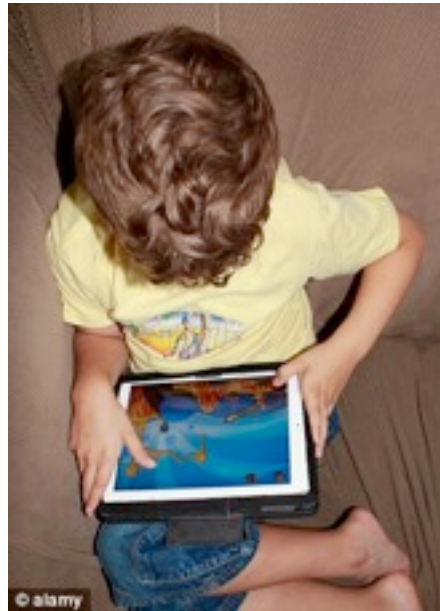


## Children who read on iPads or Kindles have weaker literacy skills and are less likely to enjoy it as a pastime, charity warns.

- **Survey of 35,000 pupils finds majority of youngsters now read on screen**
- **ebooks also reducing the number of children who enjoy reading as a pastime**
- **'Children who only read on-screen are significantly less likely to enjoy reading and less likely to be strong readers', National Literacy Trust says**



By [MARTIN ROBINSON](#)

Children who read on an iPad or Kindle are falling behind in the classroom as figures showed for the first time the majority of youngsters now prefer ebooks to printed versions. The advance of technology means that young people who read on a screen have weaker literacy skills and fewer children now enjoy reading, experts have said.

A survey, conducted by The National Literacy Trust, found that 52 per cent of children preferred to read on an electronic device - including e-readers, computers and smartphones - while only 32 per cent said they would rather read a physical book. Worryingly, only 12 per cent of those who read using new technology said they really enjoyed reading, compared with 51 per cent of those who favoured books.

Pupils who get free school meals, generally a sign they are from poorer backgrounds, are the least likely group to pick up a traditional book, the research found. The poll of 34,910 young people aged between eight and 16 across the UK found that those who read printed texts were almost twice as likely to have above-average reading skills as those who read on screens every day.

The study also found that children were more likely to have their own computer than their own desk.

Jonathan Douglas, the director of the National Literacy Trust, said: 'While we welcome the positive impact which technology has on bringing further reading opportunities to young people, it's crucial that reading in print is not cast aside.'

'We are concerned by our finding that children who only read on-screen are significantly less likely to enjoy reading and less likely to be strong readers.

'Good reading skills and reading for pleasure are closely linked to children's success at school and beyond. We need to encourage children to become avid readers, whatever format they choose.'

Award winning author Joan Brady is one of several literary stars to say the rise of the ebook is a 'problem' for Britain's children.

Boys in particular would prefer to read on a computer screen and the change in trend has encouraged many publishers to cash in by offering electronic versions of comics and books. The number of children and young people reading newspapers has fallen from 46.8 per cent in 2005 to 31.2 per cent in 2012.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2325378/Children-read-iPads-Kindles-weaker-literacy-skills-charity-warns.html#ixzz2TskR1ooG>