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ABSTRACT

An amazing amount of literature has come out recently on boys, girls, gender differences, and literacy. For this study, the author administered a reading experiences survey to 698 students at a junior high school in Central California. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the connection between positive reading experiences and books (homeruns) and reading enjoyment among boys and girls as two separate groups. Conversely, the author also wished to explore the connection between negative reading experiences and books (strikeouts) and reading enjoyment, as well as the connection between free choice in reading material and reading enjoyment. The last area studied was the reading preferences of boys and girls. The researcher reported that 84% of the girls and 73% of the boys said they enjoyed reading. She noted a strong connection between the presence of homeruns and reading enjoyment for both males and females, as well as a connection between strikeouts and a lack of reading pleasure among the girls. On both the issue of free choice and the issue of strikeouts for boys, there appeared to be less significance. Finally, the study of genre preferences indicated that boys preferred to read action/adventure, horror, and comic books (in that order), and girls preferred to read mysteries, horror, and fantasy. Magazines and romances placed fifth and eighth for girls, contradicting many other studies. The girls' homerun books included male and female main characters almost equally (41% male and 37% female), whereas the boys' homerun books included male protagonists almost exclusively (74% male and 3% female).