

# EVALUATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION READING PRACTICES (ITALY)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Children's cognitive development is enhanced and favoured by reading of narrative texts. Children have to read from an early age, at first they can use tactile books, then they can watch image sequence, up to the reading of real narrative texts. The practice of reading helps children to have a positive and open attitude towards the world around them, knowledge and culture. Those who read in early age develop good writing skills and also their creative thinking. Between 0 and 10 years, the experience of shared reading is very important: reading with an adult (teacher or parent) is very different by single reading: child is more stimulated and the connections between the various part of the brain are made easier and they are stored with greater stability. Child starts to connect emotions to memory and identification with thug. Current pedagogy teaches us that there is no learning without emotional involvement, for this reason shared reading is more effective: sharing reading means stay close, indeed complicity, emotionality and affectivity are strengthened together with the ability to read and interpret the text. The approach to reading today has changed a lot, there is no longer only the paper format, but there are also e-books and reading-related apps, that allow children to interact in the book with other senses besides sight. Technology, however, cannot replace the value of the presence of an adult in the complicity of shared reading. An investigation into reading in this historical context becomes fundamental for the reasons listed above. The most recent data that we have about reading in Italy are those collected by ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics) in December 2019, relating to the year 2018<sup>1</sup>. Among the salient data we find the following considerations:

- ✓ The public most fond of reading are girls between 11 and 19 years old
- ✓ Reading is much more widespread in the regions of Northern Italy
- ✓ One in ten families don't even have a book at home.

This latter information in particular is emblematic of how necessary a connection between the school environment and families is to increase the habit of reading in children.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2019/12/Report-Produzione-lettura-libri-2018.pdf>

## 1.1 Review of educational law that includes the teaching and the learning of reading

According to National Indication for Primary School drawn up by the Ministry of Education on 2012, it's clear that the reading is considered an essential skill:

*“The practice of reading has got a central role in first cycle of education. Reading is proposed as a moment of socialisation, and discussion on learning content, but also as a moment of individual and independent research, it can develop concentrations and critical thinking skills. In summary reading is a useful activity to encourage the student's maturation process. For the development of reading skill is necessary the acquisition of appropriate strategies and techniques: reading aloud, the care of expression, and the implementation of cognitive operations for text comprehension. Knowing how to read is essential for finding information, to expand one's knowledge, to get aware answer. Attention to understanding argumentative and narrative text is a very important exercise, even using the debate and the dialogue about texts presented. Interest in reading produces an increment of attention and curiosity, it develops imagination and the pleasures of research, it makes known the tales and stories of each civilization, it brings you closer to the other and different from itself.*

*All these experiences are essential components for reaching a solid reading skill and for the development of every future knowledge. Reading tools are learning at school and cognitive process, necessary for the comprehension, are activated. Reading must be practiced on a range of texts belonging to various textual types, for different purposes and functional strategies for the tasks, without ever neglecting individual reading and listening of texts, read by the teacher, designed to increase the pleasure of reading. The development of reading skill is part of every discipline. Each teacher must favour with each activity overcoming obstacle for texts comprehension, which can nest at the lexical or syntactic level or at the level of logical-conceptual structuring.*

*The habit of using books gives the basis for a reading practice as autonomous and personal activity, that lasts for a lifetime. For this*

*it is necessary to ensure the conditions for increasing love for written texts (school library, access to books, research itineraries, use both books and new media...) Reading connected with the study and spontaneous reading, linked to emotional aspects, must be both practiced because it responds to the needs of the person. In this perspective, reading to satisfy the aesthetic pleasure of meeting the literary text and the intellectual taste of seeking answers to meaningful questions takes a primary role, as a premise for a first literary education that's no end with the first cycle.”*

According to the Italian School system, reading is an important aspect of Functional Alphabetical Competence. According to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council (22.05.2018) the goals at the end of primary school are as follow:

- ✓ Pupil can read and include texts of various types, he can identify the global sense and the most important information, using reading strategies fit for purpose.
- ✓ He uses functional skills to study: in writing texts he can identify useful information for learning a topic and he can put it in relation; he can synthesize information, depending on the oral exposure; he can acquire specific terminology.
- ✓ Child can read texts of various kinds (children's literature), both out loud and silently, and he makes personal judgement about them.

These goals are verified in intermediate stages, corresponding to the skills acquired at the end of each school year. Below we indicate the most significant passages for acquiring these skills.

#### **Basic skills for reading at the end of the first class of primary school.**

- Mastering instrumental reading in loud mode
- Predicting the content of a plain text based on some elements such as the title and images
- Reading narrative, descriptive and informative texts understanding the topic we are talking about and recognizing the main information with the help of stimulus questions from the teacher.
- Understanding simple and short texts of different types: continuous (tales, descriptive texts, simple and short informative texts) and non continuous (tables with data related to practical experiences, lists, instructions), for practical purposes of entertainment and recreation.
- Reading simple and short literary texts, both poetic and narrative (short tales, stories, doggerels; the pupil can get the global sense, with the help of stimulus questions from the teacher.

#### **Basic skills for reading at the end of the third class of primary school.**

- Mastering instrumental reading both in loud mode, taking care of the expression, and silent
- Predicting the content of a plain text based on some elements such as the title and images; understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words by the sense of the text.

- Reading narrative, descriptive and informative texts understanding the topic we are talking about and recognizing the main information
- Understanding texts of different types: continuous and non continuous for practical purposes of entertainment and recreation.
- Reading simple and short literary texts, both poetic and narrative (short tales, stories, doggerels; the pupil can get the global sense
- Reading simple disclosure texts, in order to obtain useful information to expand knowledge on known issues

### **Basic skills for reading at the end of the fifth class of primary school**

- Using appropriate strategies to analyze the content, during the reading of various types of text
- Asking yourself question at the beginning and at the end of a text reading;
- Finding useful clues to solve problems of under standing;
- Using title, images and caption to get an idea about what the pupil is going to read
- Reading and comparing information coming from diffrent texts, with the aim of finding ideas to talk and write about something.
- Looking for information, applying techniques to support under standing (maps)
- Follow written instruction to realize a method.
- Reading narrative and descriptive texts, both realistic and fantastic, distinguishing literary invention from reality.

