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The National Authority for Education Assessment and  
Evaluation (RAMA)

**Sifriyat Pijama**  
**Evaluation of Reading Encouragement Program**  
**in Preschools**  
**and in Schools – Grades 1-2 Pilot**

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# **RAMA**

## **Assessment**

### **In Service to**

#### **Learning**



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# Executive Summary

## Background

The Sifriyat Pijama (Pajama Library) Program, founded by Keren Grinspoon Israel (Hebrew for Grinspoon Foundation Israel) in partnership with the Ministry of Education, aspires **to instill a love of reading in children and encourage young children and their families to hold conversations about Israeli-Jewish values and heritage.**

Sifriyat Pijama began operation as a pilot in the 2009-2010 school year. Initially, the program ran in 107 Israeli preschool classrooms, and was expanded to additional classrooms in subsequent years. By 2013-2014, the program was running in 7,100 state and state-religious preschool classes in the Hebrew-speaking sector. Over the course of the year, eight books were distributed free of charge to preschoolers, with two copies of each book also provided to the preschool library. Each book contained suggestions for post-reading discussion and activity at home (these suggestions were also made available in English and Russian translation on the Sifriyat Pijama website).

In 2013-2014, **a pilot program was begun in elementary schools**, enrolling some 3,000 first graders and second graders at 24 schools in the Central District. Expansion of the program into the early grades in school was founded on the assumption that, from preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, parental involvement in activities that encourage reading plays a vital role – both because children’s mastery of reading is still not adequate at this age, and also because of a desire to continue active parental involvement in the early grades. During the year, four books were distributed to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders to add to their family library, and one copy was provided to the classroom library.

**The main goals** which Sifriyat Pijama seeks to achieve are:

- ✓ Encouraging **a love of reading** and of books (improvement of reading ability is not a goal)
- ✓ Promoting **conversation around Jewish and Israeli values and heritage** in preschool and in school and in the home

Additional goals include:

- ✓ **Language enrichment and strengthening literacy skills;**
- ✓ Forging a broad **common cultural ground** (literary-cultural foundations and shared values) among children reading the same books;
- ✓ **Bolstering the habit of reading** together and encouraging family discourse;
- ✓ Creating a **child-teacher or parent-teacher “circle”** that helps to bolster literacy skills and enrich values education;
- ✓ **Making children’s books accessible** by giving books as gifts.



In 2010-2011, RAMA (Israel National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation in Education) evaluated several programs to encourage reading that were then running in the preschools: The March of Books, My Home Bookshelf, and Sifriyat Pijama.

**The current evaluation focuses on the implementation and adaptation of the Sifriyat Pijama Program in preschools—a program now in its fifth year of operation—and also on the pilot program (first-year pilot) in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades.**

In general, this assessment seeks to probe the modus operandi of the program and the extent to which its goals have been achieved, along with the program's impact as perceived by preschool teachers, school teachers and parents. We hope the findings will help stakeholders to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses and decide how best to proceed in the coming years.

### **Methods**

The assessment performed in the preschools in 2013-14 was a follow-up study that aimed to examine the program's integration over time, particularly in light of the program's expansion into hundreds of additional preschools over the intervening years. By contrast, the assessment of the program at the lower grade levels was a first-time effort, part of the program's pilot year, and was designed to examine the suitability of Sifriyat Pijama for the lower grades and the manner in which it was implemented.

Assessment of the pilot program's operation in the lower grades combined quantitative methodologies (surveys) with qualitative ones (interviews and classroom observation) to generate a broad, in-depth snapshot of how the pilot was being implemented, and whether it was achieving its goals (this "snapshot" provides a general overview of what went on in the classroom alongside individual voices and nuances). By contrast, our evaluation of the program in the preschools relied solely on quantitative methodology.

As part of the preschool assessment, we conducted a phone survey of 600 preschool teachers, drawn exclusively from the Hebrew-speaking preschools (300 from the state stream, and 300 from the state-religious stream). We also sampled 600 parents (one parent for each preschool; parents in 300 preschools from each of the two educational streams were surveyed). The surveys were conducted during the months of June-September 2014.

Qualitative data collection in the schools took place during visits to the seven schools sampled for this study (five state schools and two state-religious schools). These visits included observation of classroom activity (a total of seven observations) and semi-structured interviews with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers, as well as with the program coordinators (15 interviews). This qualitative data was collected during May-June 2014.

In addition, telephone surveys were conducted among a sample of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers from all the schools that took part in the pilot (we contacted 197 teachers from 23 schools), as well as among a sample of parents (we contacted 460 parents, all of them Hebrew speakers). These telephone surveys were conducted during the months of June-September 2014.

The survey questions focused on the following topics: the background or context in which Sifriyat Pijama was introduced; satisfaction with the program and perceptions of its impact; the way the program was implemented; help and support in doing the activities suggested after reading the book; evaluations of the books that were distributed under this program throughout the year; communication with parents about the program (including sharing information and messages about reading and doing joint activities); and carryover—continued engagement with books at home and outside the classroom.

### **Main Findings**

The main findings will be presented separately for the program in the schools and that in the preschools, similar to the presentation of the findings in the report (divided in two sections).

### **Key Findings in the Preschools**

Below are the key findings in the preschools, based on our surveys of preschool teachers and parents regarding the following subjects: (a) general attitudes and reactions to Sifriyat Pijama; (b) support systems for preschool teachers in running the program; (c) actual program implementation in the preschools; (d) reviews of the books given in the program during 2013-2014; (e) carryover from the preschool to the home; (f) reading habits and exposure to books irrespective of the program.

### **General Views and Reactions to Sifriyat Pijama**

**Overall satisfaction:** In general, the program **has earned tremendous trust from preschool teachers and parents:** Significant proportions (95% or more) are satisfied with the program and want to continue participation in it. Furthermore, 96% of the preschool teachers think the program should be made compulsory for all Israeli preschools, and a significant proportion believe that discontinuing this program would have a negative impact on children's engagement with books—both in the preschool class (62%) and at home (78%).

The program's main positives are:

- ✓ **It encourages exposure to books and reading enjoyment;**
- ✓ It provides **a positive, pleasurable experience** just from receiving the books;
- ✓ It enriches and **contributes to the development of the children,** their world and their language;
- ✓ **It increases parental awareness** of the importance of books;
- ✓ It lays the groundwork for **a shared reading experience** between parents and children;
- ✓ It helps to build **a home library** (especially in the lower socio-economic strata).

**Perceptions of the program's impact:** Based on the preschool teachers' responses, it appears that, thanks to this program, **books occupy a more central place in preschool than in the past** (70% of the teachers agree), as well as in the preschool teacher's program of activities (49%) and at home (49% of parents). The program's impact in making books the centerpiece is more pronounced in the state-religious preschools.

Substantial proportions of the preschool teachers and parents (about 80%-90%) felt the program had made a contribution to the children in the various areas that we examined, including:

- ✓ **Expansion of reading in preschool** (84% of preschool teachers) **and at home** (83% of preschool teachers and 75% of parents);
- ✓ **Speech, language, and vocabulary enrichment** (86%-88% of preschool teachers and 81% of parents);
- ✓ **Thought development, story comprehension, and values education** (83%-86% of preschool teachers and 82-87% of parents);
- ✓ **Finding pleasure in reading** (93% of preschool teachers and 90% of parents) and **the centrality of books** in daily life (83% of preschool teachers).

**Suggestions for improvement:** Alongside their great appreciation for the program as a whole, some of those surveyed had **comments about the books** that were distributed through the program – in particular:

- ✓ **The program's content should match the values and way of life** of the population (especially in the religious sector). Accordingly, the preschool teachers in the state-religious stream schools gave lower marks to the books' content and illustrations.
- ✓ **Uneven level of interest and age-appropriateness (both content and illustrations):** In general, pre-K preschool teachers were less satisfied with the books according to the various examination criteria, whereas teachers in combined preschools (pre-K and K) were much more satisfied with the books.
- ✓ **Additional suggestions** for improvement (made by smaller numbers of those surveyed) include: giving out **hardcover editions of the books** (especially the copy given to the preschool, because it wears out quickly); **include the preschool teachers in the book selection process** (a proposal made by the preschool teachers); **create additional activities in the preschool class associated with the books** and joint activities (proposal made by the parents).

### **Operational Support Systems for Preschool Teachers**

Most of the preparation for the Sifriyat Pijama activities in preschool is carried out by the preschool teachers themselves, sometimes with the aid of program materials supplied by the program. Only a few of the teachers reported requiring additional support, particularly more ideas for activities and ready-to-use activity packs.

### **Program Operation in the Preschools**

**Implementation of the program and its integration from year to year:** The majority of preschool teachers reported that their preschool was participating in the program either for the third consecutive year (46%) or the fourth consecutive year (30%). Consistent with their reporting about the program's impact on engagement with books in preschool (in general and with regard to their own engagement with books), a significant proportion even reported that, **from year to year, they are able to better integrate the program into their preschool**

**curriculum (42%) and devote more time to it (31%).** Furthermore, **a significant proportion (58%) even feel that it gets easier every year for them to run the program,** especially because they know it, understand what is expected of them, and know where they can find suggestions for activities.

**Distribution of books:** As reported by the preschool teachers at the time they were surveyed, 57% of preschools had received all eight books (36% didn't know the answer and the remainder reported receiving fewer than eight books).

**Preschool activities after reading the Sifriyat Pijama books:** The main activity is **reading aloud to the whole group:** 94% of the teachers reported that they read all the books with their children; about half of those read each book aloud once or twice, while the rest read them more often (usually up to four times). In addition to reading to the whole group, the most common activities include **children's independent (unguided) reading of the book to themselves, and discussions about the book** (More than 90% of the preschool teachers reported conducting activities of this type after most or all of the books were read).

Another fairly widespread activity is **discussions about values, heritage and dilemmas** (80% reported they held such discussions after most or all of the books, but the values aspect was not mentioned at all in other questions—the open-ended questions, for example).

Reading in small groups, and creative activities – crafts or dramatic play – occur less frequently (61%, 44% and 36%, respectively, reported that they did each of these activities following most or all of the books).

The percentage of preschool teachers who reported holding conversations about the book, about values, dilemmas, and heritage, and who reported doing the creative activities, was higher among K preschool teachers than among pre-K teachers.

**Almost all preschools have Sifriyat Pijama books from prior years and they appear to be using them.** 87% of teachers reported reading them (occasionally or frequently) and 56% reported doing other activities with them.

**Other activities to encourage reading:** 84% reported that, throughout the year, they often read to the children using other books that are not part of the program (and another 12% reported that they do this occasionally). 55% reported that their preschool has a lending library.

It is worth noting that those few preschool teachers who thought that discontinuing the program would not have a negative impact on engagement with books in their preschool ascribed this to the activities they do in their classrooms using other books.

### **Evaluations of the Books in the Program**

**83% of preschool teachers and 88% of parents are generally satisfied with the books** that were distributed by Sifriyat Pijama.

**Between 72%-86% gave high marks to each of the criteria used in evaluating the books**, including story content and illustrations (the latter earned the highest marks: 80%-86%), as well as the books' appropriateness to the children's way of life, to the preschool, to their age group, and the books' relevance to the children's world.

**The preschool teachers in the state stream are more satisfied with the books' contents and illustrations** than the preschool teachers in the state-religious stream (the gap in the percentage of those who gave the highest ranking stands at 9% and 17%, respectively). One can catch an echo of this in responses to the open-ended questions on the questionnaire: Preschool teachers from the Torah-religious stream expressed dissatisfaction with the contents, which they felt did not match the values of their preschool.

**Pre-K preschool teachers are less satisfied with the books** (in all regards), while teachers in combined pre-K/K classes are more satisfied (the gap in the percentage of teachers who gave high marks ranges from 4%-12%). It's worth noting again that in the open-ended questions, some expressed dissatisfaction with the content and illustrations, particularly concerning their age-appropriateness.

### **Link between Preschool and Home**

**Exposure and familiarity: Sifriyat Pijama appears familiar to many parents.** Nearly all the interviewees we contacted were aware that the program was being implemented this year (2013-2014) in their child's preschool, and 81% of those parents for whom this was their child's second year in preschool reported that Sifriyat Pijama had been implemented the previous year as well.

In addition, half of the respondents reported that their other children either had participated or were currently participating in Sifriyat Pijama, either in preschool in prior years, or at school.

Regarding active steps taken by each preschool to introduce the program to parents: **82% of parents reported that a meeting was held at which the program, its goals and methods were presented to them (among other items, at least).**

Parent-teacher communication: **58% of the teachers reported that they were in regular contact with the parents** about Sifriyat Pijama (via email, flyers that were sent home, or meetings at school). According to the teachers, their communication focused mainly on **parental guidance** on working with their children and **updates on program happenings in the preschool classroom.**

**54% of the teachers and 19% of parents** reported that **joint activities** were held for parents and children at the preschool after one or more books were read. Among parents who replied that joint activities were indeed held, 79% reported that they engaged in creative activities, and

some 50-60% reported other types of activities (parents had the option to report on several activity types).

**62% of parents reported that the teacher encouraged them to read books to their children or engage in activities related to the books. The teachers themselves reported telling the children to ask their parents to read books to them (90%), or the teachers themselves proactively encouraged the parents to do so (72%).** In contrast, the percentage of teachers who send home suggestions for activities or instruct parents how to read to their children is smaller (29% and 25% respectively).

**At-home activities reported by the parents: About half of the parents reported talking with their children about the book or about values, dilemmas, etc., after reading most or all of the books.** Very few (13%) reported engaging in any creative activities. The proportion of parents reporting that they do each of the suggested activities is a bit higher in state preschools than among parents in the state-religious preschools.

**About 70% of parents are aware of the suggested parent-child activities that accompany the books and about 60% read these suggestions, but only 15% actually used them.**

#### **Reading Habits and Exposure to Books**

**Exposure to books and reading habits: About half of the parents reported that generally, their child reads at home or they read to the child, once a day or more.** As a rule, most parents say their child enjoys reading and they recognize the importance of reading together and the positive impact it has on their relationship with their child.

**Reading Sifriyat Pijama books: 89% of parents reported that they usually read most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed this year (2013-14) two times or more.** In addition, 31% reported that they often read **previous years' Sifriyat Pijama books** to their child.

**Home library:** About half the children have up to 15 Sifriyat Pijama books in total at home, and about half own even more. In addition, 37% have up to 20 age-appropriate children's books (including Sifriyat Pijama) in the home, and 43% own 20-50 such books. Further calculations of the proportion of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library showed that in 20% of homes the only books in the home library were Sifriyat Pijama books; in another 12% of homes, they accounted for more than half (up to 80%) of the books in the home library.

## Key Findings in Elementary Schools – Grade 1 & 2

Below are the key findings for the elementary schools pilot, based on surveys (teachers and parents), interviews (with educators), and classroom observations, regarding the following subjects: (a) general attitudes and reactions to Sifriyat Pijama; (b) support systems for school teachers in running the program; (c) actual program implementation in the schools; (d) reviews of the books distributed in the program during 2013-14; (e) carryover from the school to its surroundings (home and preschools); (f) reading habits and exposure to books regardless of the program.

### General Views and Reactions to the Sifriyat Pijama Program

**Familiarity with the program and identification with its goals:** In general, it appears that both teachers and parents have been exposed to the program and, according to their reports, they know and understand its goals. However, interviews with other educators reveal that the primary focus of their understanding (at this point) is on **the importance of encouraging closeness between the child and the book, on encouraging reading, and on the connection to home—and not so much on discussing Israeli and Jewish values and heritage.**

**Overall satisfaction:** As in the preschools, so too in the elementary schools, **this program has earned tremendous trust from teachers and parents:** Significant proportions (94% of the teachers and 88% of the parents) are satisfied with the program, and nearly all (97% and more) want to continue their participation in it.

The program's main positives are:

- ✓ It encourages **exposure to books, makes reading fun and sparks motivation** to read;
- ✓ It contributes to **language development** and improves **reading skills**;
- ✓ It contributes to **thinking** and **moral** development;
- ✓ It expands the **home library** (particularly in the lower socio-economic strata);
- ✓ It enhances the **parents' sense of connection to the school and the parent-child relationship.**

**Perceptions of the program's impact:** It appears that, thanks to the program, **books occupy a more central place** both in the classroom and among the children (according to 65% of teachers), and they engage more in reading than before, both in class (41%) and at home (more than 70% of the parents reported more hours spent reading at home and a growing family library). It is interesting to note that these assessments are fairly similar to the assessments at the preschool level, even though on the surface, it might appear that engagement with books would be more self-evident as children transition from preschool to first grade (without any connection to the program).

**Substantial proportions of parents and teachers felt the program had made a contribution to the pupils in the various areas we examined, including:**

- ✓ **Expansion of reading**, both in class and at home (83% and 73%, respectively);
- ✓ **Speech and vocabulary enrichment** (about 85%);
- ✓ **Thought development, story comprehension, and values education** (about 85% and more);
- ✓ **Familiarity with books, finding pleasure in reading and the centrality of books** in daily life (70%-93%)

Teachers were also asked to compare pupils who came from preschools that had Sifriyat Pijama with pupils from preschools that didn't have the program. The results show that the schools, too, attribute significant impact to Sifriyat Pijama: **Some 50%-68% of the teachers whose pupils were in Sifriyat Pijama in preschool say these children's capacities are good** in comparison with children who did not take part in the program, particularly in language development, moral development, story comprehension and attitude towards books.

Furthermore, 91% of teachers reported that Sifriyat Pijama **contributes to advancing the curriculum and the Ministry of Education's program, and in-class engagement with it.**

**Suggestions for improvement:** Alongside their great appreciation for the program as a whole, some of the parents and teachers made suggestions for improvement:

- ✓ **Increase the number of books** that are distributed;
- ✓ **Achieve a closer match** between the books and the children;
- ✓ **Include the teachers in the book selection process;**
- ✓ Offer additional **guidance and ideas** for in-class activities;
- ✓ Offer more **activities** for pupils, or come up with joint parent-child activities around the books (proposal made by parents).

## Operational Support Systems for Teachers

Most of the teachers report that **they themselves create and plan** Sifriyat Pijama activities for their class (82%), or make use of **peer-assisted learning** (77%). The interviews reveal that when there are several teachers in one grade, they work together; in schools with one class per grade level, the teacher plans the activity by herself.

A significant proportion also rely on **program support provided by Sifriyat Pijama** – using the suggestions contained in the books, on the program's website, and in the program flyer (about **70%**). By contrast, **a smaller percentage report consulting with school staff** (43% consult with the language resource specialist, and 26% with the literacy specialist).

Although the teachers themselves actively create and plan their in-class activities, only a relatively small percentage (**about 20%**) **are interested in additional support and guidance** in this program, mainly seeking ways to **enrich their activities and receive additional ideas** for book-related activities.



## Program Operation in the Elementary School – Grades 1 & 2

**Other activities to encourage reading:** In most schools, **various activities to promote reading had been implemented before Sifriyat Pijama began operating in the schools**, and in some schools Sifriyat Pijama was combined with other reading encouragement programs. The interviewees felt that Sifriyat Pijama's greatest contribution is that it focuses on **involving the parents** and makes it possible to implement **a continuum of varied activities** in the wake of each book.

Implementation of Sifriyat Pijama: Teachers reported that the books were distributed to the classrooms as planned (about 80% and more reported the books arrived on time and in the correct quantities). At the same time, 57% of parents reported that, as of the date of survey, they had received all four books in their home their child was to receive under the program.

**Sifriyat Pijama in-class activities:** Very few teachers (8%) reported that there were books which the children received but didn't read in class. **About half (53%) reported that they read each book aloud in class an average of two times, and about a quarter (26%) read each book aloud three or more times.**

The surveys show that **the main in-class book-related activities are: reading the book aloud to the entire class, independent reading and discussions about the book, values, etc.** (80% or more reported engaging in these activities with three or four of the books). A smaller proportion (64%) engaged in arts and crafts activities, and an even smaller percentage engaged in some other activity (other types of creative engagement or activities involving outside entities).

Our interviews and in-class observations show that **the teachers are applying a large part of Sifriyat Pijama's suggestions and recommendations in their classrooms:** They engage with the book over the course of a number of lessons and preparation activities, reading it aloud, explaining the meaning of words and sayings, and doing various didactic activities and even creative activities tied to the book. We did not observe activities that took place outside the classroom.

Our surveys show that **58% of the teachers reported that they generally connect Sifriyat Pijama to the values imparted by the Key to the Heart Program**, and in their interviews, the majority said that the engagement in values in the wake of these books connected to the Key to the Heart Program. However, some of the interviewees said the books' arrival in the class **was not always timed to coincide with** the introduction of Key to the Heart topics in the course of the year, and in a small percentage of the schools, we were told in interviews that there was no connection whatsoever to Key to the Heart.

Some interviewees said they **were documenting some of the Sifriyat Pijama activities**. In the course of our observations, it emerged that only in about half the schools do the classrooms or 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade areas have a special Sifriyat Pijama corner.

## Evaluations of the Books in the Program

**Evaluation of Books Distributed to 1<sup>st</sup> Grade:** Among **teachers**, three of the four books distributed – Ogi, Cloudette, and Feathers in the Wind—received very high marks in all respects: story line, language, age-appropriateness, illustrations and general impression of the book (85%-98% of the teachers gave high marks). Concert in the Sand was less favorably received (50%-65% of the teachers gave it high marks).

Among **parents**, about 50%-60% reported being familiar with the books and shared their opinions; of these, most (80%-90%) reported being satisfied with the books and feeling they were appropriate for their children (while the gaps were minor, the parents likewise were less satisfied with Concert in the Sand).

When the parents were asked to say which book they liked best or which they felt was most appropriate for their child, Ogi came in first (34% of the votes), followed closely by Feathers in the Wind (29%) and Cloudette (22%). Concert in the Sand came in last (14%).

**Evaluation of Books Distributed to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** The teachers gave very high marks in all respects to The Owl Who Saw Backwards: story line, language, age-appropriateness, illustrations and general impression of the book (94% and more gave high marks). The Princess and the Real Loaf of Bread came in second (83%-89%), while the remaining two books: The Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales – received less favorable, though fairly high marks: 69%-72% gave them high marks. (The illustrations in The Tale of Two Cats received higher marks.)

Among parents, 77% reported being familiar with the first book that was distributed – The Owl Who Saw Backwards, while about 50-60% reported being familiar with the other books. Of these parents, the majority – 75-90% – said they were satisfied with the book and felt it was appropriate for their child. While the gaps were minor, the parents – like the teachers – were less satisfied with The Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales.

When the parents were asked to say which book they liked best or which they felt was most appropriate for their child, the majority (60%) cited The Owl Who Saw Backwards.

In general, most of the books were perceived as being age-appropriate in terms of language and values. The degree of satisfaction with the book is directly linked to perceptions of its appropriateness to the children's level, the degree of interest it arouses and the message it conveys.

## Carryover and Link between the School and Its Environment

### Link between School and Home

**Parent-teacher communication: 70% of the teachers reported integrating the books in joint parent-child activities at school**, usually at a program launch event. At the same time, 47% of the parents reported that joint in-class activity took place around Sifriyat Pijama, mostly at a program launch event, or towards the end of the school year during National Book Week (in June). **Additionally, 65% of parents reported that a meeting was held about the program, where they were told that the books were intended to be read together with their children.**

**Most of the teachers reported that they reach out to the parents and particularly encourage reading in the home, alone or with a parent** (82%-91% reported that they encourage reading at home, whether via direct contact with the parents or sending messages via their children). At the same time, **61% of the parents reported that the teacher reached out to them**, but far more of them (87%) said that the teacher encourages the children to read at home. Other kinds of contact—such as offering parents guidance on how to read to their children, or sending activity sheets home—happen with far less frequency (36% and 26% of teachers, respectively, reported doing these things, although there were teachers who reported doing them during their interviews in the qualitative portion of our research).

**Parent reports of at-home activities: About half of the parents reported talking about the book or about values or dilemmas, etc.**, after reading all or most of the books. A small minority (10%-15%) engaged in creative activities.

**About half of the parents are familiar with the suggested parent activities included in the books; 56% read them, but only 15% actually used them.**

### Continuity Beyond the Classroom (from Preschool to School and in the Community)

**Preschool-school continuity: Despite the program leaders' expectation that there would be continuity between the preschool-level program and the program for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades, in practice, there appears to be a disconnect:** Although about half of the teachers estimated that most or all of their pupils had been involved with Sifriyat Pijama while in preschool (a fact which they had heard mostly from the pupils or their parents), only very few (14%) knew which books had been distributed in preschool. However, the teachers don't seem to feel this information is vital; only 24% reported thinking this information would be helpful to them in running the program in their classroom. During our in-class observations, we saw that only one school had placed Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in preschool on the library shelves for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades.

At the same time, 37% of the parents reported that their child's preschool had Sifriyat Pijama, and many (52%) were familiar with the program because the child's brothers or sisters had taken part in it. Nearly all (96%) have kept the Sifriyat Pijama books they received in prior years.

**Collaboration outside the classroom:** 71% of the teachers reported collaborating outside their classroom, mostly with other grade-level classes.

## Reading Habits and Exposure to Books

**About half of the parents reported that, generally speaking, their child reads at home once a week; the remainder reported that the child reads more frequently.**

There is a marked preference for reading the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed this year: **76% of parents reported that their children had read, on their own, most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in 2013-2014, and 64% of parents reported reading the books to their child** (with more frequent reading to children in 1<sup>st</sup> grade). Some even reported their children were still reading Sifriyat Pijama books from prior years, either on their own (38%) or with their parents (21%).

In general, most of the parents say their child enjoys reading (82%) and they recognize the importance of reading together and its contribution to strengthening the parent-child bond (90% and more). Despite this, as stated, a larger percentage reported that their children read the books by themselves (rather than their parents reading to them).

44% of the children have between 9-20 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and 17% have even more than that. In addition, about 35% of the parents reported that their home library contains up to 20 age-appropriate books for their children. Looking at how many of the age-appropriate books in a child's home library are Sifriyat Pijama books, we find: In 17% of homes, Sifriyat Pijama books are the only such books; in another 21% of homes, Sifriyat Pijama books account for 50%-99% of the entire home library.

## Key Insights and Directions for the Future

Generally, the Sifriyat Pijama program **garners a very positive response from all its partners in preschools and schools:** preschool teachers, school teachers and parents. Almost everyone is happy with the program and believes it should continue and even be expanded.

Sifriyat Pijama has fitted well into the preschools, and from one year to the next, the preschool teachers find it easier to integrate it into their activity plan. In both the preschools and the schools, the program is perceived as integrating with and advancing the curriculum.

**The Sifriyat Pijama program did not spring out of virgin soil in the schools.** Most of the schools conduct other activities that promote reading – in the classroom, in the library or in collaboration with some other institutional program. In our qualitative interviews, it emerged that Sifriyat Pijama differs from other such activities in that it **focuses on integrating the parents and makes possible a sequence of varied activities following each book.** The interviewees felt the other activities to promote reading were focused mainly on promoting and improving reading skills.

Both in schools and in preschools, respondents felt that **the program contributes to each of the examined criteria:**

- ✓ The book occupies a central position both at school and at home;
- ✓ Readers (especially children from the lower socio-economic strata) are exposed to books, read more and take pleasure in reading;
- ✓ Speech, language and vocabulary are enriched; schools also see a contribution to reading skills;
- ✓ It develops capacities for thought and imagination, and contributes to values education;
- ✓ It expands the home library;
- ✓ It contributes to the parent-child bond, and to communication between the school and the parents;
- ✓ It advances the school curriculum and promotes engagement in all these aspects in the classroom.

However, it seems that, at this early stage in the program's implementation in the schools, **the program's implementation (including instructions and messages sent home) is focused more on the linguistic and pedagogical aspects, and less on the educational-values aspect.** Perhaps it's easier to deal with the known; perhaps this focus also derives from attitudes about the importance of pedagogical and linguistic engagement during the children's transition [from preschool] to school. **We think it worthwhile to consider the added value of Sifriyat Pijama and to place greater emphasis on its value-related aspects, as articulated in the program's stated goals.**

In this context, we seek to examine the way in which each one of the program's goals is achieved:

1. **Promoting reading and love of books, and engaging in the various aspects of language.** This goal appears largely achieved, both in the preschools and in the schools. At the preschool level, the program clearly contributes to the children's engagement with books and to the central role books play in their activities; it exposes the children to books, thereby enriching their world and their language. At the early grade level, the goal appears well achieved in the framework of the lesson plan. The books that were distributed seem mostly well-matched to the children in terms of language. The interviews and in-class observations show that the children learn about a book's structure, gain exposure to various literary styles, idioms and expressions, increase their vocabulary, practice their writing skills and generally enjoy the book-related activities.
2. **Fostering discourse and engagement in Israeli-Jewish values, heritage and tradition.** It seems that this goal is being met, in full or in part, both in the preschools and in the schools. In regard to preschools, 80% of the teachers and about half of the parents reported that they conduct conversations about values, dilemmas and heritage in the wake of the books. However, in looking at all of the remarks (on other open questions), it is not clear to what extent this discourse is central and promotes a shared cultural foundation, as the program's leaders intended. In regard to schools, 80% of the teachers

reported in surveys that they conducted conversations about values, dilemmas and heritage after reading three to four of the books in the program, and that this was the most common activity after reading a book. Nonetheless, in the qualitative research only some of the respondents mentioned the discussion of values as a program objective (this might reflect a gap in the level of awareness). Similarly, observations of book-related activities revealed that only some of these activities were addressing issues pertaining to values.

3. However, the program's leaders note that by receiving the same books during the three years of preschool a shared cultural foundation is created.

There was also a clear expectation in the schools that the focus on values in the books would be connected to a national elementary values program, Key to the Heart, but this was apparently implemented to a lesser extent: 58% of the teachers reported in surveys that they did so (after reading three to four books), while in interviews some said that the program is not coordinated with Key to the Heart's annual plan. According to Ministry of Education officials, this is not a substantive problem, because the teachers should know how to connect the two programs despite the lack of coordination. There appears to be insufficient awareness of the directive to address the values of Key to the Heart throughout the entire year (rather than the value of that month, in the relevant month). In summary, there is a need to clarify the subject of values in the schools and perhaps a greater role should be accorded to social-moral education in the program's implementation process, alongside linguistic education (which is well integrated).

Finally, 61% of the teachers reported reading in small groups, but the quantitative information received from the schools does not clearly indicate whether the reading and subsequent conversation was in small groups or with the entire class. Ministry of Education officials recommended emphasizing the directive that small groups are more conducive for book discussions, especially when discussing subjects related to values.

4. **Strengthening habits of reading together and encouraging discourse within the family** – It seems that this goal was met, but not completely, and in the preschools more than in the schools. (This may be attributable to the inherent differences between the two frameworks and parents' expectations that the children would begin to read on their own after entering first grade.) In preschools, it's clear that the parents are familiar with the Sifriyat Pijama program, and nearly all of them read most or all of the books distributed to their children, usually more than once. Moreover, according to reports from some preschool teachers, the program appears to contribute to raising the parents' awareness of the importance of reading and, to some extent, encourages shared reading. In schools, perhaps in accordance with the initial stage in the program, most of the parents were exposed to it and reported receiving an explanation about its objectives, with an emphasis on the importance of shared reading at home. However, only some of the parents read books to their children at home or engage in other book-related activity.

Both the preschool and school teachers primarily initiate communication with the parents to encourage them to read books to their children, but fewer preschool teachers send suggestions for activities or guide parents on how to read books to children. (School teachers focus more on encouraging children to read books than on encouraging parents to read to their children.)

It appears that the school teachers (in comparison to preschool teachers) concentrate more on the language aspects: reading strategies and encouraging independent reading. On the other hand, Ministry of Education officials believe there should be greater emphasis on the importance of parental involvement – to improve comprehension, to facilitate conversation on values and to foster a positive reading experience. They also believe that the experience of shared reading should be presented as an opportunity for a quality encounter between the parent and child (as opposed to homework, which might entail tension).

In this context, we note that it should be more strongly emphasized to school teachers and parents that the books, by their level, were not chosen for independent reading by the child. Rather, their added value lies in reading and exposing more complex content that the children – although already in 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – cannot read on their own.

Shared activity for parents and children was reported more in the schools than in the preschools (70% of school teachers versus 54% of preschool teachers, and 19% of parents of preschoolers). Though many schools conducted shared parent-child activities, they were infrequent – once or twice a year – and it would be good to increase their number. According to the Ministry of Education, the encounter in the wake of the book provides quality content as a basis for working with the parents (usually in launching Sifriyat Pijama at the school, but also in other ceremonies and meetings.) Moreover, in such meetings, it is possible to provide direction and training for experiential activities related to shared reading of books.

5. **Continuity over the years is one of the program's objectives**, but there is no carryover between what occurs in the preschool program and what occurs in the schools: The school teachers are usually not familiar with the books that were distributed in preschool and do not even think that this information would be particularly helpful. No joint activities related to Sifriyat Pijama are held between the schools and preschools. We also note that the children tend to read the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed during the current year, and are less apt to read those they received in previous years. It would be worth reconsidering whether to aim for carryover, and if so – to structure it or propose clear mechanisms for it.

**In regard to the books distributed in 2013-14 and the way they were chosen, it appears that most of the books selected in 2013-14 and distributed in schools and preschools were good and appropriate** for the children – both in terms of their language and in the values they reflect. Nonetheless, some of the respondents in the preschools commented about the books distributed in the program, especially concerning the **suitability of the content to the values**

**and lifestyles** of the population (primarily in the religious sector), **an uneven level of interest** and a **lack of the books' appropriateness** (content and illustrations) for the **age of the children** (primarily pre-K).

In schools, as noted, it should be emphasized that **the books are not distributed to the children with the intention of developing their reading skills**. The books are selected to match the children's tastes, the subjects addressed in school and the curriculum (and not according to the pupils' ability to read them independently). Most of the selected books intentionally require the parents to assist the child in reading them because some of the content is complicated and demands the parents' involvement.

**In regard to support systems and the need for additional assistance**, it seems that the situation is similar in both the preschools and the schools. Most of the teachers in both frameworks plan book-related activity on their own or in collaboration with colleagues (in schools primarily if there is more than one teacher per grade). The preschool and school teachers also make use of the various platforms Sifriyat Pijama offers. Relatively few (19% of teachers and 14% of preschool teachers) reported that they need additional support and assistance, mainly concerning ideas for more activities. On the question of support and training in the schools: Ministry of Education officials say that the program's implementation in schools is based on a rationale of encouraging reading that is not unique to Sifriyat Pijama, and therefore training is provided indirectly. Nonetheless, perhaps the learning sessions for teachers should focus on the connection with the parents and the importance of reading the program's books at home to the children – and in particular, on the positive experience of shared reading and conversation.



# Introduction

## Background

The Sifriyat Pijama program aims **to instill the love of reading and to encourage discourse on Israeli-Jewish values and heritage among young children and their families**. The program is the initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation in the U.S., and is based on the successful PJ Library program – a program that provides tens of thousands of books related to Jewish culture to families in over 100 communities throughout the U.S. and Canada, in Australia and in Mexico.<sup>1</sup>

Sifriyat Pijama launched a pilot program in 2009-2010 in 107 preschool classrooms in Israel. In subsequent years, the program expanded to additional preschools in cooperation with the Pre-Elementary Education Division at the Ministry of Education; in 2013-14, it operated in 7,100 preschool classrooms in the Jewish sector (state and state-religious) that are ranked within the range of 1-6 on the Deprivation Index. Some 190,000 children in 164 local authorities throughout Israel benefited from the program. The program also operates in preschools in localities ranked 7-10 on the Deprivation Index – under Ministry of Education supervision, but without ministry funding. (The program is funded in those preschools by the parents or by the local authority.) In those localities, about 40,000 additional children participated in Sifriyat Pijama in 2013-14. In total, about 230,000 books were distributed each month in the framework of the program.

A **pilot program** was launched in elementary schools in 2013-14: The Elementary Education Division in the Pedagogical Administration and Keren Grinspoon Israel launched a pilot that included about 3,000 children in grades 1 and 2, from 24 schools in the Central District. The expansion of the program to the lower grades of elementary school was based on an assumption that it is very important for parents to be involved in activities that encourage reading among children during the years of preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, when the children are working to master reading skills. Moreover, the administrators of Sifriyat Pijama recommend maintaining the same pattern of parental involvement that occurs in preschools, while implementing it in the framework of processes for encouraging reading in grades 1 and 2. This is in light of the importance of continuity and based on an understanding that it is essential to continue the multi-generational social discourse on values.

The **main goals** of the Sifriyat Pijama program are:

- ✓ To encourage a **love of reading** and of books (improvement of reading ability is not a goal);
- ✓ To promote **discourse on Jewish and Israeli values and heritage** in preschool, in school (in conjunction with national values program Key to the Heart) and at home.

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<sup>1</sup> The information is based on Sifriyat Pijama's website and on conversations with the program's leaders.

Additional objectives:

- ✓ **Enriching the language and strengthening literacy skills;**
- ✓ Forging a broad **common cultural ground** (literary-cultural foundations and shared values) among children reading the same books;
- ✓ **Reinforcing habits of reading together** and encouraging discourse among members of the family;
- ✓ Creating a **child-teacher or parent-teacher “circle”** that helps to bolster literacy skills and enrich values education;
- ✓ **Providing access to children’s books** by distributing books as gifts.

During the 2010-2011 school year, RAMA conducted an evaluation study of several programs designed to encourage reading that were operating in preschools that year: The March of Books, My Home Bookshelf and Sifriyat Pijama. The salient findings included:

- ✓ The teachers and parents were largely satisfied with all of the programs for encouraging reading, and were willing to continue to participate in the following years;
- ✓ The programs have a range of positive effects, including the frequency of reading books at preschool and at home, the children’s attitude toward books (love, enjoyment and the centrality of books in their lives); exposure to books (scope and variety), improvement of reading and writing skills, and enrichment of vocabulary; fostering thinking, comprehension and values.
- ✓ The interviewees noted the main advantage and added value of Sifriyat Pijama and of My Home Bookshelf in comparison to the regular activity at the preschool or other programs for encouraging reading: Since each child has his or her own book, they can follow along as the teacher reads and look at the pictures, and continue to read at home and engage in activity that brings children and parents together.

The full report is available on RAMA’s website.

#### **Program Operation in the Preschools in 2013-2014**

The preschoolers received eight books throughout the year as a gift (or at a minimal price in affluent communities), and the preschool library also received two copies of each book. Suggestions for book-related conversation and activities were included (and also appear in English and Russian translation on Sifriyat Pijama’s website).

In 2013-2014, some 230,000 books were distributed monthly during the schoolyear in the framework of the program (over 1.5 million books a year). Table 1 presents the list of books distributed by preschool level – kindergarten and pre-K.

**Table 1: Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in preschools in 2013-2014, by age level**

Pre-K	Kindergarten
The King's Gold Shoes (Nurit Yuval)	A Girl Alone (Ora Eyal)
The Little Trip (Naomi Shemer)	Taste of the Holiday (Yael Molchadsky)
How to Heal a Broken Wing (Bob Graham)	Sweet Letters (Jacky Levy)
Boots (Miriam Rot)	Eat Coat Eat (Ronit Chacham)
Brownstripe (Shlomit Cohen-Assif)	Gozmay Makes Believe (Lea Goldberg)
Uri Kaduri (Lea Goldberg)	Aliza the Duck and Friends (Chaya Shenhav)
Yoyo's Friday (Datya Ben Dor)	The Fox in the Vineyard (Shoham Smit)
Duck? Rabbit? (Amy Krouse Rosenthal)	Half a World Away (Libby Gleeson)

Sifriyat Pijama's website offers teachers additional ideas for using the books and values in preschool activities, and presents video clips on a range of subjects pertaining to reading in early childhood. Sifriyat Pijama also offers a Facebook page for sharing experiences related to the books and the program. In addition, the preschool staff receives a monthly email newsletter with links to suggestions on the website for preschool activities, updates, news from the field and the sharing of ideas with teachers throughout the country.

The Sifriyat Pijama program's expectation from the preschool teachers include:

- ✓ To familiarize the children with the stories and to bring the books to life through repeated reading and illustration;
- ✓ To instill the values reflected in the stories through activities in the preschool;
- ✓ To encourage reading at home;
- ✓ To initiate shared activities with the families on the books' topics;
- ✓ To share experiences and photographs in the picture gallery on Sifriyat Pijama's website.

The leaders of Sifriyat Pijama adopted an approach of suggesting activities, rather than dictating methods to the preschool teachers. The idea is to allow each teacher to find the best path for enhancing the children's enjoyment from reading, and to leave room for the teacher's personal taste (and avoid the possibility of a teacher conveying her negative view of a book to the children). Moreover, the leaders of Sifriyat Pijama believe that excessive activity surrounding a book in preschool is liable to diminish enjoyment of the book at home.

### **Pilot Program Operation in the Schools in 2013-2014**

During the year, children in 1st grade and 2nd grade received four books for the family library, while the school library received one copy of each book. The books were selected by a joint committee of Keren Grinspoon Israel and the Ministry of Education in line with the program's goals: encouraging a love of books and fostering a culture of discussion of Israeli-Jewish values, heritage and tradition. Suggestions for family activities related to the book are included at the end of each book.

As noted, the expansion of the program to the early grades of elementary school was based on the assumption that it is very important for parents to be involved in activities that encourage reading among children during the years of preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, when the children are working to master reading skills. This expansion also reflected the desire to continue the pattern of parental involvement developed in preschool. Therefore, books were chosen that are suitable for joint reading and which match the children's level of understanding – and not necessarily their level of reading.

Moreover, the program's leaders recommended maintaining a connection between preschool teachers and school teachers in the transition from preschool to 1st grade, and to judiciously use the variety of books distributed to preschool children. The assumption is that familiarity with books from previous years contributes to the child's confidence and sense of capability.

Table 2 presents the list of books distributed in elementary schools, by age level.

**Table 2: Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in schools in 2013-2014, by age level**

<b>First grade</b>	<b>Second grade</b>
Ogi (Neri Aluma)	The Owl Who Saw Backwards (Yossi Goddard)
Cloudette (Tom Lichtenheld)	A Tale of Two Cats (A. Hillel)
Concert in the Sand (Tami Shem-Tov)	Our Tales (Shoham Smit)
Feathers in the Wind (Shlomo Abbas)	The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread (Dan Huppert)

During the pilot year, a conference was held to launch the program and to brief the participating teachers, in conjunction with officials from the Ministry of Education (from ministry headquarters and from the Central District).

Sifriyat Pijama's website offers teachers additional ideas for using the books and values in classroom activities, as well as video clips on a range of topics related to early childhood reading. The teaching staff also receives a monthly email newsletter with links to the website

for classroom activities, updates, news from the field and for sharing experiences among colleagues.

Expectations from teachers participating in the Sifriyat Pijama program include:

- ✓ To expose the children to books;
- ✓ To work to instill the values reflected in the stories;
- ✓ To encourage reading at home;
- ✓ To conduct two sessions for parents and children;
- ✓ To document, share and provide feedback;
- ✓ To participate in training.

Like the approach vis-à-vis preschool teachers, the leaders of Sifriyat Pijama believe in presenting school teachers with suggestions for classroom activities without dictating methods. The idea is to allow each teacher to find the best path for enhancing the children's enjoyment from reading, and to leave room for the teacher's personal taste (and avoid the possibility of a teacher conveying her negative view of a book to the children). Moreover, the leaders of Sifriyat Pijama believe that excessive activity surrounding a book in school is liable to diminish enjoyment of the book at home.

### **The current evaluation report**

The current assessment focuses on the implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschools for the fifth year and the pilot program (first year) in grades 1 and 2.

In general, the evaluation is designed to examine the program's patterns of operation, to assess its success in meeting the program objectives, and to check how teachers and parents view the program. We hope that the findings help the stakeholders to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses, and to decide how to proceed in future years.

### **Evaluation questions**

The central question is **how the program goals are being implemented** in each of the frameworks – preschool and school. Though the evaluation questions are similar in the two frameworks, the focus is adapted to the program's stage of implementation. Here are the evaluation questions by topic:

- ✓ **General views:** How is the program regarded in general? What is the level of satisfaction with the program? Is there readiness to continue with the program and a desire to expand it? What is its perceived contribution? (The following areas are studied: attitude toward books, level of exposure to books, development of literacy skills and fostering thinking, comprehension and values.)

