SLAUGHTER AND MAY

Children's and Young People's Writing in 2015

Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual literacy survey

Christina Clark
National Literacy Trust

2016

Words for life

Registered address: National Literacy Trust, 68 South Lambeth Road, London SW8 1RL
t: 020 7587 1842 f: 020 7587 1411 | contact@literacytrust.org.uk | www.literacytrust.org.uk

About the National Literacy Trust

We are a national charity dedicated to raising literacy levels in the UK. Our research and analysis make us the leading authority on literacy. We run projects in the poorest communities, campaign to make literacy a priority for politicians and parents, and support schools.

Visit www.literacytrust.org.uk to find out more, donate or sign up for a free email newsletter. You can also find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

Copyright

Suggested reference for this report is: Clark, C. (2016). Children's and Young People's Writing in 2015. Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual literacy survey. London: National Literacy Trust.

We will consider requests to use extracts or data from this publication provided that you:

- Acknowledge that the content is the work of the National Literacy Trust and provide appropriate references in any publications or accompanying publicity;
- State that any views expressed are yours and not necessarily those of the National Literacy Trust.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the pupils and staff at the following schools, without whom this study would not have been possible:

Abbey College, Abbey Primary School, Abertillery Comprehensive School, Abraham Darby Academy, Alec Hunter Academy, Alsop High School, Amersham School, Ampleforth College, Ashlyns School, Attleborough Junior School, Beaufort Hill Primary, Belmont Community School, Bishop Creighton Academy, Blackburn Central High School, Blenheim Primary School, Bluecoat Academy, Bluecoat Beechdale Academy, Boroughmuir High School, Bow School, Bulwell St Mary's C of E Primary School, Cabot Primary School, Carlton Bolling, Carlton le Willows Academy, Cedars Upper School, Chase Terrace Primary School, Chatsworth Primary School, Chesterton Community College, City of Armagh High School, Cliff Park Ormiston Academy, Collingwood College, Copley Academy, Corpus Christi Catholic High School, Craigmount High School, Cramlington Learning Village, Cyfarthfa High School, Dartford Science & Technology College, Dussindale Primary School, Engayne Primary School, Epinay Buisiness and Enterprise School, Farnham Heath End, Farnsfield St Michael's Primary, Fearnhill School, George Abbot School, George Green's School, Goffs School, Hall Mead School, Hampstead School, Harris Academy Bermondsey, Hemlington Hall Academy, High Bickington Primary School, Hillingdon Primary School, Ilsham Academy, James Calvert Spence College, John Taylor High School, Kingsmead School, Leyburn Community Primary School, Long Stratton, LVS Ascot, Macaulay Academy, Manor High School, Matthew Moss High School, Mile Oak Primary, Nene Park Academy, Noel Baker School, Our Lady of the Rosary, Peakirk-cum-Glinton C of E Primary School, Pelsall Village School, Pontybrenin Primary School, Provost Williams C of E Primary School, Queen's Park High School, R.E.A.L Independent School, Ripon Grammar School, Salendine Nook High, Shire Oak Academy, Smithills School, Sneinton Primary School, Somervale School, Southborough High School, St Barnabas Primary School, St Hild's College CE Primary School, St Mary's Calne, St Mary's Catholic Primary, St Mary's RC School, St Nicholas Primary School, Sutton Road Primary School, Terrace Road Primary School, The Angmering School, The Costello School, The District CE Primary School, The Heath School, The Holt School, The John Bamford Primary School, The John Roan School, The Market Bosworth School, The McAuley Catholic High School, The Ramsay Academy, Thomas Hardye School, Torpoint Community College, Townhill Community School, Townley Grammar School, Treorchy Comprehensive School, Upton-by-Chester High School, Walbottle Campus, Welling School, West Chiltington Community School, Westbourne School, Whitehill Junior School, Whitings Hill Primary School, William Booth Primary School, Wood End Primary School, YGG Llwynderw, Ysgol Dyffryn Aman

Our sincere thanks to Slaughter and May for their generous financial contribution that enabled us to conduct this annual survey.

Table of contents

Tables and figures

Key findings

This report outlines children's enjoyment of writing, writing frequency and writing attitudes, taken from our sixth annual literacy survey[1], which we conducted in November/December 2015. 32,569 children and young people aged 8 to 18 participated.

Our annual survey provides us with regular opportunities to explore the centrality of writing in young people's lives. More specifically, it explores how much young people enjoy writing, how often they write, what types of materials they write and how they feel about writing. For information about findings from our 2014 annual literacy survey, see: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/7989/Children_s_and_Young_People_s_Writing_2014.pdf

Key findings for 2015 include:

- **Fewer children and young people enjoyed writing in 2015** compared with the previous year, with enjoyment levels dropping from 49.3% in 2014 to 44.8% in 2015 (see **Figure 1, p. 9**). Levels of writing enjoyment also continue to lag behind levels of reading enjoyment (see **Figure 2, p. 9**).

- **Fewer children and young people wrote something daily outside class in 2015** than in 2014 (See **Figure 3, p. 10**), with daily writing levels decreasing from 27.2% in 2014 to 20.7% in 2015. Daily writing levels also continue to be in stark contrast to daily reading levels, which have increased dramatically over the past couple of years (see **Figure 4, p. 11**).

- When asked whether they ever write something that they don't share with anyone else, nearly half (**46.8%)** of children and young people said they did. Nearly 1 in 5 (18.8%) said they do this daily, while a further 27.5% said they write something private a few times a week.

- **Technology-based formats**, such as text messages (68.6%), messages on social networking sites (44.3%) and instant messages (46.2%) **continue to dominate the writing that children and young people engaged in outside class in 2015**. Notes (3%), letters (25.8%) and lyrics (24.6%) are the most frequently written non-technology formats (see **Table 6, pp. 39**). With the exception of poems, most formats of writing have again decreased in 2015 (see **Figure 5, p. 12**).

- **Attitudes towards writing have remained unchanged in 2015** (See **Figure 6, p. 13**).

- When asked what makes a good writer, 7 in 10 children and young people believe that a good writer enjoys writing, uses his or her imagination and uses punctuation correctly.

- Children and young people who **enjoy writing very much are seven times more likely to write above the level expected for their age** compared with children and young people who do not enjoy writing at all (50.3% vs. 7.2%). Similarly, **children and young people who write outside school daily are five times more likely to be writing above the expected level** for their age compared with young people who never write outside school (30.9% vs. 5.8%) (see **Tables 1 and 2 , pp. 32)**.

- **Girls enjoy writing more** than boys (51.9% vs. 36.8%) and **are more likely to write something outside class daily** (23.9% vs. 17.0%). There was no difference between boys and girls in their attitudes towards writing. However, when asked what makes a good writer, more girls than boys said that a good writer enjoys writing, uses his or her

[1] For more information about our annual literacy survey, see **Appendix A, p.54**

imagination and tries things out, while more boys than girls believe that a good writer writes neatly and knows how to type.

- **Children aged 8 to 11 (KS2) enjoy writing (64.1%) more** than children and young people aged 11 to 14 (KS3: 41.1%) or aged 14 to 16 (KS4: 31.5%). Similarly, **more KS2 than KS3 and KS4 pupils write something that isn't for school on a daily basis** (25.2%, 20.2% and 15.7%). **KS2 pupils also think more positively about writing** than their older counterparts. For example, 63.1% of KS2 pupils agree that writing is cool compared with 30.6% of KS3 and 19.8% of KS4 pupils.

- **More pupils who receive free school meals (FSM) say that they enjoy writing** (49.2% vs. 43.8%) and that they write something that isn't for school daily (25.7% vs. 19.8%), compared with their non-FSM peers. **They also think more positively about writing**. For example, 44.6% agree that writing is cool compared with 34.0% of non-FSM pupils. This is a reversal of the relationships seen for reading, where more non-FSM than FSM pupils say that they enjoy reading and that they read daily.

What's new for 2016

This report differs from previous reports in one important aspect. We report the findings from statistical analyses. Due to the large sample size we use a more stringent significance level – p = 0.001. If a difference or relationship is statistically significant at this level then the likelihood is not more than 1 in 1,000 (0.1%, using the 0.001 p-value) that it would happen by chance. We can therefore be relatively confident that it is meaningful.

Most of our data are ordinal and not normally distributed, i.e. they are skewed in one direction. We therefore use mostly, but not exclusively, non-parametric analyses. Where possible, we also report relevant effect sizes and confidence intervals.

A closer look at some key issues

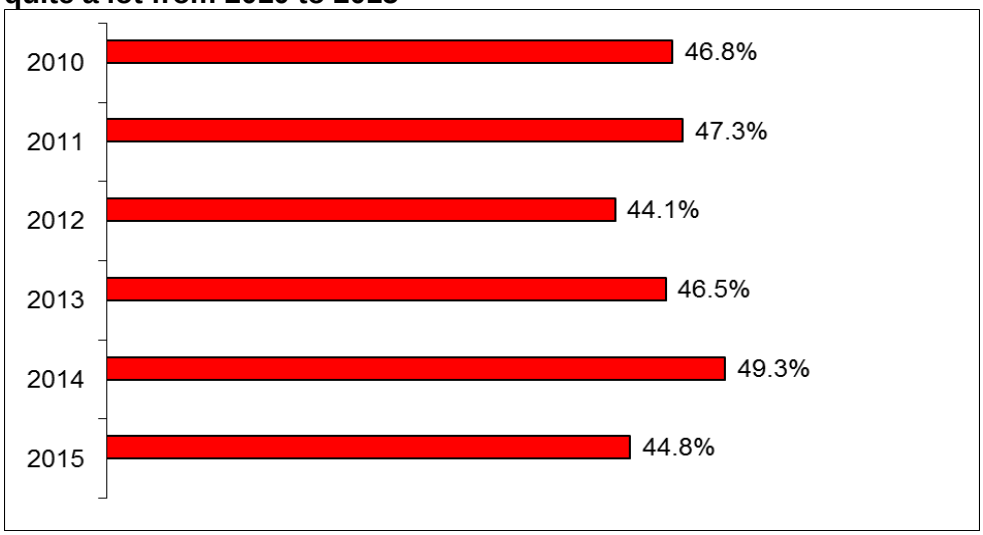
Key trends

The National Literacy Trust has conducted the national annual literacy survey since 2010. The following analyses explore changes over time in our key variables of interest: enjoyment of writing, writing frequency, formats of writing and attitudes towards writing. In addition to the trend analyses, this section also includes information on questions that we have not asked before or that do not form part of our annual survey.

~ Enjoyment of writing has decreased significantly ~

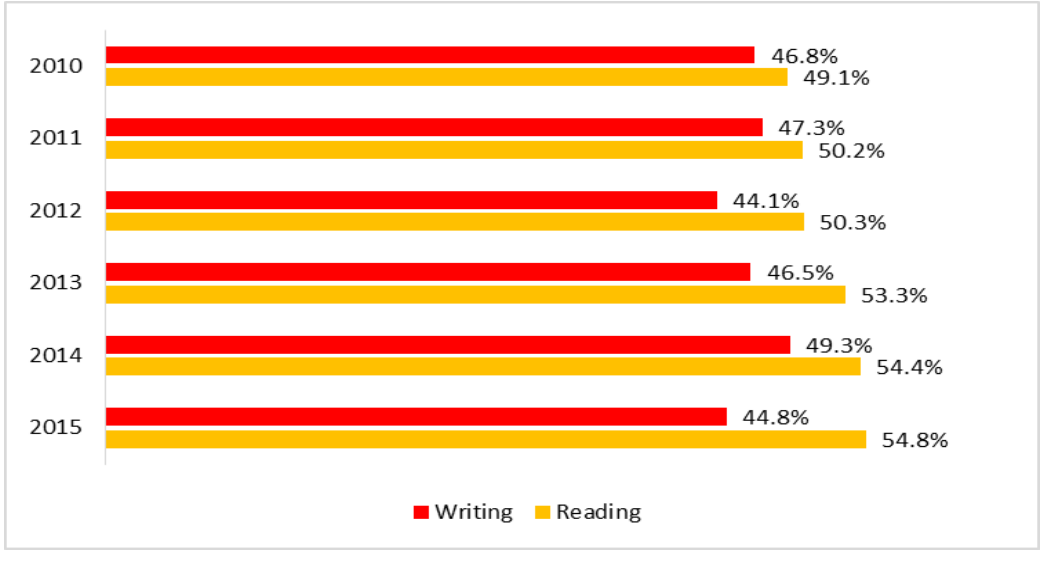
Significantly[2] fewer children and young people in 2015 said that they enjoy writing compared with the previous year. **Figure 1** shows that the percentage of children and young people who enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot has dropped by 4.5 percentage points since 2014.

Figure 1: Percentage of children and young people who enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot from 2010 to 2015



While levels of writing enjoyment have declined over the past year, levels of reading enjoyment have increased slightly over the same time period (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Comparing enjoyment of reading and writing from 2010 to 2015



[2] Mann Whitney *U* (59,676) = 428218115.0, *Z* = -8.434, p =.000, r = .034; 2014: Mdn = 3; 2015 Mdn = 3,

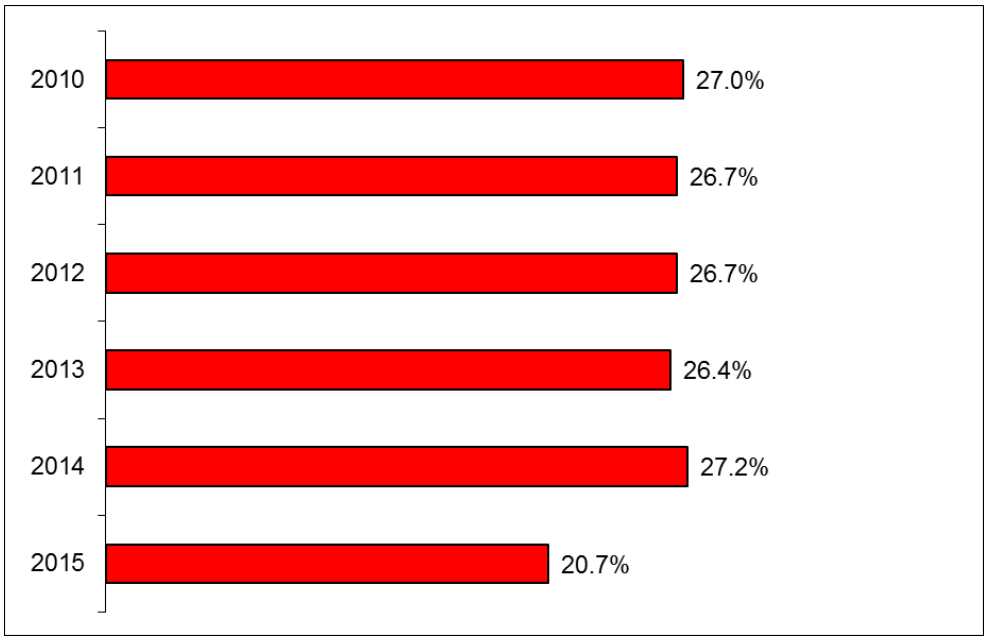
This means that the gap between reading and writing enjoyment levels has increased in 2015, rising from a difference of 5.1 percentage points in 2014 to a 10 percentage point difference in 2015. Indeed, the gap is the widest since we started measuring both reading and writing enjoyment as part of our annual survey in 2010.

~ For the first time in five years, daily writing levels have decreased ~

Since we started measuring writing frequency as part of the annual literacy survey in 2010, the percentage of children and young people who write daily outside class has remained relatively stable, with just over a quarter of children and young people saying that they write something outside class daily.

However, in 2015 there was a significant[3] change in the frequency with which children and young people write outside class, with fewer children and young people in 2015 writing as frequently as their peers did in 2014. **Figure 3** outlines the percentage of children and young people who write something outside class on a daily basis that isn't for school. It shows that daily writing levels decreased by 6.5 percentage points between 2014 and 2015, the first significant change in five years.

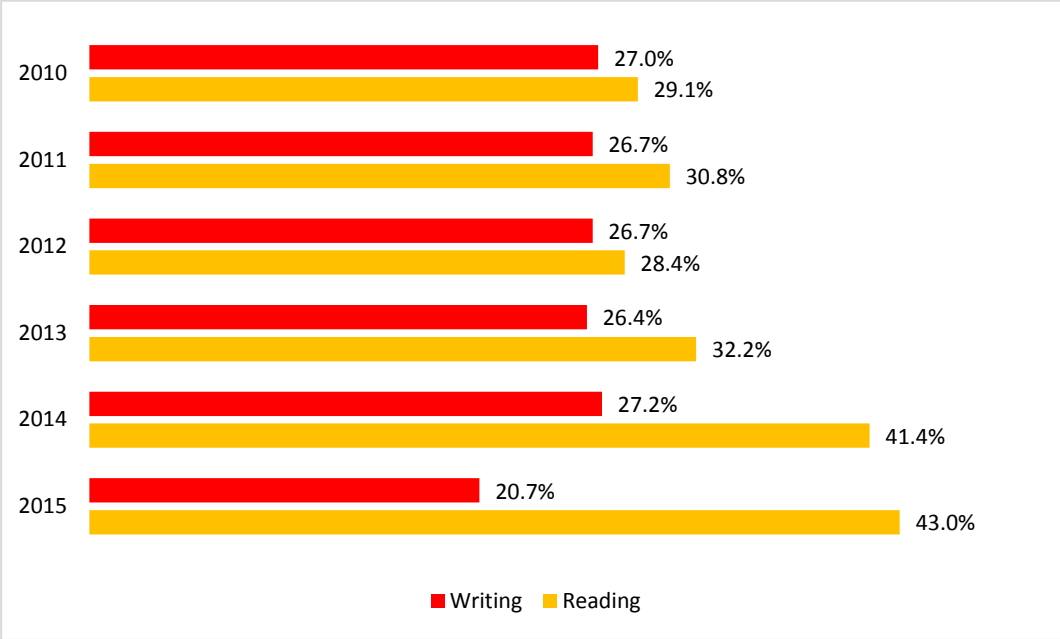
Figure 3: Percentage of children and young people who write daily outside class from 2010 to 2015



Again, the decrease in daily writing levels is at odds with a concurrent rise in daily reading levels over the same time period (see **Figure 4**). As daily reading levels increased dramatically in 2014, the gap between daily reading and writing levels increased from a 5.8 percentage point difference in 2013, to a 14.2 percentage point difference in 2014. In 2015, this gap increased further to a 22.3 percentage point difference.

[3] Mann Whitney *U* (59,697) = 389082261.5, *Z* = -27.342, p = .000; r = .112; 2014: Mdn = 2; 2015: Mdn = 3

Figure 4: Daily reading and writing levels from 2010 to 2015



~ The writing of most formats again saw a decrease in 2015 ~

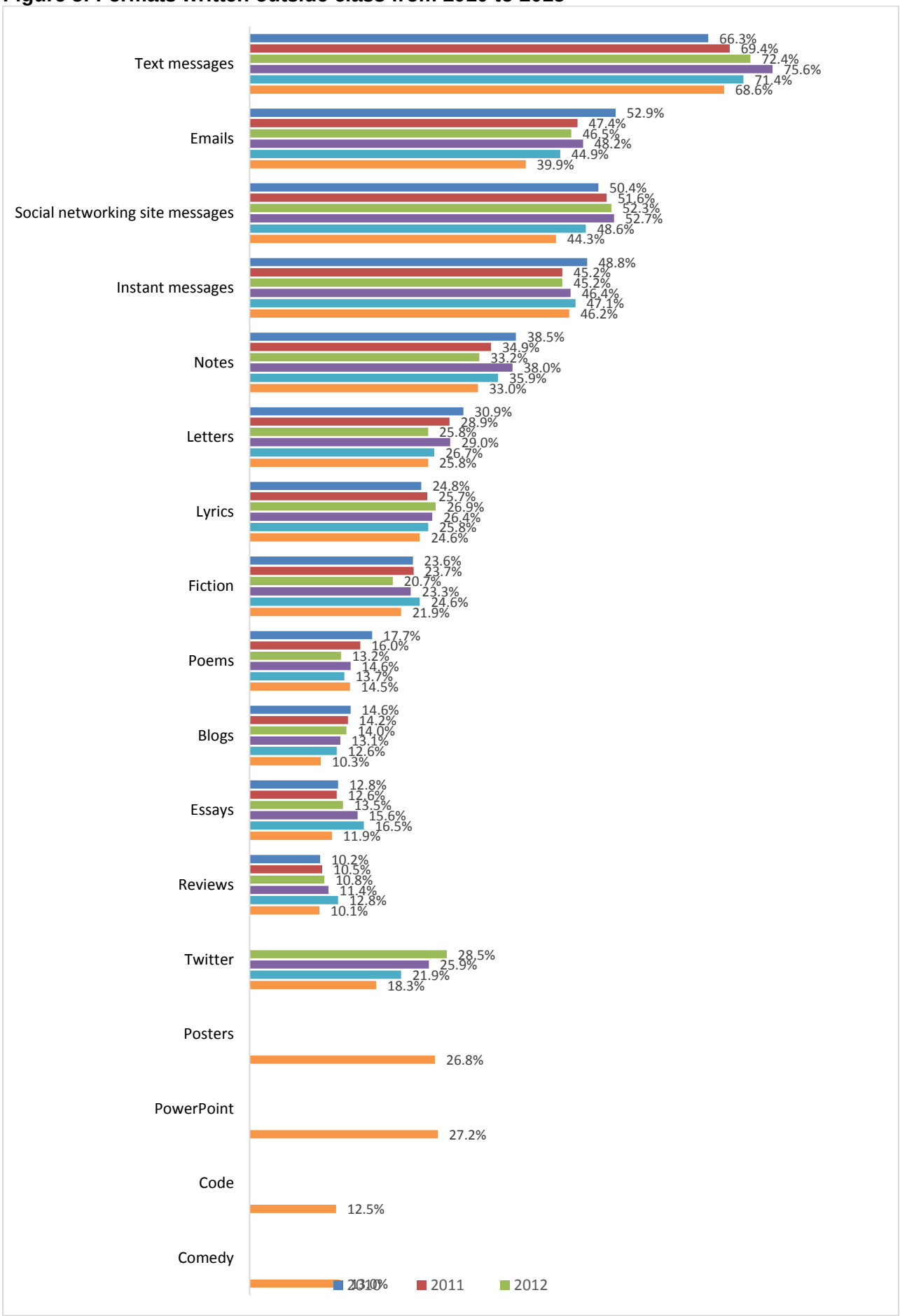
Technology-based formats, such as text messages, messages on social networking sites and instant messages, continue to dominate the non-homework writing that children and young people engage in outside class in 2015. In 2015, we included four new formats of writing: posters, PowerPoint presentations, code and comedy. After technology-based formats and notes to other people, children and young people most often write PowerPoint presentations and posters that are not for homework purposes outside class at least once a month.