In Tuscany, the Italian region in which the investigation was carried out, in order to improve communication skills in educational centres, attended by children aged 6-12, programs are promoted such as:

- ✓ *Leggere: forte! Ad alta voce fa crescere l'intelligenza*<sup>2</sup>: a project of the Tuscany Region which aims to encourage the success of school and life paths for children and young people

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.regione.toscana.it/leggere-forse->

#### **Aims**

- favors the development of fundamental cognitive functions (such as: attention, planning etc ..),
- facilitates the development of the ability to recognize one's own and others' emotions,
- facilitates the development of relationship skills,
- significantly increases the number of known words,
- helps in building one's identity
- favors the development of critical thinking
- promotes autonomy of thought

through the effects that the practice of reading aloud produces. this project was activated in the 2019/2020 school year and has slowed down due to the Covid epidemic, but it will continue during the summer and next year.

- ✓ *Donne di carta*: is a cultural association active on a large part of the national territory. Its main purpose is to promote reading and protect the bibliodiversity against any strategy of cultural homologation. The association created in 2011 the Charter of Reading Rights, consisting of 8 articles<sup>3</sup>. This association has also been operating in the Valdarno area since 2013 by collaborating with schools by offering book presentations and animated readings.

## 1.2 Sociodemographic data of family

The sample is made up of 223 families of students enrolled in the Primary Education stage in educational centers in Tuscany (area of Valdarno and Florence). For the most part the families involved belong to public school. To better understand the nature of the results, we will describe the

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<sup>3</sup> **Art.1** Reading is a right of the person without distinction of social conditions, age, language, political opinions, race, religion, health and sex.

**Art. 2** Reading is an individual and social activity that involves the mind, emotions and senses and does not limit or privilege learning and interpretation of writing (book reading) but is applicable in different areas and with different tools. Therefore, it is a social duty to increase forms and activities of start-up, facilitation and permanent support for reading which create, with equal opportunities, an education in listening, critical thinking, sharing and exchanging knowledge.

**Art. 3** Reading favors the development of personality, affective and social relationships, expressive possibilities and intercultural exchanges, placing itself as a substantial contribution to the material and immaterial progress of society. Therefore it is a social duty to contribute to the fight against primary and return illiteracy, against the impoverishment of languages and knowledge, and the conditions that make them rooted, widespread and submerged.

**Art. 4** It is an inalienable right of the person who reads to exercise their linguistic competence on each text. Therefore, it is a social duty to facilitate the comprehensibility of the texts according to the recipient and the contexts of use, to enhance each native and local language and to propose forms of dissemination of the texts that allow the verification and / or availability of the original language.

**Art.5** It is an inalienable right of the person who reads to exercise his / her reading skills on every text.

Therefore, in the specific case of physical and cognitive, temporary and / or permanent disabilities, it is a social duty to increase auxiliary forms and tools that facilitate the learning, development and exercise of reading.

**Art.6** It is an indispensable right of the person who reads to enjoy the equality of reading opportunities and to exercise a free choice of reading tools and objects.

Therefore it is a social duty to represent, in a fair way, in the objects of reading the variety and value of cultural differences, sexual orientation, religious and political beliefs, increasing their diffusion and contributing to the removal of obstacles that actually limit this right by promoting conditions , the tools and activities that make it effective.

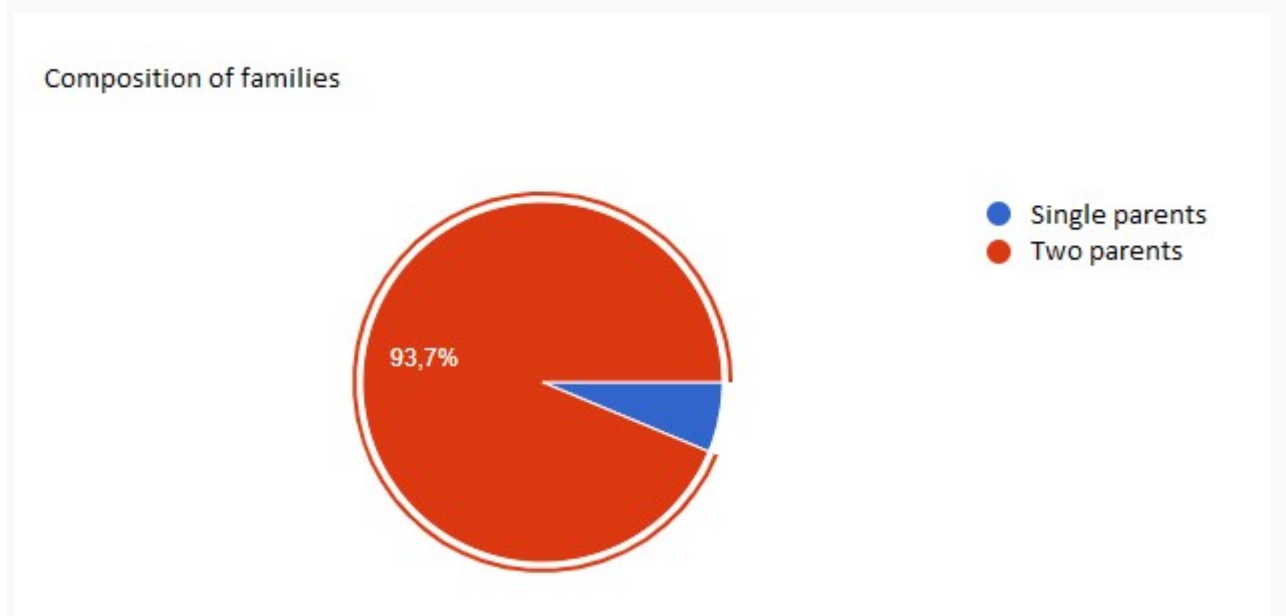
**Art.7** It is an indispensable right of the person who reads to take advantage of public and free "houses of reading", which make reading in all its forms accessible and practicable.

Therefore it is a social duty to facilitate the conditions of growth and development of these realities, also through forms of collaboration with private individuals, to guarantee a cultural policy appropriate to the training needs of the person and respectful of the cultural differences of the communities.

**Art.8** It is an indispensable right of the person who reads the facilitated access to the heritage that constitutes the historical and linguistic memory of the communities. Therefore it is a social duty to enhance written and oral, individual and collective memories, transforming them into an active and common resource and promoting tools and forms of conservation, transmission, circulation and reuse ».

characteristics of the participating families: 93,7% of families are two-parent while 6,3% are single parent.

Fig. 1 – Composition of families



Regarding the number of members of the family unit, the average number of children per family is 1.79. Of the 223 families, 136 have two children, 18 have three children and only 2 have four children.

With regard to the nationality of the parents, tables 1 and 2 can be consulted.

