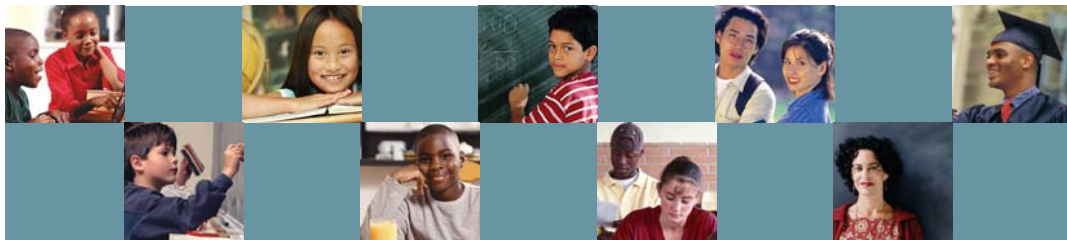


# the condition of education 2006



## INDICATOR 33

### Early Literacy Activities

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2006*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2006*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2006071>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

**Suggested Citation:**

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2006). *The Condition of Education 2006*, NCES 2006-071, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

# Learning Opportunities

## Early Literacy Activities

Poor, near-poor, and nonpoor children were more likely to participate in literacy activities in 2005 than in 1993.

Children whose parents read to them tend to become better readers and perform better in school (Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998). Other family activities such as telling stories and singing songs also encourage children’s acquisition of literacy skills (Moss and Fawcett 1995).

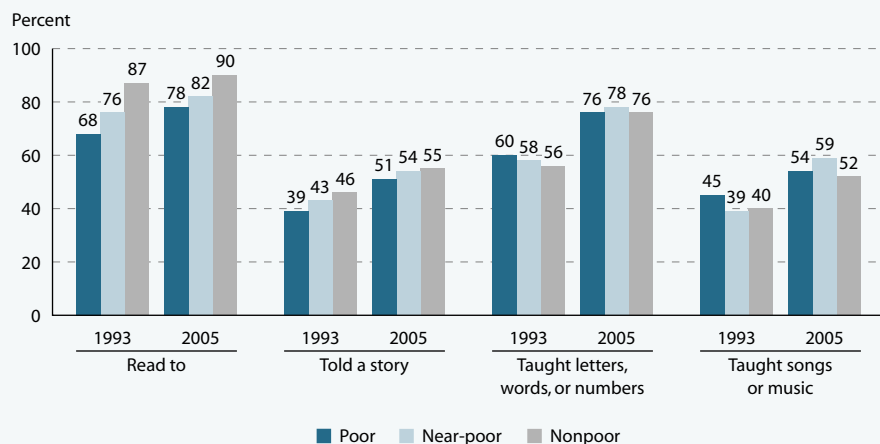
The percentage of prekindergarten children ages 3–5 read to frequently by a family member (i.e., three or more times in the week preceding the survey) increased from 78 percent in 1993 to 86 percent in 2005 (see supplemental table 33-1). There were also increases in the percentage of children whose family members frequently told them a story (from 43 to 54 percent); taught them letters, words, or numbers (from 58 to 77 percent); and taught them songs or music (from 41 to 54 percent).

All children regardless of poverty status were more likely to have an adult read to them frequently in 2005 than in 1993; however, the increase among poor children (from 68 to 78 percent) was greater than the increase among nonpoor children (from 87 to 90 percent).

Despite the greater increase for poor children, nonpoor children were still more likely than poor children to have a family member read to them frequently in 2005 as was also the case in 1993. For example, in 2005, a greater percentage of nonpoor children were read to than poor children (90 vs. 78 percent). However, in 2005, there were no measurable differences found between nonpoor and poor children for the other three home literacy activities.

The percentage of children who engaged in certain literacy activities in 2005 varied by parents’ education and race/ethnicity. Children whose parents had at least a high school diploma or equivalent were more likely to be read to and taught letters, words, or numbers than those children whose parents had less than a high school diploma. White children were more likely than Black or Hispanic children to have a family member read to them. However, a greater percentage of Hispanic children than White children were taught songs or music.

