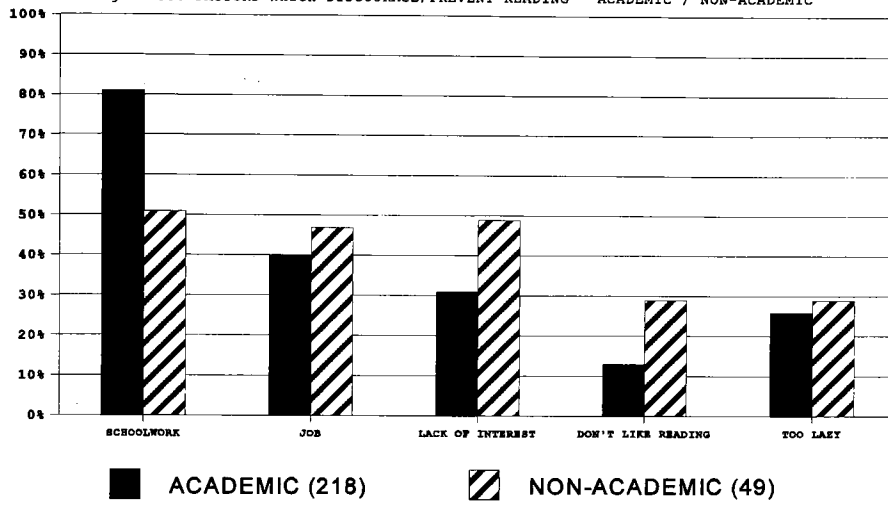
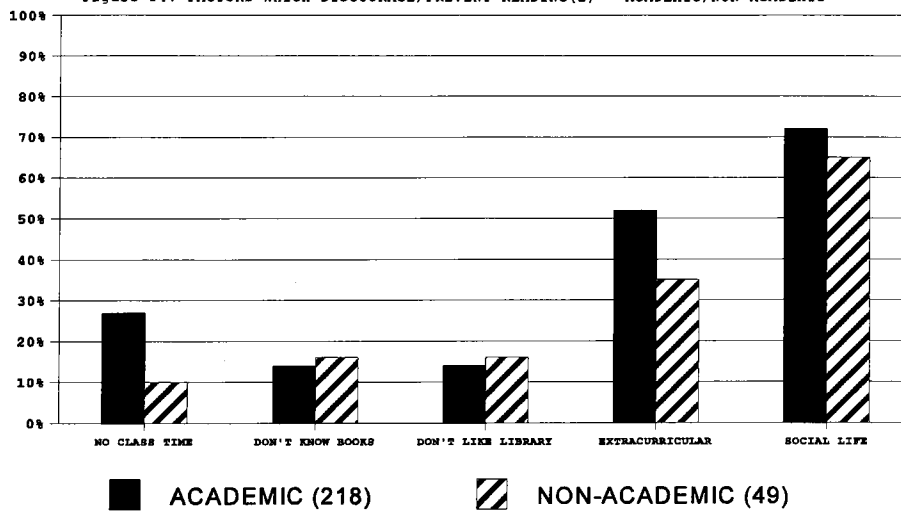
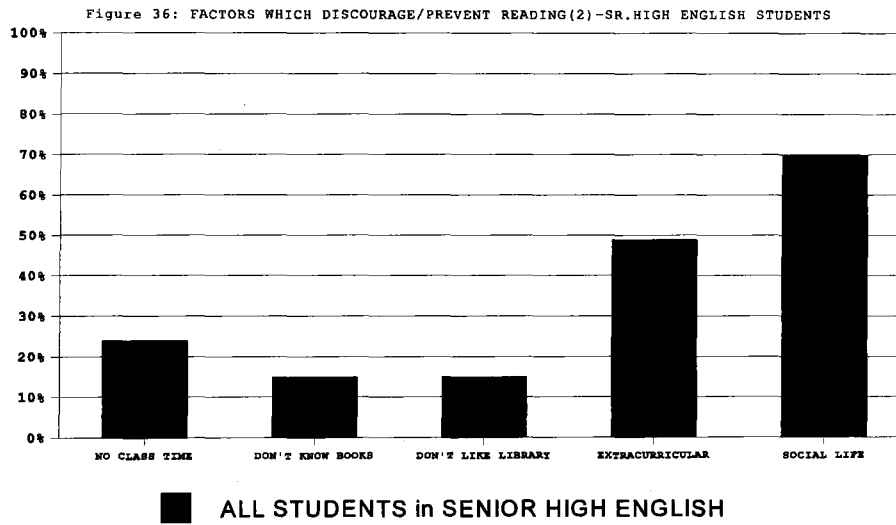
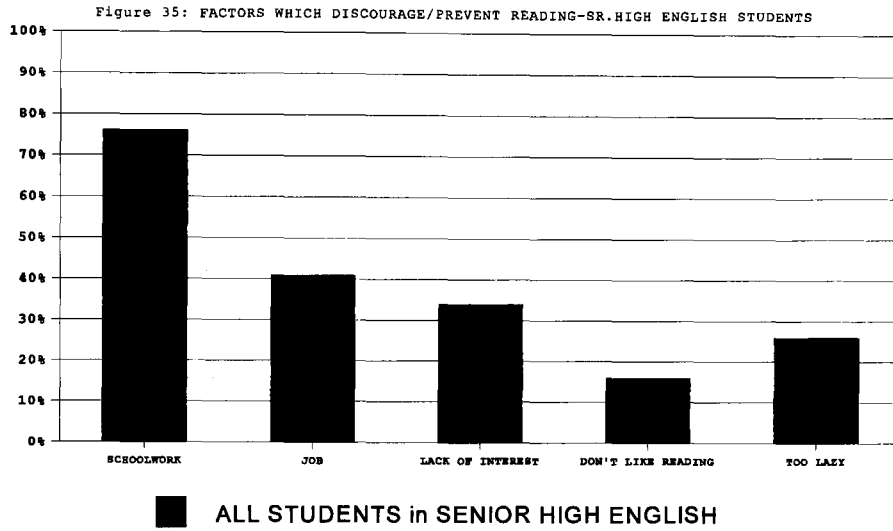


Figure 34: FACTORS WHICH DISCOURAGE/PREVENT READING(2) - ACADEMIC/NON-ACADEMIC





SUMMARY:

1. Social life, schoolwork, and job, respectively, were the top three factors in preventing reading at the grade 12 level. Schoolwork and social life were most often mentioned at grades 10 and 11. Job interference was not such a dominant factor at these grades. Grade tens showed a greater lack of interest than the other two grades. Not knowing books, liking reading and going to the library were least often chosen by all grades.

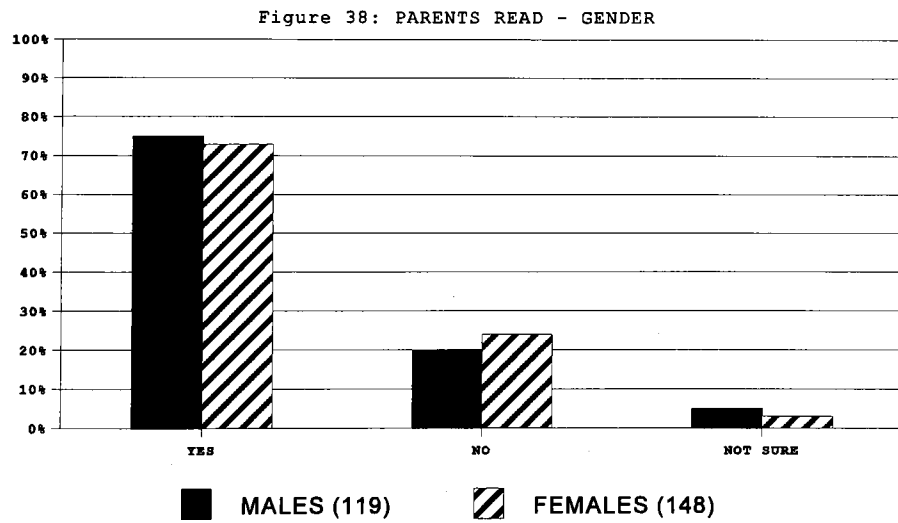
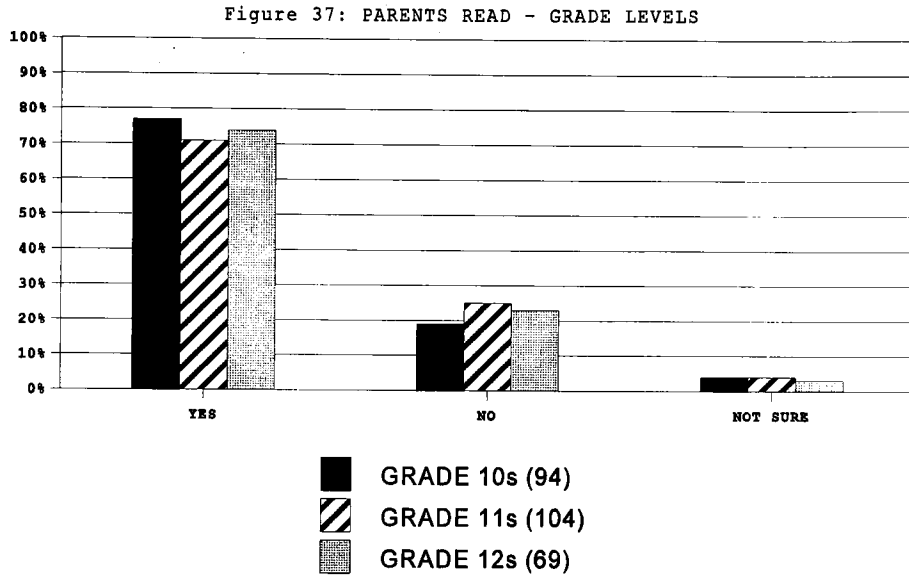
2. Schoolwork was the number one factor, followed by social life, in preventing reading for females, whereas these factors were reversed for males. Extracurricular came third for both groups. Males indicated a higher lack of interest and a higher degree of laziness and dislike toward reading.