Nationality of the mother			Nationality of the father		
		%			%
Italian	198	88,7	Italian	208	93,2
Albanian	9	4	Albanian	7	3,1
Dominican	3	1,3	Argentine	1	0,4
English	2	0,9	Cuban	1	0,4
Romanian	5	2,2	Dominican	1	0,4
Salvadoran	5	2,2	Indian	1	0,4
Peruvian	1	0,7	Macedonian	1	0,4
			Maroccan	1	0,4
			Venezuelan	1	0,4

In addition, it is observed that there are more mothers of foreign origin than fathers. In addition to this in the area of Valdarno (Tuscany) there are a lot of Indian families, with children attending primary school. These families don't participate assiduously in community life, for this, in this occasion, they don't fill in the questionnaire. These information can be detected in the PTOF

(Three-year Plan of the Educational Offer) of the institutes including the territory, in particular we mention that of Terranuova Bracciolini, which highlights this situation in the paragraph "School population".<sup>4</sup>

When asked about the mother tongue, the percentage of families that affirm that their mother tongue is Italian is 91,5 %, instead the percentage of families that affirms that they can correctly speak and write in Italian is 99,6 %.

Figure 2 – Employment of parents



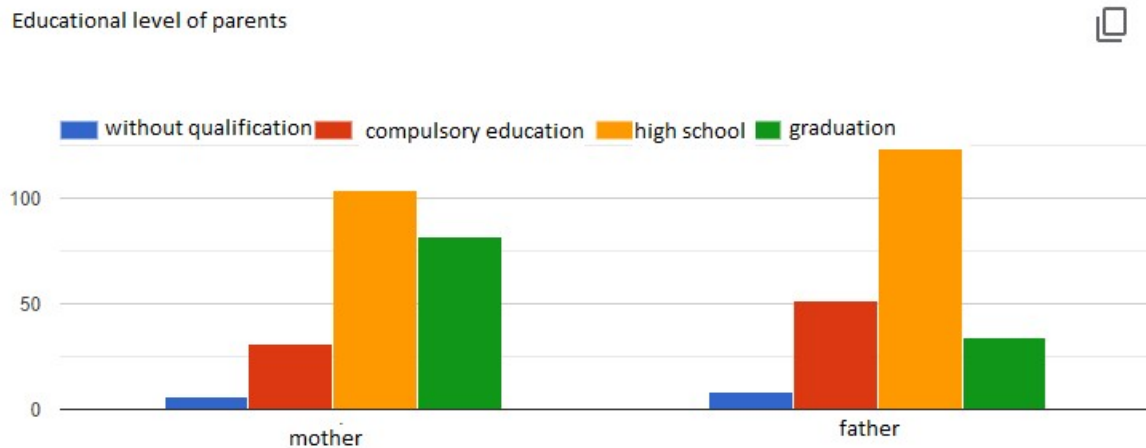
Regarding occupation, it was interesting to know the proportion of people who were engaged in domestic work, who were unemployed or who were working. As expected, the percentage of mothers engaged in domestic work (13%) , but there isn't any father engaged in domestic work. Moreover the number of unemployed mothers is greater than that of the fathers.

<sup>4</sup> "In the institute there are many students with non-Italian citizenship with a clear prevalence of pupils of Indian origin (100 enrolled). Other non-Italian-speaking children have obtained Italian citizenship - as minor children of naturalized Italian parents.[...]

Foreign pupils come mainly from India and Eastern Europe (EU and non-EU). The Indian community represents a rather closed social group, where mothers tend not to learn the Italian language.

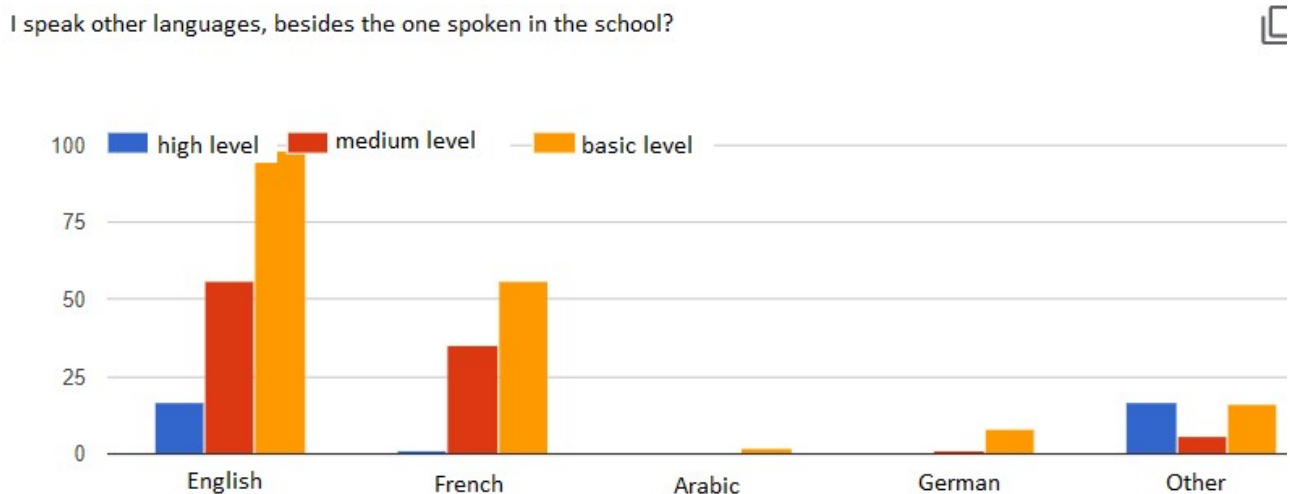
Even the proposals for learning Italian L2 promoted by local authorities have not always been accepted by some members of the community." PTOF 2019/2022

Figure 3 – Educational level of parents



By looking on the graphs on the parents' level of education, the collected data indicate that there is a higher proportion of mothers (36,7%) with graduation than fathers (15,2%). On the opposite side, parents without studies is very similar: 6 mothers and 8 fathers.

Figure 4 – Spoken languages



Many of the interviewed parents speak a second language other than the official language of the country in which they live, most of them at a basic level. The most spoken language is English: 171 parents claim to speak it, only 17 of which are at a high level.

In second place we find French language spoken by 41.2% of parents.



Data relating to parental employment, education level, knowledge of multiple languages show a population with income and medium-high education.

