

Literature Education at Dutch Secondary Schools:
The Transition from Lower to Upper Years with regards to the
English Literature Education

Utrecht University, February 2014

MA English Language and Culture: Education and Communication

Britt Ewalds 3467821

First supervisor: Dr. Ewout van der Knaap

Second supervisor: Dr. Paul Franssen

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Abstract

In this thesis, the transition between the lower and upper years of Dutch secondary schools with regards to English literature is investigated. This transition is often considered difficult, as students are required to read literature in the upper years but are often not prepared for this reading education in the lower years. Fifth year students and teachers of English of two secondary schools were asked to fill in a questionnaire about the current English literature education. Moreover, teachers were interviewed, the libraries were investigated and the course books were analysed. The results from this study emphasise that the transition has to be improved.

For this research, both Dutch and English sources have been used. To ensure the readability of my thesis, the Dutch sources have been translated into English. Please see the works cited list at the end of this thesis for the original Dutch versions.

Moreover, to avoid confusion the English translations of the Dutch terms for secondary education have been provided, but throughout the thesis, the Dutch terms or abbreviations have been used.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Nowadays, literature is supposed to be an important part of the curriculum for the upper years ('bovenbouw' or 'Tweede Fase' in Dutch) of Dutch secondary schools. Critics have addressed the lack of a literature curriculum for the lower grades ('onderbouw' in Dutch), as "literature education tends to focus on the final two or three years of havo or vwo. It does not seem to have anything to do with what happens in the lower years" (Kruithof 28). This shows in the absence of set CEFR-reading goals for lower-year students. Moreover, there seems to be a difficulty in the transition from the lower to the upper years, as many teachers at secondary schools emphasise. The "doorlopende leerlijn" (or 'integrated curriculum') becomes disrupted between the third and the fourth class, the transition between the lower years and the upper years (Stoter et al. 2; Mies 10; Witte 30).

The research to date in the Netherlands has tended to focus on literature education for Dutch rather than literature education for the modern foreign languages (MFL). Witte has conducted comprehensive research on literature education for the subject of Dutch. So far, no researchers have investigated the situation concerning literature education for the subject of English in the Netherlands as thoroughly as Witte has done. That is why this research will focus on the transition for the subject of English.

Witte's model is one of the most widely used models in Dutch literature education. He does not assume that students in the same year are homogenous in terms of reading proficiency, but that they are heterogeneous. Teachers must therefore look at the reading process of students individually. The question remains whether Witte's model is also applicable to the MFLs. However, most pupils are already fairly proficient in English when they enter secondary school. The descriptions of the different stages that a student goes through in terms of reading proficiency can be applied to students reading in a MFL as well, although their progression will be slower than for Dutch or mother tongue literature.

The main question addressed in this thesis is: How does the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to English literature education take place at Dutch secondary schools? In order to answer this main research question, several sub-questions were designed:

- What is the situation like at the moment at Dutch secondary schools for English (literature) education?
- Do the teachers pay enough attention to reading (literature) in the lower years of secondary school to ensure a good transition from lower to the upper years?
- Should the lesson books in the lower years be adapted?
- In what way does the library add to the reading skills of the students?

The research will take place at two schools. The sub-questions about the comparison between the two schools are:

- Will the two schools portray a similar approach to literature education since they are in the same school community?
- Do students from the bilingual years receive more literature education?

In order to conduct this research, several factors had to be taken into consideration.

The opinion of the students and that of the teachers is of most value to this research.

Therefore, two schools from the same school community were chosen in order to compare the results gained from the questionnaires handed out to teachers and students. The libraries at the schools were also investigated and the library personnel were interviewed. Moreover, two teachers were interviewed as well.

This thesis will focus on the transition from the lower to the upper years in Dutch secondary schools with regards to literature education for the subject of English. Firstly, an overview of the history of literature education in general will be given. Additionally, recent developments in the field of literature education will be discussed. The third chapter contains the methodology, followed by the fourth chapter comprising the results from the

questionnaires, the interviews and the investigation of the libraries and the lesson books.

These results will be analysed in the discussion. Lastly, in the conclusion, the research will be summarized and recommendations for further research will be given.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Reading in general

Reading is considered important for children because it provides them with knowledge about the composition of sentences; it teaches them about logical structures such as comparisons and oppositions. Moreover, they learn certain combinations of words and their probable occurrence in sentences. Lastly, it provides children with knowledge about the world (Koster and Matter, 133). This specifically applies to foreign languages taught in school, since reading is a receptive skill and therefore does not demand an immediate response such as the productive skills of speaking and writing. A higher command of reading and the other receptive skill, listening, is expected (Staatsen 33). Moreover, these two skills can “form an important base for the development of the productive skills” (Staatsen 33). There are more benefits to reading at a young age, as Suzanne Mol and Adriana Bus identify in an article. Reading encourages a greater vocabulary, a better understanding of reading, it improves the basic reading skills, technical reading and spelling, but it also boosts your general intelligence and academic success (6-7). Additionally, “[c]hildren who are read to by their parents and pupils and students who read in their free time are expected to be more skilful in the aforementioned skills than children who do not read in their spare time” (Mol and Bus 7).

Unfortunately, research has shown that adolescents between 12 and 19 read the least of all the age cohorts (Huymans, et al qtd. in Stokmans 9; Van den Broek qtd. in Stokmans 9; Verboord 36). Children at this age read less than they did in an earlier age cohort and children from the same age cohort in the past read more (Stokmans 9). This decline in reading is seen as a negative development, since “reading frequently and reading with pleasure go hand in hand with good reading skills” (qtd. in Stokmans 9). This development is therefore disturbing since adolescents should be reading more, as it will be of great benefit to them greatly at school.

Although this thesis addresses the transition from the lower years to the “Tweede Fase”, there is another transition in the pupil’s life that is radical: the transition from primary school to secondary school. Students are often not used to the amount of homework and have to adapt to their new school environment. This usually decreases their free time and with that also their time to read. An important task for the secondary school language teacher therefore is to encourage and stimulate students from the age of twelve to maintain and improve the reading pattern from primary school.

2.2 Literary history at secondary schools

The secondary school system in the Netherlands has undergone many changes since the nineteenth century. In terms of foreign language education, the modern foreign languages were introduced in secondary education “in 1863 for the H.B.S. and in 1876 for the Gymnasium” (Kwakernaak 395). These types of education lasted for almost a century, for it was not until 1968 that the first radical reform of secondary education occurred.

The “Mammoetwet” (the Mammoth Act) instigated many general changes such as the replacement of the (M.)U.L.O. ((More) Extensive Lower Education) with the mavo, the havo (senior general secondary education) became a combination between the H.B.S. (Higher Commoner’s School) and the M.M.S. (the same as the H.B.S. but for girls only) and the Gymnasium was replaced by the vwo¹ (pre-university education), which prepared its students for university (Kwakernaak 395). The focus of this thesis will be on pre-university education students.

¹ Vwo prepares students for tertiary education. As the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science states: “Pre-university education, or VWO, takes six years and prepares pupils for university. In the first three years of HAVO and VWO (the lower years) the emphasis is on general knowledge and skills. Specialisation takes place in the upper years (the last three years of VWO, or the last two years of HAVO)” (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science).

For literature education this meant a shift from the literary-historic approach to literature -- the approach that had been used for over a century -- to close reading and text immanent reading (Kwakernaak 395). The literary-historic approach focused on the study of classic literary texts, but with the Mammoth Act came the demand for a more practical and daily use of the modern foreign languages (Kwakernaak 129). The literary-historic approach had to give way to a more student-focused approach. Teachers were also given less space to design their literature education program, to ensure that all students received practically the same literature education.

The Mammoth Act received enthusiastic responses as well as criticism. The critics commented that the exam requirements were too broad and teachers were left with too much freedom. As Witte mentions, the Mammoth Act has been the "catalyst for the democratization and scale up of secondary education" (19). Students from all over the population now had access to higher education, which meant a problem for literature education in terms of the "cultural baggage" (Witte 19) that students had already attained in their childhood. These comments and several other factors eventually formed the way for a new major change in secondary education: the introduction of the "Tweede Fase" (or the 'Second Phase' in English) in 1998. The upper years of secondary school were transformed. Students could now choose between four profiles; Science and Health, Science and Technology, Economics and Society, and Culture and Society (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science). This narrowed down the choice of subjects that students had, and it provided them with a more specific education. Students were also held more accountable for their own learning process: the emphasis lay on the individuality of the students. Within months, students and teachers were criticizing the increased workload and protested for a less intensive program.

Nine years later, in 2007, the "Tweede Fase" was revised because pupils were thought to know less of the subjects than before its establishment. For literature education, the

revision meant the inclusion of beginning and end objectives for a student's reading process. This took place five years ago and roughly represents the current situation at secondary schools. This situation will be discussed in depth in the next section.

2.3 English literature teaching at the moment

English literature education in lower years

In the lower years of secondary school, literature education is often referred to as fiction education as the students are not yet introduced to literary works. Kwakernaak elaborates on this subject by asking:

[h]ow can literature education be organized and planned? The ideal is an integrated learning plan for fiction education (youth literature) in the lower years and literature education in the upper years. An integrated curriculum should take into account the six levels of literary competence of Witte (2008). It is of no use to enforce literary development, by making students skip phases in their development. However, it is appropriate to stay on top of the students' individual level and to aim for N+1. (398-9)

Many other researchers in the field agree with Kwakernaak's view. The input that the students receive should be just one level above the stage that the student is in at the moment (Koster and Matter 142; Witte 399).

One of the main goals for reading in the lower years for reading should be to maintain and encourage the students' overall positive attitudes towards reading. To ensure that students maintain this attitude, Bolscher mentions the importance of "sufficient books and text with variable contents and complexities" (23), a view that Jacques Kruithof emphasizes as he clarifies that a "good library is as vital [in literature or fiction education] as a good teacher" (56). Bolscher also mentions the importance of "different assignments and lesson formats [for literature education]" (23). Cor Geljon illustrates this by stating that "in general students in

the first year of secondary school read rather much” (87) and should therefore be encouraged to maintain their reading pattern throughout secondary school.

As has been stated in the first section of this chapter, teachers should be prepared to motivate students to read. This also means that the teacher should investigate the student’s reading interest with the help of, for example, a reading autobiography. This is especially important in the lower years of secondary school, as this is the moment to guide the students from youth literature to the more difficult adult literature they can expect in the upper years. Witte emphasises this as he states: “children develop their linguistic intuition for a big part through reading, so it is important for pupils in the lower grades to come into contact with the foreign language they are learning” (84).

The actual time spent on literature or reading education in the lower years will be discussed in the results section, as this theme will be dealt with in the questionnaires and the interviews. This chapter should give insight into the situation at the moment with regards to English literature teaching in general and its development.

Teaching in higher years

In the upper years of secondary education, students and teachers focus more on the exam requirements. In the lower years students are often allowed to read anything they like, as long as they read something. In the upper years this situation changes, as the books that the students read will become important for their exam requirements.

In the vwo years, students are required to read three books of a certain literary standard (Hommerschom-Schreuder 25). Most schools give students a list with books to choose from or the teacher has to approve the novels that the students want to read. This is where most students experience difficulties: most adult literature does not meet their standards in terms of attractiveness. Requirements at schools often ask pupils to read classical novels that seem of a different world to the students with the ‘out-dated’ language and

scenery. For the teachers, it is a matter of preparing students for their exams. For the students, it is a matter of getting through these final stages.

Exam requirements

For practical reasons, the Dutch government chose to test only the reading skills of the students in the central national exams for the foreign languages, the other three skills are left to the schools to test themselves (Meijer and Fasoglio 13). Although it is positive that reading has become such an important part of the exams, it is questionable whether students read the text intensively. Usually the students read the questions that accompany the text and search for the answers in the text. The exam tests the students' reading skills but does this mean that they are good or bad readers? Does this indicate that the student who performs badly at the exam is at an A1 level and the student who performs well on these exams must have a B2 level in terms of reading? It is no longer the question whether students are able to understand the text but whether they are able to pull out the bits and pieces that form the answers to the questions of the exam.

The grades for the actual reading (literature) component of English are dealt with separately, as the three modern languages (German, French and English) are combined with the subject of Dutch and are put together under a subject named 'Letterkunde' (Witte 28). For literature, the CEVO (College voor Examens) has stated three subdomains each containing can-do statements. Firstly, students are expected to read at least three literary works in their upper years per subject accompanied by a reading report (Meijer and Fasoglio 55). Secondly, a student "should be able to recognize and distinguish between different kinds of literary texts, and handle literary terms in the interpretation of literary texts" (Meijer and Fasoglio 55). The last requirement for literature states that a student should be able to give "a general overview of literary history and place the books they have read in this historical perspective"

(SLO 55). There is no mention of the literary development of students. There still seems to be a focus on the literary-historical approach in the end terms for vwo-students.

2.4 Guidelines for literature

Over the years, guidelines have been developed to improve the structure of the subjects. For literature these guidelines have been developed as well. The main guidelines instigated by the European Union were developed for the school types of vmbo, havo and vwo and constitute the beginning and end levels for students in the form of can do statements. Theo Witte has devised another classification system but this is specifically for Dutch students and is only applicable to the subject of Dutch. Some researchers have deemed Witte's levels also suitable for the modern foreign languages (Hommerschom-Schreuder 26; SLO 56). Both of these guidelines will be discussed as well as the core goals formulated for the lower and upper years by the Dutch government.

Core Goals

In the Netherlands, core goals have been created in 1993 to provide direction for the new curriculums (Bolscher et al. 17; Kwakernaak 131). In the "Handreiking Nieuwe Onderbouw" created by the Stichting Leerplanontwikkeling (SLO), Bas Trimbos elaborates on these core goals and the connection to the CEFR.

Before the introduction of these core goals, there were no official goals for subjects in the lower years of secondary education. The teacher decided how he or she structured the literature education program in the lower years. Since 1993, teachers have more structure because of these guidelines. The core goals have been revised several times. These changes also make sure that the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to literature education will run more smoothly. As Bas Trimbos explains: "the end terms of vmbo/havo/vwo [the goals that students have to achieve at their exams] are now connected to

the CEFR-levels” (5). The SLO (Stiching Leerplanontwikkeling) thinks that this should also be done for the lower years (5), although these are just directives and not set terms like in the upper years.

CEFR guidelines

In the Netherlands, students are expected to reach A2/B1 CEFR level in the third year for the subject of English with regards to reading. It does not mention specific goals for literature or making “leeskilometers”² (‘extensive reading’ or ‘reading mileage’ in English) but there are goals for reading in general. When students have reached the sixth class, most will reach a B2 level, while about 15% of the students reach a C1 level. The goals for both levels state that students should be able to read a “broad range of long and complex texts ... with a focus on [reading] skills” (Council of Europe). B2 students should be able to read “with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively” (Council of Europe 10), while students who reach C1 level “can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of specialty, provided he/she can reread difficult sections” (10). These levels and the can do statements provide students and teachers with a clear structure for the reading process. Moreover, as the title of the document reveals (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: *Learning, Teaching, Assessment* [emphasis mine]), the levels can also be used for the assessment of students. Unfortunately, these levels do not provide teachers of English literature with the right tools to determine the level of a student’s literary competence, although this system is effective for determining the level of the student’s skills. This is where Witte’s levels of literary competence fill the niche.

² ‘Leeskilometers maken’ is a Dutch term referring to the motivating of students in terms of reading. The students have to read as much as possible to ensure reading pleasure and improved reading skills. Loosely translated to English, it means ‘reading mileage’.

Witte levels for the subject of Dutch

Witte's research was based on the critical comments on literature education for the subject of Dutch. As "there is no instructional frame of reference for literature teaching that helps [teachers] identify student differences and the different stages in development" (524).

Moreover, "the literature does not appeal to the students, which causes them to read less and less; some students lack motivation" (Witte 30). In his research, Witte also addresses the connection to the starting point of the students when they first attend secondary school (Witte 30), which was also emphasised in the section on literature education in the lower years.

Students need a structured curriculum encouraging them to maintain their reading pattern and to help them improve by providing them with novels of a level N+1. They should be provided with a strong base for the literature education in the upper forms of secondary school. This foundation should be 'built' in the first years. Witte's levels emphasise the development of the students. It provides teachers with a framework specifically for literature to hold on to.

There are five principles that development-based teaching of literature should be based on, namely;

[d]ifferent levels or stages must be defined so that teachers and students can focus on the development, [moreover] the 'foundation' to be built on at each level must be sufficiently strong before students can successfully move on to a higher level. Thirdly, literary development should be encouraged through active exploration and should be mediated through social interaction with peers, teachers and other readers. Fourthly, to encourage development, students must be confronted with activities leading to cognitive conflicts in their zone of immediate development [N+1]. Fifthly, it is essential that students regularly experience pleasure while reading books and doing tasks to ensure a good balance between effort and result. (525)

Witte designed the six levels of literary competence based on these five principles as "an

instrument for detecting differences between students and for identifying and describing the different developmental stages of individual students” (525). He distinguished between the three lower levels and the three higher levels, of which the lower ones are reader-related while levels four until six “relate to literary subject matter” (527). The six levels in detail can be found in appendix 3. In short, students at level 1 are experiential readers who read for pleasure, while level 2 readers read in an identifying way and learn how to recognize their own living environment. The third level states that students read reflectively with a focus on the expansion of their horizons (527). This level is the “standard for the havo exam” (526). The fourth level asks the students to read interpretatively in order to discover deeper meanings and for aesthetic enjoyment, while the fifth level focuses on literary reading and students should really immerse themselves in literature, culture and history. Finally, there is level six, where intellectual reading is used to nourish the student’s intellect.

This model for literary competence focuses on literature education for the subject of Dutch, although Paulien Hommerschom-Schreuder believes that the levels of Witte can also be applied to 'English, German and Spanish literature education” (Hommerschom-Schreuder 26). Her thesis was based on the application of Witte’s levels to the subject of French. In her article, she claims that complex adult literature can be read in a foreign language when a student reaches B2 level (26). Students have often come into contact with English at primary school and are more proficient in the English language because it is offered to them through the media, while French and German often are not.

Therefore, the claim of this thesis will be that students can read literature in English in the upper years. As long as there is a structured curriculum and an optimal reading environment created by the students themselves and with the help of their teachers and peers.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This study set out to investigate the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to English literature education. As Witte has shown for Dutch literature education, most students have difficulties with the transition from the second to the third level of literary competence. An interesting subject would therefore be the investigation of the transition with regards to *English* literature education, since little research has been done on the topic so far.

For this research two schools were chosen from the same school community (Onderwijsgemeenschap Venlo en Omstreken or OGVO) in Venlo, in the province of Limburg, namely the Valuascollege (VC) and College Den Hulster (CDH). CDH offers its students bilingual English education. The Valuascollege also offers bilingual German education and ‘gymnasium’ (Pupils are also taught Greek and Latin). Because the bilingual English programme provides the research with an extra point of view, it was decided to include the bilingual English fifth years in this study as well.

In order to conduct this study, several elements from the two secondary schools were investigated and analysed. Students, as well as the teachers, were asked to fill in a questionnaire (see appendix 1 and 2). Moreover, the library and lesson books were investigated to confirm or reject the results from the questionnaires. This study, therefore, is mixed, containing both qualitative and quantitative data. It was considered that the qualitative data would usefully supplement and extend the quantitative data and analysis. Because of the enormous number of data received through several ways it was decided to distribute the questionnaire to only two 5vwo classes at VC and to two 5vwo classes and one bilingual English 5vwo year at CDH. The reason that the 5vwo classes were chosen was because they have just finished the first year of the upper years and the often-difficult transition from lower to upper years was fresh in their memory. They appeared to be the ideal participants to provide the data necessary for this research.

3.1 Participants

Students

Among the participants in this study were 108 secondary school pupils. The students were divided over two groups: the 'regular' vwo groups containing 85 students, and the bilingual English vwo group consisting of 23 pupils. 44 students filled in the questionnaire at the VC, while 64 students filled in the questionnaire at CDH. These students were all in their fifth year of gymnasium at CDH and the VC. The students were asked to fill out the questionnaire at the beginning of their mandatory English class.

Teachers

Several teachers of both schools were also asked to fill in a questionnaire and two of these teachers participated in an interview as well. These teachers were chosen randomly from both schools as long as they taught English in lower and/or upper years of vwo. Ten questionnaires were handed out at CDH and eight at VC. Six of these were returned within four weeks at the VC and four were returned within five weeks at CDH. The interviews were taken after the analysis of the questionnaires to ensure that the questions asked during the interview would be relevant to the outcome of the questionnaires. Moreover, questions in the questionnaire that may have been unclear or were only answered briefly could be discussed in depth as well during the interviews.

Library personnel

The library personnel were interviewed as well, since they have more knowledge of the English books and the system of the library than the English teachers themselves. Moreover, their answers gave a deeper understanding into the reason for a certain categorisation of the books.

Unfortunately, the library at the Valuascollege is closed down. Students no longer have open access to the books, except through the online reservation system Aura Library (<http://valuascollege.auralibrary.nl/auraic.aspx>). There is a learning centre with computers where students can work under the supervision of the librarian. This is also the pick-up point for the books they have reserved.

At CDH, a similar change occurred although the collection is still accessible to the students. Students can either loan the books in one of the libraries when one of the librarians is present or they can make a reservation through a similar programme (<http://denhulster.auralibrary.nl/auraic.aspx>) as that of the VC and pick up the book the next day. In chapter 4, a thorough description of the libraries of both schools will be given.

3.2 Materials

Several materials were used to conduct this research. Interviews with teachers were conducted to add more depth to the questionnaires (See appendix 1 and 2 for the questionnaires). The libraries of both schools were investigated and the librarians were interviewed. Moreover, the course books of the lower years were examined to see how much actual reading (assignments) could be found. The lesson books for the higher years were investigated as well, to see whether the number of literature drastically increased.

Questionnaires

The design of the questionnaires was based on the following sources: Witte's questionnaire (589) and Tanja Janssen's questionnaire (26). The questionnaire for the students was structured in a similar way to that of Witte. It also focuses on reading for pleasure, students' experiences with reading literature in Dutch and in English and how they feel about the literature education in the lower years and the upper years. It contained four pages with mostly multiple-choice questions either asking concrete information or questions based on the

Likert-scale, because this scale can test their attitudes best. This also made it easier to compare and contrast the answers.

The questionnaire first asked for some general information, such as age, month and year of birth, mother tongue and their choice of one of the four profiles. It continued with a focus on the literature reading in the lower years followed by questions about their reading pleasure at primary school and in the first two years of secondary school. Then they were asked about their experiences with the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to the subject of English and English literature education. The final four questions focus on the students' reading profile. Each question contained two options, one matching the second level of Witte's reading competence levels and the other matching the third level of reading competence. Students who opted more for the second level options, might be more on this level in terms of reading than students who opted more for the third choice.

The questionnaire for the teachers was designed in a similar way. The first five questions requested some general information, followed by their own experience with English and Dutch literature. Then the next eight questions asked them about teaching English literature in the lower years of vwo, finally followed by five questions about teaching English literature in the upper years. Most questions were open or gave them two or several options requesting further explanation.

Library

The librarians of both schools were willing to show the collection of English novels in the schools' possession. Moreover, they explained the way in which the books were arranged according to levels. The arrangement of the books will be included in the results section. Both schools had an online reservation system although CDH still had open access to the books for students, but the books for the lower and the upper years were separated.

Course books

Additionally, the course books were examined. Most teachers use the lesson books to structure their lessons. Therefore, the attention paid to literature and reading (skills) in those books is of importance to the overall attention paid to literature by the teachers. The course books used are *New Interface* in the lower years and *Unicom Finals* in the higher years at the VC and *New Interface* at CDH, without a lesson book for the higher years.