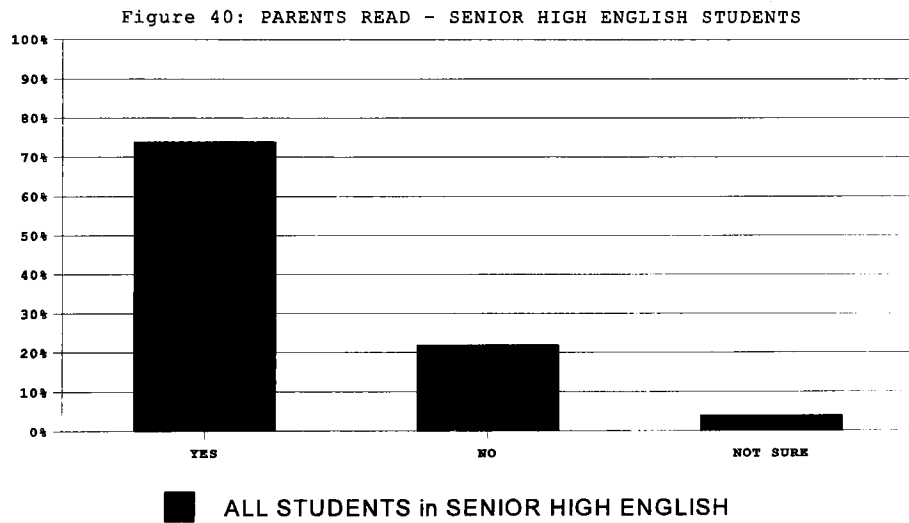
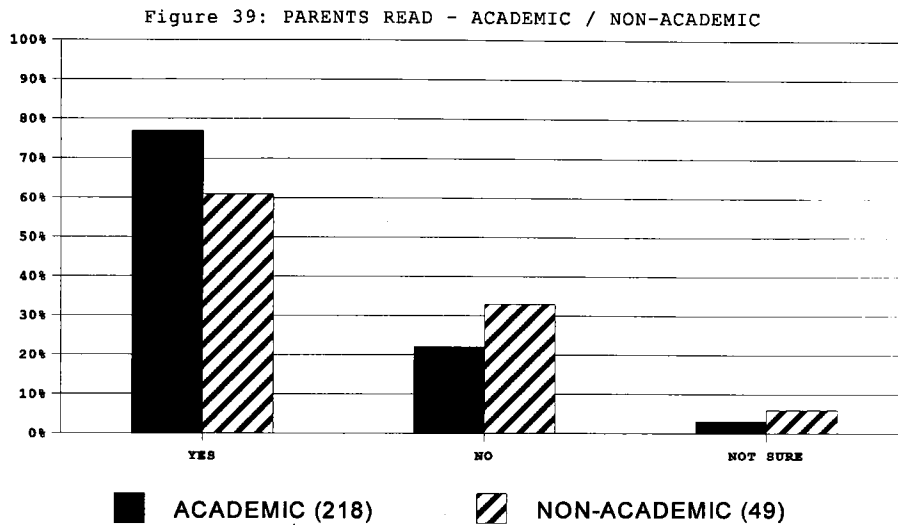
3. The top factor for academic students was schoolwork, chosen by far more academic than non-academic students. The latter's first choice was social life. More academic students chose extracurricular and no class time as factors, whereas lack of interest and job were chosen by more non-academic.

4. The top three factors chosen by fifty to eighty percent of all students surveyed were schoolwork, social life and extracurricular. Not knowing books, not liking reading or going to the library were the least likely factors to prevent reading.

Parents' Reading Habits and Influence

Do your parents read? What effect, if any, does this have on you?





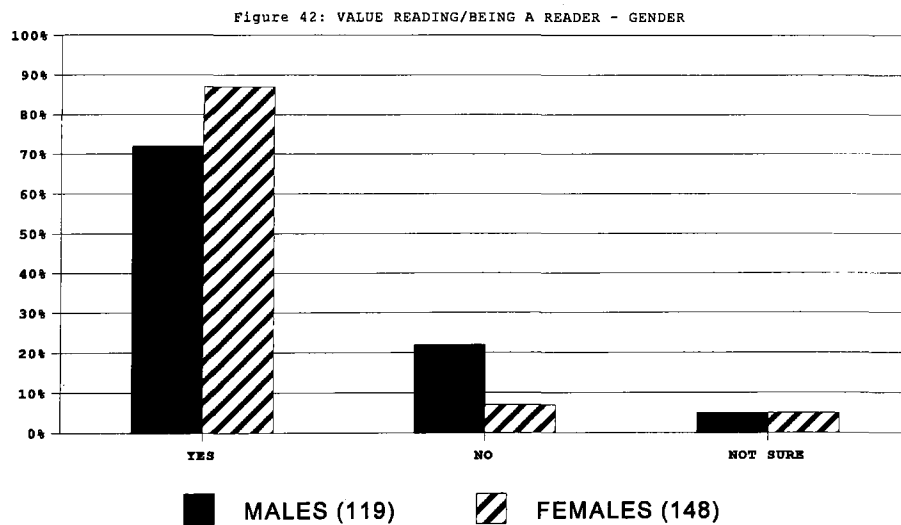
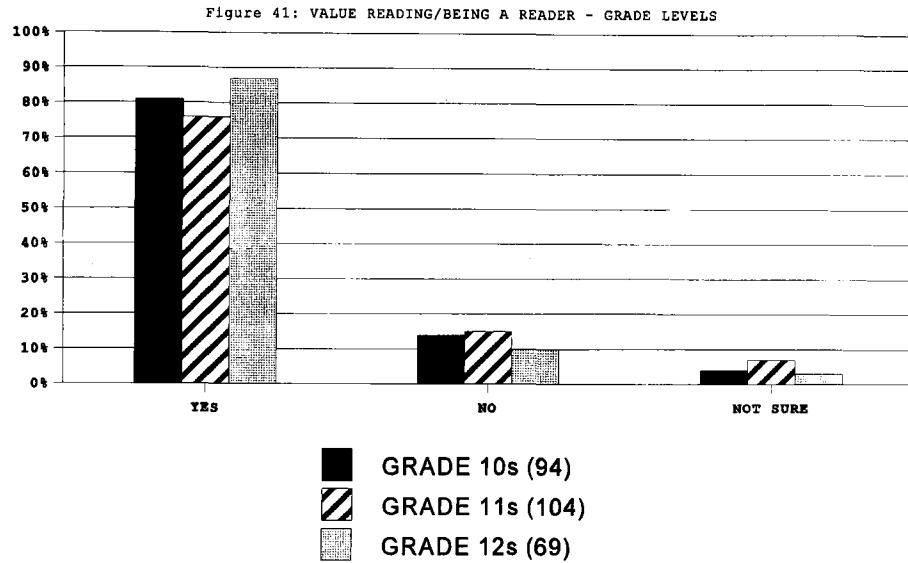
SUMMARY:

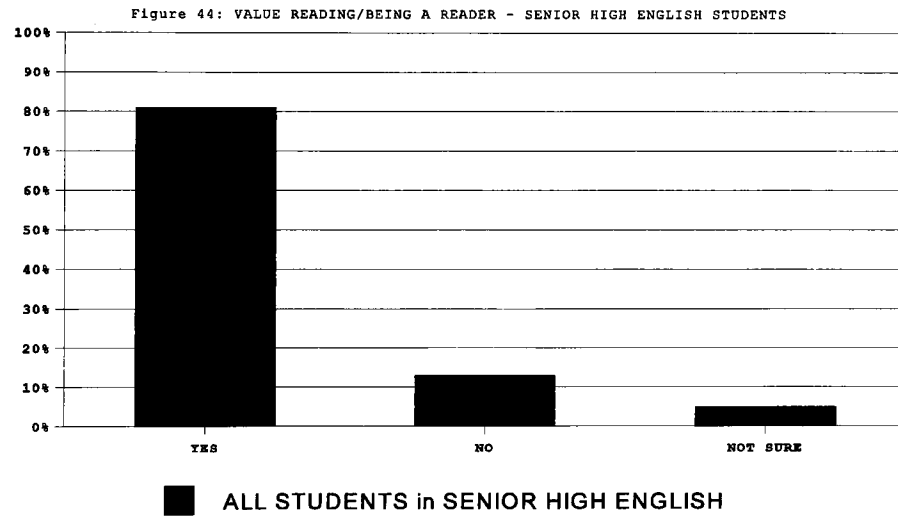
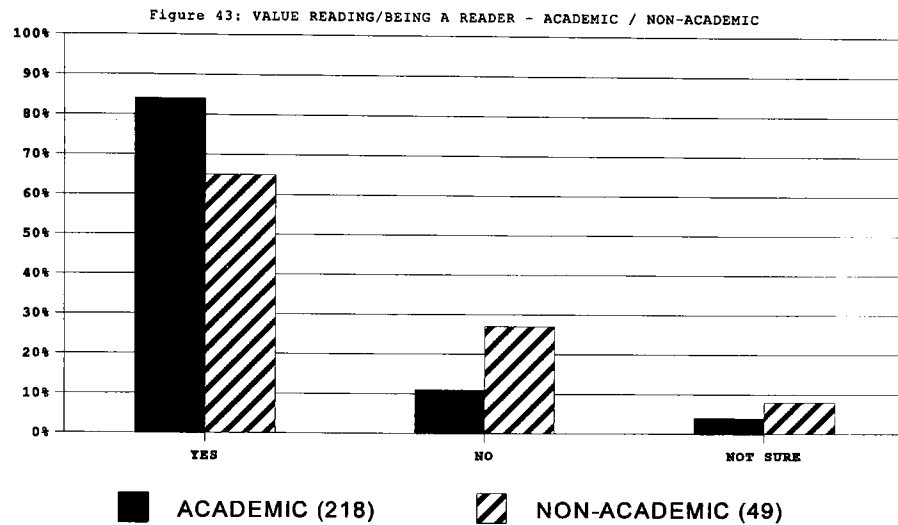
1. Neither grade level nor gender were significant variables when determining reading habits of parents. Just over seventy percent of the students surveyed responded that their parents do read.
2. More academic students responded that their parents read than non-academic students.

In answer to perhaps the more interesting part of this question, what effect parents' reading habits had on the student, approximately 60% of the students said this had no effect on them (some even added that nothing their parents do has any effect on them). Of the 30% who answered that their parents' reading habits did have an effect on them, mention was made of ways such as: "we have more books in the house", "they tell me good books to read", "they read to me as a child so I learned to love reading", "we went to the library as a family, so I got into the habit", and "I don't read because they don't read".

Value to Reading / Being a Reader

Do you see any value to reading books or being a “reader? Why or why not?





SUMMARY:

1. A large majority at all grades see some value to reading or being a reader.
2. A higher number of females (~15%) value reading or being a reader.
3. More academic than non-academic students see value to reading.
4. A large percentage of all students surveyed value reading or being a reader.