With the exception of writing poems, which has remained unchanged, most formats of writing again saw a decrease in 2015 compared with the previous year (see **Figure 5**). In the case of blogs and Twitter, this decrease has been evidenced over the past few years. A few of these decreases were statistically significant, with significantly fewer children and young people in 2015 writing messages on social networking sites, emails, essays, on Twitter and reviews[4].

We also asked children and young people whether they ever write something that they don't share with anyone else, and nearly half (46.8%) said that they did. Of those who said this, nearly 1 in 5 (18.8%) write something daily, 27.5% a few times a week and 15.6% about once a week. Some children and young people told us what they write, and the majority of this writing relates to writing in a diary or journal, stories, fanfiction, poems and song lyrics.

[4] Messages on social networking sites: chi^2 (1, N = 64,595) = 124.296, p = .000, Phi = .044; Emails: : chi^2 (1, N = 64,595) = 168.890, p = .000, Phi = .051; Twitter: : chi^2 (1, N = 64,595) = 132.940, p = .000, Phi = .045; Essays: : chi^2 (1, N = 64,595) = 283.929, p = .000, Phi = .066; Reviews: chi^2 (1, N = 64,595) = 122.973, p = .000, Phi = .044

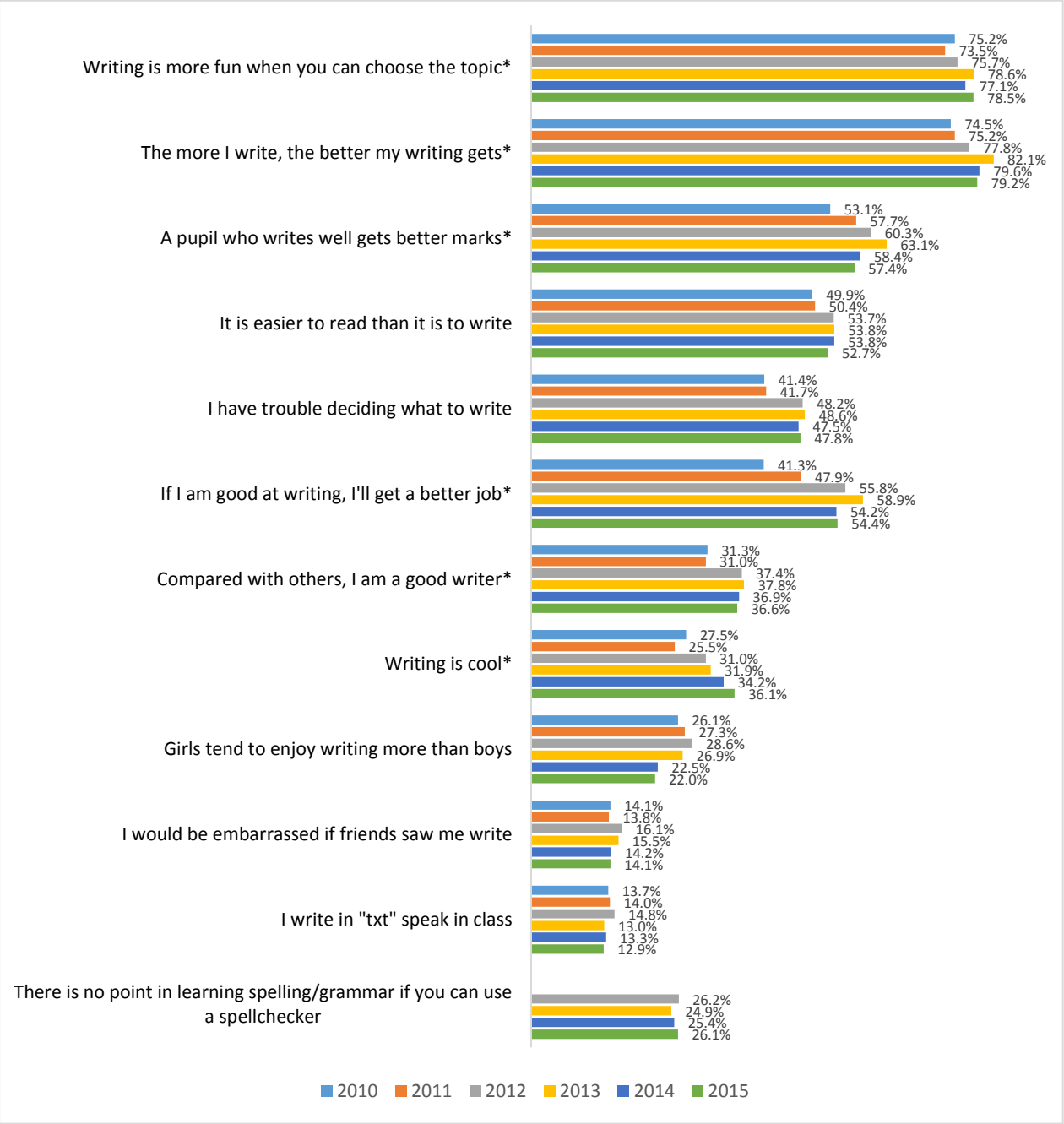
Figure 5: Formats written outside class from 2010 to 2015



~ Attitudes towards writing continue to remain stable ~

Attitudes towards writing[5] have remained unchanged since 2014[6] (see **Figure 6**).

Figure 6: Percentage agreement with writing attitude statements from 2010 to 2015



*(*Indicates items in the scale)*

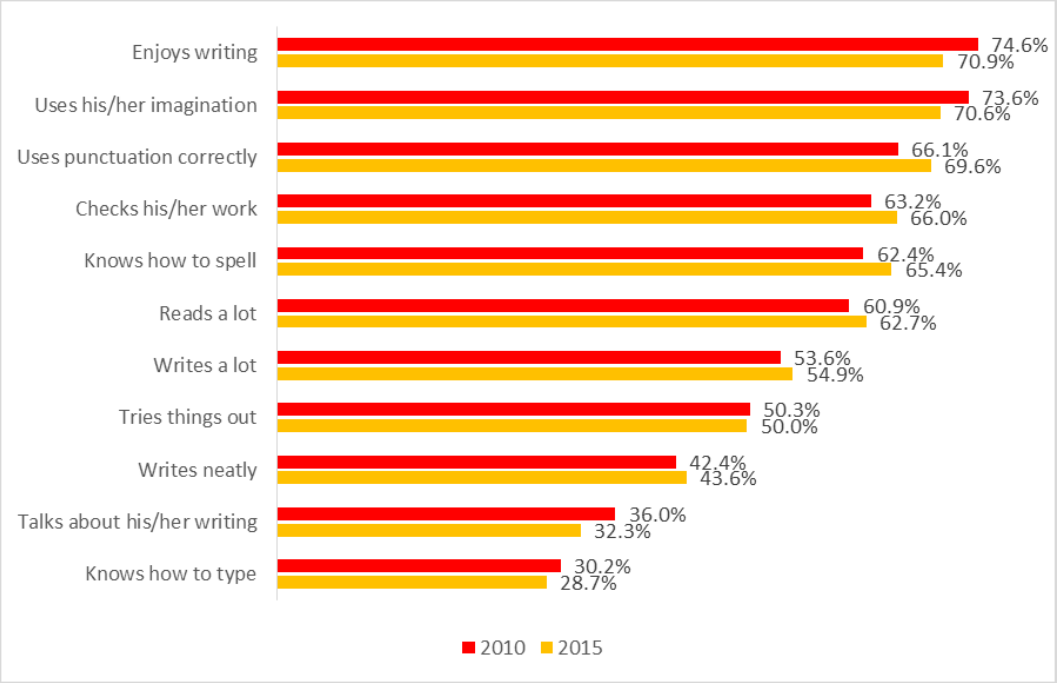
Finally, we also asked children and young people about the characteristics that make a good writer. **Figure 7** shows that most children and young people thought that a good writer enjoys writing and uses his or her imagination. 7 in 10 children and young people also thought that a good writer uses punctuation correctly. Only 3 in 10 children and young people thought that a good writer knows how to type.

[5] A principal component analysis with direct oblimin rotation showed that the 12 attitudinal items loaded on three factors. However, when items were combined into scales to reflect those factors, only one Cronbach's alpha was acceptable (.689). Therefore only one scale was created that contained the following six items: Compared with others I am a good writer, The more I write the better I become, Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic, Writing is cool, If I write well I will get a better job, A pupil who writes well gets better marks.

[6] p = .006

Figure 7 shows that perceptions of what makes a good writer have remained broadly the same since 2010.

Figure 7: Characteristics of a good writer in 2010 and 2015

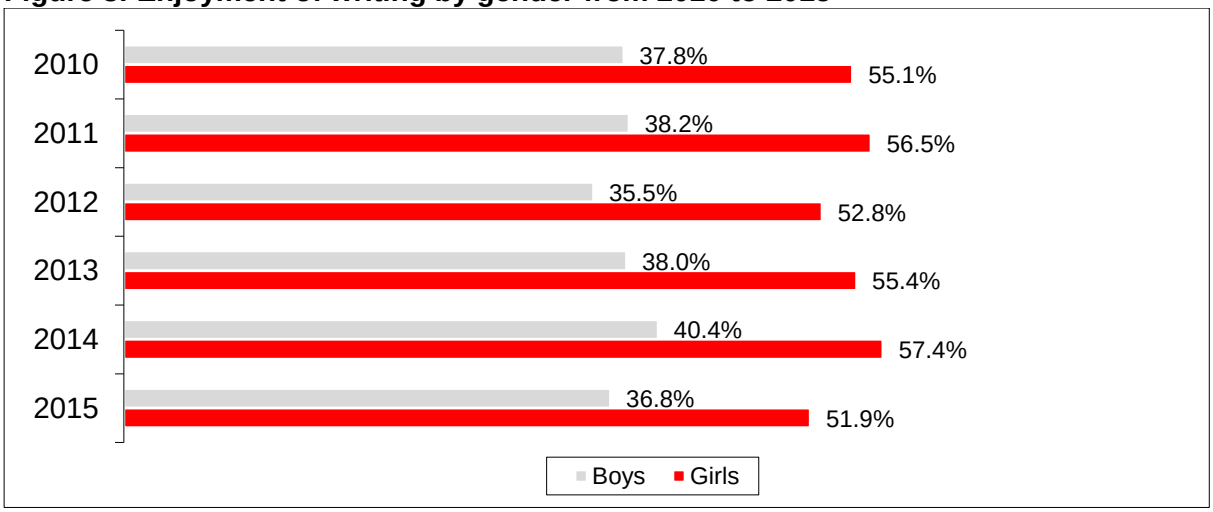


Differences by gender

Girls are significantly[7] more likely than boys to **enjoy writing** in 2015. In terms of percentages, more girls than boys enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot (51.9% vs. 36.8%). On the other hand, boys are twice as likely as girls to say that they don't enjoy writing at all (19.4% vs. 9.1%).

Figure 8 shows that in 2013 and 2014 enjoyment levels increased for both boys and girls. However, levels decreased in 2015 for both, decreasing more for girls (5.5 percentage points) than for boys (3.6 percentage points). As a result, the gap decreased slightly in 2015, falling from a 17 percentage point difference in 2014 to a 15.1 percentage point difference in 2015. It should be noted that although the gender gap in writing enjoyment has decreased, it is still wider than the gender gap in reading enjoyment, which in 2015 stands at 13.4 percentage points.

Figure 8: Enjoyment of writing by gender from 2010 to 2015

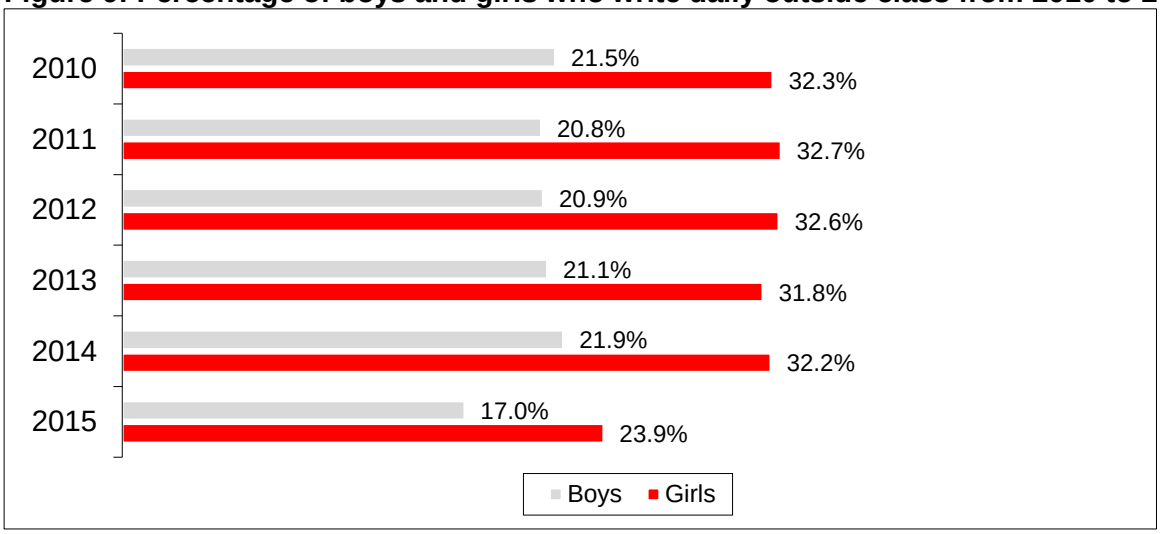


[7] Mann Whitney *U* (29,787) = 89256221.50, *Z* = -30.495, p = .000, r = .177. Girls: Mdn = 2; Boys: Mdn = 3

Girls not only enjoy writing more than boys but they also write outside class significantly[8] more **frequently**. In terms of percentages, 23.9% of girls in 2014 say that they write something that isn't for school every day compared with 17.0% of boys. Indeed, boys are nearly twice as likely as girls to say that they never write something that isn't for school (10.6% vs. 5.1%).

Figure 9 shows that the percentage of boys and girls who write daily outside class remained relatively unchanged between 2010 and 2014. Levels of daily writing decreased for both boys and girls in 2015, with girls showing a sharper decrease than boys (8.3 percentage points vs. 4.9 percentage points). As a result, the gender gap reduced from a 10.3 percentage point difference in 2014 to 6.9 percentage point difference in 2015.

Figure 9: Percentage of boys and girls who write daily outside class from 2010 to 2015



Compared with boys, girls are significantly more likely to **write technology-based formats** such as text messages (74.4% vs. 62.6%), messages on social networking sites (47.8% vs. 40.7%) and instant messages (51.0% vs. 41.2%)[9]. These gender differences cannot easily be explained by **access to materials**. With respect to technology, our 2015 survey shows no significant difference in the percentage of boys and girls who say that they have access at home to a computer or laptop (boys 93.0%; girls 94.2%) or the internet (boys 96.9%; girls 97.5%). Similar percentages of boys and girls also say that they have a mobile phone or smartphone (boys 79.6%; girls 82.6%), tablet (boys 79.5%; girls 80.2%), profile on a social networking site (boys 72.8%; girls 75.4%), blog (boys 13.9%; girls 14.9%), and a computer of their own (boys 71.8%; girls 70.3%)[10].

Girls are also more likely to write a variety of **other formats** compared with boys. For example, girls are significantly more likely than boys to say that they write lyrics (33.8% vs. 14.5%), notes to other people (41.4% vs. 24.1%), poems (17.9% vs. 10.7%), fiction or short stories (26.6% vs. 16.8%) and posters (31.3% vs. 21.9%). In contrast, significantly more boys than girls say that they write comedy (16.5% vs. 9.5%) and code (16.0 vs. 9.2%) outside school[11].

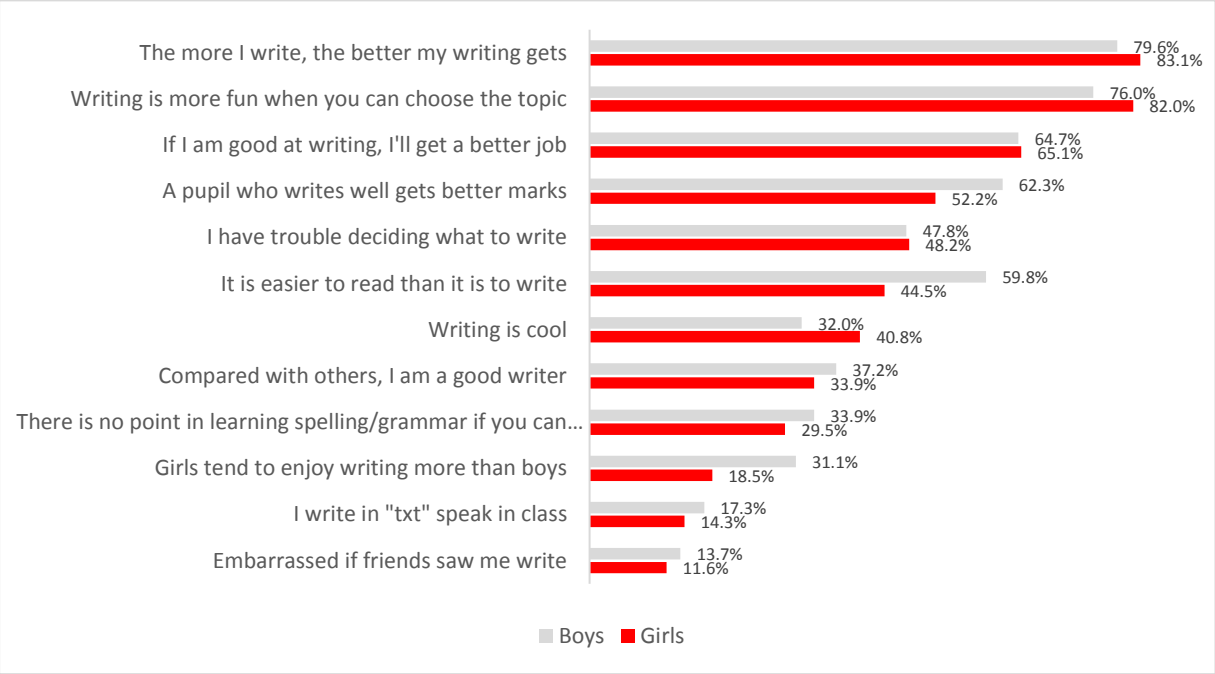
When asked whether they ever engage in any **writing that they don't share** with anyone, girls were significantly[12] more likely than boys to say that they do (54.4% vs. 36.8%).

Overall, there was no significant difference in the degree to which boys and girls **think about writing**[13]. **Figure 10** outlines the differences between boys and girls on the individual attitudinal

[8] Mann Whitney *U* (29,760) = 92307785.50, *Z* = -25.039, p = .000, r = .145; Girls: Mdn = 2; Boys: Mdn = 3
[9] Text messages: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 521.379, p = .000, Phi = -.127; Messages on social networking sites: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 163.069, p = .000, Phi = -.071; Instant messages: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 309.266, p = .000, Phi = -.098.
[10] None of these differences are statistically significant
[11] Lyrics: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 1618.725, p = .000, Phi = -.224; Notes to other people: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 1078.834, p = .000, Phi = -.183; Poems: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 331.553, p = .000, Phi = -.102; Fiction/short stories: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 448.621, p = .000, Phi = -.118; Posters: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 360.084, p = .000, Phi = -.106; Comedy: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 237.467, p = .000, Phi = .098; Code: chi^2 (1, N = 32,160) = 341.336, p = .000, Phi = .103
[12] chi^2 (1, N = 21,401) = 661.517, p = .000, Phi = -.176

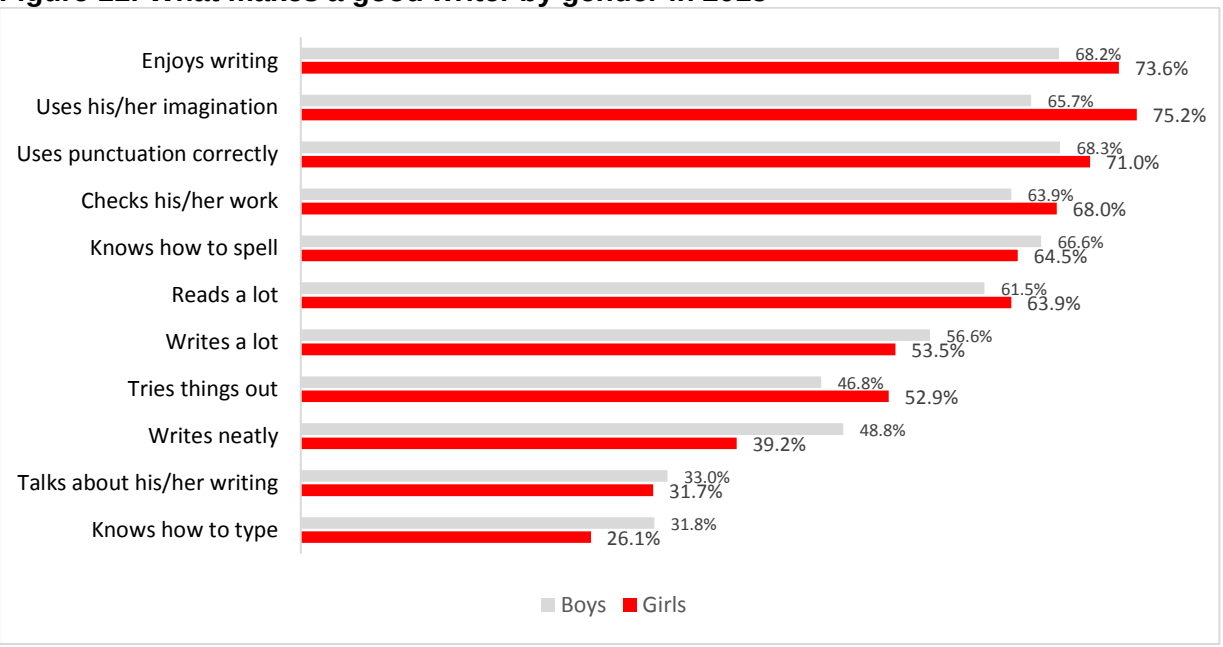
statements in percentages and shows that there were several items where there were differences. For example, more boys than girls agree that it is easier to read than it is to write and girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys. Conversely, more girls than boys agreed that writing is cool.