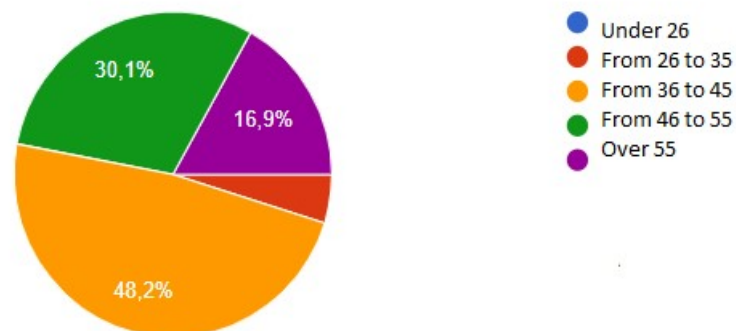
In reality, observing the PTOF of the schools in the analyzed areas, it can be seen that the level of the population is medium-low, as shown by the school of Terranuova Bracciolini: “The socio background economic is to be considered medium. There are many cases of families followed by social services. The number of students with disadvantage is significant.” (PTOF 2019/2022)

### 1.3 Sociodemographic data of primary teachers

A sample made up of 166 primary education teachers from the Florence and Valdarno area has been selected. The majority are women, specifically 92,8 % compared to 7,2 % of men. The highest percentage of teachers, 43.3% is in the age range of 36 to 45 years, followed by teachers aged between 46 to 55 years. As for the youngest teachers, under the age of 26, there is a low percentage (4.8%): this data is due to the fact that on average the university path to become primary school teacher ends at the age of 24-25 years.

Figure 5 – Teachers Age

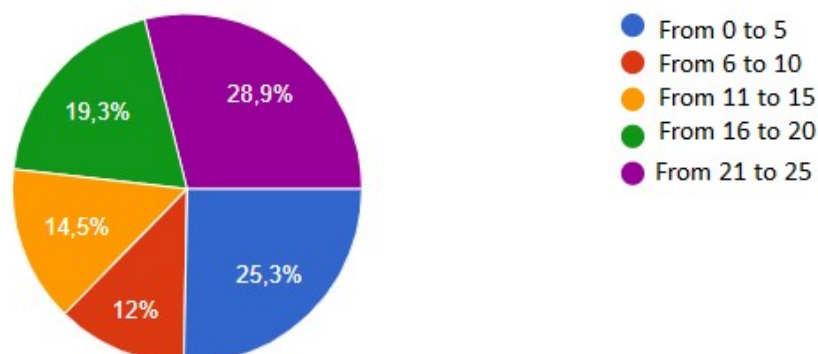
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Regarding the data about the year of service in primary school, 28,9% of teachers are duty on school from 21 to 25 years, but there is also a lot of teachers that recently started work in school (less than five years)

Fig. 6 – Years of service in the school

### Years of service in the school



By looking on the results of teachers' level of education, the collected data indicate that there is a higher proportion of teachers that have a degree (53,01%) than teachers that have high school level (39,7%). Only 6 teachers have a higher qualification (master or doctorate)

Of the teacher surveyed, 27,7% serve as a support teacher.

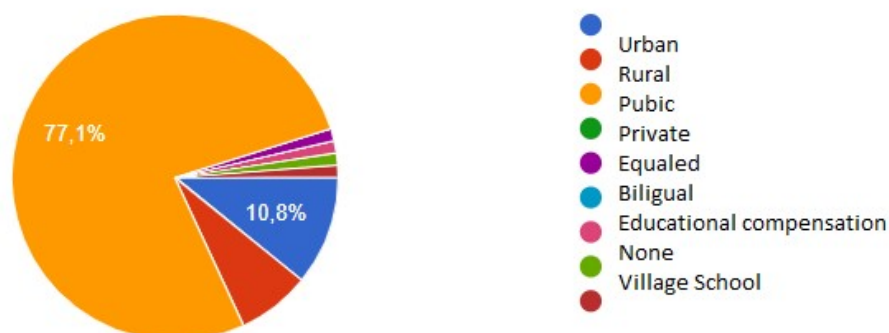
The teachers were asked if they were tutors, but the answer to this question was unclear, as many of them replied "no" or "I don't know". This difficulty of response is linked to the fact that in the Italian school system there is no tutor, or at least has an ambiguous meaning, linked to multiple areas:

1. The tutor is the one who accompanies colleagues in the first year of permanent employment, helping them and evaluating their work.
2. The tutor can be a teacher trained by the school psychologists to support pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties.
3. The tutor is a professional figure who collaborates with an expert for the realization of extra-curricular courses financed by the European Union (PON).

Most of teachers considered in the research are teaching in a public school (77,1%), only 1,2% of teachers work in private school.

Figure 7 - Location of the school

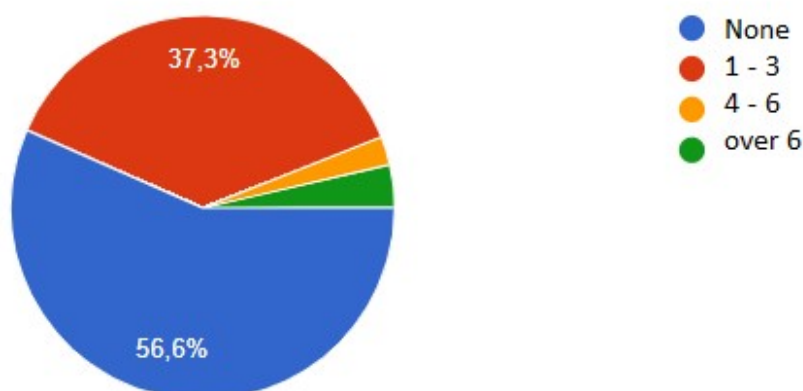
The school I am currently in is



The teachers answered the question of how many refresher lessons on language skills they have followed in the last year in this way: most did not follow refresher courses in this topic, but the 37,3 % spent 1 to 3 hours on this type of refreshment. In the Valdarno area schools refreshments courses are organized for common thematic area, as there is an association (RISVA) that unites the various educational institutions residing in this area. Lasted the last two school years, teachers followed many refresher courses on emotional education, conflict resolution and the use of ITCs, in fact not many attended courses on linguistic skills.