The greatest number of responses as to why they value reading centered on the improvement of reading, vocabulary, spelling, and comprehension skills as a result of engaging in the reading process. Students mentioned being a better student, getting better marks, and generally improving academically because of reading. The second most popular reason was that reading enables you to learn all sorts of information, and similar to that, were responses that you can learn about life and how to solve your own problems from reading or as one student stated “teaches me stuff so I don’t mess up in real life”. Many students also mentioned that reading expands your horizons and opens your mind to new ideas and insights. Others responded that reading has value because it is enjoyable, entertaining and relaxing.

Many of the students who stated they saw no value to reading did not give reasons, but a few comments were: “It’s a waste of time”, “Watching TV is better”, “It’s just something to do”, and, “Reading is just for when you’re older”.

Factors which Motivate / Encourage Reading

What would motivate or encourage you to read more? (Rate the following on how beneficial they would be in encouraging you to read.)

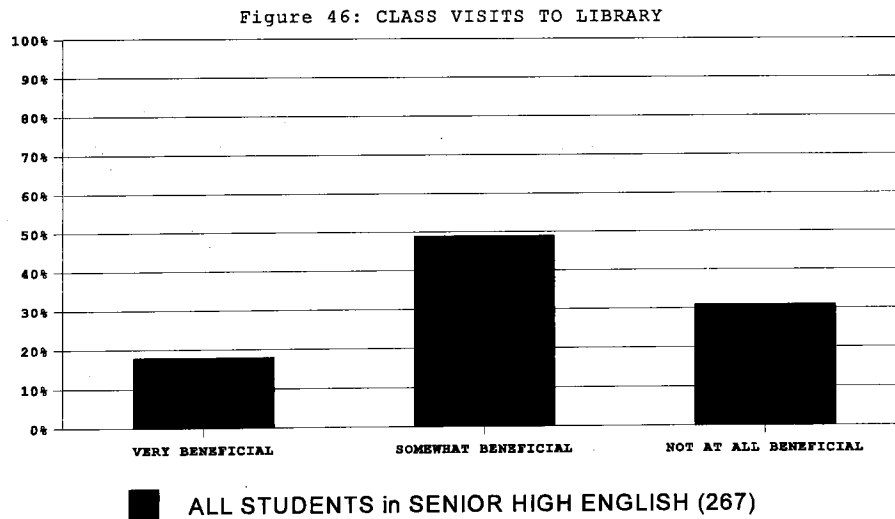
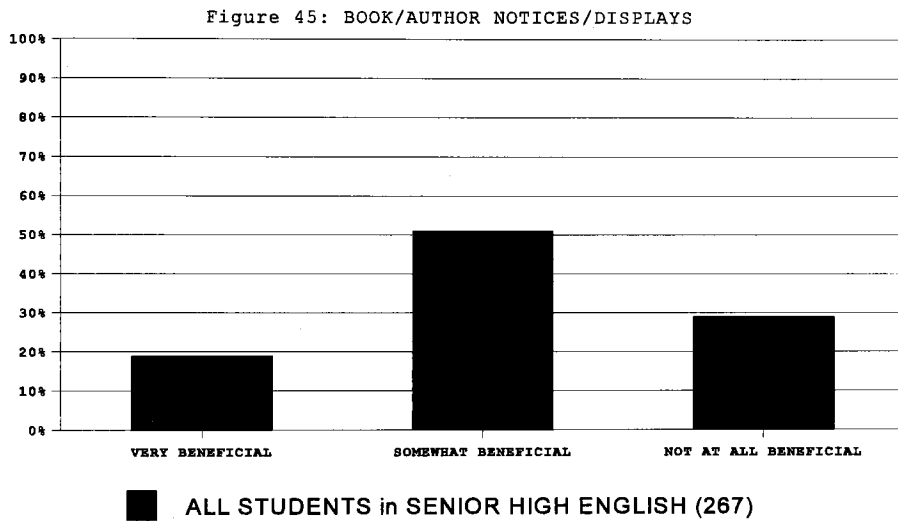