In the preschools, perceptions of the potential implications of discontinuing the program were also examined.

In evaluating the program's implementation in the schools, the study also focused on the question of the teachers' and parents' familiarity with the **goals** of the program, and how the teachers perceive these goals.

- ✓ **Method of operation:** How does the program operate in each of the frameworks? What reading and other activities (conversation, arts and crafts, etc.) are conducted in regard to the books distributed in the program? How does the Sifriyat Pijama program fit in with other activities and reading encouragement programs or other routine activity conducted in each framework? In addition, the evaluation examined the logistical aspects concerning the distribution of books to the preschools and schools.
- ✓ **Operational support systems:** Which resources help the teachers in operating the program and in preparing activities (from Sifriyat Pijama, from the Ministry of Education)? Is further assistance required, and if so – what type of assistance?
- ✓ **Satisfaction from the books and assessing their suitability for the children:** To what extent are the various stakeholders (teachers, parents) satisfied in general with the books distributed in the program? To what extent are they satisfied with the various aspects, including content, illustrations and the books' suitability for the children (age and lifestyle)?

In evaluating the program's implementation in schools, the suitability of the books was closely studied in terms of their language, values and the children's responses.

- ✓ **Carryover:** Is there carryover in reading the books and in book-related activities between the preschool/school and the home, and if so – what is the nature of this carryover? Were joint sessions for children and parents held related to Sifriyat Pijama books or other books? What messages do the teachers send to the homes? How are the books used at home (reading, other activities)?

In evaluating the program's implementation in schools, the study also focused on maintaining continuity between the preschool and the school, particularly regarding the question of whether the children were familiar with the books distributed in previous years or if they were used.

- ✓ **Reading habits and exposure to books** (not only in regard to Sifriyat Pijama): What are the children's reading habits? What are the attitudes of parents and children toward books? How many books do the children have in their home (and what percentage are Sifriyat Pijama books)?

## Methods

Though the evaluation questions are similar, the focus of the assessment is slightly different due to the different stages of implementation of Sifriyat Pijama in the preschools versus the schools. The 2013-14 evaluation in preschools is the continuation of a study intended to examine the program's implementation over time and following its expansion to hundreds of additional preschools during the past years. In the schools, on the other hand, this evaluation was conducted for the first time during the pilot year, and it is designed to examine the suitability of the Sifriyat Pijama program for the lower grades in elementary school and how it was implemented.

Accordingly, both **quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed to assess what was happening in the schools** (as described below), while **we sufficed with a quantitative methodology in assessing the program in preschools**.

The **qualitative methodology** enables an in-depth study of all aspects of a topic, though it is difficult to generalize the findings. Its contribution is particularly important in studying the schools during the pilot stage (the first year of implementation): It provides an unmediated look at the program's phenomena and processes within the context in which they occur. Moreover, we can learn about what is happening in an open and unstructured way, and identify phenomena that the program leaders and researchers did not anticipate.

The **quantitative evaluation**, on the other hand, provides a representative statistical picture of the situation. That is, it enables generalization, but the examination is concrete and uniform.

Commensurate with the state of program implementation, we decided to use both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in assessing the program in schools. This enabled us to receive a quantitative picture and complement it with interviews that primarily lend themselves to qualitative-interpretive analysis and reporting. On the other hand, in assessing the program in the preschools, we decided to only use a quantitative methodology because the ongoing activity in recent years makes the need for qualitative information less urgent at this stage.<sup>2</sup>

### Evaluation Design in the Preschools

**In the preschools, we conducted a quantitative assessment via telephone surveys** among a sample of two populations: teachers and parents of preschoolers (Hebrew speakers only). The surveys were conducted during the months of June-September 2014.

### The respondents

600 preschool teachers were randomly sampled, including 300 from the state education stream and 300 from the state-religious education stream. That is, the sample is not representative of the general population. Similarly, 600 parents were sampled (one parent representing each preschool), with 300 from each educational stream.

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, the questionnaires included open-ended questions that provide an impression of the "color and feel" of the comments, and we did not exclusively rely on a numerical scale in the evaluation.

Table 3 shows the numbers of respondents sampled in accordance with the quantitative design, and the response rate in each group.

**Table 3: Sample of respondents and the response rate**

Sampled population		Sample size	Responded	Response rate
Preschool teachers	State	300	252	84%
	State-religious	300	254	84%
Parents	State	300	197	66%
	State-religious	300	203	68%

The preschool teachers were asked about the ages of the children; 157 responded that they are pre-K teachers and 128 responded that they are kindergarten teachers; 151 responded that they teach in a mixed preschool of pre-K and kindergarten children. The rest (70 teachers) did not respond or reported a different mix of children at the preschool.

### **The questionnaire**

The **questionnaire for preschool teachers** included 77 questions (and background questions), most of them closed. Some questions were open-ended, allowing respondents to provide an explanation, details or more information in their answers.

The questionnaire included six main areas of focus:

1. Background on operating Sifriyat Pijama or other reading encouragement programs in preschool;
2. Evaluations of the books distributed by the program during the year;
3. Program operation: book-related activities conducted in the preschool during the year and changes instituted from year to year;
4. The connection with the parents in the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program: joint activities and messages sent to the home;
5. Support and guidance in preparing book-related activities;
6. Attitudes toward books in general and the perceived contribution of the program.

(The questionnaire appears in Appendix 1)

The **questionnaire for parents** of preschoolers included 61 questions (and background questions); most of them closed. Some questions were open, allowing respondents to provide an explanation, details or more information in their answers.

The questionnaire included six main areas of focus:

1. Familiarity with the Sifriyat Pijama program (this year and in previous years, or with older children);
2. Receiving the program's books at home, reading them aloud and conducting other book-related activities;



3. Evaluation of the books distributed by the program during the year;
4. Activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years;
5. Connection between the preschool and the home: joint activity for children and parents in the preschool under the program, and messages received at home;
6. Attitudes toward books, the perceived impact of the preschool's reading encouragement program and satisfaction from it.

(The questionnaire appears in Appendix 2)

Some of the questions on the parents' questionnaire and preschool teachers' questionnaire are similar, and thus provide a broad picture from several perspectives on each topic. Some of the questions for preschool teachers are identical to the questions asked in the previous evaluation study.

### **Evaluation Design in the Elementary Schools**

In the elementary schools, we conducted both quantitative and qualitative research, as described.

#### **The qualitative evaluation**

The qualitative data was collected during visits to seven schools sampled for the study, including five schools from the state education stream and two state-religious schools. The data collection took place during the months of May-June 2014.

The visits included classroom observations of book-related activity in grades 1 or 2, according to a semi-structured indicator. (A total of seven observation sessions were conducted in grades 1 and 2.) We also conducted an observation of the reading corners in the classroom and in the space for grades 1 and 2.

During the visits, we also conducted semi-structured interviews with 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers; in total, seven 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers were interviewed and five 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers. We also conducted three unplanned interviews with program coordinators at the schools.

The observations were designed to help identify patterns of activity and emphases of the teachers in operating the program; the interviews enabled a more in-depth study of the perceptions of the program's success and perceived impact, and facilitated an understanding of the model of operating the program.

In addition, we interviewed the leaders of the program at the Ministry of Education and at Sifriyat Pijama and Keren Grinspoon Israel.

#### **Qualitative assessment tools**

##### *Observation of activity in the classroom and spaces*

The observation was conducted according to an outline for evaluating activity, the classroom setting and the learning area of grades 1 and 2, and focused on these topics:

1. Details about the activity, including its duration and the number of adults and children participating;
2. Characteristics of the activity, with a focus on: the teacher's actions, the children's responses, the characteristics of the interaction between the teacher and the children, and various emphases in the activity;
3. The classroom and the area for grades 1 and 2, with a focus on the connection between the learning areas and the program, and an impression of the library in the classroom or the library in the area for grades 1 and 2 or the school library.

*Interviews with the teachers and with the coordinators*

The interviews were conducted after observing the lesson, according to an outline prepared in advance. The interview focused on the following topics:

1. Background on the teacher and on the program's implementation in the school; other reading encouragement programs (if any);
2. Perception of the program's objectives;
3. Method of program operation at the school;
4. Matching the books to the children in terms of literacy, linguistic education, reading;
5. Matching the books to the children in terms of social-moral education;
6. The children's response to the books and the program;
7. Sifriyat Pijama's connection to the school's enrichment programs in the areas of reading, heritage, the community or the family;
8. The program's connection to parents and the connection with the home;
9. The program's carryover from preschool to elementary school;
10. Summary: the program's contribution, difficulties in the program, expectations for the future, opinion on whether to expand the program.

*Interviews with the program's leaders from the Ministry of Education and from Sifriyat Pijama*

The interviews focused on the following subjects:

1. Characteristics of the school program that distinguish it from the preschool program;
2. Perceptions of the program's implementation and success;
3. Perceptions about timing the Sifriyat Pijama program with Ministry of Education programs for grades 1 and 2 on values and language;
4. Inquiries from the schools during the program's operation;
5. Free expression of opinions by the interviewees.

*The quantitative evaluation*

We conducted the **quantitative assessment** via **telephone surveys** among a sample of 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers from all of the schools participating in the pilot (23 schools in total), and from among a sample of teachers. The surveys were conducted during the months of June-September 2014.

*The respondents*

We sampled 197 teachers from grades 1 and 2, from all of the schools participating in the pilot (23 schools in total). Among the parents, we took a random sample of 10 parents of 1st graders and 10 parents of 2nd graders.

Table 4 shows the number of respondents sampled under the quantitative design and the response rate in each group:

**Table 4: Sample of respondents and the response rate**

Population	Sample size	Respondents	Response rate
Teachers	197	144	*73%
Parents	460	324**	70%

\* In the evaluation study, we approached all of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers in the schools where the program was running (a total of 197 teachers) because there was not a precise record in advance of the teachers whose classes were participating in the program. In practice, 144 of the teachers responded (73%) from 22 different schools, but only 79 of them reported that the program operated in their classroom and continued with the interview. We interviewed from one to seven teachers from each school.

\*\* Of the 324 parents who responded, 157 were parents of 1st graders and 167 were parents of 2nd graders.

#### *The questionnaire*

The **questionnaire for teachers** included 129 questions (and background questions, most of them closed. Some questions were open, allowing respondents to provide an explanation, details or more information in their answers).

The questionnaire included eight main areas of focus:

1. Participation in the Sifriyat Pijama program or in other reading encouragement programs;
2. Evaluation of the books distributed to the class in the framework of the program during the year;
3. Program operation: receiving the books and book-related activities conducted during the year;
4. Support and guidance in preparing book-related activities;
5. Connection with the parents in the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program: joint activities and messages sent to the home;
6. Participation of the pupils in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschools in previous years, connection and continuity;
7. Attitudes toward books in general and the perceived contribution of the program;
8. Engagement with books outside the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program.

(The questionnaire appears in Appendix 3)

The **questionnaire for parents** included 77 questions (and background questions), most of them closed. Some questions were open, allowing respondents to provide an explanation, details or more information in their answers.

The questionnaire included six main areas of focus:

1. Familiarity with the Sifriyat Pijama program (this year and in previous years);
2. Evaluation of the books distributed by the program during the year;
3. Receiving the program's books at home, reading them aloud and conducting other book-related activities;
4. Reading and other activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years;
5. Connection between the school and the home: joint activity for children and parents in the framework of the program, and messages received at home;
6. Attitudes toward books, the perceived impact of the Sifriyat Pijama and satisfaction from it.

(The questionnaire appears in Appendix 4)

Some of the questions in the parents' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire are similar, thus providing a broad picture from several perspectives on each topic. Some of the questions for teachers are identical to the questions asked in the previous evaluation study.

### **How the Findings are Presented**

The findings will be presented in two separate chapters, one for each framework of activity: preschools and schools.

In each chapter, we will present the findings by evaluation topic (in accordance with the evaluation questions described above) as follows:

1. **General questions and responses about the program:** The respondents' satisfaction with Sifriyat Pijama and readiness to continue to participate in it;
2. **Operational support systems** for the teachers;
3. **How the program operates:** reading the books aloud and book-related activity;
4. **Evaluations of the books** that were distributed, their characteristics and suitability for the children;
5. **Carryover between preschool and elementary school**, and the connection with the home, including joint activity for children and parents, and book-related activity at home;
6. **Reading habits and exposure to books** (not only vis-à-vis Sifriyat Pijama), including a perception of the importance of reading and its contribution to bringing parents and children closer together.

On most of the questions, the diagrams show the percentage of respondents who answered affirmatively or gave high assessments – a score of 4 or 5, which is equivalent in some questions to “to a great extent” and “to a very great extent,” and in other questions (that pertain to the program's perceived impact) to “slightly more” and “much more” in comparison to the past.

The name of the column in the diagram is an abbreviated form of the question, and we recommend checking the original wording in the questionnaire.

In the chapter summarizing the **preschool findings**, the data was statistically weighted by type of education (state and state-religious) in order to present a representative picture. Thus, the data represents all of the preschools that participated in the programs in 2013-14 by education stream.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, differences were examined according to education stream (state and state-religious), among the preschools and among the parents; among the preschools, the data was also examined by age (kindergarten, pre-K or mixed, as reported by the preschool teachers). Statistically significant differences among the respondents are described in the relevant chapter. (The report only includes differences that are statistically significant.)

Moreover, a comparison with data from the 2010-11 evaluation study is described in the relevant chapters. The data from 2010-11 is presented in Appendix 5.

In the chapter summarizing the **school findings**, we present data from the surveys (in diagrams and tables) and main ideas that arose from the qualitative evaluation.

In each of the chapters, we first present the views of the teachers on the topic, and then the views of the parents.

At the end of chapter, there is a summary of the key findings on the topic.

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<sup>3</sup> In order to separately examine the situation in each education stream, we sampled 300 respondents from each group (state and state-religious). Therefore, the sample does not represent the preschools in the program in those aspects; the statistical weighting is designed to address this problem, and thus the data presented in the report represents the entire population that participated in the program.

## **Findings**

### **Detailed Findings in the Preschools**

#### **General Views and Reactions to the Program**

In this chapter, we present the level of satisfaction expressed by preschool teachers and parents regarding the Sifriyat Pijama program and their readiness to continue to participate in it or expand it to all preschools. We also present their perception of the program's contribution in various aspects (centrality of books, richness of language, thinking and values), as well as suggestions for improvement.

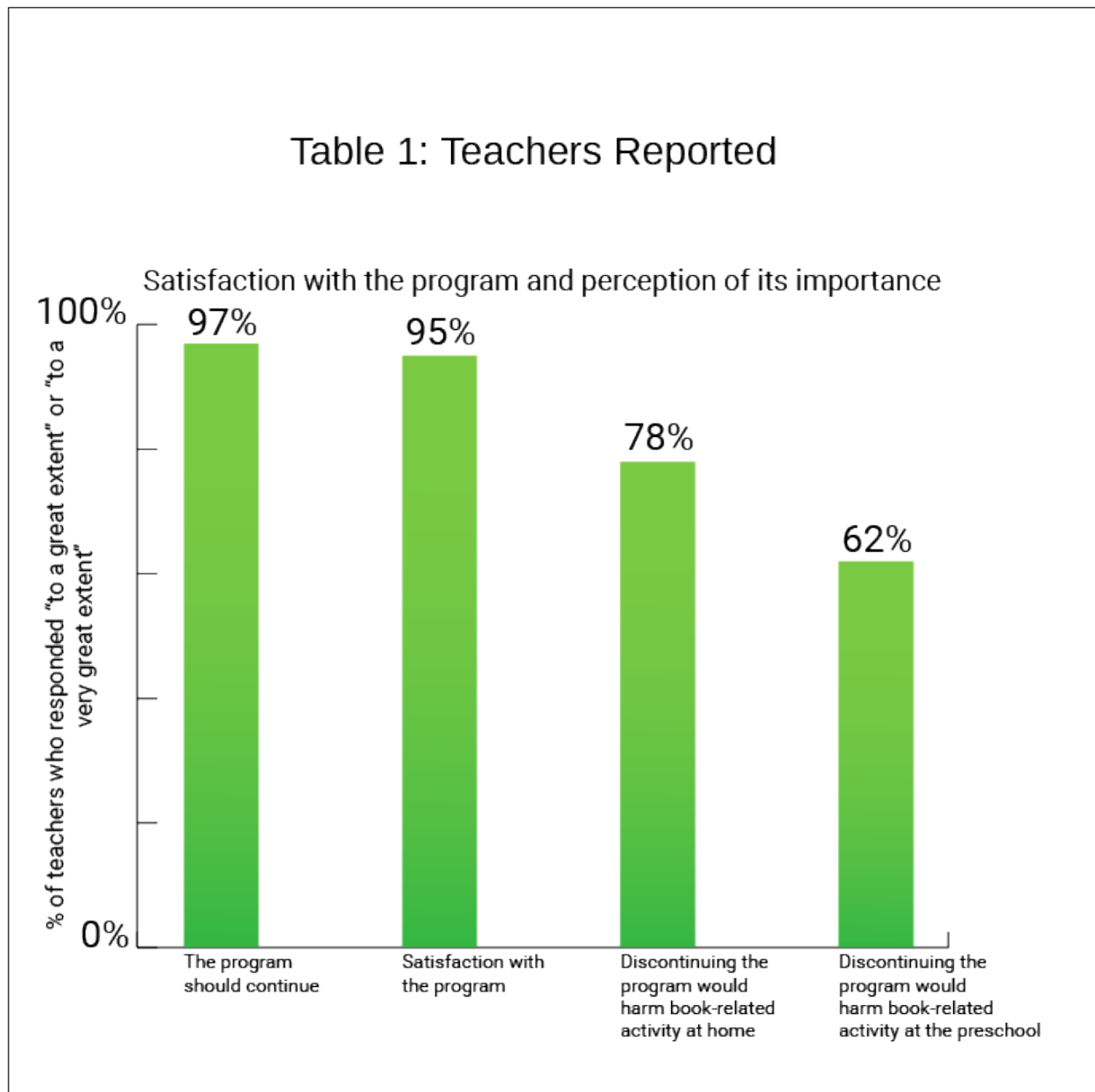
#### **A. Satisfaction with Sifriyat Pijama Program and Readiness to Continue Partnership**

##### **Reports from preschool teachers**

All of the preschool teachers reported that they wish to participate next year in the Sifriyat Pijama program and 96% think it should be instituted as a compulsory program in all preschools in the State of Israel.

Diagram 1 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who rated the program highly and believe that discontinuing it would be detrimental to book-related activity at the preschool and at home:

Table 1: Teachers Reported



As shown in Diagram 1, nearly all of the preschool teachers (over 95%) are satisfied with the Sifriyat Pijama program and think it should be continued.

The following topics were raised in an open question that asked the respondents why they think the program should continue:

1. The importance of **exposure to books and writers, pleasure from reading and motivation to read**. For example: "... if there's no program, they won't read books"; "the children enjoy this, they're exposed to something new, it challenges them"; "the program exposes them to different writers."
2. **Contributes to language enrichment**. For example: "... it enriches the language and knowledge and vocabulary..."

3. Contributes to the **discussion of values**. For example: "It's an excellent program, exposes the children to reading, values, dilemmas and raises awareness."
4. Contributes to the **bond between the child and the parent**. For example: "... the book brings the parent and child closer"; "... they have a book with them at home, and they ask the parents to sit with them and read to them."

Diagram 1 also shows that 78% of the preschool teachers believe that **discontinuing the program would harm the reading of books at home**, and 62% believe that **discontinuing the program would harm the reading of books at preschool**.

When asked in the open questions to explain why, the teachers emphasized the positive aspects of the program, and the negative impact of discontinuing the program can be deduced from those remarks. Some of the arguments they raised are the mirror image of arguments in favor of operating the program. Arguments pertaining to the (potential) **impact of the program's discontinuation on book-related activity at the preschool** included:

1. **It would harm exposure to books and motivation to read**. For example: "because the program helps. Thanks to the program, the children are reading books"; "because it's very important to the children that they receive the books at home. They can work with them as much as they like at home."
2. **It would harm the positive experience associated with the world of books through the pleasure of receiving the book**: "The children really enjoy and anticipate the day when they receive the book, and the program should continue"; "because children love to receive things at home, and that excites them."
3. **It would reduce the number of the child's books at home and harm the experience of "my book" with all its implications**: "The children really enjoy receiving a book that will be personally their own, which they can examine ... and also enriches their library at home"; "the children really enjoy, look forward to receiving a book at home that remains theirs."
4. **It would harm the experience of reading together and reduce teachers' motivation to expose the children to books**. For example: "We're in a population that has little awareness of this and the parents understood the importance of books. This really brought the parent and child closer together"; "because there are parents who lack money and an awareness of books, and when the child arrives with the book, the parents are obligated to read, and this has an enormous positive impact on the children."
5. **It would harm the children's development, the enrichment of their world and the enrichment of their language through the books**. For example: "The book is very important for enriching vocabulary, for getting to know the authors and the books"; "because it's very helpful in terms of the entire development of listening, knowledge, thinking. It's something very precious for the children and for the parents."

Preschool teachers who did not believe that discontinuing the program would have a detrimental impact explained that **in any case, the children are exposed to books at preschool – in activities or in the library**. For example: "We always include book-related activity in the preschool, so this won't be harmed"; "there's a rich library and the children come, read and exchange."



The detrimental impact on reading at home, if the program is discontinued, is attributed to two factors:

1. **Economic problems that do not allow the parents to purchase books.** For example: “There are lots of parents for whom books are the lowest priority, and here’s a structured program that saves parents money and becomes an ongoing routine, and there will be no exposure to books without it.”
2. **Harm to the parents’ awareness of the importance of reading.** For example: “because the parents are not always aware of reading, and when the children bring books home the parents become involved and have no other choice”; “in the case of some parents, if you don’t bring the book home to them, they won’t take it on their own.”

The few preschool teachers who said that discontinuing the program would not have a detrimental effect on reading books at home attributed this to **the parents’ awareness of the importance of reading (especially parents who belong to higher socio-economic strata)**: “because this is a population that reads a lot of books to the children, without any connection to the program”; “the parents are from a mid-high socio-economic level, so the parents are already aware of reading books.”

### Reports from the parents

96% of the parents reported that they are satisfied with the program, and 86% want the preschool to continue to participate in the program the next year (13% reported that their child would not be in the preschool the following year, so in fact **everyone whose child is remaining at the preschool for another year would like the program to continue**).

The following detailed topics were raised in response to the open question that asked parents to explain why they would like the preschool to continue to participate in the program: (Some, but not all, of the topics are similar to those raised by the preschool teachers.)

1. **Contributes to enriching the children’s world.** For example: “because it exposes us to new worlds that we don’t really have time to deal with. This enriches the world of the children”; “the program very much enriches the children and expands horizons.”
2. **Contributes to the home library and increases exposure to books.** For example: “populations that would otherwise be unable gain exposure to books”; “it contributes, there are children who don’t have books at home and this gives them a chance to read at home too.”
3. **Sparks motivation to read.** For example: “because it contributes to encouraging reading, expands knowledge and the variety of books to which they’re exposed”; “it’s important to encourage the children and encourage them to read books instead of [watching] television.”
4. **Receiving the books brings joy and pleasure.** For example: “because it’s fun to receive books”; “... she’s very, very happy to receive the book, and so am I”; “it’s nice, the children are excited about it, are excited about receiving the book.”
5. **Contributes to language enrichment.** For example: “... improves the vocabulary.”

6. **Contributes to values education:** For example: “because the program contributes to education about values”; “... instills values.”
7. **Contributes to the child-parent connection.** For example: “... not only the parents want to read them a story, the children want us to read them a story.”

Some of the parents noted in general that **the program is good in their opinion**. For example: “The program is excellent, and contributes to the children.”

## **B. The Perceived Contribution of the Program<sup>4</sup>**

The program’s contribution was examined from several aspects: the centrality of the book and book-related activity in comparison to the past (prior to operating the Sifriyat Pijama program in the preschools); contribution of the program to the children’s enjoyment of books and to their motivation to read (including the scope of reading), to enriching their language, to stimulating thinking and values education. Here we present reports from preschool teachers and parents on each of these aspects:

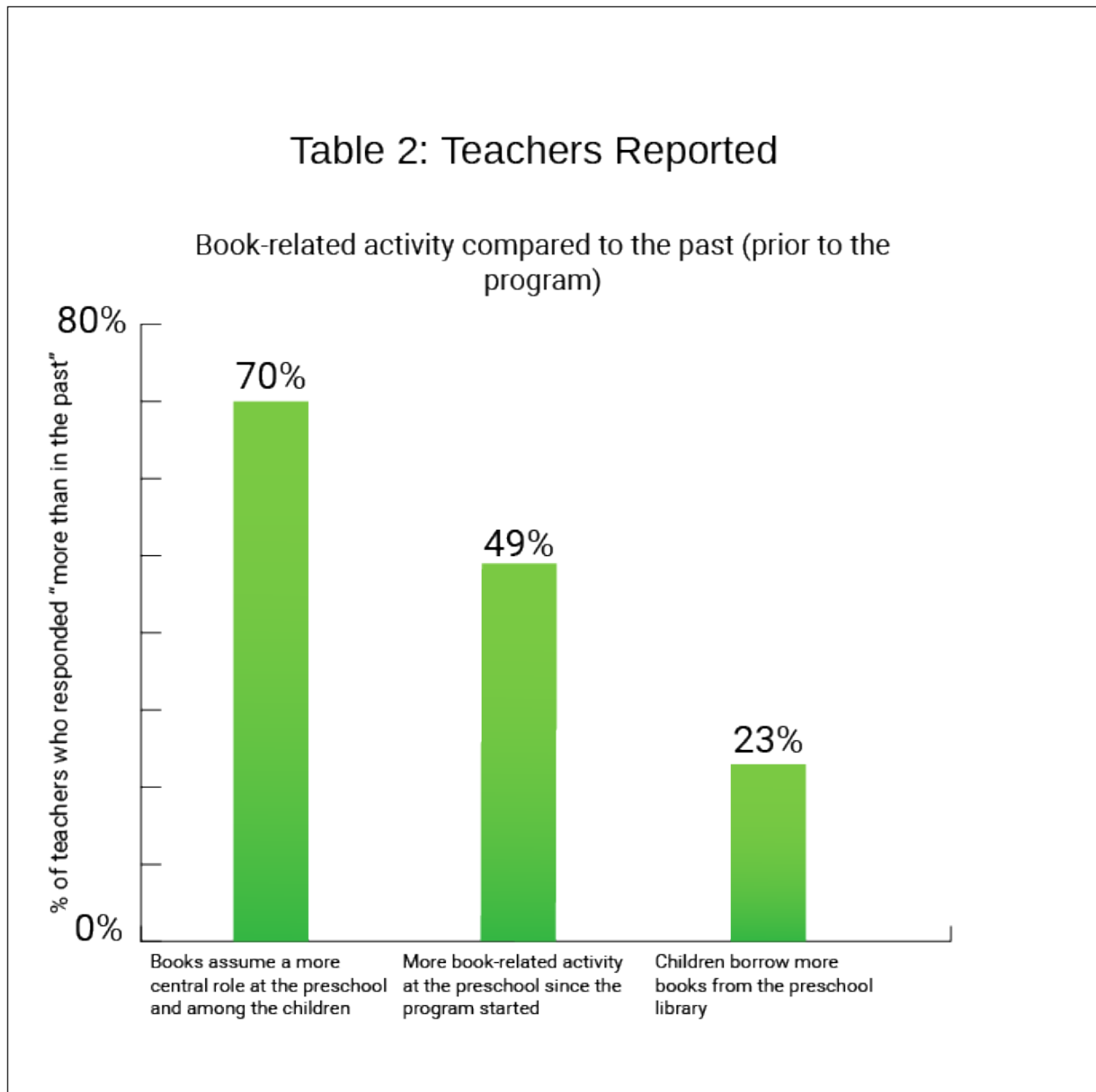
### **Reports from preschool teachers**

Diagram 2 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who reported slightly more or much more book-related activity than in the past.

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<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, we present reports on the **perceived** impact only, and not on the effectiveness of the program in practice.

Table 2: Teachers Reported

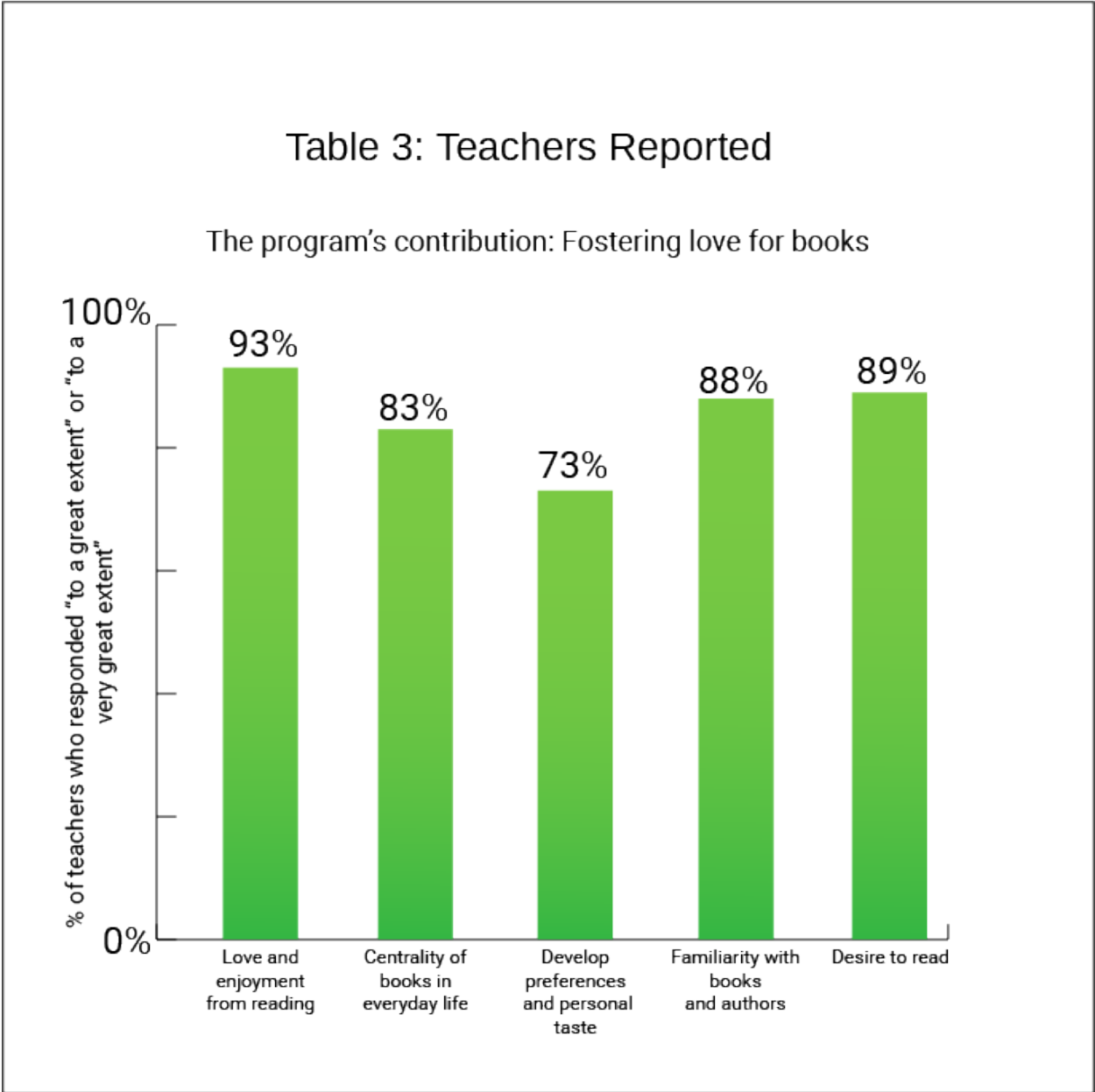


As Diagram 2 shows, **the preschool teachers said that the Sifriyat Pijama program has a positive influence on book-related activity in the preschool – both from their viewpoint and from the children’s perspective.** 70% of the teachers agreed that books play a more central role in the preschool and among the children since the program began operating; half of them reported more involvement in book-related activity at the preschool since the program started. (Others reported that the situation has not changed.) Nearly a quarter of the teachers reported that since Sifriyat Pijama began operating at the preschool the children borrow more books from the preschool library. (10% reported that the children borrow fewer books and the rest of the teachers reported no change.)

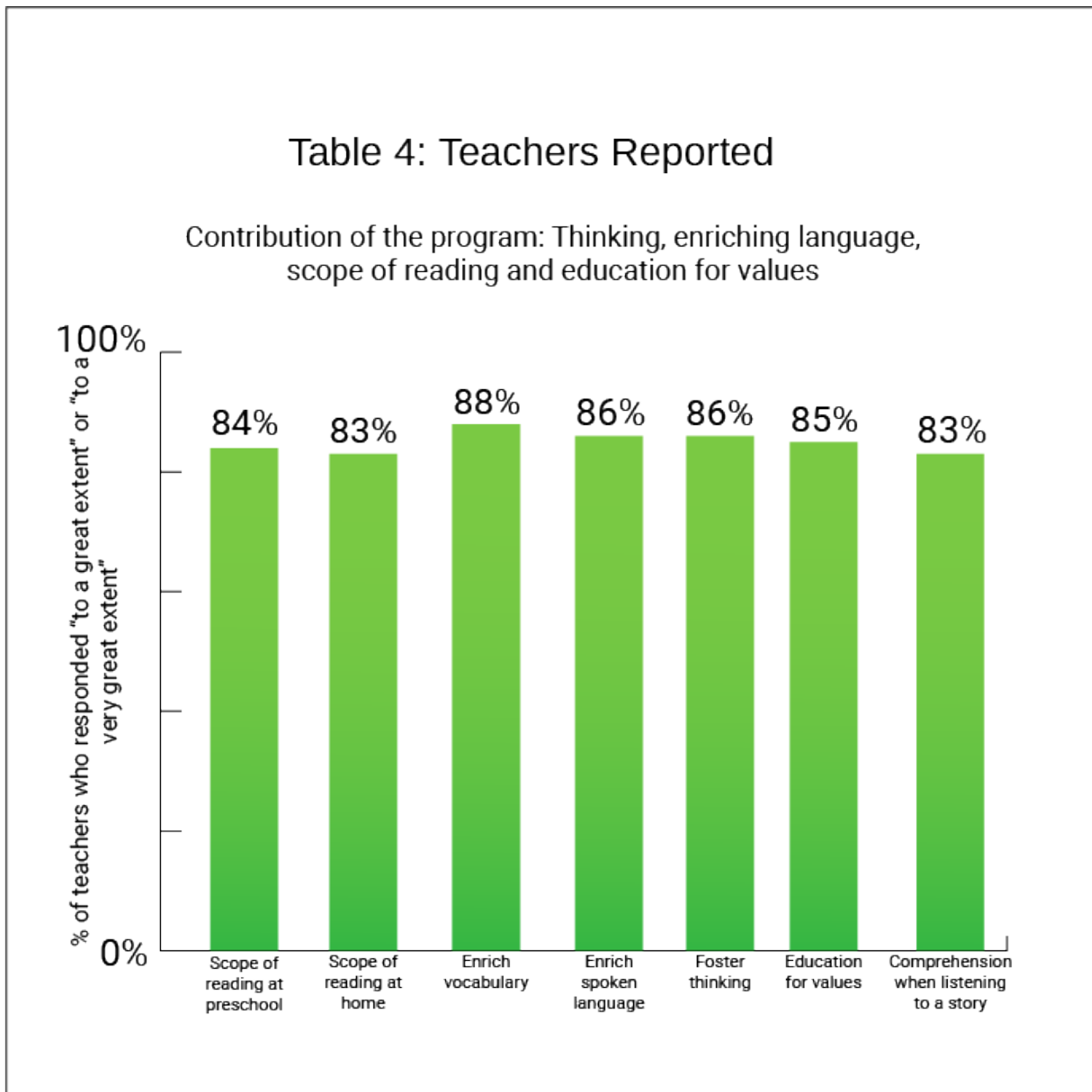
In examining the **differences by state education versus state-religious education, we found that from the teachers’ perspective the program’s impact is greater in the state-religious**

**preschools:** 75% of the teachers from the state-religious preschools reported that books play a more central role in the preschool since the program began compared to 65% of the teachers from preschools in the state education stream. A similar trend was evident in the teachers' reports on book-related activity in the preschool: 54% versus 46%, respectively, reported greater involvement in book-related activity at the preschool.

Diagram 3 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who responded that the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed greatly or very greatly in fostering a love of books. Diagram 4 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who responded that the program contributed to various aspects of the children's development (scope of reading, language, comprehension and values education).



As Diagram 3 shows, a significant percentage of preschool teachers **credited the Sifriyat Pijama program with making a substantial contribution to the children’s love for reading and appreciation of books**: 93% said that implementation of the program in the preschool contributed to the children’s enjoyment from reading books, and 83% said that the program contributed to the centrality of books in the children’s everyday lives. Moreover, about 90% said that the program boosted the children’s desire to read books. Nearly 90% responded that the children became familiar with books and writers thanks to the program, and 73% said that it contributes to developing the children’s preferences and personal taste in selecting books.



As Diagram 4 shows, **the preschool teachers felt that the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed greatly in all of the aspects studied**: about 85% said that the program’s implementation in the

preschool helped to increase the reading of books to children in the preschool and at home (some of the teachers said they could not assess the extent of reading at home), enriched the children's vocabulary and oral expression, and also fostered the children's thinking, story comprehension and values education.

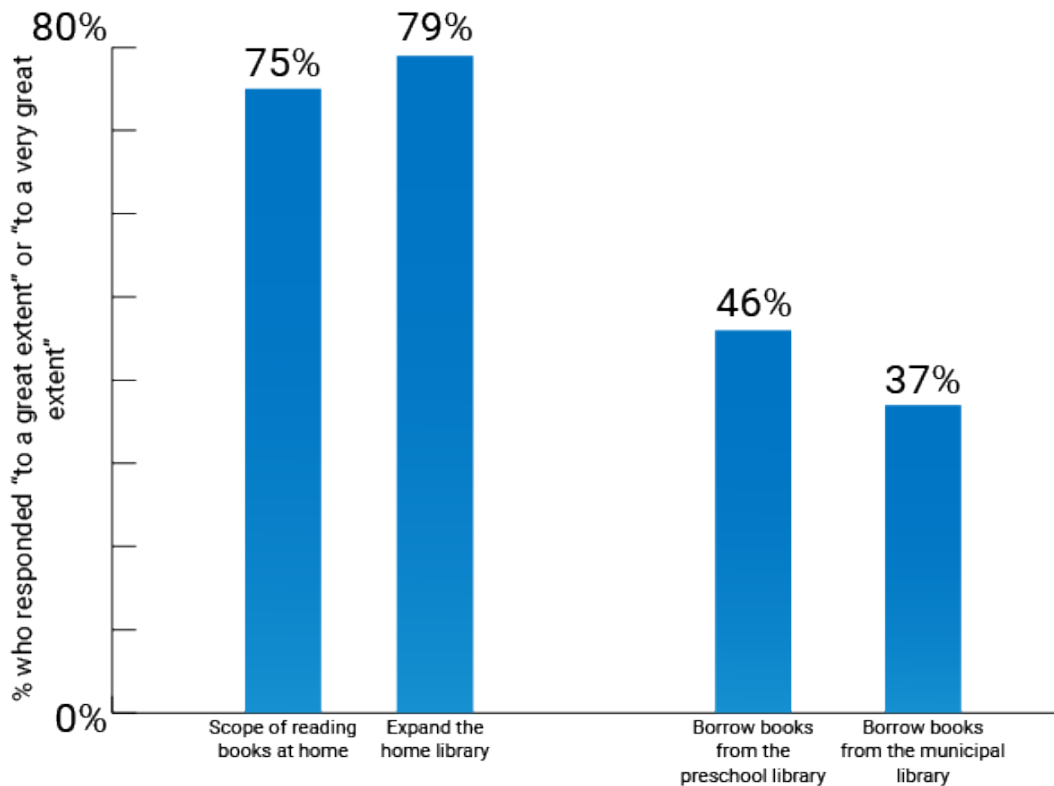
### **Reports from the parents**

Compared to 70% of the preschool teachers who felt that the books play a more central role in the preschool and in the eyes of the children since the program began operating, 49% of the parents reported that books play a more central role in their homes in comparison to the past (before the program began) and 50% responded that there was no change.

Diagram 5 presents the percentage of parents who reported that implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed greatly or very greatly to the scope of reading and exposure to books, and Diagram 6 presents the percentage of parents who said that the program contributed to various aspects of their children's development (language, comprehension and values education), and to their children's enjoyment of reading and motivation to read.

Table 5: Parents Reported

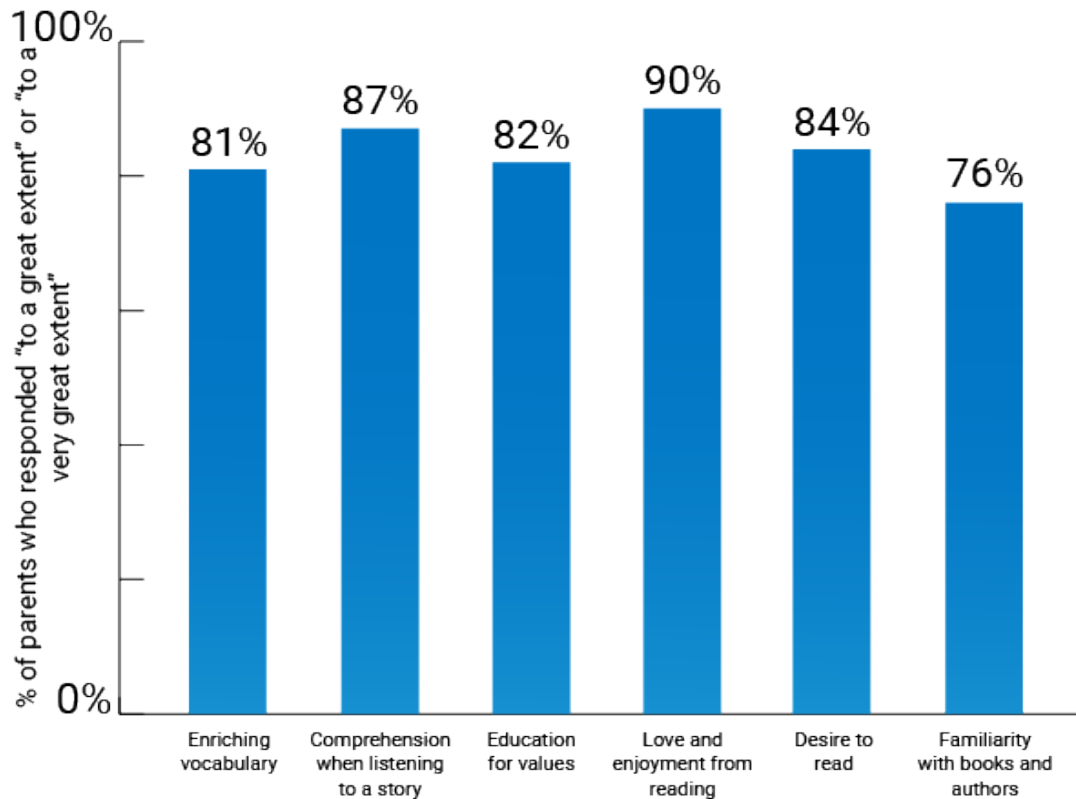
Contribution of the program: Scope of reading and borrowing books



As Diagram 5 shows, **the parents felt that the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed significantly in terms of the number of books at home and the scope of reading, and to lesser extent in regard to the children’s habits of borrowing library books**; about 80% reported that implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed greatly or very greatly to expanding the home library, and 75% said that it greatly or very greatly increased the scope of reading books to children at home. (12-13% reported that it contributed to some extent.) In addition, 46% of the parents said that the program led the children to borrow more books from the preschool library, and 37% said that it contributed to visiting the municipal library and borrowing books from it. (On the other hand, 41% reported little impact on the borrowing of books, 50% reported very little impact, and the rest reported moderate impact.)