Figure 10: Percentage of boys and girls agreeing with attitudinal statements in 2015



There were some differences in the characteristics that boys and girls think **make a good writer** (see **Figure 11**). Significantly[14] more girls than boys believe that a good writer enjoys writing, uses his or her imagination and tries things out, while significantly[15] more boys than girls believe that a good writer writes neatly and knows how to type.

Figure 11: What makes a good writer by gender in 2015



[13] P = .964

[14] Enjoys writing: chi^2 (1, N = 24,654) = 86.568, p = .000, Phi = -.059; Uses his or her imagination: chi^2 (1, N = 24,654) = 269.240, p = .000, Phi = -.105; Tries things out: chi^2 (1, N = 24,654) = 91.001, p = .000, Phi = -.061

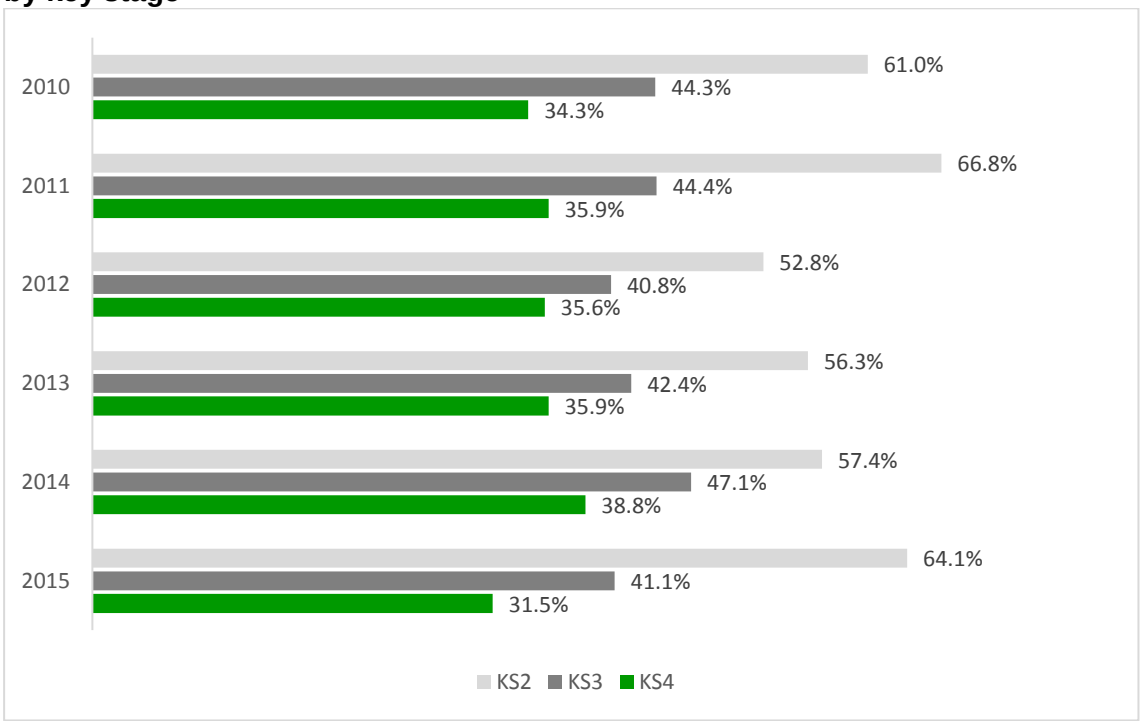
[15] Writes neatly: chi^2 (1, N = 24,654) = 227.694, p = .000, Phi = .096; Knows how to type: chi^2 (1, N = 24,654) = 97.490, p = .000, Phi = .063

Differences by age, using key stages, and writing

Significant differences exist between KS2, KS3 and KS4 pupils in the degree to which they say that they **enjoy writing**, with younger pupils enjoying writing more than older ones[16]. In 2015, only 31.5% of KS4 pupils and 41.1% of KS3 pupils said that they enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot, compared with 64.1% of KS2 pupils. Conversely, 22.1% of KS4 pupils said that they don't enjoy writing at all compared with 14.4% of KS3 and 7.7% of KS2 pupils.

Figure 12 compares levels of writing enjoyment over time and shows that levels have increased by 6.7 percentage points for KS2 pupils between 2014 and 2015, while they have decreased for KS3 (6 percentage points) and KS4 (7.3 percentage points) pupils over the same period.

Figure 12: Percentage of children and young people who enjoy writing from 2010 to 2015 by key stage

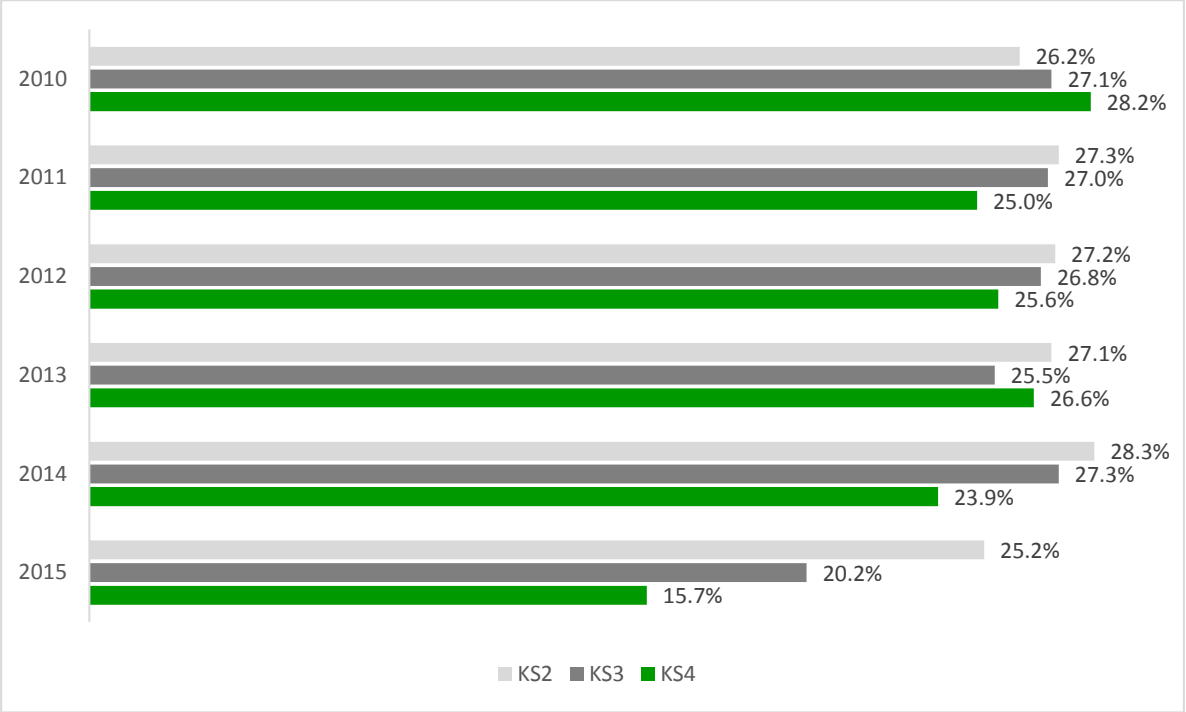


Younger pupils are also significantly more likely to **write more frequently** than older pupils[17]. In terms of percentages, 1 in 4 (25.2%) KS2 pupils wrote something daily outside class in 2015 compared with 1 in 5 (20.2%) KS3 pupils and only 1 in 7 (15.4%) KS4 pupils. **Figure 13** shows that unlike in 2014, where levels of daily writing increased for KS2 and KS3 pupils, levels of daily writing decreased across all three key stages between 2014 and 2015, with levels decreasing more for KS3 (8.1 percentage points) and KS4 (8.2 percentage points) than for KS2 (3.1 percentage points).

[16] Kruskall Wallic Chi2 (2) = 1693.888, p = .000; KS2: Mdn = 2, KS3: Mdn = 3; Ks4: Mdn = 3; There were significant differences between KS2 and KS3 pupils: U (25,541) = 43776555.00, Z = -35.803, p = .000, r = -.224; KS2 and KS4: U (10,255) = 7487069.00, Z = -.34.990, p = .000, r = -.346; KS3 and KS4 U (23,038) = 32273840.00, Z = -13.693, p = .000, r = -.0.90

[17] Kruskall Wallis Chi2 (2) = 373.768, p = .000; KS2: Mdn = 2, KS3: Mdn = 3; Ks4: Mdn = 4; There were significant differences between KS2 and KS3 pupils: U (25,524) = 55551042.00, Z = -11.078, p = .000, r = -.069; KS2 and KS4: U (10,259) = 9694913.500, Z = -18.726, p = .000, r = -.185; KS3 and KS4: U (23,015) = 32038205.50, Z = -.13.615, p = .000, r = -.090

Figure 13: Percentage of children and young people who write daily outside class from 2010 to 2015 by key stage



Children and young people choose to **write different formats** outside class at least once a month depending on their age, with young people in KS4, and to a lesser extent KS3 pupils, choosing to engage in more technology-based writing compared with pupils in KS2 (see **Figure 14**). For example, nearly twice as many KS4 and KS3 as KS2 pupils say that they write text messages and emails. Over twice as many KS3 and KS4 as KS2 pupils also say that they write messages on social networking sites and instant messages. Nearly three times as many KS4 pupils tweet outside class compared with KS2 pupils[18].

These differences can in part be explained by differing **access to technology** (see **Figure 15**). Significantly more KS4 and KS3 than KS2 pupils say they have their own computer and their own mobile phone or smartphone. Significantly more older pupils also report access to a computer and the internet at home. They are also significantly more likely to say that they have a profile on a social networking site and to have a blog[19].

While technology-based formats dominate older pupils' writing choices outside class, KS2 pupils are significantly[20] more likely to write formats that aren't purely technology-based, such as poems, letters, fiction or short stories, posters, lyrics, comedy, essays and reviews. KS2 pupils are also significantly more likely than KS3 and KS4 pupils to write code outside class. KS3 and KS2 pupils are more likely than KS4 pupils to write notes to other people and PowerPoint presentations.

[18] Messages on social networking sites: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 2356.347, p = .000, Cramer's V = .272; Emails: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 1141.163, p = .000, Cramer's V = .190; Twitter: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 651.425, p = .000, Cramer's V = .143; Text messages: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 3086.972, p = .000, Cramer's V i = .312; Instant messages: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 2284.043, p = .000, Cramer's V = .268

[19] Own mobile: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 2960.044, p = .000, Cramer's V = .339; Own computer/laptop: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 735.411, p = .000, Cramer's V = .169; Own smart phone: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 4332.483, p = .000, Cramer's V = .410; Tablet: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 156.327, p = .000, Cramer's V = .078; Access to a computer at home: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 650.503, p = .000, Cramer's V = .157; Access to internet at home: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 433.763, p = .000, Cramer's V = .128; Profile on a social networking site: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 3736.054, p = .000, Cramer's V = .382; Blog: chi^2 (2, N = 25,771) = 228.498, p = .000, Cramer's V = .099

[20] Poems: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 1960.122, p = .000, Cramer's V = .248; Letters: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 767.535, p = .000, Cramer's V = .155; Fiction/short stories: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 304.585, p = .000, Cramer's V = .098; Posters: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 670.128, p = .000, Cramer's V = .145; Lyrics: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 242.399, p = .000, Cramer's V = .087; Comedy: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 207.488, p = .000, Cramer's V = .092; Essays: chi^2 (2, N = 31,772) = 276.631, p = .000, Phi = .093; Reviews: chi^2 (2, N = 31,722) = 64.792, p = .000, Cramer's V = .045.

Figure 14: Formats written outside class and not for homework by key stage in 2015

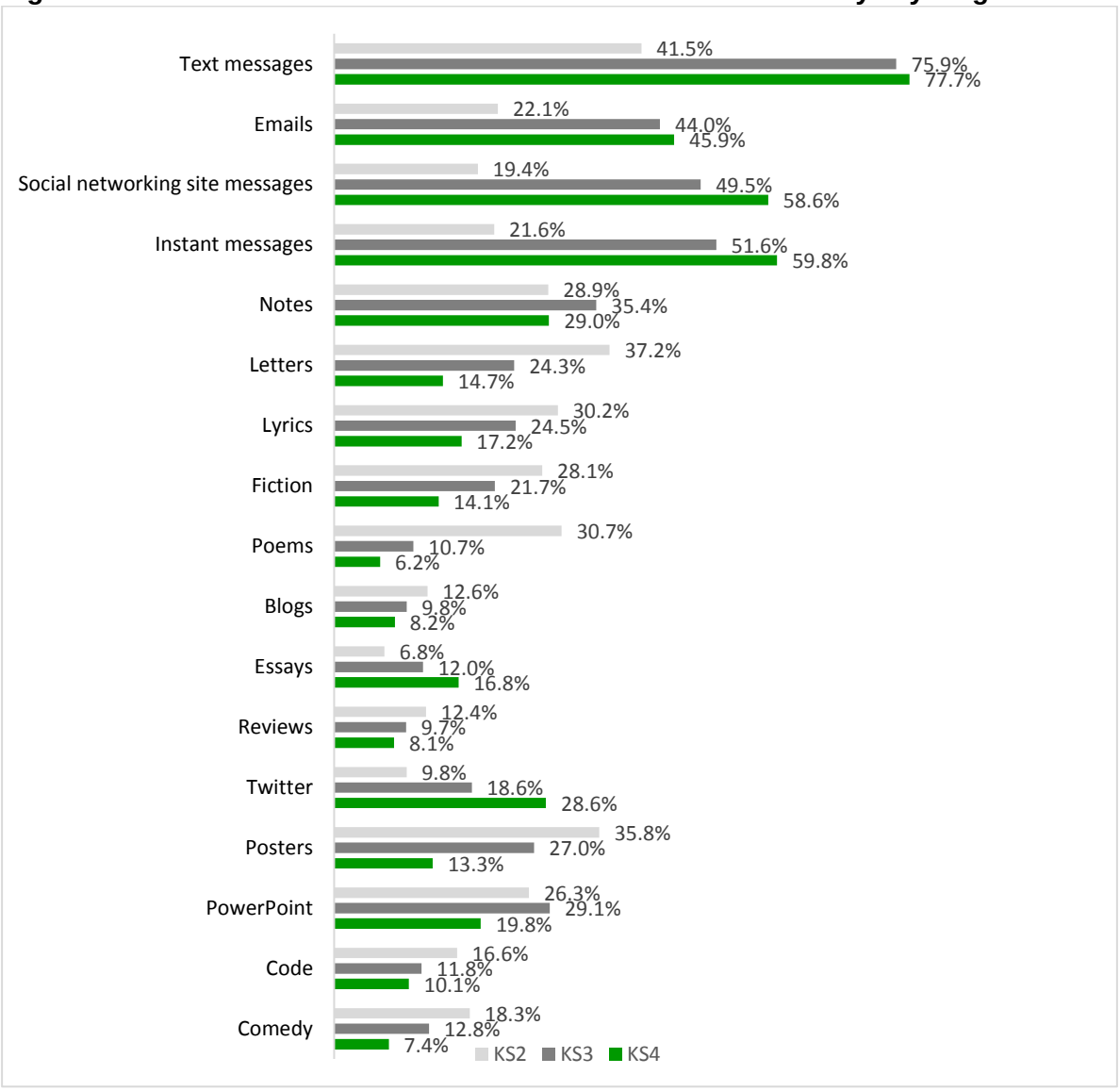
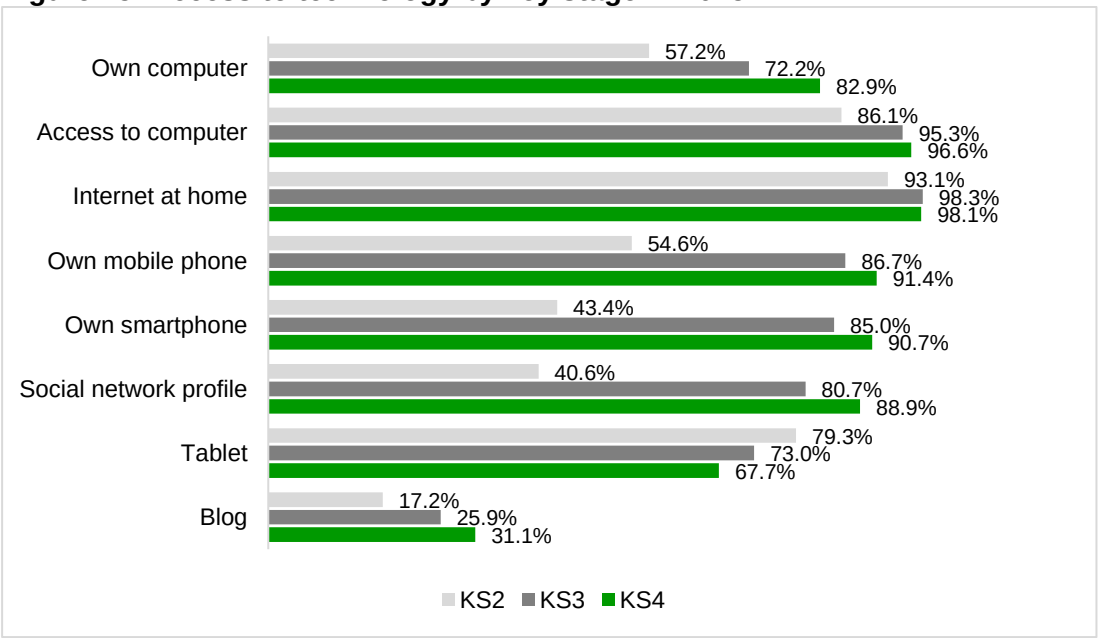


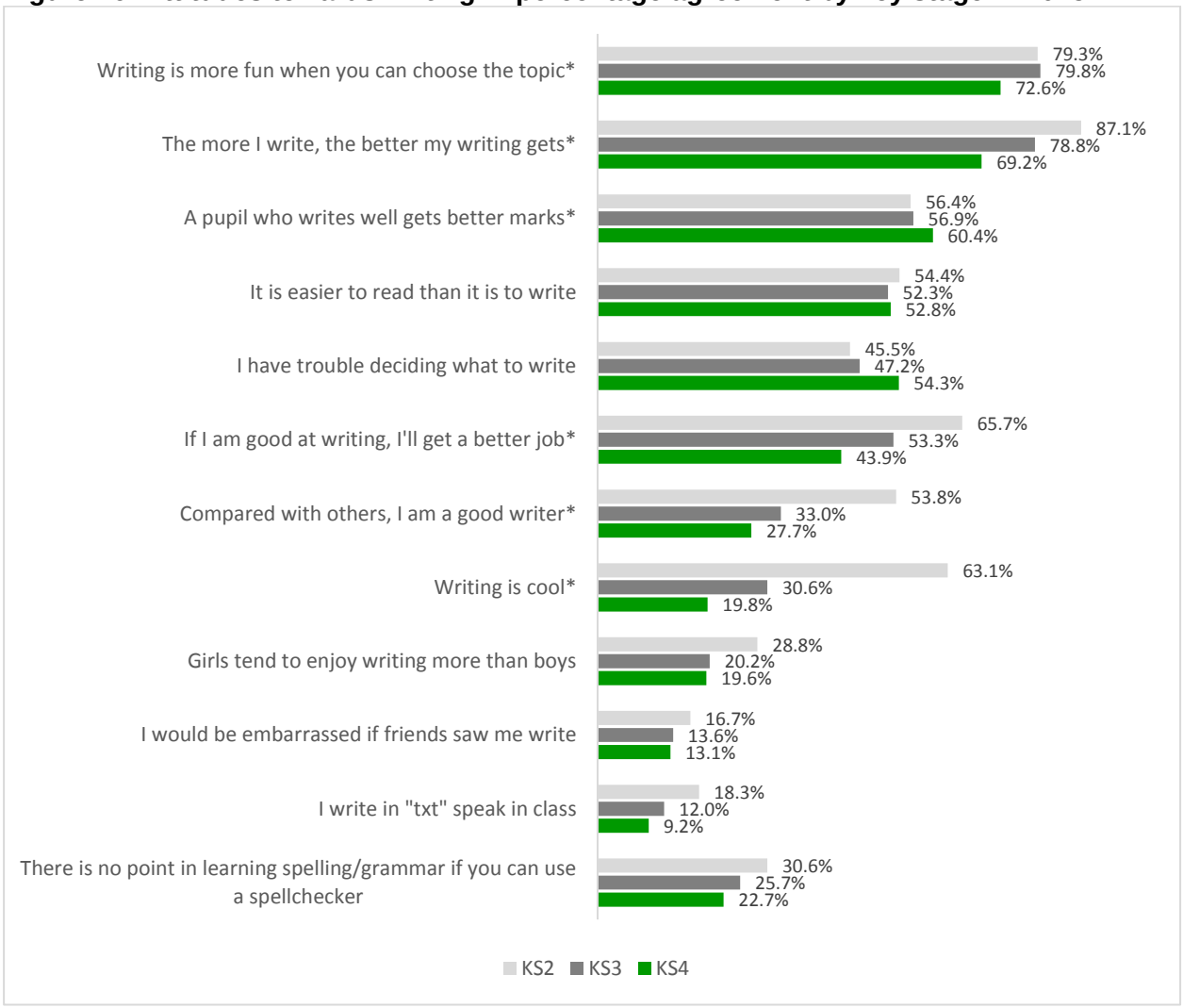
Figure 15: Access to technology by key stage in 2015



Whether pupils engage in writing outside class that they don't share with anyone else differs significantly by age[21], with pupils in KS2 (60.5%) being more likely to engage in private writing than KS3 (45.3%) or KS4 (34.1%) pupils.

There were significant differences in attitudes towards writing depending on the pupils' age, with KS2 pupils thinking more positively about writing than older pupils[22]. **Figure 16** illustrates the differences by key stage in percentages for each of the attitudinal items and shows that twice as many KS2 as KS3 and three times as many KS2 as KS4 pupils agree that writing is cool. Nearly twice as many KS2 as KS3 and KS4 pupils also agree that compared with others they are good writers. More KS2 than KS3 and KS4 pupils also agree that if they are good at writing, they will get a better job when they grow up.