Figure 47: FREE READING TIME

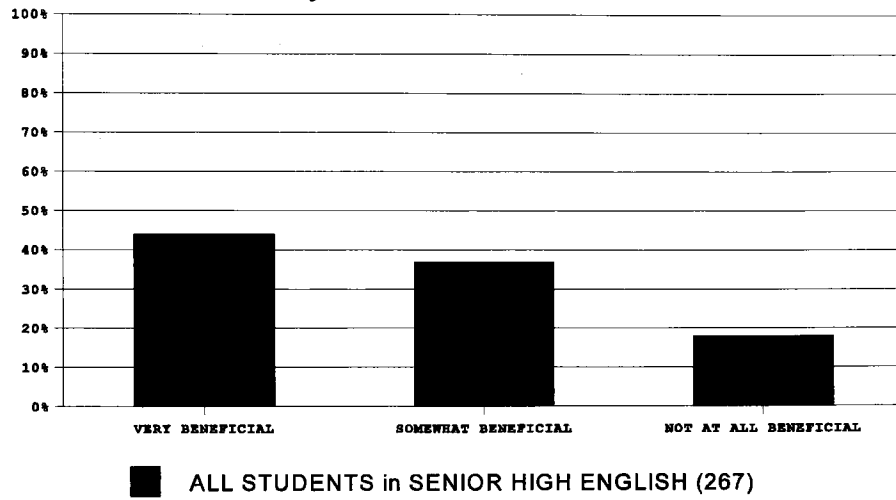


Figure 48: MARKS FOR EXTRA READING

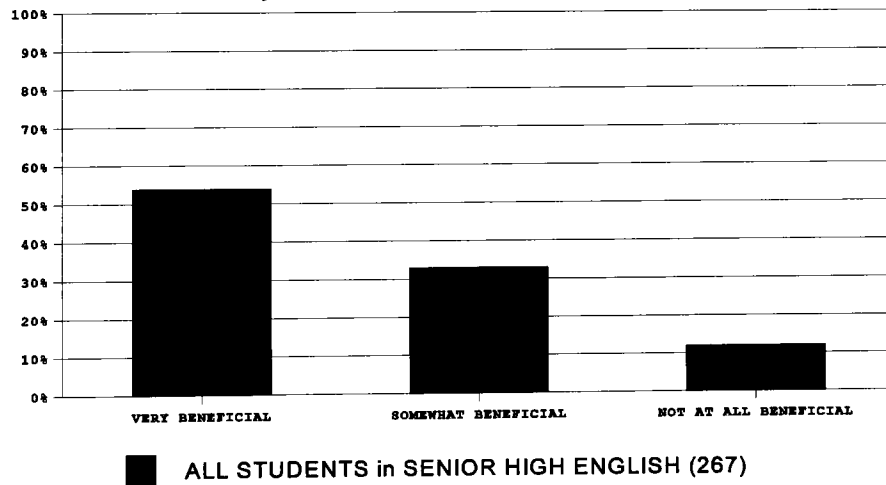


Figure 49: BOOK TALKS

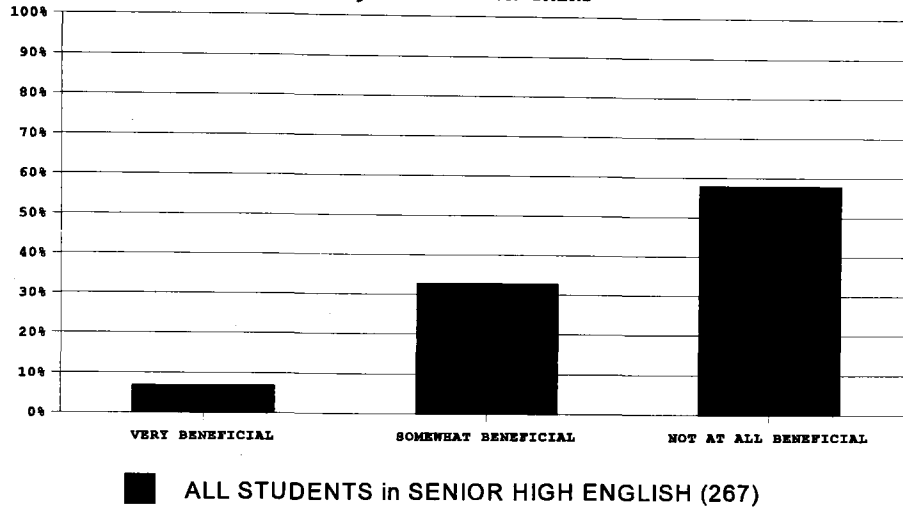


Figure 50: BOOK PURCHASING INPUT

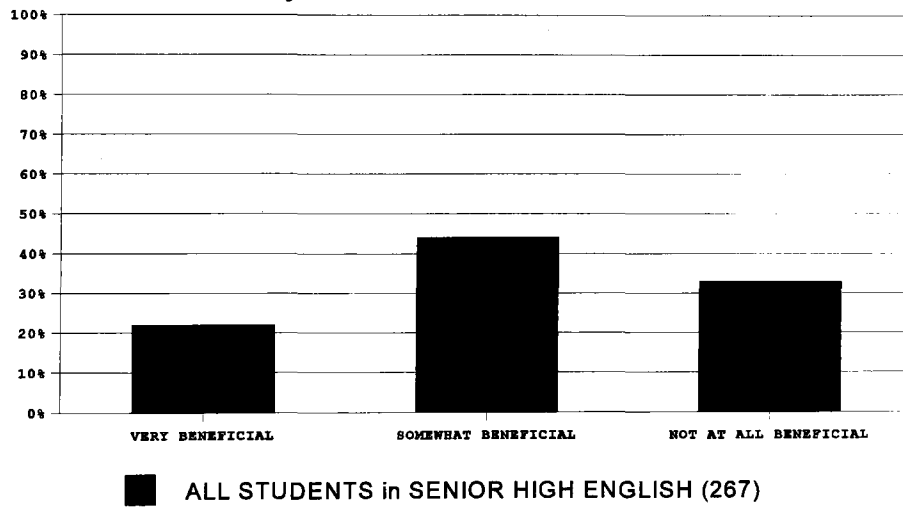


Figure 51: AUTHOR VISITS

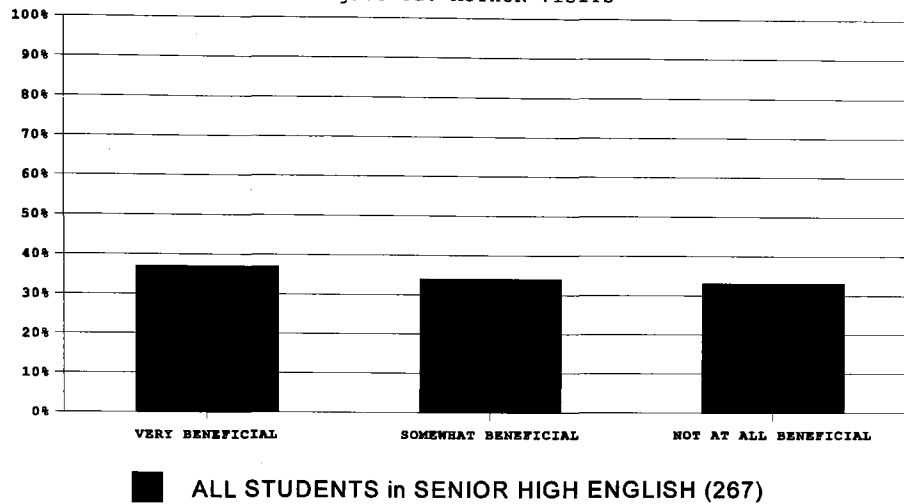
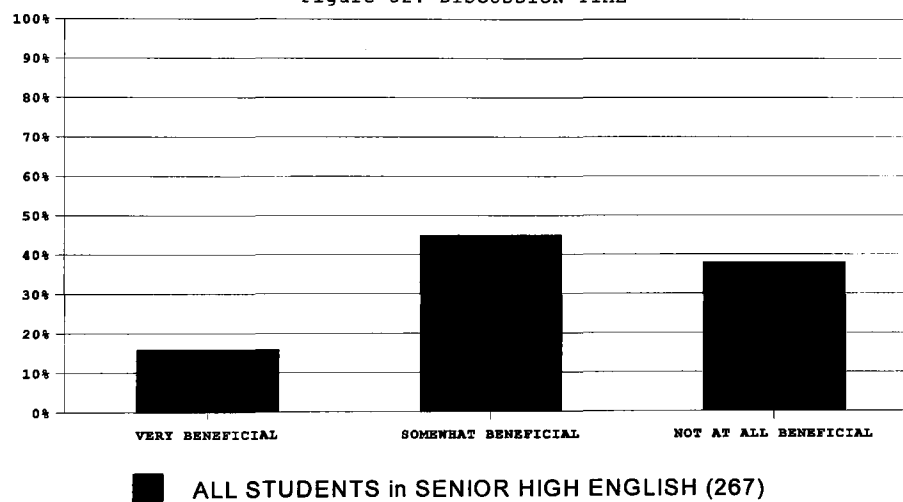


Figure 52: DISCUSSION TIME



SUMMARY:

1. The top two ways to encourage reading chosen by all students, regardless of grade, gender, or type of class, are assigning marks for extra reading and allowing free reading time during class.
2. The top factors that would be somewhat beneficial are providing more notices and displays, visiting the library regularly during class, and giving the students a say in which books are purchased for the library.
3. For all students surveyed, the clear choice for not being at all beneficial was book talks by the librarian or teacher.

Library Usage

Do you use the school library? Why or why not?

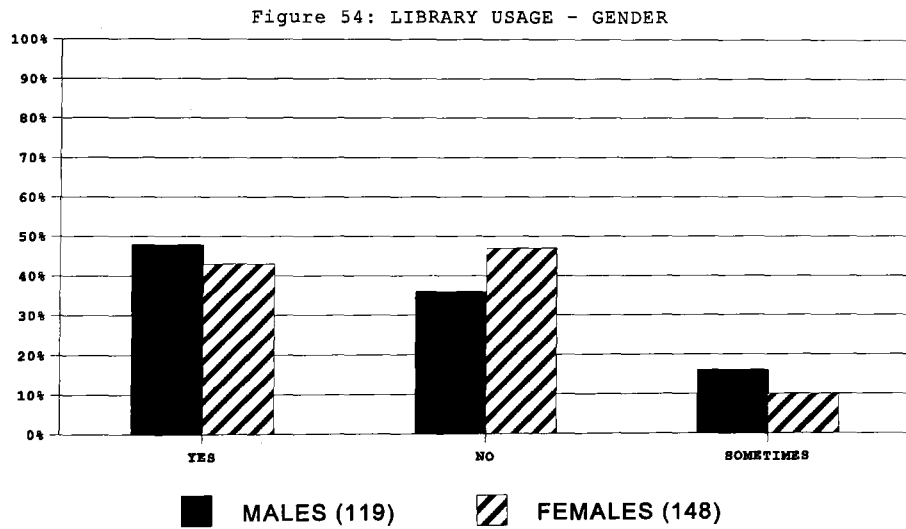
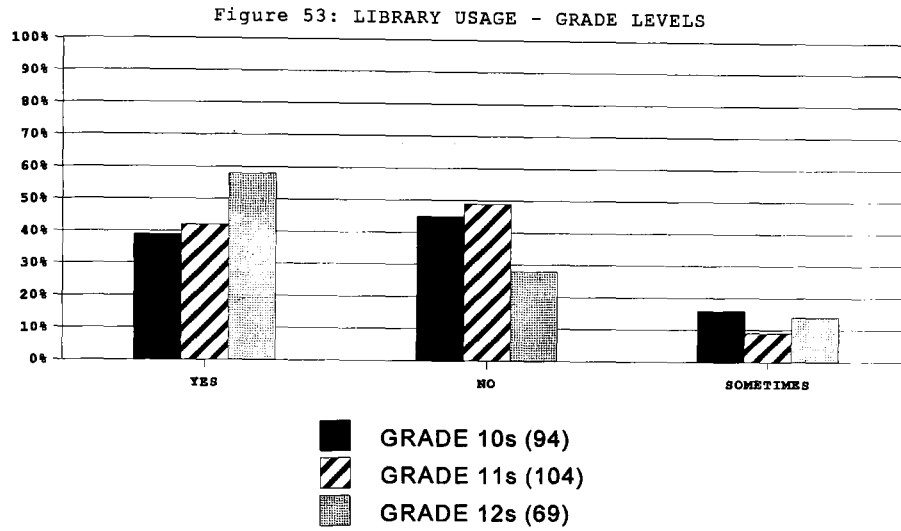


Figure 55: LIBRARY USAGE - ACADEMIC / NON-ACADEMIC

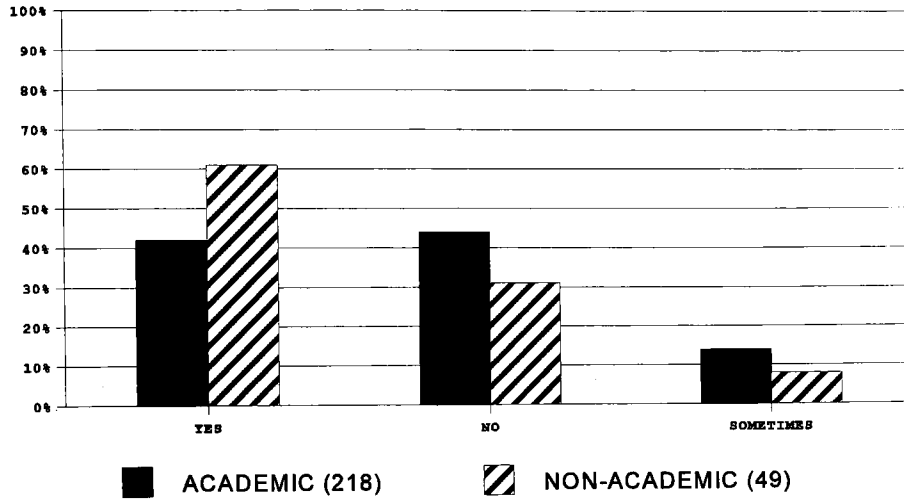
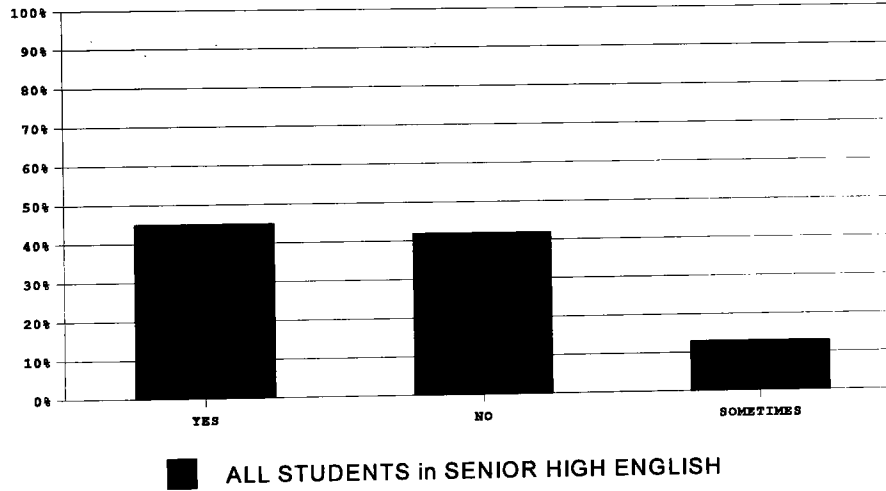


Figure 56: LIBRARY USAGE - SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH STUDENTS



SUMMARY:

1. Grade 12s use the library more often than the other two grades. Grade 11s use the library the least.
2. Males use the library slightly more than females.
3. Non-academic students use the library significantly more than academic students.
4. When considering all students surveyed regarding their library usage, the percentages of those who do use the library and those who do not is nearly the same.

The largest number of students use the library to do research assignments or homework. A much smaller number of students get books to read and use the computers or access the Internet in the library. A number of students mentioned the convenience and easy access as being reasons for using the school library.

The largest number of students who do not use the library gave “no time” as a reason. This was followed by the response that they get their books elsewhere and then the reason that the school library does not have the books they want. Others mentioned that they “don’t need to”, “don’t want to” and “have overdue fines” as reasons they do not use the school library.

Suggestions for the Library

Do you have any suggestions regarding: types of books/magazines, displays, computers, sign-out rules, library usage rules, or ways to make the library better?