**EARLY LITERACY ACTIVITIES: Percentage of prekindergarten children ages 3–5 who participated in home literacy activities with a family member three or more times in the preceding week, by poverty status: 1993 and 2005**



NOTE: “Poor” is defined to include those families below the poverty threshold; “near-poor” is defined as 100–199 percent of the poverty threshold; and “nonpoor” is defined as 200 percent or more than the poverty threshold. See supplemental note 1 for more information on poverty.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) and Early Childhood Program Participation Survey of the 2005 NHES, previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
 Supplemental Notes 1,3  
 Supplemental Table 33-1  
 Moss and Fawcett 1995  
 Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998



## Early Literacy Activities

**Table 33-1. Percentage of prekindergarten children ages 3–5 who participated in home literacy activities with a family member three or more times in the preceding week, by selected child and family characteristics: 1993 and 2005**

Child or family characteristic	Read to <sup>1</sup>		Told a story		Taught letters, words, or numbers		Taught songs or music	
	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005
<b>Total</b>	<b>78.3</b>	<b>85.7</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>53.7</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>76.6</b>	<b>41.0</b>	<b>54.4</b>
Age								
3	79.4	86.4	46.4	54.5	57.2	75.5	45.0	60.9
4	77.8	84.7	41.2	52.8	58.1	76.8	38.9	49.7
5	75.9	86.5	35.8	54.6	57.9	80.0	33.1	47.1
Sex								
Male	77.4	84.7	42.6	53.2	57.7	75.5	38.3	50.7
Female	79.2	86.8	43.4	54.3	57.7	77.8	43.8	58.4
Race/ethnicity <sup>2</sup>								
White	84.8	91.9	44.3	53.3	57.2	75.7	40.2	52.1
Black	65.9	78.5	39.0	54.3	62.7	80.6	48.9	56.4
Hispanic	58.2	71.8	37.7	49.8	53.9	74.3	38.7	59.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	68.8	84.4	52.1	64.5	61.8	75.2	35.9	46.9
Parents' primary home language								
Both parents speak English	81.1	88.8	43.6	55.0	58.1	77.8	41.6	54.4
One parent speaks English	65.1	76.4	48.7	56.3	57.0	70.8	35.2	61.9
Neither parent speaks English	40.3	64.6	33.0	43.8	51.6	68.9	32.9	53.0
Parents' education <sup>3</sup>								
Less than high school	54.4	62.7	34.1	42.6	54.6	67.8	37.3	49.0
High school diploma or equivalent	73.0	79.9	40.5	46.9	57.9	76.8	42.6	56.7
Some college, including vocational/technical	81.8	86.4	42.4	56.5	58.3	79.7	41.3	56.9
Bachelor's degree	88.9	92.2	47.7	56.4	57.3	75.8	36.7	53.8
Graduate/professional degree	88.5	94.4	52.0	60.7	58.2	76.1	42.7	50.1
Mother's employment <sup>4</sup>								
35 hours or more per week	77.9	83.2	42.7	52.0	55.7	74.7	41.9	54.8
Less than 35 hours per week	81.5	89.3	45.0	54.1	57.7	78.8	40.2	50.5
Looking for work	70.9	89.4	42.9	57.6	65.8	81.0	49.2	54.5
Not in the labor force	78.9	85.1	42.5	54.9	58.3	76.4	40.0	56.4
Family type								
Two-parent household	81.1	86.5	43.8	53.4	57.1	76.1	39.9	53.6
One-parent or guardian-only household	70.8	82.8	40.7	54.9	59.1	78.3	43.9	57.2
Poverty status <sup>5</sup>								
Poor	67.5	78.4	39.1	50.8	59.6	76.0	45.2	53.7
Near-poor	75.5	82.4	42.5	53.6	58.1	78.0	39.4	59.2
Nonpoor	86.8	90.2	45.6	55.0	56.2	76.2	39.5	52.5
Number of children under age 18 in the home								
1	80.9	85.8	45.9	56.5	65.0	77.8	44.0	56.5
2–3	78.7	85.9	43.1	53.0	55.8	76.8	39.7	52.8
4 or more	72.4	84.6	38.3	53.8	56.8	74.1	43.3	60.0

<sup>1</sup> In 1993, respondents were asked about their reading frequency in one of the two versions of the survey questionnaire. The percentages presented in the table are for all of the respondents who answered three or more times on either version of the questionnaire.

<sup>2</sup> Black includes African American, Hispanic includes Latino, and Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified. Other race/ethnicities are included in the total but are not shown separately.

<sup>3</sup> Parents' education is based on the highest level of education attained by either parent.

<sup>4</sup> Estimates do not include children without mothers (birth, adoptive, step, or foster) residing in the household.