Interviews

After the analysis of the questionnaires handed in by the students and the teachers, some teachers were invited to elaborate on the questionnaire. At CDH, the section leader, Ms. van Knippenberg was chosen to interview because of her experience with the literature program at the school and because she was also involved in the classification of the higher years library books. At the VC, most teachers were too busy to participate in an interview. After several attempts to ask them to answer the questions via email, one of them responded. Mr Coenen teaches in the upper vwo years but also has some knowledge of the teaching in the lower years.

The interviews were conducted after the analysis of the results from the questionnaire. This was done to ensure that the right questions were asked to deliberate on the questions already asked in the questionnaire. These questions were based on the questionnaire itself as well.

3.3 Procedure

Prior to commencing this study, the school educator of the Valuascollege and the section leader of English at College Den Hulster were contacted through email with an explanation of the research and a request to investigate the school. The schools were informed that the results of both schools would be analysed and described. Since these schools belong to the same

school community, they were particularly interested in the situation at the other school. Both schools were visited separately and the thesis was explained in further detail. Moreover, appointments were made for the distribution of the questionnaires, the visits to the libraries, the loan of the lesson books and the interviews with the teachers.

Over a period of two weeks, the questionnaires for the students were distributed during their English classes. The questionnaires were handed out to two 5vwo classes at the VC and two 5vwo classes and one bilingual English 5vwo year at CDH. They had to fill in the questionnaire during their English class so they were returned immediately and a 100% response was ensured. An instruction at the beginning of the lesson was not necessary although some questions were explained while walking around the classroom. The students all received the same questionnaire.

The section leaders of English at both schools distributed the questionnaires randomly among the English teachers. Most of these questionnaires were returned within three weeks. There was an explanation at the beginning of the questionnaire.

At the same time as the distribution of the questionnaires, the libraries at both schools were researched as well with the help of some questions (see appendix 5). The librarians at both schools were contacted through email. This email included an explanation of the research and the question whether they were able to show me around the library and participate in the interview. Both librarians agreed to participate. The classification of the books found there was of most importance. The librarian at the VC was interviewed on the 25th of September, on the same day that the questionnaires for the students at the school were distributed. She was willing to show the entire collection and provide commentary on the categorization of the books. The librarian at CDH also showed the collection of English books on both the upper-years as well as on the lower-years floor. She also explained the classification method for the English books.

Chapter 4 Results

The questionnaire for the students was in Dutch since this is the mother tongue of most pupils and therefore ensures that they will understand the questions better than when asked in English. For practical reasons, the questionnaire for teachers was also in Dutch, for the same reason as that for the students, although teachers are more proficient in the English language.

For this research, however, the questions and its responses were translated into English. The Dutch versions of these questionnaires can be found in appendices 1 and 2. Additional answers were added to the questionnaires after they were returned because students sometimes did not find the answer possibilities sufficient and created their own. That is why the English questionnaire might differ slightly from the Dutch one in the appendix.

This results section entails the outcome of the questionnaires filled in by the students at both schools and those of the teachers. One section will include the questionnaires filled in by the students of the ‘regular’ vwo at College Den Hulster and the Valuascollege, followed by a section containing both the answers from the teachers of the VC and those by the teachers from CDH. Finally, the students from the bilingual English department at CDH will be dealt with separately to ensure a proper comparison between the two regular vwo departments of the schools, without the interference of the results of the bilingual students. The answers per question can be found in three separate appendices at the end of this thesis (appendices 7, 8 and 9).

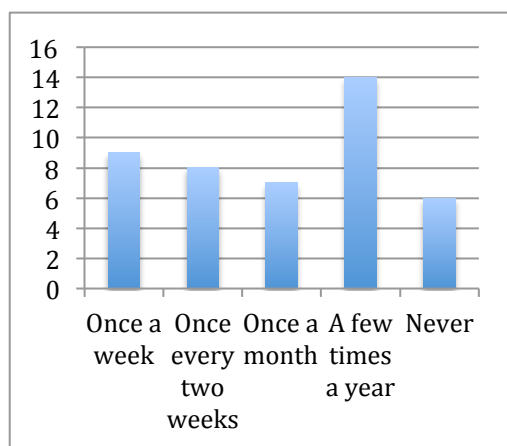
4.1.1 Questionnaires filled in by the students from the ‘regular’ vwo

The questionnaire for the students consists of five parts: general information; questions about literature or fiction education in the lower years; reading pleasure; the transition from the lower to the upper years; and four profile questions.

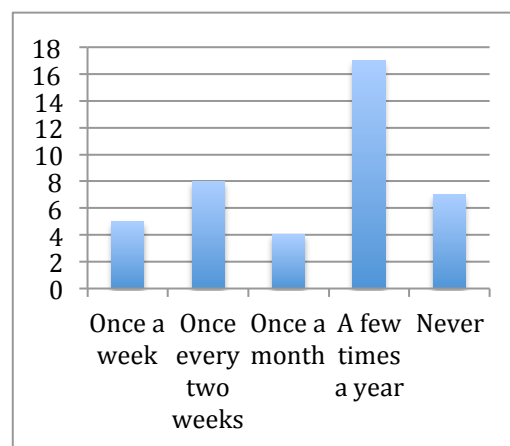
At the VC, the questionnaire was handed out to two classes, 5vwo A (27 students) and 5vwo D (17 students). A total of 44 students filled in the questionnaire. 14 were boys (31.8%) and 30 were girls (68.2%). Most students were either born in 1996 or 1997, 18 (40,9%) and 23 (52.2%), respectively, while only one pupil was born in 1995 (2.3%) and two in 1998 (4.5%). The questionnaire was handed out to three classes at CDH, 5vwo A (22 students), 5vwo B (19 students), and 5vwo C (23 students). A total of 64 students filled in the questionnaire at CDH. The pupils from 5VC are the bilingual English, while the other classes are from the ‘regular’ vwo department.

Questions about literature or fiction education in the lower years

This section of the questionnaire dealt with the literature or fiction education in the lower years and consisted of nine questions. The first question asked in this section illustrates the lack of a structured curriculum for literature lessons in the first three years of secondary school at the schools that were investigated. This might be the case at other schools as well since teachers in the lower years are not required to pay attention to reading or literature skills as there is no fixed curriculum and it therefore depends on the teacher whether he or she pays attention to the core goals (Trimbos 5). As shows in the two tables below, students at the VC received slightly more literature education. Although most teachers do not spend more than a few times a year on literature on both schools according to the students.



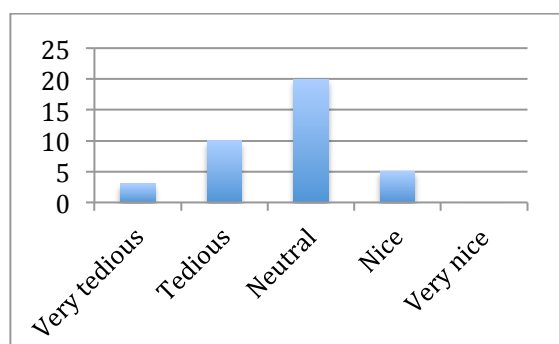
Question 6 VC



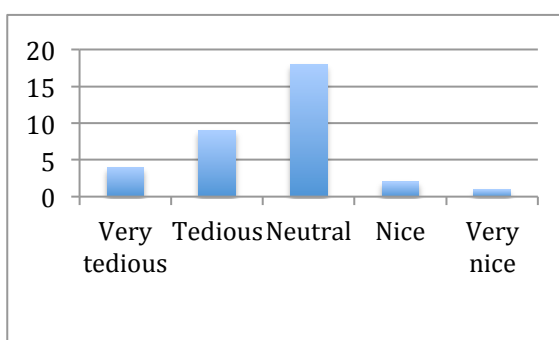
Question 6 CDH

As shows from the answers that the students provide, the number of lessons focused on reading or literature depends on the teacher. There is no fixed curriculum in the lower years for literature lessons and teachers are allowed to decide the amount of reading education given besides the grammar and vocabulary lessons and the practise of the three other skills.

When students were asked about their thoughts on these literature lessons, most of them were neutral towards the lessons. There were only a few students who actually enjoyed the lessons and at both schools thirteen children thought the lessons were tedious or very tedious.



Question 7 VC

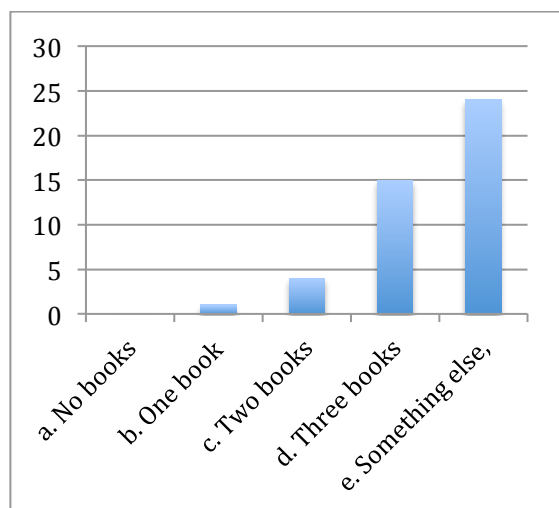


Question 7 CDH

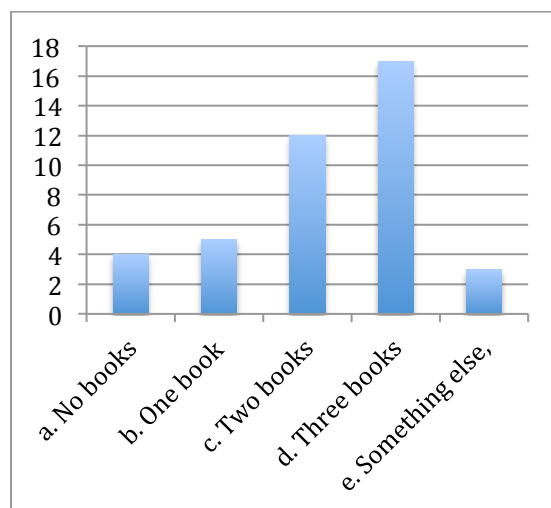
The exercises and instructions that the teacher gives, the way he or she designs and structures the lessons might influence the students' perception of and pleasure in reading. Bolscher emphasises this by stating that “differentiation in ‘processing assignments’ and lesson books in class play a big role ... for a comfortable and challenging reading environment” (23). Almost 74% of the students at VC stated that the teacher taught literature or reading during their classes with an assignment, while at CDH 73.5% of the students stated that they received a book to read at home. This is emphasised by the research conducted by Tanja Janssen in which she warns about the prominence of the “*verschriftelijking van het literatuuronderwijs*” (qtd. in Goose and Beeke 20), or loosely translated to English, the ‘written word in literature education’. Students have to read individually and do assignments instead of discussing the material that they have read (qtd. in Goosen and Beeke 20).

Especially at CDH, students are not asked to work with the material, while at VC students have to do assignments in class.

The students at CDH do not seem to enjoy reading English books as the total number of books read in the lower years is pretty low, even though the students are asked to read three books per year. As shows in the table below, students do not read that much. On average, students have to read 3.3 books per year (Goosen and Beeke 21), so the students at CDH and VC are just below average. Although at the VC, students do read more, while at CDH pupils do not seem to read as much as they are supposed to.



Question 10 VC



Question 10 CDH

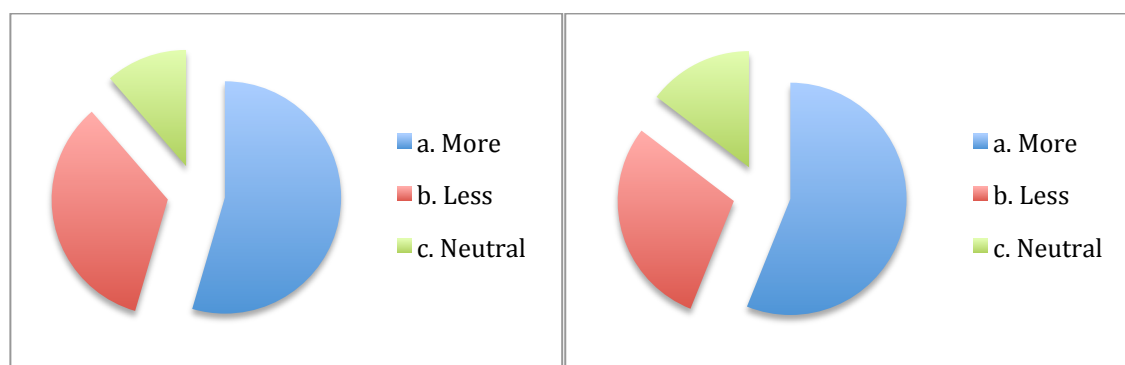
Students were also asked whether they read books at home for fun, at school as an assignment or both. Most students from the VC read both at home for fun and in class (46.5%), although, almost equally as many students only read books as an assignment for school (44.2%). Almost two thirds of the CDH students only read for school (63,4%) and never for pleasure, 11 students read both at home and at school (26,8%), a little more than a quarter of all the students. Three students stated that they only read books at home for fun (7.3%). What becomes clear is that students do not read for fun anymore but only because they are forced. This seems to be more the case at CDH, since only 26.8% of the students at

CDH read for pleasure. At VC almost half of the students do read for fun and as an assignment for school.

Children who do read for fun, “read more often, which increases their language and reading skills and accelerates the successful experience of reading a book” (Bus and Mol 8). These successful experiences will motivate students even more, creating a positive reading spiral (Bus and Mol 8). So the sooner students experience a successful reading experience, the more students will read later in life and the more motivated they are. It is therefore important to motivate the students to start or maintain their reading at the start of the lower years.

Despite the rather negative attitude towards reading English novels, a majority of the pupils stated that they would have preferred more reading education in the lower years. More than half of the students of the VC opted for answer a (54.5%), although one third of the test subjects preferred less reading education and 11.4% of the pupils were neutral. The students were also asked about a reason for their preferred option. Many students who would have preferred more reading education stated that it would have “prepared them better for the upper years” or because “reading is more fun than doing assignments”.

Fifteen students from the VC would have preferred less reading education because they thought reading was boring or they were not motivated. Several students also mentioned that because they were forced to read their reading pleasure decreased: they did not enjoy the pressure while they did enjoy reading in general.



Question 14 VC

Question 14 CDH

The majority of the students at CDH state that they would have preferred more reading education in the lower years (56.1%), while 12 students stated that they would have preferred less reading education (29.3%). The remaining six students had a neutral standpoint with regards to the English reading education and thought the amount of reading education in the lower years was sufficient.

The students were asked to explain their answer. Most students who chose for the option of more reading education stated that the reading lessons in the lower years should prepare you better for the reading in the higher years. Several students who would rather have less reading education stated that they found the lessons boring, one of them even said that he/she "hated it". The opinions are varied, but the students who wanted less reading education mostly chose for this option not because they thought the literature education at CDH was already sufficient but because they did not enjoy reading or reading lessons.

The students from both schools seem to show the same pattern in terms of more or less reading education. Even though students at the VC receive more literature education and have to read slightly more books, the students do feel the same about the preferred number of literature lessons.

Reading pleasure

These four questions focus on the student's reading pleasure. The first question asks the student how many books he or she reads for pleasure at the moment, followed by a question on the number of books they read in their free time at primary school. The two most important questions are asked lastly: how often they read for pleasure in the lower years and which type of books they read. Students are provided with multiple choice answers but in question 18 they are also asked for examples of books they have read.

In comparison to primary school, students read less. This may be due to the extra workload that they receive at secondary school. Moreover, pupils from secondary school are often required to read more as an assignment for school and lose their interest in reading for fun. Indeed, a decline in reading can be witnessed during the transition from primary school to secondary school: the number of irregular readers has increased.

When students were asked what kind of books they read for pleasure, most of them preferred to read youth novels (45.5% at VC and 41.5% at CDH), followed by YAL novels (36.4% at VC and 46.3% at CDH). Students are in a transition period in the lower years and the choice of books that they prefer to read illustrates this. Students prefer youth novels and YAL, and especially YAL can be the solution to the difficult transition from lower to upper years with regards to literature education (Stoter, Kamphuis and Kamphuis 1).

Transition lower to upper years

The following questions focus on the transition from the lower to the upper years. For students this is often a great change, as these final years signify more independence and the start of the preparation for the final exams. Students are asked about their experience concerning this transition. Much information can be extracted from this section as it is important for the research question in terms of the students' experiences.

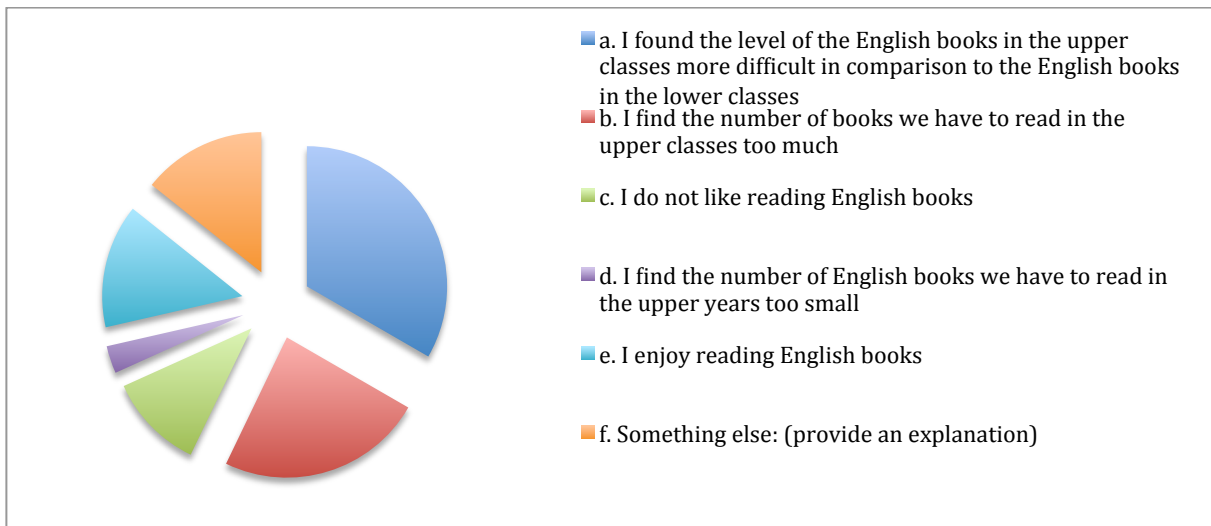
The students were asked about their experience with the transition from the lower to the upper years for the subject of English in general. They were provided with five possible answers. As shown in the table, students from CDH seem to have more difficulties with both the transition in general and the transition for literature. More than 70% of the students experience difficulties with the transition concerning English literature education. Students from the VC seem to experience this as well. More than 50% of the students there state that they have also experienced the transition to be bigger than expected.

	VC		CDH	
	Transition in general	Transition literature	Transition in general	Transition literature
Smaller than expected	6.8%	9.1%	2.4%	2.4%
Somewhat smaller than expected	2.3%	4.5%	2.4%	2.4%
Neutral	50%	31.8%	24.4%	22.0%
Somewhat bigger than expected	29.5%	31.8%	39%	41.5%
Bigger than expected	11.4%	22.7%	31.7%	31.7%

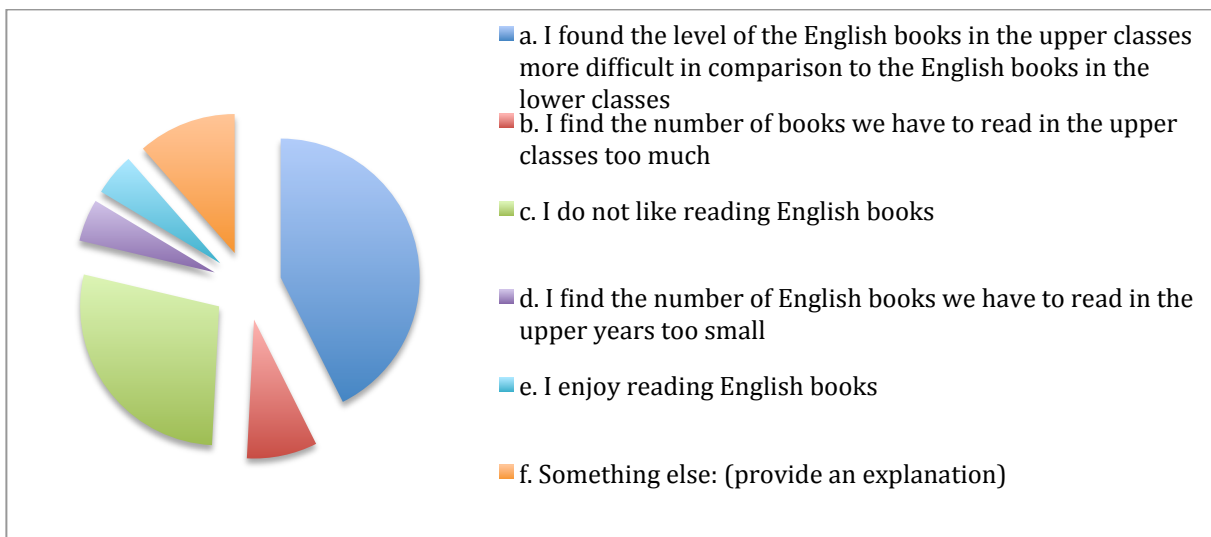
These results underline the disruption between the third and the fourth year of secondary school, or the interruption of the integrated curriculum (Stoker et al. 2; Mies 10; Witte 30).

The results of these two answers are quite disturbing as most students seem to have difficulties with the transition. This might be due to the increase of the workload and the lack of preparation for the English (reading) education in the lower years. Moreover, many students have developed a negative attitude towards reading in general. The actual literature education in the upper years might therefore put them off.

The students were also asked why they experienced the transition the way they did. They were given six possible answers and were allowed to choose multiple answers. Students who chose for option f, most of the time gave a negative answer in response to the question. They did not enjoy answering questions about literature. Also, the students enjoy reading but find the number of books that they have to read too much since they have to read for the subject of Dutch as well. The books are more difficult in the upper years and because of this students enjoy reading these books less than the books of the lower years.



Question 21 VC



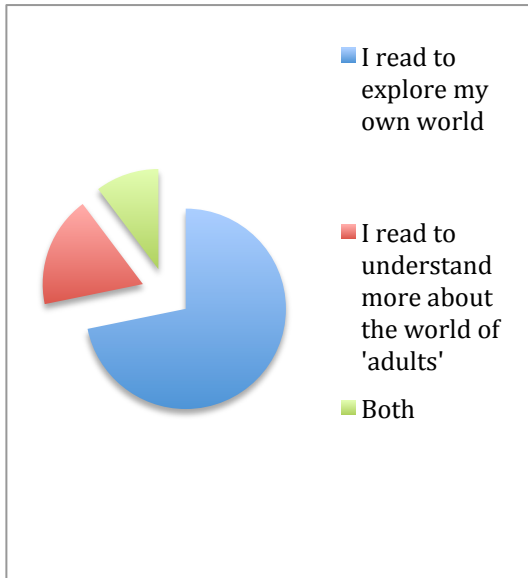
Question 21 CDH

Students from CDH seem to have more difficulties with the level of the books in the higher years, and more than a quarter of the CDH students simply do not enjoy reading, while the students at the VC found the number of books they have to read in the upper years too high.