Table 6: Parents Reported

Contribution of the program: Language, thinking and affinity for books



As Diagram 6 shows, 76%-90% of the parents **attributed a significant contribution to Sifriyat Pijama in all of the aspects we studied**: 90% said that implementation of Sifriyat Pijama contributed to the children’s love and enjoyment of books, and 85% reported that the program boosted the children’s desire to read books; 87% felt that the program contributed to the children’s level of comprehension when telling them a story, and 82% responded that it contributed to values education. Finally, 81% said that the program contributes to enriching vocabulary and 76% reported that it contributes to increasing familiarity with books and authors. (6-9% felt that the program contributes little or very little in these areas, and the others said that it contributes to a moderate extent.)

Appendix 5A displays reports from preschool teachers and parents on similar topics in the evaluation study conducted in 2010-11. In the reports from the preschool teachers, the scale was



identical only for two indexes: 70% of the teachers in the current study and 74% of the teachers in the 2010-11 study reported that books play a more central role (slightly more or much more) than in the past in the preschool and among the children. In addition, 23% of the preschool teachers in the current study versus 41% in the 2010-11 study reported that the children were borrowing slightly more or many more books from the preschool library.

The preschool teachers' evaluation of the other indexes and those of the parents were received on a different scale. (They were asked to assess the current situation and not in comparison to the past.) However, we can see that in parallel to the high assessments received in the current study, many also reported in the 2010-11 study that the program had a positive impact on these aspects in comparison to the past.

### C. Suggestions for Improving the Program

#### Suggestions from the preschool teachers

Though all of the preschool teachers expressed a desire to continue to participate in the program the following year, **17% reported that they would want to change its format.**

An analysis of the open question about desired changes points to several directions:

1. **The books should be better suited to the children** – many of the preschool teachers noted the need to better match the books' **content** and **illustrations** to the children's lifestyle or age:
  - A. Preschool teachers from the religious and ultra-Orthodox sectors asked to **adapt** the books' content and illustrations to the **religious population**. For example: "There should be greater sensitivity to the religious preschools and the books should be more suited to the children. There shouldn't be one style for all of the sectors; they should do several types"; "the illustrations should be suitable for the religious public."
  - B. Some asked to better **match** the books (and the illustrations) to the **age of the children**. For example: "to focus more on the young age, pre-pre-K, with less text"; alternatively: "there should be more of a message in kindergarten, more vocabulary and not just one line on each page, and also to speak less about monsters"; "in my view, the illustrations are a bit frightening for the children"; "sometimes there are illustrations that are at a high level ... unclear for the children's age; the books should be clearer and more from the world of the children."
2. **It would be better to distribute hardcover books, especially the copy given to the preschool.** General comments on this subject included, for example: "The book the preschool teacher receives should be with a hard cover in order to preserve the book"; "the preschool should receive one book with a thicker cover that will always be at the preschool, which will last a lot longer; they should give one book for reading to the children at the preschool"; "I think that the cover should be hard, despite the price."
3. **The preschool teachers should be involved in selecting the books** (a comment voiced less frequently). For example: "in choosing the stories, it would be appropriate to involve and consult with the preschool teachers." A small percentage of the preschool teachers noted in this context that they prefer to receive **books by Israeli authors** rather than translated literature (for example: "I would strengthen the connection with Israeli Jewish

writers. It's very important to emphasize the person who's behind the story; it's important that the writers of the books be close to the Jewish culture and state"), books that are considered "**classics**," and books that are **adapted to the work plan at the preschools** (for example: "books that can be adapted to the topic studied in the preschool according to the monthly and annual curriculum"; "some of the books should be adapted to the work plan at the preschools, to enrich them. There should be an emphasis on the emotional side of the content at the preschool."

4. A few of the preschool teachers said they would be happy **to receive information in advance on all of the books** to be sent to the preschool during the year, and even to receive the books in advance in order to prepare. [

According to the leaders of the Sifriyat Pijama program, each preschool receives a gift of two copies of each book in light of the wear and tear on the book at the preschool. Moreover, information is provided in advance on all of the books in several channels: in an email to each preschool teacher and in a letter attached to the first package of books that arrives at the preschool. The information is also published on the program's website.

### **Suggestions from the parents**

The parents also were asked in an open question for suggestions or ideas for improvement. The main topics they raised include:

1. Some of the parents sought **to focus attention on the books' level of interest and the age-appropriateness of the books and their content**: For example: "... sometimes the stories are not interesting and sometimes I don't understand the books"; "there are books that are more storylike ... and some are less interesting..."; "should receive books that are more age-appropriate and that have a moral."
2. Some suggested **adding activities at the preschool that focus on the books**, as well as joint activities for **parents and children**. Some also asked for **a greater variety**. For example: "more activities at the preschool, including activities with parents and children, could contribute."
3. Like the preschool teachers, some parents asked to **adapt the books to the sector**: Most mentioned adapting books to the **religious and ultra-Orthodox** sector. (For example: "If it's a state-religious preschool, the content should be in accordance with the commandments"; "adapt to more Torah-oriented values.") One of the parents asked to **emphasize Zionist values**. "We're not religious, so it's possible to give content on values without the religious stories ... more stories with Zionist values."
4. A few comments **centered on the quality of the drawings and illustrations or on their suitability for the children**. For example: "Concerning the illustrations, they should be of higher quality, more animated, pictures that are more suited for older children"; "the illustrations are not appropriate for the age of the child. There is no combination of colors."
5. Some of the parents asked to distribute the books in **hardcover**.

## General views and reactions about the Sifriyat Pijama program: Summary

**General satisfaction:** In general, **the program enjoys great support from the preschool teachers and parents:** A high percentage of them (over 95%) are satisfied with the program and wish to continue participating in it. 96% of the preschool teachers even think that the program should be compulsory in all preschools in Israel, and a large percentage say that discontinuing it would harm book-related activity at the preschool (62%) and at home (78%).

The main points raised (by the teachers and the parents) in favor of the program include:

- ✓ **Encourages exposure to books and motivation to read;**
- ✓ Provides a **positive experience and enjoyment** from just receiving the books;
- ✓ **Enriches and contributes to the children's development,** world and language;
- ✓ Increase **the parents' awareness** of the importance of books;
- ✓ Provides an experience of **shared reading** for parents and children;
- ✓ **Contributes to the home library** (especially among those of low socio-economic standing)

**Perceptions of the program's contribution:** the impression is that **thanks to the program, books assume a more central role in the preschool** than in the past (according to 70% of the preschool teachers), in the teacher's lesson plans (49%) and at home (49% of the parents). The program's contribution to the centrality of books is **more salient in state-religious preschools.**

A significant percentage of the preschool teachers and parents (about 80%-90%) say that the program contributes to the children in various aspects:

- ✓ **Expanding the scope of reading** at the preschool (84% of the preschool teachers) and at home (83% of the preschool teachers and 75% of the parents);
- ✓ **Enriching the children's spoken language** and vocabulary (86%-88% of the preschool teachers and 81% of the parents);
- ✓ Fostering **thinking, comprehension** of the story and **values** education (83%-86% of the preschool teachers and 82%-87% of the parents);
- ✓ **Enjoyment** from reading (93% of preschool teachers and 90% of parents) and the **centrality** of books in everyday life (83% of preschool teachers).

**Suggestions for improvement:** Along with the great appreciation of the program in general, some of the respondents commented on the books distributed in the program, particularly on these subjects:

- ✓ **The content should be adapted to the values and lifestyle of the population** (especially in the religious sector). In this context, we note that the preschool teachers in the state-religious preschools gave lower ratings to the books' content and illustrations.

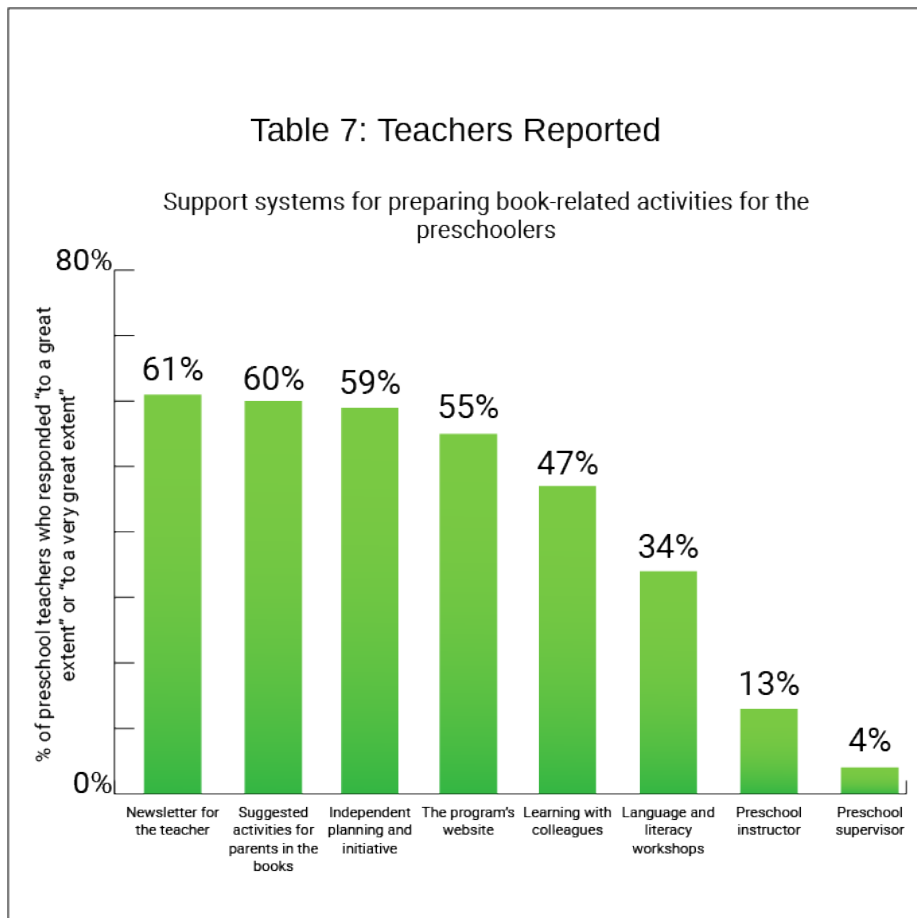
- ✓ **An uneven level of interest in the books and a lack of age-appropriateness (content and illustrations).** In general, as displayed below, pre-K teachers were less satisfied with the books in the various aspects examined (while teachers in mixed preschools – pre-K and kindergarten – were more satisfied with the books).

Additional suggestions by respondents for improving the program:

- ✓ Distribute the books in **hardcover** (especially the copy supplied to the preschool, because it wears out quickly);
- ✓ **Include the preschool teachers in selecting the books** (a suggestion raised by preschool teachers);
- ✓ Add book-related activities at the preschool and **joint** activities (a suggestion raised by parents);

### Operational Support Systems for Preschool Teachers: Teachers' Reports

Diagram 7 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who responded that they are greatly or very greatly assisted by the various support systems in preparing book-related activities for the preschoolers:



As Diagram 7 shows, about 60% of the preschool teachers reported that they prepare activities on their own or with the help of Sifriyat Pijama resources, including suggested activities for parents in the books, the newsletter for teachers and the program's website. 47% cited peer-assisted learning. A few reported receiving assistance from the Ministry of Education (and also participating in workshops in the field).

As noted, **only 14% (of 471 preschool teachers) responded that they are interested in additional support or instruction** in the framework of the program. It is interesting to note that the longer the program operates at the preschool, the higher the percentage of teachers who are interested in additional support or instruction (7%, 12%, 16% and 25% of the teachers in preschools where the program is running for one, two, three and four years, respectively, expressed interest in additional support or instruction). An analysis of the teachers' responses to the open question indicates requests for assistance in three potential directions:

1. **A need for additional ideas:** more suggestions for activities with the children and joint activities with the parents. For example: "activities, how to develop the subject learned from the book"; "it would be welcome, ideas for involving the parents."
2. **Auxiliary materials, especially arts and craft pages and tasks.** For example: "prepared pages for types of activity"; "task sheets, a continuing story, pages for coloring."
3. **Instruction or professional training** in all aspects related to working with the book. For example: "There should be instruction on how to teach the story in the most interesting way"; "how to precisely read the story aloud, how to work on it, video clips with instruction, even a professional person."

In terms of the **differences by age of the preschoolers, we found that kindergarten teachers reported more use of support systems than pre-K teachers:** newsletter for preschool teachers (64% versus 55%), peer-assisted learning (55% versus 39%) and training workshops (36% versus 32%).

Appendix 5B displays preschool teachers' reports in the **2010-11 evaluation study** on operational support systems. In 2010-11, the teachers primarily drew assistance from the suggested activities for parents in the books (59% - similar to the percentage in the current study – reported using these suggestions to a great or very great extent). In regard to the other support systems, the picture is similar to what emerges from the current study: The teachers drew more assistance from peer-assisted learning and from Sifriyat Pijama than from the Ministry of Education. In 2010-11, 31% of the preschool teachers who participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program responded affirmatively when asked whether they require additional support or instruction in the framework of the program (slightly more than the percentage in the current study).

### Sifriyat Pijama Program Operational Support Systems for Preschool Teachers: Summary

Most of the preparation work for activities conducted in the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program at the preschool is done by the teachers themselves, sometimes with help from Sifriyat Pijama materials. Nonetheless, only a few teachers reported requiring additional support; they cited, in particular, the need for additional ideas for activity and prepared auxiliary materials.

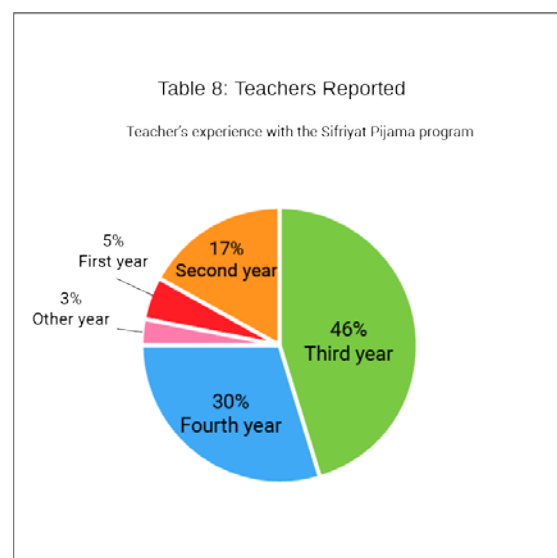
#### Program Operation in the Preschools: Reports by the Teachers

We will focus in this chapter on **how the Sifriyat Pijama program operates in the preschools**, including the teachers' feelings about how its implementation has developed over the years; logistics (distribution of books); activities at the preschool related to the program's books; and other activities conducted at the preschool to encourage reading.

##### a. Experience Running the Program; Development and Adaptation of its Operation

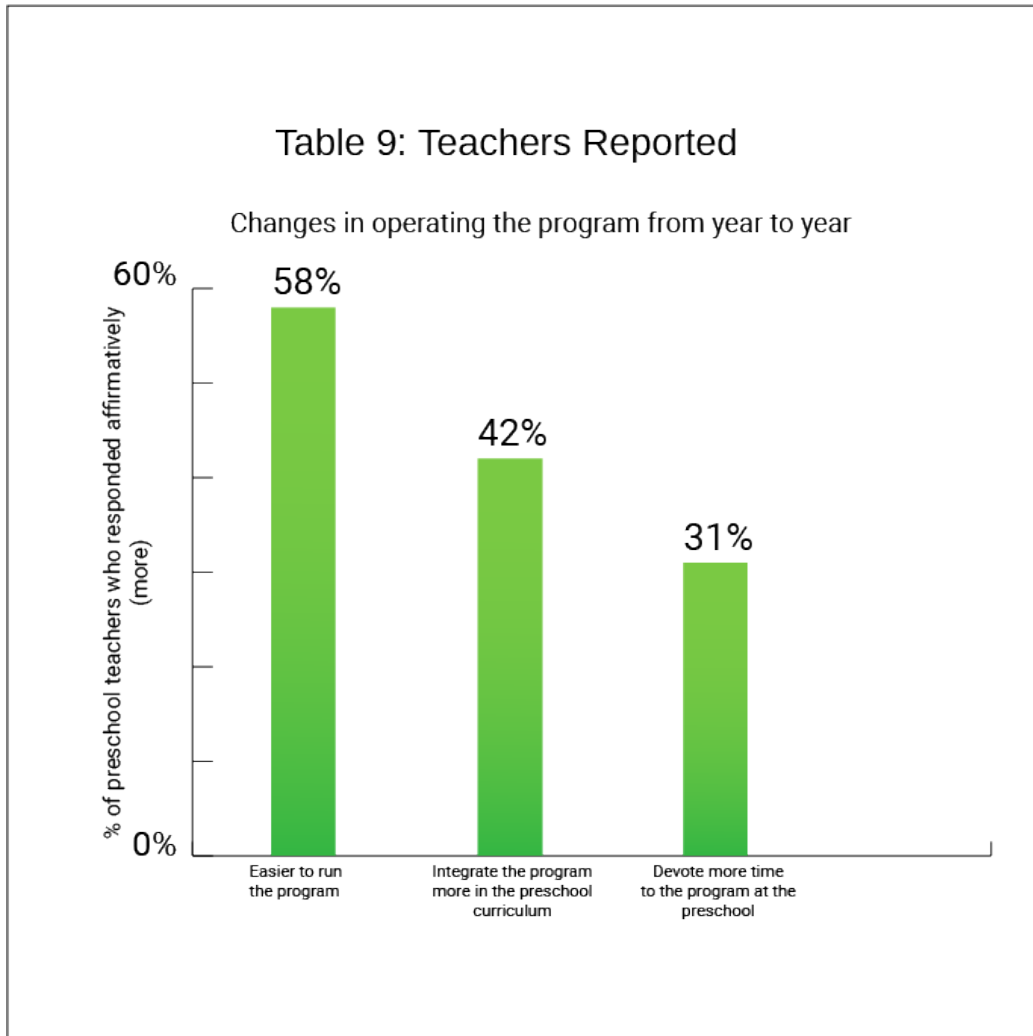
As noted, the Sifriyat Pijama program is operating in preschools for the fifth year. An evaluation study conducted by RAMA during the program's first year found widespread satisfaction with the program. One of the goals of the current study was to learn about the program's operation and the level of satisfaction with the program after operating for a number of years and expanding to additional preschools.

Diagram 8 shows a mapping of preschools that responded to the survey, by years of program operation.



506 preschool teachers who operated the Sifriyat Pijama program in 2013-14 responded to the survey. Diagram 8 indicates that 76% were operating the program for the third or fourth year, and 17% were operating the program for the second year; for 5% of the teachers, it was their first year operating the program.

The teachers were asked to express their opinion on the way the program was implemented in the preschool and to share their feelings about how its operation has changed from year to year. Their views, presented in Diagram 9, indicate an **increase in the scope of program implementation and penetration.**



\* Only a few (up to 6%) noted they do this less; the rest said “the same.”

As Diagram 9 shows, 58% of the preschool teachers **reported that it is easier each year to operate the program.** In response to the open question, **they attributed this primarily to the fact that they are familiar with the program, know what is expected of them and know where they can find activities.** For example: “It’s simply something you’ve become accustomed to, and it flows more from year to year, it’s more catchy, smoother”; “because I’m already familiar and

know where to look for activities.” A relatively small number of teachers attributed this to the children’s exposure to the program in the past and the fact that they know it and the books. For example: “Children already are aware of the book’s topics; they receive this from age 3 in pre-K, but they are already aware of this from previous years. They knew the entire program in advance before I started”; “children became accustomed to reading books. An experience for the children and the preschool teachers.” A very small number of teachers reported encountering more difficulty from year to year, and they attributed this to books that are not suitable for the children’s age or level.

Diagram 9 also shows that 42% of the preschool teachers reported that from year to year they integrate the program in their curriculum to a greater extent, and 31% said they devote more time to the program at the preschool from year to year.

A comparison of the teachers’ views by number of years operating the program indicates the following:

1. **The preschool teachers operate the program more easily as they accrue years of experience in operating it.** This finding was affirmed by 63% of the teachers participating in the program for the fourth year, 58% of third-year teachers and 47% of the teachers in their second year in the program.
2. **As the teachers gain more years of experience in the program, the amount of time they devote to it levels off:** 41%, 31% and 26% of the teachers who are in their second, third and fourth years in the program, respectively, reported that from year to year they devote more time to it, compared to 54%, 63% and 67%, respectively, who noted that they devote the same amount of time as in the past.
3. A statistical comparison between the groups by years of experience indicates **no difference in the amount of time devoted to the program** at the preschool based on the teacher’s years of experience in the program.

#### **b. Logistics (Book Distribution to Preschools)**

57% of preschool teachers (of the 479 preschool teachers who responded to the question) reported receiving eight books in the program by the survey date. 36% reported that they did not know how many books they received, and the rest (7%) reported receiving six or seven books.

#### **c. Activities in the Preschools in the Wake of Sifriyat Pijama books**

The preschool teachers were asked to report which activities they conduct in conjunction with the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed throughout the year, and whether they read the Sifriyat Pijama books that were distributed in previous years or conduct other activities related to them. Their reports are presented below.

#### **Activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books in 2013-14**

Nearly all of the preschool teachers (**94%**) reported that they read with the children all of the books they received in the Sifriyat Pijama program. About half of them (49%) reported reading

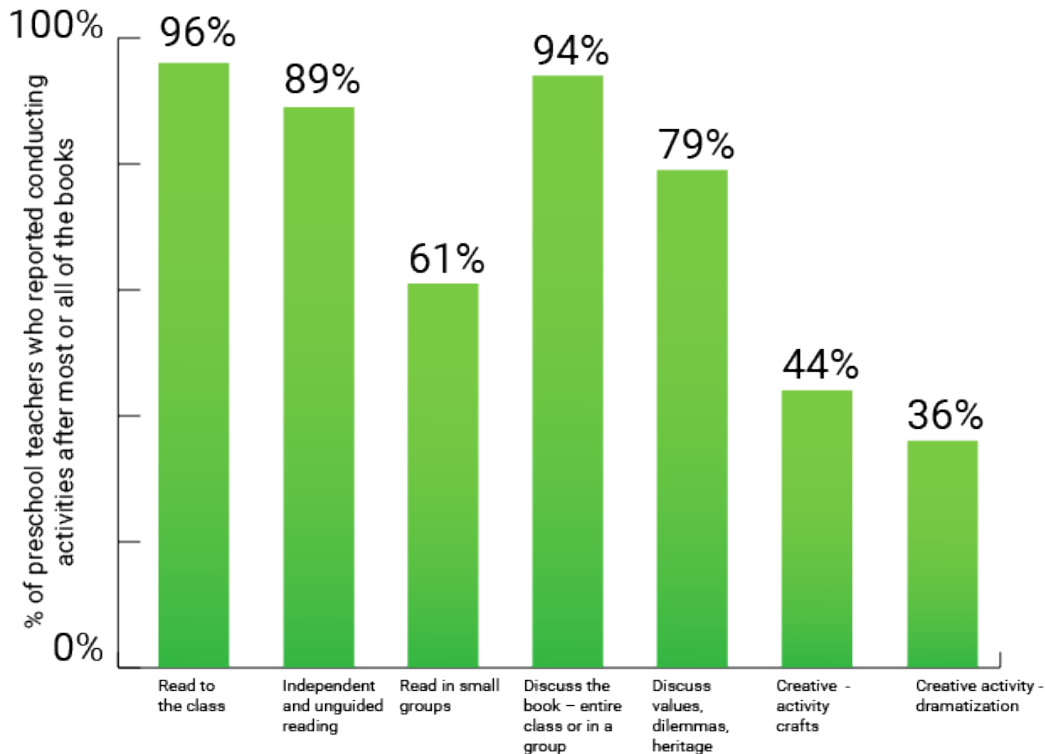


each book once or twice, 40% reported reading each book three or four times, and the rest (11%) said they read each book five times or more.

Diagram 10 shows the percentage of preschool teachers who reported conducting each of the range of activities for most or all of the books distributed in the program during the course of the year.

Table 10: Teachers Reported

Book-related activities in the program framework



As Diagram 10 shows, **the main book-related activities involve reading the book to the class, discussing the book (with the entire class or in a smaller group), independent (unguided) reading** (90% or more reported conducting these activities after most or all of the books, and another 3%-7% reported conducting these activities after about half of the books). Another significant activity is **conversations on values, heritage and dilemmas** (about 80% reported conducting this activity after most or all of the books, while another 14% reported engaging in such conversations after about half of the books).

Reading in small groups was less common (61% reported conducting this activity after most or all of the books; 20% said they did this after about half of the books). Creative projects were even less common, with 44% engaging in arts and crafts (drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.) and 36% in acting out the story after most or all of the books. Another 34% and 37%, respectively, reported conducted creative projects in the wake of about half of the books.

We found several differences among the preschools when examining the frequency of the various activities – by stream (state versus state-religious) and by age, as described below.

We found that **teachers from state preschools were more likely than teachers from state-religious preschools to read the books in small groups** (67% versus 53% reported reading in small groups after most or all of the books) and to **conduct conversations** about the books (95% of the teachers in state preschools versus 93% of the teachers in state-religious preschools reported doing so after most or all of the books; 1% and 3%, respectively, reported that they do not conduct such conversations).

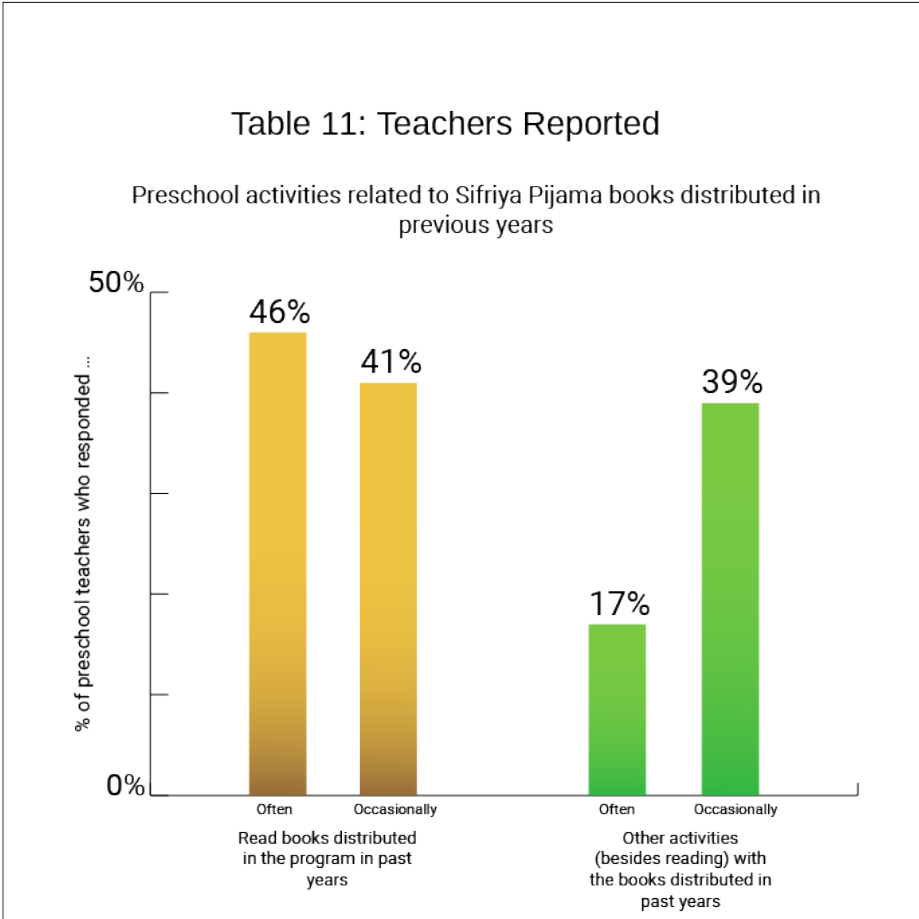
When examining the **differences by the preschoolers' ages, we found the following significant discrepancies:**

- ✓ **Kindergarten teachers, more than others, reported conducting conversations about the books** (97% of the kindergarten teachers versus 94% of pre-K teachers reported doing so after most or all of the books) **or about values, moral dilemmas and heritage after reading the books** (84% versus 75%, respectively). On the other hand, they reported **reading the books in small groups less than others.**
- ✓ **Pre-K teachers reported reading the books to the entire class slightly less frequently than others** (93% versus 97% reported reading to the entire class after most or all of the books) and **reading the books in small groups slightly more frequently** (63% versus 51% of the kindergarten teachers).
- ✓ **Finally, more kindergarten teachers than pre-K teachers reported conducting creative projects in the preschools** (a disparity of 8%-10% between kindergarten and pre-K teachers).

Appendix 5C displays reports from preschool teachers received in the **2010-11 evaluation study** in regard to activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books. As in the current study, nearly all of the teachers reported reading most or all of the books to the class (96% in the current study versus 99% in the 2010-11 study) and conducting a discussion after most or all of the books (97% versus 95%, respectively). There was a decline in the percentage of teachers reporting the other activities, including reading in small groups (61% versus 72%, respectively), discussion of values (79% versus 85%, respectively) and creative projects (40% versus about 59%).

#### **Activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years**

98% of the preschool teachers reported that there are Sifriyat Pijama books in the preschool from previous years. Diagram 11 shows their reports regarding their use of these books during the course of the year (2013-14).



As Diagram 11 shows, the overwhelming majority of preschool teachers (87%) reported that they read to the children the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in previous years; of these teachers, 46% did this often and 41% occasionally.

In addition, 56% of the preschool teachers reported that besides reading to the children, they engaged in other activities related to the books distributed in the Sifriyat Pijama program in previous years (17% of them said they did this often and 36% said they did this occasionally).

**Other activities to encourage reading**

**20% of the preschool teachers reported that a different program for encouraging reading operated in the preschool in the past:** The March of Books (39%), My Home Bookshelf (37%) or another program. (Those who reported another program were asked to specify which program. In most cases, the other program involved activity initiated by the teacher; three teachers mentioned activity conducted at the municipal library. Other program names and operators were also cited.)

In regard to exposure to books outside of the Sifriyat Pijama program, **84% of the preschool teachers reported that they often read other books (not included in the Sifriyat Pijama program) with the children during the year** and 12% responded that they did this occasionally. In addition, 55% (of the 479 teachers) reported that there is a lending library at the preschool.

## **Program Operation in the Preschools: Summary**

**Implementation of the program from year to year:** Most of the preschool teachers were participating in the program for the third year (46%) or fourth year (30%).

Consistent with their reports about the program's contribution to book-related activity at the preschool (both in general and in regard to the teachers' involvement with books), a significant percentage also reported **integrating the program to a greater extent each year (42%) and devoting more time to it (31%)**. At the same time, **a significant percentage (58%) of the preschool teachers also feel that it's easier for them to operate the program from year to year**, especially because they're familiar with the program, understand what is expected of them and know where they can find suggestions for activities.

**Distribution of the books:** According to the teachers' reports, 57% of the preschools had received eight books by the date of the survey. (36% of the teachers didn't know and the rest reported receiving fewer books.)

**Activities at the preschool in the wake of the Sifriyat Pijama books:** The central activity is reading to the entire class: 94% of the preschool teachers reported reading all of the books with the children; of them, about half read each story once or twice, and the rest read the books more often (usually up to four times). In addition to reading to the entire class, salient activities included **independent (unguided) reading and discussion of the book** (90% and more of the teachers reported doing these types of activities after most or all of the books).

Another common activity is **discussing values, heritage and dilemmas** (80% of the preschool teachers reported conducting this activity after most or all of the books, though the moral aspect was not raised in the other questions – the open questions, for example.)

Reading in small groups and creative projects – arts and crafts or dramatization – are conducted less frequently (61%, 44% and 36% reported engaging in these activities, respectively, after most or all of the books).

More kindergarten teachers than pre-K teachers reported conducting conversations on the books, values, dilemmas and heritage, or creative projects.

**Nearly all of the preschools have Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years and it seems that the teachers make use of them:** 87% of the preschool teachers reported that they read those books (occasionally or often) and 56% reported that they also conducted other activities related to them.

**Other activities to encourage reading:** 84% of the teachers reported that during the course of the year they often read other books (other than Sifriyat Pijama books) with the

children, and another 12% reported doing this occasionally. 55% reported that the preschool has a lending library.

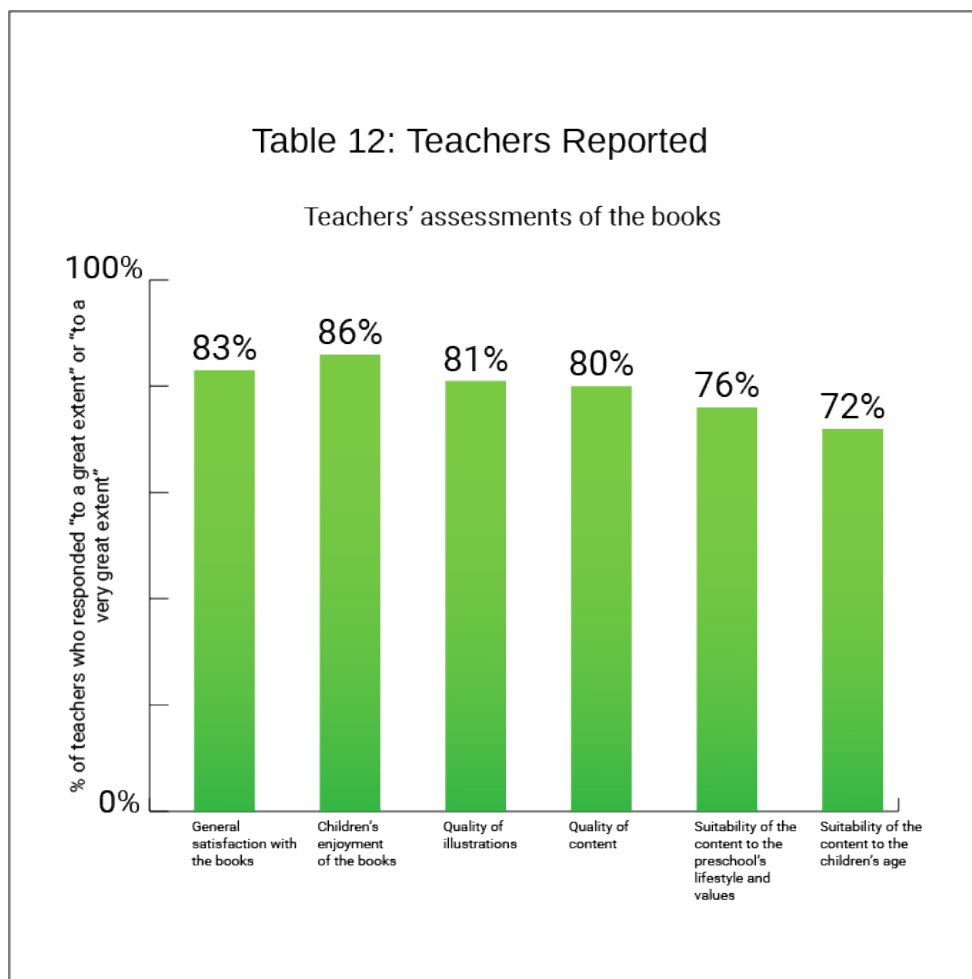
We note that the few preschool teachers who thought that discontinuing the Sifriyat Pijama program would not harm book-related activity at the preschool attributed this to the fact that other book-related activity is conducted at the preschool.

## Evaluation of the Books Distributed in this Program

Both the preschool teachers and the parents were asked to assess their satisfaction with the books in general and in regard to several defined aspects (the quality of the content and illustrations, and suitability for the children’s age and lifestyle).

### Reports from the preschool teachers

Diagram 12 shows the percentage of teachers who ranked the books highly in the various aspects.



As Diagram 12 indicates, 83% of the preschool teachers were satisfied in general with the books received in the Sifriyat Pijama program, and 72%-86% were satisfied with various aspects of the books, including the children's enjoyment of the books, the quality of the illustrations, the quality of the content, the suitability of the content to the children's lifestyle and the age-appropriateness of the content.

In response to the questionnaire's open questions (described in detail previously), some of the teachers complained that the content was unsuitable for the population (primarily in the religious sector), and some expressed dissatisfaction about the content and illustrations, citing in particular their unsuitability for the children's age.

**In regard to disparities between teachers from the state education stream and teachers from the state-religious education stream, we found that the former are more satisfied with the quality of the illustrations (88% versus 71% ranked the illustrations highly) and from the quality of the content (84% versus 75%, respectively).**

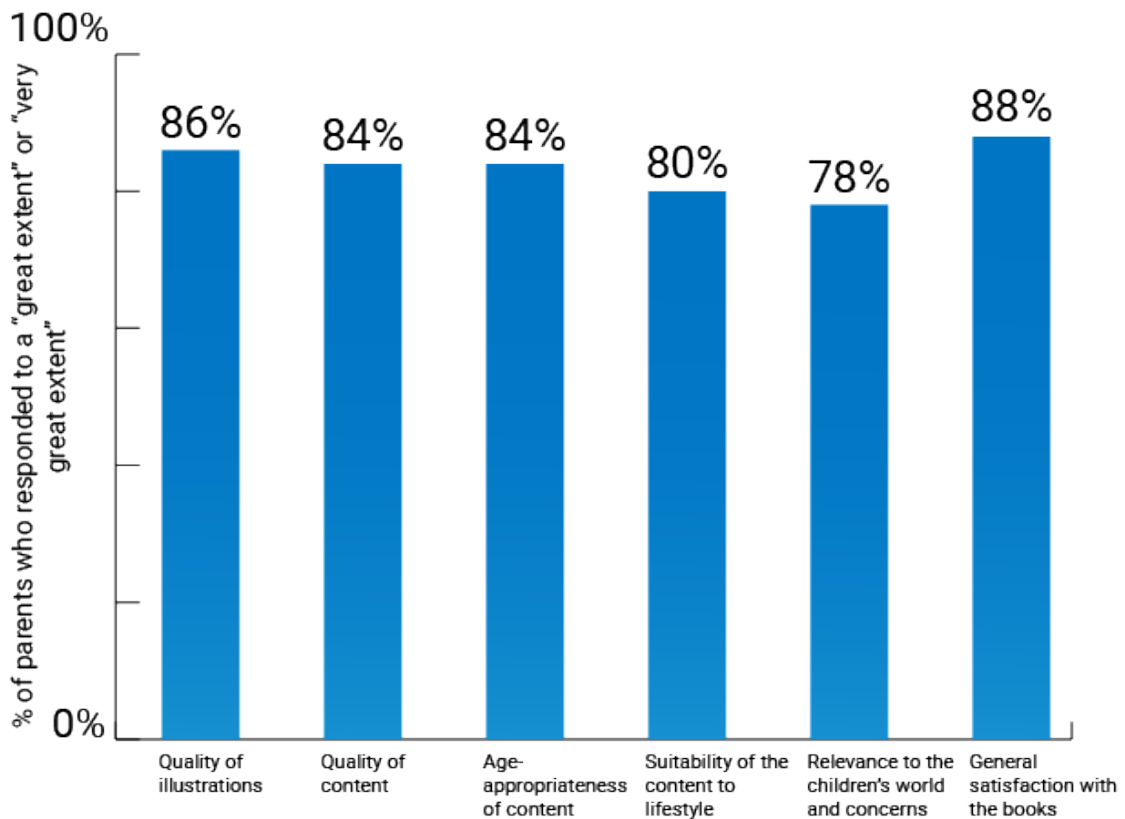
**In regard to disparities by age group, we found that pre-K teachers gave lower ratings than kindergarten teachers in nearly all aspects (except for the quality of the illustrations). On the other hand, teachers in mixed preschools (pre-K and kindergarten together) gave higher ratings to the illustrations, age-appropriateness and the children's enjoyment of the books; they were also more satisfied with the books (the rankings by pre-K teachers were 4%-12% lower than those of the group that gave the highest assessments).**

### **Reports from the parents**

Diagram 13 shows the percentage of parents who rated the books highly.

Table 13: Parents Reported

Parents' assessments of the books



As Diagram 13 shows, 88% of the parents were satisfied in general with the books received in the Sifriyat Pijama program, and 78%-86% were satisfied with various aspects of the books – including the quality of the illustrations, the quality of the content, the age-appropriateness of the content, the suitability of the content to the children’s lifestyle and family values, and the relevance of the content to the children’s world and the issues that concern them. Very few parents (3%-5%) reported that they were not satisfied with one aspect or another.

Appendix 5D displays the teachers’ and parents’ assessments of the books as reflected in the **2010-11 evaluation study**. In general, there is a decline in the assessments of the books in nearly all aspects: Among preschool teachers, the disparity ranges from 8% (quality of illustrations) to 14% (suitability to lifestyle). Among the parents, the gaps are smaller, ranging from 4% (age-



appropriateness) to 7% (quality of content). There is no disparity in the assessments of the quality of illustrations.

### ***Evaluation of the Books Received in the Program: Summary***

83% of the preschool teachers and 88% of the parents are satisfied in general with the books distributed in the Sifriyat Pijama program.

72%-86% gave high ratings to each of the aspects of the books, including the content and illustrations (which received the highest ratings, 80%-86%), suitability of the books to the lifestyle of the children/preschool, age-appropriateness of the books and their relevance to the children's world.

Teachers from the state preschools are more satisfied than teachers from state-religious preschools with the books' content and illustrations. This was also reflected in the responses to other open questions in the questionnaire: Teachers from the religious sector expressed dissatisfaction about the suitability of the content for the preschool's values.

In addition, pre-K teachers are less satisfied with the books (in all aspects) than teachers in mixed preschools (pre-K and kindergarten). As noted, on the open questions, some teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the content and illustrations, and particularly noted the lack of age-appropriateness.

## **Carryover from Preschool to Home**

According to the leaders of the Sifriyat Pijama program, one of its aims is to reinforce shared reading by parents and children at home, and to encourage discourse among family members. Consistent with this objective, the books include suggestions for the parents about shared activities with the children, and the preschools are asked to conduct two joint activities for parents and children related to the Sifriyat Pijama books.

In this chapter, we present reports from the preschool teachers and parents that indicate the **level of parental exposure to the program** and their familiarity with it; the **connection between the preschool and the parents** vis-à-vis the program (joint activities for parents and children at the preschool and messages conveyed from the preschool to the home on reading and other book-related activities), and **reading and other at-home activities related to the Sifriyat Pijama books**.

### **Exposure to and Knowledge of the Program: Parents' Reports**

98% of the parents were aware that Sifriyat Pijama was operating at their child's preschool this year (2013-14). In addition, 81% of the parents whose child attended the preschool during the previous year reported that, to the best of their knowledge, Sifriyat Pijama also operated at the

preschool during the previous year (2012-13). 12% of the parents reported that the program didn't operate the previous year and 7% said they didn't know.

82% of the parents reported that **a meeting was held for parents** at the beginning of the school year and that the teacher briefed them about Sifriyat Pijama, its goals and mode of operation (in a meeting dedicated to this subject or as part of a general meeting at the beginning of the year).

Some of the parents reported that they were already familiar with the program prior to the start of the school year: Half of them responded that their other children had participated or are participating in the program, at preschool or elementary school; 38% of the respondents reported that another child is participating in the program.

### **Preschool-Parent Communication about the Program**

#### **Reports from the teachers**

58% of the (463) preschool teachers reported **ongoing communication with the parents about the Sifriyat Pijama program**.

