

PIRLS/prePIRLS 2011 Passages

PIRLS 2011 Assessment Passages

Literary Passages	Informational Passages
<p>Enemy Pie – This contemporary story about friendship is narrated by the main character, a boy named Tom. Tom’s ‘enemy’ is Jeremy, a new arrival who threatens to come between Tom and his best friend. Tom’s Dad uses ‘enemy pie’ as a way to trick Tom into spending a day playing with Jeremy – at the end of which the boys have become friends.</p>	<p>Day Hiking – This leaflet, presented in tri-fold format, aims to give children information about the appeal of day hiking as an activity. It includes guidance on planning, packing and keeping safe on a hike, and describes how day hiking is fun and good exercise. There is a map of the hikes around Lookout Hill, with a map key showing the features of four alternative routes.</p>
<p>Fly, Eagle, Fly – In this allegorical tale from Africa, a farmer saves an eagle chick but then keeps it among his chickens. The eagle grows up behaving as chickens do, pecking on the ground and refusing to fly. The farmer’s friend is determined that the eagle should be allowed to fulfill its destiny and fly high in the sky. He takes the eagle up into a mountain and, inspired by the wind and the sunrise, the eagle flies away at last.</p>	<p>The Giant Tooth Mystery – This scientific and historical text recounts some of the stages in the discovery of dinosaurs from early times to the nineteenth century. Its main focus is Gideon Mantell, whose investigation of a giant fossil tooth enabled identification of the Iguanodon. The passage explains the features of the fossil tooth and the observations that led Mantell to deduce that it came from a giant prehistoric reptile.</p>
<p>The Empty Pot* – This traditional tale set in China has a moral message about the importance of honesty.</p>	<p>Leonardo Da Vinci* – This biographical text describes the inventions of Leonardo da Vinci and the ways that he was ahead of his time.</p>
<p>Flowers on the Roof* – This contemporary story portrays friendship between the generations.</p>	<p>Sharks* – This article presents information about sharks in a variety of formats, using subheadings, a labeled diagram, and photographs.</p>
<p>Shiny Straw* – This animal story demonstrates heroism and the consequences of a reckless attitude.</p>	<p>Where’s the Honey?* – This passage describes the relationship between honeyguide bird and the Boran people in Africa using a combination of explanation, photographs, and graphic displays.</p>

* Passage held secure for future assessments

prePIRLS 2011 Assessment Passages

Literary Passages	Informational Passages
<p>Brave Charlotte – In this animal tale, Charlotte the sheep is bold and daring, refusing to conform to the expectations of the other sheep and the shepherd. She explores, she swims, and she goes out alone at night. When the shepherd is injured, it is only the adventurous Charlotte who is able to find help and save him.</p>	<p>Caterpillar to Butterfly – This passage explains the metamorphosis of the caterpillar through the eyes of young students in a classroom. They observe as the small caterpillar eats, grows, sheds its skin, changes to a chrysalis, and eventually emerges as a butterfly. Scientific explanation is given within a simple narrative context.</p>
<p>The Lonely Giraffe – This is an animal tale set in the jungle. At the beginning of the story, the giraffe is excluded from the animals’ activities because they are nervous of his height. The other animals learn to value this difference when the tall giraffe is the only one who can save them from the flood, and by the end of the story the giraffe is no longer lonely.</p>	<p>Two Giant Dinosaurs – This passage compares two dinosaurs: the carnivorous T Rex and the plant-eating Diplodocus. Double page spreads present a large picture of each dinosaur, surrounded by explanatory labels linking their body parts with their lives and behavior.</p>
<p>The Summer My Father Was Ten* - In this thought-provoking story with a realistic contemporary setting, a boy is allowed to make amends for his thoughtless behavior.</p>	<p>Ants* - This article presents information about the lives of different types of ants, using subheadings, photographs, and diagrams.</p>
<p>Perfect Orange* - This traditional tale set in Africa has a moral about greed and generosity.</p>	<p>Training a Deaf Polar Bear* - The passage describes how zookeepers worked with a polar bear that was found to be deaf.</p>

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PIRLS/prePIRLS Passage Readability

The multistep search for appropriate PIRLS and prePIRLS passages had the ultimate goal of identifying grade appropriate passages that would be engaging and culturally suitable for students in a wide range of countries and languages. The PIRLS Development Team conducted a close review of prospective texts, which focused on the texts' literary qualities and their potential to elicit a range of comprehension items. Once passages had undergone this qualitative review, the PIRLS Development Team computed passages' word count and readability as a quantitative check of the grade appropriateness of the recommended texts. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level¹ formula was used as a measure of readability for this purpose because of its suitability for a wide range of texts and its extensive use in education. This quantitative information was provided alongside the texts to National Research Coordinators for their review. The TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center relied on the professional judgment of these country representatives and their within-country experts to evaluate the grade appropriateness, translatability, and cultural suitability of the texts for their students.

PIRLS 2011 Word Counts and Readability

	Word Count	Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level ²
Day Hiking Brochure	768	4.5
The Empty Pot	767	4.9
Enemy Pie	770	2.5
Flowers on the Roof	811	2.8
Fly, Eagle, Fly	855	3.5
The Giant Tooth Mystery	880	5.3
Leonardo Da Vinci	869	5.1
Sharks	570	7.6
Shiny Straw	860	5.5
Where's the Honey?	870	3.2

prePIRLS 2011 Word Counts and Readability

	Word Count	Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level
Ants	415	2.9
Brave Charlotte	472	3.2
Caterpillar to Butterfly	396	3.5
Two Giant Dinosaurs	420	3.1
The Lonely Giraffe	446	3.9
Perfect Orange	404	2
The Summer My Father Was Ten	484	4
Training a Deaf Polar Bear	425	4

1 Kincaid, J. P., Fishburne, R. P., Jr., Rogers, R.L., & Chissom, B. S. (1975). Derivation of new readability formulas (Automated Readability Index, Fog Count and Flesch Reading Ease Formula) for Navy enlisted personnel. (Research Branch Report 8-75). Millington, TN: Naval Technical Training Command Millington Tennessee Research Branch.

2 The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Formula uses average syllables per word and average sentence length to produce a number that represents the US grade in which students can read the text