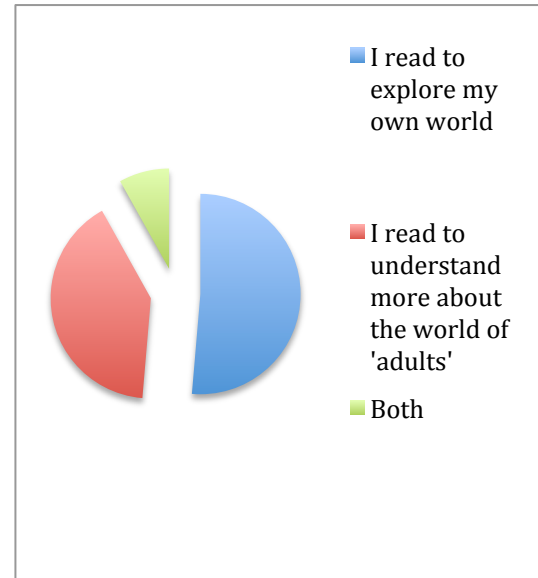
Profile

These final four questions focus on the students' reading profile. These questions were based on Witte's levels and the corresponding descriptions. Students can choose between two answers, each corresponding either with the second or the third level of lezenvoordelijst.nl,

the Dutch site for literature education based on Witte's levels of literary competence. When a student prefers the first option over the second option it is thought that they prefer books of level 2 and are not quite ready for or open to the level that they should have in the upper years.

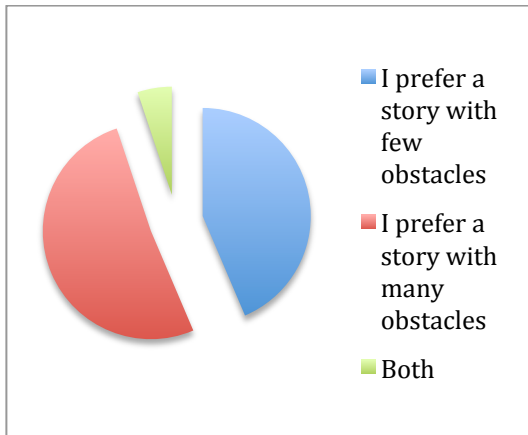


Question 22 VC

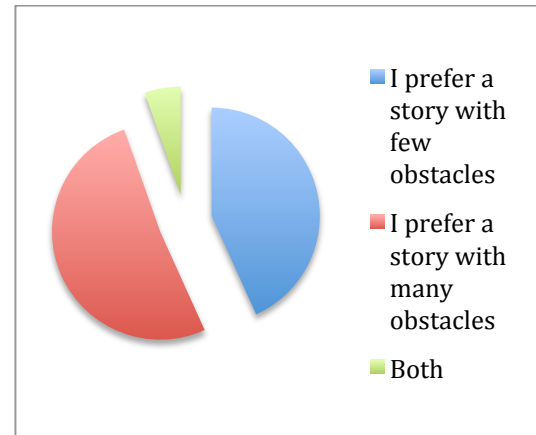


Question 22 CDH

Students from VC prefer the first option corresponding to level 2 more than the students from CDH. About the same number of students chose both the options (10% at VC and 8% at CDH). 41% of the students from CDH preferred the second option as well, with only 18% of the students at the VC choosing this option. This outcome is confirmed by previous research by Marten Stoter, Alma Kamphuis and Lisa Kamphuis. Their research states that “students [at this age] prefer to read about their peers instead of older or younger characters. This shows that adolescents want to identify with the persons they read about” (Stoker et al 4).



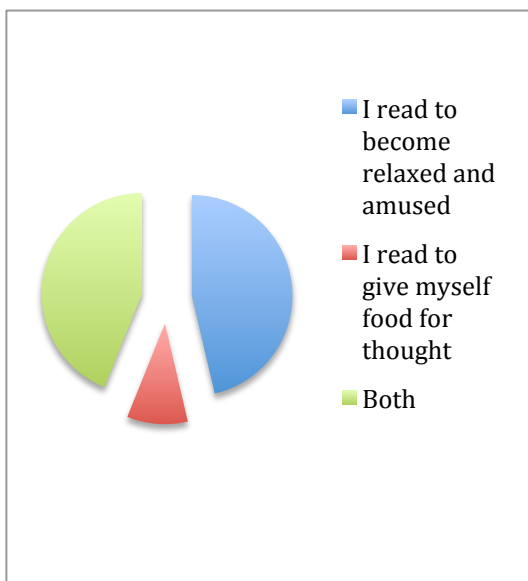
Question 23 VC



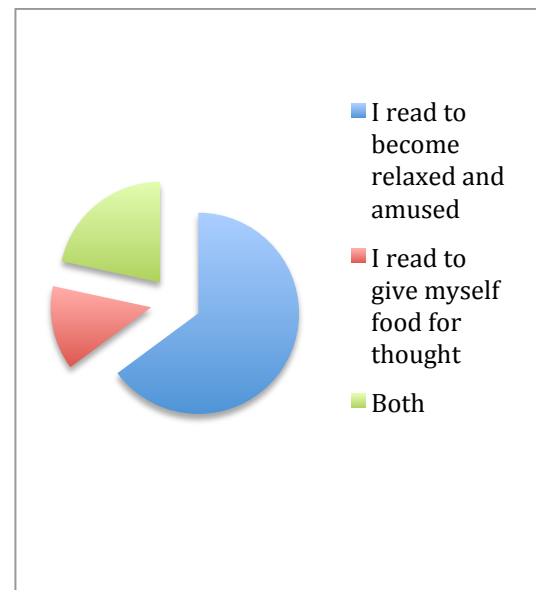
Question 23 CDH

As shown in the pie charts above, a little more than half of the students at both schools now preferred statement 2 which is a statement corresponding to level 3.

Question 24 asks students to choose between two options: I read to become relaxed and amused OR I read to give myself food for thought.



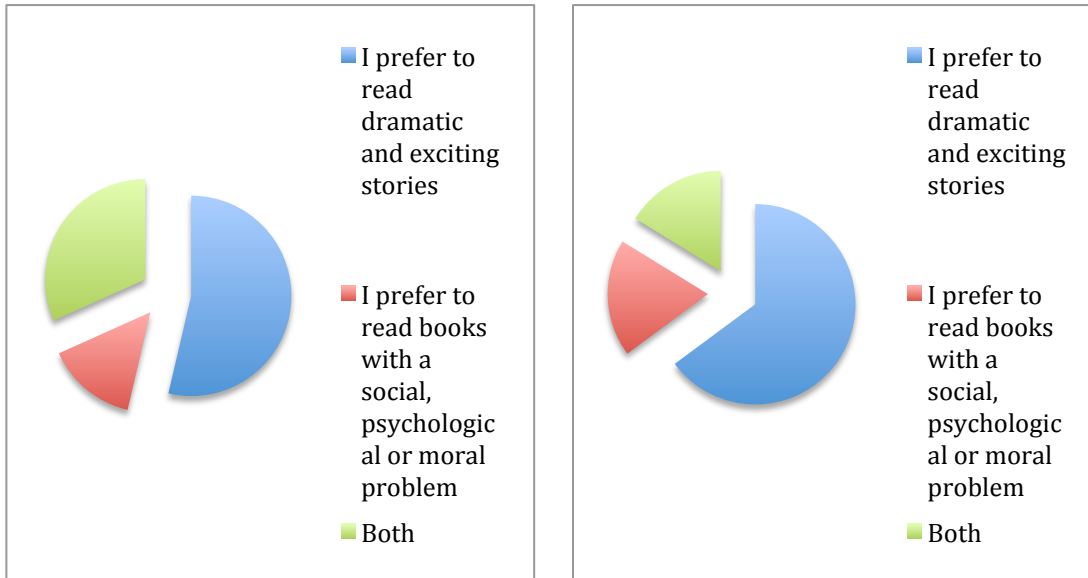
Question 24 VC



Question 24 CDH

The outcome for question 24 differed per school. At CDH 65% of the students preferred the first option, while at the VC 46% of the students preferred option 1, closely followed by 44% of the students who opt for both. Almost two thirds of the students from CDH prefer books to become relaxed and amused. While at the VC about the same number of students prefer either the first option or both the options, the opinions are more varied.

For question 25, students were given two options or they could choose for both. As shows, most students do prefer the first statement corresponding to a level 2 statement by lezenvoordelijst.nl. At CDH, more students chose for this option (65%) in comparison to the VC, where 54% of the students chose for this answer.



Question 25 VC

Question 25 CDH

This indicates that most students do still prefer level two books in terms of genre. Stories are supposed to excite them and remain close to their own world. The books that correspond to the second option often contain ‘adult’ problems and these do not appeal to the students that much (yet). The varied answers that the students gave shows that they really are in transition from one level to another. They are in a “literary rift” (Stoker, Kamphuis and Kamphuis 1).

4.1.2 Questionnaires filled in by the teachers

The questionnaire for the teachers also consists of five parts; seven general questions, followed by six questions about their personal reading pattern, eight questions about the lessons and the course books in the lower years, three questions about the upper years, and finally two questions about the transition from the lower to the upper years.

At the Valuascollege, eight questionnaires were distributed and six of these were returned within four weeks. Four of the teachers are female, while two of the participants did not fill in their gender. The questionnaire was in Dutch and teachers have therefore answered them in Dutch as well. The teachers' quotes have been translated into English, as well as the questions. The Dutch questionnaire can be found as an attachment at the end of this research. One of the teachers has been discarded from this research as he or she only taught at havo and not vwo.

There is an even age distribution among the teachers of English at the VC, although the distribution of their teaching experience is not. Two teachers have more than 25 years of experience, while the four other teachers have less than 10 years of experience.

At College Den Hulster, eight questionnaires were distributed and four of these were returned within five weeks. Two of the teachers are female, while two of the participants did not fill in their gender. All of the English teachers who filled in the questionnaire are 50 years or older. Two of the teachers are between 51 and 60 (50%) and the other two teachers are between 61 and 70 (50%). This also shows in the years of experience that they have: all four of them have more than 25 years of teaching experience.

Personal reading pattern

All of the teachers agreed on two questions: "Do you think it is important that students come into contact with the reading of literature at a young age?" and "Do you believe that it is important that students in the lower years start reading books and short stories as soon as possible?" The teachers commented by stating that reading "expands and deepens their world and their command of the English language". Another teacher also explains that it is important that the students make 'leeskilometers' from a young age but that they should read 'fun' books. Teachers at CDH also state that "reading is the way to learn a language and

getting to know the masters. You must have books in your life”. Another teacher stated that it “opens the students’ view”. Some of the statements include that reading in the lower years “prepares students for their final exams”; it provides students with “indirect and contextual language acquisition” and “expansion of the vocabulary”. Research emphasises this, but the following section investigates how often teachers pay attention to literature in class. Teachers do believe that literature is important as shows in the answers provided in the two questions mentioned above. However, the question remains whether teachers can actually facilitate literature education for students.

Lessons and lesson books in the lower years

The teachers at the VC do not seem to have made agreements about the frequency of the lessons of literature, as shows in the bar graph below. One teacher teaches literature once a week in his or her first years (answer c), while another only teaches literature once every two weeks (answer d) or even once every few months (answer f). In the second class, one of the teachers now also teaches literature once every month (answer e) instead of once every few months.

All of the teachers taught in the third grade. Again, the answers vary as one teacher focuses on reading education once a week (20%) while another teacher only pays attention to literature during class once every few months (20%). Two teachers deal with literature once every two weeks (40%), while another teacher discusses literature or reading education once every month (20%).

There were three teachers who answered the question for the fourth class. In this grade literature teaching seems to be declining in comparison to the number of reading lessons taught in the lower years. Two teachers pay attention to literature once every two weeks

(66.6%), while there is one teacher who teaches English reading or literature once every month (33.3%).

There were four teachers who taught in the fifth grade. There was one teacher who stated that he or she dealt with literature twice a week (25%), while the other three teachers either taught literature once every month (50%) or once every few months (25%). There was only one teacher who taught literature in the sixth grade and filled in an answer. He or she stated that once every two weeks attention was paid to literature education.

Three teachers answered this question for the lower years at CDH (among one who teaches bilingual English classes only), while one of them answered for the upper years only. In the first class, one of the teachers spent a class per week on literature (33%), while the other two, including the bilingual teacher, spent one class every two weeks on literature (67%). This number remains the same in the second class, although in the third class, the bilingual teacher also spends time on literature once a week. In the higher years, one teacher answered the question. This participant spends one lesson per week on literature in all three forms.

In conclusion, the teachers at the VC and at CDH do not seem to have made agreements about the frequency of the literature lessons, as the number of literature lessons given, differs per teacher. At the CDH, slightly more literature lessons are given throughout the six years, although there were fewer respondents at CDH.

Despite the fact that the teachers at CDH spend more time on literature lessons, the way in which they pay attention to literature is very important as well. The next question focuses on the kind of assignments teachers present to the students besides the lesson method. All of the teachers made use of supplementary assignments.

	Assignments used at VC	Assignments used at CDH	Assignments used for bilingual students
Year 1	Reading skills assignments	Reading skills assignments Read three short stories in English	Discuss poetry Read books Presentation Read essays and retell stories
Year 2	Reading skills along with Early Blackbirds	Reading skills assignments Read three short stories in English	Discuss poetry Read books Presentation Read essays and retell stories
Year 3	Reading skills and more varied assignments along with Young Blackbirds Assignments include: write a summary or write a different ending, the invention of a new title, etc.	Reading skills assignments Read three short stories in English	Discuss poetry Read books Presentation Read essays and retell stories And start on Shakespeare
Year 4	Short stories and Blackbirds Introduction of symbolism, technique and story plot and twists	No examples	No examples
Year 5	Continuation with the literary terms introduced in the fourth class Read three books for the oral exam at the end of the year	No examples	No examples
Year 6	No examples	No examples	No examples

The teachers were also asked to give their opinion on the course books that they use. At the VC, this is *New Interface* (the first edition) in the lower years and *Unicom Finals* in the upper years. The latest edition of *New Interface* is used at CDH, and officially there is no textbook for the upper years, although some teachers use *WaspReporter* and the *Examenbundel Engels*³. These textbooks will also be dealt with in a separate section.

In the first year, the teachers at the VC do not seem to agree on the suitability of the lesson book in terms of literature. In the first three grades the teachers' opinions vary, but most

³ A specific book for students containing all of the subject material to learn for their final exams. Each course has its own 'Examenbundel'.

of them agree with the statement. At CDH, only one teacher answered the question and disagreed with the statement. Although the schools use the same method, it might be due to the edition that the teacher at CDH does think enough attention is paid to literature. These two editions will also be discussed in a separate section. In the upper years, all of the teachers at the VC agree that the textbook does pay enough attention to literature, while at CDH the teacher believes that the textbook used (*WaspReporter*) does not pay enough attention to reading and literature. The teachers do make use of additional material but mostly use the lesson books and material that is already available.

Another important question asked was about the extra time that teachers spend on the reading of books in the lower years. Four teachers of the VC answered this question and all of them stated that they spent extra time, besides the lesson books and the material already provided, on the reading of literature or books in the lower years.

One of the teachers at CDH did not answer this question as he or she only teaches the upper years. Two teachers do spend time in class on the reading of literature or books in the lower years, while the bilingual teacher does not. The bilingual students are supposed to read at home.

The two 'regular' two teachers elaborated by stating that students are supposed to read three books per year in the lower years. In the first year, students read shortened versions of long books, while in the second and third year they are supposed to read the original. In the bilingual years, students are expected to produce essays on authors about whom the teacher taught.

All of the participants at the VC and CDH provided a confirmative answer to the final question of this section: "Do you think that it is important that students from the lower years are prepared for the reading of English stories and literature in the higher years?" They elaborate on their answer by stating that it is part of the integrated curriculum. This starts in

the lower years with easy books that become more difficult as they progress through secondary school. Teachers also mention that reading in the lower years is important because it provides students with a slow build-up of the reading load.

Reading and lesson books in the higher years

These final five questions focus on the way literature education is taught in the higher years. The first question focuses on the CEFR-level that students have reached. In their fourth year, ideally, students should have reached B1-level. Do the teachers think that this is the case for each student? Unfortunately, few answers were given as only four teachers teach in the upper forms. Two teachers answered for the VC and both stated that 50%-75% of the students has reached B1-level when they reach the fourth class. There were also only two teachers who filled in this answer at CDH; one of them thinks that only 25%-50% of the students have reached the B1-level while the other teacher believes that 75%-100% of the students have reached B1-level.

23. Why do you think it is important that students read literature in the upper years?

- a. Social development**
- b. Reading pleasure**
- c. Literary-esthetical education**
- d. Cultural education**
- e. Individual development**

These five possible answers were chosen because they represent the five functions of literature education (Janssen 62; Geljon 12). Most teachers found cultural education the most important function in the research conducted by Janssen (62). What do the teachers at CDH and VC rate as the most important function? Five teachers filled in this question. Teachers were allowed to give multiple answers, and two of them chose all the five possibilities. The other three participants chose multiple answers as well and coincidentally all of the answer options were chosen four times. At CDH, the first option, social development was chosen

once, as well as option c, literary-esthetical education. Answer b, d and e were all chosen twice.

The participants who teach in the upper years were also asked how much time they spend on literature in the upper years. The teachers were provided with seven possible answers and were asked to fill in an answer for every upper class. At CDH, only one teacher answered this question and stated that he or she spends time on literature **once a week** in all of the years. At the VC, more teachers filled in this question, but overall they did not teach literature as often as the teacher at CDH. For the fourth class, two teachers filled in an answer. One of them taught literature **once a week** and the other **once every two weeks**. Four teachers answered the question for the fifth year and two of them stated that they taught literature **once every two weeks** and the other two taught literature **once a month**. Three teachers filled in the question for 6 vwo; again the number of lessons is not very high. One teacher teaches literature **once every two weeks**. Another teaches literature **once a month**, and the last teacher gives a literature lesson **every few months**.

One of the most surprising outcomes from this questionnaire was the answer to the penultimate question:

“Do you think the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to English literature education is;

- a. Very good**
- b. Good**
- c. Not good/not bad**
- d. Bad**
- e. Very bad”**

One teacher at the VC did not fill in the answer but the four teachers who did answer this question all unanimously picked answer d. This confirms that the teachers themselves are not pleased with the transition at the moment. Only three teachers at CDH filled in this question, as one of the teachers did not know exactly what the transition is like. One of the participants

thinks that the transition is good at the moment, while one participant was neutral and the last teacher thinks that the transition is not good.

Moreover, all of the teachers, both at the VC and at CDH, do believe that an improvement of the reading or literature education in the lower years can ensure an easier transition from the lower and the upper years. They stated that “the reading of suitable and attractive books will stimulate the reading pleasure, their linguistic understanding and reading skills, and the foundation for this is laid in the lower years”. Moreover, another teacher believes “students should enjoy reading at first. Some of the literature [in the upper years] demotivates the students” and there is “not enough appreciation for reading as a learning strategy”.

4.1.3 Comparison of the bilingual students and the ‘regular’ vwo students

Some of the results from the questionnaires filled in by the bilingual English students were quite interesting. In this section the results from the bilingual students and the ‘regular’ vwo students will be discussed.

The students from the bilingual year do receive more literature education in the lower years: 47.8% of the students received literature or reading lessons once a week versus only 16.5% of the regular students. Moreover, all of the bilingual students received some form of literature education, while 15.3% of the regular vwo students never had any literature education in the lower years. Students from the bilingual year do enjoy the literature lessons slightly more (17.4% versus 11.1% of the regular students). More than two thirds of the bilingual students have a neutral standpoint, while 52.8% of the regular vwo students have neutral feelings towards the literature classes. Students from the bilingual years have more diverse lessons with a higher level of English, but the variation in assignments is not that different from the education that the regular vwo students receive.

A majority of the bilingual students read two books or less (52.2%), while only 30.6% of the students from the regular years read two books or less. Students from the bilingual years are motivated to read as many books as they can in English, so it is surprising that the number of books that the students actually read is that low. Moreover, the results for question 11 are about the same for the regular and the bilingual students: about 50% of the students only read novels as an assignment for school. Only 9.1% of the bilingual students and 8.2% of the 'regular' vwo students read at home for fun.

This is also emphasised by the results from question 12. 69.6% of the bilingual students never read an English novel in their free time in the lower years, and 76.5% of the students from the 'regular' vwo years never read novels for fun in the lower years. This is an astonishing outcome, as the students from the bilingual years receive more input and are motivated by their teachers to read in English, as this is an easy and fun way to learn the language. But as it turns out, the students from the bilingual years are not avid readers of English novels at all.

The fact that the bilingual students do not differ that much from their peers shows in the next question as well. Both groups of students would have preferred more reading education (56.5% and 55.3% respectively). However, the bilingual students do prefer books from a slightly higher level. They prefer Young Adult novels to youth novels (50% and 21% respectively), while the students from the regular vwo years do enjoy youth novels as well as Young Adult novels (45.8% and 55.3% respectively).

The bilingual students aim for a near-native level of English at the end of the sixth class, and their level of English therefore has to be much higher than that of the students from the regular years. As 80% of their lessons in the lower years are in English and as this percentage decreases as they reach the higher years, the students are expected to have fewer difficulties with the transition in general for the subject of English. But the results show that

47.8% of them do think the transition is bigger than they expected, while only 21.2% of the regular students think that the transition is bigger than expected. In terms of the transition for literature, the bilingual students again seem to have more difficulties with the transition. 78.3% thought the transition was bigger or somewhat bigger than expected and none of the students thought the transition was easier or somewhat easier than expected, while ‘only’ 63.6% of the students from the regular years experienced difficulties with the transition. There were, however, 8 students (9.3%) who thought the transition was easier or somewhat easier than expected. It appears that the level of English in the upper years is much more difficult for the bilingual students, than for the ‘regular’ students.

Despite the fact that the students from the bilingual year read less and have more difficulties with the transition, they still have a higher level of English. This might show in the final four questions from the questionnaire. These help to determine the profile of the students. As the bilingual students have a higher level of English, they can also handle novels with a higher level of English and with a more difficult vocabulary and plot. This hypothesis is confirmed as the bilingual students chose for the second option corresponding to the third level of *lezenvoordelijst.nl* more often than their peers from the other ‘regular’ years.

4.2 Research in library

Both libraries were investigated with the help of the librarians. Libraries at school play an important role in the reading education of students because this is where they can gain access to these books.

At the VC, the books are categorized by years. There are books specifically for the lower years and for the upper years. The lower years are divided into three groups, one for each class. So a student from the third year knows immediately which books are suitable for his level. Unfortunately, as the librarian also commented, these books are for vmbo, havo and vwo, although a second-year vmbo student would not necessarily read the same books as a

second-year vwo student. This already causes some difficulties in finding a book that matches the students' level. Moreover, not all the students have the same reading proficiency, so some third-year students might consider the books that they are allowed to read too difficult or too easy. The fourth-year students are 'in between' since they have passed the stage of youth literature but most of the time experience difficulties with the literature for the upper years. Their level and the corresponding books are in between youth books and adult literature. In terms of the Witte levels, this categorisation might not be a suitable one as all of the students are expected to be at the same level when they have reached a certain class.

What is striking is that there is no longer an open access system. Students can only make a reservation through the website <http://valuascollege.auralibrary.nl/auraic.aspx> and pick up the book the next day in the open access area of the library. There is a storage containing all of the books downstairs, but students are not allowed to go there. This change happened two years ago, as the management of the school wanted to create more computer spaces for the pupils.

Unfortunately, fewer books are being loaned. This is due to the 'invisibility' of the books, since they can only be reserved online and no longer seen in 'real life'. Moreover, the new digital loan system took some time getting used to and the class sets (a book that all students of one class have to read either in class or at home) were used solely for quite some time, keeping the students from visiting the library.

There are 561 English books available in the library. The Valuascollege also cooperates with the public library of Venlo, where students can loan the more modern books instead of the rather old Meulenhoff, Longman, or Macmillan guided reader series that are available in storage. This increases the total number of books available.

At CDH, there still is open access to the collection. The books are divided over two floors. One floor contains the upper level havo/vwo books and another floor the lower level

havo/vwo books. Four years ago, there was one central library downstairs where students could study and loan books. Staff worked there full-time so there was always someone to help the students. Unfortunately, due to budget reasons, the library is closed and the books were divided over the two floors. They are now situated in the OLC (Open Leer Centrum or Open Learning Centre), but the librarian herself only works part-time and has to divide her time between three different locations; the OLC for the lower years, the OLC for the upper years and the vmbo location. This alteration displeased the librarian at first but she is now pleased with this division because the books are on the floors where they belong. Also, she is more involved in the literature lessons and with the language policies.