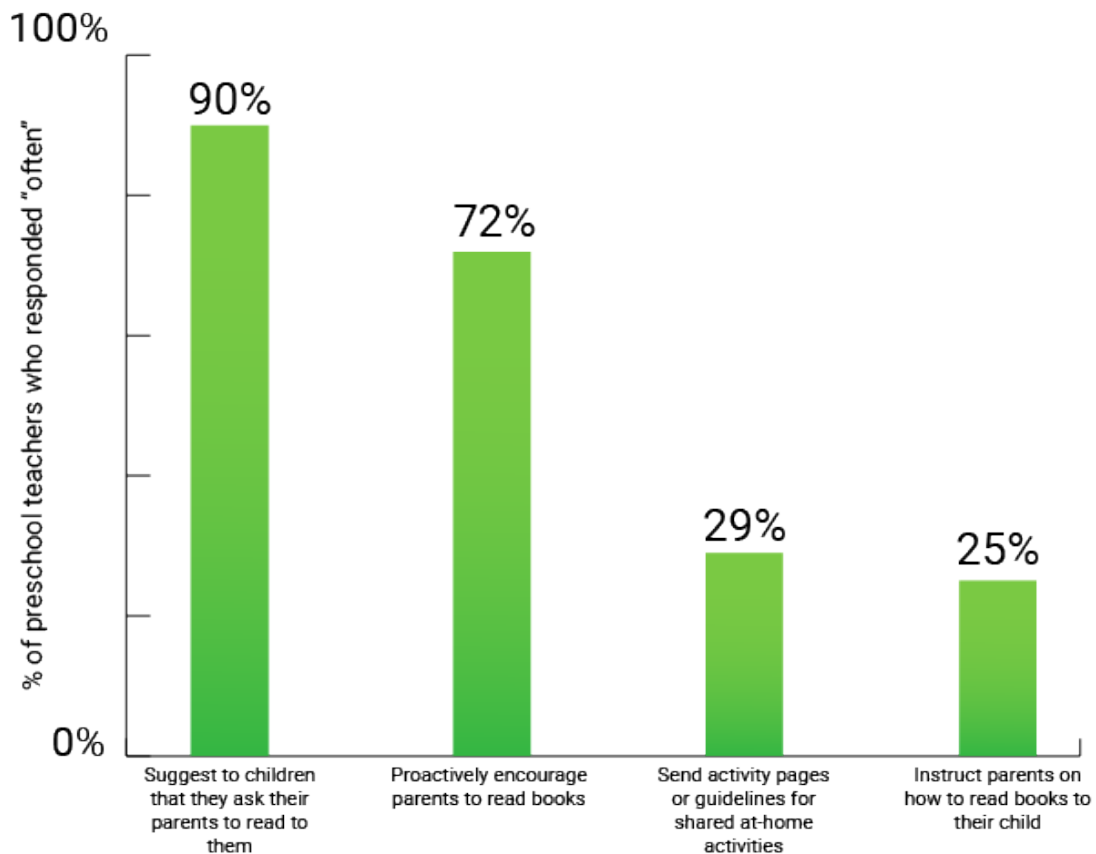
The responses to the open question on the quality of this ongoing communication indicated that it is conducted in two channels:

1. **Briefing the parents** on how to work with the children, primarily via email or pages sent to the home. For example: "I send email with suggestions for activities"; "I refer them to activities listed at the end of the book and give ideas for other activities."
2. **Updating the parents on activities at the preschool**. For example: "I report to them on what we do, send the books home and share via email."

The teachers were later asked to report on the extent to which they turn to the parents to encourage them to engage in reading activities in a variety of ways. Diagram 14 presents the percentage of preschool teachers who responded that they often take various initiatives in their communication with the parents.

Table 14: Teachers Reported

Communicating with parents and encouraging their involvement



As Diagram 14 shows, **most of the teachers' efforts are aimed at encouraging reading at home** (whether via the children or direct communication with the parents) and **less effort is invested in other activity or in instructing the parents**. 90% of the teachers reported that they suggest to the children that they ask their parents to read the books to them, 72% reported that they encourage the parents to read books to their children. A much lower percentage of teachers reported sending activity sheets/instructions home for shared at-home activity with the parents in the wake of the books (29%), or advised the parents on how to read books to their children (25%).

In regard to joint parent-child activity at the preschool, **54% of the teachers reported that they conducted at least one book-related activity for parents and children, while 46% reported that**

**they did not conduct any such activity.** Of the teachers who reported such activity, 20% said they did this after most or all of the books; 24% after half of the books, and 55% after a few books.

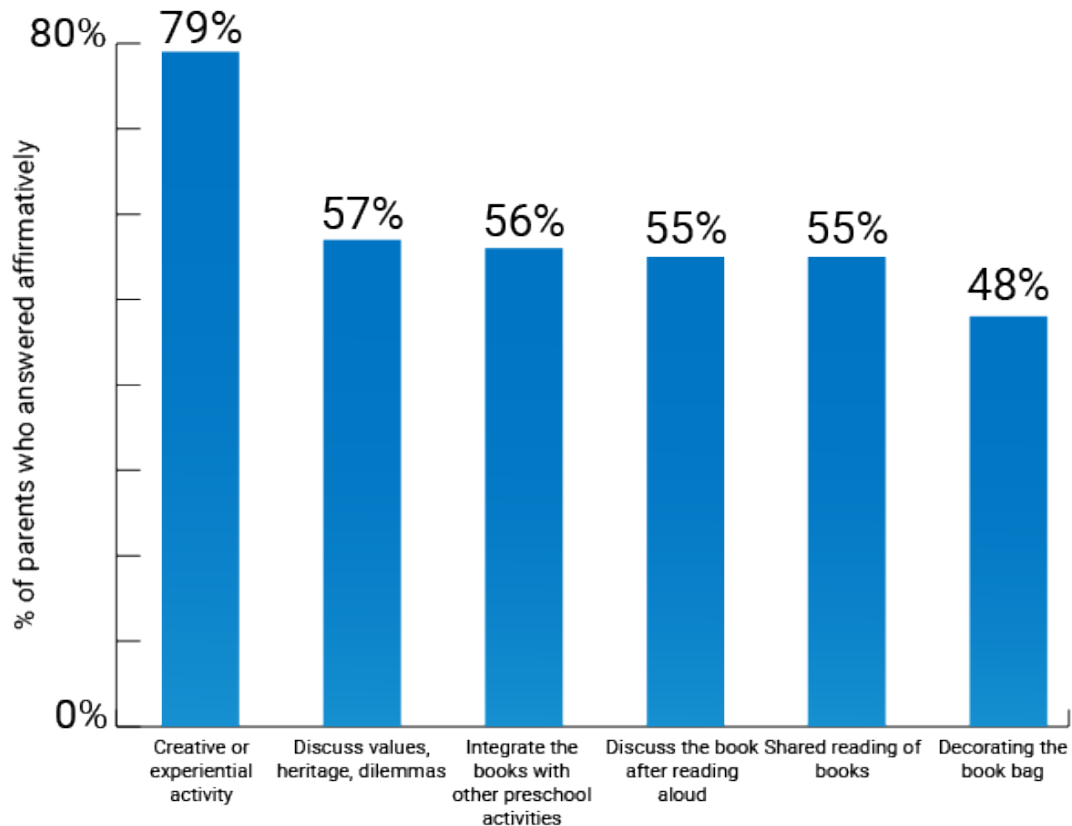
### **Reports from the parents**

In parallel and consistent with the teachers' reports on direct communication with the parents, **70%** of the parents reported that the **teacher encourages them – to some extent – to read books to their children or to engage in book-related activity at home.** Here is the full breakdown: 46% reported that the teacher does this quite often or very often, 16% reported that the teacher does this occasionally; 8% reported that she does this infrequently or very infrequently (and the rest, 30%, reported that the teacher does not do this at all).

In regard to joint parent-child activity at the preschool, only **19%** of the parents reported that **joint activity was conducted this year at the preschool** in connection with a Sifriyat Pijama book. (This was much lower than the percentage of preschool teachers who reported such activity.) Diagram 15 shows the percentage of parents who reported that each of the different types of joint activities were conducted at the preschool (calculated from among the parents who responded affirmatively on the previous question on whether joint activity was conducted).

Table 15: Parents Reported

Shared activity with the parents



As Diagram 15 shows, the percentage of parents who reported the type of activity conducted at the preschool ranges between 48% to 80% (it was possible to choose more than one answer). The majority, 80%, reported conducting creative or experiential activity (such as: dramatizing a story, writing and illustrating, etc.), and between 50% to 60% reported conducting all of the other types of activities, including discussions on values, moral dilemmas, heritage and so on; integrating the books with other preschool activities (such as opening a library, Family Day, a party at the preschool, etc.); conversation about a book after reading it aloud; joint reading of a book, decorating the book bag.

### At-Home Activities: Parents' Reports

**89% of the parents reported reading most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in 2013-14 at least twice.**

The parents were asked whether they engage in **other book-related activities** at home and whether they read and use the **suggestions for parents** in the books. Diagrams 16 and 17 show their responses: Diagram 16 displays the percentage of parents who said they engage in each of the range of activities after most or all of the program's books, and Diagram 17 shows the percentage of parents who reported being familiar with the suggestions for shared activities in the books; the diagram also shows the percentage of these parents who read and used the suggestions after most or all of the books.

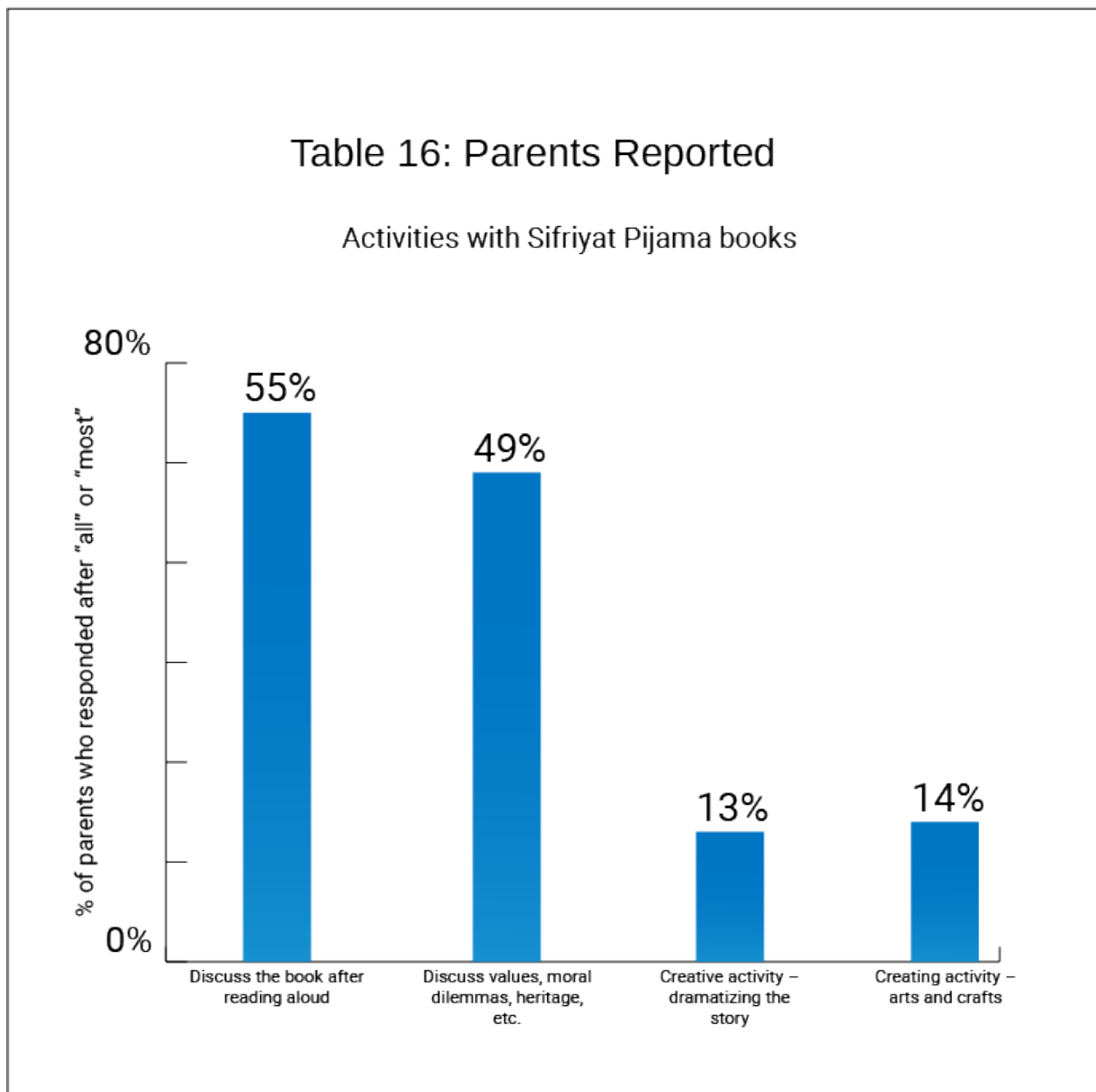
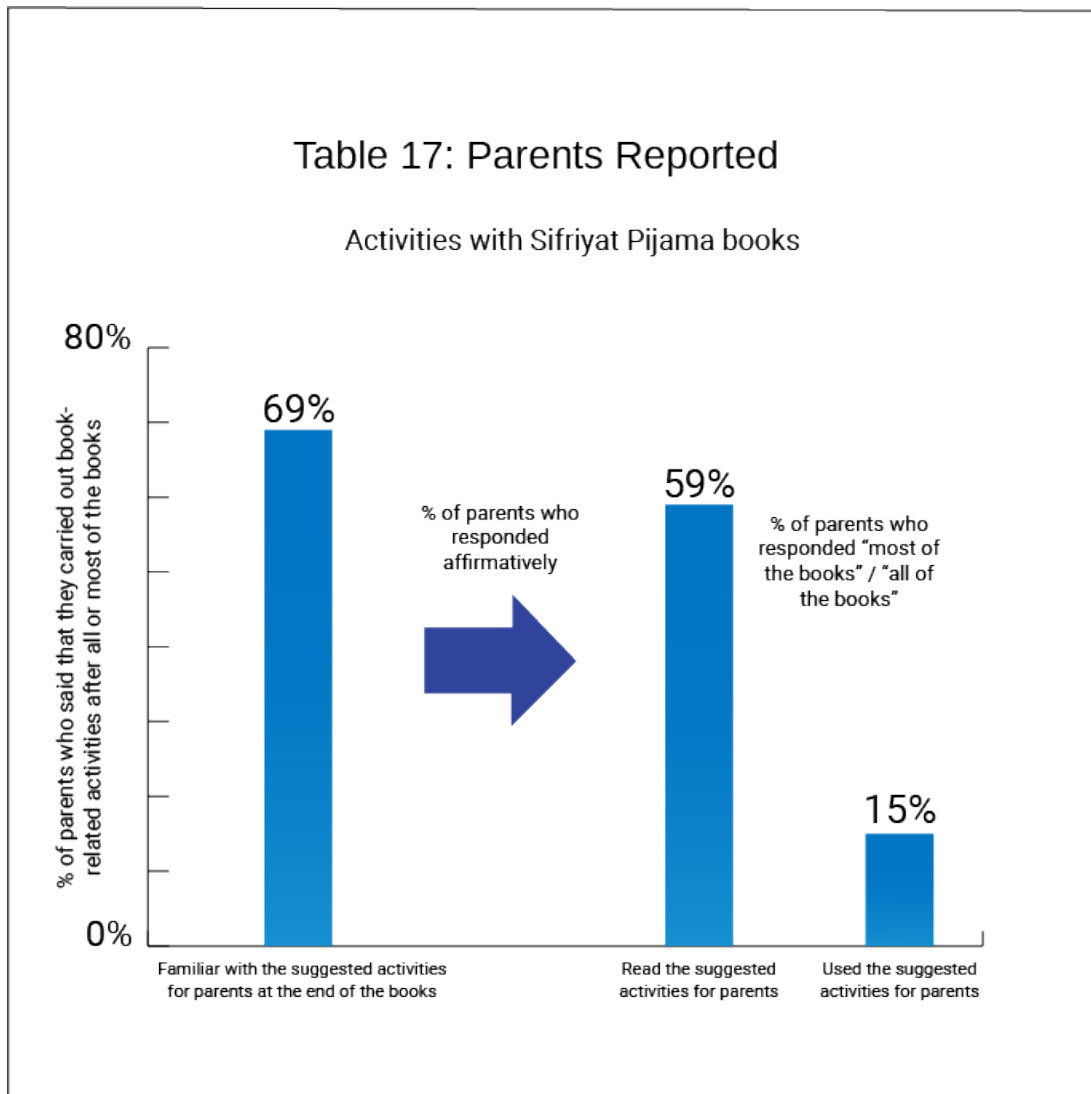


Diagram 16 shows that **about half** of the parents reported that they **converse with the children about the book and about values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc. after all or most of the books** (about 20% reported that they don't do this at all and 30% reported that they do this after a few of the books).

**A few parents** (nearly 15%) reported that they **engage in creative activity** (dramatization or arts and crafts) after most or all of the books. (Most of the parents, more than 70%, reported that they don't do this at all, or after only a few books.)



As Diagram 17 shows, about 70% of the parents reported that they're familiar with the activities for parents that appear at the end of the books they received in the Sifriyat Pijama program; about 60% of them reported that they read them in most or all of the books, and 15% said they used the suggestions in most or all of the books (17% didn't do this at all and 61% did this after a few of the books).

The parents who reported **using the suggestions** for shared activities that appear in the books were asked to report on the extent of enjoyment and inspiration they drew from these activities. **88% (of the 139 respondents) reported that their child enjoyed the activities** to a great or very great extent; **56% (of the 133 respondents) reported that using the suggested activities for parents gave them inspiration for other activities** to a great or very great extent.

**In terms of the differences between the state and state-religious preschools, we found that a higher percentage of parents with children in the state education stream reported conducting conversations with their child about the book after reading it** (59% versus 49% of parents in the state-religious preschools reported doing this after most or all of the books). The same is true regarding the percentage of parents who **conversed with their children about values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc.** (53% versus 44%, respectively) or engaged in creative activity in the wake of the books (18% versus 9%, respectively).

Appendix 5E displays reports from parents in the **2010-11 evaluation study** on similar topics: In 2010-11, 94% of the parents reported that a meeting was held at the beginning of the year to introduce the program (compared to 82% in 2013-14), 46% reported participating in a joint activity for parents and children at the preschool (compared to 19% in the current study) and 61% of the parents reported that the teacher encouraged them to read stories to the children or conduct book-related activities in the home.

In regard to at-home activities, while a higher percentage of parents reported reading to their children most or all of the books they received in the program this year (95% versus 89% in 2010-11), there is a downward trend in the level of parental activity: 55% (in 2013-14) versus 77% (2010-11) reported conversing with their child about most or all of the books; 49% (in 2013-14) versus 65% (in 2010-11) reported conversing about values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc. after reading the books; 13% (in 2013-14) versus 17% (in 2010-11) reported engaging in creative activity, and 15% (in 2013-14) versus 39% (in 2010-11) reported that they make use of the suggested activities for parents. (The questions are not identical and perhaps the different wording contributed to the disparity, since the percentage of parents who are familiar with the activities and read them is higher in 2013-14.)



### Carryover from Preschool to Home: Summary

**Exposure and familiarity: The impression is that many of the parents were familiar with the Sifriyat Pijama program in the preschool.** Nearly all of the parents knew that the program was operating in their child's preschool that year (in 2013-14) and 81% of the parents whose children were attending the preschool for the second year were aware that the program had also operated the previous year. In addition, half of the respondents reported that their other children had participated in the Sifriyat Pijama at the preschool in previous years or were currently participating in elementary school.

In terms of active steps to introduce the program, **82% of the parents reported that a meeting was held for parents where they received an explanation about the program,** its objectives and its mode of operation.

**Communication between the preschools and the parents: 58% of the teachers reported maintaining ongoing communication with the parents** in regard to the program (via email, pages sent to the home, or meetings at the preschool). According to their descriptions, these primarily entailed briefing the parents on how to work with the children and **updating the parents on program-related activities at the preschool.**

**54% of the preschool teachers and 19% of the parents** reported that **joint parent-child activities** were conducted at the preschool related to one or more of the books. This was usually a creative activity (79%), but there were also other types of activities.

**62% of the parents reported that the teachers encouraged them to read books to the children or engage in book-related activities at home. The teachers themselves reported that they primarily suggest to the children that they ask their parents to read the books to them (90%) or initiate contact with the parents and encourage them to read to the children (72%).** A smaller percentage of teachers send suggestions for activities (29%) or instruct the parents on how to read to their children (25%).

**At-home activities according to the parents' reports: About half of the parents reported that they discussed the books or values, dilemmas, etc. after reading most or all of the books** to their children. Very few (18%) engaged in creative activities. The percentage of parents who said they do every activity was slightly higher in state preschools than in state-religious preschools. About **70% are familiar with the activities for parents that appear in the books** and about **60% read** them; however, only **15% used** them.

## Reading Habits and Exposure to Books (in the Program and in General)

Besides expressing their views on the Sifriyat Pijama program, the parents were asked to describe their children's reading habits, their views on reading books and the number of books their children have at home. (One of the goals of the program is to make children's books accessible by providing books as a gift and expanding the home library.)

### A. Reading Habits and Exposure to Books: Parents' Reports

About half of the parents (52%) reported that **their child usually reads at home, or they read to him, one or more books at least once a day**; 43% said two to four times a week, and a few (6%) said once a week or less.

In regard to reading Sifriyat Pijama books, **89% read most or all of the books distributed in 2013-14, usually twice or more**. In addition, 31% reported that they often **read to their children Sifriyat Pijama books that were distributed in previous years** (and 40% do this occasionally).

In general, **the overwhelming majority of parents said that their child enjoys reading and that they [the parents] recognize the importance of shared reading and its contribution to their connection with their child** (94% to 97% noted "to a great extent" or "to a very great extent").

As Appendix 5F shows, the views toward books and reading were also very positive in 2010-11.

### B. Books in the Home: Parents' Reports

As noted, each child receives eight books as gifts during the course of the year in the framework of Sifriyat Pijama. The parents were asked how many books the children have in the home library. Table 5 shows their estimates of the number of Sifriyat Pijama books at home (the two columns on the left) and the number of children's books in general, including Sifriyat Pijama books but not including borrowed books (the two columns on the right). In addition, based on their reports, we calculated the percentage of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library (see Table 6).

**Table 5: Number of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home and number of books in the home library (parents' reports)**

<b>Number of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home</b>	<b>% of parents</b>		<b>Number of books at home suitable for the child's age</b>	<b>% of parents</b>
Up to 7	14%		Up to 10	18%
8	10%		11-20	19%
9-15	30%		21-30	13%
16-20	26%		31-40	11%
21-50	20%		41-50	18%
			51-100	21%

**Table 6: % of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library (parents' reports)**

<b>% of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library</b>	<b>% of parents</b>
Up to 10%	2%
11% to 20%	16%
21% to 30%	14%
31% to 40%	20%
41% to 50%	12%
51% to 60%	6%
61% to 70%	6%
71% to 80%	5%
100% (all of the books at home are from Sifriyat Pijama)	20%

\* Note: based on 297 respondents (34 parents who responded that the number of Sifriyat Pijama books in their home is greater than the total number of books in their home library were not included in the calculation).

As Table 5 shows, about half of the children have up to 15 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and about half have more. In addition, 37% of the children have up to 20 age-appropriate books (including Sifriyat Pijama books and not including books they borrowed), and 43% have 21-50 books.

The calculation of the percentage of Sifriyat Pijama books among all of the age-appropriate books in the home library indicates that in 20% of the homes, there are only Sifriyat Pijama books, and in about 12% Sifriyat Pijama books comprise 50%-80% of the home library.

#### ***Reading Habits and Exposure to Books: Summary***

**Exposure to books and reading habits:** about half of the parents reported that their child usually reads at home, or that they read to him, at least once a day. In general, most of the parents said that their child enjoys reading and that they [the parents] recognize the important of shared reading and its contribution to the bond with their child.

**Reading Sifriyat Pijama books:** 89% of the parents read most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed during the year (2013-14), usually twice or more. In addition, 31% reported that they often read to their child Sifriyat Pijama books that were distributed in previous years.

**The home library:** About half of the children have up to 15 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and about half have more. In addition, 37% of the children have up to 20 age-appropriate books (including Sifriyat Pijama books and not including books they borrowed), and 43% have 21-50 books. In 20% of the homes, the home library contains only Sifriyat Pijama books; in another 12% of the homes, Sifriyat Pijama books comprise at least 50% of the home library (and up to 80%).

## Detailed Findings in the Elementary Schools – Pilot Grades 1 & 2

### General Views and Reactions to the Program

In this chapter, we examine the level of familiarity of elementary school parents and teachers with the goals of the Sifriyat Pijama program. We'll also describe the extent to which the teachers understand and identify with the program goals (based on the qualitative research). We'll then present the teachers' and parents' level of satisfaction with the program and their readiness to continue to participate in it, and their perception of the program's contribution in various areas (the centrality of books, richness of language, thinking and values). We'll also present suggestions for improving the program that were raised in the evaluation study.

### Understanding and Identifying with Program Goals

The teachers and parents were asked in the surveys whether they were familiar with the program and its goals. The qualitative study enabled an in-depth look at the extent of understanding and identification with the program goals, as presented below.

### *Reports from educators: From the qualitative study*

As noted, the leaders of the Sifriyat Pijama program defined the following goals:

- ✓ Foster a love of reading and books;
- ✓ Encourage discourse on values and on Jewish-Israeli heritage
- ✓ Strengthen habits of reading together at home, and encourage discourse among members of the family.

In the qualitative study, the interviewees said that the **program's objectives are clear** to them and that they were explained at an introductory meeting at the beginning of the year and via Sifriyat Pijama's website.

Most of the interviewees also said that they **agree with the program's goals**; they especially emphasized **the importance of encouraging the child's affinity for books, encouraging reading and the connection with the home, but did not mention the goal of encouraging discussion of values and Israeli-Jewish heritage**. For example: "The clearest goal is to promote reading and it is implemented in the classroom..."; "I'm very connected with the program's goals. It's something I wouldn't do in second grade without the program, and I'm referring in particular to the connection with the parents."

### Parents' reports: From the surveys

The parents' reports in the surveys indicate that they were exposed to the program and were familiar with it: 65% of the parents reported receiving explanations about the program, its goals and its mode of operation at an information meeting for parents at the school. Nearly all of them

reported being told at the meeting that the books were intended to be read together with the children.

### **Satisfaction with Sifriyat Pijama and Readiness to Continue Partnership**

In general, there was a high level of satisfaction with the program; nearly everyone wants to continue to participate in it and believes it should be expanded to additional schools. We present below the reports of parents and teachers, including the main reasons for their satisfaction with the program. In the next section, we present suggestions for improvements submitted by the respondents.

#### ***Teachers' reports: From the surveys***

94% of the teachers report that they are **satisfied** in general (to a great extent or very great extent) with the Sifriyat Pijama program and 96% think it should **continue to operate**. In addition, **nearly all** of the teachers reported that they would like **their class to continue to participate** in the program the following year (**43%** of them responded that they wish to continue to participate in the program **after changes in its format**, as described below in the section on suggestions for improvements).

On the open question, which asked the teachers to explain why the program should continue, the follow reasons were cited:

1. The program exposes the children to **books, gives them pleasure and encourages them to read**. It also contributes to **improving reading skills**. For example: "This program offers lots of good things, added value, and improves and encourages reading. Thanks to it, they enjoy more... "
2. The program contributes to **enriching the children's language and the development of values, thought and imagination**. For example: "... exposes [the children] to a world of emotions and values..."; "books have great significance for developing the children's world of imagination in early childhood."
3. **The program expands the home library**. For example: "It's nice that the children receive books. Not all of the parents have the wherewithal to buy ... it encourages reading."
4. The program contributes to **strengthening the school's connection with the parents and the bond between the children and the parents**.

#### ***Teachers' reports: From the qualitative study***

As in the survey findings, **all of the interviewees** in the qualitative study **spoke highly of the program and recommended expanding it** to other schools. They also reported that the pupils' reactions to the program were **very positive**. For example: "The children await the books, are happy to receive the gift. The books stimulate interest"; "the children love the program and wait for the books; they come and speak enthusiastically about what they did at home with the books – who read on their own and who read with their parents."

As in the surveys, the interviewees also described the program's contribution in the following areas:

1. **Contribution to language enrichment.** For example: “The activity promotes exposure to books, affection for reading, enrichment of vocabulary, expression, improvement of reading, fluency of reading.”
2. **Promotes exposure to books,** primarily among children from a low socio-economic background. For example: “The children love the books; there are children [whose parents] don’t buy books for them, and here they receive.”
3. **Contribution to the connection between the parents and the children.** For example: “the program contributes greatly ... and exposure of the parent-child connection. The books are good; they touch upon everything, and it should be that way.”
4. The program is **challenging and experiential, relevant to the pupils’ lives and contributes to the development of values.** The impression from the interviewees’ comments is that the program stimulates significant learning (at least in regard to values and relevance). For example: “The program facilitates significant learning. It enables a learning experience in which each child has a book, creativity, significant connection to words”; “the program is very important, contributes both to literacy and morality-values, presents a solution to all sorts of situations the children encounter.”

#### ***Parents’ reports: From the surveys***

88% of the parents reported that they are **satisfied** (to a great or very great extent) with the Sifriyat Pijama program. Moreover, **97%** would like their **child’s class to continue to participate** in the program next year.

On the open question, which asked the parents to explain why the program should continue, some parents praised the program in general and noted that it is **beneficial or enriches, and that it’s a good idea**. Parents also offered similar compliments to those noted by the teachers, focusing on the program’s **contribution to encouraging reading, language and values**. Some parents also mentioned that **it contributes to the bond with parents**.

#### **Perceived Contribution of the Program<sup>5</sup>**

In addition to general satisfaction with the program, the views of parents and teachers were examined in several areas: the centrality of books and engagement with books compared to the past (prior to introducing the program), the children’s enjoyment of books and their motivation to read (including the scope of reading), language enrichment, fostering thinking and values education. Reports of parents and teachers in each of these areas are presented below.

#### ***Teachers’ reports: From the surveys***

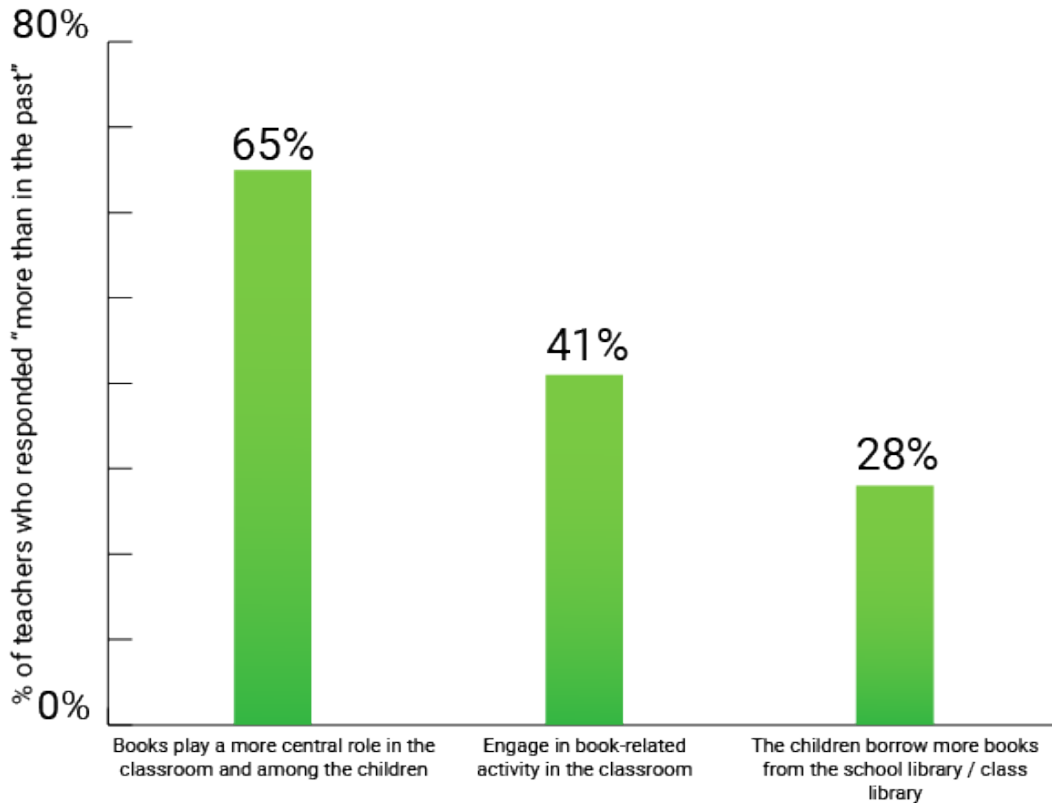
Diagram 18 shows the percentage of teachers who reported that they engage in more book-related activity since the program began operating.

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<sup>5</sup> In this chapter, we present reports on the **perceived** impact only, and not on the effectiveness of the program in practice.

Table 18: Teachers Reported

Book-related activity in comparison to the past



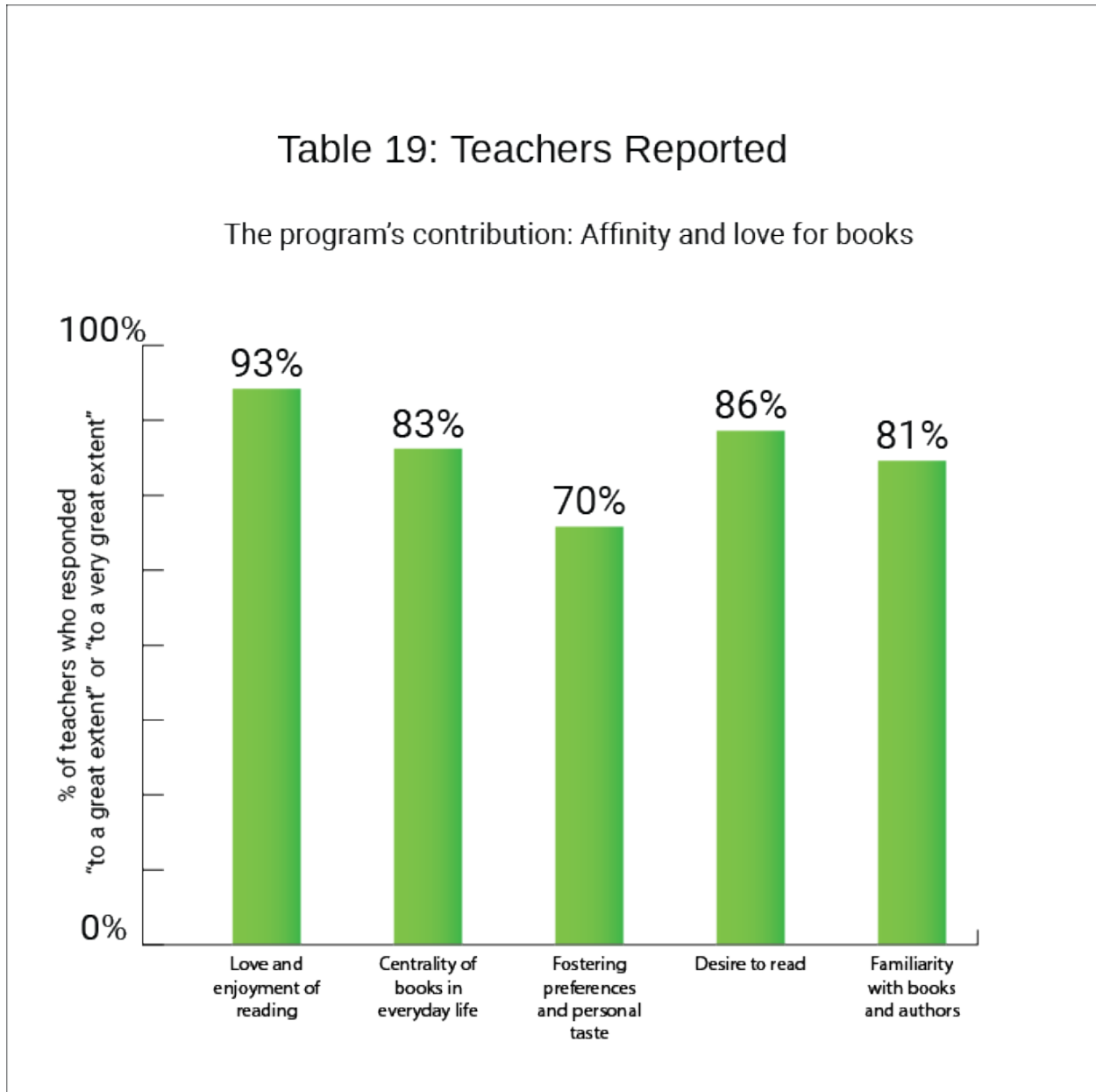
As Diagram 18 indicates, **65%** of the teachers reported that **the books assume a more central role in the classroom** and among the children in comparison to the past (before the program was introduced). **41%** reported that they **engage more with books** in the classroom since the program began operating. In addition, among teachers whose classroom or schools have a library, **28%** reported that **the children borrow more books from the library** since the Sifriyat Pijama began operating in their school (10% reported that the children borrow fewer books, and the rest reported no change in borrowing habits).

In regard to fostering a love for books and contributing to the children’s development in various aspects, the teachers were asked to express their views from two perspectives: first, to assess the contribution of the Sifriyat Pijama program in each of the areas (hereinafter: **contribution in absolute value**) and secondly, to compare children who had previously participated in Sifriyat



Pijama in preschool with children who had not participated in the past, and to note the differences between them in each of the areas (hereinafter: **relative contribution**).

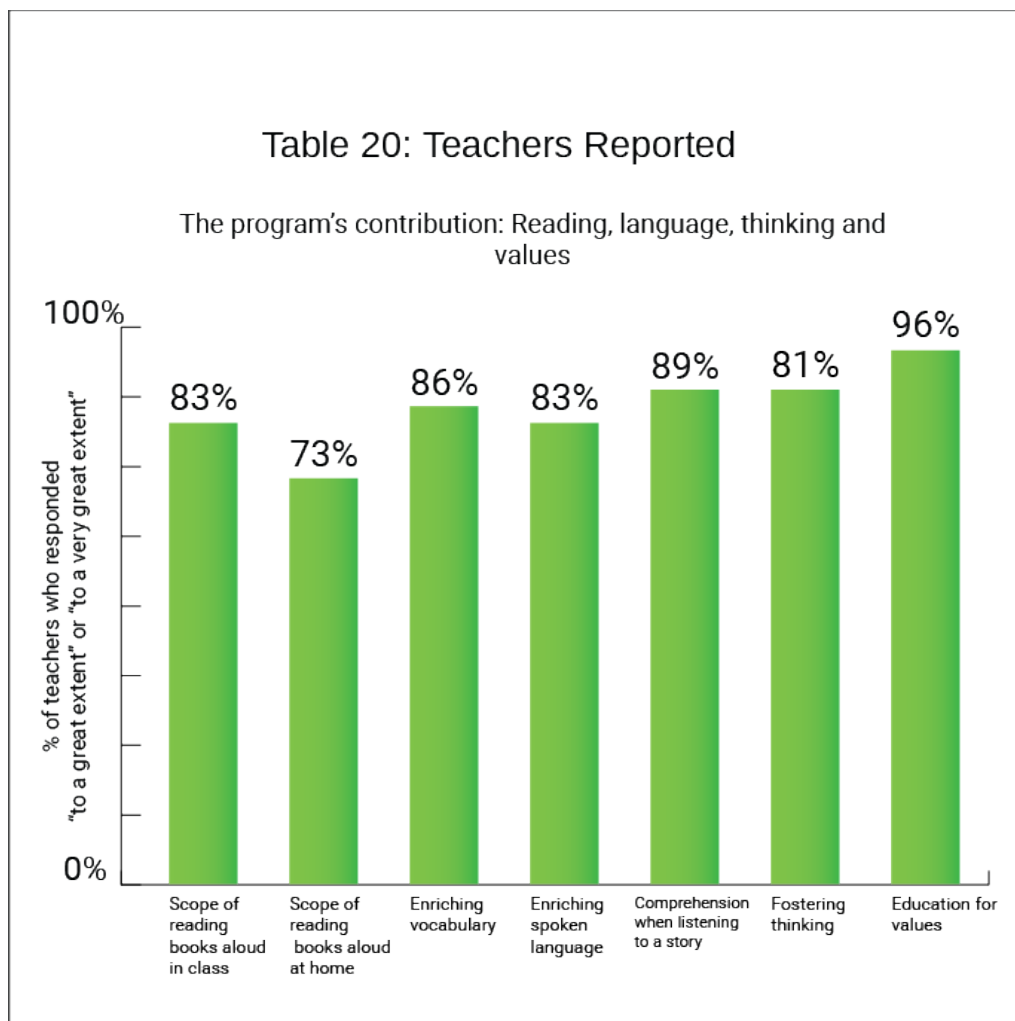
**Diagrams 19 and 20 show the teachers' reports on the program's contribution in absolute value:** Diagram 19 presents the percentage of teachers who responded that the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed to the children to a great or very great extent in regard to their affinity and love for books, and Diagram 20 shows the percentage of teachers who responded that the program contributed to the children's development in various aspects (scope of reading, language, comprehension and values education).



As Diagram 19 shows, a large percentage of the teachers **credit the Sifriyat Pijama program with making a significant contribution to the children's love for books and, to some extent, to**

**developing and fostering their taste in books:** 93% of the teachers said that implementation of the program contributes to a love for books and the children’s enjoyment of reading, and 83% felt that it contributes to the centrality of books in their everyday lives. Moreover, 86% of the teachers said that implementation of the program boosts the children’s desire to read books. Finally, 80% reported that thanks to the program the children are familiar with books and authors, and 70% felt that the program contributes to fostering the children’s individual preferences and tastes in choosing books.

It is interesting to note that the **elementary school teachers’ reports** on the program’s contribution to the children’s affinity for books and attitude toward books are **very similar to the preschool teachers’ reports** vis-à-vis preschoolers (except for the assessment of the program’s contribution to the children’s familiarity with books and authors, which are slightly lower among the elementary school teachers).



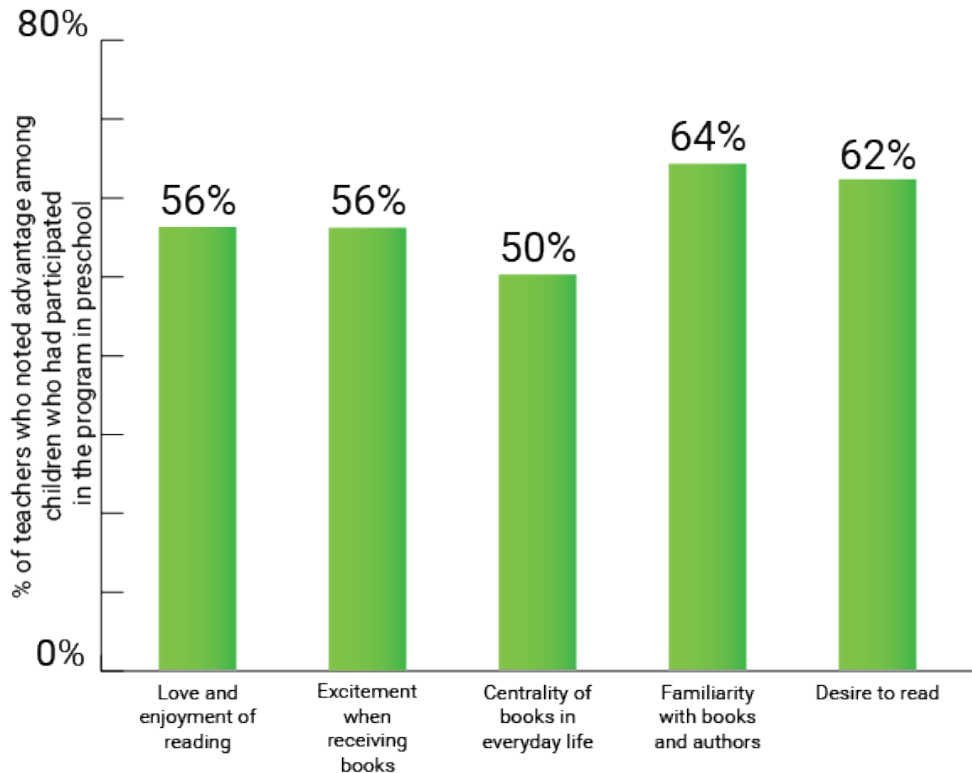
As Diagram 20 shows, **the teachers attributed a significant contribution to the Sifriyat Pijama program (to a great or very great extent) in each of the aspects examined:** about 83% said that implementation of the program contributes to expanding the scope of reading books to the

children in the classroom, and 73% said it increases the scope of reading books at home; about 85% said that implementation of the program contributes to enriching the children's vocabulary and spoken language. Finally, close to 90% reported that implementation of the program contributes to fostering the children's thinking and their comprehension when listening to stories. An even higher percentage of teachers, 96%, said that implementation of the program contributes to values education. The other teachers ranked the contribution as moderate (only a few, 1%, felt that the contribution was small or very small).

