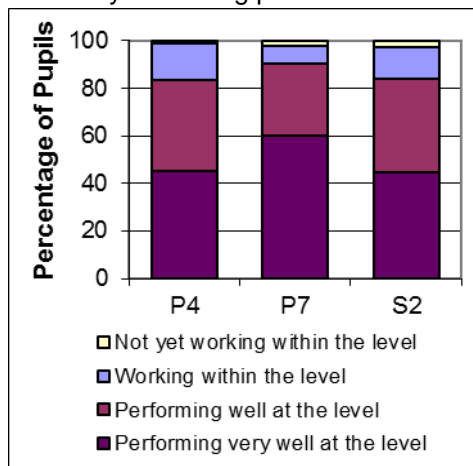## An Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2012 (Literacy)
24th April 2013

We would like to thank the 10,100 pupils and 4,900 teachers
in the 2,100 schools who took part in SSLN 2012.

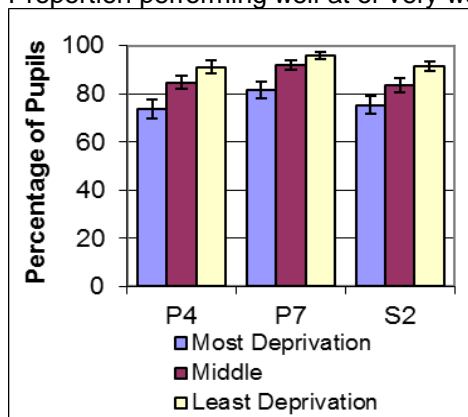Full results are available from www.scotland.gov.uk/ssln.

Reading
Summary of reading performance

- **The majority of pupils performed well or very well at the relevant Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) level for their stage**. Around 8 in 10 pupils in both P4 and S2 performed well or very well at First and Third Level respectively. That figure rises to 9 in 10 pupils performing well or very well at Second Level in P7.

- **The percentage of pupils not yet working within their respective levels is small, but increases between P4 and S2.** The figures for reading were one per cent in P4, two per cent in P7 and three per cent in S2.

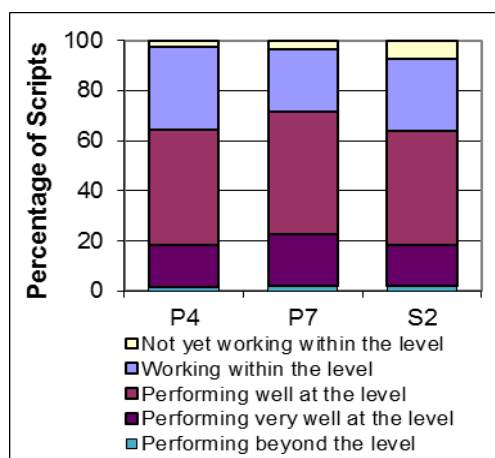Proportion performing well at or very well at the level by deprivation

- **Pupils from the most deprived areas performed less well than those from the least deprived areas at all stages**. The percentage of pupils living in less deprived areas and performing well or very well was 17 percentage points higher than for pupils living in more deprived areas in P4; 14 percentage points at P7; and 16 percentage points at S2.

- **At P7, girls outperformed boys by four percentage points. There was no significant difference at P4 and S2.**
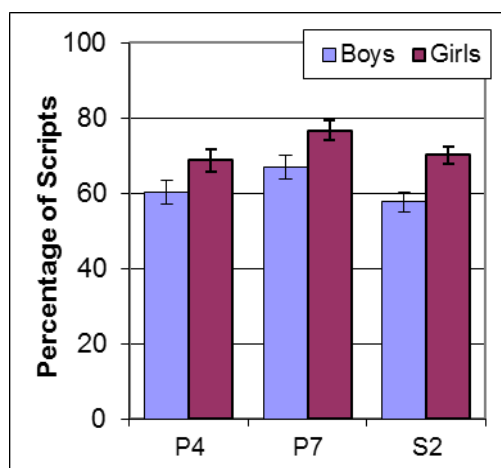
Writing

- **Around two thirds of writing scripts[1] at P4 and S2 demonstrated that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the relevant level for their stage. Performance was higher in P7 at 72 per cent of scripts**.
- **The percentage of writing scripts demonstrating that pupils were not yet working within their respective levels increases between P4 and S2.** The percentage rises from two per cent in P4 to about three per cent in P7 and about seven per cent in S2.
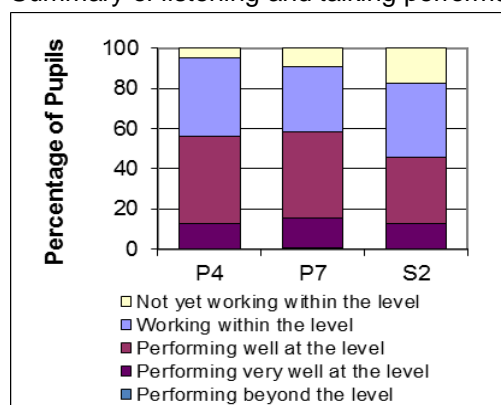
Summary of writing performance

Proportion performing well at, very well at or beyond the level

- **Girls tended to outperform boys in writing at all stages.** The biggest difference was at S2 where 70 per cent of scripts demonstrated that girls were performing well at, very well at or beyond the level, compared to 58 per cent for boys.
- **Scripts from pupils living in the most deprived areas demonstrated poorer pupil performance than those from pupils living in the least deprived areas, at all stages**. The percentage of scripts demonstrating that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the level was 21 percentage points higher for pupils from the least deprived areas, than pupils from the most deprived areas, at all stages.

Listening and talking

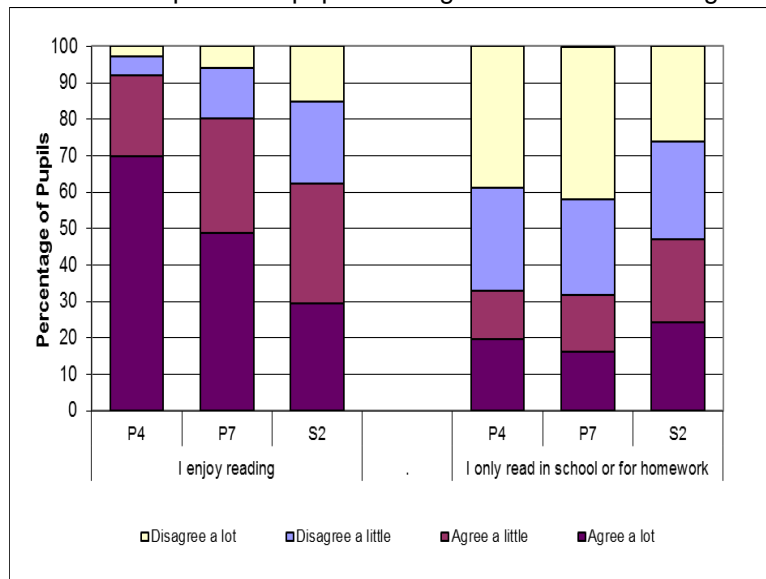Summary of listening and talking performance

- **Fifty-six per cent of P4 pupils, and 58 per cent of P7 pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the relevant CfE level for their stage. Performance was lower in S2 at 46 per cent.**
- **The percentage of pupils not yet working within their respective levels rises notably by stage:** About five per cent in P4, nine per cent in P7 and about 17 per cent in S2.