The lower year pupils have their classes on the first floor, and the upper years on the third floor, so they always have access to 'their' books. In total, there are 777 English books, 350 for the lower years and 427 books for the upper years. Students can loan the books in the library but they can also make reservations through a similar program as that of the VC, namely <http://denhulster.auralibrary.nl/auraic.aspx>.

In the lower years, students of the regular vwo only read in class with the use of class sets. There are five of these class sets available. Students from the bilingual English program and the gifted program (Da Vinci classes) are motivated to read individually as well. Most of these students rush to the library and are really enthusiastic about reading, but most regular lower years vwo students rarely visit the OLC. The library offers modern books, including many fantasy series such as *Twilight*, *Percy Jackson* and *Harry Potter*. The lower years books do not contain levels. This was done on purpose so students will not stick with books they think are suitable for their level, but really choose a book based on their interests. The levels for the upper years are arranged according to a sticker system. There are still class sets for the upper years, 32 in total, but not all of these are used yearly. Some of these sets are used for

the bilingual years as well and therefore require a higher level of English proficiency, such as Shakespeare's plays.

It seems as if there is more room for the purchase of modern books at CDH. There are more books available in the library itself. Additionally, the books that are there might be more appealing to the students. Although the VC has fewer books available in its storage, it does offer more books because of its cooperation with the public library of Venlo, although CDH is also working on cooperating with the public library. Moreover, the librarian at the VC is available full-time at one location, while the librarian at CDH is only there part-time and has to divide her attention between three different locations.

4.3 The course books at both schools

The course books at secondary schools provide teachers and students with structure. This provides this research with an interesting viewpoint. To what extent do these course books include literature or fiction in their lesson books? How much attention do they pay to reading skills? To answer these questions, the VC and CDH lent their course books for a thorough analysis. Moreover, the websites of the course books were checked as well.

The VC uses *New Interface* (NI), the first edition, for the lower years and *Unicom Finals* (UF) for the upper years; both course books were published in 2003. There is a NI course book and a workbook available for each of the three lower years and there is a UF textbook and workbook available for the fourth year and one combined for the fifth and sixth years.

New Interface and *Unicom Finals* are both published by ThiemeMeulenhoff. NI is offered to students on five different levels. The level suitable for that of vwo-students is called Blue. The other four lower levels are either meant for the four different types of vmbo or havo. The language used throughout NI is English although exercise explanations are in Dutch.

The lesson book in the first year was published in 2013, and consists of 9 units. Each unit contains five lessons. The first three lessons are called Discovery and focus on the expansion of vocabulary and grammar. These three lessons each contain three short texts or dialogues in the textbook. The final two lessons named In Context and Interaction focus on reading, listening and watching respectively. The subjects of the units are everyday themes such as going on a vacation, being at school, sports, pets; typical subjects that appeal to lower-year students. There is a focus on British English in terms of spelling and themes, although there is one chapter that concentrates on “Flying to the States”.

The lesson book for the second year contains fewer units, although each unit now includes an ‘Extra Reading’ section. This ‘Extra Reading’ involves longer texts and the exercises that go along with it are supposed to improve their reading skills. The subjects of the 8 units in this course book are also everyday situations or subjects including a chapter on food, the weather and two other English-speaking countries (Africa and Australia). The final course book for the lower years has the same layout as that of the two previous course books, only this consists of 7 Units and the ‘Extra Reading’ section is sometimes alternated with a ‘Project’. The themes are still everyday subjects and situations but there are excerpts from novels in this final course book in the ‘Extra Reading’ section, this gives teachers the opportunity to go deeper into the novel and fiction education. The question is whether teachers are willing to spend their time on this.

The fact that these three lesson books were published ten years ago starts to show. Most pictures are out-dated and students are still required to write a letter or send a fax as an assignment. Although the themes are appealing, the way in which they are portrayed is definitely not. Overall, these course books tend to focus on grammar and vocabulary mainly, which is quite normal since the students are relatively new to the language. The emphasis is

on reading skills, starting mostly from the second year, although actual fiction and fiction assignments are rare. Pupils are mostly trained in acquiring skills.

An advantage of the NI textbooks is that there is an interactive website available for students and teachers: <http://www.newinterface.nl/newinterface/index.asp>. This website provides extra exercises both for teachers and pupils. Also, teachers can find the core goals for the lower years combined with the course books so that they can see which exercises practice which core goals. Teachers can also exchange tests and exercises with other teachers on this webpage. Unfortunately, the NI first edition does not seem to be updated anymore since the new second edition of NI has been in use. Moreover, there is an extra DVD that contains listening and watching material for the teacher to use during the lessons.

Unicom Finals was first published in 2003 as well, but a second edition has been published as well. The first edition will be dealt with in this section, as this edition is still in use at the VC. UC consists of two course books: one for the fourth year of vwo and one for the fifth and sixth year of vwo. It is supposed to be a preparation for the final exams and is also arranged by the four skills that are tested in these exams: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Literature is a separate part of this exam, as has been explained in the section on exam requirements in the theoretical framework. Although this is tested separately, this part is dealt with in UF in the form of short stories, extracts, poems and songs. The language used throughout is English, in the textbook as well as the exercise book.

The first course book for fourth year pupils consists of eight units and six of these units contain at least two or up to five texts. As the introduction states: “a pupil learns how to deal with texts in different ways and also how to get as much information out of the text as possible” (8). The course book differentiates between intensive (detailed reading) and extensive reading (global reading). There is also a separate section on literature and how the textbook deals with this, “this book contains short literary texts of fragments from longer

literary works” (8) accompanied by exercises in the workbook. These exercises are meant to lead to “a better understanding of a literary text ... which also enhances reading pleasure. That is why some of these texts are also available on CD” (10). An example of such an exercise is the one on page 35 in the workbook:

Which sentence in the first paragraph tells you that the first person narrator is prejudiced against Max Kelada?

Can you explain his prejudice? What is it based on? (Unit 2, exercise 47)

So, the first question asks for an understanding of the text and asks for a detailed reading of the text while the second question asks for a more global reading of the text and for the students’ interpretation.

These texts are longer than the texts from the NI, however, they also require more in terms of supplementary exercises. Most of the texts are more than two pages and do not contain as many images as in NI. The subjects are also more serious and might appeal less to the students. In terms of CEFR and Witte levels, students should reach B1 level in the fourth year and should be able to read reflectively or interpretatively (Witte 527). This is the most difficult transition (Witte 540) and students should therefore be encouraged to read in this year specifically.

In the second course book, designed for the fifth and sixth years, there is a clear direction towards the exams. There are twelve units of which eight focus on all of the skills and the four final chapters focus on each of the skills separately. Of the first eight chapters, each contains at least two, or up to four texts. There are five short stories, two poems and two extracts from novels. The goal of these reading texts and the corresponding exercises remains the same as in the first UF course method, namely the training of intensive and extensive

reading. The final chapter, Unit 12, focuses on reading skills only and contains eight texts with corresponding exercises in the workbook.

UC also has a website, www.unicomfinals.nl that contains extra exercises and extra reading texts. Moreover, the site also includes a link to a CEFR test, where students can answer several questions and find out their current ERK level. Unfortunately, this website is out-dated as well as the new UF edition was published quite recently. Therefore, this website is not updated anymore.

These textbooks seem to pass over into each other quite naturally. Especially since the amount of reading is gradually increased. Students and teachers have access to the websites of both course books, which provides them with extra exercises and information, but the question remains whether teachers or students actually access and make use of these facilities. They might be a great addition to the lessons, but the disadvantage is that these websites are no longer updated, which makes them out-dated. This can also be said of the lesson books, as they are more than ten years old.

At CDH, the teachers make use of NI as well, the second edition, but they do not have a course book for the upper years. That is why only the textbook of the lower years will be discussed in this section. The way of teaching and additional material in the upper years will be explained in the interview section.

The second edition of NI for the first grade was first published in 2008, whereas the edition for the second year was published in 2009. The new edition of NI for the third year was published in 2010. The books are classified as Blue Label, which makes them suitable for vwo students. All of these NI editions contain a course book, which consists of a textbook and a check-book, and one workbook. Students can use the check-book to practise grammar. The website for this new edition of NI is www.newinterface-online.nl and contains tests, a user

manual for teachers, audio exercises, web and DVD exercises and much more. This website is updated regularly unlike the website for the first edition of NI.

The three course books are all built up in the same way. The structure of the books is explained in the Dutch introduction. In this section, the authors also explain the website and the exercises and information that the students can find there. As in the first edition, the introduction is followed by an overview of the course book and the workbook. The editions for the second and third year also include an overview of the CEFR levels. The units in the textbook and workbook are linked to certain can-do statements from the CEFR. Students are expected to accomplish these statements at the end of each unit. In terms of reading, students are expected to be at A2 or B1 level in the second year and in the third year a shift to B1 level occurs. The statements that occur in the second-year edition are about reading skills mostly, while in the third grade students are also expected to read short texts with pleasure. This statement keeps recurring in every unit in the third year. Although teachers and students might not necessarily pay attention to these levels, it is commendable that these levels and can-do statements are included in the books. It can provide both the teacher and the students with an idea of the student's current level and what a student needs to do to advance to the next level.

The appearance of the editions as a whole is more modern and more inviting for lower-year students. This edition appeals more to the student's world. There are eight characters -- about the same age as the students -- who lead the students through the lesson method. They appear in the dialogues that recur throughout the textbook. These dialogues are alternated with other texts such as commercials, flyers, e-mails and travel information. Most of these informative texts are used for reading exercises to enhance reading skills.

Each unit contains five lessons in the edition for the first year. The first three units focus on grammar and vocabulary, while the fourth lesson focuses on reading and the fifth on

interaction (listening and watching). There is attention for grammar as well as communicative skills. This also shows in the check-book, containing all the grammar, and in the many dialogues throughout the textbook. In the second and third year, the first five lessons remain the same although a new additional lesson is added. Lesson six contains an “Extra Reading” section.

In the first year the texts in the textbook are usually no longer than two pages and contain many images. The students are often required to extract information from these texts. From the second year on, the texts become longer and contain fewer images. The additional “Extra Reading” lesson also portrays a shift from reading short texts to reading more and longer texts. In the third year, students are even required to read short stories (four pages with no images).

4.4 Interviews

The interviews were meant as an extension of the questionnaires and to extract more information about the English literature situation at both schools. The questions were short and as Mr Coenen filled in the questions via email, there was not much room for elaboration. However, certain general conclusions can be drawn from the interviews.

The two schools seem to maintain practically the same approach towards literature, which was already established in the questionnaires. This also shows in the outcome of the interviews. At both schools, teachers are not aware of the Witte stages of literature for Dutch. Moreover, the teachers do not pay attention to the students’ individual levels. As Mrs. van Knippenberg emphasises, “we don’t take the individual level of the students into consideration. The books are of a certain level and there will always be students who struggle with literature”. Also, the teachers are familiar with the CEFR-levels but do not use them when teaching literature.

The students at the VC are required to read more books: three English novels per year in the lower years and this continues in the upper years. The focus is more on the coming final exams at the CDH, and students are therefore only required to read one novel in 4 vwo, two in 5 vwo and one novel and one Shakespeare play in 6 vwo. The number of novels that students have to read does differ at both schools. At the VC, students have to continue their 'leeskilometers', while at CDH, teachers in the upper years seem to focus more on the final exams.

Chapter 5 Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction and the theoretical framework, the transition between the lower and the higher years of secondary school with regards to literature education is disturbed (Stoter et al. 2; Mies 10; Witte 30). Witte has created levels to provide teachers and students with an overview of their literary development. This model was introduced specifically for the subject of Dutch and most students seem to have difficulties with the transition from level 2 to level 4. As this research suggests, the challenging transition from lower to upper years can also be witnessed for the subject of English.

As Hommerschom-Schreuder states, the levels that Witte created for Dutch can also be applied to the modern foreign languages offered at secondary schools (25). This applies especially to the subject of English, as most students have already come into contact with the language at primary school and through the media. The levels that Witte applies to Dutch literature can be applied to the subject of English as well. Students might go through the stages at a slower pace for a foreign language, but the levels apply to the student's progression in literature, not the improvement of their language skills.

This study set out to describe the situation in terms of English literature education at two Dutch secondary schools in the province of Limburg. These results cannot be applied to all of the secondary schools in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, very little research has been done so far with regards to the literary transition for the subject of English at Dutch secondary schools. This thesis could therefore be used as a model for further research into the literature education situation at secondary schools in the Netherlands.

Literature education in the lower years of secondary school does exist but is not very structured. Core goals have been formulated to provide teachers with some structure but it still depends on the teacher whether attention is paid to literature or reading education in the first years. As shows in the results from the questionnaires handed in by the students, their

frequency of reading lessons varies per teacher. Some students received one lesson per week on reading education while others never had any literature lessons in the lower years.

Most students who do receive literature lessons often do not enjoy them. The students at the VC were mostly neutral (52.6%) and 33.9% of the students thought the lessons were tedious or very tedious. At CDH, the results are not very promising either, 52.9% of the students had a neutral standpoint while 38.2% of the students found the lessons tedious or very tedious. At the VC, 70.5% of the students never read English books for fun in the lower years, while this percentage is 82.8% at CDH.

Despite the disappointing results shown in the previous paragraph, the students do prefer more reading lessons in the lower years (56.1% of the students at CDH and 55% of the students at the VC), mostly because of the high level of the literature education in the upper years. Several students stated that the transition would have been easier if the teacher had spent more time on literature in the lower years.

A way to get students to read is to introduce them to books at N+1. Most students prefer youth novels and YAL in the lower years, and students might be helped when they can read YAL in the fourth year combined with adult literature to make the transition easier. Students at that age prefer to read novels that appeal to their world instead of the world of adults.

The lesson book for the lower years -- both schools use either the first or the second edition of *New Interface* -- does focus on reading education, but the texts are rather short. The teachers therefore provide the students with additional material and books to read, because these are not provided for by the lesson itself. Despite this, more time could be spent on a structured literature curriculum for all teachers, with a focus on the individual reading process of the students. Another idea is to let the interns at both schools provide pupils with more help when they experience difficulties with the reading of literature

The library and the librarians are an important part of a motivating and structured reading curriculum. As Kruithof underlines “a good library is as vital [in literature or fiction education] as a good teacher” (56). The librarians have more knowledge of the books that are available and can help students choose the right books at the right level, preferably at N+1. Unfortunately, the situation at both schools is not ideal at the moment. The students at the VC can only order the books through an online system. They are categorized according to years. This means that students from all three levels of education (vmbo, havo and vwo) read the same books. So books from the first year might be too hard for students from vmbo-classes but too easy for students from vwo-classes. This classification, moreover, does not motivate students to read books from a higher or lower level because most of the students will stick to the books that are thought suitable for their year.

In the lower years at CDH, the books are not categorized, encouraging students to read books that appeal to them instead of choosing a book that matches ‘their level’. The only disadvantage is that students might choose books that are too difficult or too easy for their level. The teacher or librarian should therefore guide the students in their choice. In the upper years the section leader has introduced a new sticker system, based on the number of pages, the themes in the book and the overall difficulty of the book.

The transition at both schools is not very structured yet: there are certain rules about the number of books students should read in the lower years but there is no structured curriculum. At the moment, it depends on the teacher how many hours of literature or reading education are taught and in what way. Most students state that they would have preferred more literature education in the lower years because of the difficult transition. According to them, the teachers do not pay enough attention to literature or reading in the lower years.

Contrary to expectations, this study did not find a significant difference in the reading pattern and reading pleasure between the bilingual English students and the regular vwo students. Such a difference might be found in future research on the reading skills and apprehension of English between regular vwo students and bilingual English students.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has given an account of the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to English literature education at secondary schools in the Netherlands. In order to investigate this transition, two schools from the same school community were researched. Namely, College Den Hulster and the Valuascollege, both situated in Venlo.

The integrated curriculum has already been greatly improved in comparison to the situation before 2007. There are more lessons committed to reading or literature education, although many improvements can still be made. Teachers at both schools still believe that the transition at the moment is somewhat flawed and that an improvement of this transition can greatly increase the students' reading abilities and reading pleasure.

To investigate this transition, many factors had to be taken into consideration such as the influence of the library on the children's attitude towards reading, as well as the structure of the (integrated) curriculum for the years. Moreover, students' and teachers' opinions towards the importance of reading novels and the significance of literature lessons had to be investigated through the use of questionnaires and interviews.

Of course, this research is limited to five (bilingual) vwo classes at two secondary schools in the southern part of the Netherlands and does not cover the situation in the whole country. Moreover, havo and vmbo students were not taken into account. Despite this, general conclusions can be drawn for the vwo English department at the two schools and the current situation. The findings suggest that in general, students are no longer interested in reading for fun or for school, but they do prefer more reading lessons to prepare them for the literature in the upper years. Findings suggest that students need to be motivated more from the beginning of the first grade to maintain their reading pattern. The results of this research support the idea that the transition from the lower to the upper years can be improved. The students with a should be provided with a more structured curriculum and a library containing interesting

novels. The teachers should be motivated more to guide students through their individual literary development.

The main disadvantage of this study is that it contains a relatively small sample of 107 students and 10 teachers from two schools, which are part of the same school community. This study should therefore be replicated on a much greater scale to be able to draw general conclusions about the literature education situation in the Netherlands at the moment.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire Students

Instructie

Door middel van deze vragenlijst wil ik graag te weten komen hoe jij het **literatuur/leesonderwijs** voor het vak **Engels** op school vindt in de **onderbouw** én de **bovenbouw** tot nu toe.

Verkeerde of slechte antwoorden bestaan niet, vul je antwoorden eerlijk in.

De antwoorden worden anoniem verwerkt.

1. Jongen / Meisje
2. Geboortemaand en jaar:
3. Moedertaal/moedertalen:
4. Profielkeuze
5. Klas

Deze vragen gaan over **literatuur- of leesonderwijs** in de **onderbouw**:

6. Hoe vaak werd er **tijdens de Engelse les** aandacht besteed aan verhalen of gedichten?
 - a. Een keer per week
 - b. Een keer per twee weken
 - c. Een keer per maand
 - d. Een paar keer per jaar
 - e. Nooit

Vraag 7 t/m 9 mag je **overslaan** als je bij vraag 6 antwoord E hebt gegeven.

7. Wat vond je van deze lessen over literatuur?
 - a. Heel erg leuk
 - b. Leuk
 - c. Neutraal
 - d. Vervelend
 - e. Heel vervelend
8. Vond jij dat je docent genoeg aandacht besteedde aan literatuur?
 - a. Ja
 - b. Nee
9. Als er aandacht aan literatuur werd besteed in welke vorm was dit dan?
 - a. Tijdens de les met een opdracht
 - b. Tijdens de les werd er (voor)gelezen
 - c. We kregen een opdracht mee naar huis
 - d. We kregen een boek mee naar huis om te lezen
 - e. Iets anders, nl:

10. Hoeveel boeken heb je in totaal voor het vak Engels moeten lezen in de onderbouw?
 - a. Geen boeken, alleen korte teksten en gedichten
 - b. 1 boek
 - c. 2 boeken
 - d. 3 boeken

- e. Anders, nl:
11. Las je in de onderbouw boeken
- Thuis, voor je plezier
 - Op school, als opdracht
 - Beide
12. Hoeveel **Nederlandstalige** boeken las je gemiddeld **thuis voor je plezier** in de **onderbouw**?
- Een of meerdere boeken per week
 - Een boek per twee weken
 - Een boek per maand
 - Een boek per twee maanden
 - Een boek per half jaar
 - Nooit
13. Hoeveel **Engelstalige** boeken las je gemiddeld **thuis voor je plezier** in de **onderbouw**?
- Een of meerdere boeken per week
 - Een boek per twee weken
 - Een boek per maand
 - Een boek per twee maanden
 - Een boek per half jaar
 - Nooit
14. Had je zelf **meer of minder** literatuur- of leesles willen hebben in de onderbouw?
- Meer, want ...
 - Minder, want ...

Leesplezier

15. Hoe vaak lees je een boek **in welke taal** dan ook voor je **plezier**? (Dus niet als opdracht voor school)
- Ongeveer een boek per week
 - Ongeveer een boek per twee weken
 - Ongeveer een boek per maand
 - Ongeveer een boek per twee maanden
 - Ongeveer een boek per jaar
 - Nooit
16. Hoe vaak las je een boek **voor je plezier** op de **basisschool**?
- Ongeveer een boek per week
 - Ongeveer een boek per twee weken
 - Ongeveer een boek per maand
 - Ongeveer een boek per twee maanden
 - Ongeveer een boek per jaar
 - Nooit
17. Hoe vaak las je een boek **voor je plezier** in de **eerste en tweede klas**?

- a. Ongeveer een boek per week
- b. Ongeveer een boek per twee weken
- c. Ongeveer een boek per maand
- d. Ongeveer een boek per twee maanden
- e. Ongeveer een boek per jaar
- f. Nooit

18. Wat voor soort boeken las je **voor je plezier** in de onderbouw? Je mag **meerdere antwoorden** aankruisen. Geef ook een **aantal voorbeelden van boeken** die je toen hebt gelezen.

- a. Jeugdboeken (zoals boeken van Francine Oomen of Carry Slee)
- b. Young Adult (zoals *Twilight*, *The Hunger Games*, of *Meisje met negen pruiken*)
- c. ‘Makkelijke’ literatuur (zoals *Het Achterhuis* of *De Passievrucht*)
- d. ‘Moeilijke’ literatuur (zoals *Karel ende Elegast*, *Turks Fruit* of *Hersenschimmen*)

Boeken die ik heb gelezen in de onderbouw:

Overgang onderbouw naar bovenbouw

Deze vragen gaan over hoe jij de **overgang** van de **onderbouw naar de bovenbouw** hebt beleefd voor het vak **Engels**.

19. Hoe vond je de overgang van onderbouw naar bovenbouw **in het algemeen** voor het **vak Engels**? Vond je het niveauverschil

- a. Groter dan je had verwacht
- b. Iets groter dan je had verwacht
- c. Niet groter/niet kleiner dan je had verwacht
- d. Iets kleiner dan je had verwacht?
- e. Kleiner dan je had verwacht?

20. Hoe vond je de overgang van **onderbouw** naar **bovenbouw** met betrekking tot het **Engelse literatuur-/leesonderwijs**?

- a. moeilijker dan je had verwacht?
- b. ietsje moeilijker dan je had verwacht?
- c. niet moeilijker / niet makkelijker dan je had verwacht?
- d. ietsje makkelijker dan je had verwacht?
- e. makkelijker dan je had verwacht?

21. **Waarom** vind je dit? Je mag hier meerdere antwoorden aankruisen

- a. Ik vind het niveau van de Engelse boeken in de bovenbouw moeilijk in vergelijking met de Engelse boeken in de onderbouw
- b. Ik vind het aantal Engelse boeken dat we in de bovenbouw moeten lezen te groot
- c. Ik vind Engelse boeken lezen niet leuk
- d. Ik vind het aantal Engelse boeken dat we in de bovenbouw moeten lezen te klein
- e. Ik lees graag Engelse boeken
- f. Iets anders, namelijk:

Profiel

Probeer bij deze vragen te kiezen voor het antwoord dat het beste past bij **jou**.
Streep het antwoord door dat niet op jou van toepassing is

22. Ik lees om mijn **eigen wereld** te verkennen OF om meer te weten te komen over onderwerpen die spelen in de **wereld van volwassenen**
23. Ik geef de voorkeur aan een verhaal met **weinig** obstakels (met weinig sprongen in de tijd, meerdere verhaallijnen, etc.) OF Ik geef de voorkeur aan een verhaal met **veel** obstakels (met bijvoorbeeld open plekken, een open einde, perspectiefwisselingen)
24. Ik lees om te **ontspannen** en om **geamuseerd** te worden OF Ik lees om **aan het denken gezet te worden**.
25. Ik lees het liefst **dramatische** en **meeslepende verhalen** OF Ik lees graag boeken met een **sociaal, psychologisch of moreel vraagstuk**.