**Diagrams 21 and 22 show the teachers' reports on the program's relative contribution.** (The respondents only included teachers who reported that their pupils had participated in the program in the past at preschool.) Diagram 21 shows the percentage of teachers who reported detecting a greater affinity and love for books among children who had participated in Sifriyat Pijama in the past at preschool, in comparison to children who had not previously participated in the program. Diagram 22 shows the percentage of teachers who reported finding that children who had previously participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program were also more advanced in various aspects of development.

Table 21: Teachers Reported

Disparities by participation in the program in preschool: Affinity and love for books



As Diagram 21 shows, a significant percentage of the teachers recognized the program's positive impact on children who had participated in Sifriyat Pijama in previous years (while in preschool). 50%-56% noticed a small or big difference in favor of those children in aspects related to **love of reading** (31% reported a big difference in favor of the children who had participated in the program in preschool, and 26% reported a small difference), **excitement about receiving Sifriyat Pijama books** (39% reported a big difference and 17% a small difference in favor of the children who had previously participated in the program), and the **centrality of books in everyday life** (21% reported a big difference and 29% reported a small difference). A slightly higher number of teachers (nearly 65%) also noted a disparity in favor of pupils who had participated in the program in the past when assessing familiarity with books and authors (28% and 36%, respectively) and the desire to read books (28% and 33%, respectively).

Table 22: Teachers Reported

Disparities by participation in the program in preschool: Language, thinking and values

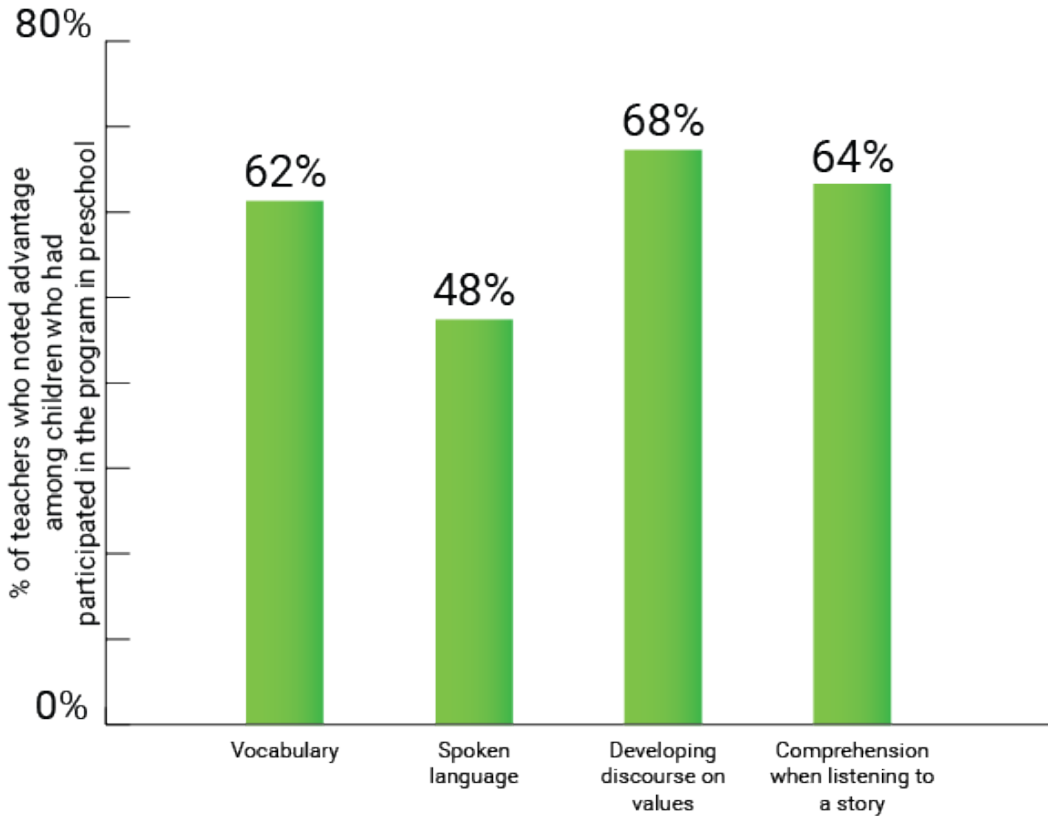


Diagram 22 indicates a similar trend: **A significant percentage of the teachers also noted the program’s positive impact on children who had participated in Sifriyat Pijama in previous years (while in preschool) in aspects related to language development, cognitive development and the development of values.** 62% reported detecting a difference in favor of the children who had participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in the past in **vocabulary** (21% saw a big difference and 41% saw a small difference), and 48% reported a difference in **spoken language** (15% saw a big difference and 33% saw a small difference). Moreover, 68% of the teachers reported that the children who had participated in the program in the past were better able to develop a discussion on values (28% saw a big difference and 40% saw a small difference), and 64% noted a difference

in the children's comprehension when listening to a story (15% saw a big difference and 49% saw a small difference).

Very few teachers (0%-5%) reported a small or big difference in favor of children who had not previously participated in the program vis-à-vis the aspects displayed in diagrams 21 and 22.

**91%** of the teachers also reported that the Sifriyat Pijama program **helps them advance the curriculum** and the Ministry of Education's program in the classroom (and does not hinder these efforts). In response to the open question "How? Why" – nearly all of the teachers described the benefits of the program. These responses can be categorized as follows:

1. Contributes to **promoting language skills**. For example: "There are many shared objectives with the language program in the classroom, developing encouragement of reading, illustrations, sequencing, reading together and reading aloud..."
2. Contributes to **values education and connection to the Key to the Heart program**. For example: "Each book enriches, especially when it has educational values..."; "... and the Key to the Heart connects to all of the fields."
3. An opportunity for **exposure to books and different types of literature**. For example: "There are children who never go to the library, don't read at all and this is very important"; "different types of writing"; "different types of literature."
4. **Encourages reading and love for books**. For example: "contributes to encouraging reading and the child's love for books ... and varied book-related activities"; "increases the children's affinity for reading in a very experiential way."

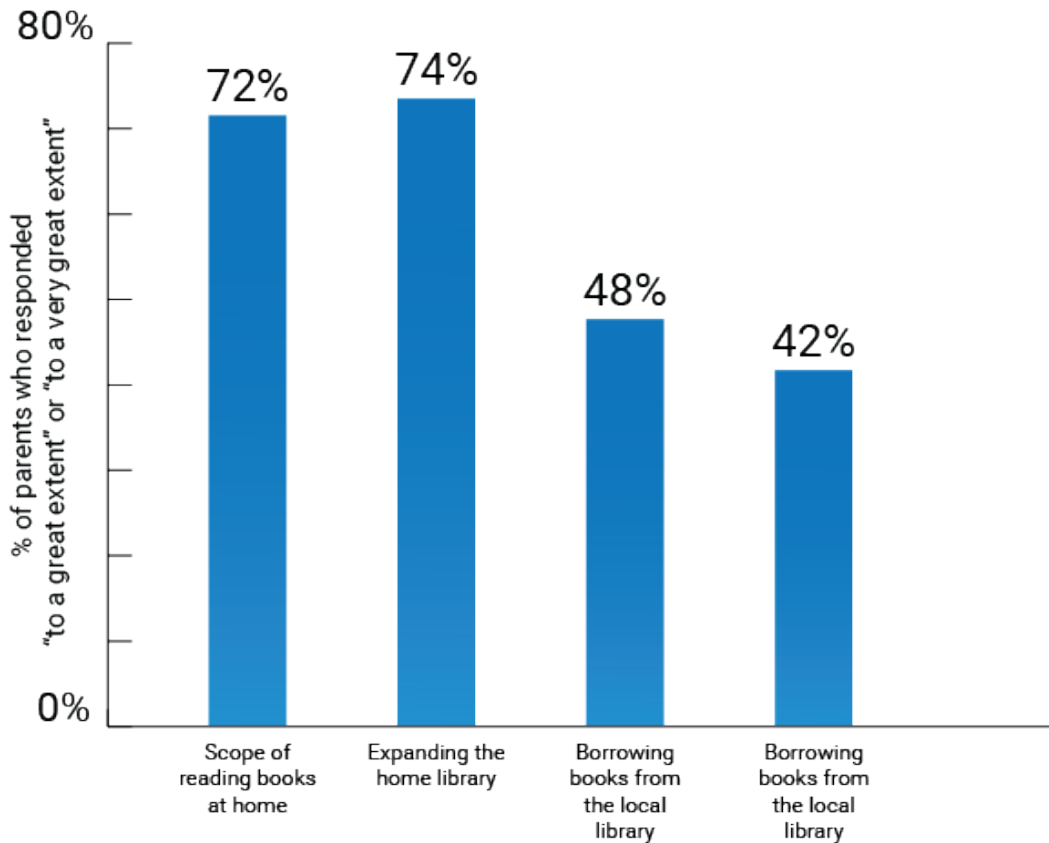
#### ***Parents' reports: From the surveys***

39% of the parents reported that books now play a more central role in their home compared to the past (prior to participating in the program) and 59% reported no significant change. (Very few reported that books play a less central role than in the past.)

Diagram 23 shows the percentage of parents who reported that implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contributed greatly or very greatly to the scope of reading and borrowing books. Diagram 24 shows the percentage of parents who responded that the program contributed to their children's development in various aspects (language, comprehension and values education), and to their children's enjoyment from reading and motivation to read.

Table 23: Parents Reported

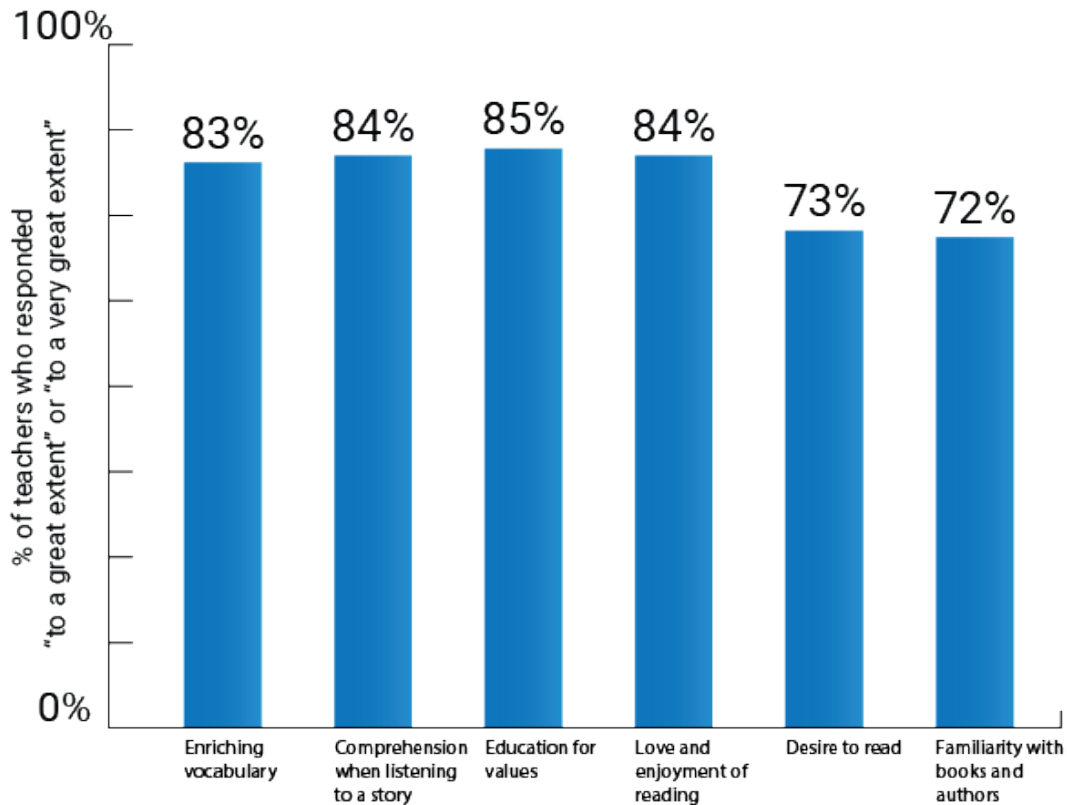
The program's contribution: Scope of reading and borrowing books



As Diagram 23 shows, **parents said the Sifriyat Pijama program had a significant positive impact on the number of books at home, the scope of reading to children at home, and – to a lesser extent – on the borrowing of library books.** 74% of the parents reported that the implementation of the program in the classroom contributed to the expansion of the home library and 72% said it contributed to the scope of reading books to the children at home. In addition, 48% felt that implementation of the program contributed to borrowing books from the municipal library and 42% said it contributed to borrowing books from the school library. (On the other hand, 37% and 41%, respectively, reported little or very little impact on the borrowing of library books.)

Table 24: Parents Reported

The program's contribution: Affinity and love for books



As Diagram 24 shows, 72%-85% of the parents **attribute a significant contribution to the Sifriyat Pijama program in all of the aspects examined**. About 85% said that implementation of the program in the school contributed to their child's love for reading and enjoyment from it, enriched their vocabulary, comprehension of stories and values education. A slightly lower percentage – 72% - felt that the implementation of the program in the classroom contributed to the children's desire to read books and learn about books and authors.



### **Suggestions for Improving the Program**

Along with the highly favorable assessment of the program, some respondents offered suggestions for improving it. The main topics that emerged from the open questions in the surveys and from the qualitative study include:

#### ***Teachers' suggestions (from the surveys)***

As noted, while nearly all of the teachers want their class to continue to participate in the program the following year, 43% reported that they wish to see changes in its format. The responses to the open questions on desired changes pointed in several directions:

1. Some asked to receive **more guidance**, including **additional suggestions for activities**.
2. Some suggested **distributing more books**.
3. Some asked to **adapt the books more closely to the children** (to the contemporary period and to the children's age, so they can read on their own).
4. Some suggested allowing a choice of books or **consulting with the teachers** in selecting the books.

#### ***Suggestions from educators (from the qualitative study)***

**A few interviewees** noted shortcomings in the program or suggested the following improvements:

1. Some proposed **increasing the involvement of parents in the program**, since some of the parents are not involved.
2. Some said that **the school should receive in advance a list of the books it will receive** in order to help the teachers prepare for them and integrate them when planning the annual curriculum in the fields of language and values education. For example: "I would recommend that the teachers know the content of the books first and the date of their arrival in order to connect them to the annual plan. If they know in advance which book will arrive and its content, it can be connected to the annual plan and also to the language skills that are taught."
3. Some recommended adding **training for teachers** by Sifriyat Pijama.

According to the program's leaders, the participating teachers receive a list of books, including a summary of each book. The list is sent in advance via email and a printed copy is included in the first package of books sent to the class. Moreover, the list of books is displayed on the program's website. Therefore, those who asked to announce in advance which books would be sent to the school may not have been aware of this.

#### ***Parents' suggestions***

In the open question, the parents were asked for suggestions and ideas for improving the program. The main topics they raised include:

1. Some of the parents suggested **adding more book-focused activities in the school and shared parent-child activities.** (Some noted that in preschool there were more book-related activities.)
2. Parents of second graders cited a need for **greater parental involvement with the books** and a need to **provide more guidance to them.**
3. Like the teachers, some of the parents also suggested **distributing more books.**
4. Some asked to more meticulously **match the books** to the children's age.
5. Other suggestions included: distribute books that are more well-known, distribute books from the **classic** literature, add books that include **messages about values or Judaism.**

#### **General Views and Responses to the Sifriyat Pijama Program: Summary**

**Familiarity with the program and identification with its goals:** In general, it seems that both the teachers and the parents were **exposed to the program** and, according to their reports, **they are familiar with it and understand its goals.** Nonetheless, the comments of educators who were interviewed indicate that the emphasis from their perspective (at this stage) is on **the importance of encouraging the children's affinity for books, on encouraging reading and on the connection to the home, and less on the discussion of values** and Israeli-Jewish heritage.

**General satisfaction:** Like the findings in the preschools, the program in the elementary schools also **enjoys substantial support from teachers and parents.** A significant percentage (94% of the teachers and 88% of the parents) are satisfied with the program and nearly all (97% and more) want to continue to participate in it. The key points raised in support of the program (from teachers and parents) include:

- ✓ The program encourages **exposure to books, enjoyment from them and motivation** to read;
- ✓ The program contributes to **language development and improvement of reading skills;**
- ✓ The program contributes to **thinking and values education;**
- ✓ The program contributes to **expanding the home library** (especially among those from a low socio-economic background);
- ✓ The program contributes to **strengthening the school's connection with the parents and the bond between the parents and children.**

**Perceptions about the program's contribution:** The impression is that **books play a more central role in the classroom thanks to the program** and also in the eyes of the children (65% of the teachers). There is more book-related activity in the class than in the past (41%) and also at home (more than 70% reported that the program contributed to the scope of reading at home and to expanding the home library). It is interesting that these assessments are quite similar to those received from the preschool, even though it seems

that there should be a greater focus on books with the transition from preschool to 1st grade (unrelated to the program).

**A significant percentage of the teachers and parents credited the program with contributing to the pupils in various areas, including:**

- ✓ Growth in the **scope of reading** in the classroom (83%) and at home (73%);
- ✓ Enriching **spoken language and vocabulary** (about 85%);
- ✓ Fostering **thinking, comprehension** of stories and **values** education (about 85% and more);
- ✓ **Familiarity with the world of books, deriving pleasure from them and the centrality** of books in everyday life (70%-93%).

In addition, the teachers were asked to compare pupils who had attended preschools participating in the Sifriyat Pijama program to pupils whose preschools did not participate in the program. The teachers reported that the program made a significant contribution to the former: **50%-68%** of the teachers whose pupils had participated in Sifriyat Pijama in preschool found they had an advantage over pupils who had not participated – in terms of their language development, world of values, comprehension of stories and attitude toward books.

Finally, 91% of the teachers also reported that the Sifriyat Pijama program **helps them to promote the curriculum** and the Ministry of Education's program in the classroom.

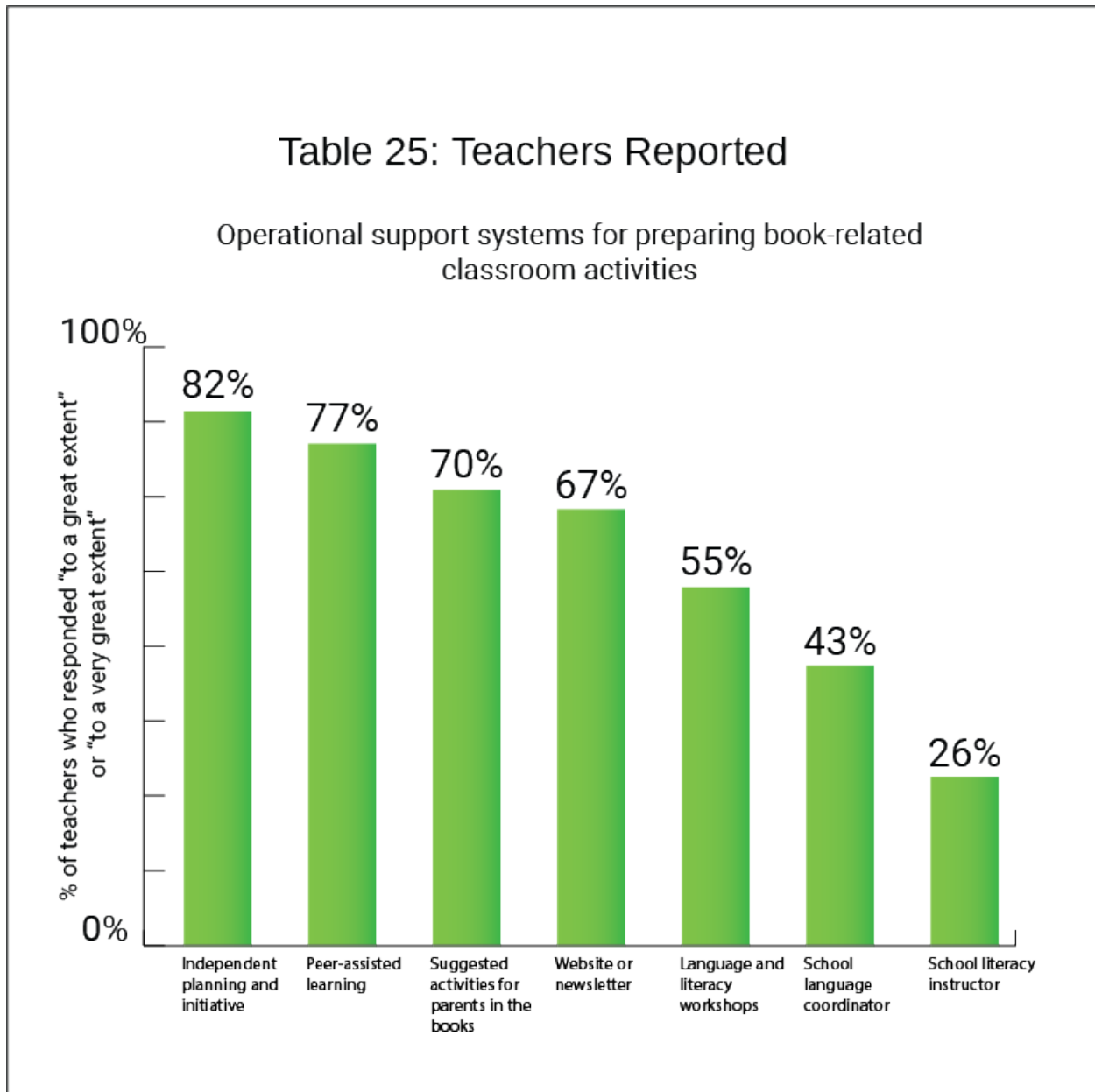
**Suggestions for improvement:** Along with the great appreciation of the program as a whole, the teachers and parents made suggestions to improve it.

- ✓ **Distribute more books;**
- ✓ **Adapt** the books more closely to the children;
- ✓ **Include teachers in choosing the books;**
- ✓ Offer **additional guidance and ideas for classroom activities;**
- ✓ **Conduct more book-related activities** – for pupils or joint activities for parents and children (a suggestion from parents)

## Operational Support Systems for School Teachers

### *Teachers' reports (from the surveys)*

Diagram 25 shows the percentage of teachers who responded that they use, to a great or very great extent, each of the various support systems for preparing book-related activities for the children in the classroom.



As Diagram 25 shows, about **80%** of the teachers reported that they **prepare the activities independently or in collaboration with colleagues**; about **70%** reported that they **make use of resources provided by Sifriyat Pijama**, including suggested activities for parents provided in the books, the program's website or its information newsletter. Finally, **55%** reported that they draw

assistance from **workshops in the field of language and literacy**, and 43% are assisted by the school's **language coordinator**.

A comparison of the reports from preschool teachers and elementary school teachers vis-à-vis various support systems indicates two trends: first, a higher percentage of elementary teachers than preschool teachers reported using each of the resources for preparing classroom activity; secondly, the rankings by the two populations are quite similar, with self-reliance and resources from Sifriyat Pijama more prevalent than assistance from school resources.

19% of the **teachers reported in the surveys that they are interested in additional support or guidance** in the framework of the program. In response to the open question in the survey, what emerged most prominently was the need to **enrich the activities and receive additional ideas for book-related activities**. For example: "primarily, experiential activity related to the books, things that are not routine, unconventional, outside the box"; "to enrich the activities, linguistic connections and links to other sources of information or literary and sources and works." Some suggested **adding activities or incorporating external resources** such as outside facilitators or a play.

### ***Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)***

Interviewees were asked whether they are familiar with the program and whether they require support in operating it. The majority reported **participating in a conference at the Ministry of Education and receiving explanations about the program**. In one of the schools, there were critical comments about the conference – that it **failed to give the teachers significant tools for running the program**.

Otherwise, the comments in the interviews echoed the survey findings: Most of the teachers said that during the year they made use of **Sifriyat Pijama's website** and received very helpful suggestions from it for activities with the children. They also had words of praise for the **suggested activities included in the books**.

Some of the teachers said that they received guidance from **the school's program coordinator or linguistic coordinator**, and sometimes **from the Ministry of Education's language trainer**.

While the teachers' responses in the surveys indicate that many teachers plan activities on their own or with colleagues, the information from the interviews suggests that **preparation for activities varies from school to school depending on the number of classes per grade**. In schools with **several classes per grade, the teachers collaborate** to build a program around each book. Sometimes the program is developed in conjunction with the program coordinator or the language coordinator. For example: "We have a regular meeting of the 1st grade and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade staff with the pedagogical coordinator. She outlines a lesson plan for four to five lessons and offers recommendations." On the other hand, in schools with only **one class per grade, each teacher plans the activity independently**. For example: "There is one teacher for 1st grade and one teacher for 2nd grade. Each teacher prepares separately."

Most of the interviewees said they **do not require additional guidance**, and that the ideas on the Sifriyat Pijama program's website or at the end of the books are sufficient for them. A few asked for **additional guidance from Sifriyat Pijama**. For example: "If there were a Sifriyat Pijama workshop, I would go to it. I expect to be exposed to additional ideas, activities, how to teach the

books and get the most out of them. Perhaps if I had been exposed to Concert in the Sand in another way, it would have been more successful.” In addition, a small number of interviewees said **they did not receive assistance** (for example, a teacher who replaced a teacher who left on maternity leave).

#### **Sifriyat Pijama Program Operational Support Systems for School Teachers: Summary**

Most of the teachers reported that they **plan and initiate book-related activities on their own** (82%) or benefit from peer-assisted learning (77%). The interviews revealed that when there are several teachers in the grade, they prepare together; in schools with only one class per grade, the teacher plans the activities independently.

A significant percentage of the teachers draw assistance from **Sifriyat Pijama’s resources** – suggestions in the books, the program’s website and the program’s newsletter (about **70%**).

On the other hand, **fewer teachers report that they receive support from school staff** (43% receive assistance from the language coordinator and 26% from the literacy trainer).

Nonetheless, a relatively **small number of teachers (about 20%) are interested in receiving additional support or guidance** in the framework of the program, particularly in **enriching the activities and more ideas** for book-related activities.

## Program Operation in the Schools (Reports by the Teachers)

In this chapter, we will focus on **the way the Sifriyat Pijama program operates in the schools**, including **its context**, the **logistics** of distributing books and book-related **classroom activities**.

### Other Activities to Encourage Reading: Background

#### *Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)*

The Sifriyat Pijama program did not encounter virgin territory when appearing in the schools. According to the interviewees, **other activities of various types were conducted in most of the schools to encourage reading**: reading during the first lesson of the day, borrowing books, reading books aloud by volunteers, activity in the school library and more.

The interviewees stated that the Sifriyat Pijama program is different from other programs in that it focuses on **involving the parents** and **offers a series of diverse book-related activities**.

In some schools, the interviewees said that the program **fits in with other activities for encouraging reading**:

1. In some schools, the program was said to fit in with the **school library's** programs to encourage reading. For example: "Sifriyat Pijama was integrated in the school library ... there was activity related to differences among people. I placed a number of books on the desk that deal with this, and also Cloudette. The children read the books and learned that there are different books in which the motif appears."
2. In some schools, **Sifriyat Pijama books were placed in the reading corners** in classrooms, and the teachers referred the pupils to them as part of other reading encouragement activities in the classroom (such as reading books aloud by volunteers, independent reading by the pupils, and so on).
3. In one school, it was noted that the program was integrated with **another program for encouraging reading** (The March of Books): "... at the end of the year, the children have to choose a book in the framework of The March of Books and this includes Sifriyat Pijama books."

#### *Teachers' reports (from the surveys)*

A similar picture emerges from the surveys: 30% of the teachers who implemented the program in their classroom reported that **in 2013-14 they participated, as teachers, in another reading encouragement program** (and 23% reported that they participated in another such program in previous years).

Programs mentioned by several teachers include: The March of Books, Reading for Pleasure (each in a few schools) and local school initiatives (such as devoting 10 minutes for reading in a lesson).

In parallel, **88% reported that during the course of the year, the children read other books outside of the Sifriyat Pijama program** (in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, the percentage was slightly higher), especially **independently**, alone (41% of the respondents) or both **independently and in guided reading** (41%).

In addition, 82% of the teachers reported that **there is a lending library in the school or a classroom library.**

### **Sifriyat Pijama Program Operation in the Schools and Book Distribution**

#### ***Teachers' reports (from the surveys)***

Of the 144 teachers who responded to the survey, **55% (79 teachers)** reported that **Sifriyat Pijama operated in their classroom this year**, and only these teachers continued on to the other questions in the survey. Of these 79 teachers, **58% teach 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 42% teach 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.**

Most of the teachers – **86%** - reported **receiving four books** by the survey date (9% cited a number greater than four and the rest received fewer than four). (Only four books were distributed per grad).

**81%** of the teachers reported that all of the books arrived **on schedule** and **87%** said that the program's books arrived in the **required quantity.**

#### ***Parents' reports***

The **324** parents who responded to the survey reported that the Sifriyat Pijama program **operated in their child's classroom this year;**<sup>6</sup> **47% of them are parents of a first grader and 53% are parents of a second grader.**

In regard to receiving the books at home, **57%** of the parents reported receiving four Sifriyat Pijama books at home by the survey date, and 25% reported receiving two or three books (and 16% cited a number greater than four).

### **Classroom Activities in the Wake of Sifriyat Pijama Books**

Sifriyat Pijama's website includes instructions, recommendations and suggestions for running the Sifriyat Pijama program. This includes suggestions for each book (which also appear in the books themselves) and general guidance for teachers on book-related activity:

1. Focus on words and unfamiliar word combinations;
2. Vary the ways of presenting the books to the children in accordance with each book and each class;
3. Conduct preparatory activity before showing the books – for example, start with a background story, dress up as one of the characters, dramatize the story;
4. Focus on a value, an expression, a quotation or a concept from the book before or after reading it;
5. Think of how the book, author or values reflected in the story connects to other topics studied in the classroom or experiences that occur in the pupils' community;
6. Invite parents for shared activity;

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<sup>6</sup> 29 of the parents we approached (6%) responded that the program did not operate in the classroom or that they didn't know whether or not it operated.



7. Connect with resources outside of the classroom to work with them together on the subject of the book – for example, collaboration with another grade-level class or activities at the local library.

We present below teachers' reports from the surveys and insights from the qualitative study vis-à-vis activities conducted in the classroom in the wake of Sifriyat Pijama books.

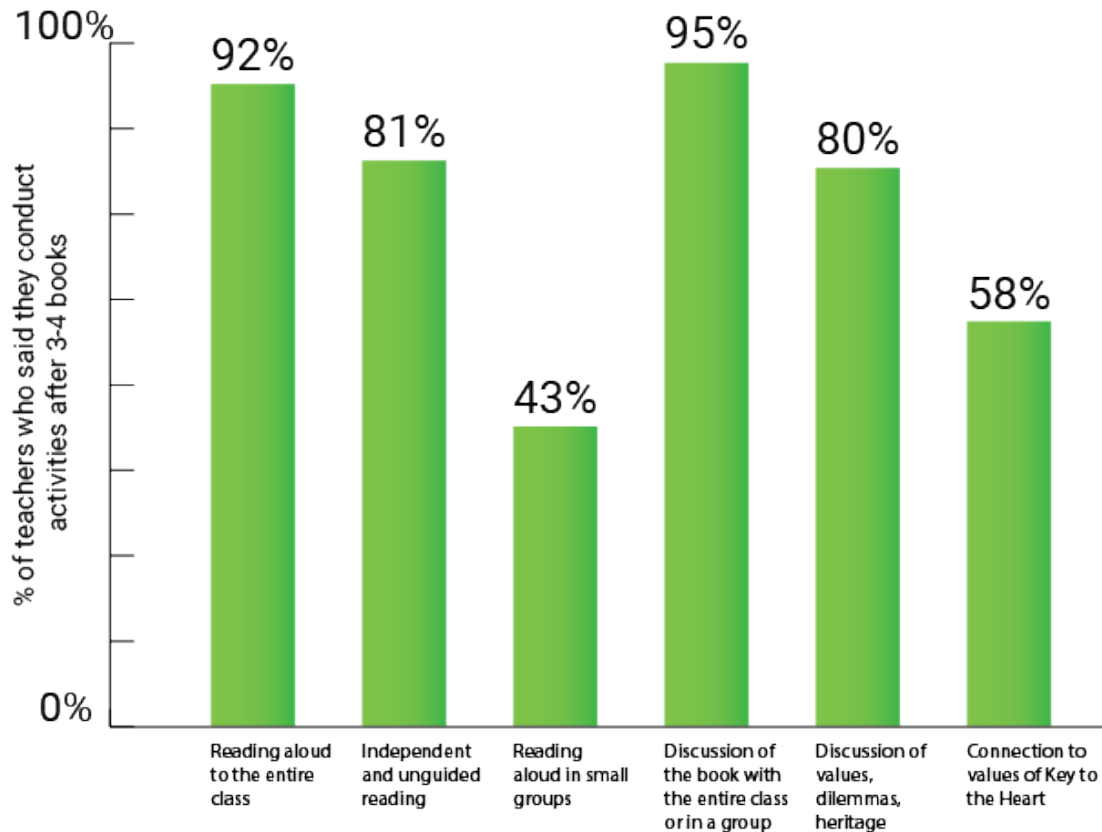
### ***Teachers' reports (from the surveys)***

The teachers were asked to report which activities they conduct around the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed throughout the year. **A very few – 8% of the teachers – said they didn't read in the classroom some of the books the children received. About a half (53%) reported that they read aloud each book in the classroom twice on average, and about a quarter (26%) reported reading each book three or more times.**

Diagrams 26 and 27 show the teachers' reports on book-related activities in the classroom. Diagram 26 shows the percentage of teachers who responded that they read three to four books (in various ways) or discussed them and the values they reflect, and Diagram 27 displays the percentage of teachers who said they engaged in different types of creative activity or other activities connected to three to four of the program's books.

Table 26: Teachers Reported

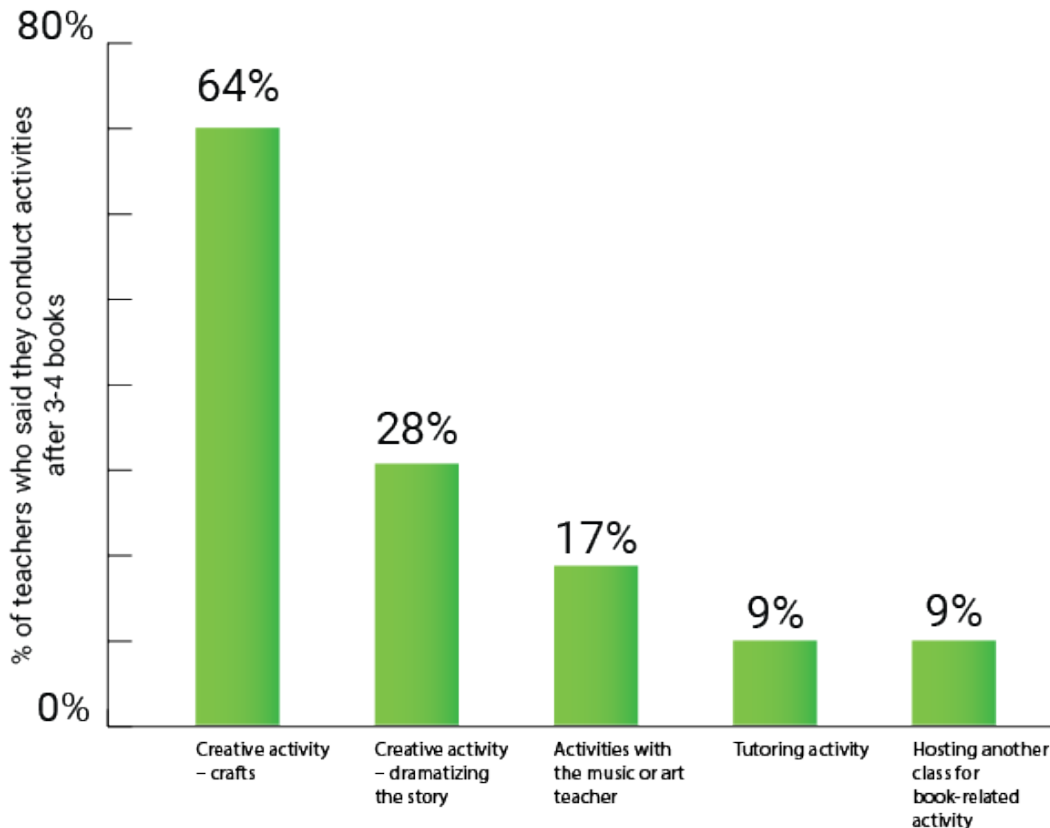
Activities related to the program's books: Reading aloud and discussion



As Diagram 26 shows, **most of the book-related activity is reading aloud to the entire class (92%) and discussing the book with the entire class or in a group (95%)** after three to four books. Two other common activities are **independent (unguided) reading and conversation in the classroom on values, heritage and dilemmas** (about 80% reported conducting these activities after three to four books). Less prevalent activities included connecting to the values of Key to the Heart (58%) and reading aloud in small groups (43%).

Table 27: Teachers Reported

Activities related to the program's books: Creative work and other activities



As Diagram 27 shows, most of the creative activities and other activities are less common in the schools: 64% of the teachers reported conducting creative activity involving arts and crafts (drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.) after three to four books. 28% reported engaging in creative activity involving dramatization of the story, and 17% reported conducting activity with the music teacher or the art teacher after three to four books. Other types of activity, including tutoring by older children or hosting another class for book-related activity after three to four books, occurred infrequently (9%).

***Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)***

The interviews about the activities conducted this year and the classroom observations (primarily of activities related to two books – Feathers in the Wind and The Princess and the Real Loaf of Bread) indicate that **the teachers implement many of the suggestions and recommendations that appear on Sifriyat Pijama’s website**, as described above.

- ✓ The interviewees’ comments and observations reveal that a **number of activities are conducted over several lessons after receiving a Sifriyat Pijama book**. (Only one teacher said she conducts just one activity in the wake of each book.) The **first session** is usually devoted to **preparatory activity** – the children look at the cover and guess what the book is about, and talk about the author and the illustrator. Then they **read the book aloud** or **the children read themselves and the teacher explains difficult words or complex sentences**. It is interesting to note that in the observations the teachers did not ask the pupils to read the books aloud; instead the teachers read them aloud.
- ✓ In most of the observations, **various didactic activities** were observed – such as orientation in the book, writing a different ending for the book, writing a letter to the author or retelling the story.
- ✓ Some **creative book-related activities** were observed. For example, after reading The Princess and the Real Loaf of Bread, the pupils engaged in bread-making and this was tied to the celebration of the Shavuot holiday.
- ✓ **Values are discussed and sayings are analyzed**. Nonetheless, the observations of classroom activities revealed that **only some of the activities addressed the moral aspect, and the discussion of values was usually from a universal perspective**.
- ✓ **Book-related activities with the parents** were conducted in some of the schools. The observations of lessons found that only one school conducted activity in the classroom as a follow-up to activity that took place at home.
- ✓ **No** collaborative activities with other classes or activities in the framework of the municipal library or in other community frameworks were observed

### **Connection to the Key to the Heart program**

**According to most of the interviewees, the focus on values reflected in the books is usually connected to the national Key to the Heart values program**. For example: “There’s a connection ... I connect the books to Key to the Heart. For instance, the book Cloudette arrived in the winter and then we spoke during the Jewish month of Kislev-Tevet on the subject of heroism. We used Cloudette to talk about courage ... each person with his strengths can express his heroism. If the book comes to the class and it has values we discussed during the year, I return and connect to the value that we’ve already discussed.” **A few schools, we were told, did not make a connection to Key to the Heart**. For example: “We spend almost no time on moral issues. We speak less about values than what is prescribed. The Sifriyat Pijama program is not connected to the Key to the Heart program.”

Some of the interviewees reported that the **timetable for receiving Sifriyat Pijama books is not always in sync with the topics addressed in the Key to the Heart program during the course of the year**. (Their comments suggest that there is insufficient awareness of the directive to discuss and reinforce values during the year.)

## Documentation of classroom activities

The program's leaders asked the teachers to document the activities conducted in the classrooms and in the school, and to share experiences and photographs in a picture gallery on Sifriyat Pijama's website. Some of the interviewees said that they document the activities, but usually not all of them. Some said that they send photos to the website, and some send photos to the parents and also receive pictures of activities conducted in the home.

## "Pijama corners" in the schools

We saw in the observations that only **half of the schools have areas devoted to Sifriyat Pijama in the classrooms or in spaces for grades 1 and 2**. In schools with such areas, there are drawings made by the children, things they wrote and book-related projects they created with their parents.

In most of the schools, copies of the Sifriyat Pijama books were placed on the bookshelves in the classroom or in the class spaces.

### Program Operation in the Schools: Summary

**Other activities for encouraging reading:** In most of the schools, **various classroom activities were conducted to encourage reading prior to the introduction of the Sifriyat Pijama program**, and in some schools the program was integrated with other reading encouragement programs. The interviewees focused on Sifriyat Pijama's contribution in placing importance on **involving parents** and in facilitating a **continuity of diverse activities** in the wake of each book.

**Sifriyat Pijama program operation:** 79 of the 144 teachers (55%) reported that the program operated in their classroom. According to the teachers' reports, the books were distributed to the classrooms as planned (about 80% and more reported that the books arrived on time and in the required quantity). At the same time, 57% of the parents reported that four Sifriyat Pijama books had arrived by the date of the survey.

**Classroom activities in the framework of Sifriyat Pijama:** Very few teachers – 8% - reported that they did not read all of the books the children received. About half (53%) reported that they read each book to the class twice on average, and about a quarter (26%) said three or more times.

**The surveys indicate that the main book-related activity in the classroom is reading aloud to the entire class or independent reading, as well as discussion of the book, values, etc.** (80% or more reported engaging in these activities after three to four books). A smaller percentage reported creative work related to arts and crafts (64%) and a still smaller percentage conducted other activity (creative work of a different type or activity with other entities).

The interviews and observations show that **the teachers implement many of Sifriyat Pijama's suggestions and recommendations in the classroom**, including book-related activity over the course of several lessons and preparatory activity, reading aloud, explaining words and sayings, various didactic activities and even creative work related to the books. No activities were observed outside of the confines of the classroom.

Regarding the **connection with the Key to the Heart program**: 58% of the teachers reported in the surveys that they connect the books to the values of Key to the Heart; in interviews, most said that their discussion of the values reflected in the books connects to the Key to the Heart program. Nonetheless, some of the interviewees said that the books are not timed to coincide with the topics of Key to the Heart during the year, and there does not seem to be sufficient awareness of the directive to address and reinforce values throughout the year. Interviewees in a few schools said that they do not connect the books to Key to the Heart at all.

A number of interviewees said that they document some of the activities conducted in the framework of Sifriyat Pijama.

We found through the observations that only half of the schools have corners designated for Sifriyat Pijama in their classrooms or the spaces for grades 1 and 2.

## Evaluation of the Books Distributed in this Program

The teachers and parents were asked to evaluate each of the books distributed during the year. The teachers were asked to rank each of the following characteristics of the books: the plot, the language and age-appropriateness; the illustrations and the book in general. The parents were asked to say how satisfied they were with the books in general and whether they were age-appropriate (except if they were unfamiliar with the book and had not read it, in which case they were asked to cite this and not to evaluate the book).

In order to receive additional information, respondents who reported dissatisfaction with the book(s) were asked why. They were also asked to say which book was their favorite and why.

