

# Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2011

## Highlights of Ontario Results

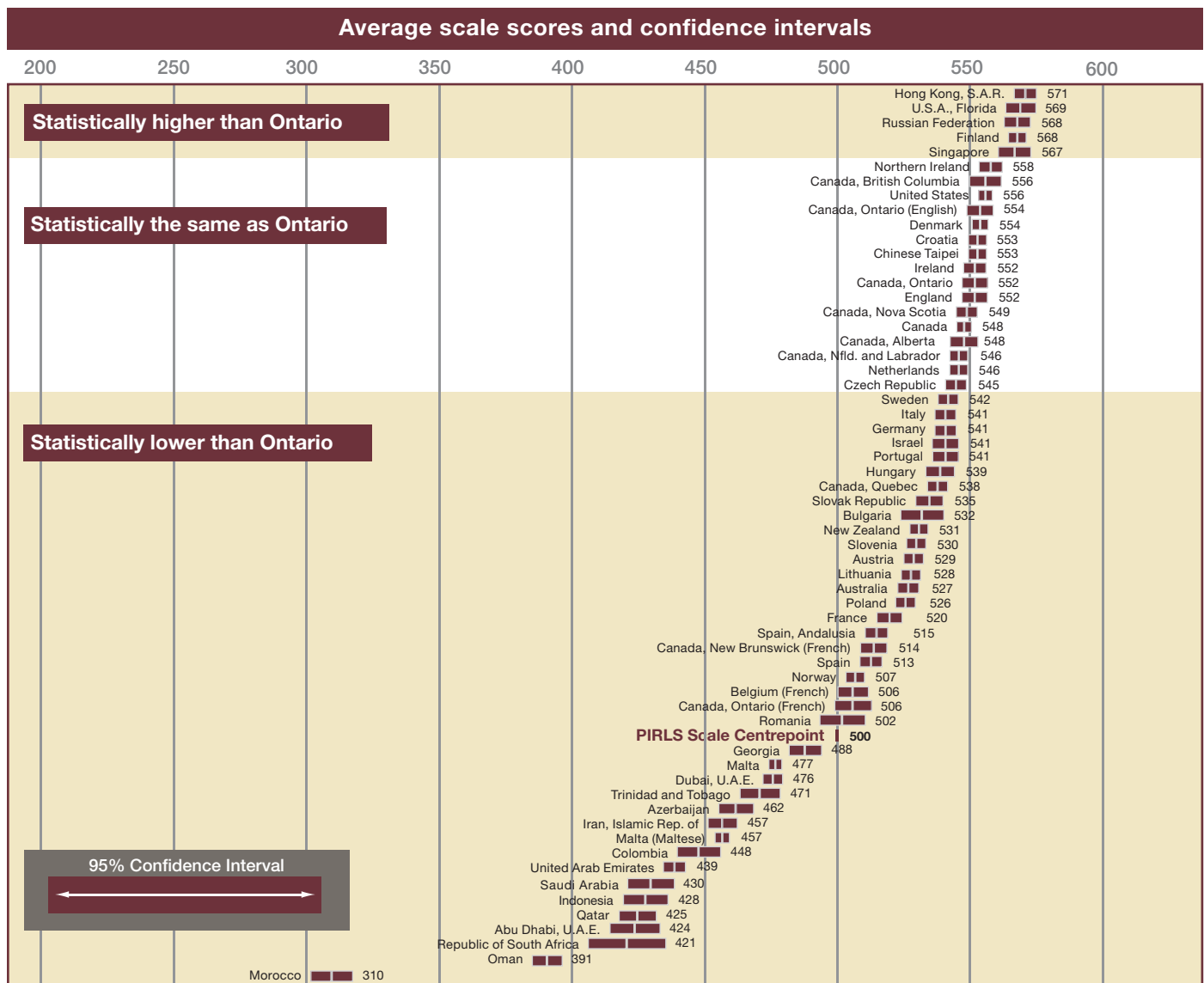


### Reading Achievement in Grade 4 (Based on Average Scale Scores)

Ontario students maintain strong reading achievement

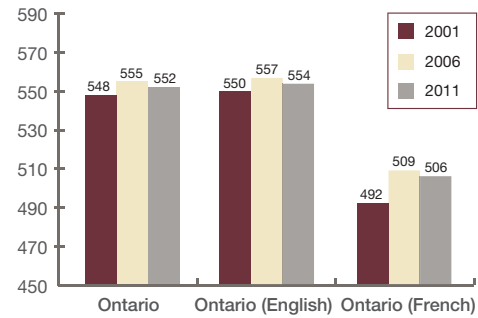
- Ontario Grade 4 students have maintained their high standing internationally compared to the 58 participating jurisdictions, including six other Canadian provinces. Only five jurisdictions performed significantly better than Ontario in overall reading achievement.
- The average scores of Ontario's English-language students were statistically the same as those of the province as a whole.
- The average scores of Ontario's French-language students were statistically lower than those for the province as a whole, but they have shown significant improvement since 2001—greater improvement than that among English-language students.
- In PIRLS, achievement scores are based on samples of students and estimate the actual achievement of an entire population of students. The study therefore provides a range of scores within which the actual achievement results might fall (i.e., a confidence interval). The chart below factors in the confidence intervals, so that the stated differences between jurisdictions are likely real and not due to chance.

