



*Tanggapan ng Kalihim  
Office of the Secretary*

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DECS MEMORANDUM  
No 241, s. 2000

PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL READING LITERACY  
STUDY (PIRLS) ASSESSMENT 2001

To Regional Directors  
Schools Division/City Superintendents  
Private Elementary Schools Principals

1 The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international study designed to investigate students knowledge and abilities in reading literacy and the cultural environments teaching practices curriculum goals and institutional arrangements that are associated with achievement. It is designed to measure and interpret differences in national education system in order to help improve the teaching and learning of reading worldwide

2 PIRLS is conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) an independent international cooperative of national research institutions and government agencies Forty (40) countries including the Philippines have joined together in this study

3 A national representative sample of fourth grade pupils ages 9 to 10 will take the PIRLS reading assessment. This population was chosen for PIRLS because it is an important transition point where pupils typically have learned how to read and are now reading to learn

4 The written assessment of reading comprehension will be in Filipino

5 The study has a two-stage design a) a Field study to 30-40 schools by September 2000, and b) a Main study to 150 schools by February 2002 PIRLS 2001 is intended to be the first in a continuing four-year cycle of trend studies in reading literacy

6 PIRLS focuses on the three aspects of reading literacy process of comprehension purposes for reading, and reading behaviors and attitudes The first two aspects will form the basis of the written assessment of reading comprehension while the latter will be addressed by student questionnaires Enclosure No 1 contains the overview of assessment content.

7 All schools are therefore enjoined to carry out activities as in Enclosure No 2 to enhance reading literacy

8 Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired

*Andrew B. Gonzales*  
ANDREW B GONZALES  
Secretary  
*AG*

Encls  
As stated

Reference  
None

Allotment 1—(D O 50 97)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subjects

EXAMINATION/TESTS  
 Learning Area READING  
 RESEARCH or STUDIES

**OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT CONTENT**

The PIRLS assessment of reading comprehension focuses on three aspects of reading literacy 1) Processes of Comprehension 2) Purposes for Reading and 3) Reading Behavior and Attitudes The first two are the foundation for the PIRLS written assessment of reading comprehension. Figure 1 portrays the interaction between these two aspects. As illustrated in the figure each process of comprehension is assessed within each purpose for reading The percentages of the test that are devoted to each aspect are also shown in the Figure

**Figure 1**  
**Aspects of Reading Literacy – PIRLS Reading Framework**

<b>Processes of Comprehension</b>	<b>Purposes for Reading</b>	
	<b>Literacy Experience 50%</b>	<b>Acquire and Use Information 50%</b>
<b>Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information 20%</b>		
<b>Make Straightforward Inferences 30%</b>		
<b>Draw and Justify Complex Inferences and Interpretations 30%</b>		
<b>Examine and Evaluate Content, Language and Textual Elements 20%</b>		

### ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE READING LITERACY

English and Filipino Supervisors in the regions and the divisions, district supervisors and school heads play crucial roles to enhance reading literacy. Mentioned below are the possible activities they could do in the different sub-level training.

- Concentrate training teachers of grades III and IV. In the sub-level training of current RETP include Grade III teachers
- Determine the reading ability of pupils
- Focus on the development of reading skills like
  - Scanning
  - Skimming
  - Retrieving information
  - Inferencing
  - Evaluating
- Develop pupils' skills on test-taking
- Prepare support instructional materials to develop reading skills
- Conduct intensive monitoring of grades III and IV reading and pagbasa classes

#### A Processes of Comprehension

There are four types of comprehension process that will be used in the PIRLS assessment to develop the comprehension questions for the passages presented to students. Below are the processes and samples of reading tasks for each type of text processing.

- 1 Focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information and ideas
  - identifying information that is relevant to the specific goal of reading
  - looking for specific ideas
  - searching for definitions of words or phrases
  - identifying the setting of a story (e.g. time, place)
  - finding the topic sentence or main idea (when explicitly stated)
- 2 Make straightforward inferences
  - inferring that one event caused another event to occur
  - concluding the main point being made by a series of arguments
  - determining the referent of a pronoun
  - identifying examples of generalizations made in the text
  - describing the relationship between two characters
- 3 Construct and justify interpretations
  - concluding the overall message or theme of a text
  - considering an alternative to actions taken by characters
  - comparing and contrasting text information with prior knowledge
  - inferring a story's mood or tone as portrayed in plot elements
  - interpreting a real-world application of a specific text information

#### 4 Examine

- evaluating the likelihood that a story could really happen
- describing how the author created a surprise ending
- judging the completeness or clarity of information provided in the text
- determining an author's perspective on the central topic
- describing how the author's choice of adjectives affects meaning

### B Purposes of reading

Reading literacy is directly related to the following purposes for which individual reads

- reading for personal interest and pleasure
- reading to participate in society
- reading to learn

PIRLS assessment of reading literacy focuses on two types of texts that reflect the purposes for reading most often engaged in by students both in and out of school. In selecting texts for the (PIRLS) assessment, the aim is to present as wide as possible a range of text types within the two purposes for reading, namely

- **Reading for Literary Experience** engages the reader in imagined events, settings, actions, consequences, characters, atmosphere, feelings of ideas and in the enjoyment of language itself. The main form of literary texts to be used in the (PIRLS) assessment is narrative fiction.
- **Reading To Acquire And Use information** - engages the reader not with imagined worlds but with aspects of the real universe. Texts for this purpose take many forms, as chronological and non-chronological structuring which make different kinds of demands on the reader.
  - Chronological texts present ideas as a sequence ordered in time, i.e. recounting events (history), diary entries, personal accounts or letters, biographies and autobiographies, recipes and instructions.
  - Non-chronological texts are structured according to a logical rather than a chronological order, i.e. descriptions and explanations, discussion and persuasion texts presenting arguments and counter-arguments. Other non-chronologically ordered types are variety of documents, i.e. lists, diagrams, charts and graphs and some that call for actions on the reader.

### C Reading Literacy Behaviors and Attitudes

Reading literacy involves not only the ability to construct meaning from a variety of texts, but also the demonstration of behaviors and attitudes that support lifelong reading. These behaviors and attitudes contribute to the full realization of the individual's potential within a literate society.

PIRLS will obtain information about student's attitudes towards reading and their reading habits through a self-report questionnaire to be completed by each student.

who takes the PIRLS reading literacy test. In addition, PIRLS will administer a series of questionnaires to be completed by the students tested, their parents, their teachers, and their school principals.

PIRLS is also developing an encyclopedia about each participating country to provide information on the national contexts in which children's home and schools are situated.

#### **D Assessment Specifications**

➤ **Types of Texts**

- Literary
- Informative
- Reader (Magazine type)

➤ **Considerations in the Selection of Texts**

- topic and theme appropriate for the age group
- fairness and sensitivity to gender, racial, ethnic, and religious considerations
- nature and level of linguistic features
- density of information
- text no longer than 1000 words

➤ **Question Types and Scoring Points**

50% multiple-choice questions with one point each answer

50% constructed-response questions with partial credit scoring - 1, 2, 3 points assigned as scores depending on the depth of understanding or the extent of textual support the question requires