Bedankt voor je medewerking!

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Teachers

Door middel van deze vragenlijst wil ik graag te weten komen of en hoe literatuur-/leesonderwijs in de onderbouw en bovenbouw wordt gegeven. Omdat elke docent op een andere manier lesgeeft, heb ik voor vrij veel open vragen gekozen. Neemt u alstublieft de tijd om de vragen zo volledig mogelijk in te vullen. Het kost maximaal een half uur van uw tijd en u helpt mij er ontzettend mee.

NB. Onder literatuur-/leesonderwijs versta ik alle boeken, langere teksten, short stories en gedichten die op de een of andere manier worden aangeboden tijdens of buiten de les.

Algemeen (omcirkel waar mogelijk)

1. Man/vrouw
2. Leeftijd
 - a. 20-30
 - b. 31-40
 - c. 41-50
 - d. 51-60
 - e. 61-70
3. Onderwijservaring
 - a. Tussen de 1 en 5 jaar
 - b. Tussen de 6 en 10 jaar
 - c. Tussen de 11 en 15 jaar
 - d. Tussen de 16 en 20 jaar
 - e. Tussen de 21 en 25 jaar
 - f. Langer dan 25 jaar
4. Welke studie(s) heeft u gevolgd?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
5. Aan welke klas(sen) geeft u les? (Bijvoorbeeld 2vmbo, 4vwo of 5havo)
6. Hoe verloopt de samenwerking met (de secties van) de andere talen naar uw mening? Geef hierbij alstublieft een toelichting
 - a. Zeer goed
 - b. Goed
 - c. Niet goed/niet slecht

a.	b.	lecht	d. S
c.	d.		
e.	f.	eer slecht	e. Z
g.	h.		

Toelichting:

7. Wordt er voor het onderdeel literatuuronderwijs wel eens samengewerkt met andere secties of andere vakken? Wilt u hieronder a.u.b. een toelichting geven waarom er wel of niet wordt samengewerkt.
 - a. Ja

- b. Nee

Toelichting:

Persoonlijk

8. Leest u graag Engelse literatuur? Zo ja, hoe vaak?
En kunt u wat voorbeelden noemen van boeken of schrijvers die u graag leest?
- a. Een of meerdere boeken per week
 - b. Een boek per twee weken
 - c. Een boek per maand
 - d. Een boek per twee maanden
 - e. Een boek per half jaar
 - f. Nooit

Toelichting:

9. Werd er tijdens uw studie aandacht besteed aan Engelse literatuur?
- a. Ja
 - b. Nee
- Zo ja, hoeveel procent van uw studie was ongeveer gericht op literatuur?

Toelichting:

10. Hoeveel **Engelse** boeken leest u gemiddeld?
- a. Een of meerdere boeken per week
 - b. Een boek per twee weken
 - c. Een boek per maand
 - d. Een boek per twee maanden
 - e. Een boek per half jaar
 - f. Nooit

11. Hoeveel **Nederlandse** boeken leest u gemiddeld?
- a. Een of meerdere boeken per week
 - b. Een boek per twee weken
 - c. Een boek per maand
 - d. Een boek per twee maanden
 - e. Een boek per half jaar
 - f. Nooit

12. Vindt u het belangrijk dat leerlingen op **vroege leeftijd** (vanaf hun twaalfde) met het **lezen van literatuur** (al dan niet met hulp) in aanraking komen? Waarom wel, waarom niet?

13. Vindt u het belangrijk dat leerlingen in de onderbouw van de middelbare school zo snel mogelijk boekjes/short stories moeten gaan lezen **in het Engels** (oftewel leeskilometers maken)?
- a. Waarom vindt u dit wel of niet belangrijk?

Bij de volgende acht vragen zou ik het heel erg op prijs stellen als u voor elk leerjaar dat u lesgeeft antwoord kunt geven.

Lessen en lesmethode in de onderbouw

14. Hoe vaak wordt er tijdens de les aandacht besteed aan lees-/literatuuronderwijs? (bijv. Verwerkende opdrachten maken bij een (langere) tekst/korte teksten of verhalen lezen/leesstrategieën aanleren)

Geeft u a.u.b. per leerjaar aan hoe vaak er tijdens de les aandacht aan lees-/literatuuronderwijs wordt besteed. Vermeldt a.u.b. "n.v.t." als u dat leerjaar niet lesgeeft.

- a. Drie keer per week
- b. Twee keer per week
- c. Een keer per week
- d. Een keer per twee weken
- e. Een keer per maand
- f. Een keer per een aantal maanden
- g. Nooit

Leerjaar:	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Leerjaar:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lesmethode:						

Antwoord:						
-----------	--	--	--	--	--	--

15. Maakt u gebruik van aanvullende of verdiepende opdrachten m.b.t. lees-

Leerjaar:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Antwoord:						

/literatuuronderwijs en wat voor soort opdrachten zijn dit? (Geef a.u.b. zoveel mogelijk voorbeelden)

- a. In welke klassen geeft u deze opdrachten?
- b. Wat voor soort opdrachten zijn dit doorgaans?

Zie volgende pagina voor het schema

16. Welke lesmethode(s) wordt/worden er gebruikt in de verschillende leerjaren?

17. Deze methode besteedt/deze methodes besteden te weinig aandacht aan literatuur en/of leesonderwijs

- a. Helemaal mee eens
- b. Mee eens
- c. Niet mee eens/niet mee oneens
- d. Niet mee eens
- e. Helemaal niet mee eens

Leerjaar:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Antwoord:						

18. Gebruikt u in de les deze opdrachten, teksten en/of suggesties **m.b.t. leesonderwijs uit de methode(s)**
- Nooit
 - Zelden
 - Soms
 - Meestal
 - Altijd
19. Geeft u, boven de lesmethodes, de voorkeur aan
- materiaal dat in de sectie aanwezig is?
 - materiaal dat u zelf ontwerpt?
 - iets anders, nl:
20. Wordt er buiten de methode door u extra aandacht besteed aan (het) lezen (van literatuur) in de onderbouw?
- Ja, nl.
 - Nee
21. Vindt u het belangrijk dat leerlingen in de onderbouw voorbereid worden op het lezen van Engelse verhalen/literatuur in de bovenbouw? Waarom wel of niet?

Lessen en lesmethode in de bovenbouw

22. Als leerlingen in 4VWO terechtkomen, zou hun ERK-niveau zo rond B1-niveau moeten liggen. (Zie onderaan deze vragenlijst voor een korte uitleg van het B1-niveau van het ERK)
Hoeveel procent van de leerlingen kan het niveau van de vierde klas/B1 niveau met betrekking tot lezen/literatuur aan?
23. Waarom vindt u het belangrijk dat leerlingen literatuur lezen in de bovenbouw?
- Maatschappelijke vorming
 - Leesbereidheid/plezier
 - Literair-esthetische vorming
 - Culturele vorming
 - Individuele ontplooiing
24. Hoeveel tijd besteedt u aan literatuur in de bovenbouw? Beantwoordt deze vraag alstublieft voor **elk** leerjaar dat u lesgeeft.
- Drie keer per week
 - Twee keer per week
 - Een keer per week
 - Een keer per twee weken
 - Een keer per maand
 - Een keer per een aantal maanden
 - Nooit

Leerjaar:	4 havo	4 vwo	5 h	5v	6v	
Antwoord:						

Overgang onderbouw naar bovenbouw

25. Hoe vindt u de overgang van onderbouw naar bovenbouw met betrekking tot het literatuuronderwijs Engels op het moment? **Waarom** vindt u dit?
- Heel goed
 - Goed
 - Niet goed/niet slecht
 - Slecht
 - Heel slecht
26. Denkt u dat een verbetering van het lees-/literatuuronderwijs in de onderbouw ervoor kan zorgen dat de overgang tussen onder- en bovenbouw met betrekking tot literatuuronderwijs vergemakkelijkt wordt? Leg alstublieft uit:

Dit waren alle vragen. Hartelijk bedankt voor uw medewerking!

Bijlage Vraag 22

Lezen: Kan de **belangrijkste punten begrijpen** uit duidelijke **standaardteksten** over **vertrouwde zaken** die **regelmatig voorkomen op het werk, op school en in de vrije tijd**.

Schrijven/Spreken/Gesprekken voeren: Kan zich redden in de meeste situaties die kunnen optreden tijdens het reizen in gebieden waar de betreffende taal wordt gesproken. Kan een eenvoudige lopende tekst produceren over onderwerpen die vertrouwd of die van persoonlijk belang zijn. Kan een beschrijving geven van ervaringen en gebeurtenissen, dromen, verwachtingen en ambities en kan kort redenen en verklaringen geven voor meningen en plannen

Appendix 3

Witte's levels in English

Level	Description
Level 1	<p><i>Very limited literary competence</i></p> <p>Experiential reading</p> <p>“written in simple everyday language, closely linked to the experiences of adolescents in terms of content and characters”</p>
Level 2	<p><i>Limited literary competence</i></p> <p>Identifying reading</p> <p>“written in everyday language, closely linked to the experiences of adolescents in terms of content and characters”</p>
Level 3	<p><i>Modest literary competence</i></p> <p>Reflective reading</p> <p>“written in simple language and has a complex but nonetheless transparent structure with a deeper layer of meaning alongside the concrete one. The content and characters do not relate directly to the experience of adolescents, but the story addresses issues that interest them”</p>
Level 4	<p><i>Fairly broad literary competence</i></p> <p>Interpretative reading</p> <p>“written in a ‘literary’ style and are not immediately related to the world of adolescents in terms of content and characters”</p>
Level 5	<p><i>Broad literary competence</i></p> <p>Literate reading</p> <p>“books do not only contain characters and themes that are far removed from their own experience, but may also differ greatly from what they are accustomed to in terms of language use and literary conventions”</p>
Level 6	<p><i>Sophisticated literary competence</i></p> <p>Intellectual reading</p> <p>“written in a fairly inaccessible literary style which may include experimental forms and styles (multi-layered, complex structure)”</p>

Appendix 4

Dates of visits and appointments

25-09-2013	Interview with the librarian from the Valuascollege
“	Distribution of the questionnaires in the two classes of the VC
“	Distribution of the questionnaires for the teachers at the CDH
01-10-2013	Interview with the librarian from College Den Hulster
“	Meeting with Mrs. Van Knippenberg at CDH
“	Meeting with the ‘boekenfonds’ at VC
8-10-2013	Distribution of the questionnaires in the three classes at CDH
21-10-2013	Meeting with Mrs. Mertens at VC
20-01-2014	Interview with Mrs. van Knippenberg at CDH

Appendix 5

Questions asked in the library

- Hoeveel boeken zijn er in totaal voor Engels?
 - Hoeveel zijn er voor de onderbouw bedoeld?
 - Hoeveel voor de bovenbouw?
 - Mogen de leerlingen van alle boeken gebruikmaken?
- Hoe is de indeling van de boeken georganiseerd?
 - Gaat dit op niveaus?
 - Hoe worden deze niveaus bepaald?
 - Is de mediathecaris op de hoogte van lezenvoordelijst.nl (en relevantie ervan m.b.t. Engels?)
- Is er vrije toegang tot de boeken of moeten deze worden gereserveerd?

Appendix 6

Interviews

Interview (via e-mail) with Mr Coenen, at Valuacollege, 21-01-2014

B: Wordt de doorlopende leerlijn van leerlingen (van de onderbouw naar de bovenbouw) m.b.t. literatuuronderwijs in de gaten gehouden?

- Op welke manier?
- Wordt dit per leerling bekeken? Of per klas?

C: Nee

B: Wordt er in omgang met literatuur gebruik gemaakt van ERK? Hoe?

C: Nee

B: Weet u wat de Witte-niveaus die gelden voor Nederlands inhouden?

C: Nee

B: Bent u bekend met de site leesid.nl voor Engelstalige boeken en gebruikt u deze website?

C: Ja, wel bekend; Nee, niet gebruikt

B: Hoe lost u eventuele niveauverschillen tussen de leerlingen m.b.t. leesonderwijs op in de onderbouw en in de bovenbouw?

C: Met persoonlijk leesadvies

B: Vindt u dat al uw leerlingen op het zelfde niveau zitten m.b.t. literatuur lezen?

C: Zeker niet!

B: Hoe zorgt u ervoor dat leerlingen voorbereid naar de bovenbouw gaan m.b.t. literatuuronderwijs?

C: Korte introductie in derde klas

B: Hoe motiveert u leerlingen om te lezen?

C: Door af en toe (ongeveer 3X per jaar) mijn eigen leeservaring met leerlingen te bespreken

B: Vindt u dat al uw leerlingen in 5V op hetzelfde niveau zitten?

C: Nee

B: Zijn er onderling afspraken over wat er behandeld moet worden tijdens de literatuurlessen?

- In de onderbouw?

C: Niet voor zover ik weet

- In de bovenbouw?

C: Ja

B: Hoeveel boeken moeten er worden er gelezen in de onderbouw vwo?

C: 3 per jaar

B: Hoeveel boeken moeten er worden er gelezen in de bovenbouw vwo?

C: 3 per jaar

B: Hoeveel boeken worden er gezamenlijk gelezen (klassensets) in de onder- en bovenbouw?

C: Alleen in onderbouw: 3 per jaar, dus 9 incl. Brugklas

Interview (in person) with Mrs. van Knippenberg, at College Den Hulster, 20-01-2014

B: Wordt de doorlopende leerlijn van leerlingen van de onderbouw naar de bovenbouw m.b.t. literatuuronderwijs in de gaten gehouden?

K: Nee

B: Er wordt in de onderbouw neem ik aan aandacht besteed aan literatuuronderwijs of leesonderwijs, wordt er dan gekeken per klas wat er gelezen wordt of wordt er soms ook individueel gekeken? Dat leerlingen die moeite hebben met lezen extra begeleiding krijgen bijvoorbeeld?

K: Nee gaat alleen klassikaal. Literatuur wordt uitsluitend klassikaal gegeven.

B: En wordt er in omgang met literatuur gebruik gemaakt van ERK?

K: Nee, niet bij literatuur.

B: Oké, en Weet u wat de Witte-niveaus die gelden voor Nederlands inhouden?

K: Nee, die ken ik niet.

B: Bent u bekend met de site leesid.nl voor Engelstalige boeken en wordt deze wel eens gebruikt?

K: Nee, niet mee bekend.

B: Hoe lost u eventuele niveauverschillen tussen de leerlingen m.b.t. leesonderwijs op in de onderbouw en in de bovenbouw?

K: Onderbouw weet ik niet en in de bovenbouw, ja wij hebben gewoon een klassikaal boek, en of een leerling dat aankan of niet, houden wij geen rekening mee. Wij kijken naar het niveau van het boek zelf, dat zou voor 5havo of 5vwo geschikt moeten zijn en de gemiddelde leerling heeft er niet zoveel moeite mee, maar er zijn inderdaad altijd leerlingen die erg veel moeite met literatuur hebben.

B: Vindt u dat al uw leerlingen op het zelfde niveau zitten m.b.t. literatuur lezen?

K: O nee, zeker niet. Ik heb leerlingen die er echt niks van begrijpen en een boek twee keer kunnen lezen en dan nog niet weten waar het over gaat en er zijn er die zie je inderdaad voor zichzelf glimlachen bij bepaalde passages, die het dan doorhebben hoe het gaat en dan een vraag stellen. En dat duidt dan aan dat ze meer betrokken zijn bij literatuur dan de doorsnee leerling.

B: Raadt u wel eens leerlingen die wat verder zijn op literair niveau aan om andere boeken te lezen?

K: Nou ja, ze hoeven niet voor ons. Het literatuuronderwijs is vrij beperkt, een á twee romans per leerjaar, maar ze zijn ook niet echt geïnteresseerd in meer te weten. Ze vinden het allang goed als ze gedaan hebben wat ze moeten doen. Dat is gewoon zo.

B: Hoe zorgt u ervoor dat leerlingen voorbereid naar de bovenbouw gaan m.b.t. literatuuronderwijs?

K: Dat weet ik niet.

B: Hoe motiveert u leerlingen om te lezen?

K: Hoe motiveer ik ze? Erg moeilijk. Door ze vooruit te laten lezen voordat ik iets uit ga leggen. Door korte samenvattingen, mondelinge samenvattingen door hen te laten presenteren in de klas, van wat heb je nou gelezen? Wat is er gebeurd in het hoofdstuk dat jij ging voorbereiden? En bij t-vwo lukt dat natuurlijk goed. Dan zeg ik hoofdstuk 5 en 6 zijn voor jou en dan komt dat de les erop terug; wat heb jij nou gelezen. En dan krijg je inderdaad opmerkingen per pagina met regelverwijzingen waar ik dan ook aanvullingen op geef, maar dit soort literatuuronderwijs krijg je alleen in tweetalig onderwijs nog van de grond.

Leerlingen van 5havo en 6vwo die ook voor hun literatuurtoets in het schoolonderzoek moeten leren zijn erg passief. Ik heb met 6vwo een boek gelezen *A Novel* en ik heb gezegd: “Dan en dan is er een vragenuurtje”, en ik heb geen enkele vraag gehad. En het is geen makkelijk boek, en ik verwachtte al vragen over hoe zit dat nou met die mensen, met dat en dat, wat gebeurt er eigenlijk, welke tijd is het eigenlijk? Ook daar zijn ze zich niet van bewust want het boek bestrijkt een langere periode. En dan denk ik ook, ja jongens wat moet ik nou doen? Moet ik alles gaan vertalen? Ik dacht het niet.

B: Vindt u dat al uw leerlingen in 5V op hetzelfde niveau zitten? Nou daar hebben we het al over gehad, dat is dus nee.

K: Inderdaad.

B: Zijn er onderling afspraken over wat er behandeld moet worden tijdens de literatuurlessen?

K: We hebben een standaard handout die een aantal literaire begrippen aanreikt; metafoor, simile, personification, een paar van die begrippen. Vinden wij wel dat dat belangrijk is, standaard bagage is voor 5havo en voor 6vwo breiden we dat dan nog een beetje uit met poëzie, poëziebegrippen. Italiaans sonnet, Engels sonnet. Het is niet veel, maar we willen toch dat vwo iets meer weet en dat leggen we dan voornamelijk in het onderdeel poëzie.

B: Er worden dus wel gewoon gedichten gelezen in de bovenbouw?

K: Ja, dat wordt wel gedaan.

B: Hoeveel boeken moeten er worden er gelezen in de onderbouw vwo?

K: Drie boeken, ze hebben een vrij strikt programma.

B: En in de bovenbouw? Blijft dat dan doorgaan?

K: Nee, dan wordt het wat minder. Want we zijn dan eigenlijk gericht met het examen bezig.

En dan heb je in havo 4 wat korte verhalen en één novel. In havo 5 één novel en daarna komen andere onderdelen aan de orde en als literatuur dan eenmaal is afgesloten gaan we ook niet meer terug naar literatuur. Dus na die novel is het wel goed, met die literaire begrippen. 4vwo beginnen we ook met een novel en een handout, 5vwo regulier wil ik dit jaar toch wel twee novels doen, uitgebreid met gedichten en literaire begrippen. 6 vwo krijgt een novel en een Shakespeare play. Met de literaire handout natuurlijk weer. Dat is dan minimaal wat we erin willen houden. Wat we ook al jaren doen, die Shakespeare play in 6vwo en het is moeilijk, we weten het, maar we proberen het te verlevendigen met de tekst op cd en filmfragmenten. Maar zo'n Shakespeare play blijft iets wat voor eerstegraads docenten een verplicht onderdeel is.

B: Hoeveel boeken worden er gezamenlijk gelezen (klassensets) in de onder- en bovenbouw?

Die klassensets hebben we toen samen bekeken. In de onderbouw werd er meestal klassikaal gelezen dus die sets zijn dan voornamelijk voor de onderbouw?

K: Ja, maar zoals ik al zei, de bovenbouw heeft ook klassensets.

Appendix 7

Results Questionnaire Students

At the VC, the questionnaire was handed out to two classes, 5vwo A (27 students) and 5vwo D (17 students). A total of 44 students filled in the questionnaire; of these students 14 were boys (31.8%) and 30 were girls (68.2%). Most students were either born in 1996 or 1997, 18 (40.9%) and 23 (52.2%), respectively, while only one pupil was born in 1995 (2.3%) and two in 1998 (4.5%).

The majority of the students speak Dutch (36 students or 81.8%), while 8 pupils speak a different mother tongue, sometimes in combination with Dutch (18.2%).

The students can choose between four profiles or a combination of them. Seven opted for the Science and Health program (16%), only three for the Science and Technology (7%), although four take the combined SH and ST program (9%). There are sixteen students taking the Economics and Society profile (36%) while thirteen are taking the Culture and Society profile (30%). Only one student has combined the ES and the CS profile (2%).

The questionnaire was handed out to three classes at the CDH, 5vwo A (22), 5vwo B (19), and 5vwo C (23). A total of 64 students filled in the questionnaire at CDH. Of these students, 63 filled in their age. Three students were born in 1995 (4.8%), 25 in 1996 (39.7%), 34 in 1997 (53.9%) and one in 1998 (1.6%). For the purpose of this study, the bilingual English students (5VC) were not taken into consideration in this particular part of the results.

With regards to the 'regular' vwo students, 41 filled in the questionnaire. Two students were born in 1995 (4.8%), eighteen were born in 1996 (44%) and twenty-one in 1997 (51.2%). Most of these students speak Dutch as their mother tongue (75.6%), although several students also speak a different mother tongue. One student also speaks German (2.4%), another speaks Bosnian (2.4%), and two students already speak fluent English (4.8%). A rather large group of students also speaks Turkish (14.6%).

A majority of the students follow one or both of the beta profiles, Science and Health or Science and Technology (85.4% in total). Twelve students chose the Science and Health profile (29.3%), nineteen students chose the Science and Technology profile (46.3%) and four students have combined the profiles (9.8%). Only three students filled in Economics and Society (7.3%), and three other students opted for the Culture and Society profile (7.3%).