Fig. 8 – Number of language skills lessons

Number of language skills lessons I have attended in the last year



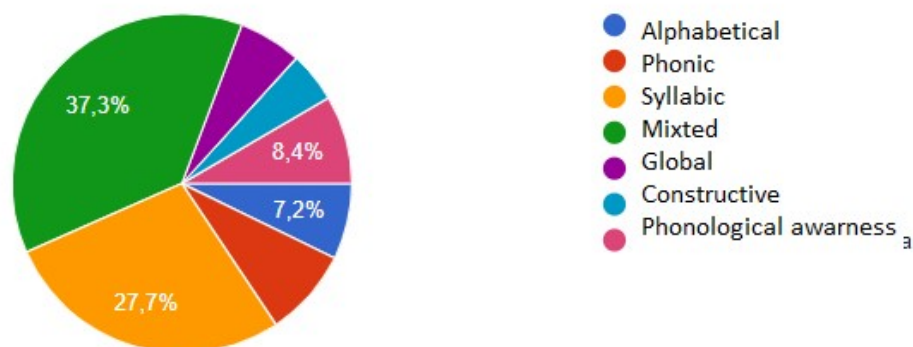
## 2. METHODOLOGIES AND READING STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING COMPETITION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION STUDENTS (6-12 YEARS OLD)

In Italian school, for learning writing and reading, the most used method is phono-syllabic: it unites syllabic method and phonetic method, in addition to this it replaces alphabetical method, used until about thirty years ago. In last ten years some teachers apply the global method: it is based on visual recognition of whole words, but this method is less effective, in particular it isn't suitable by children with specific learning disabilities (as reported in ministerial guidelines of 2011). The global method is sometimes used at the beginning of reading process, in the phonological field to allow children the comprehension of whole sound of a word, than separate the sound of a single phoneme. In some schools, who adopt a mainly laboratory teaching method, the construction method is used: it derives from some Piaget theory, for which reading and writing learning is more effective with experiential teaching: learning is an active process, for this reason the pupil learns more by an experiential input than by a theoretical lesson given by teacher.

In Valdarno and Florence area teachers involved in the questionnaire state that they use mostly mixed method (phono-syllabic 37,3%), but many of them use syllabic method (27,7%). Someone employs global method (6%), instead only a small part uses the construction method. The weak use of the construction method it also do to the availability of spaces not always suitable for this type of teaching.

Figure 9 – Methods used by teachers

In my class i use this method...



Below are the results of the questions asked to teachers about the learning method:

Statements	Yes	No
We design projects and curricular materials based on lines of joint action	86,7%	13,3%
We plan periodic meetings throughout the course to unify criteria and actions between both stages.	77,1%	22,9%
We plan periodic meetings throughout the course to unify criteria and actions between both stages.	73,4%	26,6%
We exchange reading experiences of some levels with others.	63,8%	36,2%
We carry out activities shared between the students of both levels (reading sponsorship, classroom visits and dependencies, sharing recess or assemblies in class, telling experiences of students from the last course of early childhood education and the first course of primary education).	73,4%	26,6%

Looking at the table above, we can deduce that most of the teachers interviewed plan the activities to develop the linguistic function in a team, sharing criteria and lines of action.

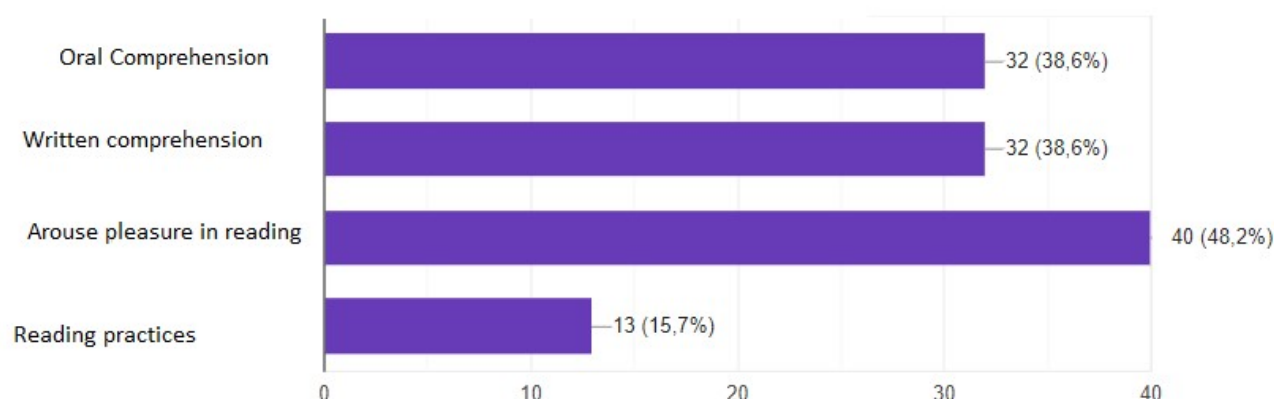
All teachers also encourage the exchange of experiences with students of the upper course, this activity is also very useful for creating continuity of education between the three school levels (childhood, primary and secondary).

The majority of teachers (60.2%) said that in the school they are working in there are no common indications on reading methods, each of them acts independently or comparing themselves to parallel classes. 67.5% of teachers also say that they have not worked in centers where you learn reading with innovative methods, they therefore relied on the traditional methods mentioned at the beginning of the paragraph

When asked what difficulties teachers find in teaching reading, most of them (48,2 %) answers that they have difficult in eliciting pleasure in reading. Someone says that pupils find difficulties in oral and written comprehension (38,6 %).

Fig. 10 – Difficulties in reading

in reading I find many practical difficulties related to



Reflecting on these data, we understood that in primary school the attention is focused on learning reading and writing, on the contrary, the national indications do not focus on the pleasure and discovery of reading, intended as entertainment and fun. This attitude can lead children to associate reading with a moment of obligation and imposition, removing the introspective and personal entertainment role it should have. Often today we tend to blame the advent of video games and social media for having a poor aptitude for reading, but this type of problem was already present in the 1960s, when the implication of the digital world was far away.

This concept was expressed by Adler in 1967 in his book *How to read a book*<sup>5</sup>, where he notes that, starting from primary school, children and young people move away from reading intended as a moment of leisure.

## 2.1. Psychopedagogical Principles And Reading Learning Methodology

Statements	YES	NO
I ask my students questions while reading texts to ensure their understanding	94,7 %	5,3 %
I encourage the participation of families in the organization of activities to promote reading	100 %	0 %

<sup>5</sup> Adler, Mortimer J.; *Come si legge un libro*, Armando Armando Editore, 1967

The author distinguishes various levels of reading and explains how to acquire them from elementary reading, through the last systemic reading of the text and exploratory reading, up to fast reading.

. The work teaches to analyze the structure of a book, to identify its central nucleus, to extract its author's message, to carry out an appropriate critical intervention.

It therefore exposes the different rules for reading according to whether it is practical books, literary works, poetry, history, mathematics and sciences, philosophy or social sciences.