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[1] Each pupil submitted two writing scripts for assessment. Each script was independently assessed and assigned into one of the five reporting categories.
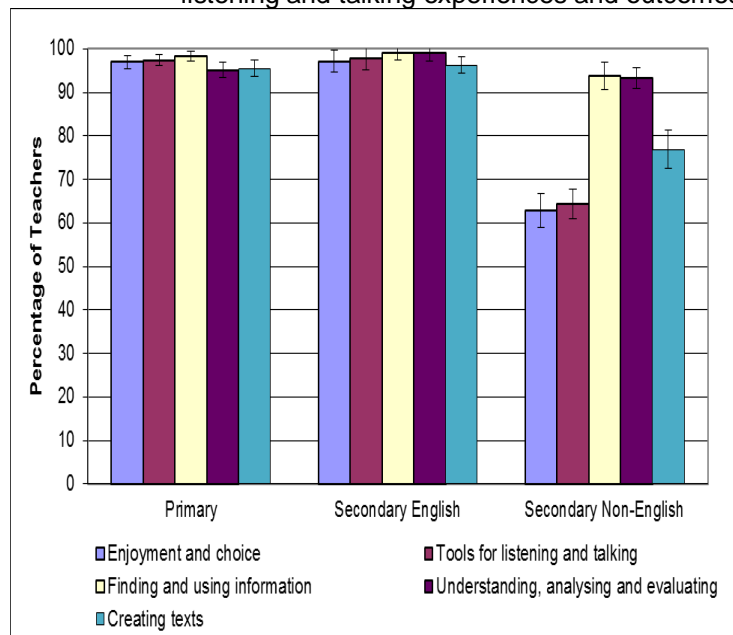
Pupil and teacher experiences and attitudes

- **Pupils generally enjoy reading**: the proportion of pupils who 'agree a lot' or 'agree a little' that they enjoy reading was 92 per cent in P4, 80 per cent in P7 and 62 per cent in S2.

- **Engagement with learning appears to reduce by stage**. Fourteen per cent of P4 pupils 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little' that 'learning is boring'. At P7 and S2 the comparable percentages were 22 per cent and 37 per cent respectively.

Proportion of pupils who agreed with the following..:

- **Teacher confidence in delivering literacy experiences and outcomes was generally high. This was particularly noticeable amongst Primary and Secondary English teachers** where over 92 per cent reported they were 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' in delivering all literacy experiences and outcomes. Secondary non-English teachers reported lower confidence, particularly in relation to listening and talking.

Percentage of teachers very or fairly confident in delivering listening and talking experiences and outcomes

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Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   What is the SSLN?

The Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN) is a sample survey which monitors national performance in literacy and numeracy in alternate years. The survey assesses pupils at P4, P7 and S2. It also provides information which will inform improvements in learning, teaching and assessment at classroom level. The SSLN is undertaken as a partnership between the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES).

This SSLN was the first to assess literacy, and took place in May 2012. Approximately 10,100 pupils participated in the survey, which consisted of a set of written and practical literacy assessments, a pupil questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire completed by 4,900 teachers. The assessments used in the survey were designed to assess the wide range of knowledge, skills and capabilities across learning identified in the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. The assessments reflect the CfE requirements that pupils should have achieved in breadth, challenge and application of their learning. The pupil questionnaire collected information on factors that are likely to affect learning, such as pupil attitudes and experiences in class. The teacher questionnaire collected information on teachers' experience of delivering literacy across the curriculum.

Literacy is defined within CfE as:

 "the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful."[2]

The literacy framework is split into three 'organisers', covering reading, writing, and listening and talking. All of the pupils who participated in the 2012 survey, except some attending independent schools, will have followed CfE in their everyday schooling. The SSLN provides a national performance benchmark of literacy skills for each of the three organisers.

The SSLN replaces the Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA) which ran from 2004 to 2009. The SSLN has been developed specifically to support assessment approaches for Curriculum for Excellence, and so results are not comparable with the SSA.   The guidance for assessment of CfE is set out in Assessment for Curriculum for Excellence: Strategic vision and key principles, published in September 2009, and in Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment and its supporting suite of publications, first published in January 2010.

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[2] *Curriculum for Excellence*, 2009, Learning and Teaching Scotland

1.2 How was the survey carried out?

As in the first SSLN (numeracy) in 2011, all schools were asked to participate in the survey, ensuring that the demand on each school was minimised. The overall target pupil sample size of about 4,000 pupils per stage, selected at random, was based on two pupils per stage (P4 and P7) in primary schools and twelve pupils per stage (S2) in secondary schools. Weighting was then applied to the data to account for the fact that sampled pupils were representing schools of varying size.

Both publicly funded and independent schools were included. Special schools and schools with fewer than two or five pupils (at primary and secondary respectively) per stage were excluded. The resulting school participation rate for returning pupil assessments was 88 per cent among publicly funded schools and 26 per cent among the independent sector. Weighting was also applied to account for non-responding schools.

All participating pupils took part in a reading assessment, pupils at half of participating schools were assessed in writing whilst those in the other half were selected to take part in a listening and talking assessment. More detail on the assessments is provided in the relevant chapters.

All tasks for the 2012 survey were newly developed for the SSLN by practising teachers and assessment experts. The assessments were constructed to include tasks with different degrees of challenge and across the range of topics within literacy, set out by the curriculum at each level.

Pupils were assessed at the following CfE levels:

P4   First Level
P7   Second Level
S2   Third Level

The reading assessment assessed pupils only at the level specified. Therefore although pupils in P4, for example, may be reported as 'performing very well' at First Level, it is possible that some may be able to achieve many of the Second Level tasks as well; however the reading assessment is not designed to capture this. For writing, and listening and talking, the nature of the assessments **does** allow pupils to demonstrate capabilities beyond the level for their stage. The principles of CfE are clear that the curriculum levels are not a barrier to pupils' progress in learning, and that pupils must demonstrate breadth and depth of learning and be able to apply their learning in different and unfamiliar contexts.

1.3 Interpretation of SSLN results

As the SSLN is based on a sample of pupils rather than on the whole population, the national results shown are estimates. That is to say there is an element of uncertainty within the results because the pupils sampled may not reflect the population exactly. To give a scale to this uncertainty, confidence intervals are produced to show the range of values within which one can be reasonably confident that the actual value would lie if all pupils were assessed. Throughout the report, where appropriate, confidence intervals are represented on charts by short lines to

help demonstrate this level of uncertainty. Standard error data for the results, used to calculate these confidence intervals, are provided in the data tables available online. As the confidence intervals will differ for each of the elements of literacy being assessed, they are discussed in more detail in the relevant sections of this document.

The attainment of pupils is presented by categories for ease of reporting. These categories refer to performance in the survey and are not intended to be used for general classroom reporting of performance. The reporting categories vary slightly between the three elements of literacy being assessed (reading, writing, and listening and talking).

The first four reporting categories are the same for each organiser:

- Not yet working within the level (pupils are not yet meeting any of the CfE outcomes of the level assessed)
- Working within the level (pupils are meeting some of the expected outcomes for their level, but they are not yet meeting the others)
- Performing well at the level (pupils are meeting most of the outcomes at that level)
- Performing very well at the level (pupils are meeting almost all the outcomes at that level).

For writing and listening and talking there is an additional category:

- Performing beyond the level (pupils are demonstrating skills at the next level).

1.4   How will the findings be used?

The results of the 2012 SSLN will be used in line with the survey's three main objectives. These are:

- to monitor and report nationally on achievement in literacy at the P4, P7 and S2 stages. The 2012 results will establish a baseline for future monitoring of literacy achievement over time;

- to identify areas of literacy strengths and weaknesses among pupils in Scotland to help inform policy initiatives and learning and teaching practices; and

- to gather information and report nationally on pupils' and teachers' experience of learning and teaching literacy, along with their views about this experience.