Figure 16: Attitudes towards writing in percentage agreement by key stage in 2015



There were significant differences between KS2, KS3 and KS4 pupils in their perceptions of what makes a good writer[23]. **Figure 17** shows that KS3 and KS4 pupils were more likely than KS2 pupils to believe that a good writer enjoys writing and uses his or her imagination. They are

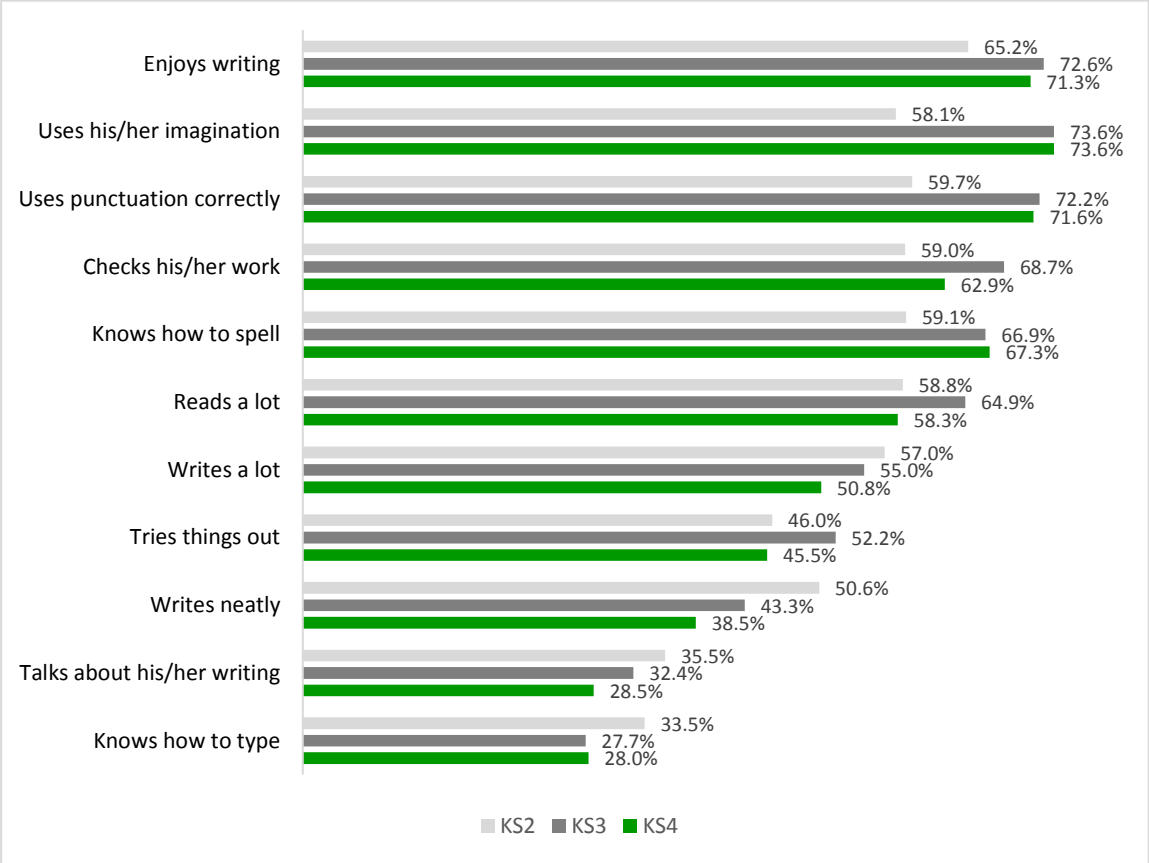
[21] chi^2 (2, N = 21,165) = 494.742, p = .000, Cramer's V = .153

[22] KS2: M = 129, SD = .792; KS3: M = 2.436, SD = .729; KS4: M = 2.628, SD = .754; F(2, 28853) = 612.543, p = .000. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferoni correction indicate that there were significant differences between KS2 – KS3, KS2 – KS4 and KS3 – KS4.

[23] Writes a lot : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 33.922, p = .000, Cramer's V = .037; Enjoys writing : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 95.544, p = .000, Cramer's V = .063; Reads a lot : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 90.937, p = .000, Cramer's V = .061; Talks about writing : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 44.072, p = .000, Cramer's V = .043; Uses imagination: chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 439.033, p = .000, Cramer's V = .134; Knows how to spell : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 103.702, p = .000, Cramer's V = .065; Tries things out : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 88.359, p = .000, Cramer's V = .060; Writes neatly : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 127.807, p = .000, Cramer's V = .072; Uses punctuation correctly : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 274.714, p = .000, Cramer's V = .106; Knows how to type : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 61.410, p = .000, Cramer's V = .050; Checks work : chi^2 (2, N = 24,382) = 169.191, p = .000, Cramer's V = .083

also more likely to believe that a good writer uses punctuation correctly and knows how to spell. By contrast, KS2 pupils are more likely than older pupils to believe that a good writer writes neatly and knows how to type.

Figure 17: Perceptions of what makes a good writer by key stage in 2015



The case of teenage boys and writing

Boys tend to enjoy writing less, write less often and think less positively about writing than girls. Similarly, older pupils tend to be more disengaged with writing in terms of enjoyment and attitudes when compared with younger pupils. This section combines being a boy and age, using key stages, in the analyses to explore differences in writing.

KS2 boys are significantly more likely to **enjoy writing** than KS4 boys[24]. In terms of percentages, only 1 in 4 (23.9%) KS4 boys say that they enjoy writing very much or quite a lot compared with nearly 3 in 5 (56.7%) KS2 boys. **Figure 18** (overleaf) shows that while levels of enjoyment have improved for boys in KS2 in 2015, levels of writing enjoyment have decreased for KS4 boys.

KS2 boys are also significantly more likely than KS4 boys to write more **frequently outside class** in 2015[25]. In terms of percentages, 20.4% of KS2 boys say that they write something that isn't for school on a daily basis, compared with 14.9% of KS4 boys. Conversely, more KS4 than KS2 boys say that they rarely or never write outside class (32.5% vs. 23.1%). **Figure 19** (overleaf) shows that there has been a decrease in daily writing levels for both KS2 and KS4 boys. However, the decrease was more pronounced for KS4 (5.7 percentage points) than for KS2 boys (1.2 percentage points).

[24] Mann Whitney U (5,046) = 1771251.500, Z = -24.494, p = .000, r = -.345; Boys KS2: Mdn = 2; Boys KS4: Mdn = 3
[25] Mann Whitney U (5,053) = 2577454.000, Z = -7.458, p = .000, r = -.105; Boys KS2: Mdn = 3; Boys KS4: Mdn = 4

Figure 18: Percentage of KS2 and KS4 boys who enjoy writing from 2012 to 2015

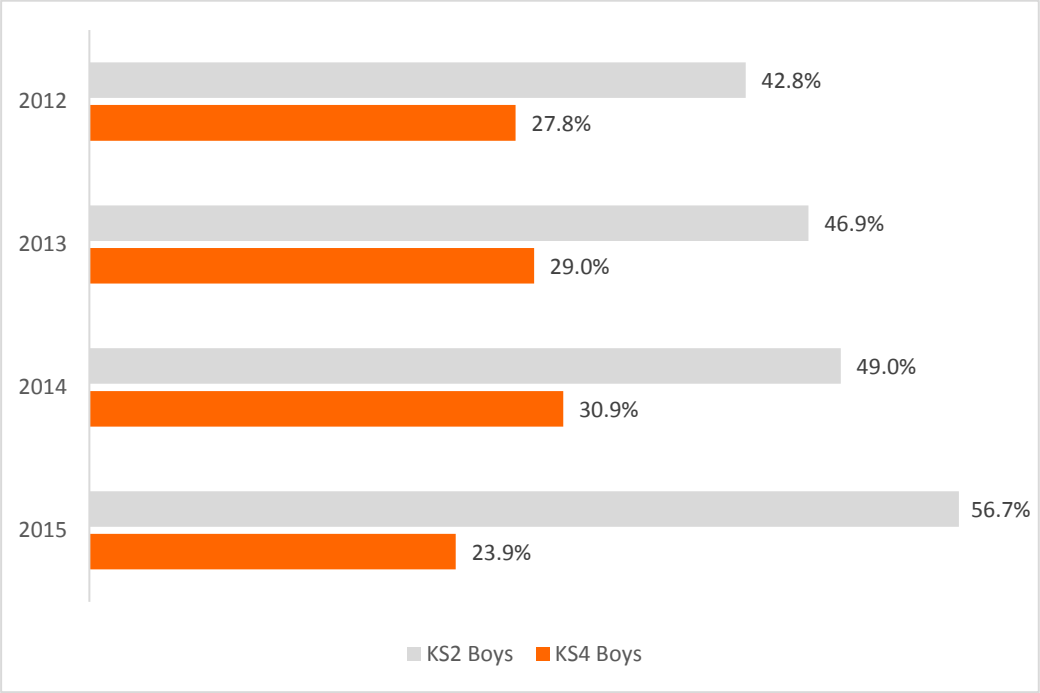
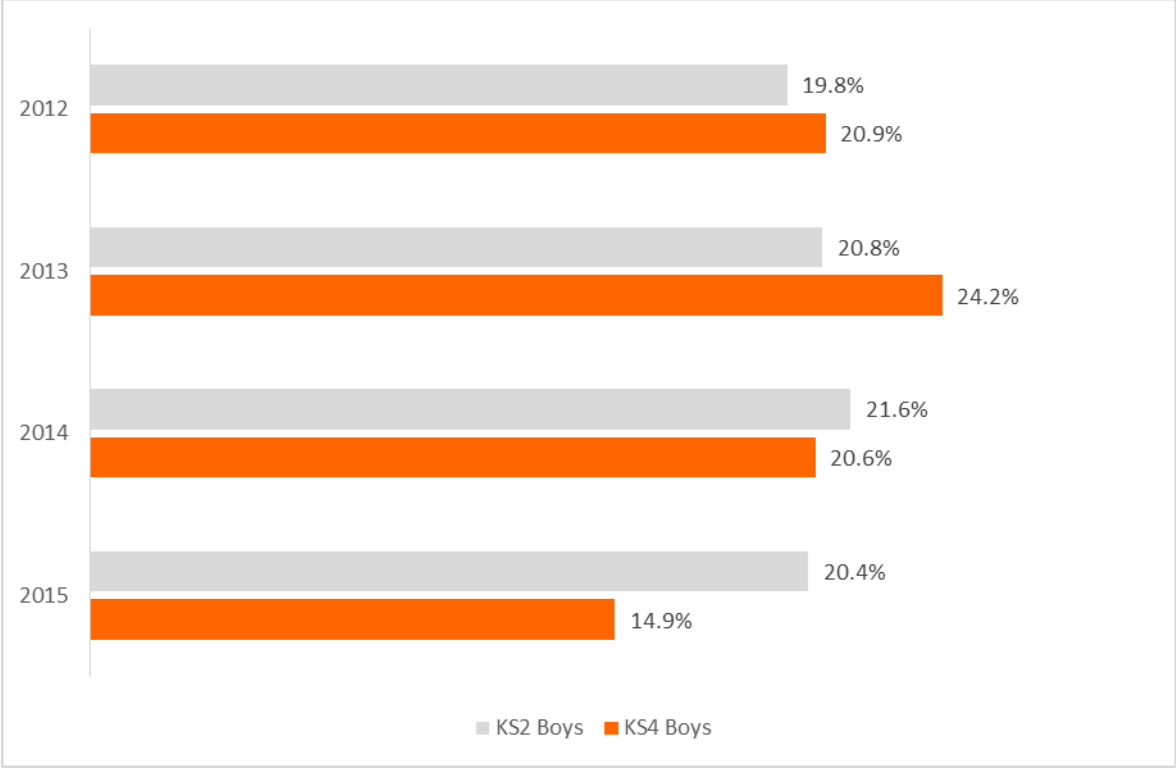


Figure 19: Percentage of KS2 and KS4 boys who write something outside class daily from 2012 to 2015



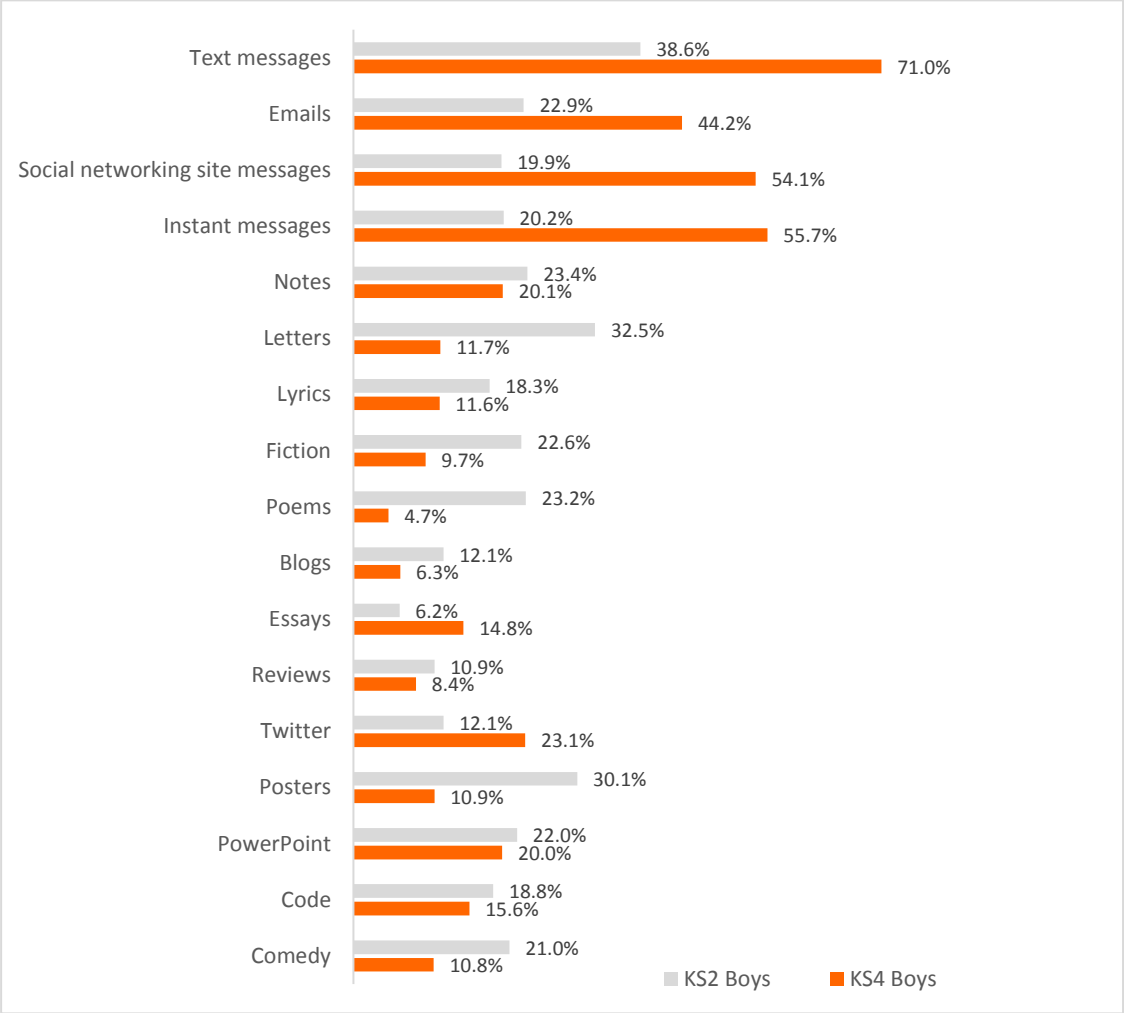
KS4 boys are significantly more likely than KS2 boys to **write technology-based formats** such as text messages, emails, messages on social networking sites, instant messages and messages on Twitter at least once a month outside class (see **Figure 20**). They are also more likely to write essays outside class that are not for homework[26]. Some of these differences are at least in part explained by differing **access to technology**, with KS4 boys being significantly

[26] Text messages: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 527.318, p = .000, Phi = -.309; Emails: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 269.513, p = .000, Phi = -.221; messages on social networking site: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 674.444, p = .000, Phi = -.350; Instant messages: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 718.607, p = .000, Phi = -.361; Twitter: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 113.664, p = .000, Phi = -.144; Essays: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 110.015 , p = .000, Phi = -.141;

more likely than KS2 boys to say that they have a mobile phone (90.2% vs. 54.8%) or smartphone (88.9% vs. 45.3%), their own computer or laptop (84.4% vs. 59.6%) and a profile on a social networking site (87.5% vs. 43.8%). KS4 boys are also significantly more likely than KS2 boys to say that they have access to a computer or laptop (95.7% vs. 86.4%) and the internet at home (97.6% vs. 93.5%)[27].

On the other hand, KS2 boys are more likely than KS4 boys to write letters, lyrics, fiction or short stories, poems, posters and comedy[28].

Figure 20: Formats written outside class for KS2 and KS4 boys in 2015



Overall, significantly more KS2 than KS4 boys say that they write something outside class that they **don't share** with anyone else (51.2% vs. 27.0%)[29].

KS2 boys are significantly more likely to **think positively about writing** than KS4 boys[30]. **Figure 21** illustrates the difference between the two groups for each of the attitudinal items and shows that four times as many KS2 as KS4 boys say that writing is cool. More KS2 than KS4 boys also agree that there is a link between their writing skill and their chances of finding a good job. However, fewer KS4 than KS2 boys believe that they don't need to know about spelling and grammar if they have a spellchecker and fewer agree that they write "txt" speak in class.

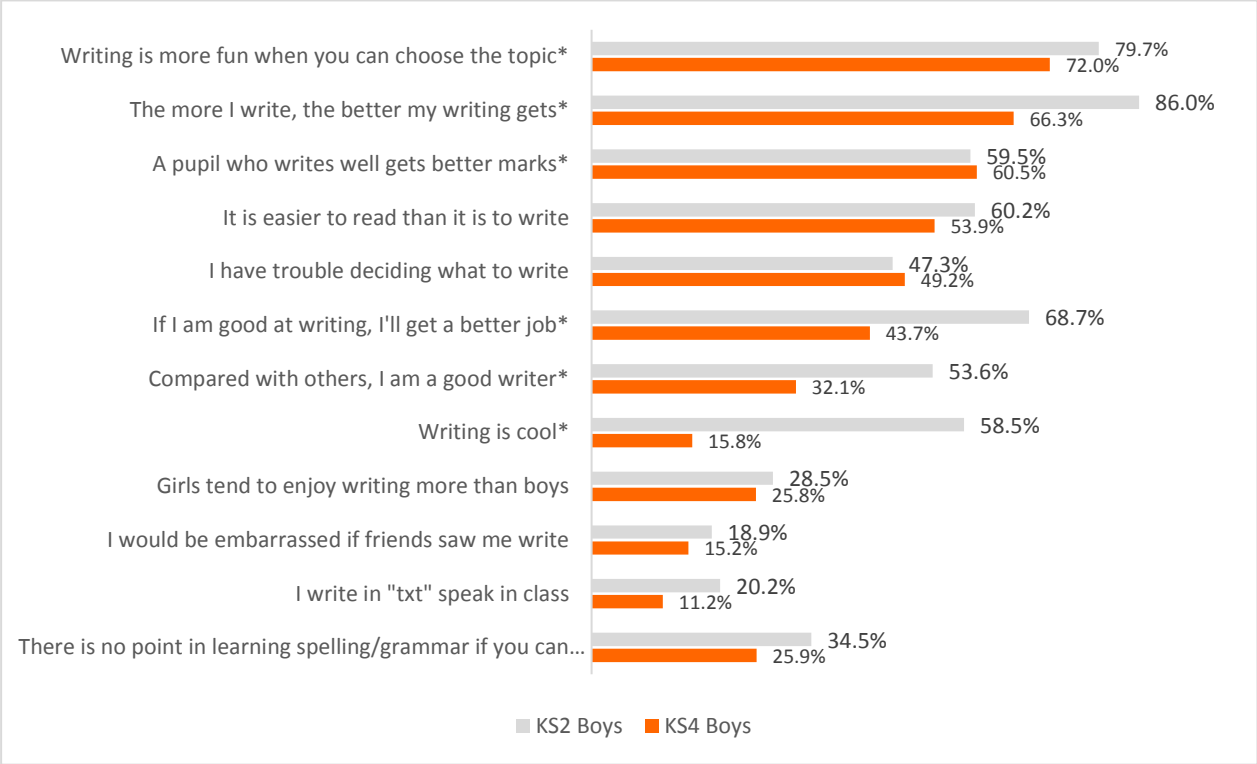
[27] Own mobile: chi^2 (1, N = 4,274) = 581.951, p = .000, Phi = -.369; Smartphone: chi^2 (1, N = 4,259) = 814.931, p = .000, Phi = -.437; Own computer: chi^2 (1, N = 4,302) = 290.284, p = .000, Phi = -.260; SNS profile: chi^2 (1, N = 4,202) = 800.304, p = .000, Phi = -.436; Computer at home: chi^2 (1, N = 4,417) = 98.144, p = .000, Phi = -.149; Internet: chi^2 (1, N = 4,466) = 37.798, p = .000, Phi = -.092

[28] Lyrics: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 42.606, p = .000, Phi = .088; Letters: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 290.884, p = .000, Phi = .230; Fiction/short stories: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 142.426, p = .000, Phi = .161; Poems: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 311.290, p = .000, Phi = .238; Posters: chi^2 (1, N = 5,512) = 257.774, p = .000, Phi = .216; Comedy: chi^2 (1, N = 4,446) = 69.704, p = .000, Phi = .134;

[29] chi^2 (1, N = 3338) = 197.403, p = .000, Phi = .243

[30] KS2 boys: M = 2.095, SD = .825; KS4 boys: M = 2.716, SD = .807; t(4921) = -25.544, p = .000, d = .761, Mdif = -.621, CI95%(-.668, -.573)

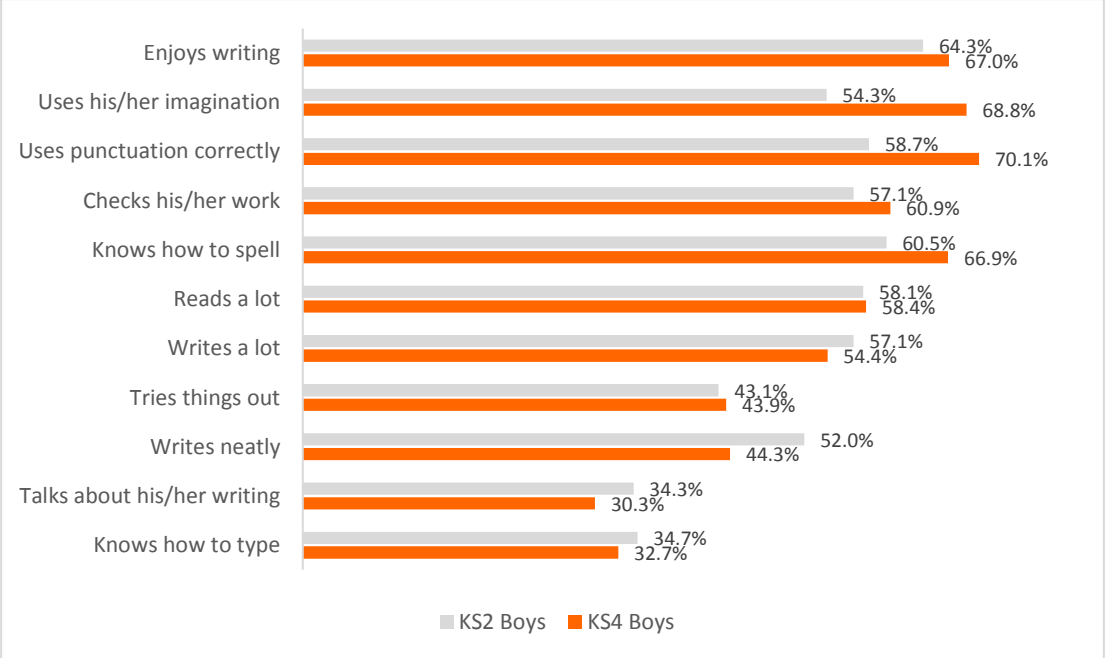
Figure 21: Percentage agreement with attitudinal items for KS2 and KS4 boys in 2015



*(*Indicates items in writing scale)*

While KS2 and KS4 boys think differently about writing, there are only a few differences between them in what they think **makes someone a good writer** (see **Figure 22**). Significantly more KS2 than KS4 boys think that a good writer writes neatly, while significantly more KS4 than KS2 boys believe that a good writer uses his or her imagination, knows how to spell and uses punctuation correctly[31].