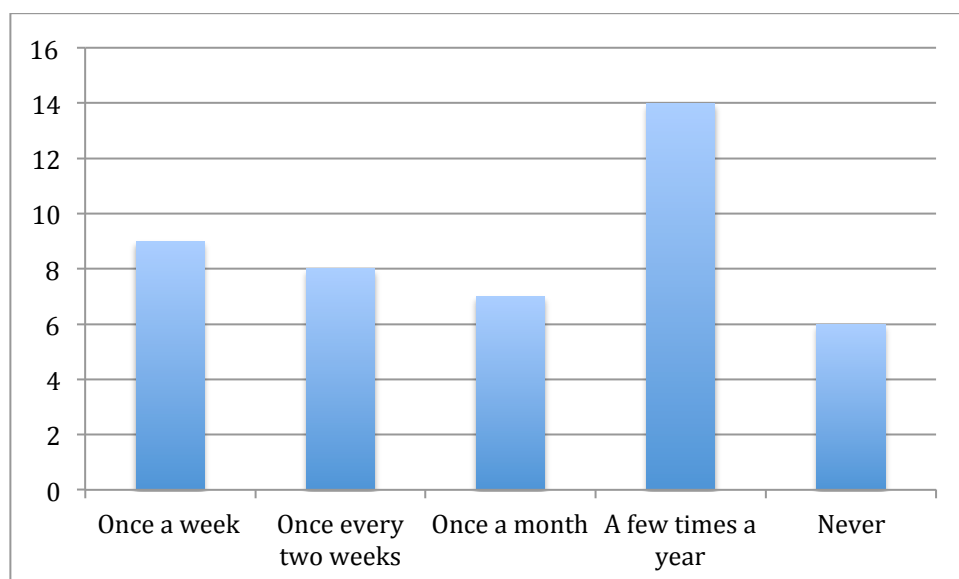
Questions about literature or fiction education in the lower years

6. How often did the teacher pay attention to stories or poems during English classes?

- a. once a week
- b. once per two weeks
- c. once per month
- d. a few times a year
- e. never

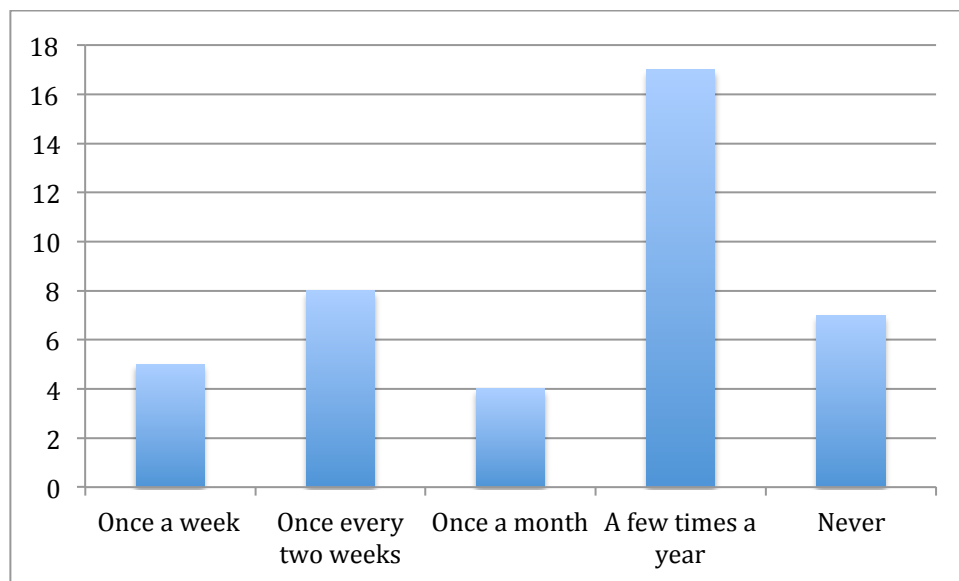
Nine students (20.4%) stated that the teachers at the VC pay attention to literature or reading skills once a week. 18.2% of the students chose option b, namely that teachers spent a lesson on literature or reading once per two weeks. 15.9% of the students stated that only once a month teachers would focus on reading during the lesson, while 31.8% of the students even stated that the lesson concentrated on reading and literature skills only a few times per year.

Of all these students, six (13.6%) filled in that the teacher did not pay attention to stories or poems during English classes in the lower years.



Question 6 VC

At CDH, the answers varied, as five students stated that their teacher paid attention to reading about once a week (12.2%), eight of them about once per two weeks (19.5%), while the majority of the students stated that the teacher only paid attention to stories or poems a few times a year (41.5%). Seven students even stated that they never had any reading lessons at all (17%). Four students chose for option c and only had a reading lesson once a month.

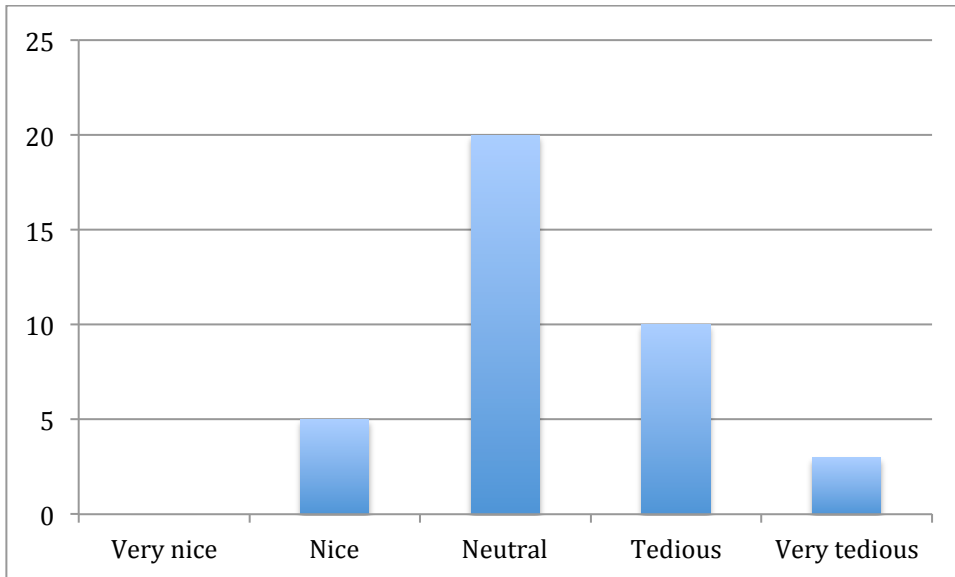


Question 6 CDH

7. What did you think about these classes about literature or reading education?

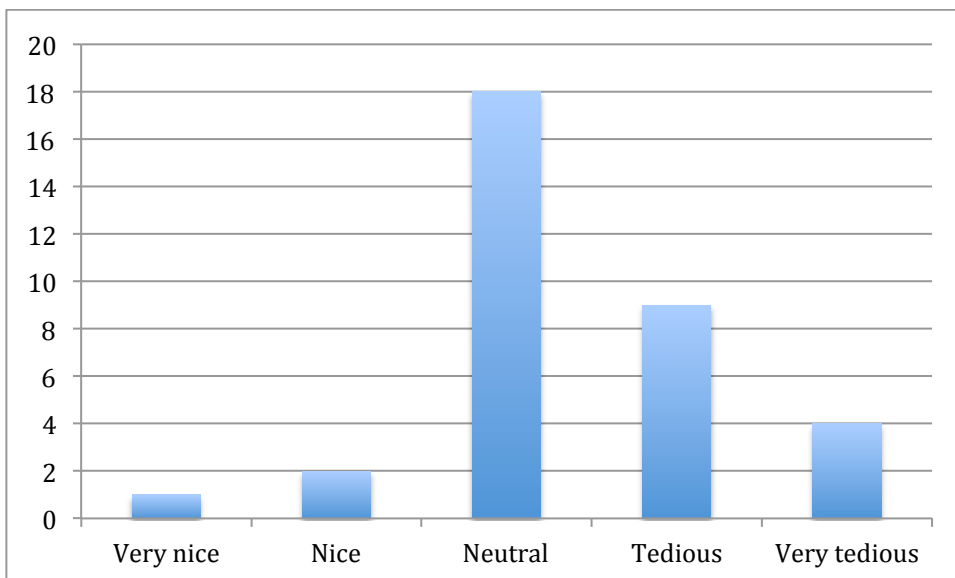
- a. very nice**
- b. nice**
- c. neutral**
- d. annoying**
- e. very annoying**

None of the students at the VC opted for answer a, that their reading lessons were ‘very nice’ and only 13.5% of the students thought their lessons were ‘nice’. The majority of the students (52.6%) were neutral towards their reading lessons, while almost one third of the pupils stated that the lessons were annoying (33.9%, d and e combined).



Question 7 VC

The majority of the students at CDH had neutral feelings towards these classes (52.9%), but still thirteen students found the lessons tedious (26.5%) or very tedious (11.7%). Only one student found the lessons very enjoyable (2.9%), and two thought the lessons were enjoyable (6.0%).



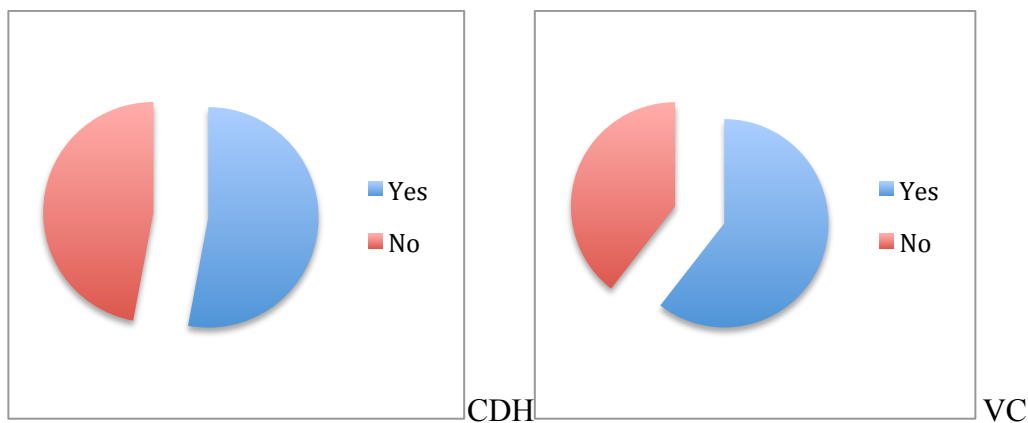
Question 7 CDH

8. Do you feel that your teacher paid enough attention on literature?

- a. yes
- b. no

Almost two thirds of the students at the VC felt that their teacher paid enough attention to the literature lessons (60.5%). This could also be because many students had a negative attitude towards the lessons, as shown in question 7, and therefore did not wish for more lessons regarding this topic.

A slight majority of the students at CDH thought that the teacher did pay enough attention to literature (52.9%), with sixteen students stating that the teacher should have paid more attention to literature lessons (47.1%).



9. How did the teacher pay attention to literature?

- during yearwith an assignment
- during class, reading (aloud or individually)
- we received an assignment to finish at home
- we received a book to read at home
- something else (provide an explanation)

The answer students from the VC chose the most (in combination with other answers) was option a. Almost 74% of the students stated that the teacher taught literature or reading during their classes with an assignment. This was followed by option b, with 39.5% of the students declaring that they had to read aloud or individually in class to practise their reading skills. Option d was also chosen quite often, 31.6% of the students chose this answer and state that they had to read a book at home. This was followed by nine students who received an assignment to finish at home, although this question was only chosen in combination with

another answer option. There was one student who also provided an additional answer at option e. He or she stated that students also had to take tests on reading.

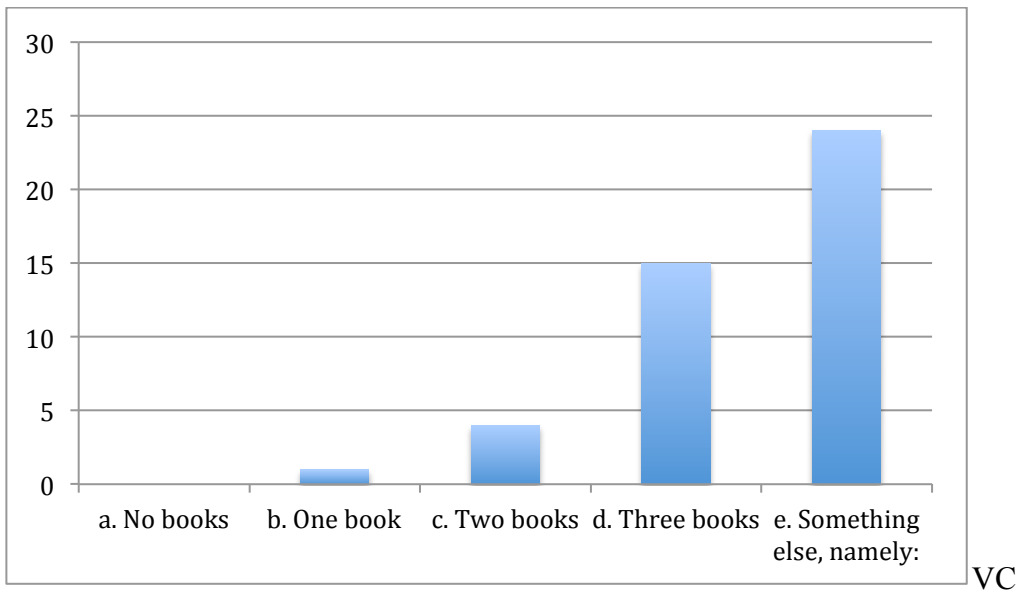
The majority of the 34 students at CDH stated that they received a book to read at home (73.5%). Ten students also had to do assignments in class regarding reading lessons (29.4%). There were nine students who also had to read aloud or individually in class (26.5%) and only four students who also received an assignment to finish at home (11.7%).

10. How many books have you read in total for the subject of English in the lower years?

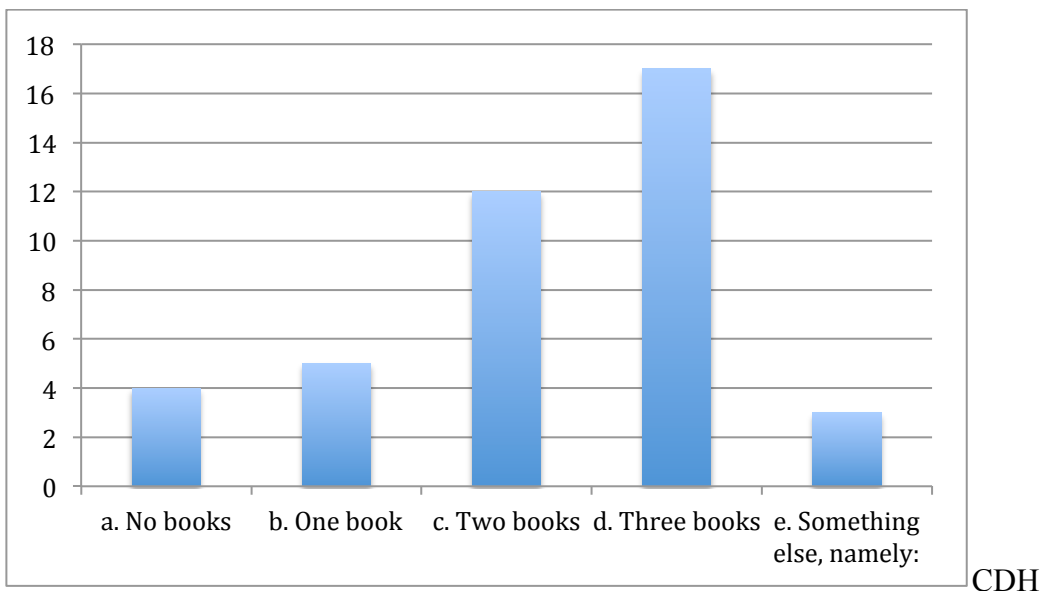
- a. no books, just short stories or poems**
- b. 1 book**
- c. 2 books**
- d. 3 books**
- e. more than three books**

Students at the VC were indeed obliged to read some English books, as most of the students state that they had to read at least three books (88.6%). More than twenty of the students who chose for option e stated that they had to read six books. This means that they read at least two English novels per year. Although this is not much, at least the students get some practice in the reading of a novel. Moreover, as became clear in the last question, students often read during class or do an assignment in class, where the teacher was able to guide them.

There were 24 students who stated that they read more than three books or something else. About eighteen of these students had to read six books, while there were four students who stated that they had to read 8 or 9 books. So, a great percentage of the students had to read more than two books per year.



At CDH, the number seems to be considerably lower. Four students claim that they have not read any books (9.8%) during these years, while five of them have only read one book in the lower years (12.2%). Only 12 students have read 2 books (29.3%) and a majority of the students has read three books in total (41.5%). Three students chose for option e, of which two stated that they had to read four books, while one of them stated that he or she had to read six books.



11. Did you read books in the lower years:

- a. at home, for fun
- b. at school, as an assignment
- c. both?

One student from the VC did not answer this question, so the percentages are based on 43 students. This question was asked to investigate whether students read books for fun or for school. Most students read both at home for fun and in class (46.5%), in their lower years, although almost equally as many students only read books as an assignment for school(44.2%).

Almost two thirds of the CDH students only read for school (63,4%) and never for pleasure, 11 students read both at home and at school (26,8%), a little more than a quarter of all the students. Three students stated that they only read books at home for fun (7.3%). These students might have misunderstood the question and thought that the place where they read counted and did not take into consideration whether this was an assignment for school or for fun. One student even stated that he or she never read books for fun or as an assignment (2.4%).

12. How many Dutch books did you read on average at home for pleasure in the lower years?

- a. one or more books per week**
- b. one book per two weeks**
- c. one book per month**
- d. one book per two months**
- e. one book per half year**
- f. never**

The majority of the CDH students, however, did not read any books for pleasure in the lower years (39%). While only five of the students can be considered regular readers. Two of them read about one book per two weeks (4.8%) and three of them one or more books per week (7.3%). Six students read one book per month (14.6%) and five students read one book per two months (14.6%), while nine students read one book per half year (22%). The outcome of this question is disappointing as the majority of the students are not avid readers of Dutch books or do not read at all.

13. How many English books did you read on average at home for pleasure in the lower years?

- a. one or more books per week**
- b. one book per two weeks**
- c. one book per month**
- d. one book per two months**
- e. one book per half year**
- f. never**

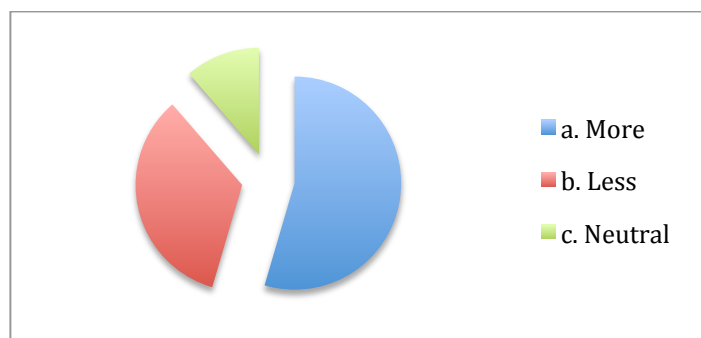
The answers revealed that most students of the VC (70.5%) never read any English books for pleasure at home. Some students read about two books per year (15.9%), but only a small group read 'regularly', at one book per month (9.1%, combination of b and c). No student read more than one English book per week.

The number of students reading English books is very low, 82.8% of the students never read an English book in the lower years for pleasure and five students read only one book per half year (12.2%). Only one student reads one or more books per week (2.4%) and one pupil reads one English novel per month (2.4%).

14. Would you prefer more or less reading education in the lower years?

- a. more**
- b. less**
- c. neutral**

Despite the rather negative attitude towards reading English novels, a majority of the pupils stated that they would have preferred more reading education in the lower years, more than half of the students opted for answer a (54.5%), although one third of the test subjects preferred less reading education and 11.4% of the pupils were neutral.



Question 14 VC

The majority of the students at CDH state that they would have preferred more reading education in the lower years (56.1%), while 12 students stated that they would have preferred less reading education (29.3%). The remaining six students had a neutral standpoint with regards to the English reading education and thought the amount of reading education in the lower years was sufficient.



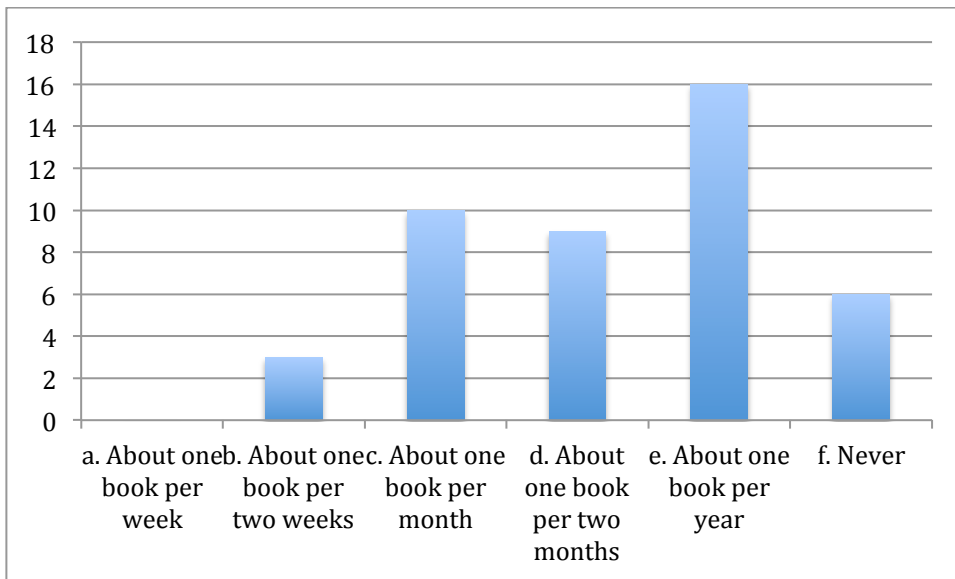
Question 14 CDH

Reading pleasure

15. How often do you read a book for pleasure in any language at the moment?

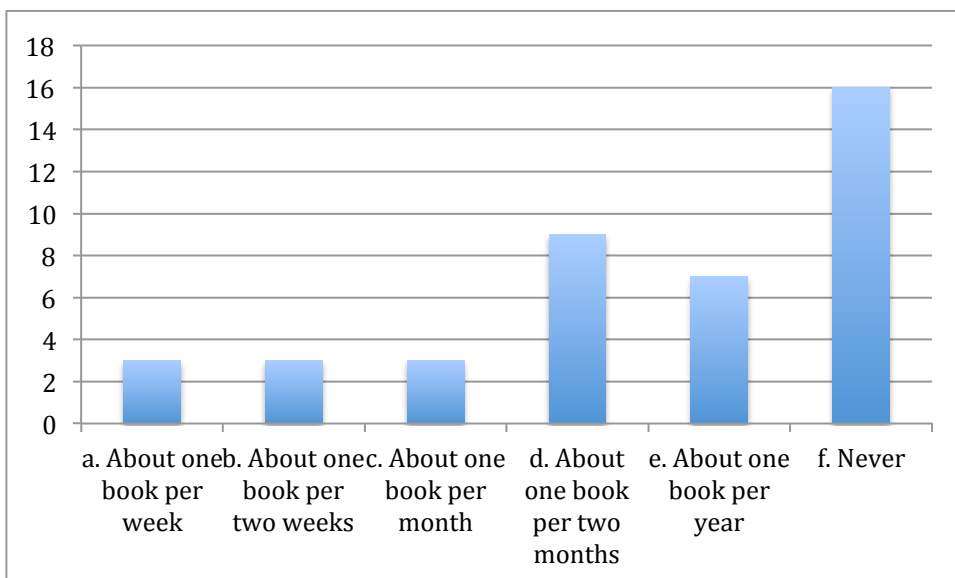
- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**
- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**
- f. never**

Most students are not regular readers at all, more than 70% of the students read between one book per two months and about one book per year, or even never. Only thirteen pupils stated that they read one book per two weeks or per month (29.5%).



Question 15 VC

The number of reading for pleasure has declined, as only 9 students of CDH read regularly, at least one book per month, 21.9% of all the students. While more than two thirds of the students (39%) never reads for pleasure in any language at all, and 16 students read irregularly, only one book per two months or even less (nine students read one book per two months, 22.9%; seven students read one book per year, 17.6%).



Question 15 CDH

16. How often did you read a book for pleasure at primary school?

- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**

- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**
- f. never**

Most students read more books at primary school than at secondary school. This also shows in the results of this question. Only two students never read a book for pleasure at primary school while most students read at least one book per month or more (61.4%). Unfortunately, these figures drop when the students attend secondary school, as the results of the question below illustrates.

The students at CDH are much more regular readers at primary school. Thirteen students are regular readers (21.7%), although still, sixteen students never read a book for pleasure at primary school at all (39%). Three students read one book per week (7.3%), while six students read one book per two weeks (14.6%) and four students read about one book per month (9.8%). There are five students who read about one book per two months (12.2%), and seven students who read about one book per year (17.1%).