Learning and teaching resources have been developed by Education Scotland in line with the SSLN survey themes. This information is designed for teachers, schools and local authorities to support and inform learning and teaching practice in the classroom. The resources are available on the Education Scotland website www.educationscotland.gov.uk/ssln, with further materials, based on an in-depth analysis of results, becoming available over the coming months.
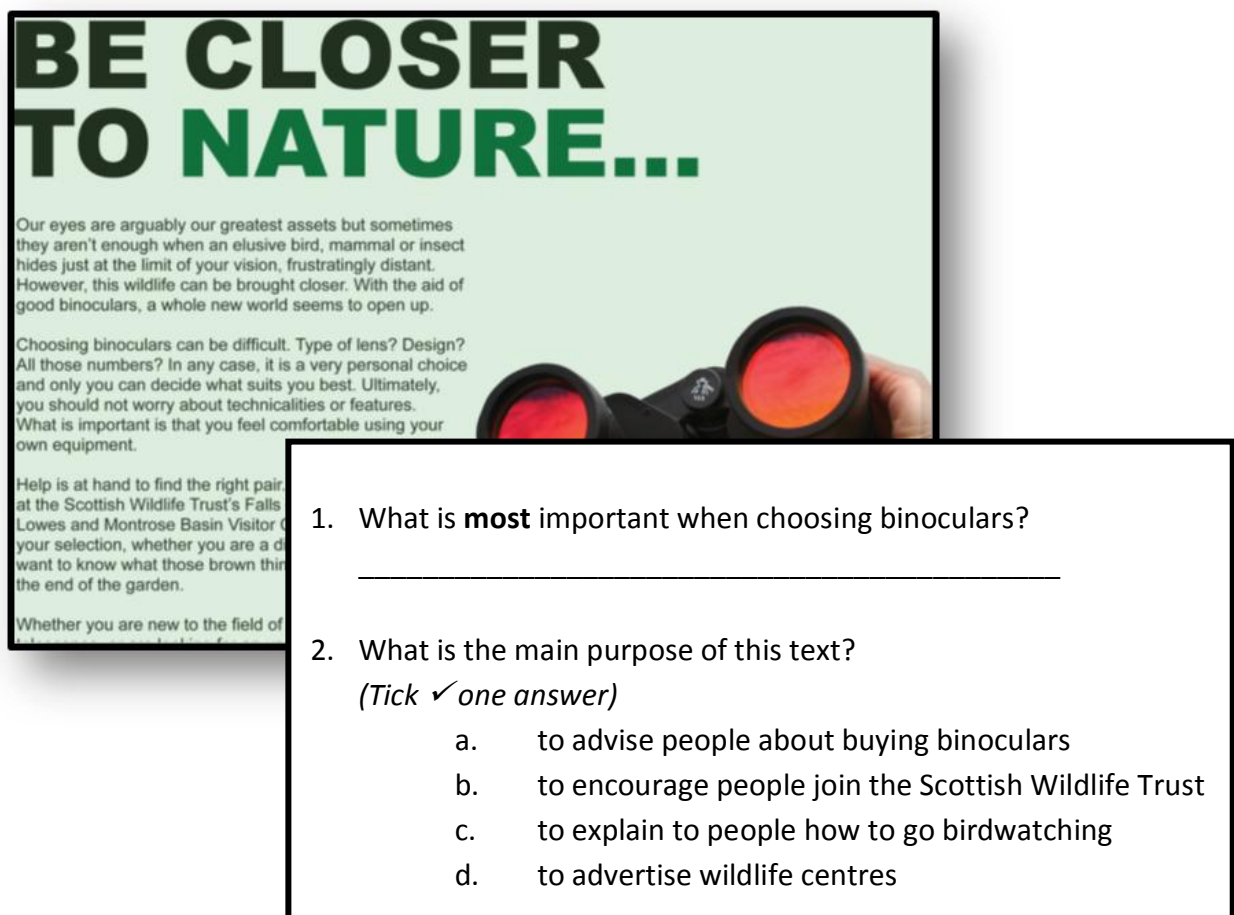
Chapter 2: Assessment of reading

2.1 Assessing reading skills

All participating pupils took part in a reading assessment. This consisted of two components: a pencil and paper booklet consisting of four tasks, each incorporating a source reading passage and a set of questions; and an online assessment made up of four tasks: two based on webpage texts and two based on moving image texts (for example a BBC Newsround clip or a television advertisement for a children's museum).

Figure 1 provides an illustration of a paper and pencil reading task. 'Be Closer to Nature' was a Second Level task with five associated questions. The illustration shows an extract of the text and two questions from this task. The text was adapted from the 'Scottish Wildlife Trust Events and Activities Brochure' and describes what to look for when choosing a new pair of binoculars.

Figure 1: Extract from the Second Level (P7) Paper and Pencil Reading Task 'Be Closer to Nature'[3]

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[3] Text adapted and used with permission from the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

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2.2 Reporting reading attainment

Pupils are assigned to one of four reporting categories based on the percentage of questions they answer correctly. The following table describes the categories used for each performance level in the reading assessment.

Percentage of items successfully completed in the SSLN	SSLN reading reporting category
80 per cent or more	Performing very well at the level
60 per cent or more, but less than 80 per cent	Performing well at the level
P4: more than 25 per cent, but less than 60 per cent P7: more than 39 per cent, but less than 60 per cent S2: more than 34 per cent, but less than 60 per cent	Working within the level
P4: 25 per cent or less P7: 39 per cent or less S2: 34 per cent or less	Not yet working within the level

For example, pupils correctly answering 80 per cent or more of the reading questions across all tasks are described as 'performing very well at the level'. As the assessments are designed to cover the full range of topics within the curriculum at a given level, such a pupil might be expected in general to achieve at least 80 per cent across all tasks at their level. Pupils described as 'working within' a level can achieve some of the outcomes expected for their stage, but are still working on achieving the others.

These cut-off points were set in consultation with Education Scotland, SQA and teachers, based on professional judgement and an analysis of the tasks involved in the assessment. For each stage, the differing cut-off scores between 'working within the level' and 'not yet working within the level' were determined by assessing the number of marks that could potentially be obtained in the assessment using only skills acquired at the previous level or, in the case of multiple choice items, by chance.

2.3 Reading attainment

Chart 2.1 shows the distribution of reading scores for each of the three stages assessed. The chart shows that there were similar levels of performance in P4 and S2 and higher levels in P7. The difference is most noticeable for the highest achieving pupils in each stage. The chart shows that 29 per cent of P7 pupils scored over 90 per cent. For P4 and S2 the figures are lower at 18 and 15 per cent respectively.

Chart 2.1: Distribution of reading scores in each stage

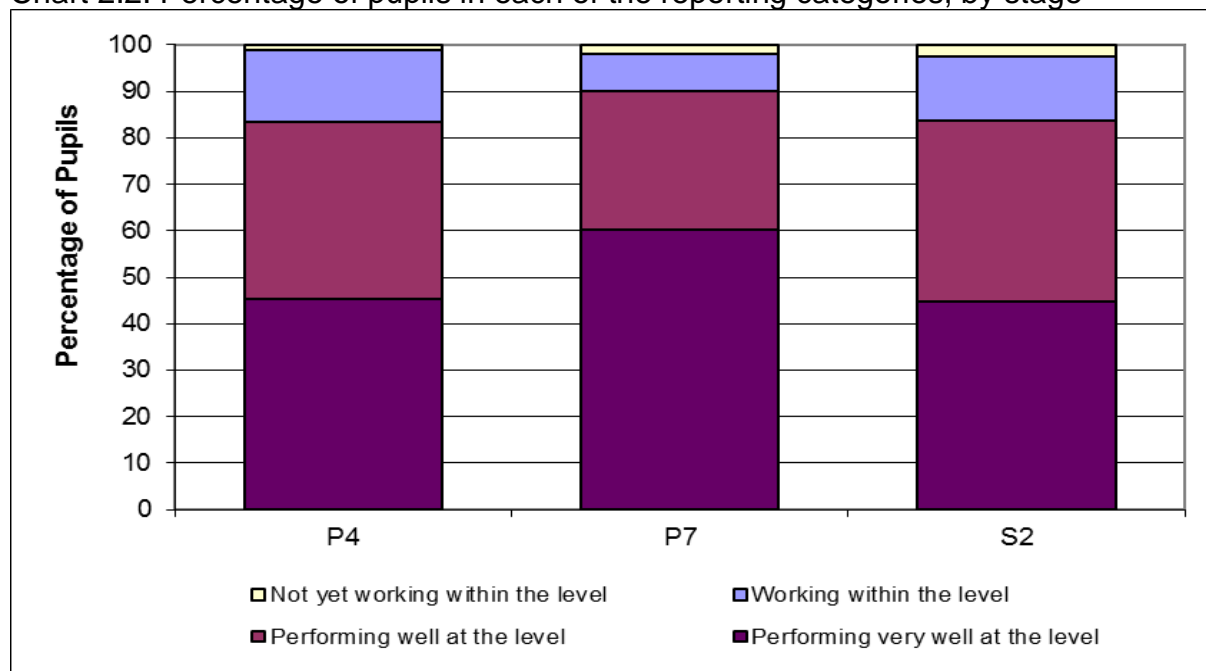'0 up to 10' includes 0 and all values up to but not including 10, etc.