The students offered some very valuable suggestions for improving the library and the collection, many of which are easily acted upon. Various titles of magazines and books were named which will help me with purchasing decisions. Ideas for displays such as student artwork, top ten titles for teens, and popular biographies can be used in the near future. Some students requested more and better computers for the library. Suggestions by many of the students to eliminate the use of student ID cards and overdue fines may be a reflection of the fact that this is the first year these rules have been enforced. We made a conscious decision to follow the same rules as the public library so that our library would mirror what is expected of our students in the “real world”. Many students also requested a longer sign out time for books. In the library usage category, a number of students suggested that the library be quieter, the rules be stricter, and only students who are working rather than visiting be allowed to stay in the library. I believe the domination of the junior high students in the library and their somewhat noisier manner irritates many of the senior high students. The general suggestions for improving the library were interesting to read. They ranged from “big screen TV” and “cappuccino bar” to “stay open until 5:00 pm” and “play background music”.

CHAPTER FOUR: IMPLICATIONS AND RESPONSES

The survey data provides valuable information about the reality of the senior high students' reading experiences. However, the next logical stage in my research project is to consider ways to use this information in order to increase leisure reading at the senior high level. How does the data collected inform my practice as teacher-librarian? By sharing the results with the English teachers and their classes, can anything be done to improve the reading experiences of senior high students?

Habits versus Attitudes

A key set of numbers to compare are the reading frequency figures and those relating to attitudes toward reading. The amount of reading done by our senior high students is dismally low with close to half of those surveyed only reading once every two or three months or not at all. On the other hand, when asked if they like reading, as many as 60% of the students said yes and another 15% said sometimes. Even more dramatic were the results of the question regarding the value they placed on reading and being a reader. Eighty percent of the students indicated that they do value reading and their comments expounded on the virtues of reading and the ways it can enhance one's life. It seems, then, that we do not have to convince most students that reading is beneficial and enjoyable, we simply must find ways to help students create a space in their lives for reading.

Barriers to Reading

The students indicated that schoolwork, social life, and extracurricular activities were the biggest factors in preventing reading. These adolescents are busy people with probably very little free time on their hands. Leisure reading cannot compete with having to do an assignment for the next day, going out with a friend, or playing soccer on a summer evening. Based on my observations of my own seventeen year old daughter, reading definitely cannot compete with the telephone! Therefore, the only window of opportunity for reading to occur in our students' lives on a regular basis is within our own classrooms. Many teachers are reluctant to do this because that would leave less time to cover the course requirements. One just has to read over the students' responses as to why reading is a valuable activity to see that perhaps "course requirements" need to be more flexible. By allowing time in class for leisure reading, we are giving our students, as Daniel Pennac says, "the gift of reading" - a gift that they may not otherwise receive in their busy lives.

Motivators to Reading

Teachers may want to consider implementing the top choices of the students: free reading time in class and assigning marks for extra reading. I was particularly interested in the strong dislike of book talks shown in the students' responses. After giving the survey, I was scheduled to give a book talk to one of the grade 11 classes. A "book talk" means that I load up a cart of books, in this case the teacher had requested any book that would be considered a classic, and take them into the classroom where I give a brief summary of why it might be a good choice. Because of the survey results, I asked these grade 11 students why they had

such objections to book talks. One student said “don’t tell us, just let us pick our own” and another student responded, “it’s frustrating to have to sit and listen forever it seems before you can go grab the book you want”. I will never do book talks the same way again. In fact, the next week I went into a grade 7 class and simply suggested to the students that if they were looking for a mystery they might check out these ten choices and only spoke briefly about one or two of the total group. I then went on to do that for selection of science fiction books, fantasies and so on. Again, students need time to read, not more time to listen to a teacher or librarian talk about reading. One factor I wish I would have included in the list of motivating factors is “being read to by the teacher or librarian”. I fondly remember reading *Homecoming* to my grade 7 class and am curious if senior high students would respond positively to this or view it as more “teacher talk”.

Student Preferences

Comments that “the library has no good books” struck a nerve with me as the person who is responsible for developing our library’s collection. After reading that comment in the first few surveys that were returned, I decided to share the book buying responsibility with as many students as possible. Armed with their responses to favourite books and authors, I can now, not only make better buying decisions, but also share this decision-making process with the students. I have contacted a book seller who will send books for approval and who better to give their approval than the students themselves. I plan to take a cartload of these books around to the senior high classes who will give me feedback on these choices by rating the book on a scale from “Please buy!” to “Don’t waste library money on this!”. The students

must be made to feel a sense of ownership of the library and its collection. If they are empowered to decide what the library has to offer, the tendency to sign out these books should increase.

One of the teachers, upon hearing students' perceptions regarding the poor selection of books in the library, decided to create an assignment to encourage students to suggest books to buy for the library. The students have been asked to write a paragraph giving a few reasons why a particular book should be added to the collection. The fact that the book must be one that is not already in the library also encourages the students to use the computer catalogue to check for favourite titles and authors.

Library Promotion

The discrepancy between the students' perceptions of the library collection and what it actually has to offer is another issue that I feel I must address in the near future. Many students complained that the selection is poor and one student suggested "The library should get books with a copyright later than 1902". The reality is that I am constantly buying bestsellers and books of current interest (five on the Titanic alone in the last month!), but the students simply are not made aware enough of this fact. Also, many of their favourite books and authors, and the books they last read for enjoyment exist in our library. One way to combat the impression that the library selection does not suit their needs is increase the number of displays and notices of new books in the library. Another idea that I will try is to have a display of photos of senior high students holding books of their favourite titles or

authors. This would not only promote the books and reading, but also dispell the myth in these students' minds that the library does not have any books that they would choose. Not having the time to visit the library is also a factor in not knowing what the library has to offer. Therefore, I will encourage teachers to consider allowing students to come to the library to browse for books during class time.

Generally, I think I have been rather passive in my approach to promoting books and reading. I wait for teachers to ask me to do book talks, wait for students to make suggestions regarding purchases. Instead, in the future, I will make a conscious effort to drop by classrooms with a few new books in hand to do a quick one minute "show and tell". Before making any major book purchases, I will simply visit as many classrooms as possible to ask the students if there are any books they would recommend that I buy. These initiatives seem so obvious now, but I honestly do not think I would have felt compelled to change the status quo until I heard the voices of students speaking to me through these surveys. An example of how obvious the solution can be is something I just tried with the staff. As I was doing this project and considering ways to promote reading with students, it occurred to me that I should try to encourage staff members to read as well. I have always put notices in teachers' mailboxes of new curriculum materials, but it suddenly occurred to me that these teachers have little time to come to the library to browse for their own leisure reading. Therefore, I decided every Friday morning to bring a variety of 10 to 15 fiction and non-fiction books to the staff room for teachers to peruse in their leisure time. The results are truly amazing because every Friday usually half of the books on display in the "mini-

library” in the staff room have been signed out by the end of the day! This project has opened my eyes to the fact that I cannot sit back and wait for the students and staff to come to the library, I must go out and bring the library to them at every opportunity.

Issues for Further Research

As I scrutinize the bar graphs of data and reflect upon the written responses of the students surveyed, I realize that this survey is only the first step in my research journey. Numerous questions arise from my research:

- Why do fewer grade 11 students engage in leisure reading when compared to grade 10s or grade 12s?
- Why do more non-academic students than academic students prefer non-fiction?
- Why do far more females than males prefer horror fiction?
- Since biographies were one of the top non-fiction choices for males and females, who specifically do students want to read about? I have had two requests since doing this survey for books on Marilyn Manson and Dennis Rodman - are these indicative of the type of biographies senior high students are interested in reading?
- Why do more males and more non-academic students get their books from the school library? Conversely, why do fewer females and academic students use the school library as a source for leisure reading materials?
- Why, when we hope to be encouraging students to be lifelong readers, does public library membership decrease as the students get older?
- Why is there a higher number of academic students when compared to non-academic

students reading less now than in junior high?

- What can be done to increase the value placed on reading by males and non-academic students?
- Given class time to read, will students read for the sake of reading or only when there are marks attached to this activity?
- Why do more males than females and non-academic than academic students use the library?

All these concerns are worthy of further study and as I share the data and student responses with teachers and students, they, too, may come up with more issues that beg to be addressed. Ellis (1997) explains this ongoing cycle of research in what she refers to as “loops in spiral”:

Each loop or exploration, which can be understood as data collection and interpretation, will generate findings. Some of these may well be what the researcher would have expected. Others, however, may be surprises....In hermeneutic terms, any unexpected dimensions that are revealed are called uncoverings. While the *uncoverings* may not lead directly to a solution, they will often enable the researcher to understand the problem or question differently in order to reframe it usefully for planning the next step in the inquiry. (p.6)

My journey of learning about the reading experiences of senior high students will continue through many loops of inquiry, and I look forward to this process of searching, discovering and re-searching.

CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSION

The results of this reading survey has provided me with insight into the reading habits and attitudes toward reading of senior high students at our school and directions for future research. However, the most powerful impact of this project is that it provided a way for me to connect with students and teachers. Often, during the administration of the surveys, students took the opportunity to discuss with me their thoughts and feelings about books and reading. Numerous times students came up to me in the library to ask if I had the results of the surveys yet or if the library had books by their favourite author. The teachers now make a point to tell me what students are reading and what they are doing in their classrooms to encourage reading. This focus on students' leisure reading has made us all reflect on and share ideas about reading that otherwise would not have happened.

The results are completed but the sharing of the results is just beginning. I am providing teachers with the results of each question one at a time so they can share these with their classes. With each set of results, I am asking for any comments or feedback from the teachers or students to be directed back to me. I plan to personally visit each of the twelve classes to share the results of the Library Usage section of the survey so that I can address concerns and gain direct feedback from the students.

The results, as I said earlier, are invaluable in providing me with information, feedback, and suggestions. The process, however, has changed my way of being a teacher-librarian. The

very act of getting concrete data to reflect upon, and in particular, hearing the “voices” of the students through their written responses, voices that I would otherwise not have heard, now seems to be the most logical way for me to connect with students and teachers on an on-going basis. For example, it is as simple as asking each of the seventh grade classes to tell me who their favourite author is or asking the ninth grade classes to tell me how often they read books for enjoyment and sharing these results with them, their teachers, the parents, or possibly the whole school. The specific information gained from the data will change as the student population changes, but the process is something I take away from this project that will forever alter my practice as a teacher-librarian.