We present below the respondents' evaluations of the books, and the main topics that arose in their responses to the open questions. The findings will be presented separately for the books distributed in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and for the books distributed in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

### Evaluation of the Books Distributed to 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classes

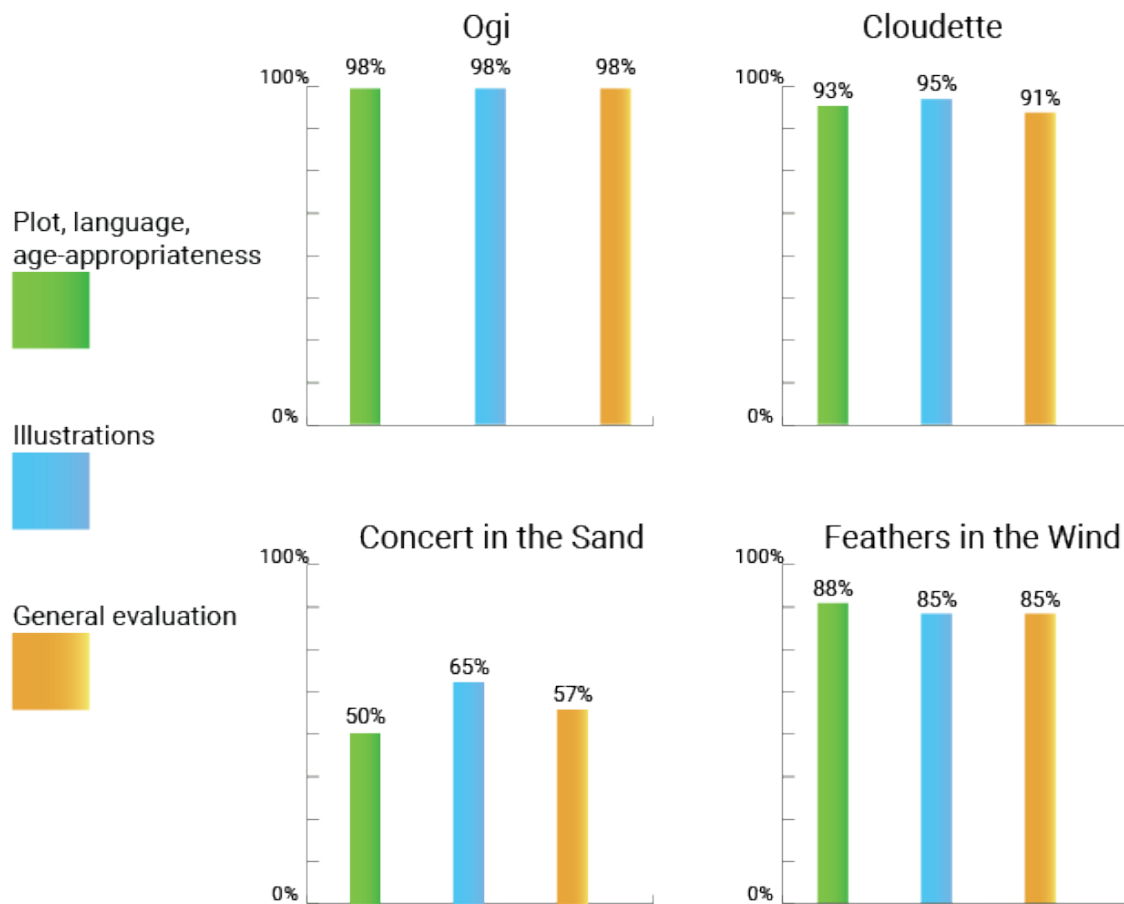
#### *Teachers' reports (from the surveys)*

Diagram 28 shows the percentage of teachers who ranked the books highly in the various aspects.

Table 28: Teachers Reported

Activities related to the program’s books: Reading aloud and discussion

% of teachers who responded “to a great extent” or “to a very great extent”



As Diagram 28 shows, **most of the teachers (85% and more) gave high marks to three of the four books distributed during the year – Ogi, Cloudette and Feathers in the Wind** – in all aspects (plot, language, age-appropriateness, illustrations and the book in general). Concert in the Sand received a lower evaluation: 57% of the teachers said that the book was good to a great or very great extent in general, 65% reported that the illustrations were good and 50% said that the plot, language and age-appropriateness were good in their opinion.

***Explanations of the book evaluations: From the surveys and interviews (teachers)***

In the surveys, the **teachers were asked to explain** why they gave a book a low assessment and to cite their favorite book and to say why it was their favorite. In interviews, the teachers were

asked to note how appropriate the books were for the children in terms of their language and values. Below is a list of **topics the teachers raised in general and in regard to each book** (in the open questions in the surveys and interviews).

**Concerning the suitability of the books for the children in general and from the perspective of language and values**, most of the teachers who were interviewed felt that the books were **good and that their language was appropriate for the children: Cloudette** (for example: “A book that served more from a language perspective is Cloudette. Part of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade program is to teach ‘dialogue bubbles’: how to compose direct speech and what dialogue is, and the book connected to this”); **Feathers in the Wind** (for example: “Feathers in the Wind has rich language: its tongue is as sharp as a razor”; “Feathers in the Wind” taught expressions like ‘guard your tongue from speaking evil’ and all sorts of difficult words”) and **Ogi** too.

In regard to **moral content** in the books, the teachers felt the books were **appropriate for the population of pupils and generally connected to their world and the situations that concern them or are likely to concern them** (and therefore facilitate significant learning). For example: “The book Ogi stimulated more discourse on values. It deals with taking something that doesn’t belong to me, even though I really crave it. The book Feathers in the Wind also dealt with moral issues.”

Here are some comments from the interviews and open questions on each book:

1. **Ogi**: In response to the open question in the surveys, the teachers noted that the book is **very appropriate for children from the perspective of the plot, the language, the experience the children undergo and the values**. For example: “The book really connected to the children; the children have similar experiences to what is told in the book. There was a wonderful conversation about the book and the parents also really liked the book”; “the content, illustrations and readability were suitable for the children”; “children connect with animals, the plot of the book speaks to the age of the children, and the children connected to it and to the values, of course.”
2. **Cloudette**: In the surveys, some of the teachers emphasized that the **book was well-suited for the children**. For example: “The book is appropriate for the children in the class in terms of the plot, the values and the moral of the story. The book is childish and really attracted the children.”

Some approvingly noted the **timing of the book’s distribution** – during the winter season, when we discuss the moral message (relating to someone who is different) in the classroom. For example: “because it was appropriate, in terms of values and language; it was at the child’s level, appropriate for the winter; it fit in with the Ministry of Education’s program; the children really connected to the book”; “because they explained the process of creating rain and a map. We saw someone who is different, small, and it’s always possible to do something with this.”

3. **Feathers in the Wind**: survey respondents who emphasized the **positive sides** noted two aspects: First, the book **spoke to the children** and the children connected with it; in addition, “**the message of the book is good, strong.**”



On the other hand, respondents **who were not satisfied** with the book explained that it's difficult for young children to understand the **moral** of the book and that it's more appropriate for second graders.

In the qualitative interviews, along with the teachers who offered a positive assessment of the book, two teachers expressed criticism: "The language level in the last book, Feathers in the Wind, is a bit high"; "it's very difficult to connect to the phrase 'gossipy woman.' I think that a gossipy woman is not appropriate content for 1<sup>st</sup> grade."

4. **Concert in the Sand**: a few teachers responded in the survey to the question about why they were dissatisfied with the book. Their comments include: the book was **not appropriate for the age or world of the child**; the book is **too long** or is **not interesting**; the children or teacher "**did not connect** with the book."

In the interviews, it was clear that the book is less recommended relative to the other books. Some of the teachers said that the children **connect less with the book in terms of the language and the content, which is suited for a different era**. For example: "Concert in the Sand was not appropriate at all! Too much text. The writing is a bit [too] high. It deals with an era that doesn't speak to the children. The book should speak to the children." On the other hand, the program coordinator in one of the schools said that the **content of the book was appropriate** and the book offered added value. "In 1<sup>st</sup> grade, the book Concert in the Sand was significant for our population, because they learned from the story, for the first time, what a concert is."

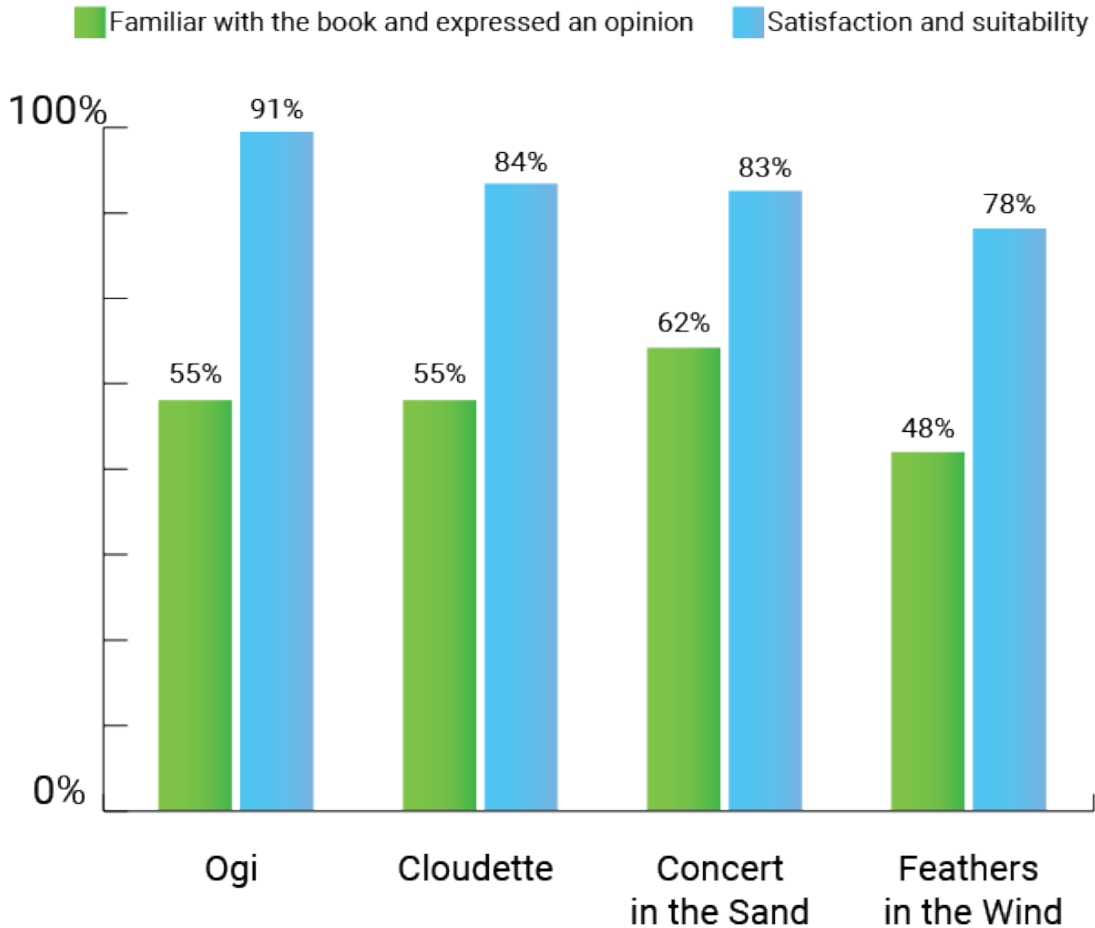
#### ***Parents' reports (from the surveys)***

Diagram 29 shows the percentage of parents who reported that they read each book, and the percentage of these parents who were satisfied with the books and said they were appropriate for their child to a great or very great extent.

## Table 29: Parents Reported

Parents' evaluations of the books

% of parents who responded "to a great extent" or "to a very great extent"



As Diagram 29 shows, 48%-62% of the parents reported that they read every book. Of them, 78% (for Concert in the Sand) to 91% (Ogi) reported that they were satisfied with the book and felt it was appropriate for their child.

In another question, the parents were asked to cite their favorite book or the one that was most appropriate for their child (they were asked to select only one). Consistent with earlier findings, **Ogi was ranked first** (34%), followed closely by Feathers in the Wind (29%) and Cloudette (22%). Concert in the Sand finished in last place (14%).

***Explanations of the book evaluations: From the surveys (parents)***

Like the teachers, the parents were also asked to explain in the open survey questions why they gave low evaluations, and to cite their favorite book and say why. Here are **some issues the parents raised about each book; we emphasize that there were only a few respondents.**

1. **Ogi:** Like the teachers, the parents also reported that they were satisfied with the book because it is **easy, short and speaks to the children.** Some also noted that their **children love animals.** Only four parents reported that the book was not interesting or that their child did not like it.
2. **Cloudette:** The parents said they liked the book because it is **interesting, suitable for the children** and that their child “connected with the book” (two parents cited the beautiful illustrations).
3. **Feathers in the Wind:** Unlike some teachers who thought that the children had difficulty understanding the moral of the story, some parents reported that they were **satisfied with the book because of its moral** and that it was **suitable for the children.**
4. **Concert in the Sand:** Relatively few parents expressed a view on this book. The parents who said they liked the book reported that the story is connected to history and is suitable for the children, or that their children connected with it. On the other hand, two parents said that the book did not “speak” to their child.

#### **Evaluation of the Books Distributed to 2nd Grade Classes**

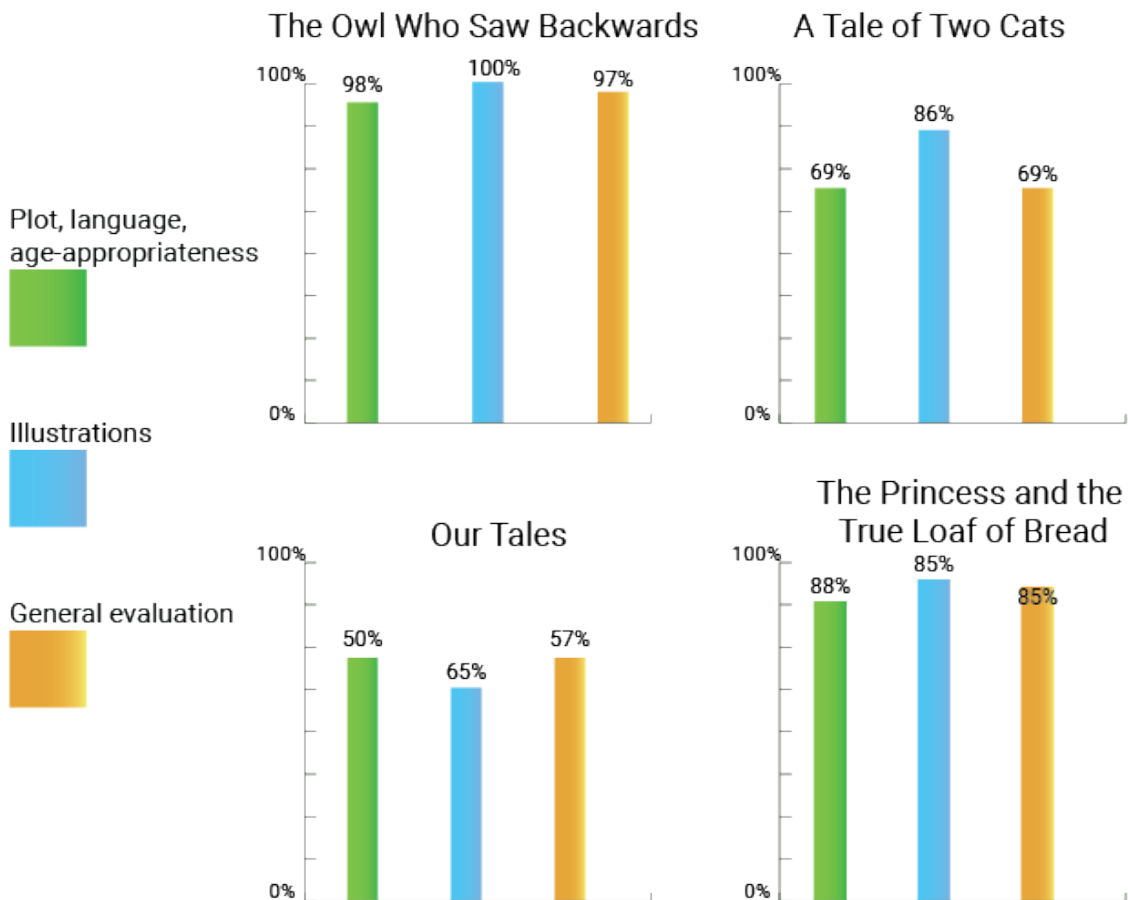
##### ***Teachers’ reports (from the surveys)***

Diagram 30 shows the percentage of teachers who gave high marks to the books distributed in 2nd grade in various aspects.

## Table 30: Teachers Reported

Activities related to the program's books: Reading aloud and discussion

% of teachers who responded "to a great extent" or "to a very great extent"



As Diagram 30 indicates, only 27-31 teachers expressed an opinion on each of the books. Due to this small sample size, we should be cautious in drawing conclusions from the data.

With this proviso, The Owl Who Saw Backwards received the highest rankings (in absolute and relative terms): 94% and more rated it highly (97% reported that in general the book is good – to a great or very great extent; all of them said that the illustrations are good and 94% felt that the book's plot, language and age-appropriateness were good). The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread took second place in the rankings (83%-89% gave it high marks in all of the aspects). The other two books – A Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales received lower evaluations, though still quite high (69%-72% gave high marks; the illustrations in A Tale of Two Cats received higher marks).

***Explanations of the book evaluations: From the surveys and interviews (teachers)***

In the surveys, **teachers were asked to explain** why they gave a low evaluation to a book, and to specify which book was their favorite and why. They were also asked in the interviews to express their views on the appropriateness of the books for the children in terms of language and values, and some indeed offered their opinions on particular books distributed to the pupils. Here are the **topics raised by the teachers in general and vis-à-vis each book** (in the open questions in the surveys and interviews).

**In regard to the general suitability of the books in terms of the children’s language and values**, most of the teachers who were interviewed felt that the books were **good and that the language was appropriate for the children**. They spoke positively about three books: A Tale of Two Cats (for example: “the book by A. Hillel, A Tale of Two Cats, was a good book; there are plays on words and this is very useful ... the tone games were excellent”), The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread and The Owl Who Saw Backwards (for example: “there were books that helped us more in the field of literacy. The Owl Who Saw Backwards, for instance, taught what a palindrome is. This is a significant concept”).

In regard to the books’ **moral content**, the second grade teachers – like the first grade teachers – said that the **content was appropriate and connects with the children’s world**. For example: “The books were appropriate from a moral perspective. They touched upon topics or values: loving the other, someone different, tolerance. A. Hillel connected more in regard to loving the other. The Owl Who Saw Backwards connects to children with difficulties in learning.”

Here are the comments voiced in interviews and in the open survey questions vis-à-vis each book:

1. **The Owl Who Saw Backwards**: The teachers noted that **the book’s message is excellent and “speaks” to the children**. For example: “The content was excellent, the drawings and the jokes, the world of the children”; “the book talks about the backward writing and reading that really characterizes the children.” Some noted that the **book develops language**. For example: “The children learned a concept they didn’t know, it enriched their vocabulary”; it’s very special; from a linguistic perspective, there were opposite words.” Finally, some teachers noted that the book’s **moral message connects with the annual topic in the education system**. For example: “It was charming and we could discuss differences, which was the topic of the year. We could do lots of things with it. The message could be conveyed to the children in many ways, and also together with the parents.”
2. **A Tale of Two Cats**: Teachers who emphasized the **positive sides** of the book noted two aspects: First, the **moral message is connected to the annual topic of the education system**. For example: “connects to the topic of ‘the other is me,’ it speaks to the hearts of the pupils.” Secondly, **the book enriches language**. For example: “The language in the books is very high, and this enriches the children’s knowledge and vocabulary. On the other hand, two teachers were not satisfied with the book and explained that **“the children connected less with the book.”**
3. **The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread**: Teachers who expressed an opinion in the open question emphasized that the book was **appropriate for the children’s world and age**. For example: “appropriate for the level, plot and flow”; “because it came closer to the children’s world”; “a book that arrived exactly on time. The content was appropriate for

the children. An enriching book. The children and the idea of the story, collaboration with the parents.”

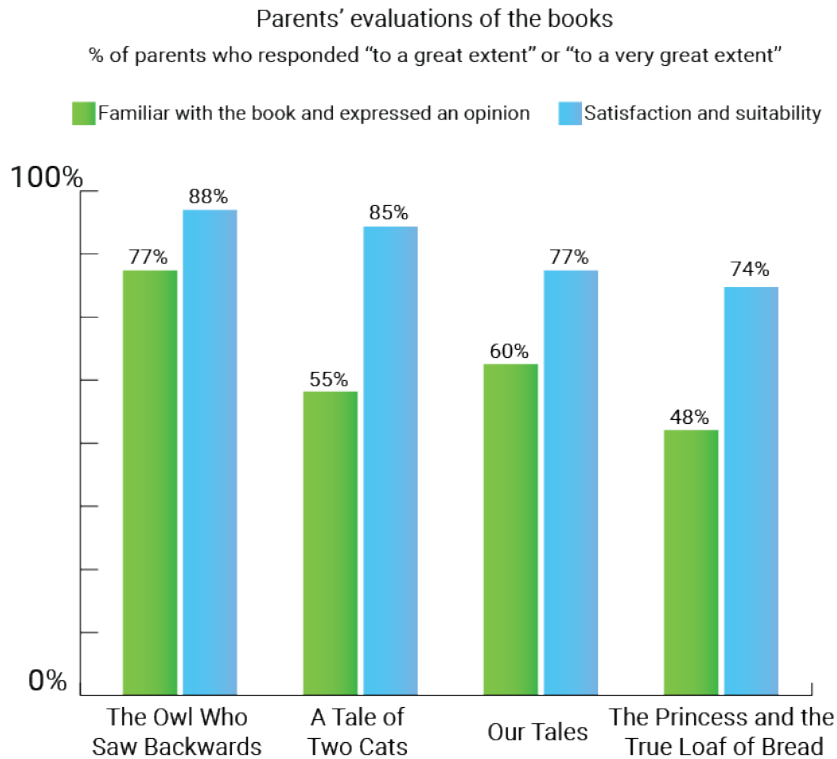
4. **Our Tales:** Teachers who responded to the question of why they were dissatisfied with the book gave the following reasons: The book is **not suited for the age of the children** (2nd grade); the children or the teacher did not connect with the book; one comment focused on the **suitability of the book for a school in the state education stream**.

In the interviews, it became clear that Our Tales was less recommended relative to the other books. Some of the 2nd grade teachers said that they and the children **connected less with the book in terms of content and the spirit of the era**. For example: “There was some reservation about Our Tales. It was a bit detached for them. They didn’t know how to connect.” On the other hand, two teachers noted in the interviews that the book is important from the perspective of **values**: “Our Tales is very important in terms of values; it is dedicated to liturgical poems and rabbinical folklore.”

**Parents’ reports (from the surveys)**

Diagram 31 shows the percentage of parents who reported that they read each book and the percentage of these parents who reported that they were satisfied with the book and think that it was appropriate for their children – to a great or very great extent.

Table 31: Parents Reported



As Diagram 31 shows, 77% of the parents reported being familiar with The Owl Who Saw Backwards and expressed an opinion about it. 48%-60% reported having read the other books. Of them, 74% (for Our Tales) to 88% (for The Owl Who Saw Backwards) reported that they were satisfied with the books and think they are suitable for their child.

Though the disparities are small, both the parents and teachers were less satisfied with A Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales.

The parents were asked to cite **their favorite book and to say which book was most appropriate for their child. The majority – 60% – cited The Owl Who Saw Backwards.**

### ***Explanations of the book evaluations: From the surveys (parents)***

Here is a list of topics raised by the parents in regard to each book. Their comments came in response to the open questions that asked them to explain any low evaluation they gave to a book and to cite the book they liked most:

1. **The Owl Who Saw Backwards**: There were many positive responses from the parents, who commented on different aspects, including **the message, the moral of the story, the interest, the topic of diversity** (a focus of the book). Some parents reported that their child connected to the book.
2. **A Tale of Two Cats**: Parents who said **they liked the book** noted that it is **interesting** and that their child **connected with it and liked it**.
3. **The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread**: Parents who liked the book cited **the message, the moral of the story and its lesson**, and some noted that their child connected with the book.
4. **Our Tales**: Seven parents expressed a positive opinion and noted that **their child connected with the book and that the book's message is important** (Torah, Hillel the Elder).

Along with the explanations for the evaluations of the books in the surveys, we note that in general the interviewees emphasized in their responses that they were **interested in receiving books in the future that contain messages and values that describe situations relevant to the children's world**. For example: "I would like to receive in the future books that have a moral and educational message, books that are pleasant and match the children's level"; "in the future, I prefer to receive books with values appropriate for the age level, with situations they can connect with and that also touch upon solving social problems"; "it's very important for us to receive books that have a message and clear lesson."

### ***Evaluation of the Books Distributed in this Program: Summary***

**Evaluations of books distributed in 1<sup>st</sup> grade:** Among the **teachers**, three of the four books distributed – Ogi, Clouette and Feathers in the Wind – received very high evaluations in all aspects: the book's plot, language, age-appropriateness, illustrations and general assessment (85%-98% rated the books highly). Concert in the Sand received lower evaluations (50%-65% of the teachers gave it high marks).

Among the **parents**, about half to 60% reported that they were familiar with the books and expressed their opinions on them; the majority of them (80%-90%) reported that they were satisfied with the books and believe that they are appropriate for their children (though the gap is small, the parents are also less satisfied with Concert in the Sand).

The parents were asked to say which book they liked best or found most appropriate for their child; Ogi was the most popular (34% chose it), closely followed by Feathers in the Wind (29%) and Clouette (22%). The least popular was Concert in the Sand (14%).

**Evaluations of books distributed in 2nd grade:** Among the teachers, The Owl Who Saw Backwards received very high evaluations in all aspects: the book's plot, language, age-appropriateness, illustrations and general assessment (over 94% of the teachers rated the books highly). The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread came in second (with 83%-89% of the teachers rating it highly), while the two other books – A Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales – received lower evaluations, though still quite high (69%-72% of the teachers rated them highly; the illustrations in A Tale of Two Cats received higher marks).

Among the parents, 77% reported that they were familiar with the first book distributed – The Owl Who Saw Backwards. Between 50%-60% reported that they were familiar with the other books and expressed their views on them. Most of them – about 75%-90% - reported that they were satisfied with the book and feel that it is appropriate for their child. Though the disparities are small, the parents (like the teachers) were less satisfied with A Tale of Two Cats and Our Tales.

The parents were asked to cite which book was their favorite or was most appropriate for their child, and most (60%) chose The Owl Who Saw Backwards.

In general, most of the books that were distributed in the program were perceived as appropriate for the children in terms of their language and values. Satisfaction with a book is connected to the perception of its appropriateness for the children's level, the interest in it and its message.

## Carryover from School to Home

As noted, the leaders of Sifriyat Pijama state that one of the program's goals is to strengthen parent-child reading habits and to encourage discourse among family members. In order to realize this goal, the books include instructions for shared activity with the children. In addition, the schools were asked to conduct two joint activities for parents and children related to Sifriyat Pijama books.

In this section, we start by presenting reports by teachers and parents on the communication between the school and the home: the level of familiarity with the Sifriyat Pijama program and parental involvement in joint activities at school or via messages sent to the home. We'll also present reports from the parents on reading and other activities in the home related to Sifriyat Pijama books.



In the second part of this section, we'll present responses about the carryover of activity outside the classroom – whether as a continuation of Sifriyat Pijama activity at the preschool or joint activity with other grade-level classes at the school and others in the community.

### **Communication between the School and the Home**

As noted, one aspect we examined is the communication and carryover between the school and the home. Here we'll present reports from the teachers (in surveys and interviews) and reports from the parents (in interviews) on these subjects.

#### ***Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)***

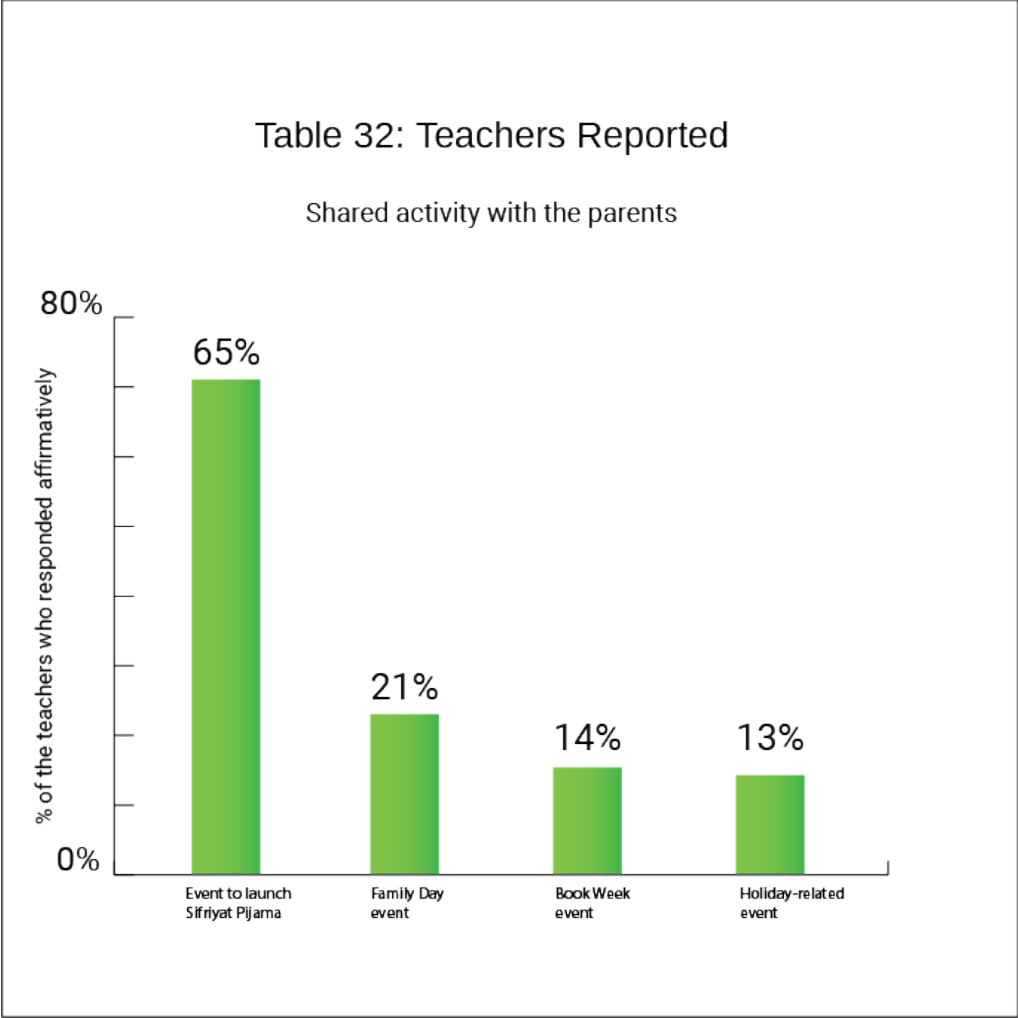
The interviewees spoke about various activities aimed to expose the parents to the program and to communicate with them in order to **encourage shared reading**. First, most of the schools reported that **the teachers introduced the program to the parents at the beginning of the year** at the initial parents' meeting (as noted, 65% of the parents reported in the quantitative study that there was an orientation meeting for parents at the school). In addition, in some of the schools, the interviewees reported that **joint activities for parents and pupils were conducted in the framework of the program at the beginning of the year**. For example: "With the first book, we held a pajama party on Friday morning and invited the parents. The goal was to receive the first book and give tips to the parents on how to read stories at home."

In some of the schools, there were **joint activities for parents and children during the course of the year** – in most cases, one activity. Only one school reported conducting three joint activities during the year.

On the subject of **book-related communication between teachers and parents**, most of the teachers who were interviewed said that when a book arrived at school, they sent the parents **information pages** and asked them to **conduct activities at home**. Some of the parents said they **updated** the parents about classroom activities. For example: "I inform the parents via email about the work we'll do. I ask the parents to work with the children and send them suggestions for activity and also a summary of activities."

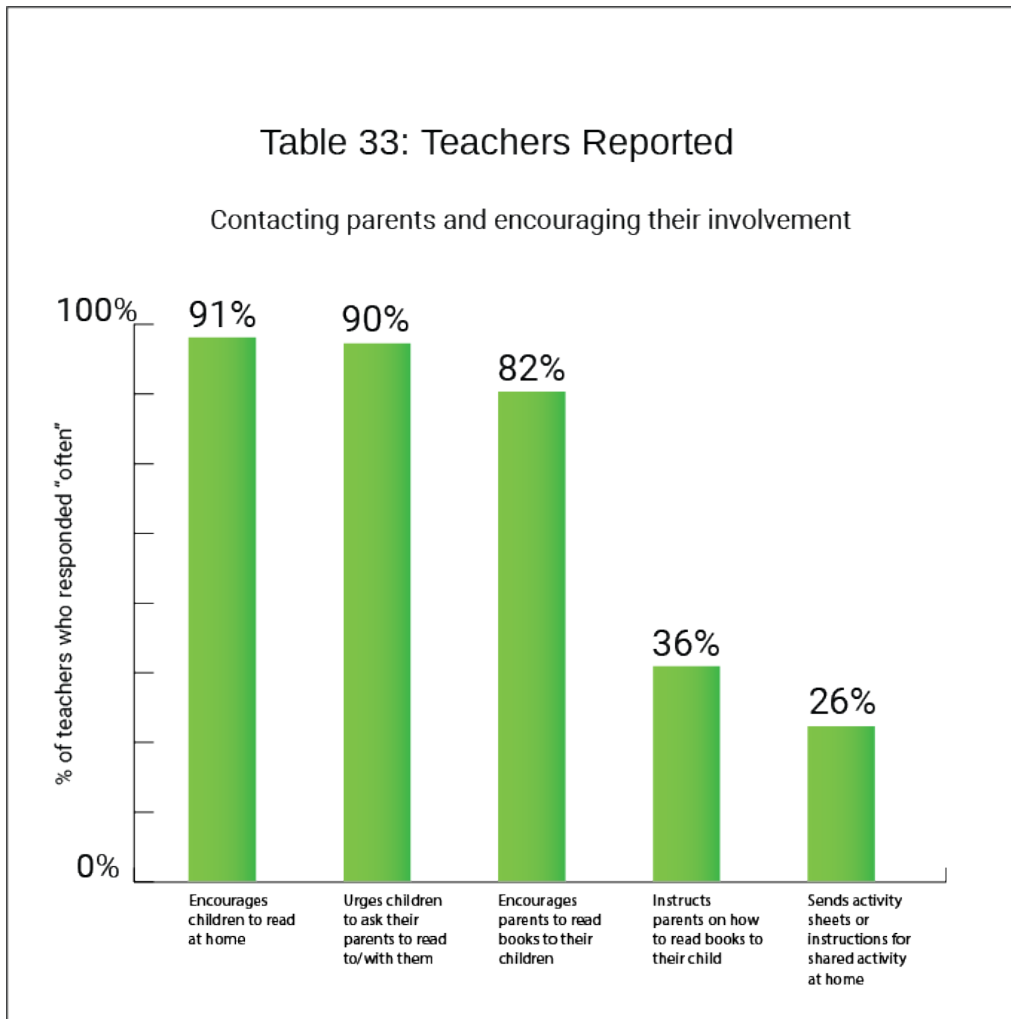
#### ***Teachers' reports (from the surveys)***

**70%** of the teachers reported that **they used the books in joint activities** for parents and children at the school. Diagram 32 shows the percentage of teachers who reported conducting each of a variety of activities with parents.



As Diagram 32 shows, the most common activity was to involve parents and children in an **event launching Sifriyat Pijama** (65% reported doing so). Other joint activities, conducted on a smaller scale, included a session for Family Day, a Book Week event or a holiday-related session.

The teachers were also asked to what extent they initiate parental activity to encourage reading. Diagram 33 shows the percentage of teachers who responded that they often take various initiatives to encourage parental involvement.



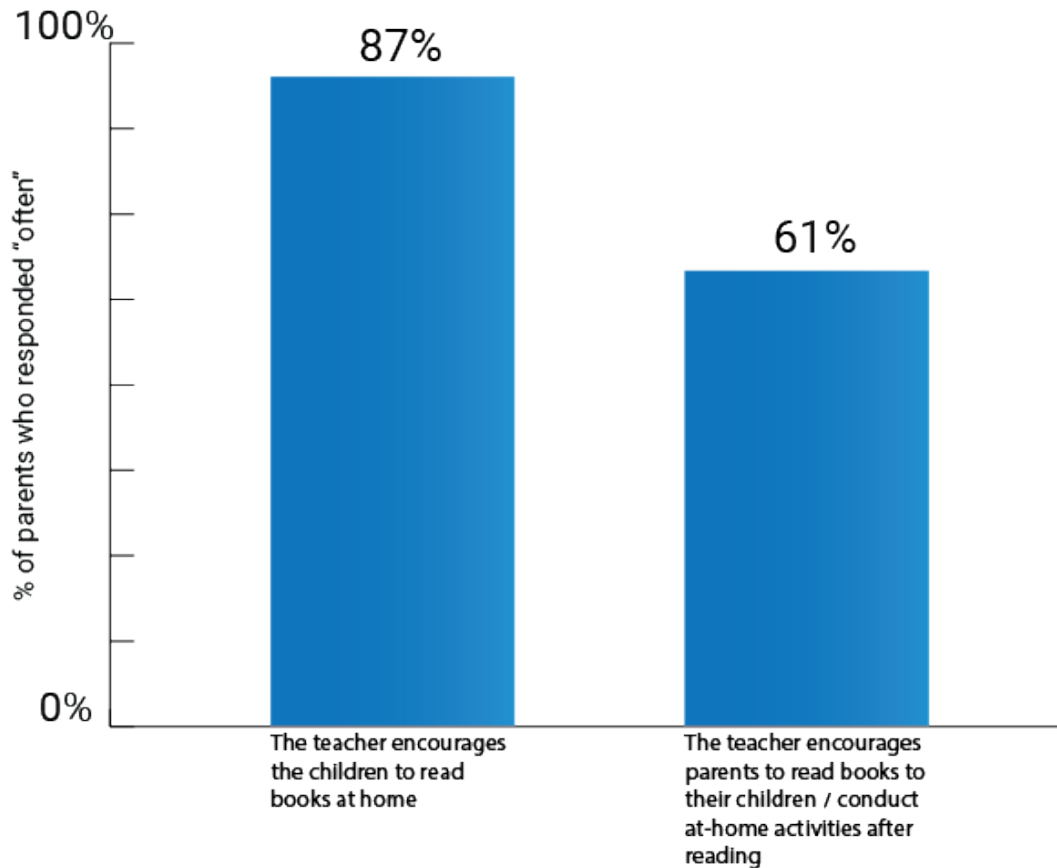
As Diagram 33 shows, the teachers say that they **focus on encouraging children to read at home – alone or with their parents**. About 90% reported that they often ask the parents to encourage their children to read books at home or suggest to the children that they ask their parents to read the books to them or to read together. In addition, about 80% reported that they often initiate communication with the parents to encourage them to read books to their children. Other activities were conducted less frequently: Only 36% reported that they often instruct the parents on how to read books to their child, and 26% said they often send parents activity sheets or instructions for joint at-home activities related to a book.

***Parents' reports (from the surveys)***

The parents were also asked to report whether they receive instructions from the teachers. Diagram 34 shows the percentage of parents who responded that the teachers often communicate with them about each of the initiatives.

Table 34: Parents Reported

Contacting parents and encouraging their involvement



As Diagram 34 shows, **the parents reported that the teachers' efforts to encourage reading are primarily directed at the children and less at the parents** (though a significant effort is directed at the parents too). 87% reported that the teacher often encourages the children to read books at home, and 61% reported that the teacher often encourages them to read books to their children or asks them to conduct book-related activities at home (a large percentage, but lower than among preschool teachers).

## At-Home Activities

### *Parents' reports (from the surveys)*

As described in the next section, **76% of the parents responded that their child reads independently most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed, and 64% reported that they or another family member read the books to the child at home.** The parents were asked if they engage in activities related to the books distributed in the program and whether they read and use the suggestions for parents in the books. Diagrams 35 and 36 display their responses. Diagram 35 shows the percentage of parents who reported that **their child and another family member or their child independently engaged in one of the activities** in the wake of most or all of the books, and Diagram 36 shows the percentage of parents who reported that **they are familiar with the suggestions for joint activities in the books, and the percentage of those who read and used these suggestions** after most or all of the books.

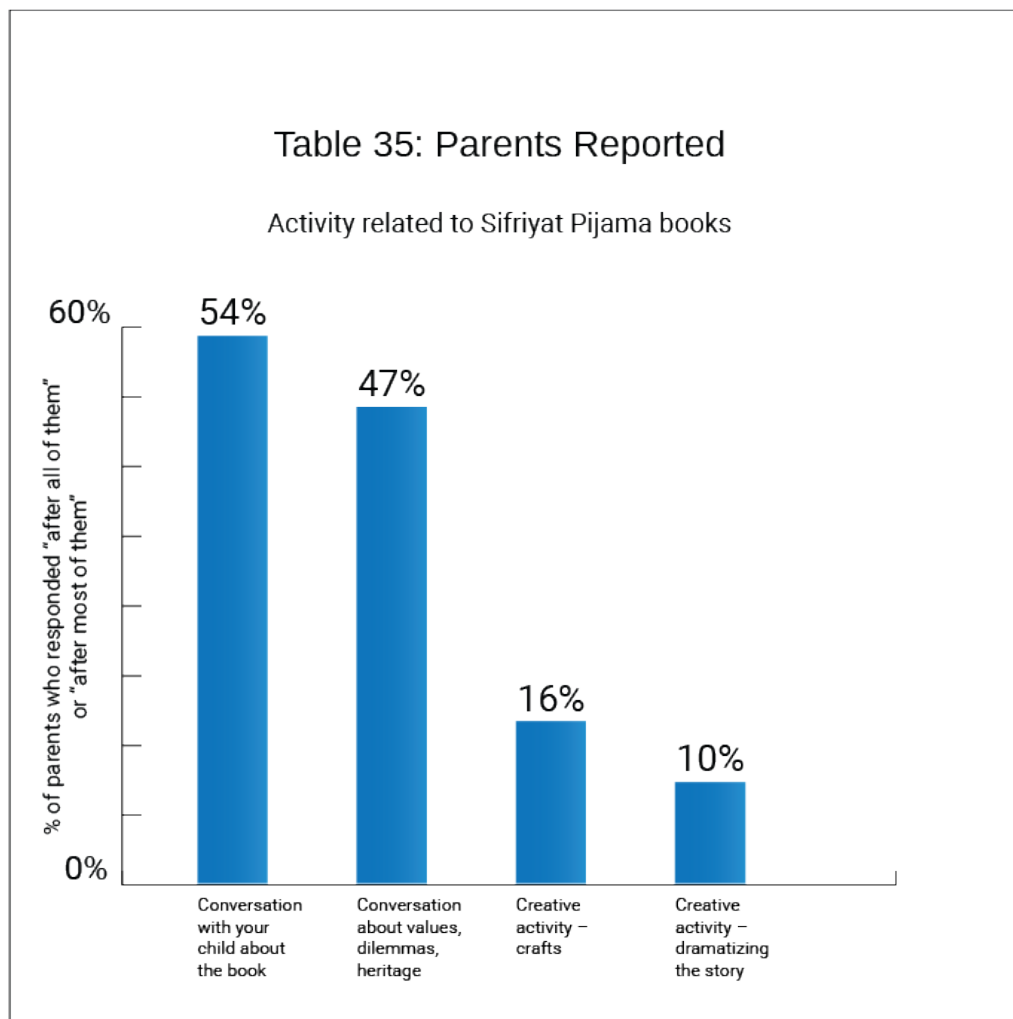
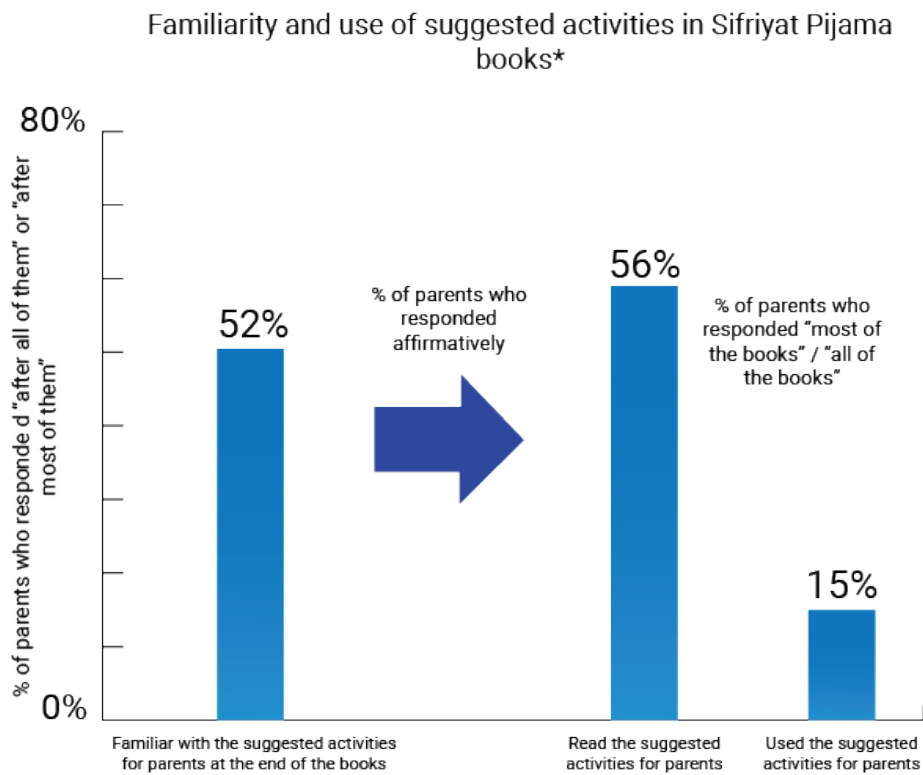


Diagram 35 shows that **about half** of the parents reported that they **discuss the books or values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc. in the wake of all or most of the books.** (About 30% reported that they do not engage in such discussion after all or most of the books.)