<sup>5</sup> "Poor" is defined to include those families below the poverty threshold; "near-poor" is defined as 100–199 percent of the poverty threshold; and "nonpoor" is defined as 200 percent or more than the poverty threshold. See *supplemental note 1* for more information on poverty.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) and Early Childhood Program Participation Survey of the 2005 NHES, previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).

## Early Literacy Activities

**Table S33.** Standard errors for the percentage of prekindergarten children ages 3–5 who participated in home literacy activities with a family member three or more times in the preceding week, by poverty status: 1993 and 2005

Poverty status	Read to		Told a story		Taught letters, words, or numbers		Taught songs or music	
	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005
Poor	1.6	1.9	1.8	2.7	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.4
Near-poor	1.5	1.7	1.6	2.2	1.6	2.2	1.3	2.3
Nonpoor	0.8	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) and Early Childhood Program Participation Survey of the 2005 NHES, previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).

## Early Literacy Activities

**Table S33-1. Standard errors for the percentage of prekindergarten children ages 3–5 who participated in home literacy activities with a family member three or more times in the preceding week, by selected child and family characteristics: 1993 and 2005**

Child or family characteristic	Read to		Told a story		Taught letters, words, or numbers		Taught songs or music	
	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005	1993	2005
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>1.08</b>
Age								
3	0.99	1.21	1.33	1.91	1.27	1.19	1.33	1.49
4	1.00	1.32	1.52	1.60	1.11	1.46	1.24	1.62
5	2.09	2.24	2.70	3.40	2.81	2.32	2.56	3.32
Sex								
Male	1.04	1.20	1.26	1.78	0.97	1.40	1.31	1.59
Female	1.00	0.94	1.24	1.63	1.35	1.17	1.22	1.48
Race/ethnicity								
White	0.71	0.75	0.98	1.49	0.93	1.36	1.00	1.53
Black	2.36	3.13	2.69	3.63	2.69	3.13	3.10	4.09
Hispanic	2.38	2.04	2.18	2.40	1.94	2.24	1.99	2.18
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.83	4.41	7.35	4.93	4.90	6.30	4.65	6.02
Parents' primary home language								
Both parents speak English	0.64	0.74	0.92	1.18	0.85	0.98	0.94	1.18
One parent speaks English	7.44	6.17	7.96	7.91	7.66	7.04	6.08	7.29
Neither parent speaks English	3.13	2.81	2.75	2.84	2.76	2.68	2.60	3.61
Parents' education								
Less than high school	3.83	3.55	3.55	3.91	2.98	3.47	3.06	3.97
High school diploma or equivalent	1.56	1.78	1.48	2.48	1.51	2.11	1.45	2.49
Some college, including vocational/technical	1.36	1.38	1.78	2.47	1.62	1.64	1.33	2.23
Bachelor's degree	1.57	1.38	2.27	2.32	1.77	2.34	2.25	2.13
Graduate/professional degree	1.57	1.17	2.40	2.52	2.07	1.79	2.21	2.48
Mother's employment								
35 hours or more per week	1.20	1.18	1.23	2.00	1.47	1.87	1.55	1.94
Less than 35 hours per week	1.67	1.47	1.94	2.39	1.95	1.73	1.81	2.47
Looking for work	3.45	2.55	2.91	6.83	3.65	3.64	4.41	4.69
Not in the labor force	1.26	1.31	1.46	2.02	1.49	1.57	1.36	1.86
Family type								
Two-parent household	0.71	0.80	0.96	1.14	0.91	1.08	0.89	1.35
One-parent or guardian-only household	1.71	1.74	1.97	2.57	2.13	1.98	1.93	2.61
Poverty status								
Poor	1.59	1.94	1.83	2.65	2.00	2.08	2.05	2.44
Near-poor	1.46	1.72	1.55	2.23	1.59	2.15	1.34	2.33
Nonpoor	0.77	0.72	1.26	1.34	1.05	1.20	1.26	1.43
Number of children under age 18 in the home								
1	1.52	1.95	1.93	2.60	1.74	2.53	1.67	2.80
2–3	0.80	0.88	1.10	1.29	0.87	1.18	1.01	1.31
4 or more	2.62	2.09	2.90	3.39	3.01	2.84	2.23	3.20

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) and Early Childhood Program Participation Survey of the 2005 NHES, previously unpublished tabulation (October 2005).