Figure 22: Perceptions of what makes a good writer for KS2 and KS4 boys in 2015

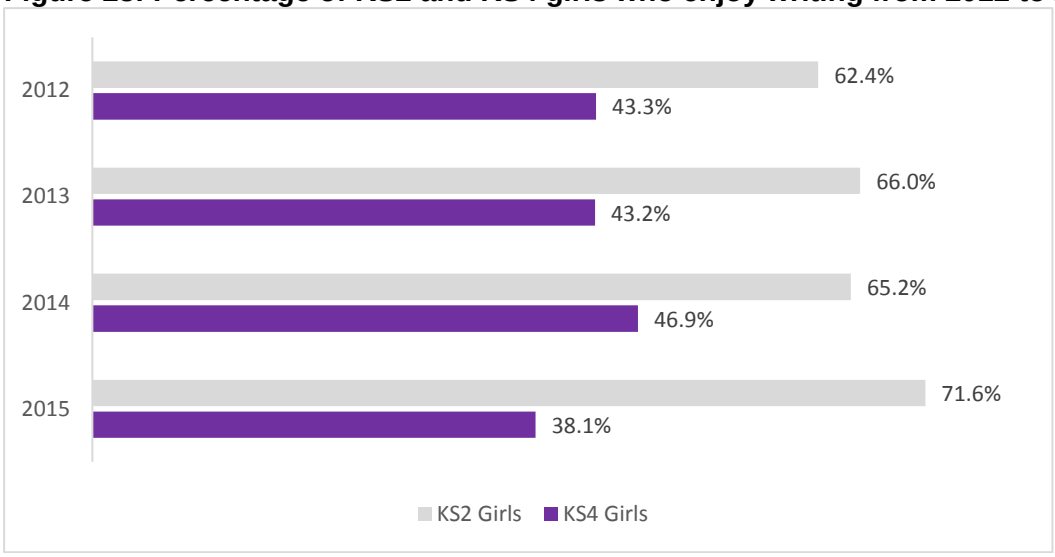


[31] Writes neatly: chi^2 (1, N = 3,910) = 22.212, p = .000, Phi = .075; Uses imagination: chi^2 (1, N = 3,910) = 83.034, p = .000, Phi = -.146; Knows how to spell: chi^2 (1, N = 3,910) = 16.332, p = .000, Phi = -.065; Uses punctuation correctly: chi^2 (1, N = 3,910) = 52.775, p = .000, Phi = -.116

… and teenage girls and writing

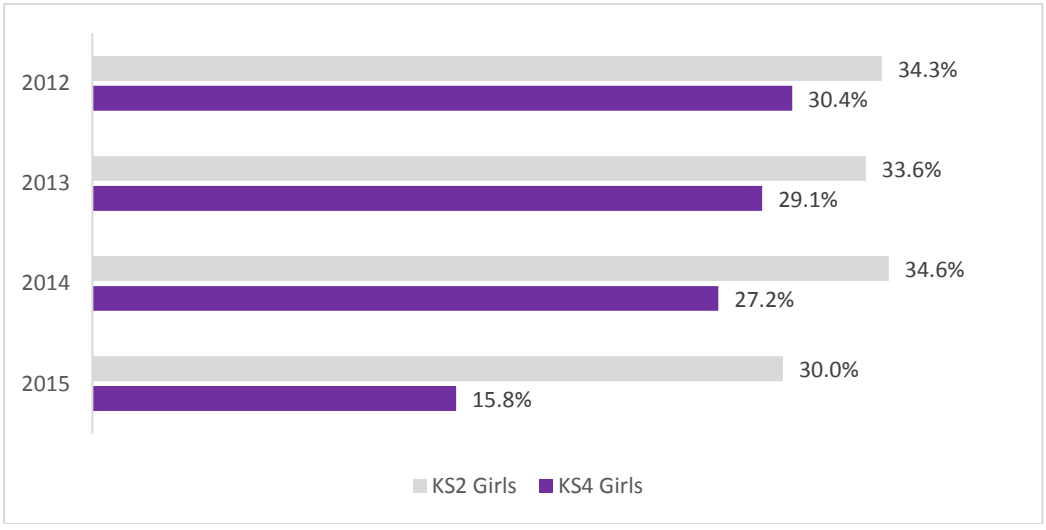
KS2 girls are significantly more likely to **enjoy writing** than KS4 girls[32]. In terms of percentages, nearly twice as many KS2 as KS4 girls say that they enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot (71.6% vs. 38.1%). **Figure 23** shows that compared with the previous year, levels of writing enjoyment have increased for KS2 girls, while they have decreased for KS4 girls over the same period. As a result, the gap between KS2 and KS4 girls has doubled over the past year, increasing from an 18.3 percentage point difference in 2014 to a 33.5 percentage point difference in 2015.

Figure 23: Percentage of KS2 and KS4 girls who enjoy writing from 2012 to 2015



Not only are KS2 girls more likely to enjoy reading, but they are also significantly more likely than KS4 girls to write more **frequently outside class** in 2015[33]. In terms of percentages, twice as many KS2 as KS4 girls say that they write something that isn't for school every day (30.0% vs. 15.8%). Conversely, twice as many KS4 as KS2 girls say that they rarely or never write outside class (37.7% vs. 15.3%). **Figure 24** shows that there has been a decrease in daily writing levels for both KS2 and KS4 girls compared with 2014. However, the decrease was more pronounced for KS4 girls (11.4 percentage points) than for KS2 girls (4.6 percentage points). As a result, the gap between the two has increased from a 7.4 percentage point difference in 2014 to a 14.2 percentage point difference in 2015.

Figure 24: Percentage of KS2 and KS4 girls who write something outside class daily from 2012 to 2015



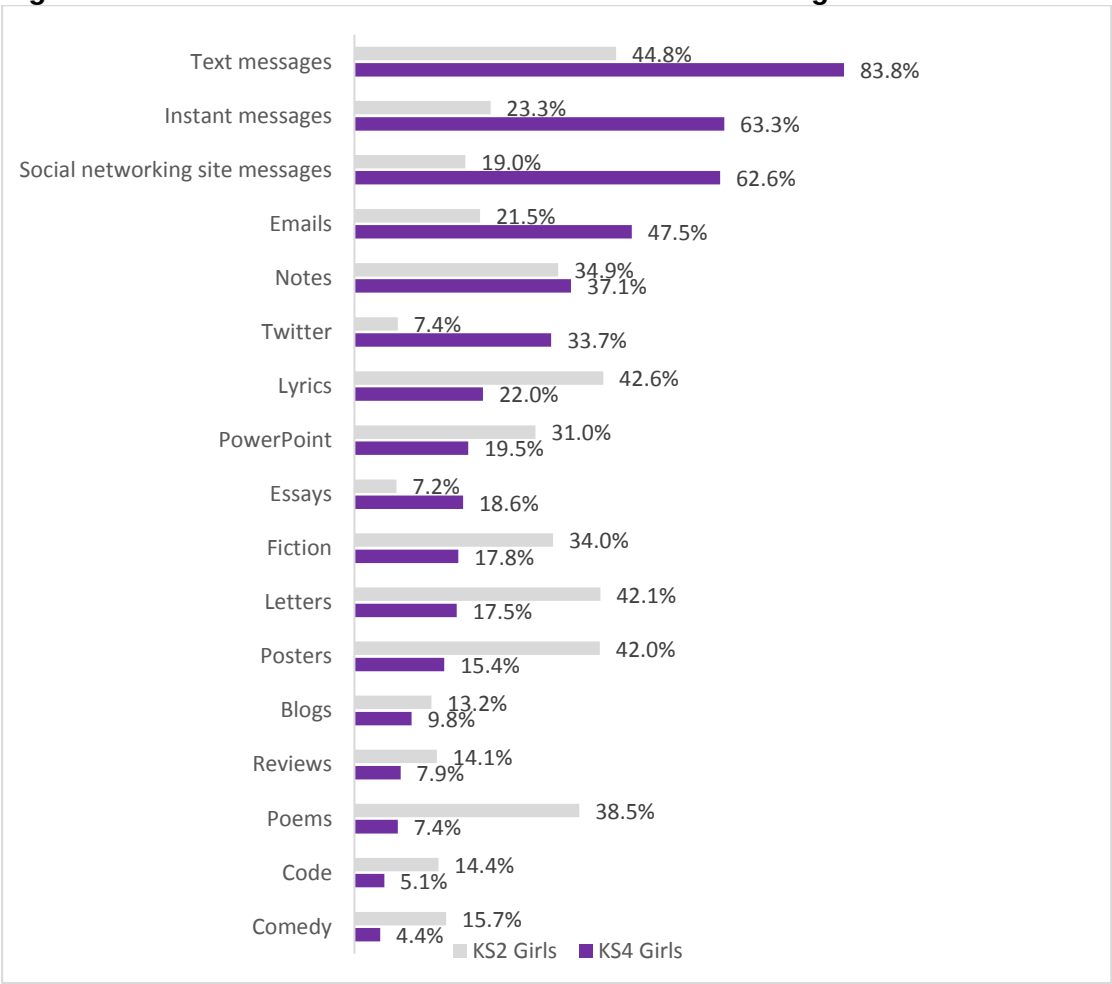
[32] Mann Whitney U (5,078) = 1810714.000, Z = -26.129, p = .000, r = -.367; KS2 girls: Mdn = 2; KS4 girls: Mdn = 3
[33] Mann Whitney U (5,068) = 2100023.500, Z = -19.595, p = .000, r = -.275; KS2 girls: Mdn = 2; KS4 girls: Mdn = 4

There were significant differences between KS2 and KS4 girls in the **types of formats** that they write outside class at least once a month (see **Figure 25**). Significantly more KS4 than KS2 girls say that they write technology-based formats, such as text messages, instant messages, messages on social networking sites, emails and Twitter[34].

Some of these differences are at least in part explained by differing **access to technology**, with KS4 girls being significantly more likely than KS2 girls to say that they have a mobile phone (92.5% vs. 54.4%) or smartphone (92.4% vs. 41.2%), their own computer or laptop (81.8% vs. 54.8%) and a profile on a social networking site (90.2% vs. 37.5%). KS4 girls are also significantly more likely than KS2 girls to say that they have access to a computer or laptop (97.4% vs. 85.7%) and the internet at home (98.6% vs. 92.8%)[35].

KS4 girls are significantly more likely to write essays outside class and not for homework. By contrast, significantly more KS2 than KS4 girls say that they write song lyrics, PowerPoint presentations, fiction or short stories, letters, posters, blogs, reviews, poems, code and comedy[36].

Figure 25: Formats written outside class for KS2 and KS4 girls in 2015



[34] Text messages: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 843.961, p = .000, Phi = -.388; Social network messages: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 1096.233, p = .000, Phi = -.443; Instant messages: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 895.132, p = .000, Phi = -.400; Emails: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 413.894, p = .000, Phi = -.272; Twitter: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 628.686, p = .000, Phi = -.335; Essays: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 168.774, p = .000, Phi = -.174

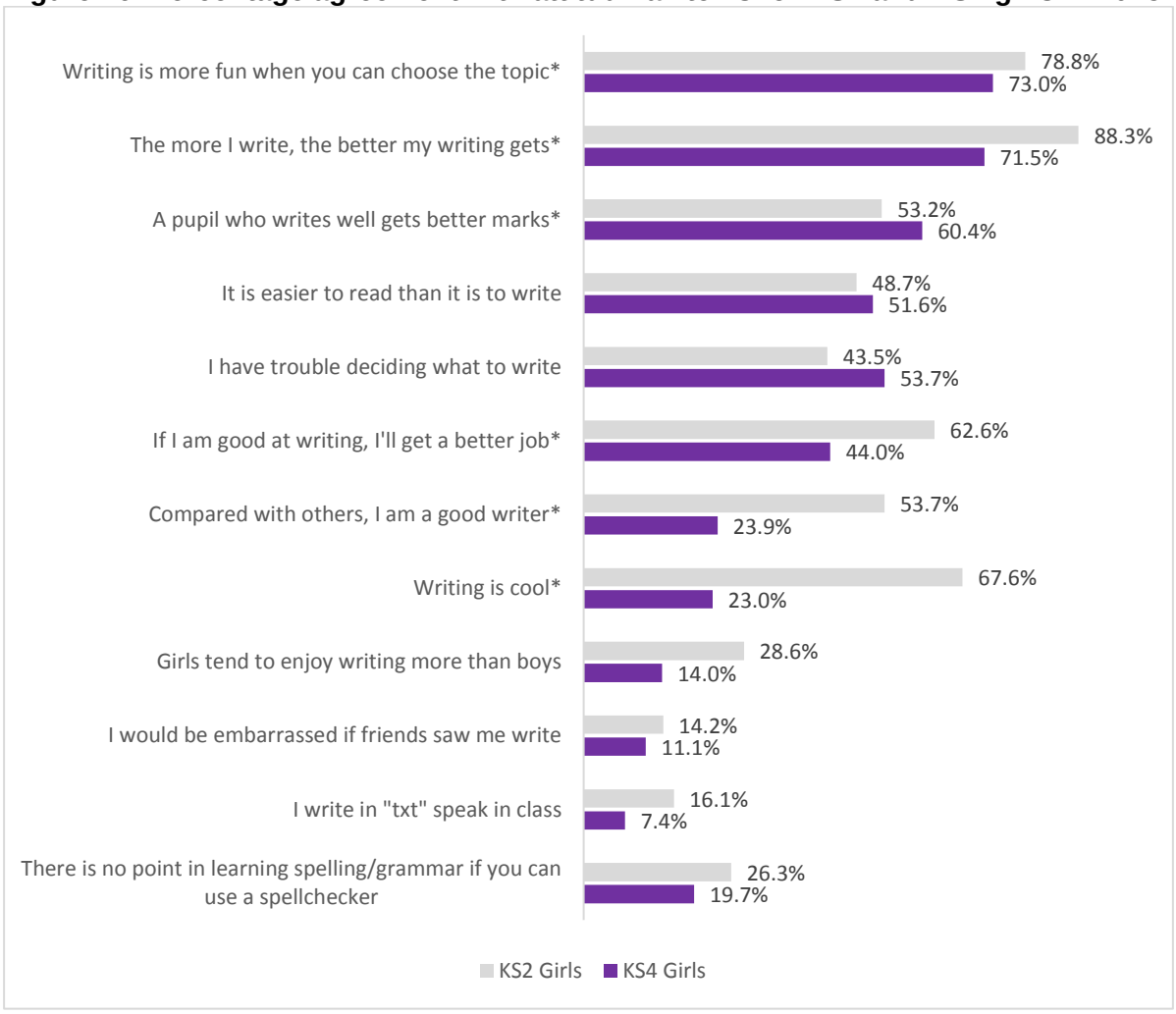
[35] Own mobile: chi^2 (1, N = 4,366) = 745.015, p = .000, Phi = -.413; Smartphone: chi^2 (1, N = 4,317) = 1192.901, p = .000, Phi = -.526; Own computer: chi^2 (1, N = 368) = 345.536, p = .000, Phi = -.281; SNS profile: chi^2 (1, N = 4,309) = 1224.333, p = .000, Phi = -.533; Computer at home: chi^2 (1, N = 4,528) = 177.707, p = .000, Phi = -.198; Internet: chi^2 (1, N = 4,576) = 81.575, p = .000, Phi = -.134

[36] Lyrics: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 248.748, p = .000, Phi = .211; PowerPoint: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 89.877, p = .000, Phi = .127; Fiction: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 174.646, p = .000, Phi = .177; Letters: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 368.232, p = .000, Phi = .257; Posters: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 433.306, p = .000, Phi = .278; Blogs: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 14.721, p = .000, Phi = .051; Reviews: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 49.827, p = .000, Phi = .094; Poems: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 661.799, p = .000, Phi = .344; Code: chi^2 (1, N = 5,592) = 119.345, p = .000, Phi = .146; Comedy: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 133.320, p = .000, Phi = .182

When exploring the difference between public and **private writing**, significantly more KS2 than KS4 girls said that they write something outside school that they don't share with anyone (69.8% vs. 40.3%)[37].

KS2 girls are significantly more likely to **think positively about writing** than KS4 girls[38]. **Figure 26**, which illustrates the difference between the two groups for each of the attitudinal items, shows that three times as many KS2 as KS4 girls say that writing is cool. More KS2 than KS4 girls also agree that if they are a good writer they will get a better job when they grow up and that the more they write, the better they become. However, KS2 girls are also twice as likely as KS4 girls to agree that they write "txt" speak in class. They are also more likely to see writing as a gendered activity.

Figure 26: Percentage agreement with attitudinal items for KS2 and KS4 girls in 2015

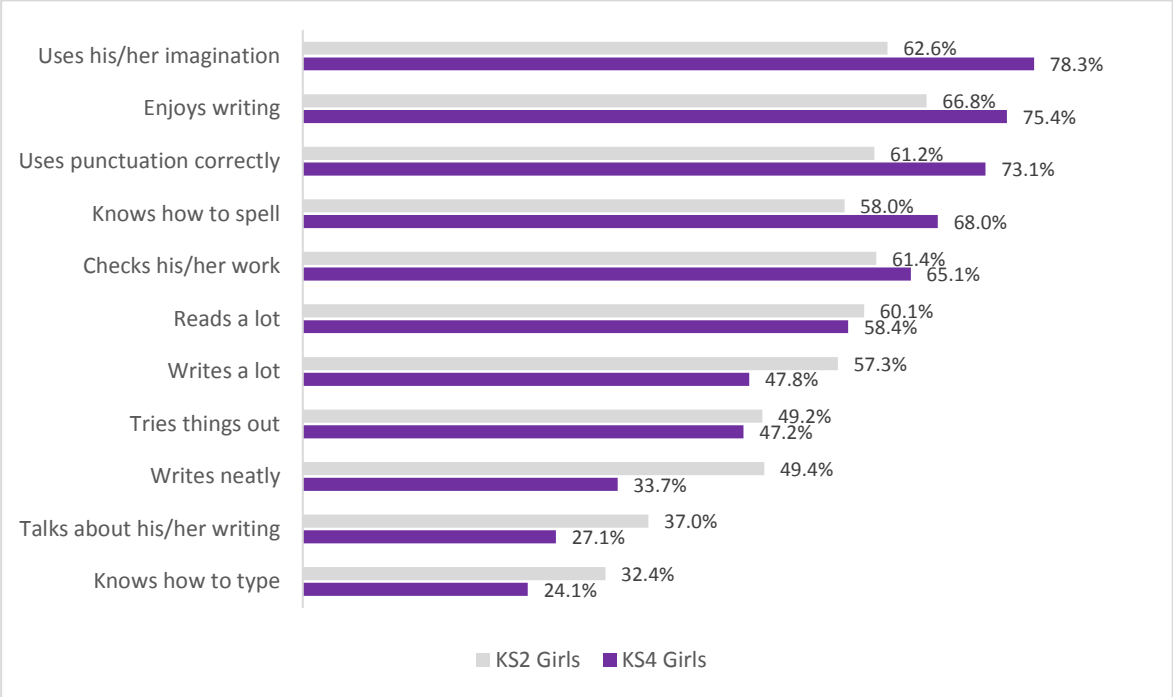


*(*Indicates items in writing scale)*

There were also some differences in the perceptions of KS2 and KS4 girls of **what makes a good writer** (see **Figure 27**). Significantly more KS4 than KS2 girls believe that a good writer uses his or her imagination, enjoys writing, uses punctuation correctly and knows how to spell. Conversely, significantly more KS2 than KS4 girls said that a good writer writes a lot, writes neatly, talks about his or her writing and knows how to type[39].