In regard to **creative activities**, a **few** parents reported that they engage in arts and crafts activity after most or all of the books (about 15%) or act out the story (10%). Most reported that they do not engage in such activities at all (73%).

The reports from parents of elementary school pupils on at-home activities related to Sifriyat Pijama books are quite similar to the reports from parents of preschoolers.

Table 36: Parents Reported



As Diagram 36 shows, about **50%** of the parents reported that they are **familiar with the suggested activities** for parents that appear in the books received in the Sifriyat Pijama program, and 56% of them reported that they **read** the suggestions in most or all of the books. **15%** reported that they **used the instructions in most or all of the books**. 23% reported that they did not do this at all, and 65% said they did this infrequently.

In comparison to the findings from the study of preschools, a smaller percentage of parents of first graders and second graders reported that they are familiar with the suggestions for shared parent-child activities that appear in the books.

### ***Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)***

In the qualitative study, the teachers and coordinators were asked about at-home activities. **Some of them said that the parents were conducting activities with the children at home, and others said that the parents were not doing so because of a lack of fluency in Hebrew; and some of the teachers said they didn't know what went on at home.** For example: "We receive good feedback from the parents. The children say: 'Mom enjoyed, the book was beautiful, Dad read me the book.' There are some parents who document the activity and there are some parents who don't know how to read, so an older sibling reads [to the child]. Since there's a problem in some of the homes, most of the activity takes place in the classroom"; "the parents read to the children at home. I don't know whether they do something besides reading to them"; "I don't know what the parents do with the books. I think that the connection with the parents is more relevant in preschool. There, the children like it when they read to them several times."

### **Communication between Preschool and the School**

Sifriyat Pijama's leaders attribute great importance to the continuity of activities for encouraging reading, including activities conducted in the children's homes (as presented in the previous section). However, the carryover from the program in preschool to the program in elementary school is also very important. In this section, we'll present findings on the communication and carryover between the preschools and elementary schools.

### ***Teachers' reports (from the surveys)***

First, the teachers were asked whether the children in their class had participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool. Of the 69 teachers who responded to this question, **51% reported that most or all of the children in their class had participated in the program in preschool**, and 22% responded that half of them had participated in Sifriyat Pijama in preschool (compared to 27% who said that few or none of their pupils has participated in the program in preschool).

Table 7 shows the breakdown of responses to the question of how they knew whether their children had participated in the program in preschool (the total exceeds 100% because the respondents could choose more than one answer).

**Table 7: How the teachers know whether the children in their class participated in the program in preschool (teachers' reports)**

Explanation	% of teachers
The children spoke about it in the classroom	93%
The parents mentioned this to the teacher	61%
The children brought to class some Sifriyat Pijama books they had received in the past	52%
Number of respondents	56

The teachers were then asked whether they are familiar with the books that were distributed in the preschools. **14%** (of the 57 teachers who responded) reported that they **knew which books the children received** (and 25% responded that they knew some of them). Nonetheless, only **24%** (of 49 respondents) felt that **this information is helpful in running the program in the classroom**.

***Reports from educators (from the qualitative study)***

A similar picture emerged from the interviews: all of the interviewees said **they have no contact with the preschools** in regard to Sifriyat Pijama and most of the teachers said **they do not know what was done in the preschools** in the framework of the program, and that **they are not familiar with the books** that were distributed in preschools.

Some teachers said that the children mentioned during the lessons that they had also received books in preschool, but did not say anything more about this. There was only one elementary school where books distributed in preschool were placed on the library shelves in the space for grades 1 and 2, and the children could read these books on their own (which was not possible in the preschools).

***Parents' reports (from the surveys)***

The parents were asked about other interfaces with the Sifriyat Pijama program – whether through their child's participation in the program in the past or through the participation of other children in the family. **37%** of the parents reported that they **thought the Sifriyat Pijama operated in their child's preschool during the previous year (2012-13)** and **52% reported that their other children had participated or were participating in the program** (in preschool or in elementary school).



Nearly all of the parents (96%) reported that they kept at home all of the Sifriyat Pijama books the children received this year and in previous years.

### **Carryover Outside the Classroom (from the surveys)**

In addition to the connection between the school and the home, and the carryover from the preschool to the elementary school, the teachers were asked whether there was collaboration outside of the classroom. **71%** of the teachers responded affirmatively; **in most cases, this involved joint activity with another grade-level class.** In response to this question, a few teachers mentioned collaboration with the municipal library, a class from another school, a 1<sup>st</sup> grade or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class.

#### **Carryover and Communication between School and the Environment: Summary**

##### **Carryover between the school and the home**

**Communication between the teachers and the parents:** **70%** of the teachers reported that they incorporated the books in **shared activities** for parents and children at school, usually during an **event to launch Sifriyat Pijama.** At the same time, **47%** of the parents reported that **joint activities** related to Sifriyat Pijama books were conducted in the classroom, usually **an event to launch the program or during Book Week.** In addition, **65%** of the parents reported that an **information meeting** about the program was held and that they were told in this meeting that the books are intended for shared parent-child reading.

**Most of the parents reported that they initiate communication with the parents and, in particular, encourage reading at home – independent reading by the child or reading together with the parents** (82%-91% reported that they encourage reading at home, whether by directly communicating with the parents or via the children). At the same time, **61% of the parents said that the teacher directly encourages them** to read with their child, but many more (**87%**) reported that the teacher **encourages the children** to read at home. Other types of communication, such as instructions on how parents should read to their children (36%) or sending activity sheets to the home (26%) occur much less frequently (though some teachers reported this in the interviews in the qualitative study).

**At-home activities according to the parents' reports:** **About half** of the parents reported that they **discussed the book or values, dilemmas, etc. after reading most or all of the books to their child.** A few (10%-15%) engaged in creative activities.

About half of them were **familiar with the suggested activities for parents included in the books;** **56% read** the suggestions, but only **15% used** them.

##### **Carryover outside the classroom (from preschool to the school and with the community)**

**Carryover from the preschool to the school: Contrary to the expectations of the Sifriyat Pijama's leaders that there would be continuity between the preschool program and the elementary school program, there appears to be no such connection:** While about half of the teachers said that most or all of their pupils had participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool (most of the teachers learned of this from their pupils or their parents), **only a few (14%) knew which books were distributed in the preschools.** On the other hand, it seems that the teachers do not feel the need for this information: **only 24% reported that this information would help them** in running the program in the classroom. In the observations, we saw that only one school placed Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in preschool on the library shelves in the space for grades 1 and 2.

At the same time, **37%** of the parents reported that the **program had operated at their child's preschool**, and some of them (**52%**) were familiar with the program through the **participation of other children in the family. Nearly all (96%) kept the Sifriyat Pijama books they received in the past.**

**Collaboration outside of the classroom:** 71% of the teachers reported collaboration outside of the classroom, usually with parallel grade-level classrooms.

## **Reading Habits and Exposure to Books (in the Program and in General)**

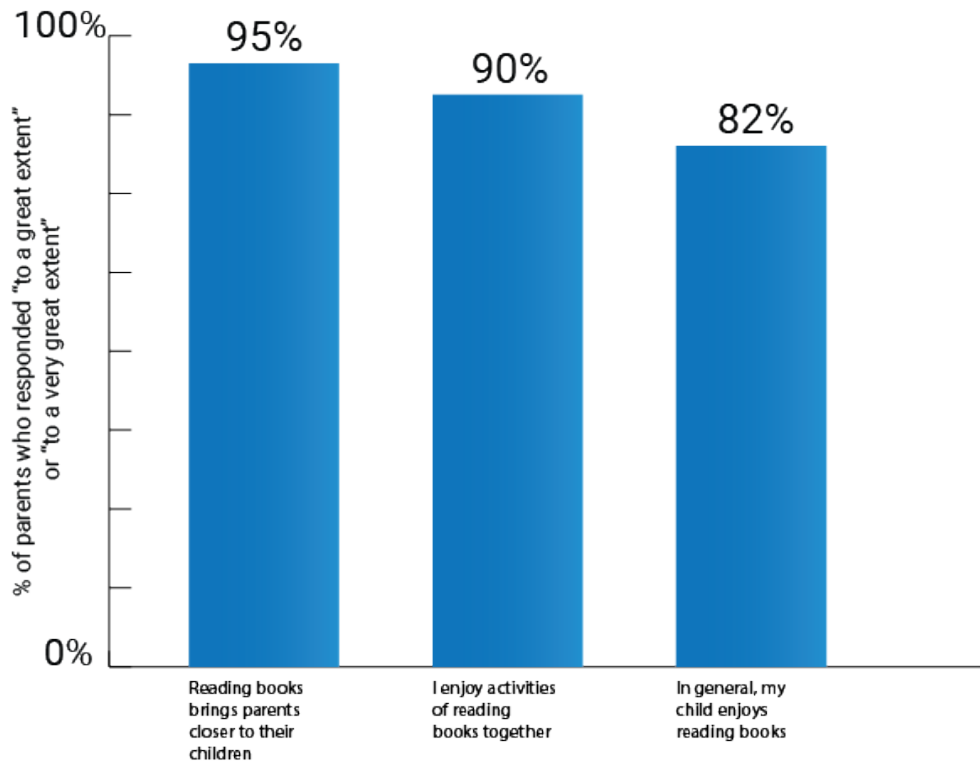
In addition to their evaluation of the Sifriyat Pijama program, the parents were asked about the reading habits of their children, their attitude toward reading books and how many books their children have at home (one of the program goals is to increase access to children's books by giving books as a gift and enlarging the home library).

### **Attitudes towards Reading (parents' reports)**

Diagram 37 shows the percentage of parents who expressed positive views (to a great or very great extent) about reading books.

Table 37: Parents Reported

Attitudes toward reading books in general



As Diagram 37 shows, most of the parents (95%) are aware of the importance of reading books together and enjoying this (95% to a great extent and 90% to a very great extent). A slightly lower percentage reported that their child enjoys reading books in general.

#### **Books in the Home (parents' reports)**

As noted, each child receives four books during the course of the year in the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program. The parents were asked how many books their child has in the home library. Table 8 shows their estimates of the number of Sifriyat Pijama books at home and the overall number of children's books at home, including Sifriyat Pijama books but not including books they borrowed. In addition, we calculated – based on their reports – the percentage of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library. This data is presented in Table 9.

**Table 8: Number of Sifriyat Pijama books and total number of books in the home library (parents' reports)**

No. of Sifriyat Pijama books at home	% of parents		No. of books at home that are appropriate for the children's age	% of parents
up to 4	21%		up to 10	17%
5-8	18%		11-20	19%
9-20	44%		21-40	28%
more than 20	17%		41-50	15%
			more than 50	22%

**Table 9: Percentage of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library (parents' reports)**

% of Sifriyat Pijama books in the home library	% of parents
up to 10%	12%
11%-20%	20%
21%-30%	12%
31%-40%	10%
41%-50%	8%
51%-60%	7%
61%-70%	7%
71%-80%	5%

81%-99%	2%
100% (all of the books at home are Sifriyat Pijama books)	17%

\* Note: based on 284 respondents (not including 13 parents who said the number of Sifriyat Pijama books is greater than the total number of books in the home library)

As Table 8 shows, **44% of the children have 9-20 Sifriyat Pijama books** at home and 17% have more than 20. The rest (about 40%) have fewer than 9. In addition, 36% have more than 20 books appropriate for the child’s age at home (including Sifriyat Pijama books but not borrowed books) and 43% have 21-50 books. The data on the total number of books in the home library is similar to the figures received for preschoolers. About half of the children have up to 15 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and about half have more. In addition, 37% of the children have up to 20 age-appropriate books (including Sifriyat Pijama books but not borrowed books), and 43% have 21-50.

Analysis of the data shows that Sifriyat Pijama books are the children’s only age-appropriate books in 17% of the homes; in another 21% of the homes, 50%-99% of the books in the children’s home library are Sifriyat Pijama books.

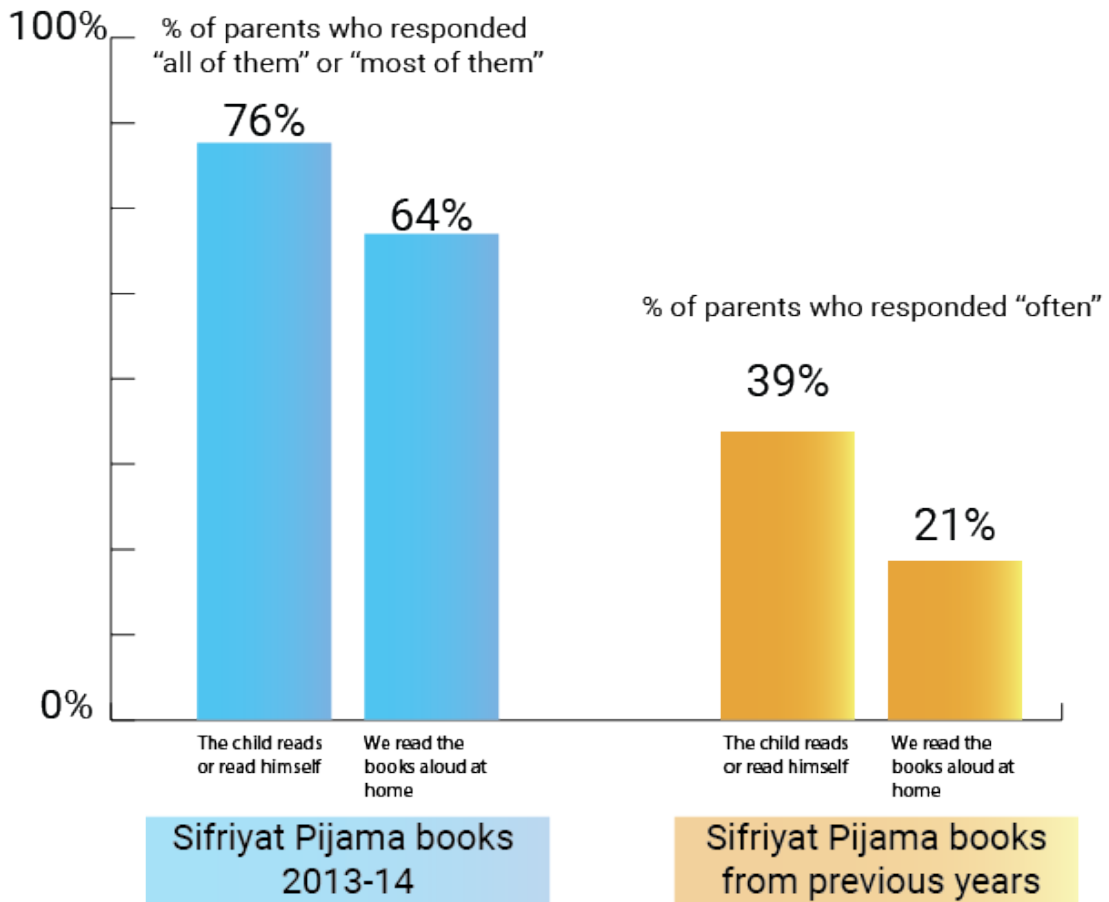
**Reading Habits (parents’ reports)**

In general, **46% of the parents reported that their child reads a book or that they read a book to their child approximately once a week (unrelated to Sifriyat Pijama), and the others – more frequently** (parents of first graders more often than parents of second graders).

Diagram 38 shows the parents’ reports on reading habits of Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in 2013-14 and in previous years (please note – the scale is different).

Table 37: Parents Reported

Habits of reading Sifriyat Pijama books\*



\* Note: In 2013-14, **17%** of the parents reported that **they do not read the Sifriyat Pijama books to their child** and **4%** reported that the children **do not** read them on their own.

\* Sifriyat Pijama books from earlier years: **31%** reported that **they do not read to their child**, and **16%** reported that **their children do not read any of these books** on their own.

\* As expected, parents of first graders tend to read more to their children.

As Diagram 38 shows, **76%** of the parents responded that their child read by himself most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books distributed. In addition, **64%** reported that they or other family members read the books to the child at home.

**In regard to Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years, 38%** responded that the children independently read the books they received from Sifriyat Pijama in previous years, and **21%** reported that they **read** these books to their children.

As expected, a larger percentage of parents of children in 1st grade report reading the books to their children, in comparison to parents of children in 2nd grade.

#### **Reading Habits and Exposure to Books: Summary**

About 50% of the parents reported that their child usually reads at home once a week, and the rest of the parents reported that their child reads more frequently.

In regard to reading Sifriyat Pijama books, there was a clear preference for the books distributed this year: 76% reported that their child independently read most or all of the books distributed by Sifriyat Pijama this year, and 64% reported reading the books to their child (parents of 1st graders read to their children more in comparison to parents of 2nd graders). Some of the parents reported that their child also reads books distributed in previous years – on their own (38%) or together (21%).

In general, most of the parents felt that their child enjoys reading (82%) and were aware of the importance of reading together and its contribution to the parent-child connection (90% and more). Despite this, as noted, a larger percentage reported that the children read the books themselves (as opposed to reading together with a parent).

44% of the children have 9-20 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and 17% have more than 20. In addition, about 35% have a total of up to 20 age-appropriate books at home (including Sifriyat Pijama books, but not including borrowed books); 43% of the children have 21-50 books. In 17% of the homes, Sifriyat Pijama books are the only age-appropriate children's books, and in another 21% of the homes, Sifriyat Pijama books account for 50%-99% of all children's books.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Sifriyat Pijama Preschool Teacher Questionnaire 2013-14

Good evening, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from RAMA, the National Authority for Education Assessment and Evaluation. We're conducting telephone interviews as part of an evaluation study on the Sifriyat Pijama program operating in the preschool.

RAMA and the [Education Ministry's] Pre-Elementary Education Division are conducting the evaluation study in order to examine how the program is operating at the preschool and what you think about it.

Your responses are very important to us and will help in drawing lessons and improving the program to better meet your needs and those of the preschoolers. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the evaluation team. The responses of interviewees will only be presented as a general picture and not on the individual level.

Could you spare a few minutes of your time now?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Could we speak at another time? When would be convenient?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Refuses to participate in the survey

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → Thank you, let's start (advance to question 1)

#### 1. Did the Sifriyat Pijama program operate in your preschool this year?

1. No \_\_\_\_\_ → confirm that the preschool teacher understands the question. Make a note, thank her and conclude
2. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → move on to the next question
3. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
4. Refuses \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
5. Not relevant \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude

#### 2. Did the Sifriyat Pijama program also operate in the preschool in previous years?

1. No, this is the first year \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
2. Yes
3. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
4. Refuses \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
5. Not relevant \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude

#### 3. If so, how many years? (read the choices one after another)



1. This is the second year (skip to question 5)
  2. This is the third year (skip to question 5)
  3. This is the fourth year (skip to question 5)
  4. (don't read this) she gave another response
  5. I don't know (skip to question 5)
  6. I refuse to say (skip to question 5)
  7. Not relevant (skip to question 5)
4. Specify the response the preschool teacher gave to the previous question: \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Has another program for encouraging reading operated at the preschool in the past?**
1. No (skip to question 8)
  2. Yes
  3. Don't know (skip to question 8)
  4. Refuses (skip to question 8)
  5. Not relevant (skip to question 8)
6. **If so, which program? (open question, don't read the possible responses)**
1. My Home Bookshelf (skip to question 8)
  2. The March of Books (skip to question 8)
  3. A different program
  4. Don't know (skip to question 8)
  5. Refuses (skip to question 8)
  6. Not relevant (skip to question 8)
7. Specify which program and who funded it: \_\_\_\_\_
8. **How many books were distributed so far this year (2013-14) in the Sifriyat Pijama program?**  
(Write a number up to 8 books \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant)

In general, how satisfied are you with the books the preschool received in the framework of the program this year (2013-14), in each of the following aspects:

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
9. Quality of the content	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
10. Quality of the illustrations	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
11. Suitability of the content for the children's age	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
12. Suitability of the content for the preschool's lifestyle and values	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
13. The children's enjoyment of the books	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
14. In general, how satisfied are you with the books the preschool received in the program framework?	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

For each of the following activities I'll read to you, please note whether you do the activity in the preschool with the books you received in the Sifriyat Pijama program. And if so, with how many of the books you received?

	Not at all	With a few books	With about half of the books	With most of the books	With all of the books	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
15. Reading the book you received in the program to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
16. Reading the book you received in the program in small groups	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
17. Independent (unguided) reading of the books by the children	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
18. Discussion of the books with the children – with the entire class or in a group – after reading to them	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
19. Creative activity involving arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
20. Creative activity involving dramatizing the story	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
21. A conversation on values, moral dilemmas, heritage, Jewish-Israeli values, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
22. Shared parent-child activities related to the books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

23. Did you read with the children all of the books that you received in the program? (to the interviewer: there's a total of 8 books, but they may have only received 7 so far)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

24. How many times did you read to the children each book in the program (to the entire class or in small groups)? Write the number of times (if the teacher says it varies, ask for an average): \_\_\_\_\_

25. Do you maintain ongoing communication with the parents about the Sifriyat Pijama program?

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 27)
3. Don't know (skip to question 27)
4. Refuses (skip to question 27)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 27)

26. If you answered yes, what do you do? What is your objective? (open questions)

Do you engage in each of the following with the parents in regard to the books in the Sifriyat Pijama program?

	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Not at all	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
27. Proactively encourage the parents to read books to their children	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
28. Suggest to the children that they ask their parents to read the books to them	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
29. Send activity sheets home or instructions for shared at-home activities with parents in the wake of the books	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
30. Instruct parents on how to read books to their child	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

To what extent do you use the following support systems, if available, when preparing book-related activities for the preschoolers?

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
31. The preschool's trainer	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
32. The preschool's supervisor	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
33. The program's website	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
34. Newsletter for the teacher	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
35. Peer-assisted learning	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
36. Language and literacy workshops	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
37. Suggested activities for parents that appear in the books you received from the program	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
38. To what extent did you independently initiate, plan and prepare activities related to the books?	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
39. Were you assisted by someone else?	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

40. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

41. Are you interested/need further support/instruction in the framework of the program?

1. No (skip to question 43)
2. Yes
3. Don't know (skip to question 43)
4. Refuses (skip to question 43)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 43)

42. Which support/instruction? (open question) \_\_\_\_\_

43. Did you read books with the children during the year that are not included in the Sifriyat Pijama program?

1. Not at all
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Often

5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

**44. Is there a lending library at the preschool?**

1. No (skip to question 46)
2. Yes
3. Don't know (skip to question 46)
4. Refuses (skip to question 46)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 46)

**45. Are the children borrowing more, fewer or the same number of books from the preschool library since the Sifriyat Pijama program began operating?**

1. Many more than in the past
2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Fewer than in the past
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

**46. To what extent do you deal with books in activity at the preschool since the program started – in comparison to the past, before the program?** (to the interviewer: the question here pertains to books in general, not only the program's books)

1. Much more than in the past
2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

**47. To what extent, in your view, do books play a more central role at the preschool and among the children since the program started – in comparison to the past, before the program?** (to the interviewer: the question here pertains to books in general, not only the program's books)

1. Much more than in the past
2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

To what extent does the implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contribute to each of the following areas:

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
48. Scope of reading books to the children in the preschool	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
49. Scope of reading books to the children in the home	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
50. Enriching the children's vocabulary	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
51. Enriching the children's spoken language	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
52. The children's comprehension when listening to a story	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
53. Fostering the children's thinking	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
54. Education for values among the children	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
55. The children's love and enjoyment of reading books	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
56. Centrality of the book in the children's everyday lives	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
57. Fostering the children's preferences and personal taste in choosing books	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
58. The children's desire to read books	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99
59. The children's familiarity with books and authors	5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

60. Is it easier or more difficult for you to run the program at the preschool from year to year?

1. Easier
2. The same
3. More difficult
4. Don't know (skip to question 62)
5. Refuses (skip to question 62)
6. Not relevant (skip to question 62)

61. Please explain your response (open) \_\_\_\_\_

62. Do you devote more or less time in the preschool to the program from year to year?

1. More time
2. The same
3. Less time
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

**63. Do you incorporate the program more or less in the preschool's curriculum from year to year?**

1. More
2. The same
3. Less
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

**64. Are there Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years at the preschool?**

1. Yes (skip to question 66)
2. No
3. Don't know (skip to question 68)
4. Refuses (skip to question 68)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 68)

**65. If the answer is "no": What did the preschool do with the books from previous years? (open)**  
\_\_\_\_\_ (skip to question 68)

**66. Did you read to the children in the preschool books that were distributed in the Sifriyat Pijama program in previous years?**

1. Not at all
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Frequently
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

**67. Besides reading books to the children, did you conduct activities at the preschool this year with books that were distributed in the Sifriyat Pijama program in previous years??**

1. Not at all
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Frequently
5. Don't know



- 6. Refuses
- 7. Not relevant

68. In your opinion, to what extent would the discontinuation of the program harm book-related activity in the preschool?

To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

69. Please explain why (open) \_\_\_\_\_

70. In your opinion, to what extent would the discontinuation of the program harm book-related activity in the home?

To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

71. Please explain why (open) \_\_\_\_\_

72. To what extent do you think the program should be continued?

To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

73. Why? Please explain your response (open) \_\_\_\_\_

74. **To what extent, in general, are you satisfied with the Sifriyat Pijama program operating in the preschool?**

To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

75. **Did you think the program should be compulsory in all preschools in the State of Israel?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

76. **Would you like to continue to participate in the program next year?**

1. Yes
2. Yes, with changes in the format
3. No
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

77. **What would you change in the program? (open) \_\_\_\_\_**

In conclusion, a few background questions:

78. **How old are the children in the preschool?**

1. Kindergarten only (skip to question 80)
2. Kindergarten and pre-K (skip to question 80)
3. Pre-K only (skip to question 80)
4. Other
5. Don't know (skip to question 80)
6. Refuses (skip to question 80)
7. Not relevant (skip to question 80)

79. **Please specify \_\_\_\_\_**

80. **Does the preschool belong to the state education stream or the state-religious stream?**

1. State
2. State-religious
3. Don't know

- 4. Refuses
- 5. Not relevant

81. **How many years have you worked as a preschool teacher in the education system?** Write the number of years: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant
82. **How many years have you worked as a preschool teacher in the current preschool?** Write the number of years: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant
83. **How many children of new immigrants are in the preschool? (to the interviewer: children from homes where the spoken language is not Hebrew).** Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant
84. **How many children are in the preschool in total?** Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant
85. **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for your cooperation!**

## Appendix 2: Sifriyat Pijama Preschool Parent Questionnaire 2013-14

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from RAMA, the National Authority for Education Assessment and Evaluation. We're conducting telephone interviews as part of an evaluation study on the Sifriyat Pijama reading program operating in (interviewer: insert the child's name)'s preschool.

RAMA and the [Education Ministry's] Pre-Elementary Education Division are conducting the evaluation study, including interviews with preschool teachers and parents, in order to examine the program's impact on the children's reading habits and love of books.

Your responses are very important to us and will help in the effort to encourage reading among preschoolers. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the evaluation team. The responses of interviewees will only be presented as a general picture and not on the individual level.

Could you spare a few minutes of your time now?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Could we speak at another time? When would be convenient?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Refuses to participate in the survey

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → Thank you, let's start (advance to question 1)

1. **Did the Sifriyat Pijama program operate in [insert the child's name]'s preschool this year (2013-14)?** (interviewer: if the interviewee is not certain, ask: "is your child in kindergarten or pre-kindergarten?" (1) If the child is in kindergarten, say: "as part of the program, your child received softcover books such as [list of kindergarten books]." If the parent is still unsure, read the names of the pre-K books. (2) if the child is in pre-K, say: "as part of the program, your child received softcover books such as [list of kindergarten books]."

1. No \_\_\_\_\_ → skip to question 62
2. Yes
3. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_ → skip to question 62
4. Refuses \_\_\_\_\_ → skip to question 62
5. Not relevant \_\_\_\_\_ → skip to question 62

2. **Did the Sifriyat Pijama program, in which you received softcover books at home, operate in your child's preschool last year (2012-13),?**

1. No
2. Yes
3. Don't know
4. The child wasn't in preschool last year
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

3. **Have your other children participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool or elementary school? It is important to note that the program began to operate gradually four years ago, during the 2009-10 school year.**

1. No
2. Yes – one other child
3. Yes – two other children
4. Yes – three or more children
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

Introduction before question 4: In the following questions, I'll ask you specifically about how the Sifriyat Pijama program is implemented in [insert the child's name]'s preschool.

4. **Did the teacher at [insert the child's name]'s preschool convene a parent's meeting at the beginning of the school year in which she explained about the Sifriyat Pijama program, its goals and mode of operation?** (to the interviewer: an explanation about the program during a parents' meeting at the beginning of the year is sufficient)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

5. **How many books did your child receive in the Sifriyat Pijama program at the preschool during the current school year (2013-14)?** (to the interviewer: write a number up to 8 books or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant) \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Do you or another member of the family read these books to your child at home?**

1. Yes, all of them
2. Yes, most of them
3. Some yes, some no
4. Didn't read most of them
5. Didn't read any of the books to the child at home
6. Don't know
7. Refuses
8. Not relevant

7. **Approximately how many times did you read each book that you received this year in the Sifriyat Pijama program, throughout the year?** Write the number of times or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant (if the interviewee says it varies, ask for an average) \_\_\_\_\_

For each of the following activities I'll read to you, please note whether you do it at home with the books you received in the Sifriyat Pijama program this year. And if so, with how many of the books you received?

	Not at all	With a few books	With about half of the books	With most of the books	With all of the books	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
<b>8. Conversation with your child about the book after reading the book to the child</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>9. Creative activity related to arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>10. Creative activity related to dramatizing the story</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>11. A conversation on values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc.</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**12. Are you familiar with the suggested activities for parents that appear at the end of the books you received in the Sifriyat Pijama program?**

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 17)
3. Don't know (skip to question 17)
4. Refuses (skip to question 17)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 17)

**13. Did you read the suggested activities for parents that appear in the books? If so, in how many of them?** 1. Not at all 2. In a few of the books 3. In about half of the books 4. In most of the books 5. In all of the books 6. Don't know 7. Refuses 8. Not relevant

**14. Did you use and conduct activity with your child based on the suggested activities for parents?** 1. Not at all 2. In a few of the books 3. In about half of the books 4. In most of the books 5. In all of the books 6. Don't know 7. Refuses 8. Not relevant

**15. If you answered 2-5 on question 14, to what extent did your child enjoy the shared activity?** 1. To a very small extent 2. To a small extent 3. To a moderate extent 4. To a great extent 5. To a very great extent 6. Don't know 7. Refuses 8. Not relevant

**16. To what extent did you gain inspiration for other activities by using the suggested activities for parents?** 1. To a very small extent 2. To a small extent 3. To a moderate extent 4. To a great extent 5. To a very great extent 6. Don't know 7. Refuses 8. Not relevant

To what extent does the implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contribute to each of the following areas:

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
17. Scope of reading books to your child in the home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
18. Enriching your child's vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19. Your child's comprehension when listening to a story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20. Education for values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21. Your child's love and enjoyment of reading books	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
22. Your child's desire to read books	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
23. Your child's familiarity with books and authors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
24. Expanding your family's home library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
25. Visiting and borrowing books from the local library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
26. Borrowing books from the preschool library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

In general, how satisfied are you with the books your child received in the framework of the Sifriyat Pijama program this year at preschool, in each of the following aspects: (To the interviewer: If necessary, you can remind the parents of the names of the books – list of books for kindergarten list of books for pre-K.)

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
27. Quality of the content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
28. Quality of the illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
29. Suitability of the content for the age of your child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30. Relevance of the content to your children's world and the topics that occupy them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

31. Suitability of the content for the family's lifestyle and values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
32. In general, how satisfied are you with the books you received this year in the program framework?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

33. How many Sifriyat Pijama books do you have in your home, including books from previous years or from your other children? (to the interviewer: each year, 8 books are distributed to each child in preschools participating in the program). Write the number \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

34. How many books that are appropriate for your child's age, including Sifriyat Pijama books, do you have in your home, not including books borrowed from the preschool library or public library? Write the number \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

Did you save all of the Sifriyat Pijama books the family received, including those from previous years or from your other children? (interviewer: the respondent can choose more than one answer)

Number	Description	Yes	No	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
35	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
36	No, you gave some books to family and friends	1	2	3	4	5
37	No, you contributed some books	1	2	3	4	5
38	No, you threw away some books	1	2	3	4	5
39	No, some books got worn out and torn	1	2	3	4	5
40	No, some books got lost	1	2	3	4	5

41. Do you read to your child Sifriyat Pijama books that you received in previous years?

1. Yes, often
2. Occasionally
3. Rarely
4. No
5. Don't know



- 6. Refuses
- 7. Not relevant

42. **Irrespective of the program, approximately how many times per week does your child read a book or has a book read to him/her?**

- 1. Once a day or more
- 2. About 3-4 times a week
- 3. About 2-3 times a week
- 4. About once a week
- 5. Less than once a week
- 6. Don't know
- 7. Refuses
- 8. Not relevant

43. **To what extent do you feel that books play a more central role in your home – in comparison to the past, prior to the Sifriyat Pijama program?**

- 1. Much more than in the past
- 2. More than in the past
- 3. Slightly more than in the past
- 4. The same as in the past
- 5. Less than in the past
- 6. Don't know
- 7. Refuses
- 8. Not relevant

44. **Was there joint activity for parents and children this year at the preschool related to a Sifriyat Pijama book?**

- 1. No – skip to question 53
- 2. Yes, once
- 3. Yes, more than once
- 4. Don't know – skip to question 53
- 5. Refuses – skip to question 53
- 6. Not relevant – skip to question 53

(for those who responded affirmatively to the previous question: **Which type of activity?** (the respondent can choose more than one response))

Number	Description	Yes	No	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
45	Reading the book together	1	2	3	4	5

46	A conversation about the book after reading it aloud	1	2	3	4	5
47	Creative or experiential activity related to the book (such as: dramatizing the story, writing and illustrating, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
48	Decorating the child's book bag	1	2	3	4	5
49	Incorporating a book in other activities in the preschool (launching Sifriyat Pijama, Family Day, a party at the preschool, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
50	A discussion of values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
51	Other	1	2	3	4	5

52. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

53. Does the preschool teacher encourage you to read books to your child or ask you to conduct book-related activities at home?

1. Yes, very often
2. Yes, quite often
3. Sometimes yes, sometimes no
4. Quite rarely
5. Very rarely
6. Not at all
7. Don't know
8. Refuses
9. Not relevant

In conclusion, I'll ask a few general questions:

54. In general, irrespective of the Sifriyat Pijama program, to what extent does your child enjoy reading books?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

55. To what extent do you enjoy reading books together with your child?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

56. To what extent do you think that reading books brings parents and children closer together?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

57. In general, to what extent are you satisfied with the Sifriyat Pijama program operating in the preschool?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

58. Do you have suggestions or ideas for improving the program? (open) \_\_\_\_\_

59. In general, irrespective of the program for encouraging reading, to what extent are you satisfied with the preschool?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**60. Would you like the preschool to continue to participate in the program next year?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. It doesn't matter to me
4. My child will not be in preschool next year (skip to question 62)
5. Don't know (skip to question 62)
6. Refuses (skip to question 62)
7. Not relevant (skip to question 62)

**61. Why?** (open question)

Finally, a few background questions:

**62. Please assess your fluency in Hebrew on a scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (excellent).** (Write a number \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant)

**63. What is your mother tongue (primary spoken language)?**

1. Hebrew
2. Russian
3. French
4. English
5. Amharic
6. Other language
7. Don't know
8. Refuses
9. Not relevant

**64. Your education level:**

1. Some high school (skip to question 66)
2. High school graduate (skip to question 66)
3. High school graduate + matriculation certificate (skip to question 66)
4. Bachelor's degree (skip to question 66)
5. Master's degree (skip to question 66)
6. PhD (skip to question 66)
7. Other
8. Don't know (skip to question 66)
9. Refuses (skip to question 66)
10. Not relevant (skip to question 66)

**65. Specify:**

**66. How do you define yourself religiously?**

1. Secular (skip to question 68)
2. Traditional (skip to question 68)
3. Religious (skip to question 68)
4. Other

5. Don't know (skip to question 68)
6. Refuses (skip to question 68)
7. Not relevant (skip to question 68)

67. **Specify:** \_\_\_\_\_

68. **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your cooperation!**

### Appendix 3: Sifriyat Pijama School Teacher Questionnaire 2013-14

Good evening, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from RAMA, the National Authority for Education Assessment and Evaluation. We're conducting telephone interviews as part of an evaluation study on the Sifriyat Pijama program operating in your classroom.

RAMA and the [Education Ministry's] Elementary Education Division are conducting the evaluation study in order to examine how the program is operating and what you think about it.

Your responses are very important to us and will help in drawing lessons and improving the program to better meet your needs and those of the children. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the evaluation team. The responses of interviewees will only be presented as a general picture and not on the individual level.

Could you spare a few minutes of your time now?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Could we speak at another time? When would be convenient?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Refuses to participate in the survey

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → Thank you, let's start (advance to question 1)

#### 1. Did the Sifriyat Pijama program operate in your class this year?

1. No \_\_\_\_\_ → confirm that the teacher understands the question. Make a note, thank her and conclude
2. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → move on to the next question
3. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
4. Refuses \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude
5. Not relevant \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank her and conclude

#### 2. Did you participate as a teacher in another reading encouragement program this year (2013-14)?

1. No (skip to question 4)
2. Yes (advance to question 3)
3. Don't know (skip to question 4)
4. Refuses (skip to question 4)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 4)

#### 3. If so, which program? (open)

#### 4. Did you participate as a teacher in another reading encouragement program in previous years?

1. No (skip to question 6)
2. Yes
3. Don't know (skip to question 6)
4. Refuses (skip to question 6)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 6)

5. **If so, which program?** (open)

6. **How many books were distributed to the children in the Sifriyat Pijama program so far this year?** Write a number \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant. (For your information, up to 4 books were distributed)

7. **Did the program's books arrive in your classroom according to the scheduled dates?**

1. Yes, all of the books arrived on time
2. Most of the books arrived on time
3. Most of the books did not arrive on time
4. None of the books arrived on time
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

8. **In general, did the program's books arrive in your classroom in the requested quantity?**

1. Yes, the requested number of books arrived
2. No, too few books arrived
3. No, too many books arrived
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

9. **Now I'll ask about your level of satisfaction regarding each book you received this year. Do you teach 1st grade or 2nd grade?**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> grade
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (skip to question 28)
3. Don't know (skip to question 46)
4. Refuses (skip to question 46)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 46)

Please state how satisfied you were with the various components of each book distributed this year.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> grade</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>To a small extent</b>	<b>To a moderate extent</b>	<b>To a great extent</b>	<b>To a very great extent</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refuses</b>	<b>The book didn't arrive</b>
<b>(1) Ogi / Neri Aluma</b>								
10. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
11. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
12. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

13. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?

<b>(2) Cloulette / Tom Lichtenheld</b>								
14. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
15. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
16. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

17. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?

<b>(3) Concert in the Sand / Tami Shem-Tov and Rachella Sandbank</b>								
18. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
19. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
20. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

21. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?

<b>(4) Feathers in the Wind / Shlomo Abbas</b>								
22. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
23. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
24. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99



**25. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?**

**Which book did you like the most or do you think was most appropriate for the children in the class?**

26. To the interviewer: write the number of the book (1-4)

27. Why? (**open**) and skip to question 46

**Please state how satisfied you were with the various components of each book distributed this year.**

<u>2<sup>nd</sup> grade</u>	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	The book didn't arrive
<b>(5) The Owl Who Saw Backwards / Yossi Goddard</b>								
28. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
29. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
30. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

**31. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?**

<b>(6) A Tale of Two Cats / A. Hillel</b>								
32. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
33. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
34. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

**35. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?**

<b>(7) Our Tales / Shoham Smit</b>								
36. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
37. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
38. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

**39. Why were you dissatisfied with the book?**

<b>(8) The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread / Dan Huppert</b>								
40. The book's plot, language and age-appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
41. The illustrations	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
42. The book in general	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

43. **Why were you dissatisfied with the book?**

44. **Which book did you like the most or do you think was most appropriate for the children in the class?** To the interviewer: write the number of the book (5-8)

45. **Why? (open)**

46. **How many times on average did you read each of the books to the children in the class (to all or some of the children)?**

1. Never
2. Once
3. Twice
4. 3 or more times
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

For each of the following activities I'll read to you, please note whether it occurred in the class in the framework of the program. And if so, with how many of the books you received?

	None	One book	Two books	Three books	Four books	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
47. Reading the book you received in the program aloud to the entire class	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
48. Reading the book you received in the program aloud in small groups	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
49. Independent (unguided) reading of the books by the children	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
50. Discussion of the books with the children – with the entire class or in a group – after reading to them	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
51. Creative activity involving arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
52. Creative activity involving dramatizing the story	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
53. A conversation on values, moral dilemmas, heritage, Jewish-Israeli values, etc.	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
54. Connection to the values of the Key to the Heart	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
55. Activity with the music or art teacher	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
56. Tutoring activity by older children related to the books	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
57. Hosting another class for book-related activity	0	1	2	3	4	97	98	99

58. Were there books the children received but didn't read at all in the classroom – either together or individually?

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 60)
3. Don't know (skip to question 60)

4. Refuses (skip to question 60)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 60)

59. Why? (open) \_\_\_\_\_

60. To what extent does Sifriyat Pijama help or hinder you in implementing the curriculum and the Ministry of Education’s program?

Helps very much	Helps quite a lot	Doesn’t help or hinder	Hinders quite a lot	Hinders very much	Don’t know	Refuses	Not relevant
5	4	3	2	1	97	98	99

61. In what way? Why? (open) \_\_\_\_\_

To what extent do you use the following support systems when preparing book-related activities for the children in the class? If a support system is unavailable, specify “Not relevant”

	To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don’t know	Refuses	Not relevant
62. The school’s literacy instructor	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
63. Social education instructor	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
64. The program’s website	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
65. Sifriyat Pijama’s newsletter or website	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
66. Peer-assisted learning	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
67. Language and literacy workshops	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
68. Suggested activities for parents that appear in the books you received from the program	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
69. The school’s language coordinator	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
70. To what extent did you independently initiate, plan and prepare activities related to the books?	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
71. Were you assisted by someone else?	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

72. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

**73. Are you interested / need further support / instruction in the framework of the program?**

1. No (skip to question 75)
2. Yes
3. Don't know (skip to question 75)
4. Refuses (skip to question 75)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 75)

**74. Which support / instruction? (open question) \_\_\_\_\_**

Do you engage in each of the following with the parents in regard to the books in the Sifriyat Pijama program?

