



Englisch



Progress in International Reading Literacy Study



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



**KULTUSMINISTER
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Center for Research
on Education and
School Development

Why is reading important?



Reading is a
fundamental
cultural
technique.

Reading is the
basis for social
participation.



Reading is the
key to lifelong
learning.

Reading skills
create more
opportunities in
education and
employment.



... and reading
is fun!



Reading creates
space for
creativity and
imagination.

What is the PIRLS study?

The **Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)** is an educational monitoring study that analyses the reading literacy of children in the fourth grade. The results of the study provide important information about and for the development of schools and teaching. In Germany, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (KMK) are responsible for PIRLS.

Around 60 countries and regions worldwide have regularly taken part in PIRLS since 2001. The reading achievement of primary school children from Germany can thus be compared with the reading achievement of children from other countries. This is the sixth time that Germany takes part in the study. In Germany, the study is known as **Internationale Grundschul-Lese-Untersuchung (IGLU)**.



What are the goals of PIRLS?

- Find out how well fourth-grade children can understand texts
- Show how reading skills develop
- Find solutions for improving schools and teaching
- Analyse the organisation and quality of the learning environment
- Compare reading literacy internationally

What is analysed in PIRLS?

PIRLS measures reading skills using a scientifically developed performance test. This test consists of comprehension questions on illustrated informational and literary texts. In addition to the test, the children also answer questions about their attitude to reading, reading motivation and reading behaviour as well as general questions about school and family.

Questionnaires

Students

Parents

Teachers

School
principals

The performance test and the questionnaire were developed specifically for PIRLS and are the same in all participating countries. For the study in Germany, further important questions were added, for example on reading on digital devices and the quality of teaching. The parents, teachers and school principals of the participating children are also surveyed in order to be able to take a more holistic view of reading skills.

The students taking part in PIRLS work on the questions in class on laptops at their school. All data is analysed anonymously. In addition, the results are not analysed for individual children, but for larger groups (e.g. separated into girls and boys).

What's new in PIRLS 2026?

In the last PIRLS in Germany in 2021, 4,611 students from 252 fourth-grade classes, their parents, teachers and school principals took part. Around 400,000 students from 65 countries and regions took part internationally. For PIRLS in 2021, reading literacy was measured digitally for the first time and the use of digital media was recorded, which provided many new insights into digitalisation in learning and reading.



In 2026, PIRLS will be conducted in Germany for the sixth time. Changes in students' reading achievement at the end of the fourth grade can be described over a period of 25 years.

In this cycle, not only reading literacy is assessed digitally by the children working on reading tasks on a laptop. The questionnaires are also being completed digitally for the first time by students, parents, teachers and school principals. For the first time, a digital English-language version of the questionnaire will also be made available to parents; a paper version in German will also be provided.

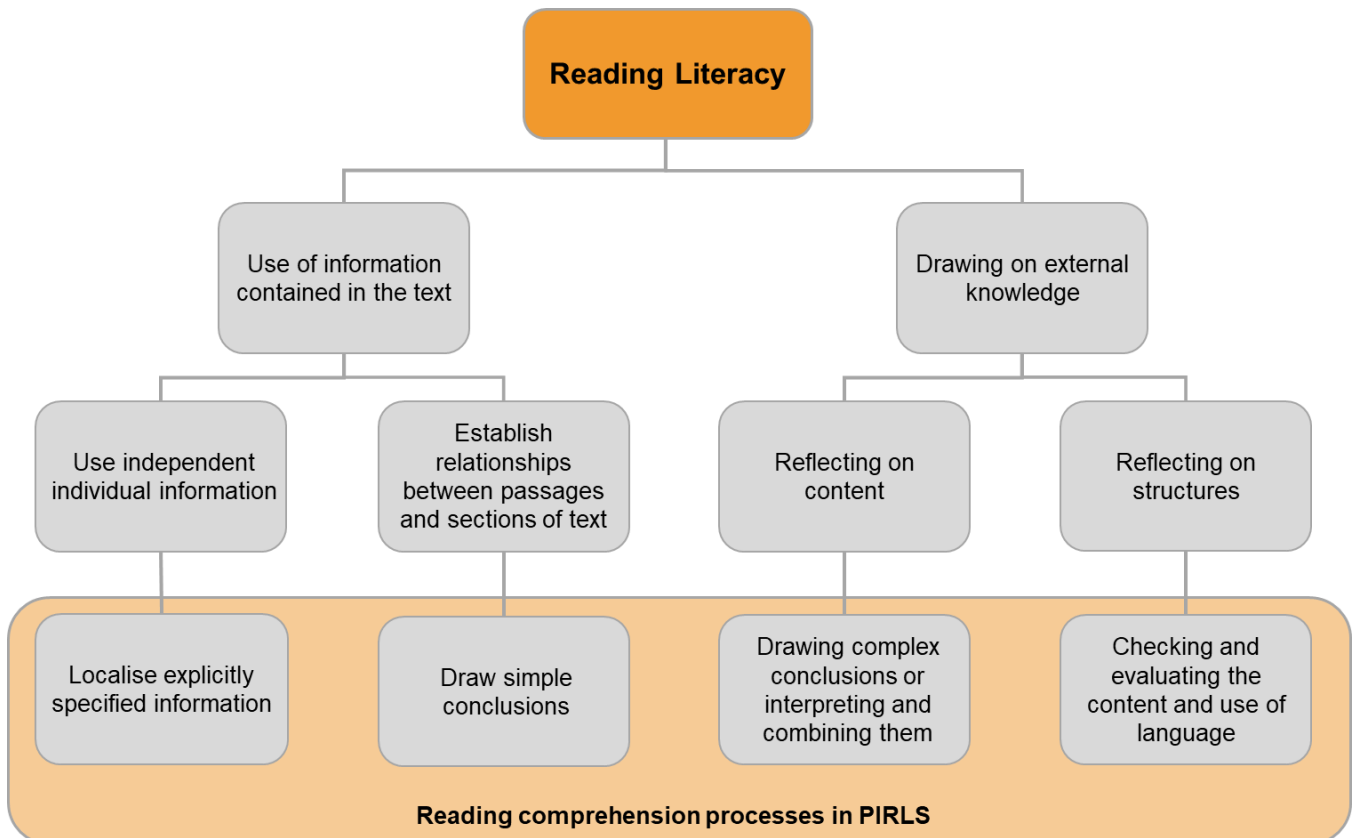
Part of the reading test is ePIRLS, which analyses reading skills in online environments. In this context, the students read texts and work on tasks on simulated websites.

The rich information on reading literacy and the contextual conditions of competence acquisition can be used to gain important insights. These contribute to the further development of teaching in general and primary schools in Germany.



What exactly does reading literacy mean?

The reading literacy model summarises the skills of the students examined in PIRLS:



Responsible for PIRLS

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Funded by



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Further information on PIRLS can be found on the project websites of TU Dortmund University and the international study center at Boston College:



National: PIRLS / IGLU

<https://ifs.ep.tu-dortmund.de/en/research/research-projects/iglu/pirls-2026/>



International: PIRLS

<https://timssandpirls.bc.edu/pirls2026/>