Chart 2.2 shows the percentages of pupils in each of P4, P7 and S2 presented by the four reporting categories for reading defined in Section 2.2.

Performance was highest in P7 where about 90 per cent of pupils performed well or very well when assessed against the relevant CfE level for their stage i.e. they achieved at least 60 per cent when assessed against tasks reflecting the experiences and outcomes for reading at Second Level. There was little difference in performance between P4 and S2 pupils where the percentage of pupils performing well or very well at the relevant CfE level was about 83 and 84 per cent respectively.

The percentage of pupils who performed very well (achieved a score of at least 80 per cent) was highest in P7 at about 60 per cent. There was again little difference in performance between P4 and S2 where the percentage of pupils who performed very well was about 45 per cent in each case.

The percentage of pupils not yet working within the level appropriate for their stage was less than three per cent for all stages.

Chart 2.2: Percentage of pupils in each of the reporting categories, by stage

2.4 Attainment by gender

In P7, reading attainment was slightly higher for girls than boys, with about a four percentage point difference in the proportion of pupils performing well or very well at the level. The difference at P4 and S2 was negligible.

Across all stages, the pattern of reading attainment for both boys and girls is similar to that for all pupils: attainment for both genders is highest in P7 and similar but lower in P4 and S2, as shown in Chart 2.3.

Chart 2.3: Percentage of pupils performing well or very well in reading at the relevant level, by gender

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2.5 Attainment by deprivation

Pupils from areas of least deprivation[4] have significantly higher attainment than pupils from the most deprived areas, at all stages. The percentage of pupils living in areas of least deprivation and performing well or very well was 17 percentage points higher than for pupils living in the most deprived areas in P4; 14 percentage points at P7; and 16 percentage points at S2.

Chart 2.4 Percentage of pupils performing well or very well at the relevant level, by deprivation

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[4] Defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2009, based on where pupils live, not where they go to school. Data split into three groups, bottom 30 per cent, middle 40 per cent and top 30 per cent of datazones.

Chapter 3: Assessment of writing

3.1 Assessing writing skills

Half of participating schools were selected to take part in a writing assessment. Each school participating in the writing assessment submitted two pieces of class-based writing for each sampled pupil. The two pieces of writing for each pupil were from two different curriculum areas and written for two different purposes (e.g. to describe an event or express an opinion), and were selected to reflect the level at which the pupil was currently working. Guidance on the selection of suitable writing pieces was provided to schools.

Each piece of writing submitted was assessed independently, and assigned to one of five reporting categories:

- Not yet working within the level (pupils are not yet meeting any of the CfE outcomes of the level assessed)
- Working within the level (pupils are meeting some of the expected outcomes for their level, but they are not yet meeting the others)
- Performing well at the level (pupils are meeting most of the outcomes at that level)
- Performing very well at the level (pupils are meeting almost all of the outcomes at that level)
- Performing beyond the level (pupils are demonstrating skills at the next level).

As each writing script was assessed independently, the two scripts submitted for any one pupil may have been assigned to the same or two different reporting categories, depending on the pupil's performance in each. As a result, the national performance estimates for writing reflect the percentage of scripts assigned to each of the five performance categories. This differs to that for reading, and listening and talking, where performance estimates relate to the percentage of pupils within each performance category.
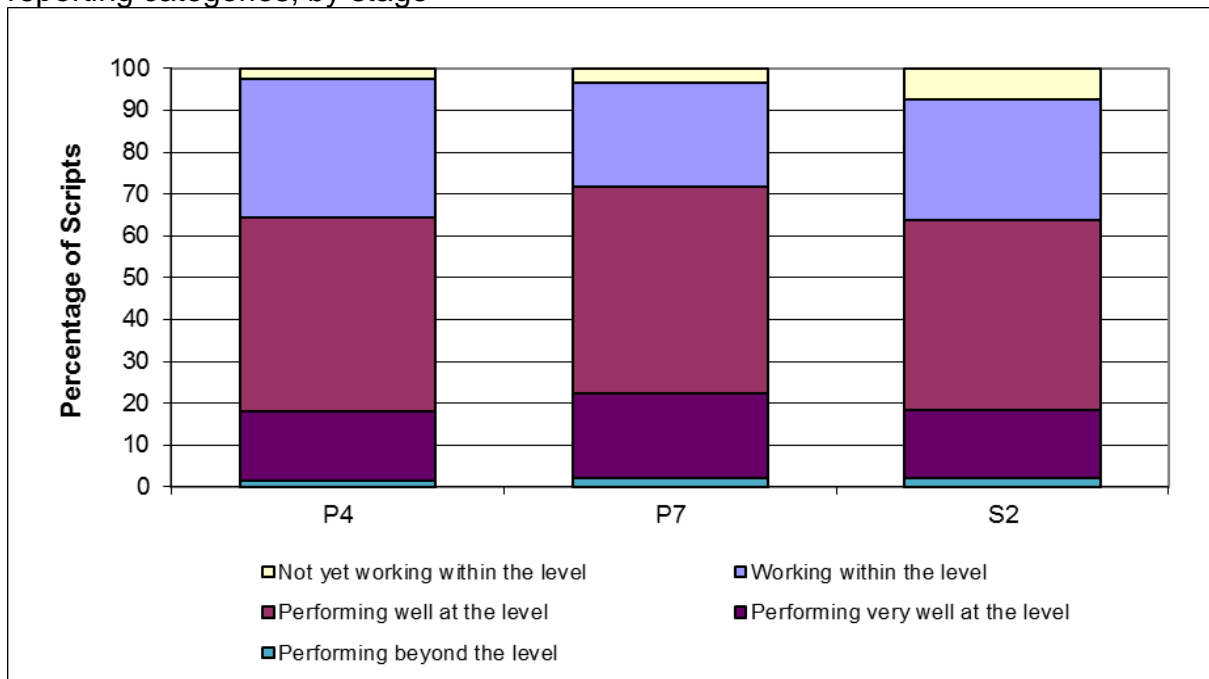
3.2 Writing attainment

Chart 3.1 illustrates pupils' writing performance, as per the assessment of scripts submitted, by reporting category and stage.

Writing performance was highest in P7 where 72 per cent of scripts demonstrated that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond Second Level. At both P4 and S2, 64 per cent of pupils performed well at, very well at or beyond the relevant CfE level for their stage.

The percentage of scripts demonstrating that pupils were not yet working within the level was highest in S2 at seven per cent. At P7 and P4 the percentage of scripts demonstrating that pupils were not yet working within the level was lower at three and two per cent respectively.

Chart 3.1: Percentage of scripts demonstrating pupil performance in each of the reporting categories, by stage
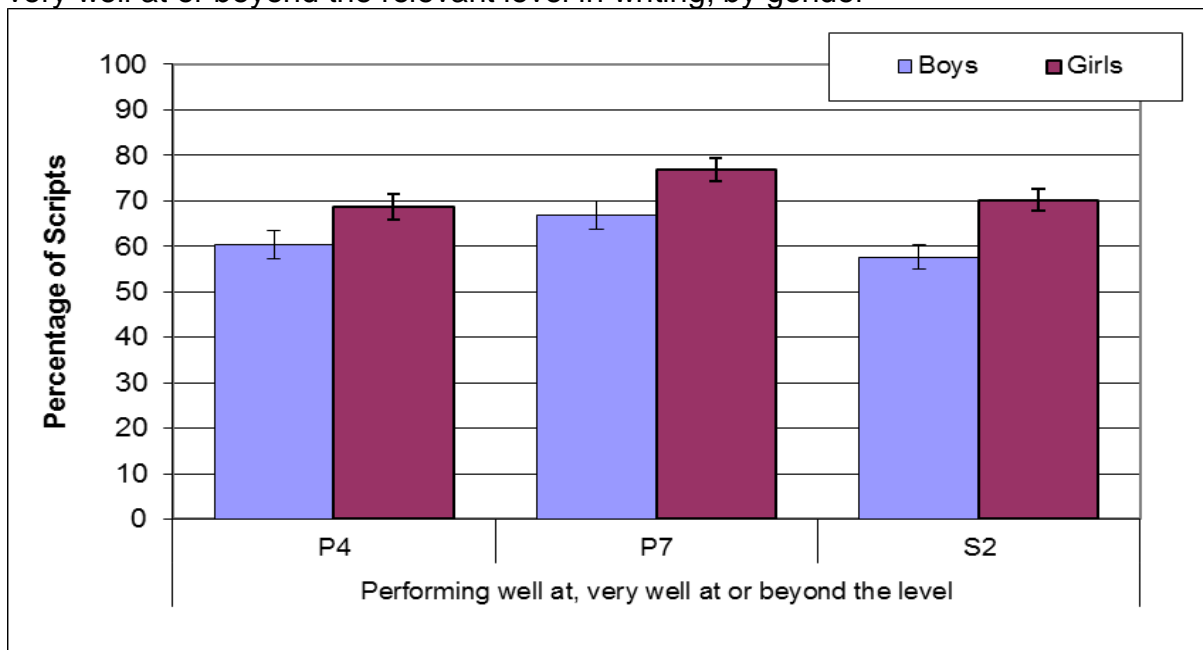
3.3 Attainment by gender

