

WEBSITE RESOURCE W16.2

Case study: Summary of survey of children's multimodal text experience at home and at school

This primary school in an industrial town in south-east England has 325 pupils, many of whom are learning English as an additional language. The school wanted to review its use of digital technology and other multimodal texts in the classroom, so they asked all classes to complete the survey about children's use of the following types of multimodal texts at home and at school:

- comics
- magazines
- newspapers
- television programmes
- computer games
- films
- internet texts
- emails
- phone texts
- e-books
- books with words and no pictures
- books with pictures
- audio books.

The survey also asked about ownership of an iPhone or iPad.

The picture of the whole school

Figure W16.1 shows a comparison for the whole school: boys and girls, ages 5–11. The graph is based on percentages of the responses from the total number of children who completed the survey. Of course, these responses only represent the text experience of children in this school. They are not intended to indicate any general trends.

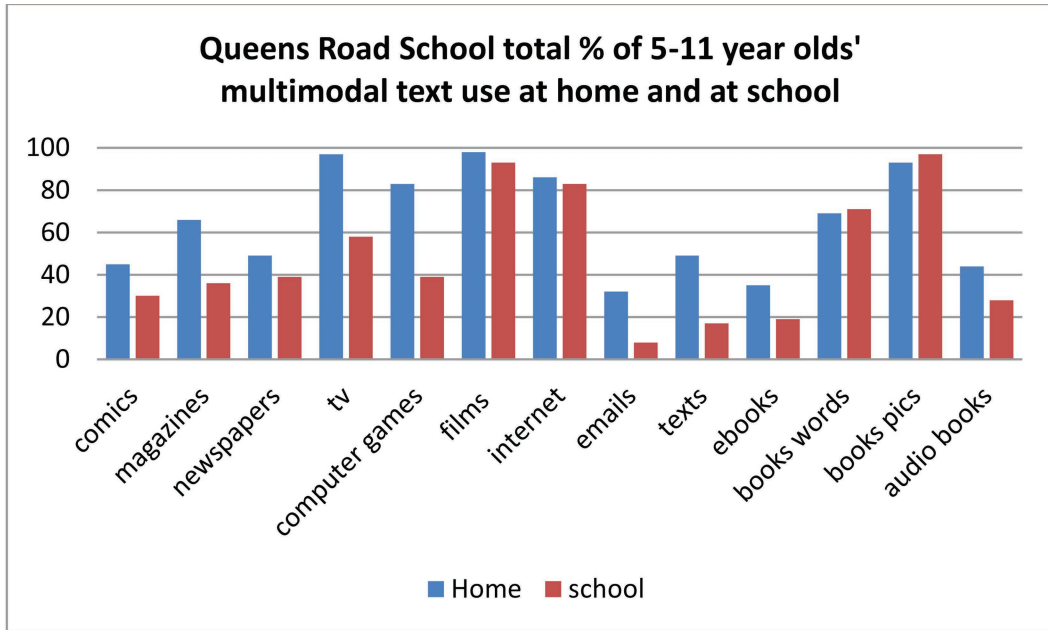


Figure W16.1 5–11 year olds' multimodal text use at home and at school

When the teachers reviewed the responses, they noted that the children’s popular cultural home reading of magazines and comics did not feature very highly in the classroom, although the figures for reading newspapers were about the same at home and at school. Understandably, television and computer games were more likely to be used at home than at school, although the figure for using computer games in school was about half that of home use. Only one teacher used computer games as part of the curriculum. Screen-based texts on the television and internet seemed equally regularly used at school and at home, and emails and texts hardly featured at school. Where children used e-books and audio books at home these were much less common in school, although books, with and without pictures were equally prevalent at home and at school.

