

Table 414.—Reading literacy test scores of 14-year-olds: Selected countries, 1992

Country	Grade tested	Mean age	Overall mean score	Narrative <sup>1</sup> mean score	Expository <sup>2</sup> 1st quartile	Expository <sup>2</sup> mean score	Expository <sup>2</sup> 3rd quartile	Documents <sup>3</sup> mean score
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Finland .....	8	14.7	560 (2.5)	559 (2.8)	493	541 (2.2)	575	580 (2.5)
France .....	9	15.4	549 (4.3)	556 (4.2)	484	546 (4.3)	580	544 (4.2)
Sweden .....	8	14.8	546 (2.5)	556 (2.6)	469	533 (2.4)	576	550 (2.4)
New Zealand .....	10	15.0	545 (5.6)	547 (5.7)	457	535 (5.7)	597	552 (5.3)
Hungary .....	8	14.1	536 (3.3)	530 (3.1)	469	536 (3.6)	577	542 (3.2)
Iceland <sup>4</sup> .....	8	14.8	536 (0.0)	550 (0.0)	472	548 (0.0)	617	509 (0.0)
Switzerland .....	8	14.9	536 (3.2)	534 (3.4)	466	525 (3.2)	572	549 (3.0)
Hong Kong .....	9	15.2	535 (3.7)	509 (3.7)	480	540 (3.8)	576	557 (3.8)
United States .....	9	15.0	535 (4.8)	539 (4.9)	456	539 (5.6)	599	528 (4.0)
Singapore .....	8	14.4	534 (1.1)	530 (1.1)	476	539 (1.2)	574	533 (1.1)
Slovenia .....	8	14.7	532 (2.3)	534 (2.6)	471	525 (2.2)	576	537 (2.2)
Germany (former East) .....	8	14.4	526 (3.5)	512 (3.9)	464	523 (3.5)	566	543 (2.9)
Denmark .....	8	14.8	525 (2.1)	517 (2.0)	458	524 (2.2)	573	532 (2.1)
Portugal .....	9	15.6	523 (3.1)	523 (2.5)	469	523 (3.4)	556	523 (3.4)
Canada <sup>5</sup> .....	8	13.9	522 (3.0)	526 (3.1)	449	516 (3.1)	569	522 (2.7)
Germany (former West) .....	8	14.6	522 (4.4)	514 (4.9)	453	521 (4.5)	573	532 (3.9)
Norway .....	8	14.8	516 (2.3)	515 (2.1)	464	520 (2.4)	569	512 (2.4)
Italy .....	8	14.1	515 (3.4)	520 (3.6)	459	524 (3.2)	565	501 (3.3)
Netherlands .....	8	14.3	514 (4.9)	506 (4.8)	442	503 (4.7)	546	533 (5.3)
Ireland .....	9	14.5	511 (5.2)	510 (5.3)	439	505 (5.3)	555	518 (4.9)
Greece .....	9	14.4	509 (2.9)	526 (2.9)	450	508 (3.1)	548	493 (2.6)
Cyprus .....	9	14.8	497 (2.2)	516 (2.2)	427	492 (2.4)	536	482 (2.0)
Spain .....	8	14.2	490 (2.5)	500 (3.0)	435	495 (2.6)	536	475 (2.0)
Belgium <sup>6</sup> .....	8	14.3	481 (4.9)	484 (5.1)	415	477 (4.8)	522	483 (4.7)
Trinidad/Tobago .....	9	14.4	479 (1.7)	482 (1.7)	408	485 (1.8)	537	472 (1.7)
Thailand .....	9	15.2	477 (6.2)	468 (6.6)	429	486 (5.9)	533	478 (6.2)
Philippines .....	8	14.5	430 (3.9)	421 (3.6)	378	439 (4.1)	472	430 (3.9)
Venezuela .....	9	15.5	417 (3.1)	407 (2.9)	381	433 (3.3)	482	412 (3.0)
Nigeria <sup>7,8</sup> .....	9	15.3	401 (—)	402 (—)	351	406 (—)	441	394 (—)
Zimbabwe <sup>8</sup> .....	9	15.5	372 (3.8)	367 (3.3)	326	374 (3.6)	411	373 (4.6)
Botswana .....	9	14.7	330 (2.0)	340 (1.6)	294	339 (1.9)	371	312 (2.4)

<sup>1</sup> Narrative prose is continuous text in which the writer's aim is to tell a story.

<sup>2</sup> Expository prose is continuous text designed to describe, explain, or otherwise convey factual information or opinion to the reader.

<sup>3</sup> Documents are structured information presented in the form of charts, tables, maps, graphs, lists, or sets of instructions.

<sup>4</sup> Iceland tested all students, therefore standard errors are not applicable.

<sup>5</sup> British Columbia only.

<sup>6</sup> Only French-speaking students were tested.

<sup>7</sup> Insufficient data to calculate the standard error.

<sup>8</sup> Sampling response rate of schools was below 80 percent.  
—Data not available.

NOTE.—Standard errors appear in parentheses.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, *How in the World Do Students Read?*, 1992. (This table was prepared April 1993.)