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APPENDIX A - SENIOR HIGH READING SURVEY

ENGLISH _____
MALE / FEMALE

LEISURE READING HABITS

1. How **often** do you read books for your own enjoyment?

- Daily _____
- Once a week _____
- Once a month _____
- Once every 2-3 months _____
- Rarely/Never _____

2. If you ever do read, what **type** of books do you prefer?

- Fiction _____
- Non-fiction _____

3. If you were to read fiction, what **type of fiction** do you prefer? (Check any of the following)

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Mystery _____ | Horror _____ | Science Fiction _____ | War _____ |
| Fantasy _____ | Humour _____ | Real Life _____ | Sports _____ |
| Adventure _____ | Historical _____ | Romance _____ | |

4. If you were to read non-fiction, what **topics** would interest you?

5. **When** do you read? **Where** do you read?

6. From **where** do you get most of your books?

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| _____ School library | _____ Public library |
| _____ Bookstore | _____ Friends |

7. Are you a member of the **Public Library**? _____

8. What was the name of the last book you read for **school**? _____
in grade _____

9. What was the name of the last book you read for **enjoyment**? _____
in grade _____

10. What has been one of the **best books** you have ever read? _____
Why? _____

11. Who is or was one of your **favourite authors**? _____
Why? _____

READING MOTIVATION

1. Do you **like** to read? Why or why not?

2. Do you read **less or more** now than you did in your junior high school years? _____

3. What **discourages or prevents** you from reading? (check any of the following)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| _____ schoolwork | _____ no free reading during class time |
| _____ job | _____ don't know what books to read |
| _____ lack of interest | _____ don't like going to the library |
| _____ don't like reading | _____ extracurricular activities |
| _____ too lazy | _____ social life |
| | _____ other? _____ |

4. Do your **parents** read? What effect, if any, does this have on you?

5. Do you see any **value** to reading books or being a "reader"? Why or why not?

6. What would **motivate or encourage** you to read more? Rate the following on how beneficial they would be in encouraging you to read:

- 1- very 2- somewhat 3 - not at all**
- _____ more notices or displays on good authors/good books
- _____ regular visits to library during class
- _____ free reading time during class
- _____ marks assigned for extra reading
- _____ book talks by librarian and/or teacher
- _____ being able to have a say in which books are purchased in the library
- _____ authors coming to speak

_____ class time to discuss books and authors
_____ (other) _____

LIBRARY USAGE

1. Do you use the school library? _____

2. Why or why not? _____

3. Do you have any **suggestions** regarding:
Types of books/magazines _____
Displays _____
Computers _____
Sign-out Rules _____
Library Usage Rules _____
Ways to make the library better _____

APPENDIX B - SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS ENROLLED in ENGLISH in SEMESTER II:....	267
BY GRADE:	
ENGLISH 13/10.....	94
ENGLISH 23/20.....	104
ENGLISH 33/30.....	69
BY ACADEMIC / NON-ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:	
ACADEMIC.....	218
NON-ACADEMIC.....	49
BY GENDER:	
MALE.....	119
FEMALE.....	148

APPENDIX C - CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

CLASS 1 -	ENGLISH 30 -	7 MALES 24 FEMALES
CLASS 2 -	ENGLISH 30 -	9 MALES 8 FEMALES
CLASS 3 -	ENGLISH 33 -	10 MALES 11 FEMALES
CLASS 4 -	ENGLISH 20 -	13 MALES 8 FEMALES
CLASS 5 -	ENGLISH 20 -	5 MALES 24 FEMALES
CLASS 6 -	ENGLISH 20 -	12 MALES 21 FEMALES
CLASS 7 -	ENGLISH 23 -	13 MALES 8 FEMALES
CLASS 8 -	ENGLISH 10 -	12 MALES 14 FEMALES
CLASS 9 -	ENGLISH 10 -	18 MALES 10 FEMALES
CLASS 10-	ENGLISH 10 -	11 MALES 11 FEMALES
CLASS 11-	ENGLISH 10 -	4 MALES 7 FEMALES
CLASS 12-	ENGLISH 13 -	6 MALES 1 FEMALE

APPENDIX D - READING FREQUENCY DATA

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
DAILY	28%	16%	23%	21%	23%	24%	12%	22%
WEEKLY	21%	11%	16%	13%	18%	17%	10%	16%
MONTHLY	10%	15%	16%	13%	14%	12%	20%	13%
ONCE EVERY 2-3 MONTHS	26%	18%	14%	18%	21%	22%	12%	20%
RARELY/NEVER	15%	39%	29%	36%	22%	24%	43%	28%

APPENDIX E - BOOK PREFERENCE DATA

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
FICTION	70%	74%	75%	69%	76%	75%	65%	73%
NON-FICTION	16%	20%	19%	22%	16%	17%	27%	18%
BOTH	14%	5%	6%	10%	7%	8%	8%	8%

APPENDIX F - FICTION PREFERENCE DATA

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
MYSTERY	51%	42%	49%	28%	63%	51%	29%	47%
FANTASY	31%	23%	23%	33%	20%	28%	14%	26%
ADVENTURE	38%	34%	29%	43%	27%	35%	31%	34%
HORROR	59%	46%	45%	41%	57%	50%	51%	50%
HUMOUR	40%	31%	42%	39%	36%	39%	29%	37%
HISTORICAL	12%	15%	16%	11%	17%	15%	10%	14%
SCI-FI	30%	24%	28%	37%	19%	29%	16%	27%
REAL LIFE	35%	22%	39%	13%	45%	35%	12%	31%
ROMANCE	23%	24%	20%	2%	40%	24%	18%	23%
WAR	22%	11%	14%	24%	9%	15%	18%	16%
SPORTS	22%	19%	16%	29%	11%	17%	29%	19%

APPENDIX G - NON-FICTION TOPIC PREFERENCES

MALES

Multiple Mentions:

Sports (49%)
Biographies (24%)
War (21%)
History (15%)
Music (10%)
Cars (10%)
Science (8%)
Horror/Occult (6%)
Mystery/Strange Phenomenon (4%)
Animals (3%)
Computers (3%)
Humour (3%)
Statistics (3%)
Geography (3%)
Real Life (3%)
Hunting (2%)
Politics/Government (2%)

Single Mentions:

Woodworking
Military
Psychology
Entertainment
Educational
Religion
Adventure
Stamps
Future
Mob
Jail
Inventions
News
Aviation

FEMALES

Multiple Mentions

Biographies (32%)
Historical Events (19%)
Sports (17%)
Animals (12%)
Science (12%)
War (6%)
Mystery/Strange Phenomenon (5%)
Romance/Love (4%)
Music (3%)
Horror/Occult (3%)
Religion (3%)
Geography (3%)
Relationships (3%)
True Stories (3%)
Art (2%)
Death (1%)
Fashion (1%)
Anthropology (1%)
Dance (1%)
Teenagers (1%)
Medical (1%)

Single Mentions

Technology
Sociology
Camping
Myths
Evolution
Olympics
Pottery
Drugs
Sex
Cooking
Inspirational
Life
Astrology
Self-help
Psychology
World Problems
Entertainment
Abortion
Creation vs
Gangs
Poetry
Languages

APPENDIX H - BOOK SOURCES

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12		MALES	FEMALES		ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC		ALL STUDENTS
SCHOOL LIBRARY	28%	28%	28%		33%	24%		24%	53%		28%
BOOKSTORE	39%	26%	33%		34%	32%		36%	16%		33%
PUBLIC LIBRARY	37%	40%	38%		38%	39%		41%	29%		39%
FRIENDS	34%	27%	28%		24%	34%		32%	20%		29%

**APPENDIX I - PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEMBERSHIP**

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON- ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
YES	86%	64%	59%	68%	73%	76%	47%	71%
NO	12%	36%	41%	32%	26%	23%	53%	28%

APPENDIX J - LAST BOOKS READ for ENJOYMENT in GRADE (#)

GRADE 10

Male (51)

- 6 none/don't know
- The Stand(10)
- Rage (9)
- Don't Stand Too Close to a Naked Man(10)
- Blubber
- Schindler's List (10)
- Calvin & Hobbes(10)
- One Eyed Man(10)
- Speaker for the Dead(10)
- Like Water For Chocolate(10)
- The Work and the Glory(10)
- Four Past Midnight(10)
- Grapes(9)
- Dragonflight(10)
- The Beast(9)
- Life and Death of Superman(10)
- Brave Two Zero (9)
- Magic The Gathering Shattered Chains(10)
- Needful Things(10)
- The Divine Comedy(10)
- Complete Works of Shakespeare(10)
- The Chamber(9)
- Lord of the Rings(10)
- In The Eye of a Dragon(6)
- Mustang Bed Book(10)
- The Regulators (10)
- Boy on Defence (10)
- Myst (10)
- Outlanders(10)
- Clockwork Orange(10)
- Elven Blood(10)
- Mario (10)
- Star Wars (10)
- Joy Rides(9)
- Dune(10)
- The Awakening Evil(10)
- The Island of the Blue Dolphins(10)
- Dave Barry's Guide to Guys(9)
- Tick Tock(9)
- Rainmaker(9)
- Defender of Magic(10)
- Return of the King (9)
- Shadows of the Empire (10)
- Strike Two (10)

Female(43)

- 9 none/don't know
- The Deadly Kiss (10)
- Living Free(9)
- Four Seasons(10)
- Titanic(10)
- Famous Ghosts(9)
- Slob(9)
- We Won't Let You Die Daddy(10)
- 2 Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul(10)
- Gerald's Game(10)
- Christy(9)
- Leviathan(10)
- Agatha Christie(10)
- Dead Girls Don't Scream(9)
- The Work and the Glory (10)
- The Bridesmaid(10)
- Julie(9)
- Chicken Soup for the Soul(8)
- Rainmaker(10)
- A Time to Kill (9)
- A Time to Kill (10)
- My Sergei(10)
- Jenny (10)
- Homecoming(10)
- Helter Skelter (9)
- Windmill of the Gods(10)
- Twins (10)
- Thoroughbred Series(10)
- Eternal Enemy(10)
- Prom Night(10)
- The Upstairs(6)
- The Firm (9)
- Garden of Shadows(9)
- All Around Town(10)

GRADE 11

Male (43)

- 11 don't know/can't remember
- 3 none
- Hitchhiker
- How to restore your muscle car(11)
- The Long Walk(9)
- Brave Heart(11)
- Rose Madder(11)
- Wizard and Glass(11)
- Schindler's Ark (11)
- Dead Man's Folly(11)
- Client
- 2 Chrysalids(10)
- Dragons of North Chitterleon(5)
- Left Behind (11)
- Sphere (11)
- Rainmaker (11)
- Hard Sell (11)
- Ishmael (11)
- Battle Hymn (11)
- Days of Blood and Fire(11)
- Melancholy death of Oyster Boy (11)
- Reality Dysfunction GI Emergence(11)
- Rose Madder (9)
- Drawing of the Three (11)
- Day of the Triffids (10)
- Total Control (11)
- Jerry Seinfeld(11)
- Justice Denied (9)
- Swan Song (10)