### Reading Achievement Distribution



## Trends in Student Achievement: From PIRLS 2001 to 2011

- The graph shows changes in average scale scores among students in Ontario between the 2001 and 2011 PIRLS administrations. When calculating differences from 2001 to 2011, the international agency made some adjustments to the samples to ensure that they would be comparable across the three assessments. Therefore the numbers in the following graph may be slightly different from those reported previously.
- Between 2001 and 2011, Ontario French-language students showed statistically significant improvements in reading achievement. Although the average scale score among Ontario English-language students was higher in 2011 than in 2001, the difference was not statistically significant.



### Student Achievement According to International Benchmarks

- PIRLS defines four benchmarks for student achievement. The table gives the percentage of students reaching each benchmark. The results for Ontario are listed along with the results for the six other participating Canadian provinces, the other participating Group of Eight jurisdictions and the five jurisdictions that performed significantly better than Ontario in overall reading achievement.
- Fifteen percent of Ontario students reached the top achievement benchmark in the study. The international median was 8%.

Jurisdiction	International Benchmark			
	Advanced (625)	High (550)	Intermediate (475)	Low (400)
Singapore	24 (1.6)	62 (1.8)	87 (1.1)	97 (0.4)
U.S.A., Florida	22 (1.7)	61 (1.7)	91 (1.1)	98 (0.4)
Russian Federation	19 (1.2)	63 (1.7)	92 (1.1)	99 (0.2)
Finland	18 (0.9)	63 (1.3)	92 (0.7)	99 (0.2)
England	18 (1.1)	54 (1.3)	83 (1.1)	95 (0.5)
Hong Kong, S.A.R.	18 (1.2)	67 (1.5)	93 (0.8)	99 (0.2)
United States	17 (0.7)	56 (0.8)	86 (0.6)	98 (0.3)
Canada, British Columbia	15 (1.5)	55 (1.9)	88 (1.3)	98 (0.7)
<b>Canada, Ontario</b>	<b>15 (1.3)</b>	<b>54 (1.7)</b>	<b>85 (1.1)</b>	<b>97 (0.4)</b>
Canada, Nova Scotia	14 (1.1)	52 (1.5)	85 (1.0)	98 (0.3)
Canada, Alberta	13 (1.0)	51 (1.6)	85 (1.2)	97 (0.5)
Canada, Nfld. and Labrador	13 (1.3)	50 (1.8)	84 (1.2)	98 (0.5)
Italy	10 (0.7)	46 (1.4)	85 (1.1)	98 (0.4)
Germany	10 (0.8)	46 (1.4)	85 (1.0)	98 (0.3)
International median	8	44	80	95
Canada, Quebec	7 (0.7)	43 (1.9)	85 (1.0)	98 (0.3)
France	5 (0.5)	35 (1.6)	75 (1.5)	95 (0.8)
Canada, New Brunswick (French)	3 (0.8)	29 (1.9)	73 (2.0)	96 (0.7)

### About PIRLS

- PIRLS is a worldwide assessment undertaken every five years and sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. The first PIRLS administration was in 2001.
- The purpose of the study is to assess the reading skills of Grade 4 students from around the world, determine the contexts that influence reading development, understand how young children learn to read, and assess and understand the differences among education systems in order to improve reading teaching and learning methods throughout the world.
- In 2011, 58 jurisdictions participated in PIRLS. In Canada, the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia participated as seven distinct jurisdictions.
- In Ontario, 4561 Grade 4 students from 189 English- and French-language schools were randomly selected by Statistics Canada to participate.
- PIRLS 2011 also focused on reading behaviours and attitudes. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire on their reading habits. Parents, teachers and school principals were also asked to complete questionnaires. The responses to these questionnaires helped describe how reading is taught and learned.
- A complete Ontario Report of the PIRLS 2011 results is available at [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

**About EQAO:** The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) acts as a catalyst for increasing the success of Ontario students by measuring their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics against a common curriculum benchmark. As an independent provincial agency, EQAO plays a pivotal role by conducting province-wide tests at key points in every student's primary, junior and secondary education and reporting the results. The objective and reliable facts obtained add to the current knowledge about student learning and are an important tool for improvement at the individual, school and provincial levels.