

What kids think

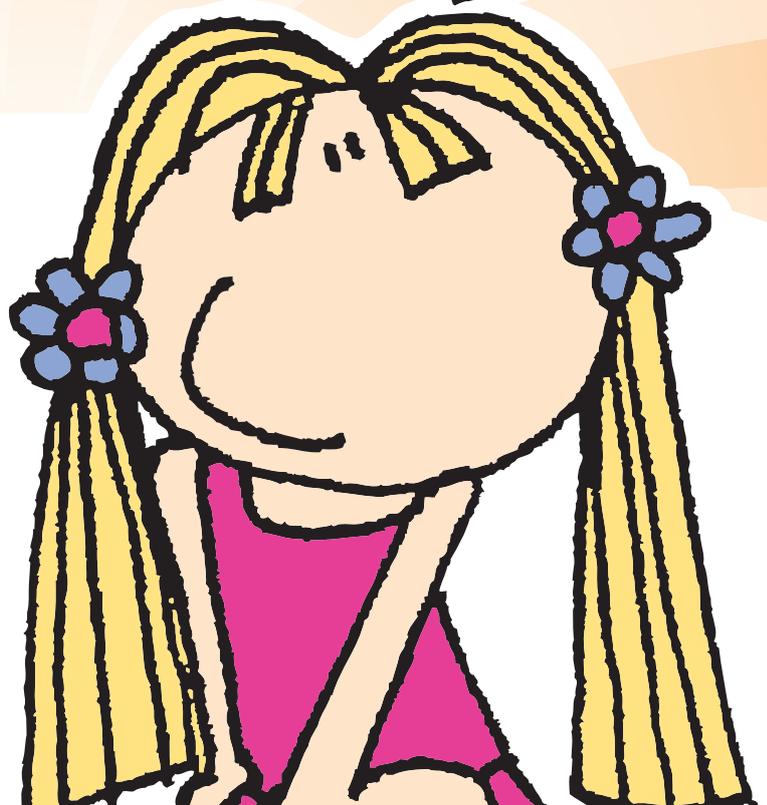
Results of the 2008 Kids' Life and Times Survey

This isn't really a comic at all is it?

No, it's just a way of disguising the results of a big study that was done by people at the University of Ulster and Queen's University. They think they're so clever but we can see right through it.

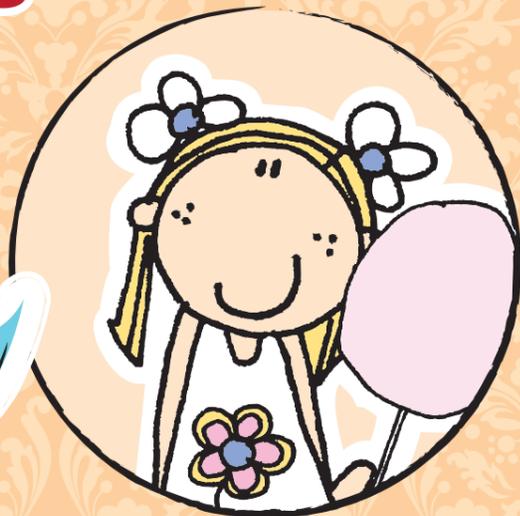
What was it about?

It was a survey of everyone in P7 in Northern Ireland in June 2008. It was about what kids thought about school and other things in their lives. They said they wanted to let people in P7 say what they thought now that they had reached the end of primary school.



KLT Survey 2008

Did you do it?
Did everyone do it?
What was it like?



3,440 P7 children did it. It was OK - Here are some of the things that other kids said about doing it.

'I think it is good to ask children their views on things and make it fun for them.'

'I liked it because it gave children a chance to express their opinions and you didn't have to answer the questions if you didn't want to.'

'It was a good way to help children speak in a way that it is not out loud but it is to other people. It is also a good way to improve schools and how bullying can be solved.'

'Surveys like this let kids voice their opinion.'