17. How often did you read a book for pleasure in the lower years of secondary school?

- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**
- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**
- f. never**

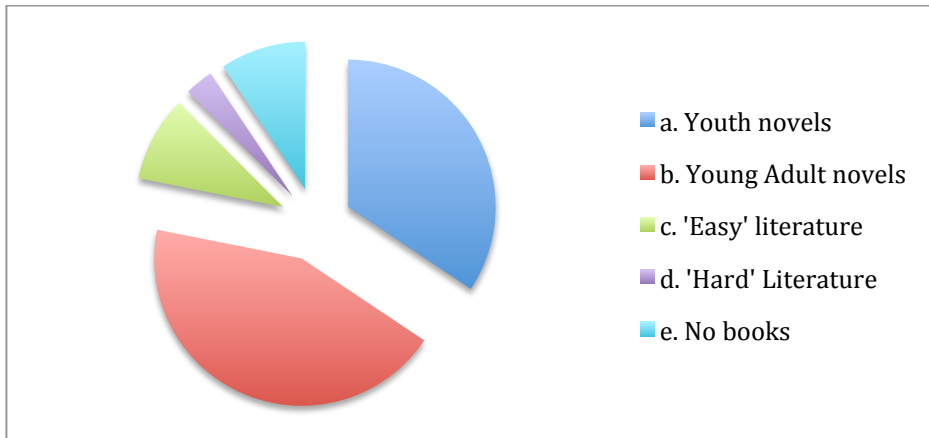
Only 27.2% of the students at VC read more a book more than once a month. The number of children who never read has also increased from 4.5% to 18.2%. This trend tends to continue as the pupils move on to the final years of their secondary school career.

Indeed, a decline in reading can be witnessed during the transition from primary school to secondary school, as the number of irregular readers has increased. Only 31.7% of the CDH students reads regularly, while 29.3% are irregular readers. Sixteen students never read a book for pleasure in the lower years at all (39%).

18. What kind of books did you read for pleasure in the lower years?

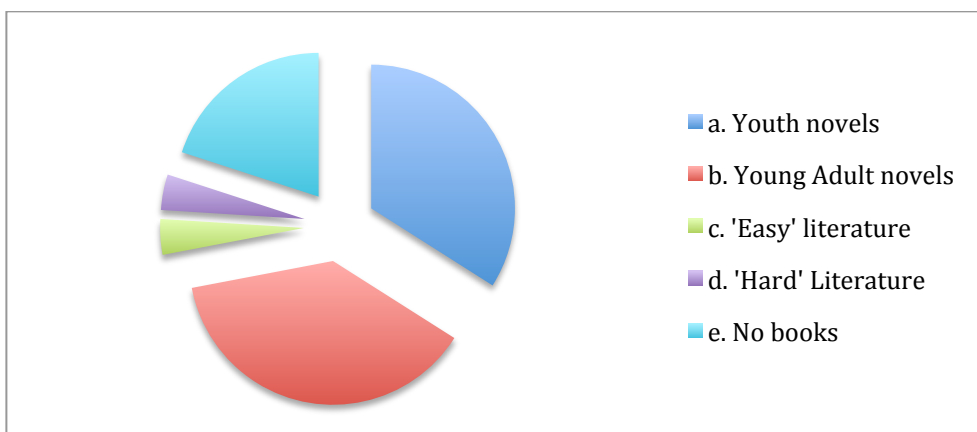
- a. Youth novels
- b. Young Adult novels
- c. 'Easy' literature
- d. 'Hard' literature
- e. No literature at all

Students at the VC often combined several answers, but most students preferred to read youth novels (45.5%), followed by Young Adult novels (36.4%).



Question 18 VC

The students at CDH clearly preferred youth novels and Young Adult novels in their lower years (41.5 and 46.3% respectively), but a great number of the students also did not read at all (24.4%). Four students read either easy or hard literature but this was mostly in combination with easier novels (4.9% and 4.9% respectively).



Question 18 CDH

Transition lower to upper years

19. How did you experience the transition from the lower to the upper years in general for the subject of English? Did you find the transition:

- a. Bigger than you expected**
- b. Somewhat bigger than you expected**
- c. Not bigger/not smaller than you expected**
- d. Somewhat smaller than you expected**
- e. Smaller than you expected**

40.9% of the students at the VC experienced the transition bigger as they expected.

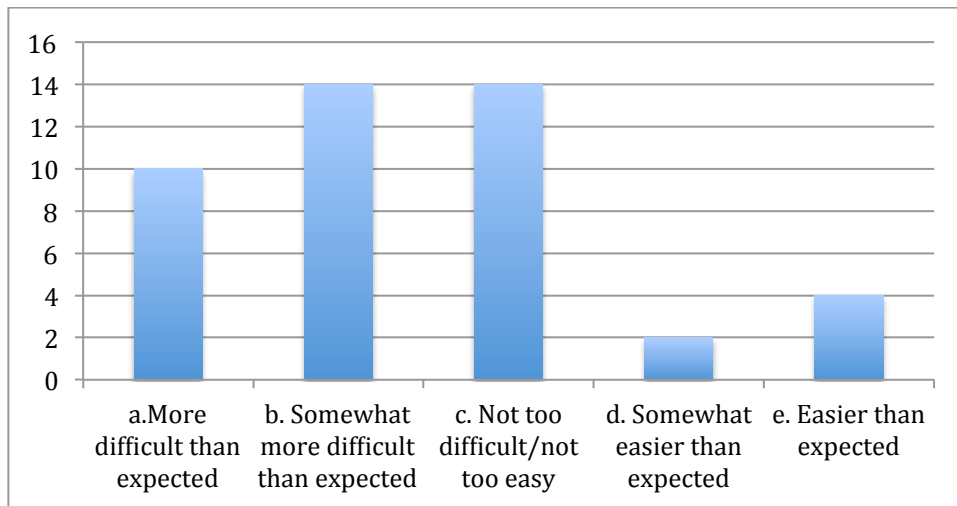
While only 4 students (9.1%) stated that the transition was smaller than they expected and 22 students were neutral (50%).

Most of the CDH students found the transition bigger than they expected: 31.7% of the students found the transition bigger than expected and 39% found it somewhat bigger than they expected. Almost a quarter of all students had a neutral standpoint and only 2 students found the transition somewhat smaller or smaller than they expected (2.4% and 2.4% respectively).

20. How did you experience the transition from the lower to the upper years in terms of literature or fiction education for the subject of English? Did you find the transition:

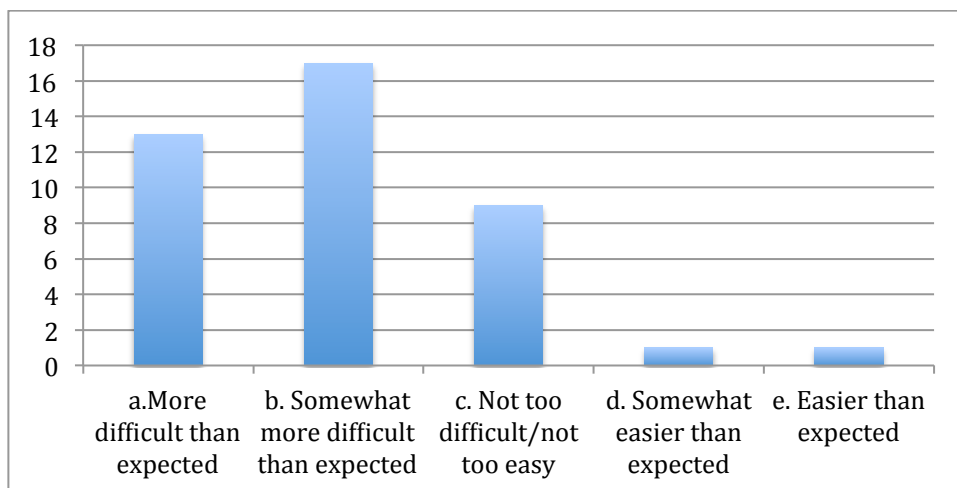
- a. Bigger than you expected**
- b. Somewhat bigger than you expected**
- c. Not bigger/not smaller than you expected**
- d. Somewhat smaller than you expected**
- e. Smaller than you expected**

More than half of the VC students stated that this transition was bigger than they expected (54.5%), while only 6 students found the transition easier than they had expected and 14 students were neutral and did not find the transition too easy or too difficult.



Question 20 VC

Thirteen students at CDH claimed that they found the transition bigger than they expected (31.7%), while the majority of the students stated that they experienced the transition as somewhat bigger than they expected (41.5%). Nine students had a neutral opinion towards the transition (22.9%). Again, as in question 19, only two students experienced the transition as somewhat smaller or smaller than they expected (2.4% and 2.4% respectively).



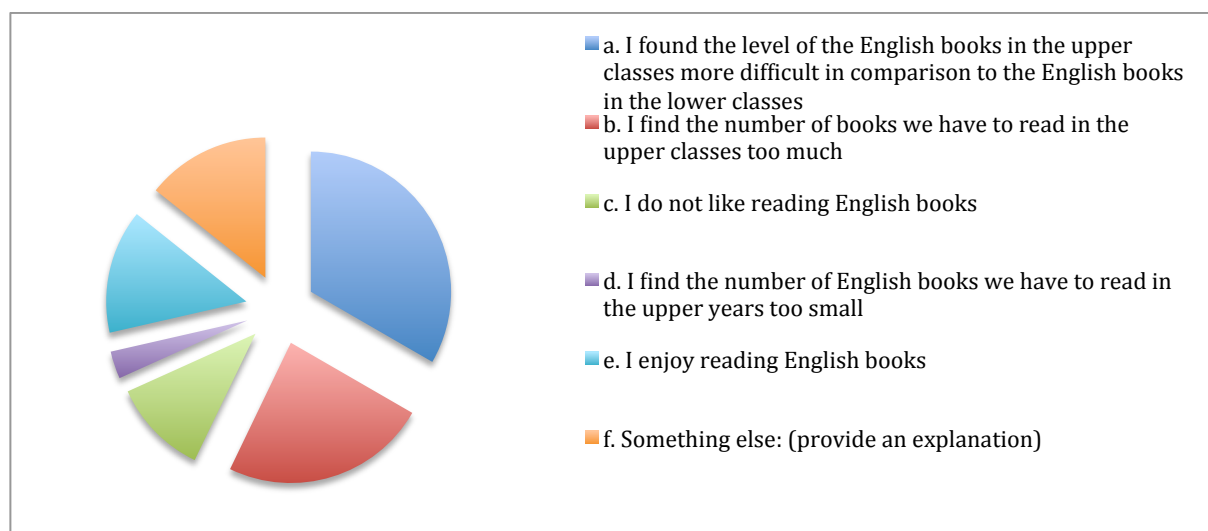
Question 20 CDH

21. Why did you experience the transition in this way?

- a. I found the level of the English books in the upper years more difficult in comparison to the English books in the lower years**
- b. I find the number of books we have to read in the upper years too much**
- c. I do not like reading English books**

- d. I find the number of English books we have to read in the upper years too small**
e. I enjoy reading English books
f. Something else: (provide an explanation)

Students were allowed to choose multiple answers, and many students at VC stated that they found the level of the English books in the upper years more difficult in comparison to the English books in the lower years (47.7%). Students also state that they find the number of books that they have to read is too much (34.1%). Still, 9 students enjoy reading English books and two students find that the number of books that they have to read is not enough.

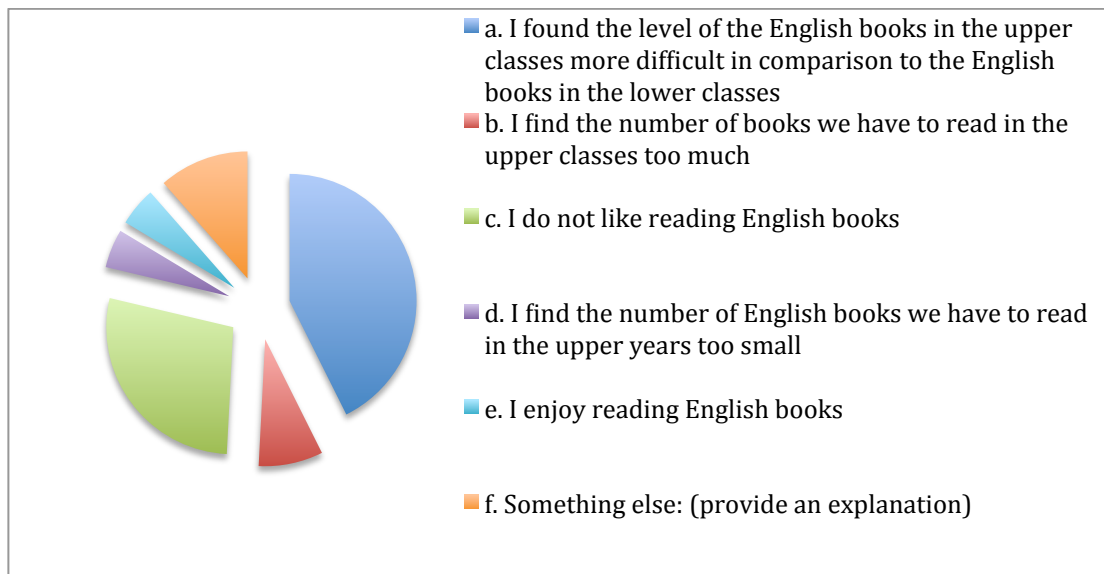


Question 21 VC

Almost two thirds of the students at CDH stated that they had difficulties with the level of the English books in the higher years compared to those in the lower years (63.4%) while seventeen students state that they do not like reading English books as well (41.5%). There are only six students who chose for the more positive answers towards literature, namely that they would like to read more English books in the upper years and that they enjoy reading English books (7.3% and 7.3% respectively).

The students were also asked to explain their answer when they chose for option f. They often stated that the emphasis was on literature in the upper years while grammar was most important in the lower years. Also, students were surprised by the difference in the approach towards a text. The emphasis lays “more on the details instead of the plot”. The

books are more difficult in the upper years and because of this students enjoy reading these books less than the books of the lower years.



Question 21 CDH

Profile

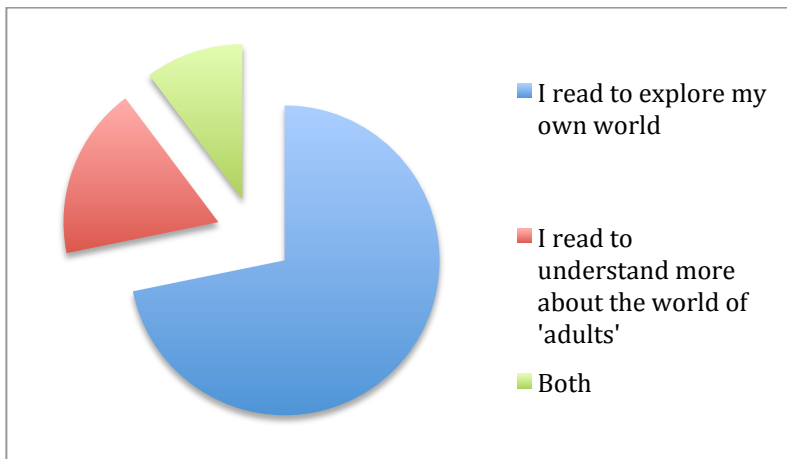
22.

I read to explore my own world

OR I read to understand more about the world of adults

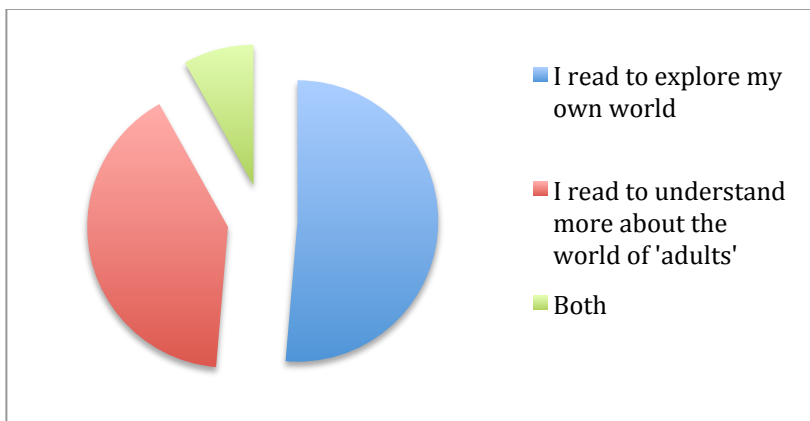
Both

Five students did not answer this question and therefore the percentages have been calculated for 39 students only. The majority of these students preferred to read to explore their own world, indicating that they prefer level 2. Few students were in between and chose for both the options.



Question 22 VC

Nineteen students at CDH indeed read to explore their own world (51.4%) only a slight majority as fifteen students prefer the second answer (40.5%) Three students have chosen for both options (8.1%).

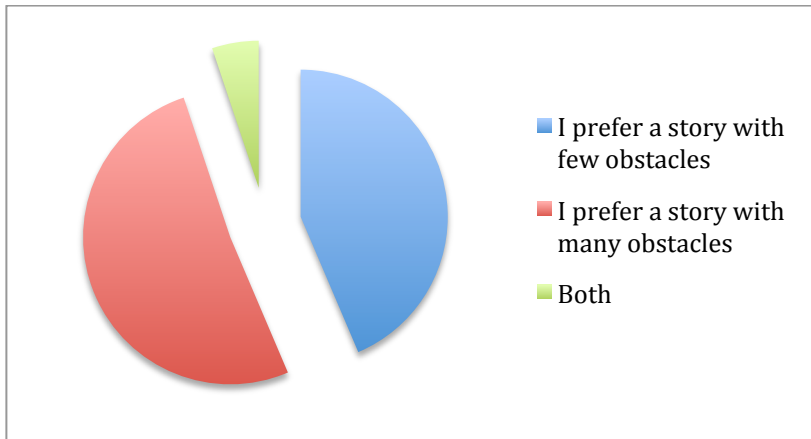


Question 22 CDH

23.

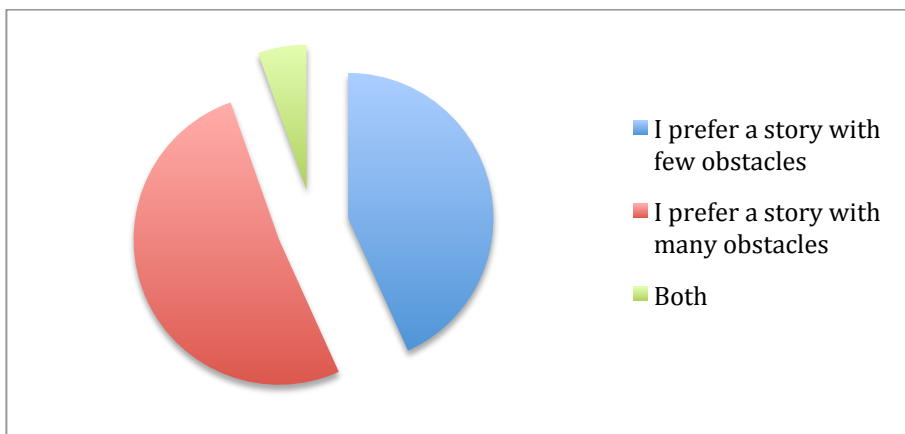
**I prefer a story with few obstacles
OR I prefer a story with many obstacles
Both**

This question was also not answered by five students from VC. Students now preferred the third level since 51.3% chose for the second option: a story with many obstacles. Although the first option was also chosen quite often with 43.6% of the students opting for the stories with few obstacles. Again, few students were in between these two levels as only two students enjoyed reading both stories with few obstacles and many obstacles.



Question 23 VC

The majority of the students at the CDH prefer a story with many obstacles (51.4%) while sixteen participants do prefer a story with few obstacles (43.2%). Two students showed a neutral attitude to both statements and opted for both (5.4%).

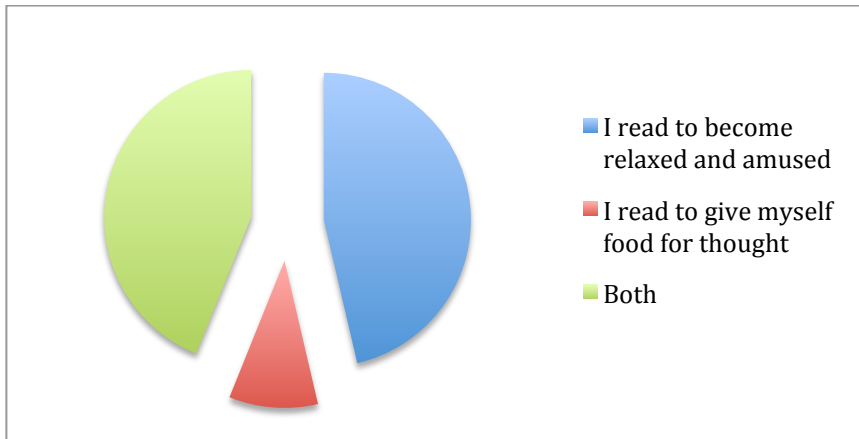


Question 23 CDH

24.

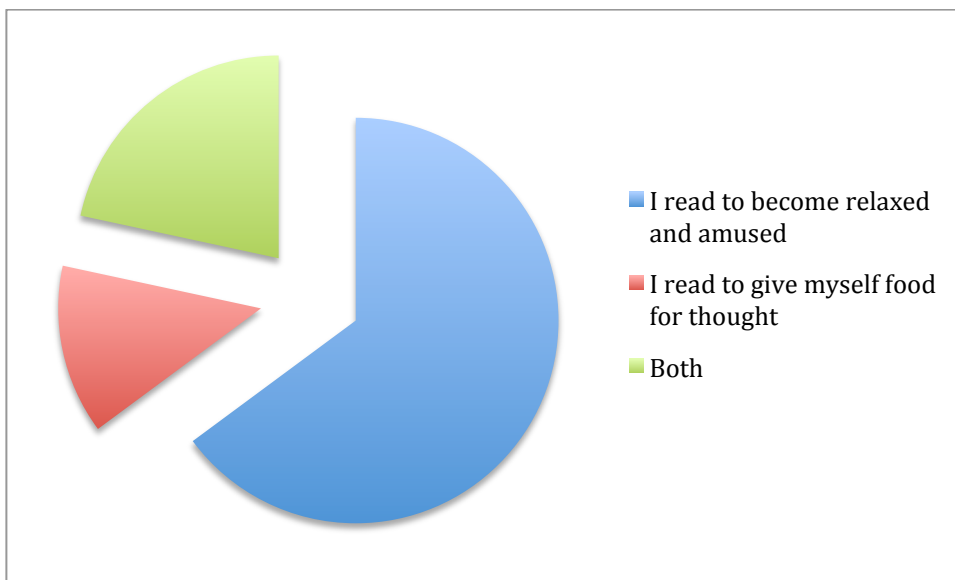
**I read to become relaxed and be amused
OR I read to give myself food for thought
Both**

Three students did not answer this question, therefore these percentages are based on 41 pupils. Of these pupils, many students either preferred the first option (46%) or chose for the third option (44%), namely both.



Question 24 VC

Twenty-four students prefer to read a story to make them relaxed and feel amused. Only five students chose for option two (13.5%). Eight students chose for both of these statements (21.6%): they explained that it depends on the mood that they are in.



Question 24 CDH

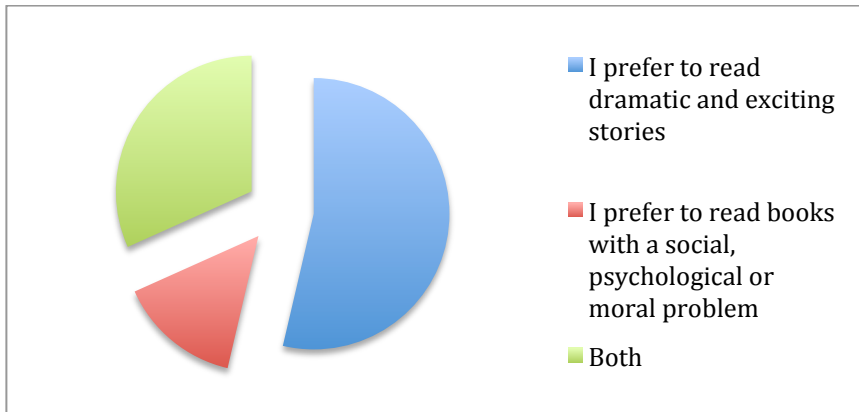
25.