[37] chi^2 (1, N = 3,400) = 298.284, p = .000, Phi = .296
[38] KS2 girls: M = 2.143, SD = .795; KS4 girls: M = 2.600, SD = .728; t(4506.985) = -20.921, p = .000, d = .599, Mdif = -.457, CI95%(-.499, -.414); adjusted for unequal variances
[39] Uses imagination: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 114.815, p = .000, Phi = -.196; Enjoys writing: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 35.541, p = .000, Phi = -.094; Uses punctuation: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 63.509, p = .000, Phi = -.126; Knows how to spell: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 42.379, p = .000, Phi = -.103; Writes a lot: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 36.369, p = .000, Phi = .095; Writes neatly: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 100.081, p = .000, Phi = .158; Talks about writing: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 43.561, p = .000, Phi = .104; Knows how to type: chi^2 (1, N = 4,006) = 33.204, p = .000, Phi = .091

Figure 27: Characteristics of a good writer for KS2 and KS4 girls in 2015

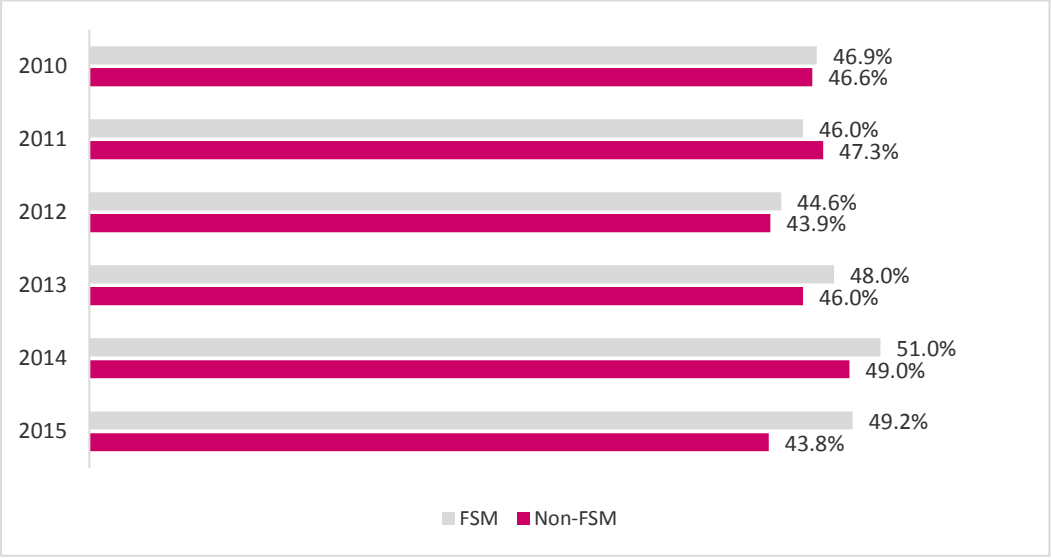


Linking writing and socioeconomic background (using free school meal uptake as a proxy indicator)

In 2015, pupils who receive free school meals (FSM) are significantly more likely than their peers who do not receive FSM to **enjoy writing**[40]. In terms of percentages, 49.2% of FSM pupils say that they enjoy writing either very much or quite a lot compared with 43.8% of non-FSM pupils. It might be worth noting that in 2015 there was no significant difference between FSM and non-FSM pupils with respect to their reading enjoyment.

Figure 28 shows that levels of writing enjoyment have decreased for both FSM and non-FSM pupils over the past year and that the drop in writing enjoyment was bigger for non-FSM pupils (5.2 percentage points) than for FSM pupils (1.8 percentage points). As a result, the gap in writing enjoyment has increased between 2014 and 2015, rising from a 2 percentage point difference in 2014 to a 5.4 percentage point difference in 2015.

Figure 28: Levels of writing enjoyment by FSM uptake from 2010 to 2015

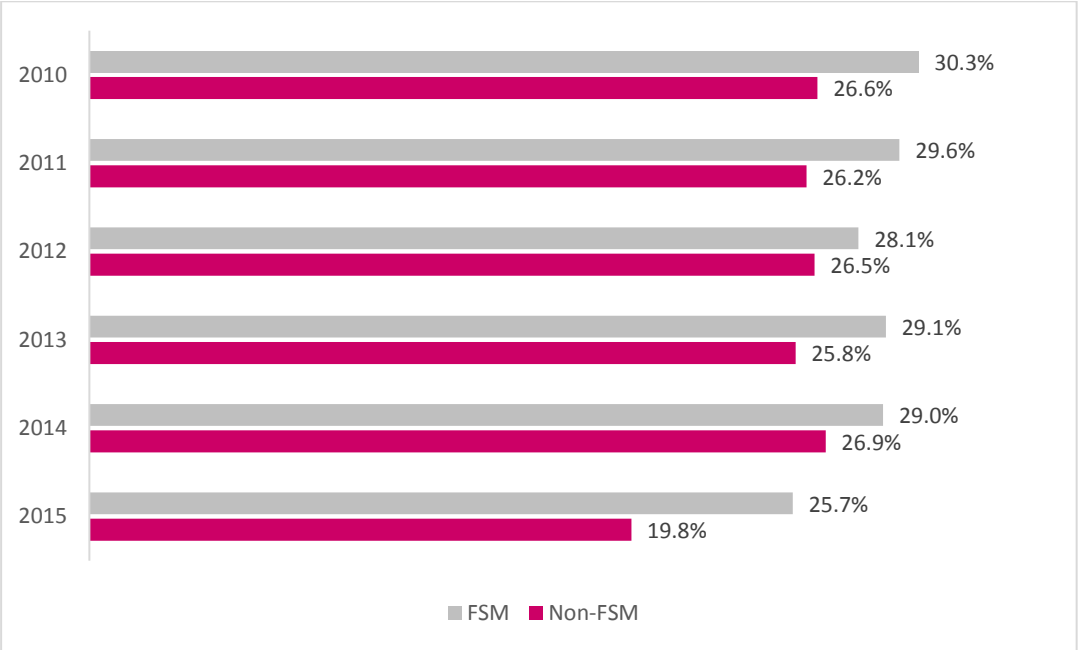


[40] Mann Whitney U (28,152) = 45240487.50, Z = -7.410, p = .000, r = -.044; FSM: Mdn = 3; non-FSM: Mdn = 3

There is also a significant difference in **writing frequency**[41], with FSM pupils writing more often outside class than non-FSM pupils. In terms of percentages, 1 in 4 (25.7%) FSM pupils say that they write something that isn't for school on a daily basis compared with 1 in 5 (19.8%) non-FSM pupils. Again, this is a different dynamic to that seen in reading, where more non-FSM than FSM pupils say that they read outside class on a daily basis.

Figure 29 outlines the difference in daily writing levels between FSM and non-FSM pupils over time and shows that 2015 has the lowest daily writing levels for both non-FSM and FSM pupils since we first asked the question in 2010. It also shows that the decrease is more pronounced for non-FSM pupils (7.1 percentage points) than for FSM pupils (3.3 percentage points). As a result, the gap in daily writing has increased between the two groups, rising from a 2.1 percentage point difference in 2014 to a 5.9 percentage point difference in 2015.

Figure 29: Levels of daily writing by FSM uptake from 2010 to 2015



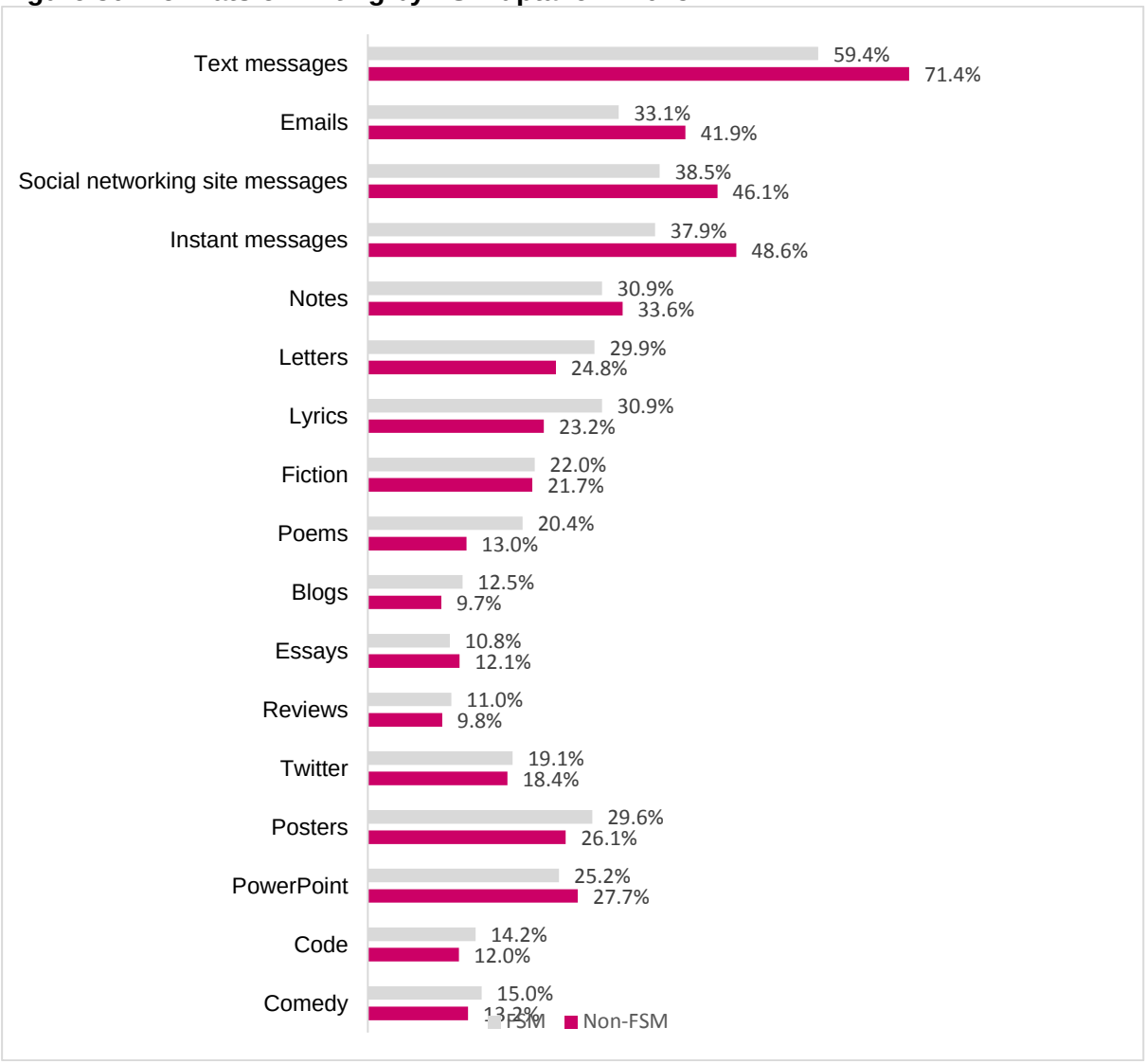
There were also some significant differences[42] in terms of the **formats** that children and young people write outside class (see **Figure 30**), with more FSM than non-FSM pupils saying that they write lyrics, letters and poems outside class. By contrast, more non-FSM than FSM pupils say that they engage in technology-based writing, such as messages on social networking sites, emails, text messages and instant messages.

Some of these differences can, at least in part, be explained by a differing **access** at home to computers or laptops (FSM pupils 87.8%; non-FSM pupils 95.0%) and the internet (FSM pupils 93.3%; non-FSM pupils 98.1%)[43]. Significantly more non-FSM than FSM pupils also say that they have a profile on a social networking site (75.9% vs. 68.9%). There were no significant differences between the two groups in terms of having a mobile phone or smartphone (FSM pupils 78.1%; non-FSM pupils 82.3%), their own computer or laptop (FSM pupils 69.8%; non-FSM pupils 71.3%) or their own tablet (FSM pupils 73.3%; non-FSM pupils 73.3%).

[41] Mann Whitney U (28,127) = 44652321.50, Z = -8.288, p = .000, r = -.049; FSM: Mdn = 2; non-FSM: Mdn = 3
[42] Lyrics: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 121.642, p = .000, Phi = .063; Letters: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 51.537, p = .000, Phi = .041; Poems: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 170.958, p = .000, Phi = .075; Messages on social networking sites: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 87.470, p = .000, Phi = -.054; Emails: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 120.601, p = .000, Phi = -.063; Text messages: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 255.224, p = .000, Phi = -.092; Instant messages: chi^2 (1, N = 30,382) = 173.427, p = .000, Phi = -.076
[43] Access to computer/laptop at home: chi^2 (1, N = 25,319) = 274.785, p = .000, Phi = -.104; internet at home: chi^2 (1, N = 25,519) = 287.066, p = .000, Phi = -.106; profile on a social networking site: chi^2 (1, N = 24,546) = 76.243, p = .000, Phi = -.56; It should be noted that while these are statistically significant, the size of the difference is very small as indicated by the small Phi values.

Overall, FSM pupils are more likely than non-FSM pupils to engage in **private writing**[44], with 53.8% of FSM and 44.8% of non-FSM pupils saying that they write things outside class that they don't share with anyone else. Not only are FSM pupils more likely to do some private writing, but they also do it more frequently[45]. For example, 24.0% of FSM pupils say that they write something they don't share with anyone on a daily basis compared with only 17.6% of non-FSM pupils.

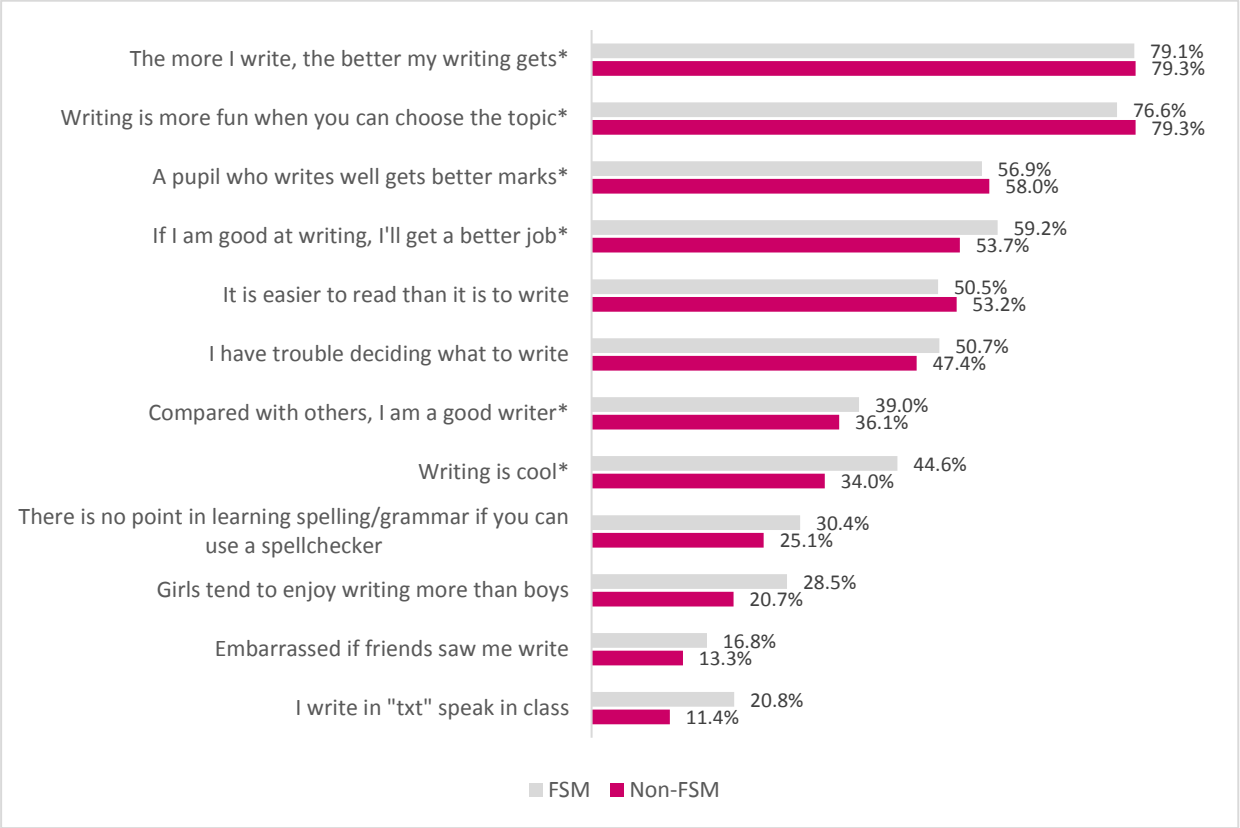
Figure 30: Formats of writing by FSM uptake in 2015



FSM pupils **think more positively about writing** than non-FSM pupils[46]. The differences in percentages for each of the individual writing statements are shown in **Figure 31**. More FSM than non-FSM pupils agree that writing is cool and that if they are good at writing, they will get a better job when they grow up. However, they are also more likely to agree that girls enjoy writing more than boys and that they write "txt" speak in class.

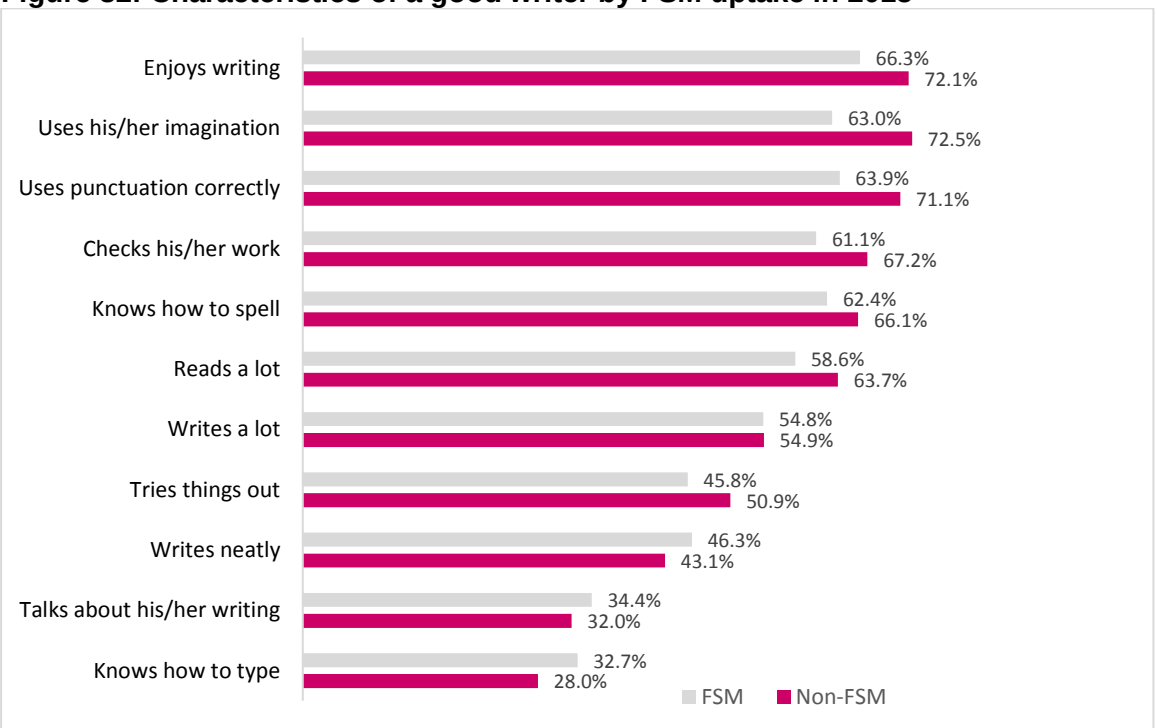
[44] chi^2 (1, N = 20,380) = 72.940, p = .000, Phi = .060
[45] Mann Whitney U (9,418) = 4931586.000, Z = -6.76, p = .000, r = -.069; FSM: Mdn = 2; non-FSM: Mdn = 3
[46] FSM: M = 2.336, SD = .814; non-FSM: M = 2.403, SD = .734, t(5083.704) = -4.836, p = .000, d = .086 , Mdif = -.067, CI 95%(-.094, -.039)

Figure 31: Percentage agreement with attitudinal items by FSM uptake in 2015



Finally, there were some differences in what FSM and non-FSM pupils think **makes someone a good writer**[47]. More non-FSM than FSM pupils believe that a good writer uses his or her imagination, tries things out and uses punctuation correctly (see **Figure 32**).

Figure 32: Characteristics of a good writer by FSM uptake in 2015



[47] Uses imagination: chi^2 (1, N = 23,456) = 115.885, p = .000, Phi = -.070; Uses punctuation correctly: chi^2 (1, N = 23,456) = 64.739, p = .000, Phi = -.053

Linking enjoyment of writing, writing frequency and attitudes towards writing with writing attainment

We had writing attainment data[48] for 3,311 KS2 pupils in 2015. Of these, 91.4% wrote at either the expected level for their age (73.4%) or above the expected level for their age (18.0%). 8.6% of pupils wrote below the expected level for their age. Overall, writing attainment in this sample is in line with the national average for this age group[49].

Our analysis shows that there is a clear relationship between writing enjoyment and writing attainment. Seven times as many children and young people who enjoy writing very much write above the level expected for their age compared with children and young people who do not enjoy writing at all (50.3% vs. 7.2%; see **Table 1**). In contrast, nearly 14 times as many children and young people who do not enjoy writing at all write below the expected level compared with those who enjoy writing very much (40.5% vs. 3.0%).

Table 1: Enjoyment of writing and writing attainment in 2015 (N = 3,311)

	Below expected level %	*At expected level %*	*Above expected level %*
Very much	3.0	46.7	50.3
Quite a lot	2.5	77.8	19.7
A bit	17.4	75.2	7.4
Not at all	40.5	52.3	7.2

Table 2 shows that five times as many children and young people who write outside school every day write above the expected level for their age compared with young people who never write outside school (30.9% vs. 5.8%). Overall, a third of children and young people who never write outside school write below the level expected for their age.

Table 2: Writing frequency and writing attainment in 2015 (N = 3,311)

	Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
Every day	5.5	63.9	30.9
A few times a week	5.5	75.2	19.3
About once a week	5.2	79.9	14.9
A few times a month	6.1	79.5	14.4
About once a month	7.7	78.3	14.0
Rarely	13.3	77.8	8.9
Never	33.2	61.0	5.8

[48] The attainment data contained a varied set of levels so we re-categorised the data to form three crude categories: below expected level for their age, at expected level for their age and above expected level for their age.
[49] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/456343/SFR30_2015_text.pdf

Children and young people who hold more positive attitudes towards writing are also the ones who are more likely to write at or above the level expected for their age compared with those who hold more negative attitudes (see **Table 3**). For example, a greater percentage of those who agree with the statement that "writing is cool" write above the level expected for their age compared with those who disagree with this statement.