Female(61)

- 12 can't remember
- Reba(11)
- Goodnight Kiss(10)
- To Kill a Mockingbird(10)
- Secret Admirer(11)
- Cutting Edge (9)
- Witch's Daughter(11)
- 2 Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul(11)
- Chicken Soup for the Soul(11)
- Anne of Green Gables (8)
- My So Called Life(11)
- Moonlight over Madness(11)
- 2 Intensity(11)
- A Gown of Spanish Lace(11)
- First Deadly Sin(11)
- A Time to Kill(11)
- Simon's Soul (9)
- Flowers in the Attic (11)
- Apaches (11)
- Thinner(11)
- Fear St. book (11)
- Goodnight Kiss(11)
- Brownstone(11)
- My Sweet Audrina(11)
- A Night to Remember(11)
- I'll Be Seeing You(11)
- A Princess Bride(10)
- a Stine(8)
- A Spell for Chameleon (11)
- Left Behind(11)
- Grapes of Wrath (10)
- Vanishing Cultures of the World(11)
- Goodnight my child forever(11)
- Caesar(11)
- Thornbirds (11)
- My Sergei(11)
- Molly by any other Name(11)
- They do it with Mirrors (11)
- X Files (10)
- Angel Maker(9)
- Wizard's First Rule(11)
- Flute Song Magic
- Key to Midnight (9)
- Dark Half(11)
- God in the Dock (10)
- Sea of Violets (10)

GRADE 12**Male (25)**

- 3 don't know/can't remember
- Druids of Shannara(12)
- Starship Troopers(11)
- Fallen Angels(12)
- Rebel Glory(12)
- Dragons of Autumn Twilight(12)
- X-Files#2(12)
- Hatchet(8)
- Across the River and into the Trees(12)
- Pool of Radiance(11)
- Desperation(11)
- A Crown of Sword(12)
- Of Mice and Men(11)
- Fury(11)
- Bo Jackson Bio(8)
- Life and Death of Superman(?)
- Rage of a Demon King(12)
- Lost World(12)
- Michael Jordan Bio(12)
- book about bridges(12)

Female(44)

- 8 don't know/can't remember
- Dawn(11)
- Saving Jessica(12)
- Missing Piece(12)
- The Waitress(10)
- Hideaway (12)
- I Know What You Did Last Summer(12)
- 2 Don't Die My Love(12)
- Diary of Anne Frank(12)
- Sweet Valley High(10)
- Something Wicked This Way Comes(11)
- 2 Chicken Soup for the Soul(11/12)
- Kaleidoscope(11)
- A Son of the Circus
- Nostradamus(12)
- Calling on Dragons(12)
- Last Vampire(12)
- Applause of Heaven(12)
- Star Group(12)
- Poison Med Center(12)
- Obasan(11)
- Tale of the Body Thief(12)
- Catcher in the rye(11)
- Stones from the River(12)
- Storm Breaking(12)
- Simon's Soul(12)
- Witch(10)
- Killing Floor(12)
- The Cider House Rules(12)
- She's Come Undone(11)
- Cat Who Ate the Cheese(12)
- Ocean City Forever(12)
- The Star Group
- Of Mice and Men(12)
- The Chamber(12)

APPENDIX K: FAVOURITE BOOK and REASON WHY

GRADE 10 MALES (51)

- don't know 7
- Schindler's List -interesting
- stamps-because I collect stamps
- Blubber
- Don't Stand Too Close to a Naked Man -said stuff about him I would never imagine
- Graveyard Shift -horror
- The Stand -realistic book
- The Beast-lots of action and suspense
- Last Vampire-interested in vampires and fantasy
- Hardy Boys Series
- IT-good story/very detailed
- The Work and the Glory-had a little of everything
- Callahans Crosstimes-very descriptive and interesting
- Ender's Game-very well written sci-fi with a good plot
- The One Eyed Man-about a life of crime and the effects
- Misery-it was cool
- In The Eye of a Dragon-scary
- In The Eye of a Dragon-good
- Chronicles of Prydain-incredible
- A Time to Kill-exciting, full of action, never stopped
- Hobbit-enjoyable, funny, adventurous, a classic
- Hobbit-greatest story
- Hobbit-unbelievably amazing fantasy story
- Hobbit-keeps your interest throughout book
- Hobbit-interesting book
- StarWars
- Outlanders-fun/unique
- Clockwork Orange-really neat view of how the future should be
- Squires Blood-realistic war stories/graphic explanation
- High Fives-strong sense of character
- A Wrinkle in Time
- The Vampire-mysterious and horrible
- Island of the Blue Dolphin-interesting
- Intensity-kept me interested
- Rainmaker-good book
- Needful Things-didn't want to put the book down, very interesting and suspenseful
- Debtors Planet-Star Trek-TWL- Like Star Trek
- Brave Two Zero-about desert storm, so detailed about the time they were there
- Incident at Hawks Hill-very very interesting based on true story
- Lost World-exciting, dealt with scientific theories
- The Shining-love King novels
- Star Trek Q Squared-alternate timelines reveal much about human characters
- Twinkie Squad-could relate to it in Grade 4

GRADE 10 FEMALES (43)

- can't remember/don't know 7
- R.L. Stine's-I like horror
- There's a Boy in the Girls Bathroom-interesting
- Bridge to Terabithia-sad, good story
- The Giver-complex
- Five in a Tent-old and sweet
- Ten Little Indians-not too much suspense but enough
- Walk Two Moons-interesting, thoughtful, sad
- A Day No Pigs Would Die-interesting
- The Firm-suspenseful
- Chicken Soup for Teenage Soul-real life stories from real people who have similar problems
- Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul-real life nature to it
- Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul-it's about teens, many stories of different people
- IT-love horror exaggeration
- Cold White Fury-very compelling/couldn't put it down
- Simple Spells for Success-has to do with witchcraft
- Looking at the Moon-I could cope and understand it by putting myself in her shoes
- Flowers in the Attic-easy to follow, interesting
- Where the Red Fern Grows-exciting, sad but also real, liked how it took place in the past
- Julie-based on something that really happened
- Phantom of the Opera-kept me interested
- Slave Dancer-loved storyline
- Cold Heart-full of killing and mystery
- Stine's-can't be left standing so I read until I'm done
- Outsiders-real life/good
- Outsiders-you could react and sympathize with the characters
- Thoroughbred or Saddle Club Books-fictional horse and rider stories
- VC Andrews series-keep me interested
- Memnoch the Devil-very interesting, dragged you into it
- Other Side of Midnight-hard to put down
- Night Shift-a lot of different horror stories in it
- Time to Kill-very well written, enjoyable book
- Not Without My Daughter-interesting, detailed, hard to put down
- Little Women-very well written and enjoyable
- Number the Stars-made me think, really emotional

GRADE 11 MALES (43)

- don't know 11
- Nightmares and Dreamscapes-like short stories
- Dark Side-so descriptive and lots of suspense
- Outsiders-it reminded me of my life
- Romeo and Juliet-kept me reading, some books don't
- Jurassic Park-action
- Jurassic Park-suspense

- Jurassic Park
- Misery
- Bruno and Boots-really funny and enjoyable
- Wishsong of Shannara-filled with action and not many boring parts
- Plan B is Total Panic
- Chrysalids-could relate with characters
- Needful Things-loved the plot of the book
- Needful Things-very interesting and hard to put down
- Wheel of Time series-really cool
- Dagger Spell-not sure
- Rally Cry-everything from war to history to science fiction
- JFK bio-interested in his life and the assassination
- Hard Sell-lots of changes of events, exciting
- Long Walk-true story about a couple of friends who escape from prison camp
- Shannara Series
- The Client-best seller and suspenseful
- Rainmaker-about something I'm interested in-law
- To Kill a Mockingbird
- Lord of the Rings-best fantasy books around
- The Relic-very well written/scary/suspenseful
- Swan Song
- Rainmaker-entertaining, attention getter, action, suspense
- Stine's-kept me interested
- Kissed the Girls-it's messed up
- Dragonlance Series-best books and very descriptive
- Melancholy death of Oyster Boy-funny, creative, entertaining
- Chrysalids-liked fantasy and futuristic

GRADE 11 FEMALES (61)

- don't know 15
- Starless Night-has everything I want in a book
- Can you teach me to pick my nose-funny and interesting
- Cracking Ice-about figure skating
- Best Friend-I like the suspense, mystery
- Number the Stars-true, real, exciting
- Reba My Story-tells the whole truth from various points in her life, didn't hold back
- Princess Bride-read it since gr.8 and enjoy the book
- To Kill a Mockingbird-got into it right away and couldn't put it down
- To Kill a Mockingbird-kept me interested
- Flowers in the Attic-great book, enjoyable and enthralling
- Footsteps-about the author and her famous poem
- Anne of Green Gables-entertaining
- Underground to Canada/Even if it Kills Me/And Then There Were None
- Homecoming
- Chrysalids-interesting/intriguing, portrayed a different world that could be real
- Ist Deadly Sin- interesting
- Apaches-full of action and surprises

- It couldn't put it down
- Simon's Soul-excellent book, written well
- A Time to Kill-interested in law, justice and social/racial issues
- Morning, Noon and Night-never expected what was going to happen, ending a surprise
- Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul-real, interesting, intriguing
- Little Princess-enchanted, beautiful story
- My Sergei-book about people I knew of
- My Sergei-really enjoyable and sad-I like sad books
- Castle in the Attic-good fantasy book, with lively characters
- The Physician-found the plot really fascinating
- The Good Earth-just good
- Phantoms-interesting and fun to read
- The Eagle and the Raven-interesting
- Feather Stroke-good descriptions and plot
- Alive -true story with lots of action
- Left Behind-good
- 20 and 10-very interesting
- Another Fine Myth
- Runaway Jury-plot was so twisted and so out of this world that it really captured my attention
- Beauty/The Trumpeter Swan
- Vanishing Cultures-talks about things that actually interest me, told in a very effective way
- Firebrand-like Greek Mythology
- Diary of Anne Frank-showed real life of girl during holocaust
- Too Young to Die-sad and about real life
- A Night to Remember-interested in the Titanic
- Morgan Family-it showed realistic changes through generations
- My So Called Life-books are better than shows usually