Girls outperformed boys in writing at all stages, as shown in Chart 3.2. The percentage of scripts that demonstrated pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the level was 13 percentage points higher for girls than boys in S2. The difference was slightly smaller in P4 and P7 at eight and ten percentage points respectively.

Across all stages, the pattern of writing attainment for both boys and girls is similar to that for all pupils. Attainment for both genders is highest in P7 and lower in P4 and S2.

At P7 and S2, more than twice as many scripts from boys were assessed as being not yet within the level, compared to scripts submitted by girls. The percentage of scripts from boys demonstrating that pupils were not yet working within the level at P7 and S2 was five and ten per cent respectively (for girls the figures are two and four per cent respectively). At P4, the difference between boys and girls was negligible.

Chart 3.2: Percentage of scripts demonstrating that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the relevant level in writing, by gender
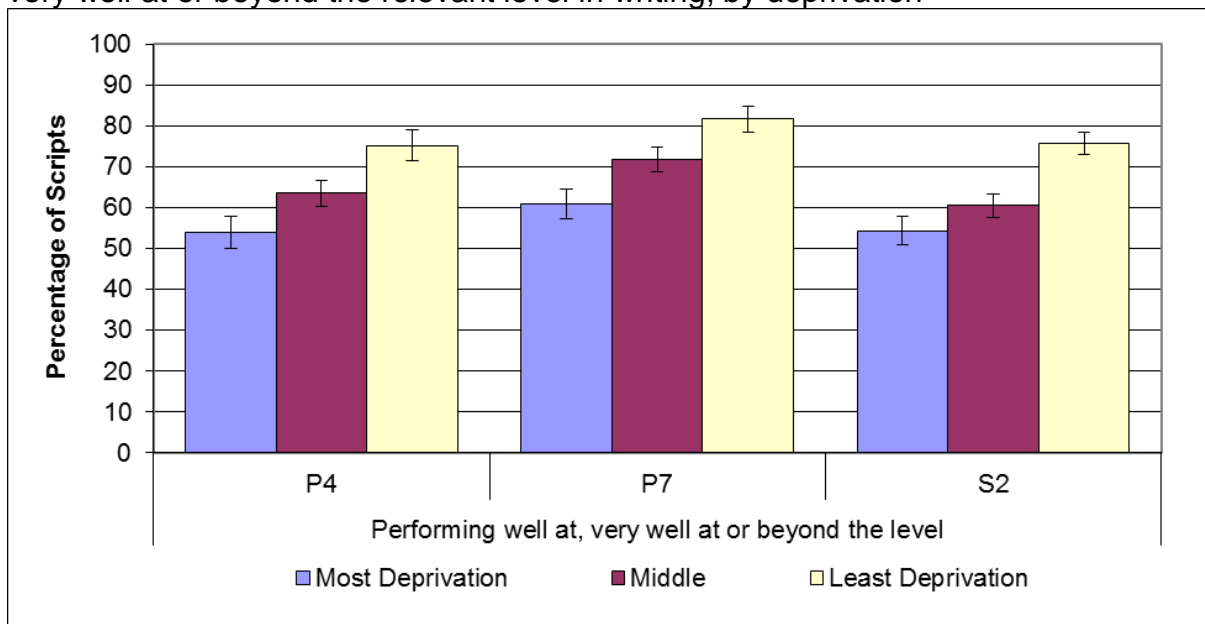
3.4 Attainment by deprivation

Writing scripts from pupils living in areas of least deprivation[5] demonstrated evidence of significantly higher attainment than those from pupils living in the most deprived areas, at all stages. Comparing scripts from pupils living in the most deprived areas to those from less deprived areas, the difference in the percentage of scripts which demonstrated that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the relevant level was 21 percentage points, at all stages.

Chart 3.3 shows performance of S2 pupils living in the 'middle' deprivation category (neither the most deprived nor the least deprived areas) tended towards performance of pupils living in more deprived areas. At P4 and P7, performance of pupils living in the 'middle' deprivation category was not markedly closer to those from either the most or least deprived areas.

Chart 3.3 Percentage of scripts demonstrating that pupils were performing well at, very well at or beyond the relevant level in writing, by deprivation

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[5] Defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2009, based on where pupils live, not where they go to school. Data split into three groups, bottom 30 per cent, middle 40 per cent and top 30 per cent of datazones.

Chapter 4: Assessment of listening and talking

4.1 Assessing listening and talking skills

The remaining half of participating schools that were not invited to submit writing scripts were selected to take part in a listening and talking assessment. Listening and talking skills are explicitly encompassed within the Curriculum for Excellence definition of literacy as important uses of language skills in everyday life. The 2012 SSLN was the first time a large scale national assessment of these skills has been undertaken in Scotland.

Listening and talking was assessed by means of a filmed group discussion, lasting about 10 to 15 minutes, between participating pupils at each stage. Each group was provided with task materials designed to generate discussion. The tasks were all newly developed for the SSLN, and each discussion involved three or four participants[6]. Figure 2 is an extract from a set of learning and teaching task materials designed for a Second Level (P7) assessment.
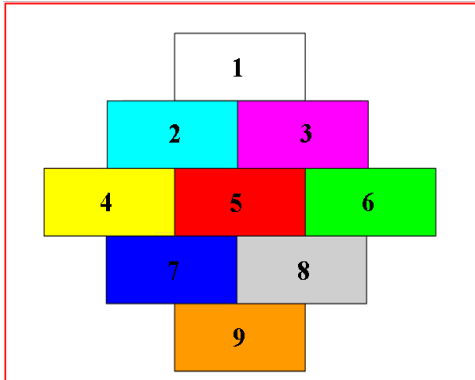
Figure 2: Illustration of the task materials used in the Second Level (P7) Listening and Talking Task 'Top Inventions'

Getting Started: Read the headline and discuss what you think is the most important invention.

Look at the cards, talk about the inventions and decide how important you think each one is. Then, arrange the cards in a Diamond 9 pattern on your table (see the picture).

Remember to talk about **why** you think the inventions are important and to **listen** to everyone's opinions and to share **your** ideas.

This is a **Diamond 9**. The card at number 1 would be the one that you agree is the **most** important.

What do **you** think the top inventions are?

iPhone tops invention poll

'Britons vote for the iPhone as most important invention ahead of flushing loo and space travel!' *The Daily Telegraph, 19 May 2010*

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[6] In some cases, pupils not being assessed as part of the SSLN took part in the group discussion to ensure a large enough group could be formed.

Each group discussion was assessed by independent, trained assessors using guidance developed by SQA, Education Scotland and teaching professionals. Each sampled pupil was assessed and assigned to one of five performance categories:

- Not yet working within the level (pupils are not yet meeting any of the CfE outcomes of the level assessed)
- Working within the level (pupils are meeting some of the expected outcomes for their level, but they are not yet meeting the others)
- Performing well at the level (pupils are meeting most of the outcomes at that level)
- Performing very well at the level (pupils are meeting almost all the outcomes at that level)
- Performing beyond the level (pupils are demonstrating skills at the next level).