Table 3: Percentage agreement and disagreement with attitudinal items and writing attainment in 2015 (N = 3,311)

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
The more I write, the better my writing gets	Agreement	5.4	74.7	19.9
	Disagreement	30.0	56.6	11.4
Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic	Agreement	6.7	74.7	18.6
	Disagreement	19.8	62.2	17.9
A pupil who writes well gets better marks	Agreement	7.9	72.9	19.2
	Disagreement	9.8	69.9	20.3
It is easier to read than it is to write	Agreement	10.7	67.4	21.9
	Disagreement	6.7	74.7	18.6
If I'm good at writing, it means I'll get a better job when I grow up	Agreement	6.7	71.4	21.8
	Disagreement	14.2	72.1	13.7
I have trouble deciding what to write	Agreement	12.0	75.1	12.9
	Disagreement	3.7	65.4	30.9
Compared with others, I am a good writer	Agreement	2.2	62.2	35.5
	Disagreement	30.5	65.2	4.3
Girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys	Agreement	9.4	76.3	14.3
	Disagreement	7.7	67.7	24.6
Writing is cool	Agreement	3.6	65.6	30.8
	Disagreement	17.7	72.4	9.9
I write in "txt" speak in class	Agreement	10.9	66.3	22.8
	Disagreement	6.5	75.9	17.7

		Below expected level %	At expected level %	Above expected level %
I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write	Agreement	13.4	66.5	20.1
	Disagreement	6.5	74.0	19.6
If you can use a spellchecker there is no point learning spelling and grammar	Agreement	19.8	62.7	17.5
	Disagreement	12.0	70.5	17.6

Please note that while writing enjoyment, writing frequency and writing attitudes are related to writing attainment, our research design can make no inference about causality: that is, higher attainment may lead to greater writing enjoyment, more frequent writing or more positive writing attitudes; or alternatively, higher writing enjoyment, more frequent writing or more positive writing attitudes may lead to higher attainment. Indeed, the relationship might be cyclical. We have set up a longitudinal subsample within our annual literacy survey, which will hopefully give us more information about the direction of associations in the future.

Children's and young people's writing in 2015 – data tables

The following pages contain the data tables for each of our writing questions. Each table contains information pertaining to the sample as a whole (top purple row) as well as broken down by demographic background: gender, key stage, free school meal (FSM) uptake and ethnic background[50]. The shaded areas at the bottom of the table contain information where two demographic background variables have been combined to provide a more detailed look into particular subgroups of young people.

Please note that due to rounding, the data in the tables do not necessarily add up to 100 in each row.

[50] See **Appendix B** and **C** for more information on the demographic breakdown of our 2015 sample

Table 4: Enjoyment of writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background

How much do you enjoy writing?	*Very much*	*Quite a lot*	*Overall enjoyment*	*A bit*	*Not at all*
All (N = 32,569)	**16.7%**	**28.1%**	**44.8%**	**41.2%**	**14.0%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	12.7%	24.1%	36.8%	43.8%	19.4%
Girls (N = 16,746)	20.1%	31.7%	51.9%	39.0%	9.1%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	32.0%	32.1%	64.1%	28.2%	7.7%
KS3 (N = 20,512	13.1%	28.0%	41.1%	44.5%	14.4%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	9.2%	22.3%	31.5%	46.5%	22.1%
KS5 (N = 695)	15.4%	26.8%	42.3%	41.0%	16.7%
FSM (N = 4,432)	22.3%	26.9%	49.2%	37.1%	13.8%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	15.4%	28.4%	43.8%	42.2%	14.0%
White (N = 20,614)	15.7%	27.3%	43.0%	42.2%	14.8%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	19.0%	30.3%	49.3%	39.1%	11.6%
Asian (N = 3,558)	18.0%	32.2%	50.2%	39.8%	9.9%
Black (N = 1,208)	22.3%	31.3%	53.6%	34.4%	11.9%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	26.3%	30.4%	56.7%	32.4%	10.9%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	37.7%	33.8%	71.6%	24.0%	4.4%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	9.2%	23.1%	32.3%	47.3%	20.4%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	16.4%	32.3%	48.8%	42.1%	9.1%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	6.2%	17.7%	23.8%	47.8%	28.3%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	11.7%	26.3%	38.1%	45.5%	16.4%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	11.0%	24.2%	35.2%	39.0%	25.8%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	18.5%	29.0%	47.5%	42.4%	10.2%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	18.0%	24.5%	42.5%	38.8%	18.7%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	26.1%	29.2%	55.3%	35.6%	9.1%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	11.6%	24.0%	35.6%	44.9%	19.5%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	18.8%	32.4%	51.1%	39.8%	9.1%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	11.8%	22.9%	34.7%	44.6%	20.8%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	19.1%	31.3%	50.4%	40.1%	9.5%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	13.3%	26.1%	39.4%	46.4%	14.2%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	23.5%	34.0%	57.5%	33.2%	9.3%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	15.2%	30.2%	45.4%	40.8%	13.7%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	21.0%	34.5%	55.5%	38.7%	5.8%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	19.8%	26.3%	46.0%	37.5%	16.5%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	24.2%	34.5%	58.8%	32.4%	8.9%

Table 5: Writing frequency outside class in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background

How often do you write something that isn't for school?	*Every day*	*A few times a week*	*About once a week*	*A few times a month*	*About once a month*	*Rarely*	*Never*
All (N = 32,569)	**20.7%**	**24.6%**	**12.1%**	**9.6%**	**4.9%**	**20.4%**	**7.7%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	17.0%	22.3%	11.4%	9.5%	5.3%	23.9%	10.6%
Girls (N = 16,746)	23.9%	26.7%	12.8%	9.7%	4.7%	17.2%	5.1%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	25.2%	28.3%	11.9%	7.9%	3.9%	14.1%	8.8%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	20.2%	24.3%	12.5%	10.2%	5.2%	21.0%	6.7%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	15.4%	20.0%	11.0%	9.5%	5.8%	27.1%	11.2%
KS5 (N = 695)	23.5%	22.6%	10.0%	8.5%	3.8%	24.2%	7.4%
FSM (N = 4,432)	25.7%	26.4%	11.2%	6.9%	4.1%	17.0%	8.7%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	19.8%	24.2%	12.3%	10.1%	5.1%	21.0%	7.4%
White (N = 20,614)	19.9%	23.7%	11.8%	9.9%	5.0%	22.0%	7.7%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	24.8%	24.8%	12.3%	9.1%	5.3%	17.6%	6.2%
Asian (N = 3,558)	21.9%	29.2%	13.6%	9.0%	4.5%	15.2%	6.7%
Black (N = 1,208)	24.1%	23.7%	11.5%	9.5%	5.5%	16.3%	9.4%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	20.4%	24.6%	11.8%	8.2%	5.1%	18.0%	11.9%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	30.0%	32.1%	12.3%	7.6%	2.7%	10.0%	5.3%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	16.2%	21.8%	11.5%	10.1%	5.4%	25.4%	9.7%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	23.6%	26.7%	13.2%	10.4%	4.9%	17.2%	4.1%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	14.9%	20.0%	10.4%	9.4%	5.1%	27.4%	12.8%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	15.8%	19.9%	11.7%	9.5%	6.4%	26.9%	9.8%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	19.5%	26.0%	7.3%	7.3%	5.3%	25.2%	9.5%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	26.4%	20.5%	12.1%	9.4%	2.7%	22.9%	5.9%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	21.0%	24.5%	10.8%	7.0%	4.5%	19.7%	12.4%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	29.7%	28.4%	11.6%	6.7%	3.8%	14.5%	5.3%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	16.2%	22.0%	11.5%	10.0%	5.4%	24.8%	10.0%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	22.9%	26.2%	13.1%	10.3%	4.9%	17.7%	5.0%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	15.6%	21.2%	11.0%	9.7%	5.6%	26.2%	10.8%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	23.7%	26.0%	12.5%	10.0%	4.6%	18.2%	5.0%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	21.8%	22.5%	11.8%	8.5%	4.9%	22.9%	7.6%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	27.0%	26.6%	12.9%	9.7%	5.6%	13.3%	4.8%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	20.9%	27.6%	12.9%	8.9%	4.3%	16.9%	8.5%

How often do you write something that isn't for school?							
	Every day	*A few times a week*	*About once a week*	*A few times a month*	*About once a month*	*Rarely*	*Never*
All (N = 32,569)	**20.7%**	**24.6%**	**12.1%**	**9.6%**	**4.9%**	**20.4%**	**7.7%**
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	22.9%	30.9%	14.2%	9.0%	4.8%	13.6%	4.6%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	21.5%	20.7%	11.4%	10.8%	5.8%	17.0%	12.8%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	25.7%	26.2%	11.0%	8.8%	5.4%	15.8%	7.1%

Table 6: Formats of writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background (Part 1)

What do you write outside class at least once a month (not counting what you write for school)?	*Text messages* %	*Social networking messages* %	*Emails* %	*Instant messages* %	*Notes* %	*Twitter* %	*Lyrics* %
All	**68.6%**	**44.3%**	**39.9%**	**46.2%**	**33.0%**	**18.3%**	**24.6%**
Boys	62.6%	40.7%	38.3%	41.2%	24.1%	18.6%	14.5%
Girls	74.4%	47.8%	41.4%	51.0%	41.4%	18.0%	33.8%
KS2	41.5%	19.4%	22.1%	21.6%	28.9%	9.8%	30.2%
KS3	75.9%	49.5%	44.0%	51.6%	35.4%	18.6%	24.5%
KS4	77.7%	58.6%	45.9%	59.8%	29.0%	28.6%	17.2%
KS5	80.6%	59.0%	65.2%	55.7%	30.8%	35.4%	14.1%
FSM	59.4%	38.5%	33.1%	37.9%	30.9%	19.1%	30.9%
Non-FSM	71.4%	46.1%	41.9%	48.6%	33.6%	18.4%	23.2%
White	77.3%	50.8%	44.4%	52.5%	36.7%	21.2%	26.5%
Mixed	71.6%	48.5%	41.5%	50.9%	37.1%	18.5%	30.8%
Asian	67.9%	39.5%	42.7%	43.3%	33.8%	14.8%	22.0%
Black	68.5%	45.0%	39.5%	48.9%	37.3%	17.5%	35.8%
Boys: KS2	38.6%	19.9%	22.9%	20.2%	23.4%	12.1%	18.3%
Girls: KS2	44.8%	19.0%	21.5%	23.3%	34.9%	7.4%	42.6%
Boys: KS3	69.7%	45.5%	42.3%	45.9%	25.3%	19.8%	13.7%
Girls: KS3	81.6%	53.3%	45.5%	57.0%	44.5%	17.4%	34.0%
Boys: KS4	71.0%	54.1%	44.2%	55.7%	20.1%	23.1%	11.6%
Girls: KS4	83.8%	62.6%	47.5%	63.3%	37.1%	33.7%	22.0%
Boys: KS5	71.3%	50.9%	58.4%	48.1%	23.5%	28.7%	10.9%
Girls: KS5	87.4%	65.2%	70.5%	61.2%	36.3%	39.8%	16.4%
Boys: FSM	53.5%	36.5%	33.9%	32.8%	22.8%	20.5%	17.9%
Girls: FSM	65.5%	40.7%	32.5%	42.9%	38.8%	17.7%	43.0%
Boys: Non-FSM	65.4%	42.3%	39.9%	43.6%	24.4%	18.5%	13.5%
Girls: Non-FSM	77.0%	49.8%	43.7%	53.3%	42.1%	18.3%	31.9%
Boys: White	70.3%	45.9%	42.5%	46.3%	26.7%	20.8%	14.7%
Girls: White	83.7%	55.5%	46.1%	58.2%	45.7%	21.6%	36.8%
Boys: Mixed	66.3%	46.8%	40.5%	47.4%	28.6%	21.1%	20.0%
Girls: Mixed	76.5%	50.2%	42.8%	54.0%	44.8%	16.2%	40.3%
Boys: Asian	63.4%	39.4%	41.5%	41.1%	26.1%	16.9%	15.7%
Girls: Asian	73.0%	39.9%	44.5%	46.0%	42.3%	12.5%	28.8%
Boys: Black	58.8%	42.0%	34.9%	41.0%	22.6%	19.8%	25.3%
Girls: Black	76.4%	48.0%	42.7%	55.2%	48.1%	15.8%	43.1%

Table 6: Formats of writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background (Part 2)

What do you write outside class at least once a month (not counting what you write for school)?	*Letters*	*Fiction*	*Code*	*Poems*	*Blogs*	*Essays*	*Reviews*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
All	**25.8%**	**21.9%**	**12.5%**	**14.5%**	**10.3%**	**11.9%**	**10.1%**
Boys	22.1%	16.8%	16.0%	10.7%	8.9%	10.2%	9.4%
Girls	29.1%	26.6%	9.2%	17.9%	11.5%	13.5%	10.6%
KS2	37.2%	28.1%	16.6%	30.7%	12.6%	6.8%	12.4%
KS3	24.3%	21.7%	11.8%	10.7%	9.8%	12.0%	9.7%
KS4	14.7%	14.1%	10.1%	6.2%	8.2%	16.8%	8.1%
KS5	18.3%	12.8%	6.3%	9.6%	12.9%	32.7%	8.5%
FSM	29.9%	22.0%	14.2%	20.4%	12.5%	10.8%	11.0%
Non-FSM	24.8%	21.7%	12.0%	13.0%	9.7%	12.1%	9.8%
White	27.8%	23.1%	13.1%	14.2%	10.8%	11.5%	10.0%
Mixed	32.4%	27.1%	17.7%	20.9%	13.8%	15.5%	14.4%
Asian	25.7%	24.9%	13.1%	16.4%	10.3%	17.8%	12.3%
Black	28.9%	29.4%	15.4%	23.0%	13.0%	23.2%	14.6%
Boys: KS2	32.5%	22.6%	18.8%	23.2%	12.1%	6.2%	10.9%
Girls: KS2	42.1%	34.0%	14.4%	38.5%	13.2%	7.2%	14.1%
Boys: KS3	20.6%	16.3%	15.3%	7.4%	8.2%	10.1%	9.1%
Girls: KS3	27.6%	26.4%	8.6%	13.7%	11.2%	13.7%	10.2%
Boys: KS4	11.7%	9.7%	15.6%	4.7%	6.3%	14.8%	8.4%
Girls: KS4	17.5%	17.8%	5.1%	7.4%	9.8%	18.6%	7.9%
Boys: KS5	15.4%	10.2%	9.9%	7.2%	8.5%	27.6%	9.6%
Girls: KS5	20.2%	14.6%	3.5%	11.3%	16.1%	36.5%	7.6%
Boys: FSM	25.0%	16.4%	16.9%	15.0%	10.9%	9.1%	9.7%
Girls: FSM	34.4%	27.2%	11.6%	25.3%	14.0%	12.4%	12.2%
Boys: Non-FSM	21.3%	16.6%	15.7%	9.5%	8.3%	10.4%	9.4%
Girls: Non-FSM	27.8%	26.3%	8.6%	16.1%	11.1%	13.8%	10.2%
Boys: White	23.2%	17.1%	16.9%	10.2%	8.9%	9.5%	9.0%
Girls: White	31.7%	28.4%	9.5%	17.7%	12.6%	13.3%	10.8%
Boys: Mixed	29.8%	20.4%	21.9%	14.9%	13.2%	13.2%	14.4%
Girls: Mixed	34.7%	32.7%	14.4%	26.0%	14.4%	17.3%	14.5%
Boys: Asian	24.8%	21.5%	16.6%	13.7%	10.5%	17.6%	12.9%
Girls: Asian	26.8%	28.7%	9.3%	19.3%	10.2%	18.0%	12.0%
Boys: Black	25.5%	23.0%	19.0%	19.2%	12.7%	16.6%	13.9%
Girls: Black	31.7%	34.1%	12.9%	25.6%	13.3%	28.1%	15.2%

Table 6: Formats of writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background (Part 3)

	Posters %	*PowerPoints %*
All	**26.8%**	**27.2%**
Boys	21.9%	24.7%
Girls	31.3%	29.7%
KS2	35.8%	26.3%
KS3	27.0%	29.1%
KS4	13.3%	19.8%
KS5	10.2%	27.9%
FSM	29.6%	25.2%
Non-FSM	26.1%	27.7%
White	28.0%	28.1%
Mixed	32.4%	31.8%
Asian	31.0%	34.8%
Black	34.5%	35.7%
Boys: KS2	30.1%	22.0%
Girls: KS2	42.0%	31.0%
Boys: KS3	21.5%	26.6%
Girls: KS3	31.9%	31.3%
Boys: KS4	10.9%	20.0%
Girls: KS4	15.4%	19.5%
Boys: KS5	9.6%	24.6%
Girls: KS5	10.6%	30.5%
Boys: FSM	23.7%	21.3%
Girls: FSM	35.3%	29.1%
Boys: Non-FSM	21.1%	25.3%
Girls: Non-FSM	30.5%	29.9%
Boys: White	22.6%	25.2%
Girls: White	32.8%	30.6%
Boys: Mixed	27.4%	29.3%
Girls: Mixed	36.9%	34.1%
Boys: Asian	27.0%	33.8%
Girls: Asian	35.6%	36.1%
Boys: Black	28.3%	31.1%
Girls: Black	39.1%	39.1%

Table 7.1: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – The more I write, the better my writing gets

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**79.2%**	**10.9%**	**5.5%**	**4.4%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	77.7%	11.3%	6.8%	4.3%
Girls (N = 16,746)	80.5%	10.5%	4.4%	4.6%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	87.1%	4.8%	3.8%	4.3%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	78.8%	11.3%	5.5%	4.3%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	69.2%	17.2%	8.0%	5.6%
KS5 (N = 695)	73.1%	17.0%	7.0%	2.9%
FSM (N = 4,432)	79.1%	9.9%	6.3%	4.8%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	79.3%	11.2%	5.4%	4.2%
White (N = 20,614)	78.6%	11.5%	5.8%	4.1%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	82.3%	8.9%	4.2%	4.6%
Asian (N = 3,558)	82.4%	9.1%	4.3%	4.2%
Black (N = 1,208)	79.6%	10.0%	5.6%	4.8%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	86.0%	5.3%	4.3%	4.3%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	88.3%	4.2%	3.3%	4.2%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	77.3%	11.7%	7.0%	4.0%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	80.2%	11.1%	4.1%	4.6%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	66.3%	18.5%	9.5%	5.6%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	71.5%	16.1%	6.8%	5.6%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	70.2%	18.3%	7.9%	3.6%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	75.0%	16.1%	6.4%	2.5%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	77.6%	9.9%	7.9%	4.6%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	80.6%	9.9%	4.6%	4.9%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	77.9%	11.6%	6.6%	3.9%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	80.5%	10.8%	4.3%	4.4%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	77.5%	11.7%	7.0%	3.8%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	79.5%	11.3%	4.7%	4.4%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	79.8%	10.5%	5.6%	4.1%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	84.1%	7.8%	3.0%	5.1%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	80.2%	10.4%	5.1%	4.4%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	84.8%	7.9%	3.4%	3.9%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	77.1%	11.0%	6.9%	5.0%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	81.6%	9.1%	4.6%	4.7%

Table 7.2: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Writing is more fun when you can choose the topic

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**78.5%**	**11.6%**	**5.4%**	**4.5%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	78.7%	11.1%	5.8%	4.5%
Girls (N = 16,746)	78.5%	12.1%	5.0%	4.4%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	79.3%	7.9%	7.1%	5.7%
KS3 (N = 20,512	79.8%	11.6%	4.7%	3.9%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	72.6%	16.2%	6.0%	5.2%
KS5 (N = 695)	70.5%	20.3%	5.5%	3.7%
FSM (N = 4,432)	76.6%	11.0%	7.3%	5.0%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	79.3%	11.7%	5.0%	4.0%
White (N = 20,614)	79.6%	11.5%	5.1%	3.8%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	78.8%	10.6%	4.7%	5.9%
Asian (N = 3,558)	76.8%	12.1%	5.8%	5.4%
Black (N = 1,208)	78.0%	10.6%	6.1%	5.4%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	79.7%	8.0%	7.1%	5.3%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	78.8%	7.8%	7.2%	6.2%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	80.1%	10.7%	5.2%	4.0%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	79.6%	12.4%	4.1%	3.8%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	72.0%	16.4%	6.1%	5.5%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	73.0%	16.1%	6.0%	4.9%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	66.0%	22.5%	6.7%	4.7%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	73.5%	18.7%	4.7%	3.1%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	76.2%	11.0%	7.8%	5.0%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	77.1%	11.1%	6.7%	5.1%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	79.5%	11.0%	5.4%	4.1%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	79.1%	12.4%	4.5%	4.0%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	80.4%	10.6%	5.3%	3.6%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	79.0%	12.3%	4.8%	3.9%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	77.7%	10.7%	5.2%	6.3%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	79.4%	10.7%	4.4%	5.4%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	76.6%	11.6%	6.4%	5.5%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	76.8%	12.6%	5.1%	5.5%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	73.7%	11.4%	7.3%	7.5%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	81.0%	9.9%	5.1%	4.0%

Table 7.3: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – A pupil who writes well gets better marks

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**57.4%**	**21.7%**	**12.0%**	**8.9%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	60.6%	19.3%	12.3%	7.8%
Girls (N = 16,746)	54.4%	24.0%	11.7%	9.9%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	56.4%	15.3%	15.7%	12.5%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	56.9%	23.5%	11.3%	8.4%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	60.4%	23.0%	10.0%	6.6%
KS5 (N = 695)	61.1%	24.0%	9.8%	5.1%
FSM (N = 4,432)	56.9%	19.3%	14.3%	9.6%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	58.0%	22.3%	11.3%	8.4%
White (N = 20,614)	57.3%	22.5%	11.9%	8.2%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	58.1%	21.1%	11.8%	9.0%
Asian (N = 3,558)	59.2%	18.7%	11.8%	10.3%
Black (N = 1,208)	55.9%	22.1%	12.6%	9.5%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	59.5%	14.4%	15.2%	10.9%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	53.2%	16.2%	16.5%	14.2%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	60.8%	20.5%	11.6%	7.0%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	53.4%	26.2%	11.0%	9.5%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	60.5%	21.6%	11.4%	6.5%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	60.4%	24.1%	8.7%	6.7%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	62.4%	21.6%	11.2%	4.8%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	60.1%	25.7%	8.9%	5.3%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	58.9%	18.7%	14.8%	7.6%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	55.0%	19.8%	13.9%	11.3%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	61.4%	19.6%	11.7%	7.4%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	54.9%	24.8%	11.1%	9.3%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	60.5%	20.1%	12.3%	7.2%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	54.5%	24.8%	11.6%	9.1%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	60.9%	19.1%	12.6%	7.4%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	55.6%	22.8%	11.3%	10.2%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	61.8%	17.4%	11.9%	8.9%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	56.3%	20.1%	11.6%	12.0%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	61.9%	17.7%	12.5%	8.0%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	51.4%	25.4%	12.6%	10.6%

Table 7.4: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – It is easier to read than it is to write