Gender differences

Contrary to some popular opinion, in this school, at least, there seemed to be relatively few major differences in multimodal text use between the boys and the girls. More boys

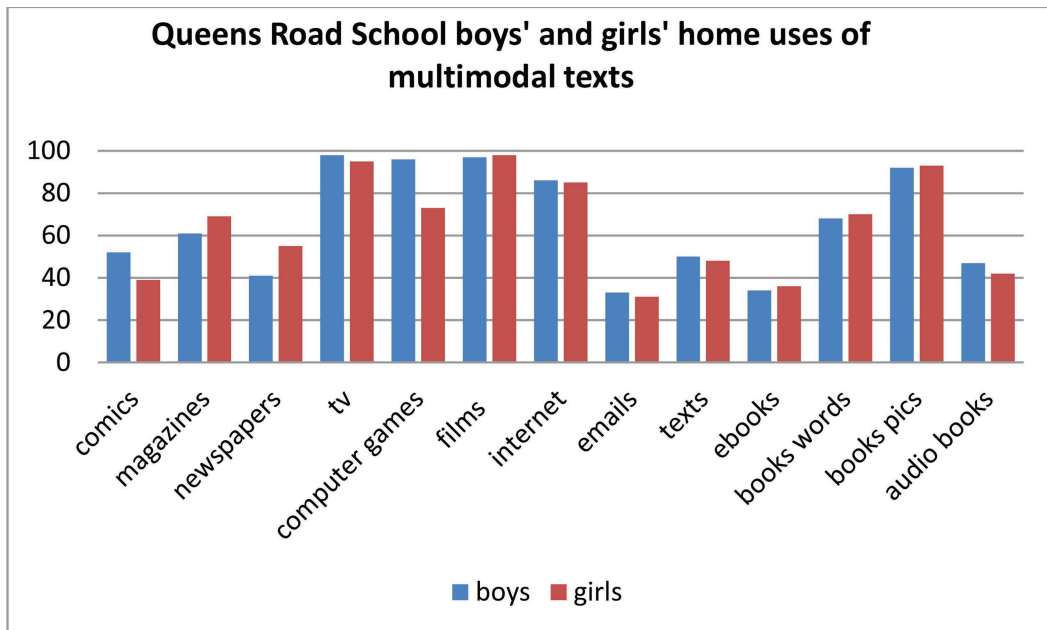


Figure W16.2 Boys' and girls' home uses of multimodal texts

than girls read comics, and more girls than boys read magazines and newspapers. Television viewing was almost the same between boys and girls and where 96 per cent of the boys play computer games, the number of girls reporting playing games was 73 per cent. There were few major differences in the use of all other types of text between boys and girls.

Actions after reviewing the responses

In considering how far children's home experience and expertise was built on in the school, overall, it seems that the particular class teacher's planning for using multimodal texts – both on screen and off – was a key factor. Gaps in provision were found in reading material and technologies associated with reading; for example, home reading of comics, magazines, e-books and audio books was noticeably higher at home than at school. The teachers also felt it may be useful to build on this expertise in school. After reviewing the findings, the staff decided to:

- Widen the range of reading material in classrooms to include children's preferred comics, magazines, audio and e-books.
- Set up staff training sessions to look at how computer games might be used in the curriculum
- Incorporate emails and texting into English teaching.
- Plan to use film more deliberately as text to be studied, not just watched.

Survey of multimodal text experience at home and at school

With younger classes, you may wish to read the survey to the children

Class **Are you a boy or a girl?**

Put a tick if you read, write, listen to or watch these things at home

comics	
magazines	
newspapers	
television	
computer games	
films	
things on the internet	
social media	
texts	
e-books	
books with words and no pictures	
books with pictures	
audio books	
. . . . other things (add anything here that isn't listed)	

Do you have an iPhone or an iPad? Tick Yes No

What do you use it for? (e.g. texting/ playing games/ taking photos. . . .)

Put a tick if you read, write, listen to or watch these things in the classroom

comics	
magazines	
newspapers	
television	
computer games	
films	
things on the internet	
social media	
texts	
e-books	
books with words and no pictures	
books with pictures	
audio books	
. . . other things (add anything here that isn't listed)	

Thank you very much for your help.