4.2 Listening and talking attainment

The achieved response rate for the listening and talking assessments was lower than intended. Feedback from some schools during and after the survey indicated that there had been difficulties in administering the group discussion, for example due to hardware, software or other technical or practical issues.
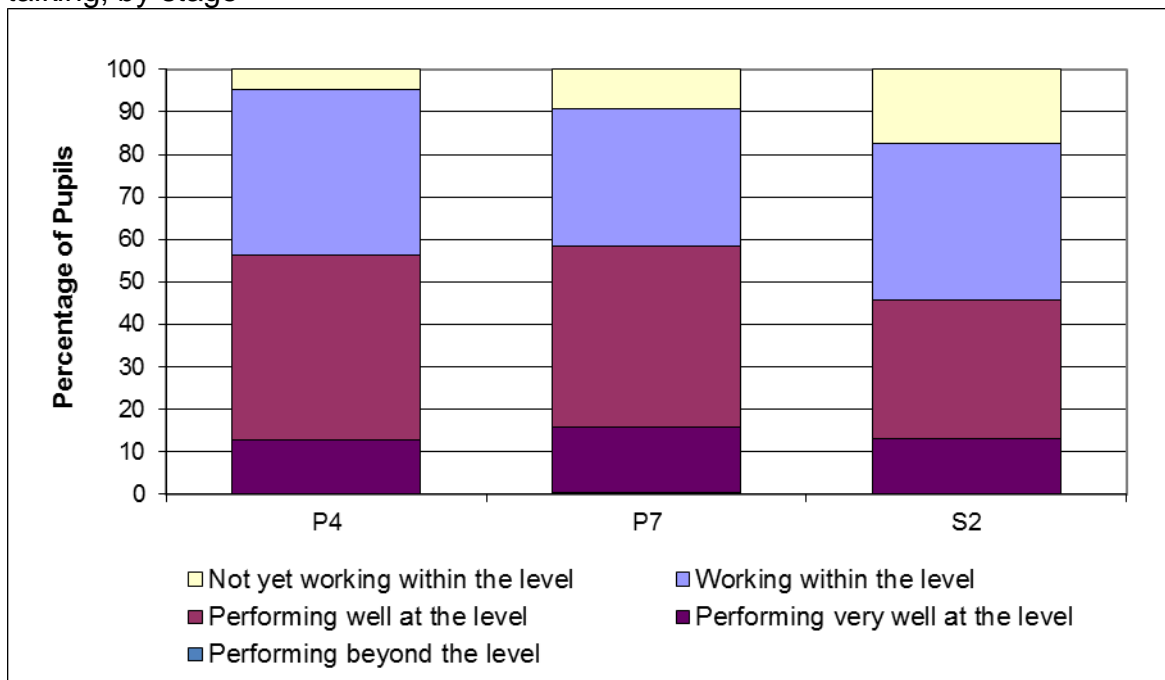
As the achieved sample size for listening and talking is lower than for the other survey elements, the level of uncertainty around the results is greater. This means that the confidence intervals which were described in Section 1.3 are larger for listening and talking than for reading or writing. For example, the confidence interval around the percentage of P4 pupils assessed as 'performing well at the level' or above for listening and talking is four per cent. This means that if all P4 pupils in Scotland had been assessed instead of just our sample, one could be reasonably confident that the percentage of all P4 pupils 'performing well at the level' or above would be no more than four per cent above or below the national estimate. The confidence interval for the same category for reading is smaller at two per cent.

When the data is divided into groups of pupils with specific characteristics, such as girls or boys, or pupils from each of the three deprivation categories, the sample size becomes smaller than for the whole stage. This means that the confidence intervals are larger for these breakdowns. As a result, it has not been possible to produce reliable estimates broken down by gender or deprivation.

Chart 4.1 shows performance of pupils listening and talking skills by reporting category and stage. Performance was highest in P4 and P7 where the percentage of pupils that performed well at, very well at or beyond the relevant CfE level for their stage was 56 and 58 per cent respectively. Performance was lower in S2 where an estimated 46 per cent of pupils performed well at, very well at or beyond the appropriate CfE level for their stage. The percentage of pupils performing 'beyond the level' was less than one per cent at all stages.

The percentage of pupils not yet working within the level appropriate for their stage increased from five per cent in P4 to nine per cent in P7 and to 17 per cent at S2.

Chart 4.1: Percentage of pupils in each of the reporting categories for listening and talking, by stage
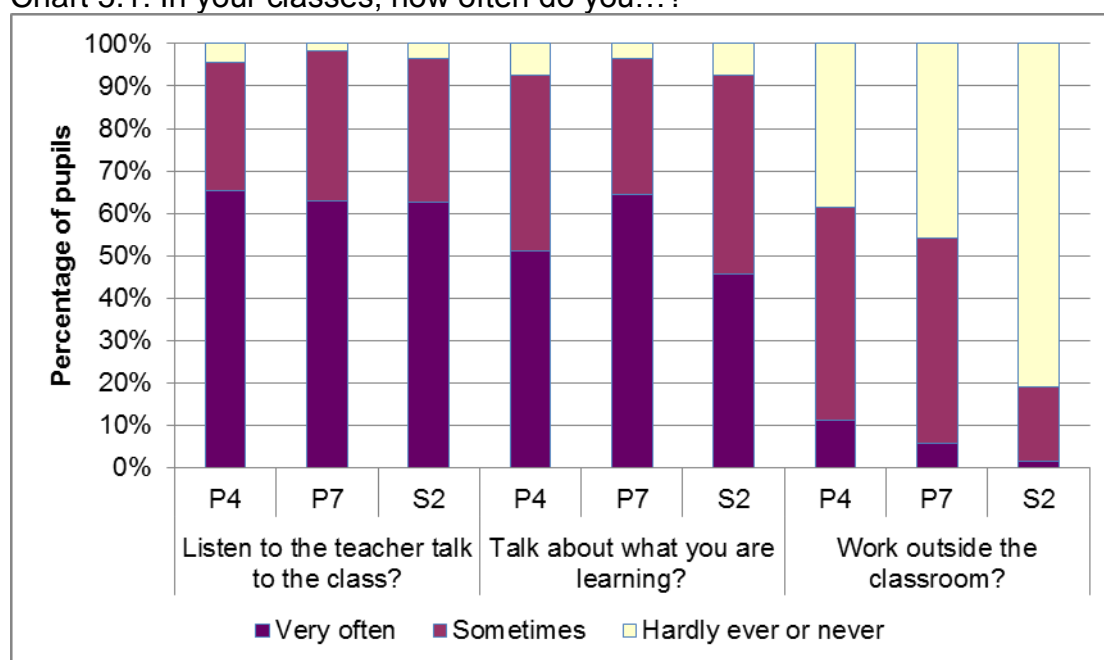
Chapter 5: Pupil questionnaire

All pupils participating in the SSLN were asked to complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on factors that are likely to affect learning, such as pupil attitudes and experiences in class.

As with all sample surveys, there are margins of error around the results. The size of these varies but, for example, the first statistic mentioned below (65 per cent in P4 'listen to the teacher talk to the class') has a 95 per cent confidence interval of ± 2.5 per cent. Standard error data for these calculations are provided in the data tables online. The data were weighted to account for school size and non-response. 'Don't know' responses were generally excluded.

5.1 Activities in school

Pupils were asked how often they participate in a range of activities in their classes. Chart 5.1 shows that the activity in which the highest percentage of P4 and S2 pupils reported they participated in 'very often' was 'listen to the teacher talk to the class' (65 per cent and 63 per cent respectively). In P7, the percentage of pupils reporting that they 'listened to the teacher talk to the class' and 'talked about what they were learning' 'very often' were similarly high (63 and 65 per cent respectively).

Chart 5.1: In your classes, how often do you…?

Eighty-one per cent of S2 pupils reported that they 'hardly ever or never' worked outside the classroom (e.g. at a museum). This was more than twice the rate for P4 pupils at 39 per cent. Forty-six per cent of P7 pupils stated that they 'hardly ever or never' worked outside the classroom.