I encourage students to present in the classroom the work they do	97,6 %	2,4%
I propose activities for my students to summarize and synthesize knowledge after reading (topic, main ideas, protagonists, events, inferences ...).	100%	0 %

Teachers are very active in proposing families to participate in reading promotion activities organized by schools. This attitude is very important because if there is a correspondence of intent between the scholastic institution and the parents, it is much easier to achieve the objectives set. In addition, the teachers accompany the pupils in the reading process, interspersing it with questions of understanding. This practice allows to obtain not only fluency in reading, but also fluidity and awareness.

All teachers propose to their students to summarize and synthesize knowledge after reading, in this way they can store and organize more information and then return it later, even in front of the rest of the class.

## 2.2. Organization Of Activities (Programming Or Planning, Timing, Student Grouping)

In this subsection programming and planning data are analysed, teachers answered about their strategies to promote reading.

Statements	Yes	No
I do reading activities in large groups	49,3 %	50,7%
I do reading activities in a small group.	75,9%	24,1%
I perform reading activities individually	100%	0%
I do readings in pairs.	68,6%	31,4%
My students use a textbook in the language area	97,6%	2,4%
My students answer questions to identify explicit and implicit information in the text.	87,9%	12,1%
I take advantage of situations that arise in the classroom for reading activities.	97,6%	2,4%
<b>The reading activities that I organize with my students start from a joint project with the rest of the curricular areas.</b>	63,8%	36,2%
<b>My students carry out activities focused on reading speed aloud.</b>	97,6%	2,4%
My students carry out activities focused on reading speed in silence.	63,8%	36,2%
I modify the classroom programming according to the needs of my students throughout the course	100%	0%

<b>I organize groups taking into account that they have students with different reading levels.</b>	87,9%	12,1%
Promotion of activities in which students can corroborate their predictions based on the content of the text	48,1%	51,9%
I ask questions to know what the student suggests the title at the beginning of a reading	43,3%	56,7%
My students discuss various aspects of the text read in small groups.	75,9%	24,1%
My students do reading to solve a definite purpose in the classroom	68,6%	32,4%
I only ask questions after they have read the text.	24,1%	75,9%
I carry out activities so that students identify the main and secondary characters in a text.	89,1%	10,9%
I carry out activities so that students identify the main idea in a text.	93,9%	6,1%
I carry out activities so that students develop changes in the plot of a text.	81,9%	18,1%
I carry out activities so that students recognize some parts of the text that contain the most important information.	93,9%	6,1%
I carry out activities for students to analyse and express ideas about the text.	80,7%	19,3%
I carry out activities for students to compare texts by format or gender.	63,8%	36,2%
I do activities so that students read aloud.	100%	0%
<b>I ask my students before, during and / or after reading a text.</b>	100%	0%
I ask oral questions about the literal content of the text that students have read in silence	97,6%	2,4%
Perform a written test (questionnaire, summary ...) after students read silently	48,1%	51,9%
I ask oral questions about the literal content of the text that students have read in silence.	83,1%	6,9%
Students learn the conventions of writing (spelling and grammar rules).	100%	0%
I propose activities so that my students can discuss different aspects of the text read in small groups.	63,8%	36,2%
While reading aloud, and the students read silently, I stop reading to ask them.	93,9%	6,1%

### 2.3 Space, material and human resources (type, organization, participants, type of participation).

Statements	YES	NO
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I use ICTs to favour the development of linguistic competence	57,8%	42,2%
<b>We carry out in the reader sponsorship centre where my students tell stories or stories to students from lower grades.</b>	39,8%	60,2%
<b>I coordinate with other teachers to schedule and / or carry out activities with our students about reading.</b>	66,2%	33,8%
In my classroom, other agents of the educational centre or other professionals participate in actions that favour the development of the linguistic competence of my students.	60,2%	39,8%
<b>In classroom I use the digital whiteboard to do reading activities</b>	56,6%	43,4%

In the vast majority of European school, as well as in Italian school there aren't teachers specialized in reading teaching, who can support the teacher in traditional class in working with students, especially those with reading difficulties.

Instead, it is provided in official documents or reported as widespread practice that at least one type of 'other' professional staff –

a speech therapist, a psychologist (of education) or the like – may be available in schools to assist teachers in certain reading-related tasks.

These professionals should collaborate in the evaluation of students reading skillssupport teaching with single students or in small groups and / or advice to teachers and parents on reading issues.

In some countries, class teachers also have specific teaching materials at their disposal to work with readers in difficulty, such as centrally standardized assessments, diagnostic tests, specific textbooks or other tools.

Periodic projects are often used in Italian schools, established year by year based on the availability of money contained in the school fund (F.I.S.) or financed by the public administration, in which experts from outside the school environment participate;

in fact when the teachers interviewed speak of "professional" they refer to these figures employed only for previous periods during the school year

## 2.4 Evaluation

In the Italian school the evaluation is regulated by the legislative decree n. 62/2017<sup>6</sup>,

<sup>6</sup> Dall'art.1 del D.Lgs.n.62/2017 1. La valutazione ha per oggetto il processo formativo e i risultati di apprendimento delle alunne e degli alunni, delle studentesse e degli studenti delle istituzioni scolastiche del sistema nazionale di istruzione e formazione, ha finalità formativa ed educativa e concorre al miglioramento degli apprendimenti e al successo formativo degli stessi, documenta lo sviluppo dell'identità personale e promuove la autovalutazione di ciascuno in relazione alle acquisizioni di conoscenze, abilità e competenze. 2. La valutazione è coerente con l'offerta formativa delle istituzioni scolastiche, con la personalizzazione dei percorsi e con le Indicazioni Nazionali per il curriculum e le Linee guida di cui ai decreti del Presidente della Repubblica 15 marzo 2010, n. 87, n. 88 e n. 89; è

where it is specified that it has formative and educational purposes and promotes both self-assessment and the development of personal growth. The questions asked to the interviewed teachers aim to highlight the peculiarities included in the legislation and the resulting data show that the evaluation considers not the knowledge acquired, but mainly the skills. Exactly half of the teachers interviewed offer students ongoing tests on reading, evaluating them with a numerical mark from 1 to 10<sup>7</sup>. But 97.4% of teachers use reading to allow pupils to develop life skills, also learning to resolve conflicts. Furthermore, following what is suggested by the European guidelines on the achievement of basic skills, 83% of teachers accompany pupils on a self-assessment process, which leads them to reflect on what they learned, and how they learned it.