No surprises there then. What were girls happy about at school?



Girls were happier with their writing, reading and spelling than boys. They were also more likely to be happy working by themselves and even just coming to school! Both girls and boys felt the same about working on their sums, their shapes, on the computer and doing science experiments.

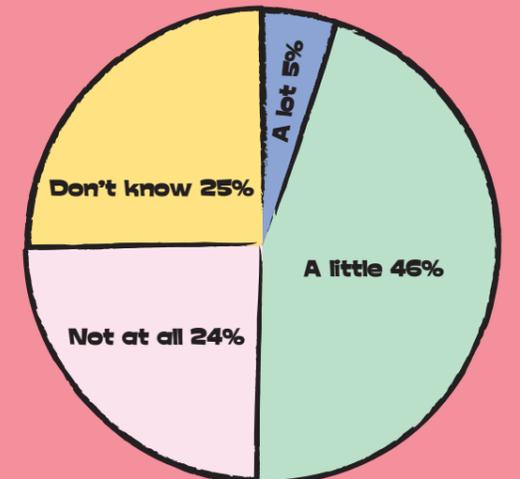


Did they ask about bullying at school?



Yes, very few kids thought that there was a lot of bullying at their school but most of them thought there was at least a little bullying.

Figure 3: Do you think that pupils at your school get bullied by other pupils?

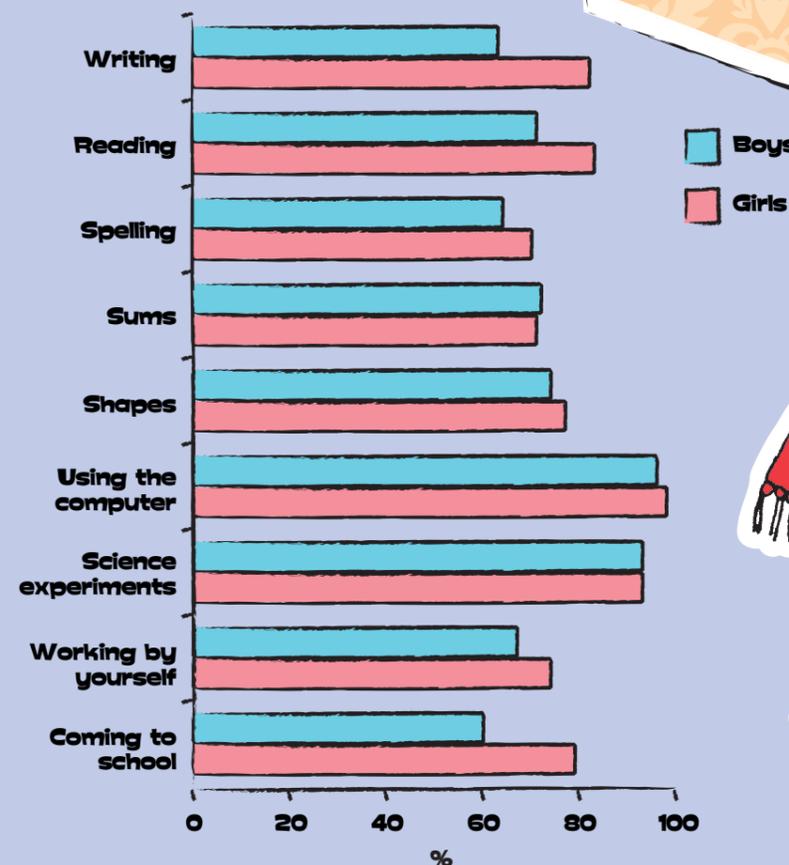


Was there anything that boys felt MUCH happier about at school than girls?



No.