Pupils were asked about how often teachers 'help you understand how you can do better'. The results show that 66 per cent of P4 pupils stated this happened 'very often', compared to 75 per cent at P7 and 51 per cent at S2.
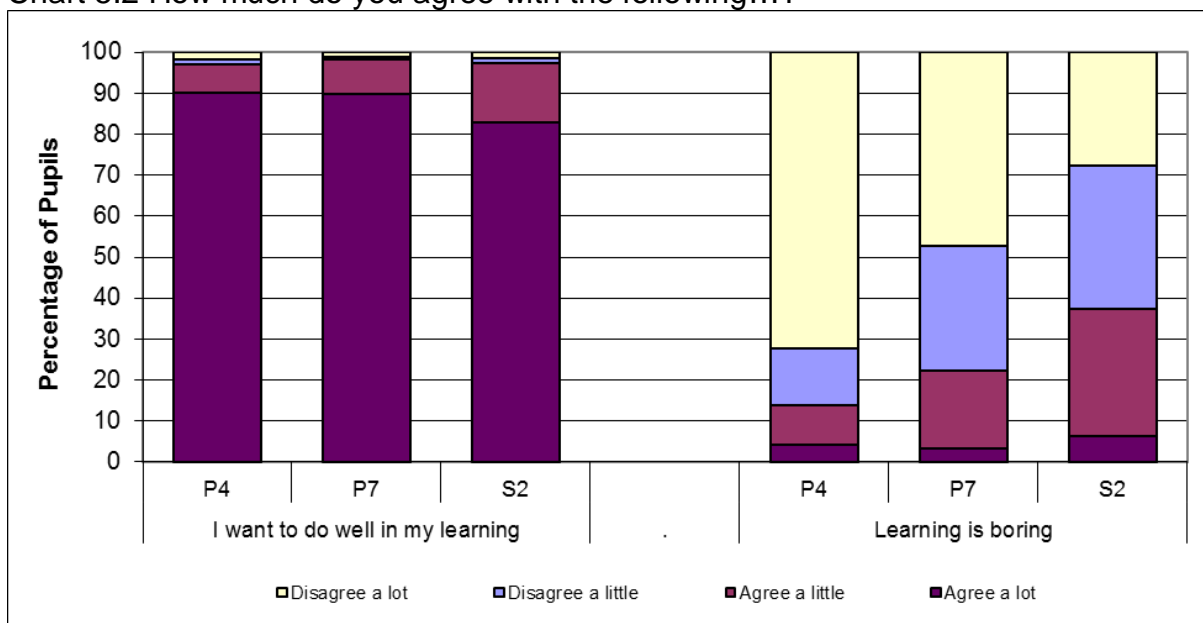
Pupils were also asked about their teachers' practices in the classroom. The most common practice reported at each stage was for teachers to 'tell you what you are going to learn before you start working' (84 per cent at P4, 87 per cent at P7 and 72 per cent at S2), closely followed by 'encourage you to work hard' (75 per cent at P4, 82 per cent at P7 and 65 per cent at S2).

5.2 Attitudes to learning and literacy

Pupils were asked a series of questions about their attitudes towards learning, including how much they enjoy learning and what aspects of learning they enjoy. Full results are available in the data tables online.

Chart 5.2 shows that high proportions of pupils at all stages 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little' with the statement 'I want to do well in my learning' (97 per cent at P4, 98 per cent at P7 and 97 per cent at S2). Conversely, engagement with learning appears to reduce by stage. Fourteen per cent of P4 pupils 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little' that 'learning is boring'. At P7 and S2 the comparable percentages were 22 per cent and 37 per cent respectively.
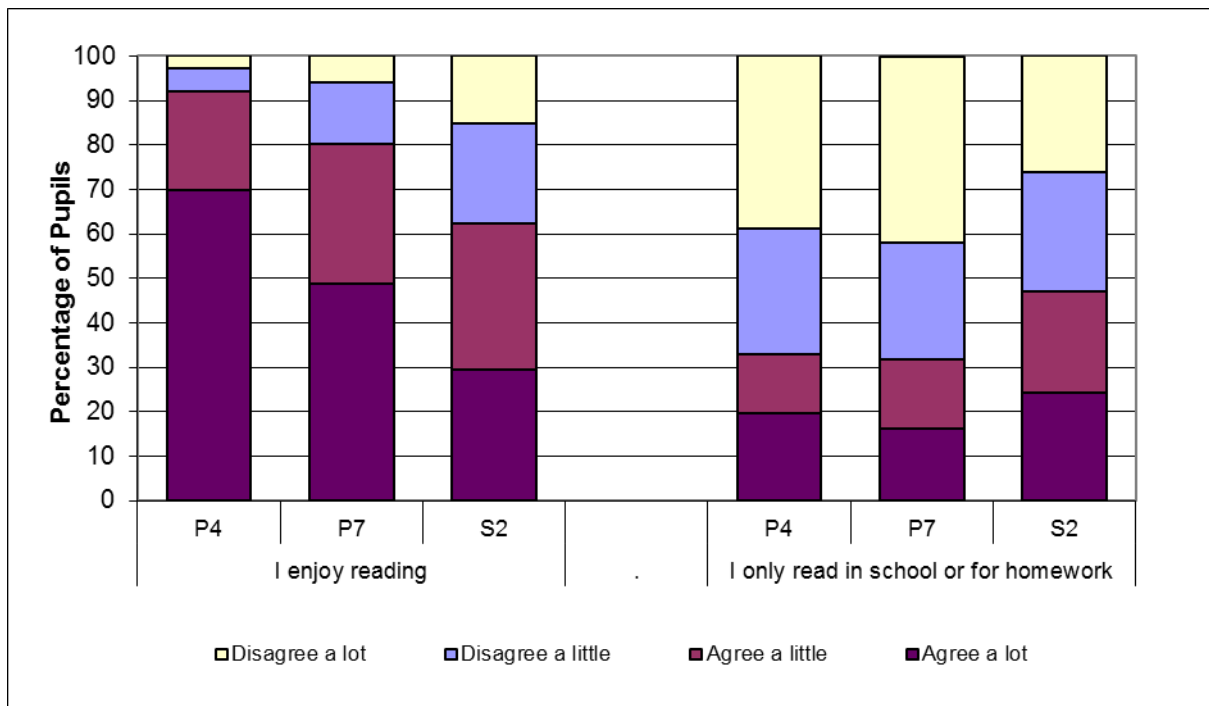
Chart 5.2 How much do you agree with the following…?

The pupil questionnaire also asked about attitudes towards reading and reading habits. Pupils were asked how much they agreed with the statement 'I enjoy reading', to which 92 per cent of pupils at P4, 80 per cent at P7 and 62 per cent at S2 stated they 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little'.

The percentage of pupils who 'agreed a lot' or 'agreed a little' with the statement 'I only read in school or for homework' was 33 per cent at P4, 32 per cent at P7 and 47 per cent at S2.

Chart 5.3: How much do you agree with the following…?

Pupils were also asked how good they thought they were at each of the literacy organisers being assessed. Pupils' perception of their ability as being 'very good' or 'good' appears to decline throughout the stages. For example, 90 per cent of P4 pupils thought they were 'very good' or 'good' at reading, compared to 78 per cent at P7 and 69 per cent at S2.

The organiser at which P4 pupils showed most confidence was reading, whilst at P7 it was talking. At S2, around seven in ten pupils stated they thought they were 'very good' or 'good' across all four organisers.