Statements	YES	NO
I use specific moments during the course to evaluate my students with a reading test	50%	50%
I use a specific rubric on reading proficiency to evaluate my students	53,2%	46,8%
I propose to my students readings aimed at favouring the development of social skills that help to face and resolve conflicts in the classroom.	97,4%	2,6%
I use different analysis techniques of a read text (concept maps, dramatizations, murals, portfolios, opinion, debates ...).	100%	0%
At the end of a task about reading in the classroom, students reflect on what they have learned.	83%	17%

## 2.5 Types of text

In this subsection, we will reflect the preferences of teachers in relation to the different types of texts they use in their lessons.

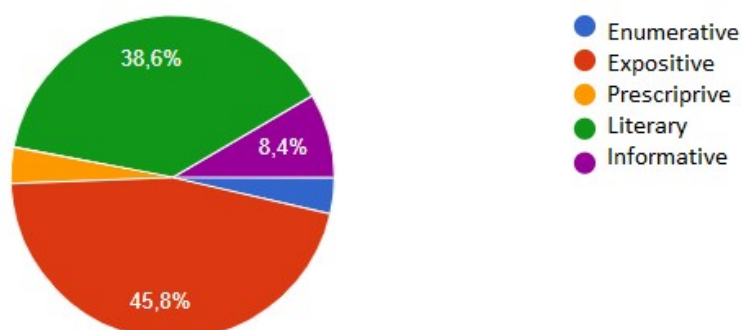
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effettuata dai docenti nell'esercizio della propria autonomia professionale, in conformità con i criteri e le modalità definiti dal collegio dei docenti e inseriti nel piano triennale dell'offerta formativa [...] 6. L'istituzione scolastica certifica l'acquisizione delle competenze progressivamente acquisite anche al fine di favorire l'orientamento per la prosecuzione degli studi.

<sup>7</sup> In Italy, a decree is in progress which requires only descriptive and non-numerical grades from primary school year 2020/2021.

Figure 11 – Type of texts used for teaching reading

For teaching reading I use this type of texts :



The expositive texts are those most used (45,8%) by teachers for the teaching of reading, in fact each class has a textbook available, which is the reference point for teaching the language. Even literary texts (38,6%) are considered very useful in learning reading, as they combine information with imagination, capable of stimulating the emotional aspect and consequently of promoting learning. Enumerative and prescriptive texts are less used, if we exclude the reading and understanding of the rules, necessary for coexistence in the classroom and for carrying out some recreational activities.

Types of Text	Percentage
<b>ENUMERATIVE TEXTS</b>	
Listings (purchase, toys, class, story titles...)	11,4%
Labels (of clothes, food ...).	4,8%
Schedules (of TV programs, school activities, home...)	18 %
Index (books, magazines, stories ...)	3,7%
Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, atlas	43,4%
Brochures and posters	11,4%
Menus (school, restaurant)	26,4%
Catalogues, phone books, agendas	2,6%
<b>EXPOSITIVE TEXTS</b>	
Dossier of work projects	26,4%
Reviews on biographies, school outings, experiments	100%
Textbooks or school books	100%
Reference books	76,4%
<b>PRESCRIPTIVE TEXTS</b>	
Cooking recipes	27,6%
Instructions	48,6%
Rules (game, behaviour...)	100%
PROSPECTS FOR CHILDREN'S MEDICINES	12,8%
<b>LITERARY TEXT</b>	

Stories and legends	100%
Sayings, songs and riddles	100%
Illustrated albums	62,8%
PREPARATION OF STORY BOOKS, POEMS, SONGS, PROVERB	100%
Poetry	97,4%
THEATRE AND DRAMATIZATION	97,4%
COMICS	68,8%
INFORMATION TEXT	
NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES	26,4%
ADVERTISING AND PROPAGANDA	4,2%
CORRESPONDENCE (LETTERS).	1,8%
CONCEPT MAPS	48%
Illustrations	86,3%
OUTREACH BOOKS, BROCHURES	12%
EMAILS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS	1,8%

### 3. THE ROLE OF FAMILIES IN READING LEARNING

Learning to read is a tiring task for the child because it implies a maturity made up of motor, perceptive, mnemonic and space-time skills.

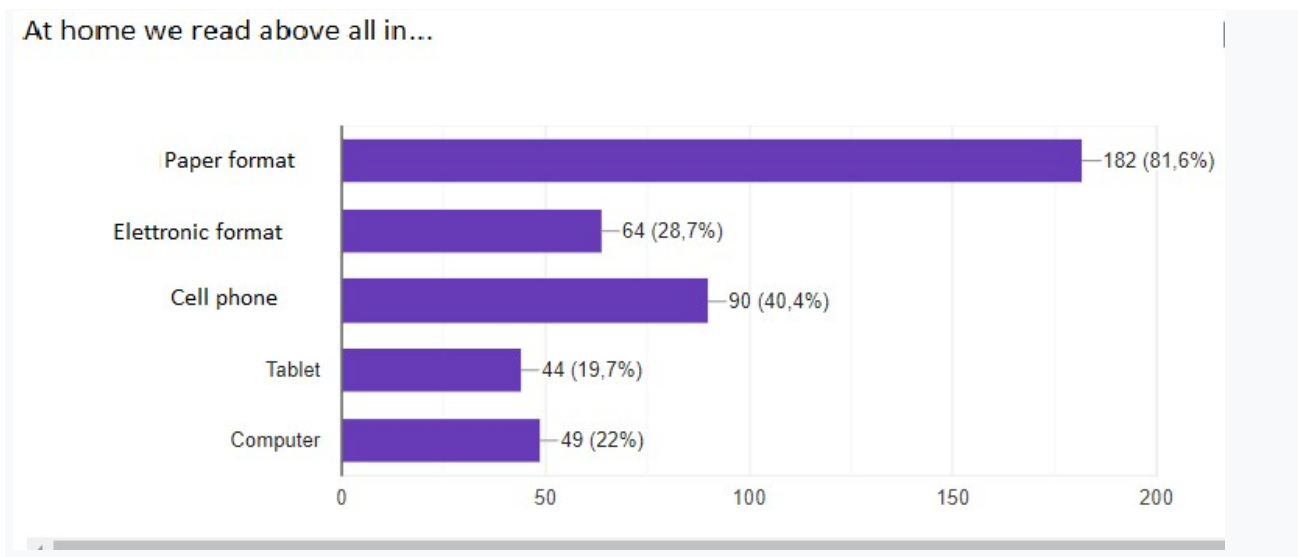
Reading books to the child is recognized as the simplest and most effective means of promoting reading learning. . Later, with growth, shared reading becomes an important practice for developing cognitive skills, but also and above all those related to the sphere of emotions. Pedagogy speaks of two types of learning: individual and social.