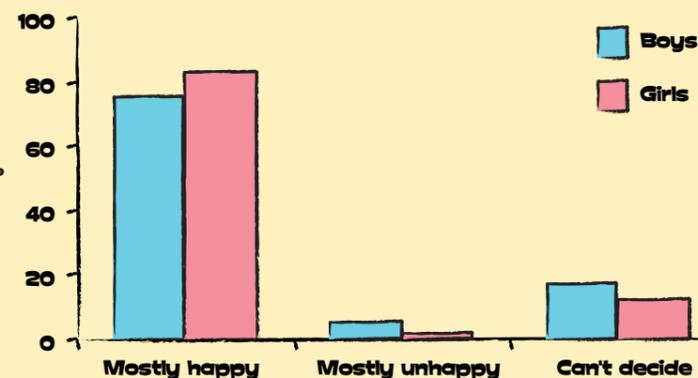
Figure 2: Thinking about all the things you do at school, how do you feel about...



I bet the kids pretended that they liked school!

I don't know if they were pretending or not but most kids said they had been mostly happy at their school! But girls were definitely happier than boys at school.

Figure 1: How happy or unhappy have you been at this school?





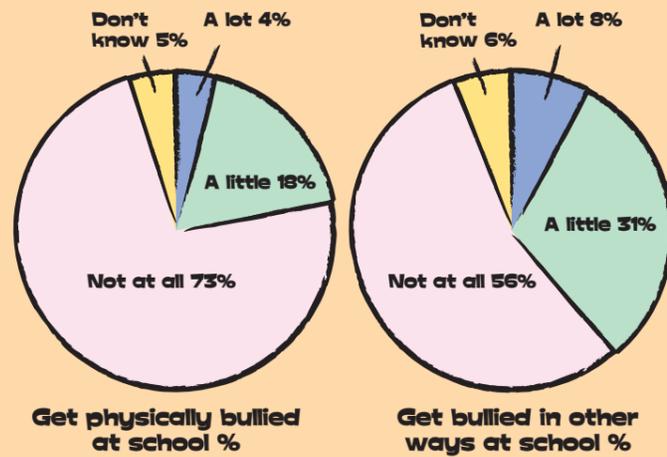
Had the kids been bullied themselves?



About a fifth said they had been physically bullied in the last 2 months. Physical bullying is things like getting pushed around or threatened or having their belongings stolen.

Four out of ten kids said that they had been bullied in some other way. That means things like getting called names, getting left out of games, or having nasty stories spread about them on purpose.

Figure 4: In the last 2 months, how often did you...



What did the teachers do about the bullying at school?



The survey didn't have any more questions about kids' own problems in case it was upsetting. There were questions about how schools dealt with bullying in general. Nearly all kids said that their school had a set of rules on bullying and that they had talked about bullying in class.

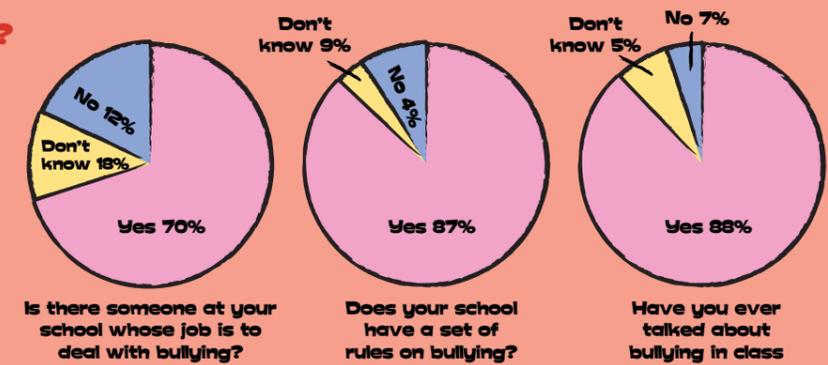


Figure 6: Bullying in school



I bet they were too scared to ask kids what they thought about the 11+



Oh no they weren't!



What about being bullied by text or on the Internet? Do enough kids have mobile phones to even be bullied that way?



Definitely! 94% of girls and 90% of boys had their own mobile phone and 93% of kids could get on the Internet at home.



Why are girls more likely to have mobile phones than boys?



No idea.