	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
75. Proactively encourage the parents to read books to their children	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
76. Ask the parents to encourage the children to read the books at home	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
77. Suggest to the children that they ask their parents to read the books to them or together with them	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
78. Send activity pages home or instructions for shared at-home activities with parents in the wake of the books	1	2	3	4	97	98	99
79. Instruct parents on how to read books to their child	1	2	3	4	97	98	99

**80. Did you use the books in joint activities for parents and children at the school?**

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 87)
3. Don't know (skip to question 87)
4. Refuses (skip to question 87)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 87)

**How did you use the books in joint activities for parents and children at the school?** (to the interviewer: the respondent can give more than one answer)

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refuses</b>	<b>Not relevant</b>
81. Holiday-related event	1	2	97	98	99
82. Family Day event	1	2	97	98	99
83. Book Week event	1	2	97	98	99
84. Event to launch Sifriyat Pijama program	1	2	97	98	99
85. Other	1	2	97	98	99

86. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

87. **During the year, did the children read in the classroom other books that are not part of the Sifriyat Pijama program?**

1. Not at all (skip to question 89)
2. Rarely
3. Occasionally
4. Often
5. Don't know (skip to question 89)
6. Refuses (skip to question 89)
7. Not relevant (skip to question 89)

88. **Did the children read those books independently or with the entire class in guided reading?**

1. They read independently, alone
2. Guided reading, all of them together
3. (interviewer: don't read) the teacher said they do both
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

89. **Is there a lending library at school / a classroom library?**

1. No (skip to question 91)
2. Yes
3. Don't know (skip to question 91)
4. Refuses (skip to question 91)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 91)

90. **Since Sifriyat Pijama began operating, are the children borrowing more, less or the same number of books from the school library / class library compared to the past, prior to the program?**

1. Much more than in the past

2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Less than in the past
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

91. **To what extent do you deal with books in the classroom compared to the past, before the Sifriyat Pijama program?** (to the interviewer: the question here pertains to books in general, not only the program's books)

1. Much more than in the past
2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

92. **To what extent do you feel that books play a more central role in the classroom and among the children – compared to the past, before the program began operating?**

1. Much more than in the past
2. Slightly more than in the past
3. The same as in the past
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

To what extent does the implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contribute to each of the following fields:

	To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
93. Scope of reading books to the children in the class	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
94. Scope of reading books to the children in the home	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
95. Enriching the children's vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
96. Enriching the children's spoken language	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
97. The children's comprehension when listening to a story	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
98. Fostering the children's thinking	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

99. Education for values among the children	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
100. The children's love and enjoyment of reading books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
101. Centrality of the book in the children's everyday lives	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
102. Fostering the children's preferences and personal taste in choosing books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
103. The children's desire to read books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
104. The children's familiarity with books and authors	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

105. **Are there children in your class who participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool?**

1. Yes, all of the pupils in the class
2. Yes, most of the pupils in the class
3. Yes, about half of the pupils in the class
4. Yes, a few pupils
5. No (skip to question 122)
6. Don't know (skip to question 122)
7. Refuses (skip to question 122)
8. Not relevant (skip to question 122)

**How do you know this? (the respondent can select more than one response)**

	Yes	No	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
106. The children spoke about this in the classroom	1	2	97	98	99
107. The children brought to class some Sifriyat Pijama books they received in the past	1	2	97	98	99
108. The parents mentioned this to you	1	2	97	98	99
109. Other, how?	1	2	97	98	99

110. **Who? (open)** \_\_\_\_\_

111. **Do you know which books the children received in the program at preschool?**

1. Yes
2. Some of them
3. Don't know
4. Refuses



5. Not relevant

**112. Does this information help or would it help in the context of operating the program in the classroom?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

To what extent do you find a difference between children who participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool and children who did not participate in it, in each of the following areas:

	A big advantage for children who did <u>not</u> participate in the program in the past	A small advantage for children who did not participate in the program in the past	No difference	A small advantage for children who participated in the program in the past	A big advantage for children who participated in the program in the past	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
113. Centrality of books in the children's everyday life	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
114. The children's vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
115. The children's spoken language	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
116. The children's comprehension when listening to a story	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
117. The children's ability to discuss values	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
118. The children's love and enjoyment of reading books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
119. The children's desire to read books	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
120. The children's familiarity with books and authors	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99
121. Excitement about receiving Sifriyat Pijama books in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

122. Do you collaborate with entities outside of the classroom in the framework of the program – such as a parallel classroom, another school, a municipal library or other institutions in the city?

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 124)
3. Don't know (skip to question 124)
4. Refuses (skip to question 124)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 124)

123. If so, with which entities do you collaborate and what activity do you conduct in this collaboration? (open) \_\_\_\_\_

124. To what extent should the Sifriyat Pijama program be continued?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

125. Why? Please explain your response (open) \_\_\_\_\_

126. To what extent, in general, are you satisfied with the Sifriyat Pijama program that operates in the classroom?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

127. Please explain why (open) \_\_\_\_\_

128. Would you like your class to participate in the program next year?

1. Yes
2. Yes, with changes in the format
3. No
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

129. What would you change in the program? (open) \_\_\_\_\_

In summary, a few background questions

130. Does the school belong to the state education stream or the state-religious stream?

1. State
2. State-religious
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

131. **How many years have you worked as a teacher in the education system?** Write the number of years: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

132. **How many years have you worked as a teacher in the current school?** Write the number of years: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

133. **How many children of new immigrants are in your class?** (to the interviewer: children from homes where the spoken language is not Hebrew). Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

134. **How many children are in your class in total?** Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

135. **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for your cooperation!**

#### Appendix 4: Sifriyat Pijama School Parent Questionnaire 2013-14

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from RAMA, the National Authority for Education Assessment and Evaluation. We're conducting telephone interviews as part of an evaluation study on the Sifriyat Pijama reading program operating in your child (interviewer: insert the child's name)'s class.

RAMA and the [Education Ministry's] Elementary Education Division are conducting the evaluation study, including interviews with teachers and parents, in order to examine the program's impact on the children's reading habits and love of books.

Your responses are very important to us and will help in the effort to encourage reading among 1<sup>st</sup> graders and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the evaluation team. The responses of interviewees will only be presented as a general picture and not on the individual level.

Could you spare a few minutes of your time now?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Could we speak at another time? When would be convenient?

No \_\_\_\_\_ → Refuses to participate in the survey

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ → Thank you, let's start (advance to question 1)

1. **Did the Sifriyat Pijama program operate in [interviewer: insert the child's name]'s class this year? (interviewer: the program operated only in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades)** (interviewer: if the interviewee is not certain, ask: "is your child in 1<sup>st</sup> grade or 2<sup>nd</sup> grade?" (1) If the child is in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, say: "as part of the program, your child received softcover books such as **Ogi / Neri Aluma; Cloudette / Tom Lichtenheld; Concert in the Sand / Tami Shem-Tov and Rachella Sandbank; Feathers in the Wind / Shlomo Abbas.**" (2) if the child is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, say: "as part of the program, your child received softcover books such as **The Owl Who Saw Backwards / Yossi Goddard; A Tale of Two Cats / A. Hillel; Our Tales / Shoham Smit; The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread / Dan Huppert.**"

1. No \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank the parent and conclude

2. Yes

3. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank the parent and conclude

4. Refuses \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank the parent and conclude

5. Not relevant \_\_\_\_\_ → make a note, thank the parent and conclude

2. **In what grade is your child [interviewer: insert the child's name]?**

1. First grade

2. Second grade (skip to question 4)

3. Don't know (skip to question 4)

4. Refuses (skip to question 4)

5. Not relevant (skip to question 4)

3. **Did the Sifriyat Pijama program, in which you received softcover books at home, operate in your child's preschool last year (2012-13)?**

1. No
2. Yes
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

4. **Have your other children participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program in preschool or elementary school?** (It is important to note that the program began to operate gradually four years ago, during the 2009-10 school year.)

1. No
2. Yes – one other child (read the introduction to question 5)
3. Yes – two other children (read the introduction to question 5)
4. Yes – three or more other child (read the introduction to question 5)
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

Introduction before question 5: In the following questions, I'll ask you specifically about how the Sifriyat Pijama program is implemented in [insert the child's name]'s class.

5. **Was there a parents' meeting in which they explained about the Sifriyat Pijama program, its goals and mode of operation?** (to the interviewer: an explanation about the program during a parents' meeting at the beginning of the year is sufficient)

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 7)
3. Don't know (skip to question 7)
4. Refuses (skip to question 7)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 7)

6. **Did they explain to you at the meeting that the books are intended to be read together with the children?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Refuses
5. Not relevant

7. **How many books did your child receive in the Sifriyat Pijama program at school during the current school year (2013-14)?** (to the interviewer: write a number up to 4 books or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant) \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Remind me whether your child is in first or second grade?**

1. First (skip to question 9)
2. Second (skip to question 19)
3. Don't know (skip to question 29)
4. Refuses (skip to question 29)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 29)

I'll read to you the list of books distributed this year and will ask you to say how satisfied you were with each one and whether it was appropriate for your child. If you're unfamiliar with the book or haven't read it, please note this.

<u>1<sup>st</sup> grade</u>	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To great extent	To a very great extent	Not familiar	Don't know	Refuses	Book didn't arrive
9. Ogi / Neri Aluma (1) – to what extent were you satisfied with the book and think it's appropriate for your child?	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
10. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
11. Cloulette / Tom Lichtenheld (2)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
12. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
13. Concert in the Sand / Tami Shem-Tov and Rachella Sandbank (3)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
14. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
15. Feathers in the Wind / Shlomo Abbas (4)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
16. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									

**Which of these books did you like best or is the most appropriate for your child, in your opinion?**

**17. To the interviewer: Write the number of the book (1-4)**

**18. Why (open) \_\_\_\_\_ (skip to question 45)**

<u>2<sup>nd</sup> grade</u>	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To great extent	To a very	Not familiar	Don't know	Refuses	Book didn't arrive

					great extent				
19. The Owl Who Saw Backwards / Yossi Goddard (5) – to what extent are you satisfied with the book and think it's appropriate for your child?	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
20. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
21. A Tale of Two Cats / A. Hillel (6)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
22. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
23. Our Tales / Shoham Smit (7)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
24. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									
25. The Princess and the True Loaf of Bread / Dan Huppert (8)	1	2	3	4	5	96	97	98	99
26. Why weren't you satisfied with the book?									

**Which of these books did you like best or think was the most appropriate one for your child?**

**27. To the interviewer: Write the number of the book (5-8)**

**28. Why (open) \_\_\_\_\_ (skip to question 45)**

**29. Did you or another member of the family read these books to your child at home?**

1. Yes, all of them
2. Yes, most of them
3. Some yes, some no
4. Didn't read most of them
5. Didn't read any of the books to the child at home
6. Don't know
7. Refuses
8. Not relevant

**30. Did or does your child read the books independently?**

1. Yes, all of them
2. Yes, most of them
3. Some yes, some no
4. Didn't read most of them

5. Didn't read any of the books at home
6. Don't know
7. Refuses
8. Not relevant

For each of the following activities I'll read to you, please note whether your child and another family member or your child independently did them at home with the books received in the Sifriyat Pijama program. And if so, with how many of the books you received?

	Not at all	With a few books	With about half of the books	With most of the books	With all of the books	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
31. Conversation with your child about the book after reading the book to the child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
32. Creative activity related to arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
33. Creative activity related to dramatizing the story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
34. A conversation on values, moral dilemmas, heritage, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

35. Are you familiar with the suggested parent-child activities that appear at the end of the books you received in the Sifriyat Pijama program?

1. Yes
2. No (skip to question 39)
3. Don't know (skip to question 39)
4. Refuses (skip to question 39)
5. Not relevant (skip to question 39)



36. **Did you read the suggested activities for parents that appear in the books? If so, in how many of them?** 1. Not at all 2. In a few of the books 3. In about half of the books 4. In most of the books 5. In all of the books 97. Don't know 98. Refuses 99. Not relevant

37. **Did you use and conduct activity with your child based on the suggested activities for parents?** 1. Not at all 2. In a few of the books 3. In about half of the books 4. In most of the books 5. In all of the books 6. Don't know 7. Refuses 8. Not relevant

38. **If you answered 2-5 on question 37, to what extent did your child enjoy the shared activity?**

To a very small extent (skip to question 39)	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know (skip to question 39)	Refuses (skip to question 39)	Not relevant (skip to question 39)
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

To what extent does the implementation of the Sifriyat Pijama program contribute to each of the following areas:

	To a very great extent	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	To a very small extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
39. Scope of reading books to your child in the home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
40. Enriching your child's vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
41. Your child's comprehension when listening to a story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
42. Education for values	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
43. Your child's love and enjoyment of reading books	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
44. Your child's desire to read books	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
45. Your child's familiarity with books and authors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
46. Expanding your family's home library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
47. Visiting and borrowing books from the local library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
48. Borrowing books from the school library	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

49. **How many Sifriyat Pijama books do you have in your home, including books from previous years or from your other children?** (to the interviewer: each year, 8 books are distributed to each child in preschools participating in the program and 4 books to children in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades ). Write the number \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

50. **How many books that are appropriate for your child's age, including Sifriyat Pijama books, do you have in your home, not including books borrowed from the school library or public library?** Write the number \_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant

**Did you save at home all of the Sifriyat Pijama books your children received this year and in previous years?** (to the interviewer: the respondent can choose more than one answer)

		Yes	No	Don't know	Refuses	Not relevant
51.	Yes	1 (skip to question 57)	2	97	98	99
52.	No, I gave some books to family and friends	1	2	97	98	99
53.	No, I donated some books	1	2	97	98	99
54.	No, I threw away some books	1	2	97	98	99
55.	No, some books got worn out and torn	1	2	97	98	99
56.	No, some books got lost	1	2	97	98	99

57. **Do you read to your child Sifriyat Pijama books that you received in previous years?**

1. Yes, often
2. Occasionally
3. Rarely
4. No
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

58. **Does your child independently read Sifriyat Pijama books received in previous years?**

1. Yes, often
2. Occasionally
3. Rarely
4. No
5. Don't know

- 6. Refuses
- 7. Not relevant

**59. To what extent do you feel that books play a more central role in your home – in comparison to the past, prior to the Sifriyat Pijama program?**

- 1. Much more than in the past
- 2. Slightly more than in the past
- 3. The same as in the past
- 4. Less than in the past
- 5. Don't know
- 6. Refuses
- 7. Not relevant

**60. Irrespective of the program, approximately how many times per week does your child read a book or has a book read to him/her?**

- 1. Once a day or more
- 2. About 3-4 times a week
- 3. About 2-3 times a week
- 4. About once a week
- 5. Less than once a week
- 6. Don't know
- 7. Refuses
- 8. Not relevant

**61. Was there joint activity for parents and children this year in the class related to a Sifriyat Pijama book?**

- 1. No (skip to question 68)
- 2. Yes, once
- 3. Yes, more than once
- 4. Don't know (skip to question 68)
- 5. Refuses (skip to question 68)
- 6. Not relevant (skip to question 68)

What type of activity? (the respondent can choose more than one response)

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Refuses</b>	<b>Not relevant</b>
62. Holiday-related event	1	2	97	98	99
63. Family Day event	1	2	97	98	99
64. Book Week event	1	2	97	98	99
65. Event to launch Sifriyat Pijama program	1	2	97	98	99
66. Other	1	2	97	98	99

67. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

68. Does the teacher encourage you to read books to your child or ask you to conduct book-related activities at home?

1. Yes, very often
2. Yes, quite often
3. Sometimes yes, sometimes no
4. Quite rarely
5. Very rarely
6. Not at all
7. Don't know
8. Refuses
9. Not relevant

69. Does the teacher encourage the children to read books at home?

1. Yes, very often
2. Yes, quite often
3. Sometimes yes, sometimes no
4. Quite rarely
5. Very rarely
6. Not at all
7. Don't know
8. Refuses
9. Not relevant

In conclusion, I'll ask a few general questions:

70. In general, irrespective of the Sifriyat Pijama program, to what extent does your child enjoy reading books?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

71. To what extent do you enjoy reading books together with your child?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

72. To what extent do you think that reading books brings parents closer to their children?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

73. In general, to what extent are you satisfied with the Sifriyat Pijama program operating in the class?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

74. Do you have suggestions or ideas for improving the program? (open)

75. In general, irrespective of the program for encouraging reading, to what extent are you satisfied with the school's performance?

To a very small extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent	Don't know	Refuse	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	5	97	98	99

76. Would you like your child's class to continue to participate in the program next year?

1. Yes
2. No
3. It doesn't matter to me
4. Don't know
5. Refuses
6. Not relevant

77. Why? (open question) \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, a few background questions:

78. Please assess your fluency in Hebrew on a scale of 1 (weak) to 10 (excellent). (Write a number \_\_\_\_\_ or 97 for Don't know; 98 Refuses; 99 Not relevant)

79. What is your mother tongue (primary spoken language)?

1. Hebrew
2. Russian

3. French
4. English
5. Amharic
6. Other language
7. Don't know
8. Refuses
9. Not relevant

**80. Your education level:**

1. Some high school
2. High school graduate
3. High school graduate + matriculation certificate
4. Bachelor's degree
5. Master's degree
6. PhD
7. Other
8. Don't know
9. Refuses
10. Not relevant

**81. Specify:**

**82. How do you define yourself religiously?**

1. Secular
2. Traditional
3. Religious
4. Other
5. Don't know
6. Refuses
7. Not relevant

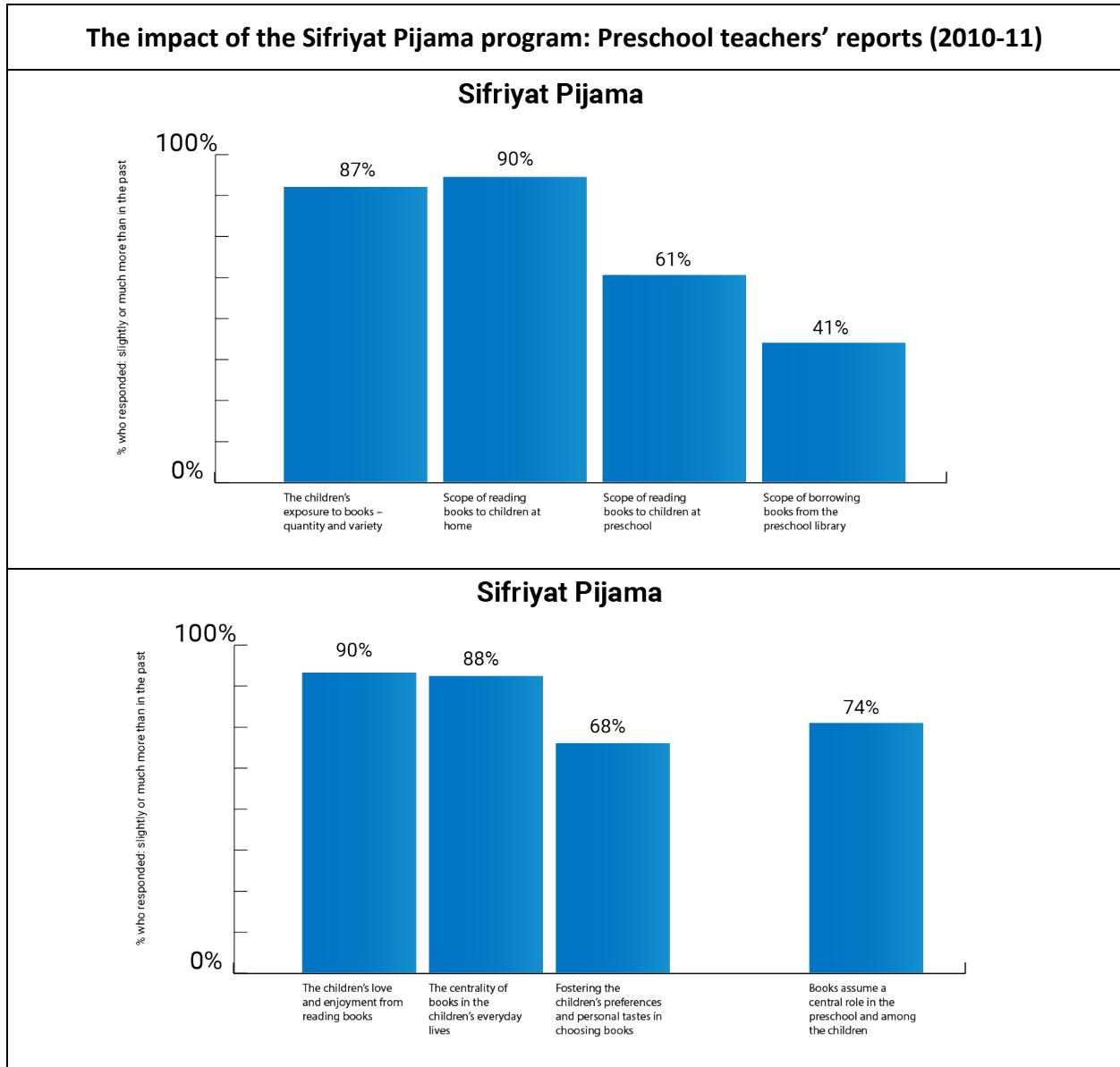
**83. Specify:** \_\_\_\_\_

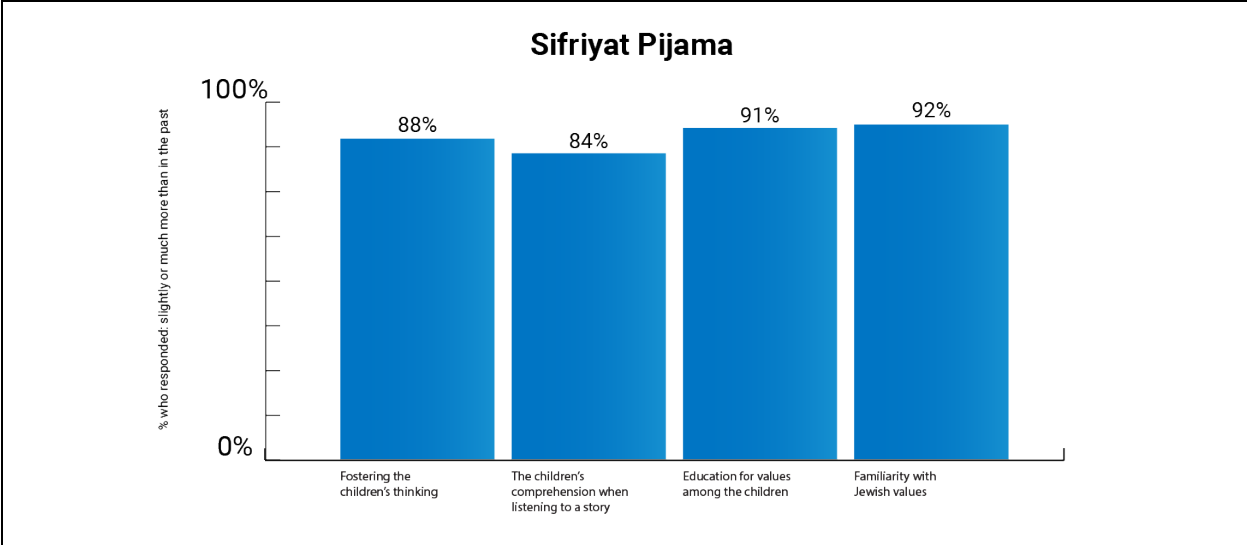
**84. Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your cooperation!**

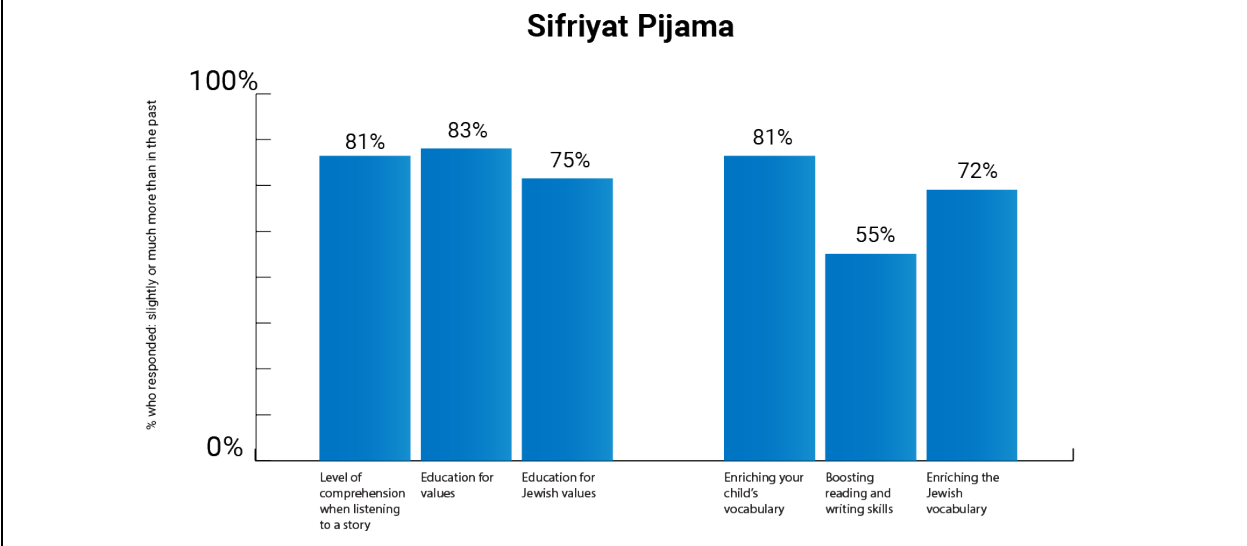
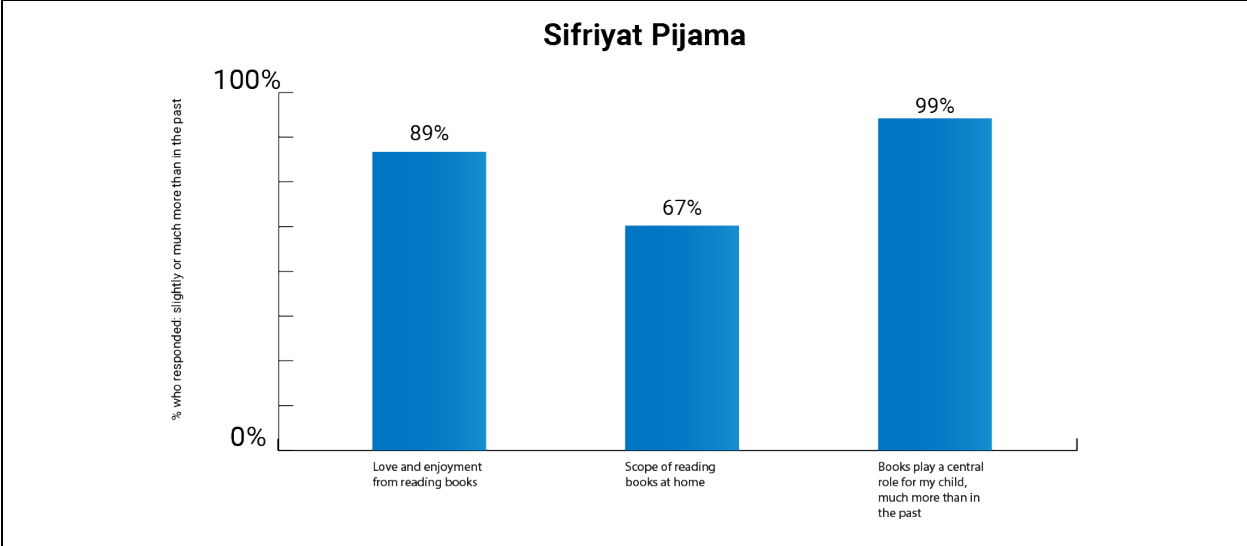
## Appendix 5: Sifriyat Pijama Data (2010-11)

### 5a. Sifriyat Pijama Program Impact (Data from 2010-11)





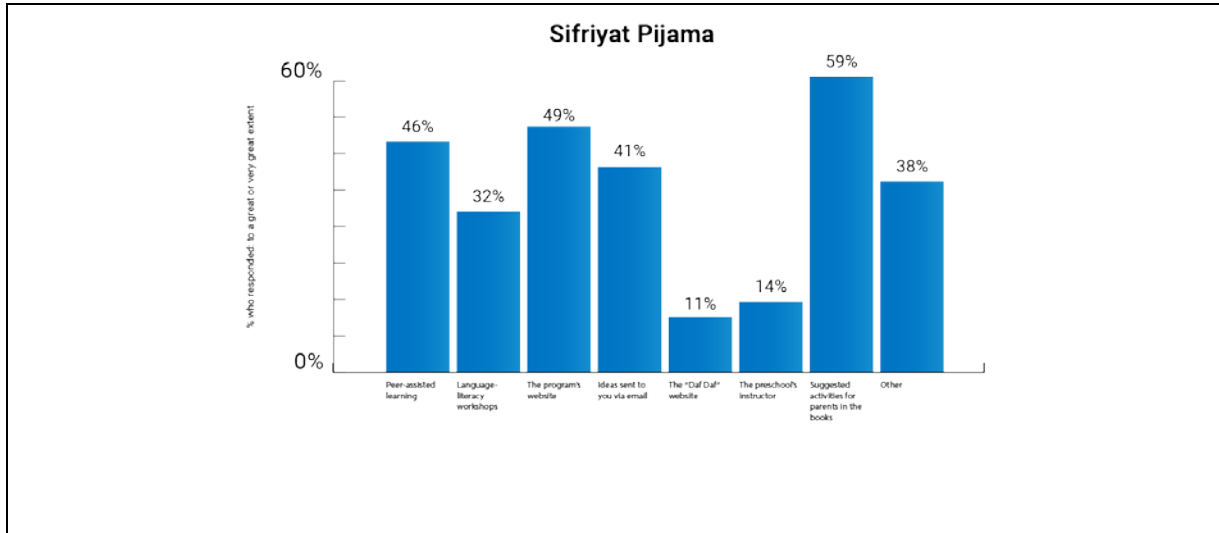
**The impact of the Sifriyat Pijama program: Parents' reports (2010-11)**





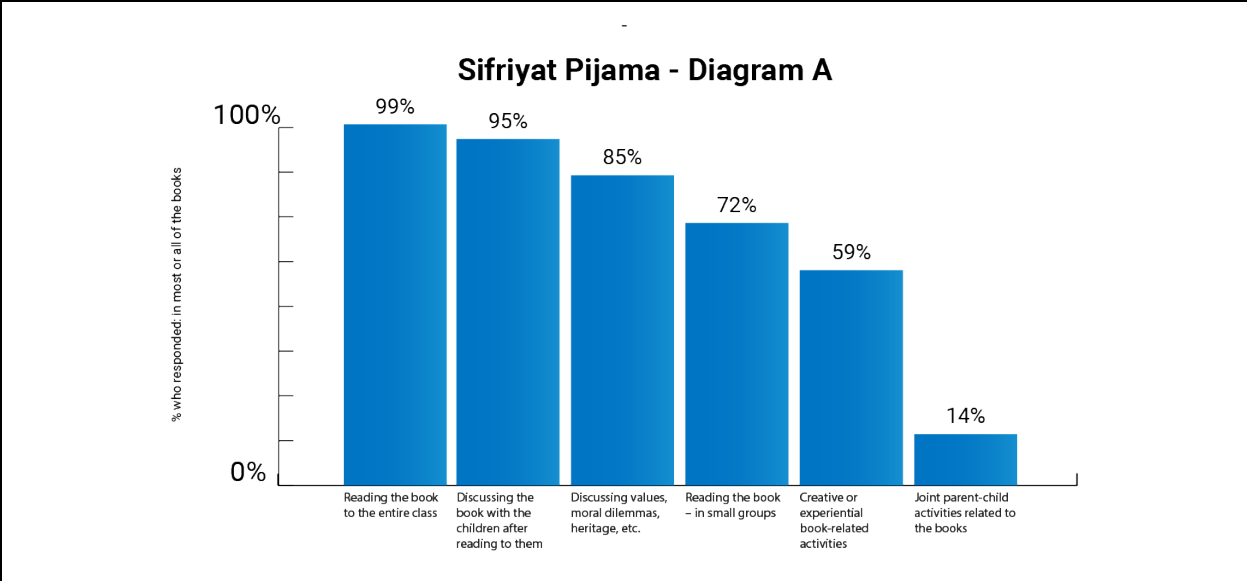
### 5b. Operational Support Systems for Preschool Teachers (Teacher Reports 2010-11)

31% of the preschool teachers who participated in the program in 2010-11 responded affirmatively when asked whether they required additional support or guidance in the framework of the program. They asked primarily for additional ideas for book-related activities. The diagram shows the percentage of preschool teachers who participated in Sifriyat Pijama and who reported that they made use of each the various resources.

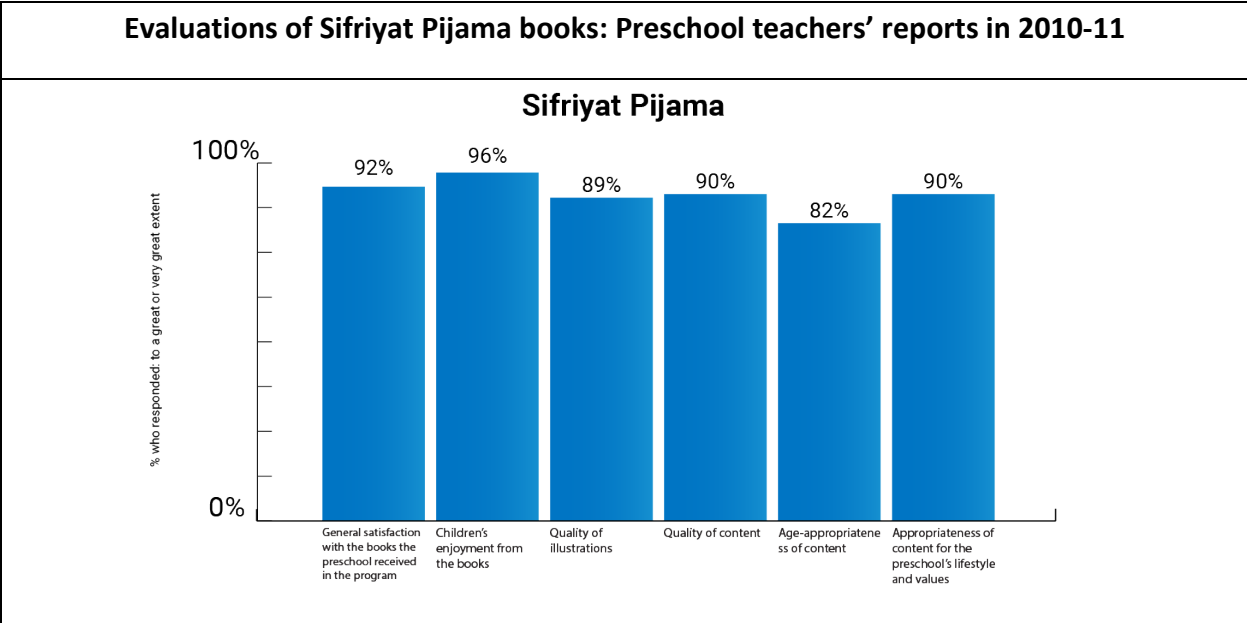


### 5c. Preschool Activities in the Wake of Sifriyat Pijama (Teachers' Reports 2010-11)

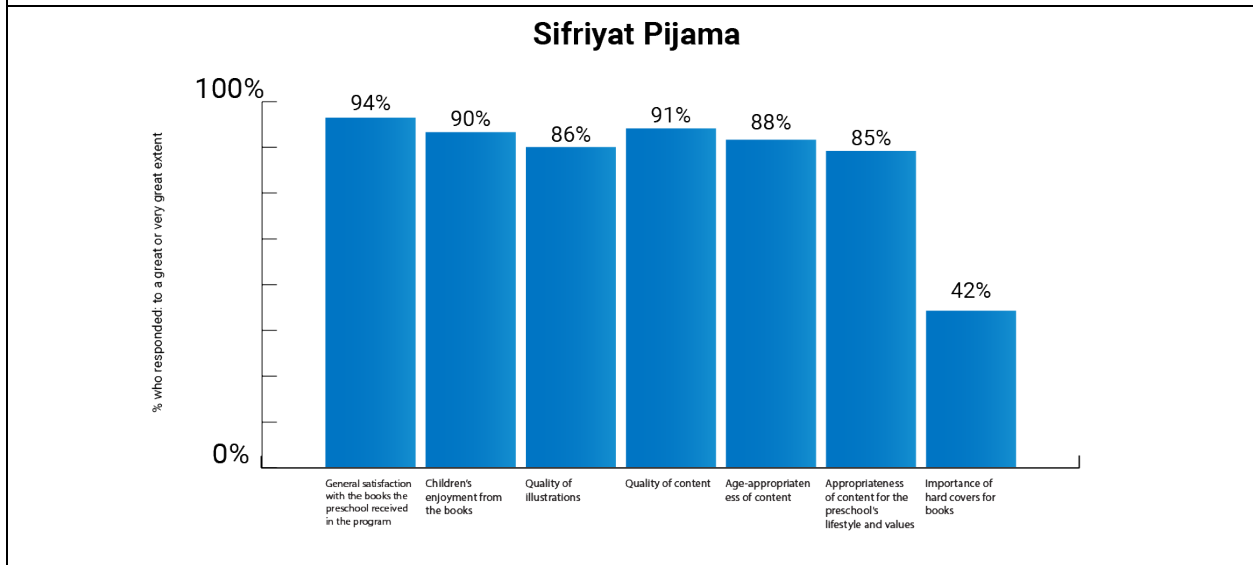
Nearly all of the preschool teachers (97% and more) who participated in the Sifriyat Pijama program reported that they read most or all of the books they received to the entire class. The diagram shows the percentage of preschool teachers who reported that they engaged in each of a range of activities in the wake of most or all of the books they received in the program.



**5d. Evaluation of Books Distributed in the Program (Reports from 2010-11)**



## Evaluations of Sifriyat Pijama books: Parents' reports in 2010-11

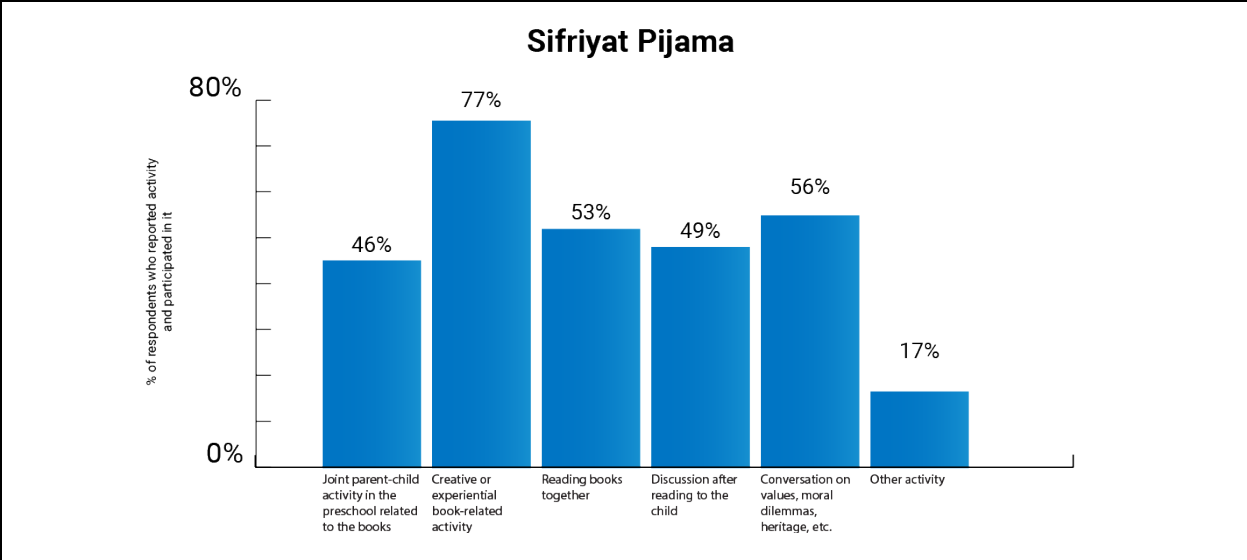


### 5e. Carryover from Preschool to the Home (Parents' Reports from 2010-11)

#### ***Exposure to the program and communication between the preschool and parents related to the program's books***

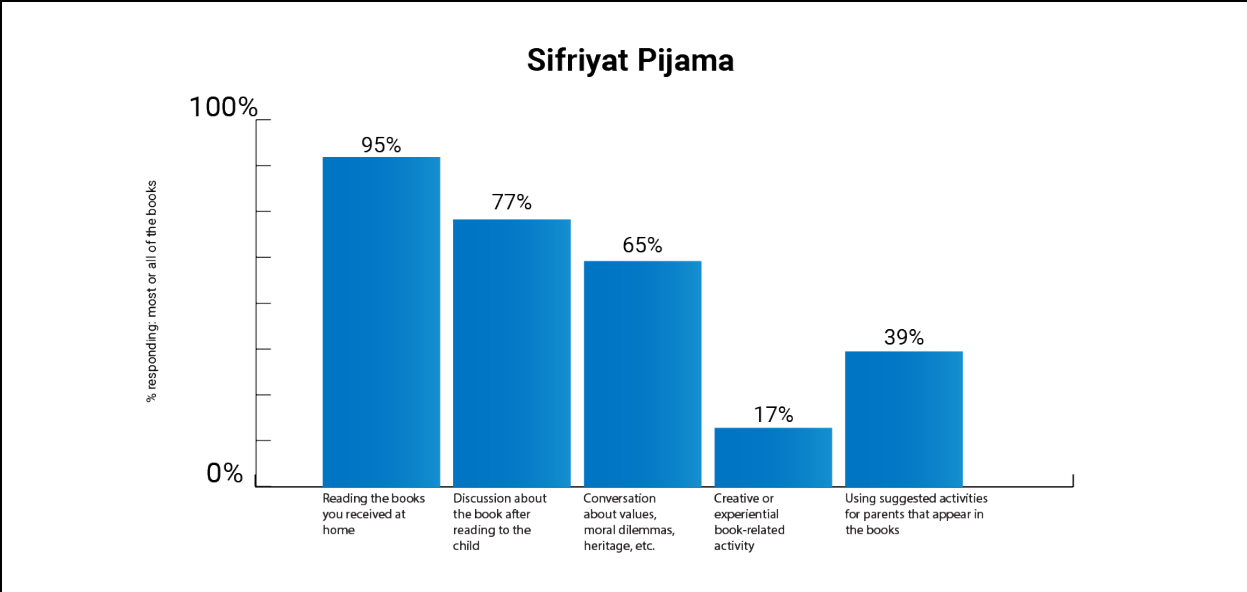
First, 94% of the parents reported that a meeting was held at the beginning of the year to introduce the program, and 61% of the parents reported that the preschool teacher encouraged them to read stories to the children and conduct book-related activities at home.

The diagram shows the percentage of parents who reported that joint activities for parents and children were held in the preschool in the wake of the program's books, and the percentage of those parents who cited each type of activity.



**Activities in the children’s home related to Sifriyat Pijama books (Parents’ reports 2010-11)**

54% of the parents reported that they usually read at least one book a day to their child; 95% of the parents reported that they read most or all of the Sifriyat Pijama books they received in the program. The diagram shows the percentage of parents who reported conducting each of the at-home activities with most or all of the books they received in the Sifriyat Pijama reading encouragement program.



**5f. Attitudes to and Relationships with Books (Parents' Reports)**

**Sifriyat Pijama**