GRADE 12 MALES (25)

- don't know 5
- Lord of the Flies-interesting and had lots of hidden meanings
- Dragons of Autumn Twilight-adventurous
- Brett Hull Bio-told about his hockey life and was interesting
- Far Side-funny
- Dark Rivers of the Heart-very suspenseful
- Dragonlance series-already know the characters-don't have to wait 3 chapters for the story to start
- Gretzky Bio-learned all about him
- Desperation-really good
- Lord of the Rings-keeps interest throughout books
- Contender-had to do with a young person growing up
- Gretzky or Lemieux Bio-like to know about hockey players
- Bo Jackson Bio-liked it a lot
- Pool of Radiance-good raw material for own fantasies
- Frozen Fire-kept my attention
- Rage of a Demon King-one I remember best

- Michael Jordan Bio-sports interest me
- Call of the Wild-about dogs and outdoors which interest me
- Clockwork Orange-very well done, insightful
- Anna Karenina-very good

GRADE 12 FEMALES (44)

- don't know/don't have one /can't remember 12
- Road to Avonlea-because I saw the show
- books by Lurlene McDaniel-best books ever
- Even If It Kills Me-about eating disorder-I understood the disease more
- Nightmares and Dreamscapes-never know what is going to happen next
- Diary of Anne Frank
- The Waitress-suspenseful-couldn't put it down
- Missing Piece-could relate to the story
- Silence of the Lambs-love the movie
- Dollemanger Series-interesting and kept me wondering what would happen next
- Killing Floor-exciting and suspenseful
- Witch-interesting, characters are real, mysterious
- Valdamir Series-so cool and a really good read
- Vampire Lestat-very interesting
- 1984-kept me interested
- Salem's Lot-very suspenseful, had vampires
- Bible-has everything-mystery, romance, violence and all the answers to anything I might ask
- A Song for Arbonne-exciting well written interesting
- Earth Children Series-Auel makes you believe in the events as if you were really there
- Needful Things-long detailed and more suspenseful than movie
- Prayer for Owen Meany-wonderful story, good plot, lots of meaning
- Horse Whisperer-interested me, well written, kept your attn. Right to the end
- Outsiders/Durango Street
- Little Women
- The Pelican Brief-suspenseful, don't want to put book down, learning something while reading
- Time to Kill-suspenseful, didn't get bored with it
- Remember Me-easy to read interesting
- Jack's Back/Ocean City-held my interest, wanted to know what happened to characters
- S.T.A.R.S.-inspirational book that I loved
- Prayer for Owen Meany-despite length everything is tied together at end
- Something Wicked this way comes-don't know why just really enjoyed it

APPENDIX L - FAVOURITE AUTHORS and REASONS WHY

GRADE 10

Male (51)

- none/don't know 14
- King-writes a real sounding story
- King-good books
- King-long, good books, scary!
- King-writes horror books
- King-good books
- King-good author
- King-very descriptive
- King/Crichton-suspense/ good plots/
realistic stories
- Stine-some good mysteries and horror
- Grisham-writes good
- Spider Robinson-neat author
- H. Lund-good books
- George Orwell
- Pike-interesting
- Grisham-always exciting
- Isaac Asimov- sci-fi
- King-like his books/very suspenseful 3
- Gordon Korman-grew up on him
- Piers Anthony-Xanth novels are very punny
- Koontz
- Lloyd Alexander-wrote Chronicles of Prydain
- King, Crichton, Allan Ginsberg
- Orson Scott Card-good sci-fi
- Tolkien-writes the best books
- Mowat-down to earth books
- Tolkien-wrote the Hobbit
- King-excellent horror books
- Crichton-exciting and well written
- Pike-interesting
- David Eddings-I could follow the whole series
- Frank Herbert-lots of detail/writes sci-fi
- Tolkien-unique writing style that makes
you feel as if you are in the book
- Peter David-can develop many plots at the
same time

Female(43)

- none/don't know 15
- Stine-describes subjects in detail
- Anne Rice
- Voigt-wrote Fortune's Wheel
- Pike-mystery
- King-awesome stories
- King-like mystery and horror stories
- Grisham
- L.M. Montgomery-books are thoughtful and
humorous
- Voigt-good story line
- Stine-suspenseful books
- Rex Miller-horror stories very real
- VC Andrews-like mystery
- Bonnie Bryant-writes Saddle Club Series
- Jennifer Redhauck-grabs my attention
- Sheldon-all his books are excellent
- Danielle Steele
- King, Anne Rice-books keep me interested
- King-very good writer/exciting books 2
- King-good imagination/scary stories
- VC Andrews-I like her writing
- Roald Dahl-crazy ideas
- Louisa May Alcott-very descriptive
- Grisham-enjoy his writing and story ideas
- Grisham-never want to stop reading
- Mary Higgins Clark-twisted plots, you never
know who has committed the crime
- Pike-excellent writing
- King-awesome writer
- Koontz-good writer
- King-very good writer, his writing gives me
the creeps

GRADE 11

Male (43)

- don't know/none 15
- King-writes mystery and horror/interesting 3
- Katherine Kerr
- King-good writer/descriptive, clear thinker 2
- William S Burrows-very interesting
- Crichton
- King-writes good novels
- Robert Jordan-good books
- Salvatore-great author
- Crichton-good stories, catch my attention 3
- Agatha Christie
- Clancy- books about war
- Terry Brooks/Tolkien
- Weiss and Hickman-team up and write great books
- Arthur Black-funny, fun to read interesting
- King
- W.R. Forestcher-writes what I want to read
- King-very interesting topics on horror
- Tolkien-awesome writing style
- Tim Burton-creativity, originality
- Grisham
- Grisham-writes about law
- Stine-kept me interested
- King-his writings are like deranged, twisted tales from the mind of a lunatic
- Stine/King-interesting
- King-like his writing style

Female(61)

- don't know/none 12
- Tom Carter-way to get message out without dirty laundry
- Munsch-when I was little because I met him
- Martyn Godfrey-good sense of humor/funny
- Stine-like his books they're full of mystery, good horror 2
- Koontz
- Beverly Cleary
- Bill Peet-psychological reasons, good illustrations
- Grisham-interesting suspenseful, make good movies
- Max Lucado-presents truth and Bible in a fresh way that makes me think
- Koontz-scary and very imaginative
- Grisham-plot is thick, intricate and interesting
- Anne Rice-like her stories
- LM Montgomery-love Anne of Green Gables 2
- VC Andrews-creepy story line/scary, unpredictable
- Sidney Sheldon-really enjoy his books
- Zimmer Bradley-writes about things I'm interested in
- Christie-suspense
- Grisham-enjoy his type of novels, different plots,thrillers 3
- King-like his style/scary, unpredictable 4
- Patricia Cornwall/LaVyrle Spencer-interesting, suspenseful
- Pike-lots of suspense in his novels
- Jack Weyland-writes stories about teenagers going through certain conflicts, I can relate to his stories
- Lois Duncan-all of her novels are great, good
- Stine-liked his suspense/like the horror 2
- Duncan-good mysteries
- Dr. Suess-like reading them when I babysit
- VC Andrews/ EB White-like their books
- Lurlene McDaniels-like the hospital and cancer
- King-interesting and suspenseful books
- Lurlene McDaniels-writes about real experiences
- Stine-like his stories, keep me in suspense
- Piers Anthony-good writing technique
- Pauline Gedge-historical fiction
- King
- LM Montgomery-like Anne book as a child
- McCaffrey-good character description and her ideas are original
- Agatha Christie-I enjoy mystery and she's good

GRADE 12

Male (25)

- don't know/don't have one 14
- King-complicated plots/interesting 2
- Frank Dixon-liked Hardy Boys
- Blume-easy to read
- Tolkien-father of fantasy genre novels
- M Weiss-good books
- Turgenev-very good
- Koontz-good
- Arthur Miller-very creative author
- Korman-when I was younger-hilarious
- Raymond Fiest-wrote the book

Female(44)

- don't know/have one 11
- VC Andrews-can make me feel like I'm in the story
- Pascal-like her writing
- McDaniel-understands the life of teenagers/excellent 2
- King-writes scary books, like mysteries, writing style, suspense 3
- King-awesome writer/lots of suspense/horror 5
- Stine-like horror books/good books 3
- Grisham-very good author
- Pike-good stories, easy to read, good sense of humour
- too many to choose one
- Pike-like mysteries/writes well/interesting 4
- Cleary -enjoyed her novels
- Arthur Miller-like 2 books he has written
- King and Grisham-write wonderfully creating suspense
- Grisham-hard to put down 2
- Keene-created Nancy Drew, liked her in Gr.7
- Rice-good author
- AA Milne-interesting
- Max Lucado-down to earth inspirational living author
- Guy Gavriel Kay-he rox
- John Irving-interested in this story telling
- Stine-Fear St. books scary/horror 2

APPENDIX M - ATTITUDE TOWARD READING

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
LIKE	59%	61%	64%	54%	66%	65%	41%	61%
DISLIKE	22%	22%	25%	29%	18%	19%	39%	23%
SOMETIMES	18%	14%	12%	15%	15%	14%	18%	15%

APPENDIX N - AMOUNT OF READING in JUNIOR HIGH vs. SENIOR HIGH

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
MORE	28%	15%	32%	25%	23%	22%	31%	24%
LESS	61%	73%	58%	63%	67%	67%	53%	65%
SAME	11%	10%	10%	12%	9%	9%	14%	10%

APPENDIX O - FACTORS which DISCOURAGE / PREVENT READING

	GR.10	GR. 11	GR. 12	MALES	FEMALES	ACADEMIC	NON-ACADEMIC	ALL STUDENTS
SCHOOLWORK	72%	77%	78%	66%	84%	81%	51%	76%
JOB	27%	39%	64%	38%	44%	40%	47%	41%
LACK of INTEREST	41%	30%	30%	43%	27%	31%	49%	34%
DON'T LIKE READING	13%	17%	17%	22%	11%	13%	29%	16%
TOO LAZY	29%	27%	22%	37%	18%	26%	29%	26%
NO FREE READING TIME	29%	21%	20%	25%	22%	27%	10%	24%
DON'T KNOW BOOKS	9%	18%	17%	16%	14%	14%	16%	15%
DON'T LIKE LIBRARY	16%	12%	17%	18%	12%	14%	16%	15%
EXTRA-CURRICULAR	48%	50%	46%	50%	48%	52%	35%	49%
SOCIAL LIFE	64%	71%	80%	63%	75%	72%	65%	70%