If we focus attention on social learning, we deduce that the child learns mainly by observing the behavior of those around him, so much so that imitative learning<sup>8</sup> has a powerful impact on the social behavior of the child.

For this reason, it is extremely important that family members share reading moments with children from an early age. It is also important that parents also practice reading individually in places accessible to the child, so that by observing them, they can learn behaviour through imitation. From the survey on the relationship between Italian families and reading, we understood that the interviewed parents have a fairly traditional approach to reading, since they mostly read paper format books (81,6%), while among those who read material in digital format, most use mobile phones (40,4%).

Figure 12 – Readings format

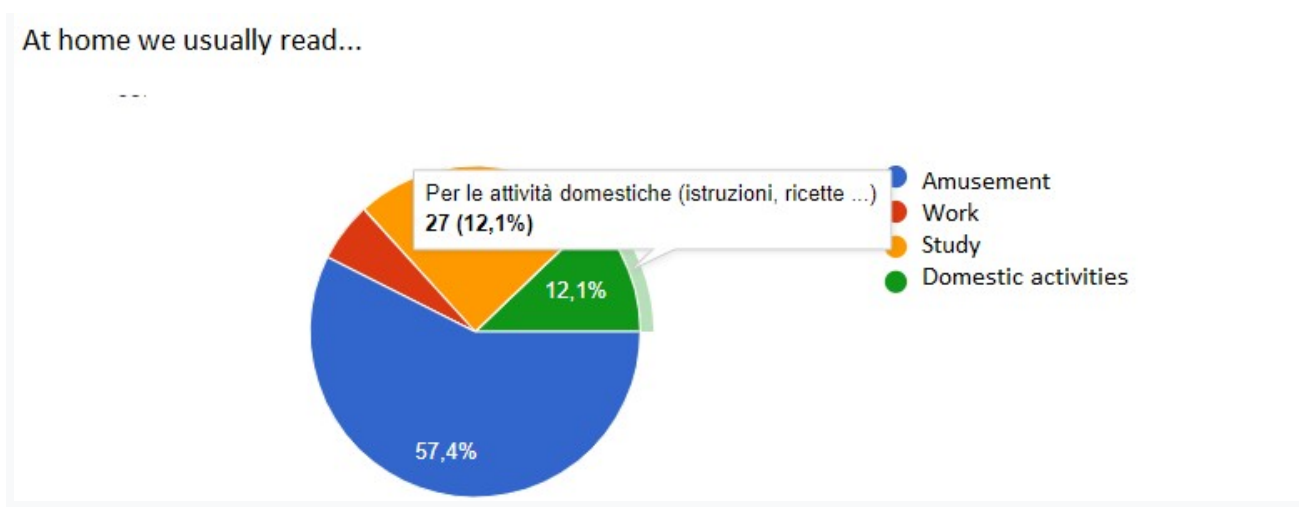
<sup>8</sup> Prinz, W. (2002). Experimental approaches to imitation. In A.N. Meltzoff e W. Prinz (a cura di), The imitative mind: Development, Evolution, and Brain Bases. New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 143-162.



Reading for fun is the most practiced (128 people, or 57.4%), but many interviewees also read for study needs (24,7%), some, on the other hand, claim to read especially in order to carry out household activities correctly: follow instructions, read culinary recipes, etc.

Research shows that leisure reading, or literary books, are mainly read in paper format, while newspapers and specialized and general magazines have a wide usability also in digital format. By comparing the data it is clear that the electronic format is preferred for practical information, related to instantaneous needs, instead the use of the paper format remains tied to the concept of reading for pleasure.

Fig. 13 – Reading goals



We asked users if they shared some statements or not to understand their attitudes towards reading and possible sharing with their children: the table below shows a summary of the result obtained.

Statements	YES	NO
I enjoy when I go to a bookstore or a library	93,7%	6,3%
I read in places in the house where my child can see and / or imitate me.	83,9%	16,1%
We read the class agenda together frequently, to learn what my child does at school	83,9%	16,1%
Reading should be an important activity in the family	99,6%	0,4%
I exchanged readings with my child (books, comics, comics...), both on paper and in electronic format and then commented on at home	63,2%	36,8%
I am interested in the tasks my children takes home, and I help her/him when she/he needs it	99,1%	0,9%
A book is always a good gift for a girl / boy	97,3%	3,7%
Reading is a waste of time	0%	100%
I read with my child television programming to choose a program (children's, a movie, a contest ..)	56,5%	43,5%
It is advisable that the family dedicate a set time per week for reading at home	98,2%	1,8%
It is recommended that the family teach their children the usefulness of reading (entertainment, studies, household activities ...).	100%	0%
There are many moments in family life that can be used to read as a family (holidays, weekends ...)	91,9%	8,1%
I select educational reading programs for my child to use on my mobile, television, tablet ...	44,4%	55,6%
The family is not responsible for the children to read, because that's what school is for	3,6%	96,4%
It is important that homes have a space dedicated to the use and care of a family library	88,8%	11,2%
I use technological devices (tablet, mobile app, computer) to encourage reading in different languages	54,3%	45,7%
We use a language other than mother tongue to understand the texts that surround us (clothing labels, instructions, subtitled films ...)	36,3%	63,7%
It is important that families know the foreign languages that their children study to help them in their training	94,6%	5,4%
I participate with my children's class in shared reading experiences (passages from this, feelings, answer questions about reading ...)	15,2%	84,8%
I participate in the activities organized by the school to promote reading.	38,1%	61,9%

From the statements in the table we can deduce that reading is considered a very positive practice by most families, so much so that 97.3% of respondents, believe that a book is a good gift for a boy

or a girl.

Many families have understood the importance of a place to hold books and where they can devote themselves to reading, allowing children to observe the parent while reading and can therefore imitate this fruitful habit. None of them believe that reading is a waste of time and therefore all parents believe that it is recommended that the family teach their children the usefulness of reading. Parents seem aware of the importance of their role in promoting reading learning in their children, in fact only 3.6% of them attribute to the school the duty to bring children closer to reading.

On the other hand, it does reflect the scarce participation of parents in the events organized by the school for the promotion of reading and also in shared reading in the child's class. This data probably results from the fact that there are few opportunities for discussion between the school and citizens on the importance of reading, for this reason such activity should be encouraged.

It is also possible that parents have many work commitments and this prevents them from constant participation in this type of event, this also coincides with the data found relating to the occupation of parents, of which only a small part is unemployed.

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