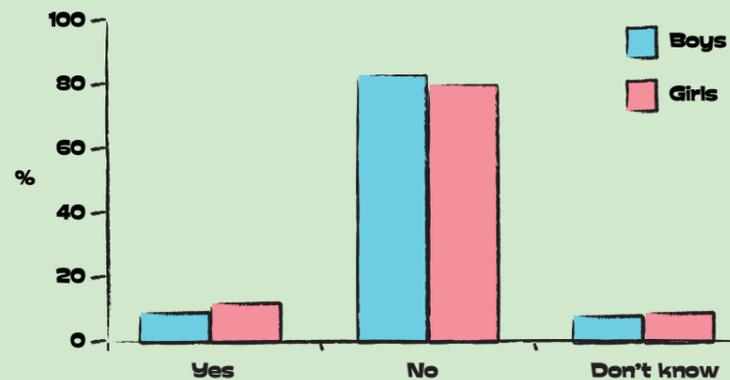


So what about the bullying by text or Internet then?



About 10% of kids had been bullied like that. I think it's called 'cyber-bullying'.

Figure 5: Have you ever been bullied by someone sending nasty texts or putting up bad things about you on the Internet?

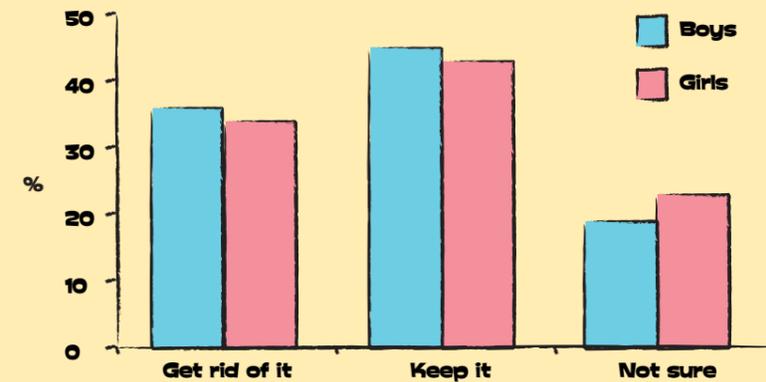


Did the kids want to get rid of the test?



Well it was kind of split. A bit like the adults I think. Just under one half of all the kids said keep it, just over a third said get rid of it and about a fifth said they weren't sure.

Figure 7: What do you think should happen to the transfer test (all children)?



You don't seriously expect me to work out those fractions do you? Can't you give me a straight answer?



No. It's just split. There was no 'consensus'. I bet you don't know what that means either.





Don't patronise me. I bet the kids who got a Grade A wanted to keep it and the kids who got a Grade D wanted to get rid of it though!



Yes you've got it right there. Half of the children who took the test said they wanted to keep it, but only a quarter of those who had not taken the test said it should stay. The kids most likely to want to keep the test were those who got an A grade. Twice as many of the kids with A grades as those with D grades wanted to keep it.

Table 1: What do you think should happen to the transfer test by grade?

	A%	B1%	B2%	C1%	C2%	D%	Don't want to say%
Get rid of it	21	30	26	43	47	51	51
Keep it	61	52	51	38	36	31	27
Not sure	18	18	23	19	17	19	22



Why do you think the transfer test should be kept?



'Because it is a fair test and a very good way to decide what school you go to.'

'Because at the minute they don't know what they are going to do to replace it so keep it until you are certain that you know what you are changing it to.'

'Because children should know what it feels like to study hard and then whatever score they get they will know that they have tried their hardest and be proud of themselves.'

'Because it gets you ready for tests in your next school, or O or A levels.'

'Because it is a good way to put children into schools that suit their ability.'

'All children have the choice of doing the test and don't have to do it if they don't want to. I think it is good because it makes pupils work a little harder to achieve their goal.'



Why do you think the transfer test should be got rid of?



'As it puts people under pressure and if people don't do well they get upset.'