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**52.7%**	**24.5%**	**15.2%**	**7.6%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	56.9%	22.0%	14.2%	6.9%
Girls (N = 16,746)	48.7%	26.9%	16.1%	8.3%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	54.4%	18.8%	16.4%	10.4%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	52.3%	25.6%	15.0%	7.2%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	52.8%	27.4%	13.8%	6.0%
KS5 (N = 695)	45.3%	30.4%	20.1%	4.2%
FSM (N = 4,432)	50.5%	21.5%	19.4%	8.6%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	53.2%	25.2%	14.6%	7.0%
White (N = 20,614)	52.6%	25.3%	15.3%	6.8%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	52.4%	24.2%	16.0%	7.4%
Asian (N = 3,558)	55.2%	21.3%	14.3%	9.2%
Black (N = 1,208)	56.1%	22.4%	14.8%	6.7%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	60.2%	16.2%	15.1%	8.5%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	48.7%	21.6%	17.4%	12.3%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	56.8%	22.7%	13.9%	6.5%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	48.2%	28.1%	15.9%	7.8%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	53.9%	26.3%	13.6%	6.2%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	51.6%	28.4%	14.2%	5.8%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	41.6%	35.1%	17.1%	6.1%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	48.0%	27.6%	21.6%	2.8%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	55.2%	18.7%	18.1%	8.0%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	46.2%	24.1%	20.5%	9.2%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	57.5%	22.6%	13.6%	6.3%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	49.3%	27.5%	15.6%	7.6%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	57.5%	22.3%	14.3%	6.0%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	48.2%	28.0%	16.2%	7.6%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	56.4%	21.0%	16.1%	6.5%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	49.2%	26.5%	16.1%	8.2%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	58.0%	20.6%	12.8%	8.7%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	52.3%	22.3%	15.8%	9.6%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	56.2%	19.9%	15.8%	8.1%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	55.8%	24.1%	14.3%	5.8%

Table 7.5: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – If I am good at writing, I'll get a better job

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**54.4%**	**23.6%**	**12.0%**	**9.9%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	57.5%	21.5%	12.5%	8.6%
Girls (N = 16,746)	51.5%	25.6%	11.7%	11.2%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	65.7%	13.1%	9.9%	11.3%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	53.3%	25.1%	11.5%	10.1%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	43.9%	31.3%	16.9%	7.9%
KS5 (N = 695)	41.1%	34.3%	20.3%	4.3%
FSM (N = 4,432)	59.2%	19.1%	12.4%	9.4%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	53.7%	24.6%	12.0%	9.6%
White (N = 20,614)	53.5%	24.8%	12.4%	9.2%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	57.9%	22.5%	10.7%	8.9%
Asian (N = 3,558)	58.2%	20.3%	10.3%	11.2%
Black (N = 1,208)	57.0%	21.0%	11.7%	10.3%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	68.7%	12.6%	9.4%	9.2%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	62.6%	13.6%	10.5%	13.4%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	56.8%	22.8%	11.8%	8.6%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	50.2%	27.2%	11.2%	11.4%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	43.7%	28.8%	19.9%	7.6%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	44.0%	33.3%	14.4%	8.3%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	42.5%	30.4%	21.1%	6.1%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	40.0%	37.2%	19.7%	3.1%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	63.2%	16.9%	12.4%	7.6%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	55.3%	21.2%	12.3%	11.1%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	56.7%	22.4%	12.6%	8.2%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	50.9%	26.6%	11.7%	10.8%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	57.2%	22.4%	12.6%	7.8%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	50.2%	27.0%	12.3%	10.5%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	59.7%	21.7%	11.0%	7.5%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	56.2%	23.2%	10.6%	10.1%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	59.6%	19.2%	11.3%	10.0%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	56.6%	21.7%	9.2%	12.6%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	60.3%	16.6%	14.3%	8.8%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	54.3%	24.1%	10.1%	11.5%

Table 7.6: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I have trouble deciding what to write

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**47.8%**	**24.2%**	**22.3%**	**5.7%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	47.5%	23.7%	23.3%	5.5%
Girls (N = 16,746)	48.2%	24.8%	21.2%	5.8%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	45.5%	17.7%	28.5%	8.3%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	47.2%	26.1%	21.7%	5.0%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	54.3%	25.5%	15.5%	4.8%
KS5 (N = 695)	50.8%	24.9%	19.9%	4.4%
FSM (N = 4,432)	50.7%	20.6%	22.4%	6.3%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	47.4%	25.0%	22.3%	5.3%
White (N = 20,614)	49.7%	24.1%	21.1%	5.0%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	43.6%	26.3%	24.9%	5.2%
Asian (N = 3,558)	40.9%	25.1%	27.5%	6.6%
Black (N = 1,208)	44.0%	23.9%	26.3%	5.8%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	47.3%	17.7%	27.9%	7.1%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	43.5%	17.7%	29.2%	9.6%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	47.3%	25.0%	22.7%	4.9%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	47.2%	27.0%	20.7%	5.1%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	49.2%	26.7%	18.5%	5.6%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	58.7%	24.6%	12.7%	4.0%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	42.5%	29.4%	22.2%	6.0%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	56.4%	22.1%	18.2%	3.4%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	50.0%	20.1%	23.3%	6.5%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	51.5%	21.0%	21.4%	6.1%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	47.0%	24.4%	23.5%	5.1%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	47.8%	25.5%	21.3%	5.4%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	49.7%	23.3%	22.2%	4.7%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	49.7%	24.9%	20.2%	5.3%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	41.2%	26.5%	27.3%	5.0%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	46.0%	26.0%	22.4%	5.6%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	39.5%	25.3%	28.7%	6.5%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	42.5%	24.9%	25.9%	6.7%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	42.0%	23.3%	27.0%	7.6%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	45.4%	24.2%	25.7%	4.7%

Table 7.7: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Compared with others, I am a good writer

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**36.6%**	**32.7%**	**17.9%**	**12.8%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	39.4%	31.2%	18.9%	10.5%
Girls (N = 16,746)	34.1%	34.0%	17.0%	14.9%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	53.8%	19.5%	14.0%	12.7%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	33.0%	35.5%	18.2%	13.3%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	27.7%	39.0%	22.7%	10.6%
KS5 (N = 695)	32.6%	40.0%	18.3%	9.1%
FSM (N = 4,432)	39.0%	27.6%	20.2%	13.1%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	36.1%	34.0%	17.5%	12.4%
White (N = 20,614)	35.6%	33.8%	18.6%	11.9%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	39.7%	31.8%	16.0%	12.6%
Asian (N = 3,558)	38.2%	32.1%	14.5%	15.2%
Black (N = 1,208)	43.6%	28.4%	14.1%	13.9%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	53.6%	19.8%	15.2%	11.3%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	53.7%	19.0%	12.9%	14.4%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	35.8%	34.0%	19.9%	10.3%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	30.5%	36.8%	16.6%	16.0%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	32.1%	37.0%	21.0%	9.8%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	23.9%	40.9%	24.0%	11.3%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	38.2%	36.3%	15.1%	10.4%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	28.5%	42.5%	20.7%	8.4%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	41.8%	25.9%	21.0%	11.3%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	36.2%	29.2%	19.6%	15.0%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	39.0%	32.5%	18.6%	9.9%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	33.5%	35.3%	16.6%	14.6%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	38.3%	32.0%	20.3%	9.3%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	33.2%	35.3%	17.2%	14.3%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	42.0%	31.0%	15.4%	11.6%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	37.7%	32.4%	16.4%	13.5%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	42.6%	30.9%	13.0%	13.4%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	33.3%	33.3%	16.2%	17.2%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	49.4%	24.9%	14.2%	11.6%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	40.0%	30.4%	14.2%	15.5%

Table 7.8: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Writing is cool

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**36.1%**	**33.5%**	**22.6%**	**7.8%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	32.4%	32.9%	27.7%	7.0%
Girls (N = 16,746)	39.1%	34.2%	18.1%	8.6%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	63.1%	15.9%	14.7%	6.3%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	30.6%	36.7%	24.5%	8.2%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	19.8%	43.8%	28.0%	8.5%
KS5 (N = 695)	33.4%	49.3%	12.0%	5.2%
FSM (N = 4,432)	44.6%	26.3%	21.4%	7.6%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	34.0%	35.4%	23.1%	7.6%
White (N = 20,614)	33.5%	35.4%	24.0%	7.1%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	41.1%	30.6%	20.5%	7.9%
Asian (N = 3,558)	43.0%	31.0%	17.3%	8.7%
Black (N = 1,208)	46.8%	25.3%	19.5%	8.4%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	58.5%	17.3%	18.7%	5.6%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	67.6%	14.5%	10.7%	7.1%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	26.7%	36.2%	30.0%	7.1%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	33.9%	37.2%	19.7%	9.2%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	15.8%	41.9%	33.4%	8.9%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	23.0%	45.7%	23.1%	8.3%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	26.9%	47.1%	19.4%	6.6%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	38.1%	50.6%	7.1%	4.3%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	41.6%	26.9%	24.8%	6.7%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	47.2%	25.8%	18.5%	8.5%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	30.4%	34.4%	28.4%	6.7%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	37.1%	36.3%	18.3%	8.3%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	29.7%	34.7%	29.4%	6.3%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	36.8%	36.1%	19.2%	7.9%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	36.3%	31.7%	25.0%	7.1%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	44.4%	30.1%	16.7%	8.8%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	40.9%	30.2%	21.1%	7.8%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	44.9%	32.3%	13.3%	9.5%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	41.4%	23.6%	26.0%	9.0%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	50.4%	26.5%	14.9%	8.2%

Table 7.9: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – Girls tend to enjoy writing more than boys

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**22.0%**	**24.8%**	**40.5%**	**12.6%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	26.8%	24.8%	35.9%	12.4%
Girls (N = 16,746)	17.6%	25.0%	44.7%	12.8%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	28.8%	16.3%	41.5%	13.4%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	20.2%	26.0%	41.2%	12.6%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	19.6%	31.2%	36.9%	12.3%
KS5 (N = 695)	25.1%	32.9%	34.7%	7.3%
FSM (N = 4,432)	28.5%	22.3%	37.4%	11.8%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	20.7%	25.4%	41.5%	12.4%
White (N = 20,614)	21.0%	25.8%	41.4%	11.9%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	21.8%	22.1%	41.4%	14.7%
Asian (N = 3,558)	24.3%	23.5%	38.4%	13.7%
Black (N = 1,208)	24.0%	22.1%	40.5%	13.4%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	28.5%	16.6%	42.4%	12.6%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	28.6%	16.2%	41.0%	14.3%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	26.2%	26.3%	35.1%	12.4%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	14.9%	25.9%	46.3%	12.9%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	25.8%	31.1%	30.2%	13.0%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	14.0%	31.6%	43.0%	11.4%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	32.7%	32.3%	26.3%	8.8%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	19.8%	33.7%	40.1%	6.4%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	31.6%	22.3%	34.3%	11.8%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	25.0%	22.5%	40.6%	11.9%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	25.8%	25.5%	36.5%	12.1%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	16.0%	25.5%	45.8%	12.6%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	25.9%	26.0%	36.5%	11.7%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	16.5%	25.7%	45.7%	12.1%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	25.1%	25.0%	35.3%	14.6%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	19.1%	19.6%	46.7%	14.6%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	28.9%	22.0%	35.0%	14.1%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	19.2%	25.3%	41.9%	13.5%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	29.8%	20.7%	35.9%	13.5%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	20.1%	22.9%	43.6%	13.4%

Table 7.10: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – If you can use a spellchecker there is no point in learning spelling and grammar

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**26.1%**	**16.3%**	**49.2%**	**8.4%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	30.4%	16.1%	44.9%	8.7%
Girls (N = 16,746)	22.0%	16.5%	53.3%	8.2%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	30.6%	10.5%	42.8%	16.2%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	25.7%	17.3%	50.3%	6.7%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	22.7%	20.3%	51.8%	5.2%
KS5 (N = 695)	13.0%	17.6%	66.2%	3.2%
FSM (N = 4,432)	30.4%	16.8%	42.2%	10.6%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	25.1%	16.3%	50.9%	7.6%
White (N = 20,614)	25.9%	16.7%	49.9%	7.5%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	25.3%	15.1%	50.8%	8.9%
Asian (N = 3,558)	26.0%	15.4%	49.0%	9.6%
Black (N = 1,208)	25.1%	15.9%	50.1%	8.8%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	34.5%	10.6%	39.0%	15.8%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	26.3%	10.4%	46.7%	16.6%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	30.1%	16.9%	46.0%	7.0%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	21.7%	17.6%	54.2%	6.5%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	25.9%	21.2%	47.4%	5.5%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	19.7%	19.5%	55.8%	5.0%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	17.2%	16.8%	61.1%	4.9%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	9.6%	18.4%	70.0%	2.0%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	33.9%	15.9%	39.7%	10.5%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	26.7%	17.6%	44.9%	10.8%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	29.5%	16.1%	46.4%	8.0%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	21.1%	16.5%	55.1%	7.3%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	30.1%	16.1%	46.0%	7.8%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	22.1%	17.1%	53.5%	7.3%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	30.5%	15.9%	44.7%	8.9%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	20.6%	14.6%	56.0%	8.8%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	30.4%	15.7%	44.3%	9.6%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	21.1%	15.0%	54.2%	9.7%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	32.7%	17.2%	38.7%	11.4%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	19.9%	15.2%	57.7%	7.3%

Table 7.11: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I write in "txt" speak in class

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**12.9%**	**12.6%**	**58.4%**	**16.0%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	15.2%	14.0%	52.8%	18.0%
Girls (N = 16,746)	10.6%	11.4%	63.6%	14.4%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	18.3%	10.8%	41.6%	29.4%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	12.0%	13.2%	60.9%	13.9%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	9.2%	13.0%	70.2%	7.5%
KS5 (N = 695)	6.5%	9.5%	79.2%	4.8%
FSM (N = 4,432)	20.8%	14.4%	46.8%	18.1%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	11.4%	12.3%	61.5%	14.9%
White (N = 20,614)	12.2%	12.2%	60.8%	14.8%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	13.7%	13.4%	57.3%	15.6%
Asian (N = 3,558)	14.0%	13.6%	53.5%	19.0%
Black (N = 1,208)	14.6%	14.0%	56.1%	15.3%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	20.2%	11.7%	38.6%	29.5%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	16.1%	9.8%	44.7%	29.4%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	14.4%	14.5%	54.9%	16.2%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	9.8%	12.1%	66.2%	11.9%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	11.2%	15.3%	64.7%	8.9%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	7.4%	11.0%	75.2%	6.5%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	7.3%	13.0%	74.0%	5.7%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	5.7%	7.1%	82.9%	4.3%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	22.9%	15.9%	42.3%	18.9%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	18.4%	13.0%	51.3%	17.3%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	13.7%	13.7%	55.6%	17.0%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	9.2%	11.0%	66.8%	13.0%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	14.4%	13.5%	55.4%	16.6%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	10.1%	11.1%	65.5%	13.2%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	17.2%	15.9%	49.4%	17.5%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	10.4%	11.6%	64.1%	13.9%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	16.7%	15.3%	47.5%	20.5%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	10.8%	11.9%	59.9%	17.5%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	19.4%	15.6%	45.2%	19.8%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	11.2%	12.7%	63.6%	12.4%

Table 7.12: Attitudes towards writing in 2015 for the whole sample and broken down by demographic background – I would be embarrassed if friends saw me write

	Overall agreement	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Overall disagreement*	*Don't know*
All (N = 32,569)	**14.1%**	**16.2%**	**62.9%**	**6.9%**
Boys (N = 15,414)	16.8%	17.2%	58.8%	7.2%
Girls (N = 16,746)	11.5%	15.3%	66.7%	6.6%
KS2 (N = 7,097)	16.7%	7.9%	67.8%	7.6%
KS3 (N = 20,512)	13.6%	17.8%	61.7%	6.9%
KS4 (N = 4,163)	13.1%	21.6%	59.1%	6.2%
KS5 (N = 695)	8.1%	15.3%	73.4%	3.2%
FSM (N = 4,432)	16.8%	13.1%	63.4%	6.7%
Non-FSM (N = 25,950)	13.3%	17.0%	63.1%	6.6%
White (N = 20,614)	14.3%	17.5%	61.8%	6.4%
Mixed (N = 1,642)	11.6%	16.3%	65.7%	6.4%
Asian (N = 3,558)	11.8%	12.2%	68.6%	7.4%
Black (N = 1,208)	12.1%	11.4%	70.3%	6.2%
KS2: Boys (N = 3,565)	18.9%	8.8%	64.7%	7.6%
KS2: Girls (N = 3,414)	14.2%	7.0%	71.1%	7.7%
KS3: Boys (N = 9,559)	16.5%	19.2%	57.2%	7.1%
KS3: Girls (N = 10,718)	11.0%	16.6%	65.8%	6.6%
KS4: Boys (N = 1,947)	15.2%	22.1%	55.7%	7.0%
KS4: Girls (N = 2,178)	11.1%	21.2%	62.3%	5.5%
KS5: Boys (N = 293)	11.4%	18.4%	64.9%	5.3%
KS5: Girls (N = 397)	5.7%	13.3%	79.3%	1.7%
Boys: FSM (N = 2,099)	19.1%	13.5%	61.1%	6.2%
Girls: FSM (N = 2,257)	14.4%	12.8%	65.7%	7.2%
Boys: Non-FSM (N = 12,212)	16.2%	18.2%	58.7%	6.9%
Girls: Non-FSM (N = 13,437)	10.7%	15.9%	67.1%	6.2%
Boys: White (N = 9,638)	17.0%	18.5%	58.0%	6.5%
Girls: White (N = 10,735)	11.9%	16.6%	65.2%	6.3%
Boys: Mixed (N = 744)	13.1%	17.5%	62.4%	7.0%
Girls: Mixed (N = 877)	10.1%	15.7%	68.2%	6.0%
Boys: Asian (N = 1,829)	14.7%	13.1%	64.1%	8.1%
Girls: Asian (N = 1,690)	8.6%	11.5%	73.4%	6.6%
Boys: Black (N = 495)	16.5%	13.6%	61.3%	8.6%
Girls: Black (N = 698)	9.0%	9.7%	76.7%	4.6%

Appendix A: An introduction to the annual literacy survey

We have been surveying children and young people on all sorts of literacy matters since 2005. This has given us a great insight into children's and young people's views and attitudes on reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, home resources, role models, technology use and their perception of themselves as readers.

Combining previous National Literacy Trust survey topics, the annual literacy survey explores young people's attitudes towards reading, writing and communication skills. It is the purpose of the annual literacy survey to provide a continuous picture of children's and young people's attitudes year on year. Its key objectives are to explore:

- Whether young people enjoy reading, how good they think they are at reading, how often they read and for how long, what types of materials they read outside class, how many books they have in the home and what they think about reading
- Whether young people enjoy writing, how good a writer they think they are, what makes a good writer, what types of materials they write and what they think about writing
- What they consider to be good communication skills, how they feel about them and how important they are to succeed

In addition to exploring children's and young people's attitudes towards reading, writing and communication, we also explore their link to attainment in a subsample of pupils for whom attainment data is available.

These objectives were further broken down into a number of questions, which included the following:

- Do reading enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?
- Do writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?
- Do attitudes towards communication skills and their perceived importance differ according to gender, age, socioeconomic and ethnic background?

Appendix B: Methodology

An invitation to participate in this online survey was sent out in National Literacy Trust newsletters at the beginning of September 2015. Schools were invited to express their interest to participate in one of two surveys:

1) A simple survey (without attainment data or name field)
2) An amended survey with a name field where schools were asked to send us the reading and writing attainment data for participating pupils

The basic online survey consisted of 41 questions exploring children's and young people's background, reading and writing enjoyment, behaviour and attitudes towards communication skills.

Due to the complexity of the questions and some concepts, the decision was made to restrict the age range of participating pupils to upper KS2 (nine to 11 years) and older. However, some schools felt that their eight-year-olds would be capable of completing the survey.

155 schools expressed an interest in taking part in one of the three surveys. A link to the online survey alongside guidance notes for teachers was emailed to the schools at the beginning of November. The survey was completed online between 9 November and 11 December 2015. It took an average of 25 minutes for children and young people to complete the survey. Schools were offered a school-specific summary report as an incentive to take part.

Participation rate

111 of the 155 schools that had originally expressed an interest in taking part participated in 2015, a participation rate of 72%. 97 schools were from England, 11 were from Wales, two were from Scotland and one was from Northern Ireland.

Appendix C: Sample characteristics

Overall, 32,569 children and young people participated in the survey in November and December 2015. There was a nearly equal gender split in the sample: 47.9% of respondents were boys (N = 15,414) and 52.1% were girls (N = 16,746).

To investigate the impact of age, four broad categories were identified according to key stages: KS2, KS3 and KS4. In 2015 we also had enough pupils to include KS5 in our analyses. The KS2 category (21.9%, N = 7,097) refers to pupils aged eight to 11, KS3 (63.2%, N = 20,512) refers to pupils aged 11 to 14, while KS4 (12.8%, N = 4,163) refers to pupils aged 14 to 16 and KS5 (2.1%, N = 695) refers to pupils aged 16 to 18.

The percentage of pupils who receive free school meals (FSM), which is frequently used in educational research as a crude indicator of socioeconomic background, was 14.6% (N = 4,432). The percentage of FSM uptake in this study is slightly below the national average[51] (15.2%).

23% of children and young people in 2015 said that they speak a language other than English at home.

When asked how they would describe their ethnic background, most pupils said that they were White British (69.0%). The second and third most frequent ethnic categories in this sample were Asian or Asian British Pakistani (5.3%) and Asian or Asian British Indian (4.1%). See **Table C1** for a full breakdown of ethnic background. Please note that 14.3% (N = 4,565) of the sample chose not to answer this question. Overall, the ethnic make-up of this sample is representative of that found nationally[52].

Table C1: Ethnic background

	%	*N*
White British	69.0	18,874
White Irish	1.6	426
White Traveller	0.5	142
White Romany	0.4	112
White other	3.9	1,060
White Total	**76.3**	**20,614**
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1.3	343
Mixed White and Black African	1.0	263
Mixed White and Asian	1.6	445
Mixed other	2.2	591
Mixed Total	**6.1**	**1,642**
Asian or Asian British Indian	4.1	1,123
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	5.3	1,457
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1.3	363

[51] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/433680/SFR16_2015_Main_Text.pdf
[52] ibid

	%	N
Asian or Asian British Chinese	0.8	208
Asian or Asian British Other	1.5	407
Asian Total	**13.2**	**3,558**
Black Caribbean	0.8	216
Black African	2.9	795
Black other	0.7	197
Black Total	**4.5**	**1,208**
Arab	1.2	332

(Based on N = 27,354)

To make comparisons by ethnic group meaningful, we combined the subcategories to form White, Mixed, Asian and Black background categories. While this crude categorisation undoubtedly hides some important differences within ethnic backgrounds, it allowed for general differences to be obtained at this stage.