Chapter 6: Teacher questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was distributed to all P4 class teachers in half of participating primary schools and all P7 teachers in the other half of primary schools. In secondary schools, questionnaires were given to ten teachers: two S2 English teachers and two S2 teachers from each of four other broad curriculum groupings:

- Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education (RME) and Health & Wellbeing
- Expressive Arts and Languages
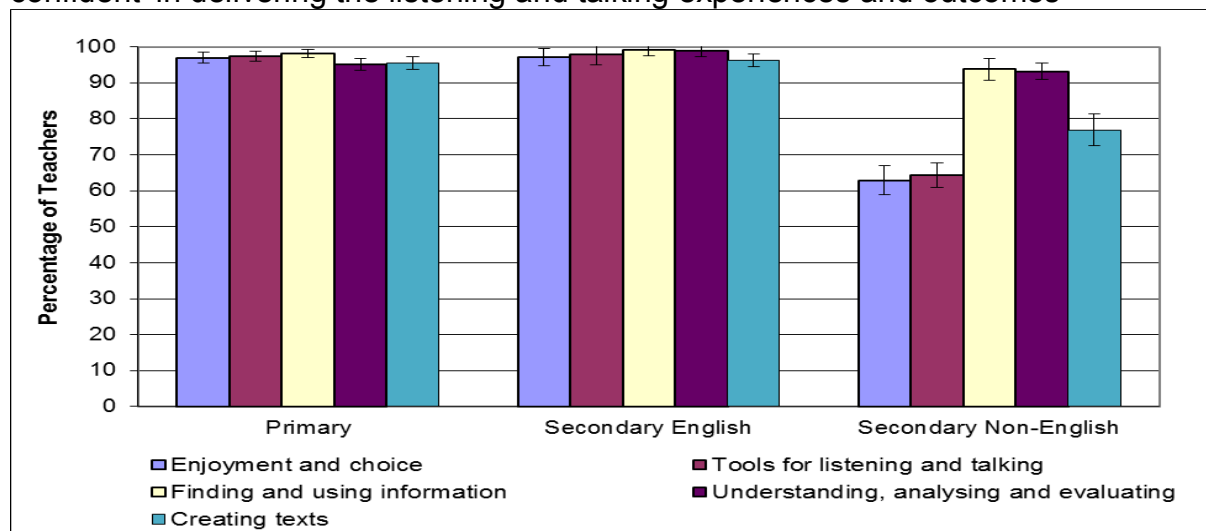- Additional Support Needs (ASN)

Primary teachers and secondary non-English teachers were asked about one of reading, writing or listening and talking whereas secondary English teachers were asked about all three organisers.

As with all sample surveys, there are margins of error around the results. The size of these vary but, as a rule of thumb, for primary teachers they are around ± one percentage point. For Secondary English teachers they are generally between ± one and three percentage points and for Secondary non-English groups they vary between ± one and five percentage points. Standard error data for these calculations are provided in the data tables. The data were weighted to account for school size and non-response.

6.1 Teaching literacy across the curriculum

Primary and Secondary English teachers both reported high levels of confidence in delivering literacy experiences and outcomes. Over 90 per cent of Primary and Secondary English teachers reported they were 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' in delivering each of the three literacy organisers. Secondary non-English teachers reported least confidence in delivering literacy experiences and outcomes, particularly in relation to listening and talking where over a third of teachers were 'not very confident' or 'not confident at all' in delivering 'enjoyment and choice' and 'tools for listening and talking' (as shown in Chart 6.1).

Chart 6.1 Percentage of teachers reporting they were 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' in delivering the listening and talking experiences and outcomes
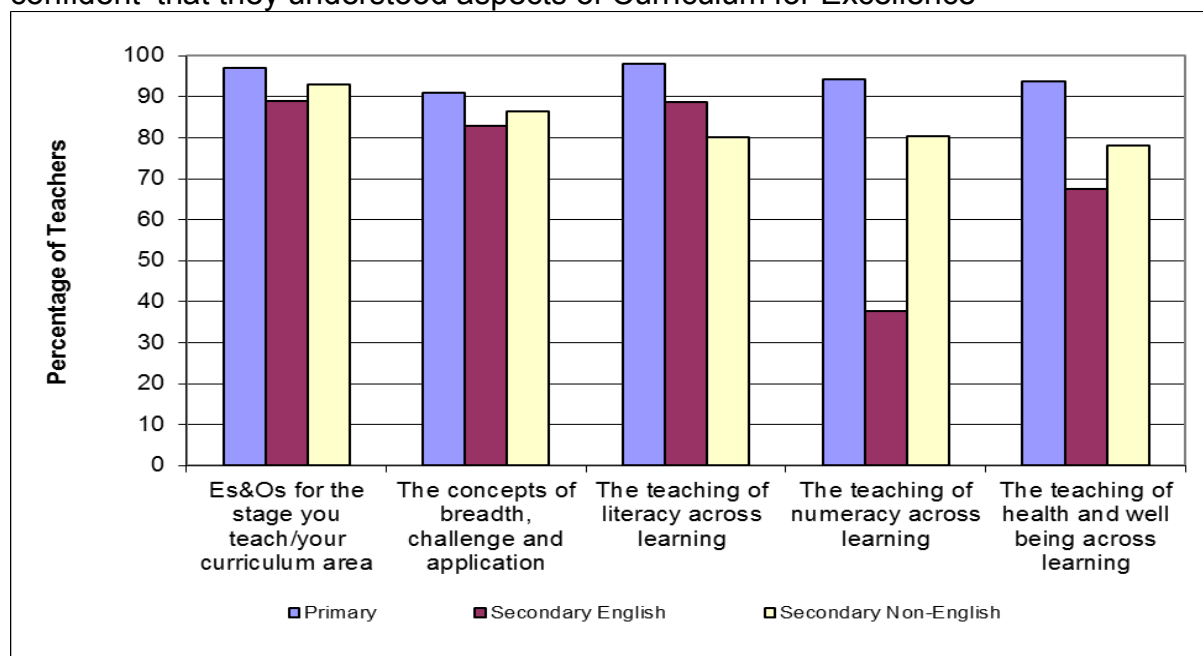
Secondary non-English teachers were also asked how often they found opportunities to reinforce pupils' literacy skills. Over four-fifths of all Secondary non-English teachers reported that they found opportunities at least 'most weeks', with the highest percentage pertaining to Arts teachers, at 95 per cent.

6.2 Aspects of Curriculum for Excellence

Teachers were asked about their levels of confidence with understanding certain aspects of Curriculum for Excellence. The highest rates were in primary schools where between 91 and 98 per cent of teachers were either 'very' or 'fairly' confident they understood the experiences and outcomes for their area. The area in which teachers reported least confidence was in the teaching of numeracy across learning by Secondary English teachers.

Chart 6.2 Proportion of teachers reporting they were 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' that they understood aspects of Curriculum for Excellence

6.3 Classroom activities and resources

Teachers were asked how often pupils in their classes spend time doing a range of activities. The activities which the highest percentages of teachers reported pupils undertook on 'most days' were 'being taught with the whole class together', 'working quietly on their own' and 'talking about what they are learning in pairs or in groups'.

Two-thirds of primary teachers also reported pupils 'worked with a partner or a group on a shared task' most days, with 97 per cent 'working at a computer or using other technology' or 'discussing everyday uses of what they are learning' at least most weeks.

Primary and Secondary English teachers were asked about the literacy resources which they make use of. The most commonly used resources were materials teachers have developed themselves, Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and interactive whiteboards.

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Chapter 7: Further information

The survey contains a huge amount of data which cannot be summarised in this publication. This report seeks to highlight the key messages and give a flavour of the range of analysis possible. Detailed tables of the performance data and pupil and teacher questionnaire results, are published as supporting tables alongside this publication, and provide a fuller picture of the findings.

Further information on the SSLN, including the more complete data tables and technical information about the survey, is available from www.scotland.gov.uk/ssln.

There is a range of other reliable information on the performance of Scotland's school pupils.

Scotland participates in the OECD's triennial Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey. This assessment is carried out by 15 year-olds in over 60 countries, including all OECD countries, and as such is an important international benchmark of performance. The results of previous PISA surveys are available at www.scotland.gov.uk/pisa.

The Scottish Government also publishes analysis of SQA exam results and leaver destinations. The latest post-appeal data are available at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/4917/0.

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Phillipa Haxton
Scottish Government
Education Analytical Services Division
Area 2D South,
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ
Tel: +44(0) 131 244 0893
ssln@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Media enquiries about the information in this Statistics Publication Notice should be addressed to
Victoria Pescodd
Tel: +44(0) 131 244 2972

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Correspondence and enquiries

Enquiries on this publication should be addressed to:	General enquiries on Scottish Government statistics can be addressed to:
Marion MacRury Education Analytical Services Area 2D South Victoria Quay Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ Telephone: (0131) 244 0315; Fax: (0131) 244 0354 e-mail: ssln@scotland.gsi.gov.uk	Office of the Chief Statistician and Performance Scottish Government 4N.06, St Andrews House EDINBURGH EH1 3DG Telephone: (0131) 244 0442 e-mail: statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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