'Because children think they will get grade A and end up getting a grade that is much lower and are sad because their friends do much better and are going to different secondary schools than them!'

'I don't think it's fair because 2 tests shouldn't decide what school you are going to.'

'I don't think there is any point in it and it causes stress for children because there is loads and loads of studying. Also sometimes children can get really upset if they don't pass and not feel good about themselves and feel they let down their family!'

'I think it puts children under a lot of pressure and it's not fair on them. They might not like the grades they get and might feel dumb when they are not.'

'I think it should be got rid of because if you get a bad grade some people feel bad about themselves and don't bother at secondary school and you can become very successful even with a D.'

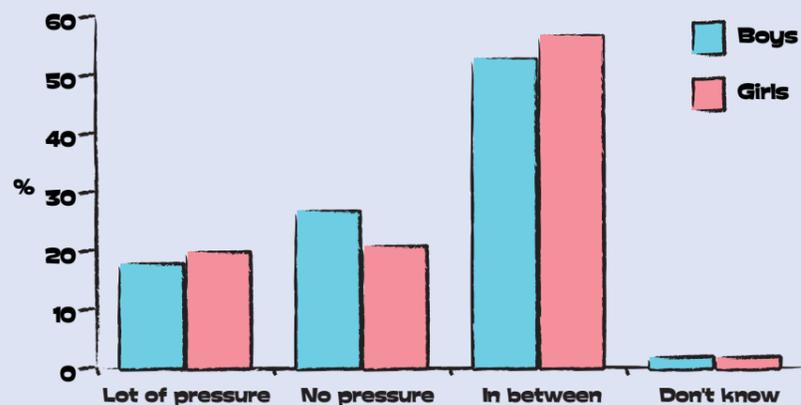


More fractions... did they ask if kids were stressed by the test?



Yes and they were. About a fifth said they had felt under a lot of pressure and most had felt some pressure.

Figure 8: Pressure due to the transfer test (pupils who sat the transfer test)



Did the survey ask about other things?



Yes, there were loads of other questions. If you want to find out more about the survey go to www.ark.ac.uk/klt



If kids felt pressurised doing the 11+ then why do so many of them think that it should stay?



They had lots of different reasons why the test should stay or go. Here are some of the things that they said.



Will there be more comics?

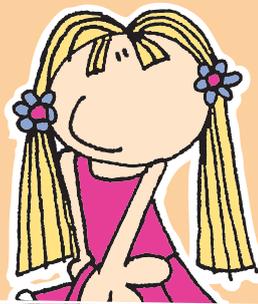


Why would you care? You're just a fictional cartoon character.



I still have feelings you know!

KLT Survey 2008



Kids' Life and Times is an online survey of P7 children in Northern Ireland carried out in school. In 2008, 3,440 children participated.

The Kids' Life and Times survey is a joint initiative between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster and aims to provide an independent source of information on what children think about the issues that affect them. Check the web site for more information on the survey findings (www.ark.ac.uk/klt) or call Katrina Lloyd on 028 9097 3585 with any queries.

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In collaboration with Queen's University Belfast and University of Ulster

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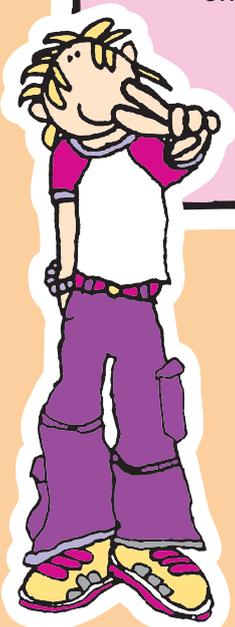
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Kids' Life and Times is part of ARK, a resource providing access to social and political material on Northern Ireland. Established in 2000 within the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast, ARK has developed a range of resource materials that inform social and political debate in the region and raise the profile of social science research on Northern Ireland. ARK's mission is to make social science knowledge on Northern Ireland easily accessible to the widest possible audience.

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