I prefer to read dramatic and exciting stories

OR I prefer to read books with a social, psychological or moral problem

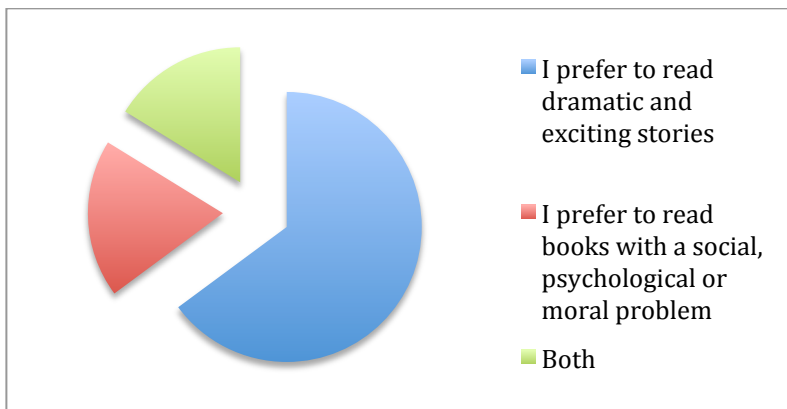
Both

Many students chose for the first option, which corresponds with the second level of Witte (53.7%). Only three students chose for both of these options, while 16 of them preferred books with an 'adult' problem.



Question 25 VC

Twenty-four students from CDH also opted for option 1: the preference for dramatic and exciting stories, as at question 24 (64.9%). Only seven students chose for the second option corresponding to level three of Witte (18.9%), and six students chose for both of the statements (16.2%).



Question 25 CDH

Appendix 8

Teachers' Questionnaires

At the Valuascollege, eight questionnaires were distributed and six of these were returned within four weeks. Four of the teachers are female, while two of the participants did not fill in their gender. The questionnaire was in Dutch and teachers have therefore answered them in Dutch as well. The teachers' quotes have been translated into English, as well as the questions. The Dutch questionnaire can be found as an attachment at the end of this research.

There is an even age distribution among the teachers of English at the VC, although the distribution of their teaching experience is not. Two teachers have more than 25 years of experience, while the four other teachers have less than 10 years of experience. Three teachers have finished their bachelor English Language and Culture at university and have not continued with a university master, while one of the teachers has a Bachelor in English and a Masters in English Education ("eerstegraads"). Two teachers completed an "HBO tweedegraads" for the subject of English, but one of them is now taking a Master in Education for the subject of English. The teachers were also asked which years that they taught. One teacher only taught havo classes and has therefore been discarded from this research, as this study focuses solely on vwo-students.

At College Den Hulster, eight questionnaires were distributed and four of these were returned within five weeks. Four of the teachers are female, while two of the participants did not fill in their gender. All of the English teachers who filled in the questionnaire are 50 years or older. Two of the teachers are between 51 and 60 (50%) and the other two teachers are between 61 and 70 (50%). This also shows in the years of experience that they have: all four of them have more than 25 years of teaching experience. Two teachers have finished their "HBO tweedegraads" for the subject of English and two have a Bachelor's degree in English Language and Culture. The teachers were also asked which years they taught. Three of the participants only teach in the lower years, while one teacher only teaches in the upper years.

For question 6, the participants could choose between five possible answers: very good – good – not good/not bad – bad – very bad cooperation. Most teachers (4 - 80%) are neutral towards the general cooperation between the departments, while one teacher (1-20%) states that the cooperation is bad. In their elaboration, teachers say that the contact between departments is increasing, although most of them state that there barely is any cooperation or consultation. All of the teachers at CDH were neutral in their answer to question 6 and stated that the cooperation is not good but also not bad. In the elaboration, one of the teachers states that there is “no active cooperation or consultation between the language departments but that the teachers do converse and exchange experiences during breaks”.

Teachers could either fill in yes or no for question 7. All of them stated that there was no cooperation with the other language departments regarding literature education, although one of the participants elaborated with “No idea why there isn’t any [cooperation]”. These questions were asked to investigate whether schools/teachers use integrated learning between language departments. Are they aware of what the other departments are teaching and how?

8. Do you often read English literature?

- a. One or more books per week**
- b. One book per two weeks**
- c. One book per month**
- d. One book per two months**
- e. One book per half year**
- f. Never**

Three teachers at the VC read one book per half year (60%), while one teacher reads one book per two weeks (20%). The last participant reads one book per month (20%).

The distribution at CDH is more varied: one teacher reads one book per two weeks (25%), while two of the teachers read one book per month (50%). The last teacher read one book per two months (25%). The teachers are fairly regular readers of English books.

9. Did your university or HBO pay attention to English literature? If so, how much percent of your study was spent on literature?

All of the teachers filled in 'yes', but the percentages range between only 20% and more than two thirds of the study, namely 70% for the VC and between 20% and 50% at the CDH.

10. How many English books do you read on average?

- a. One or more books per week**
- b. One book per two weeks**
- c. One book per month**
- d. One book per two months**
- e. One book per half year**
- f. Never**

The teachers at VC are regular readers: four of them (80%) read more than one book per month, while one teacher reads one book per half year (20%). One teacher reads one book or more per week (20%), while two read one book per two weeks (40%), and finally, the last participant reads one book per month.

Two of the teachers at CDH state that they read one English book per week (50%), while the other two teachers read fewer books. One of them reads one book per month (25%), and the last participant reads about one book per two months (25%).

11. How many Dutch books do you read on average?

- a. One or more books per week**
- b. One book per two weeks**
- c. One book per month**
- d. One book per two months**
- e. One book per half year**
- f. Never**

In terms of Dutch books, the VC teachers read less. Only one of them is an avid reader of Dutch books and reads about one book per two weeks while the four other teachers read irregularly. One of the participants reads one book per two months (20%). Two of them read one book per half year (40%), while one teacher never reads Dutch books (20%).

The participants at CDH read considerably less Dutch books in comparison to the number of English books that they read on average. One of the teachers never reads a Dutch book (25%) and the other three read one book per half year (75%).

12. Do you think it is important that students come into contact with the reading of literature at a young age?

All of the teachers from both schools answered yes, and elaborated on this topic by stating that the reading of literature at a young age “expands and deepens their world and their command of the English language”. Another teacher also explains that it is important that the students make ‘leeskilometers’ from a young age but that they should read ‘fun’ books. One teacher also stated that “the sooner the better [that they come into contact with literature], because then they will understand literature faster and even enjoy it”.

Teachers at CDH also find that “reading is the way to learn a language and getting to know the masters. You must have books in your life”. Another teacher stated that it “opens the students’ view”.

13. Do you believe that it is important that students in the lower years start reading books and short stories as soon as possible?

Again all of the teachers of both schools said yes and mentioned that it is important for the development of their vocabulary and grammar. The teachers also agree on the statement that students in the lower years should start reading as soon as possible. Some of the statements by the teachers included that it prepares them for their final exams, it provides students with “indirect and contextual language acquisition” and “expansion of the vocabulary”.

Lessons and lesson book in the lower years

14. How often do you pay attention to reading or literature education during the lesson?

- a. Thrice a week
- b. Twice a week
- c. Once a week
- d. Once every two weeks

- e. Once every month**
- f. Once every few months.**
- g. Never**

For the first class, three teachers answered. One teacher taught reading education one time per week, and another once every two weeks. The last participant only taught reading education every few months. It seems to depend on the teacher how much attention is paid to reading education.

The teachers were a bit closer with their answers concerning the second class. Three of them filled in this question and one of them filled in that he or she only taught English once every month. The second teacher taught literature once every two weeks and the third teacher once a week. Again, there is a difference between the amount of reading education that the students receive.

All of the teachers taught in the third class. Again, the answers vary as one teacher focuses on reading education once a week (20%) while another teacher only pays attention to literature during class once every few months (20%). Two teachers deal with literature once every two weeks (40%), while another teacher discusses literature or reading education once every month (20%).

There were three teachers who answered the question for the fourth year. In this year the amount of literature teaching seems to be declining in comparison to the number of reading lessons taught in the lower years. Two teachers pay attention to literature once every two weeks, while there is one teacher who teaches English reading or literature once every month.

There were four teachers who taught in the fifth class. There was one teacher who stated that he or she dealt with literature twice a week (25%), while the other three teachers either taught literature once every month (50%) or once every few months (25%).

There was only one teacher who taught literature to sixth year students and filled in an answer. He or she stated that once every two weeks attentions was paid to literature education.

Three teachers answered this question for the lower years at CDH (among one who teaches only bilingual English classes), while one of them answered for the upper years only. In the first class, one of the teachers spent one class per week on literature (33%), while the other two, including the bilingual teacher, spent one class every two weeks on literature (67%). This number remains the same in the second year, although in the third year, the bilingual teacher also spends time on literature once a week. In the higher years, one teacher answered the question. This participant spends one lesson per week on literature in all three years.

15. Do you use supplementary assignments with regards to reading/literature education and what kind of assignments are these?

All of the teachers did state, however, that there were supplementary assignments. None of them only used the lesson book for assignments and suggestions.

In the first year, teachers made use of reading skill assignments. For the second year, these assignments were supplemented with Early Blackbirds and corresponding questions. The Early Blackbirds were replaced with the Young Blackbirds in the third year, and the assignments also became more varied. Some of the assignments include writing a summary, or writing a different ending. Other popular assignments include the invention of a new title with a corresponding explanation or creating a timeline for the story. In the fourth year students are asked to read short stories and Blackbirds. Also symbolism, technique and story plot and twists in the plot are introduced. In the fifth year students continue with these literature terms and should also read three books for the oral at the end of the year. For the final year, teachers unfortunately did not provide any examples of assignments.

At CDH, all of the teachers use supplementary assignments. For the bilingual students, the assignments are more demanding: they discuss poetry, they have to do presentations in all three of the lower years, they have to read essays and retell stories, and in the third year they even start to read Shakespeare, and so on.

In the other lower years, the assignments are more focused on reading skills: students have to answer open questions, they have to translate and explain English words, and search for synonyms. The students do have to read three short novels in English in the first three years, but the question remains whether students actually read these books.

16. Which lesson books do you use in the different years?

At the VC, all of the teachers use the same method: New Interface (the first edition) in the lower years and in the upper years, Unicom Finals.

All of the teachers at CDH use the same textbooks as well: New Interface (the second edition) in the lower years, while there is no course book for the regular vwo students in the upper years, although some teachers use additional material such as the Wasp Reporter and in the fifth and sixth years the Examenbundel Engels is often used to practice for the final exams. In the lower years of the bilingual years, *English in Mind* is used, as well as additional material.

17. This course book spends too little attention to literature or reading education

- a. I completely agree**
- b. I agree**
- c. I don't agree/don't disagree**
- d. I disagree**
- e. I completely disagree**

For each lesson book and year, the teachers have answered this question. They were given five options. In the first year the opinions on the attention paid to literature in the lesson book varies. One teacher completely agrees (33.3%) and one teacher agrees with the statement (33.3%), while one teacher disagrees (33.3%). For the second year, this trend continues, as

two teachers state that they agree (66%), while one disagrees with the statement (33.3%). In the third year three teachers agree that the textbook pays too little attention to reading education (60%), while one teacher remains neutral (20%). Another teacher disagrees and thinks that the textbook does pay enough attention to reading (20%).

In the fourth year, UC is used. There is a shift in the opinion of the teachers because now all three teachers disagree with the statement question above. This remains the same in the fifth and sixth years. In the fifth year, all three teachers disagree with the statement, and two teachers also believed that in the lesson book for the sixth year enough attention was paid to the literature and reading education.

Only one teacher answered this question for the lower years, while another answered for the upper years. The bilingual teacher was only able to answer for the lower years as well. The teacher who answered for the lower years disagreed with the statement that NI did not spend enough attention to literature or reading education for each of the three years, while the bilingual teachers feels that the textbook (*English in Mind*) does not focus enough on reading. The teacher who filled in this question for the higher years completely agrees with the statement, he or she believes that the lesson book that they use (*Wasp Reporter*) does not emphasise reading education enough.

18. Do you use the assignments, texts and/or suggestions with regards to reading education from these lesson books?

- a. Never**
- b. Rarely**
- c. Sometimes**
- d. Most of the time**
- e. Always**

For this question, teachers were given five possible answers from which they could choose only one option. The opinions are very varied, as one teacher **rarely** uses material from the lesson book (20%), while another **always** uses the material provided by the lesson book (20%). Another participant **sometimes** uses material from the lesson book (20%), while two

of the teachers use material **most of the time** (40%). None of the teachers **never** used the material from the lesson method.

At CDH, three teachers answered this question. One of them uses the lesson book to structure the reading lesson **most of the time**, while another teacher **never** uses the lesson book for his or her reading or literature education. The bilingual teacher uses own material and therefore **does not use** the textbook as a grip for the reading lessons.

- 19. Do you prefer, beside the lesson method;**
a. Material that is available in the English department?
b. Material that you design yourself?
c. Something else, namely:

The teachers were provided with three answer possibilities. For the third option teachers were asked to explain their answer but none of the teachers opted for this answer. Therefore, no further quotes are provided for this question. The teachers were allowed to provide multiple answers. All of the teachers used material available in the English department, while two of the teachers also used material that they design themselves.

One of the teachers at CDH prefers material that is available in the English department (25%), while option b was chosen three times (75%). Many teachers design and use their own material as well. Two teachers also chose option c, and elaborated by stating that the Internet also provides them with new ideas. The bilingual teacher does not have a course book as he or she is “always trying to think of new challenges and new books”.

- 20. Do you spend time on the reading of literature or books in the lower years? And if so, in what way?**
a. Yes
b. No

Four teachers of the VC answered this question and all of them stated that they spent extra time, besides the textbooks and the material already provided, on reading of literature or books in the lower years.

One of the teachers at CDH did not answer this question as he or she only teaches the upper years. Two teachers do spend time on the reading of literature or books in the lower years, while the bilingual teacher does not. The bilingual students are supposed to read at home.

The two 'regular' two teachers elaborated by stating that students are supposed to read three books per year in the lower years. In the first year students read shortened versions of long books, while in the second and third year they are supposed to read the original. In the bilingual years, students are expected to produce essays on authors about whom the teacher taught.

21. Do you think it is important that students from the lower years are prepared for the reading of English stories and literature in the higher years?

- a. Yes
- b. No

All of the participants at the VC filled in this question, and each of them answered yes. They elaborate on their answer by stating that it is part of the integrated curriculum. This starts in the lower years with easy books that become more difficult as they progress through secondary school. Teachers also mention that reading in the lower years is important because it provides students with a slow build-up of the reading load.

All four teachers at CDH agree with the statement. One of the teachers stated that he or she does "try but [does not] get a feedback".

Reading and lesson books in the higher years

22. When students reach the fourth class, their CEFR-level should be B1. How many percent of these fourth year students do you think have reached this level?

An explanation of the B1-level is provided in the questionnaire so teachers have an overview of what students should be able to do once they have reached this level. Unfortunately, only two teachers from the VC answered this question. The answers were divided into four

categories namely 0-25%, 25%-50%, 50%-75% and 75%-100%. Both of the teachers opted for option c and stated that 50% - 75% of the students reached B1 level when they reach the fourth class.

Only two teachers at CDH filled in this answer. Three of the teachers only teach in the lower years and perhaps that is why two of them did not fill in this question because they are not aware of the level of the fourth-grade students.

The teachers who did fill in the question were not on the same page: one of them thinks that only 25-50% of the students have reached B1-level in the fourth year while the other believes that 75-100% have reached B1-level.

23. Why do you think it is important that students read literature in the upper years?

- a. Social development**
- b. Reading pleasure**
- c. Literary-esthetical education**
- d. Cultural education**
- e. Individual development**

Five teachers filled in this question. Teachers were allowed to give multiple answers, and two of them chose all the five possibilities. The other three participants chose multiple answers as well and coincidentally all of the answer options were chosen four times.

At CDH, the first option, social development was chosen once, as well as option c, literary-esthetical education. Answer b, d and e were all chosen twice.

24. How much time do you spend on literature in the upper years?

- a. Three times a week**
- b. Twice a week**
- c. Once a week**
- d. Once every two weeks**
- e. Once a month**
- f. Once every few months**
- g. Never**

The teachers were provided with seven answer possibilities for every upper class.

For the fourth class, two teachers filled in an answer. One of them taught literature once a week and the other once every two weeks.

Four teachers answered the question for the fifth year and two of them stated that they taught literature once every two weeks and the other two taught literature once a month. Three teachers filled in the question for 6vwo, again the number of lessons is not very high. One teacher teaches literature once every two weeks. Another teaches literature once a month, and the last teacher gives a literature lesson every few months. This difference in answers could also be due to the decrease in lessons towards the end of the final school year.

At CDH, only one of the participants teaches upper years and therefore only one answer was provided per class. He or she spends the same time teaching literature in all three years: once a week.

25. Do you think the transition from the lower to the upper years with regards to English literature education is;

- a. Very good**
- b. Good**
- c. Not good/not bad**
- d. Bad**
- e. Very bad**

One teacher at the VC did not fill in the question but the four teachers that did answer this question all unanimously picked answer d. They find the transition at the moment bad. This indicates that the teachers themselves are not happy about the transition at the moment and this implies that a change is needed.

Only three teachers at CDH filled in this question, as one of the teachers did not know exactly what the transition is like since he or she has too little experience with the level of the upper years. The teachers do not seem to agree on this answer as all of them have filled in a different answer. One of the teachers thinks that the transition is good at the moment, while one participant was neutral and the last teacher thinks that the transition is not good.

26. Do you think that an improvement of the reading or literature education in the lower years can ensure an easier transition between the lower and the upper years?

a. Yes

b. No

All four of the teachers at the VC answered yes. They elaborated on their answer by stating that “the reading of suitable and attractive books will stimulate the reading pleasure, their linguistic understanding and reading skills, and the foundation for this is laid in the lower years”. Moreover, another teacher states that “students should enjoy reading at first. Some of the literature [in the upper years] demotivates the students”.

Three teachers from CDh have filled in this question and all of them answered yes. One of the teachers elaborated on this answer by stating: “stimulating reading skills will lead to an improvement of the other skills, but also individual development and higher self-confidence. This will also have its effects in the upper years”. Another teacher claims that there is “not enough appreciation for reading as a learning strategy”.

Appendix 9

Bilingual English Students Questionnaires

The bilingual English students receive much more input of the English language than the 'regular' vwo students. The majority of their lessons are in English (almost 80%) and these students are therefore expected to have a greater knowledge of, but also a greater affinity with the English language. Their willingness to read should also be higher as they are stimulated and encouraged from the first year to start reading English books.

There are 23 students who participated in the questionnaire from the bilingual English year (5VC). Fourteen of them were born in 1997 (60.9%), while seven were born in 1996 (30.4). One student was born in 1995 (4.3%), and another in 1998 (4.3%).

Most of the students speak Dutch (82.6% or nineteen students), while two speak German as their mother tongue (8.8%). One student speaks Russian (4.3%) and another also speaks Somalian (4.3%).

Most students have chosen for the Science and Technology profile (30.4%), six students have chosen for Science and Health (26.1%) and one student has chosen for a combination of these two profiles (4.3%). There are five students who follow the Culture and Society profile (21.7%) and four who take the Economics and Society profile (17.4%). The distribution seems to be pretty evenly, with a slight majority of the students taking a Science profile.

Questions about literature or fiction education in the lower years

6. How often did the teacher pay attention to stories or poems during English classes?

- a. once a week**
- b. once per two weeks**
- c. once per month**
- d. a few times a year**
- e. never**

Eleven students stated that they received reading at least once a week (47.8%), although seven students chose for option d: a few times a year (30.4%). There were three students who stated

that the teacher paid attention to reading once per two weeks (13%) and two who opted for answer c (8.7%).

7. What did you think of these classes about literature or reading education?

- a. very enjoyable**
- b. enjoyable**
- c. neutral**
- d. tedious**
- e. very tedious**

The majority of the bilingual students had neutral feelings towards these classes (69.6%), while there were four students who found the lessons enjoyable (17.4%) and three students thought the lessons tedious (13%).

8. Do you feel that your teacher paid enough attention on literature?

- a. yes**
- b. no**

Almost two thirds of the students thought that their teacher paid enough attention to literature, (60.9%), while only nine students (39.1%) thought that the teacher could have spent more time teaching literature or reading classes.

9. How did the teacher pay attention to literature?

- a. during class with an assignment**
- b. during class, reading (aloud or individually)**
- c. we received an assignment to finish at home**
- d. we received a book to read at home**
- e. something else (provide an explanation)**

More than half of the students states that the teacher paid attention to literature during class with an assignment (56.5%), while more than one third of the students also had to read during class (34.8%). There were also four students who stated that they received an assignment to finish at home (17.4%) and also eleven participants who received a book to read at home (47.8%).

10. How many books have you read in total for the subject of English in the lower years?

- a. no books, just short stories or poems**

- b. 1 book**
- c. 2 books**
- d. 3 books**
- e. other, namely:**

Two students stated that they have read no books (8.7%), while four students have read only one book (17.4%). There were six students who read two books (26.1%) and six other students as well who read three books (26.1%). There were five students who chose for option e and three of them clarified their answer by stating that they had to read four or five books.

11. Did you read books in the lower years:

- a. at home, for fun**
- b. at school, as an assignment**
- c. both**

One student did not fill in an answer and the percentages are therefore calculated for 22 students. Eleven students stated that they only read books at school as an assignment(50%), while only nine students did both (40.9%). There were two students who only read books at home for fun (9.1%).

12. How many Dutch books did you read on average at home for pleasure in the lower years?

- a. one or more books per week**
- b. one book per two weeks**
- c. one book per month**
- d. one book per two months**
- e. one book per half year**
- f. never**

Only one student read one book per two weeks (4.3%), while three students read one book per month (13%). There were also three students who chose for option d, and read only one Dutch book per month for pleasure (13%). The majority of the students, however, only read one book per half year (47.8%). Five students did not read for pleasure at all during the first years of secondary school (21.7%).

13. How many English books did you read on average at home for pleasure in the lower years?

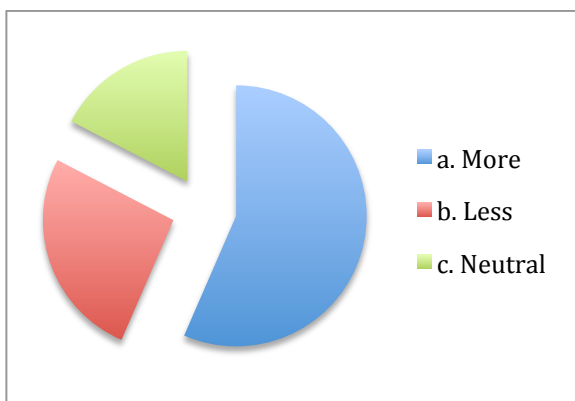
- a. one or more books per week**
- b. one book per two weeks**
- c. one book per month**
- d. one book per two months**
- e. one book per half year**
- f. never**

The majority of the students claim that they have never read an English book at home for pleasure (69.6%). While only four students can be considered regular readers: one of them reads one book per two weeks for pleasure (4.3%) and three of them read one book per month (13%). There are also three students who read one book per half year (13%).

14. Would you prefer more or less reading education in the lower years?

- a. more**
- b. less**
- c. neutral**

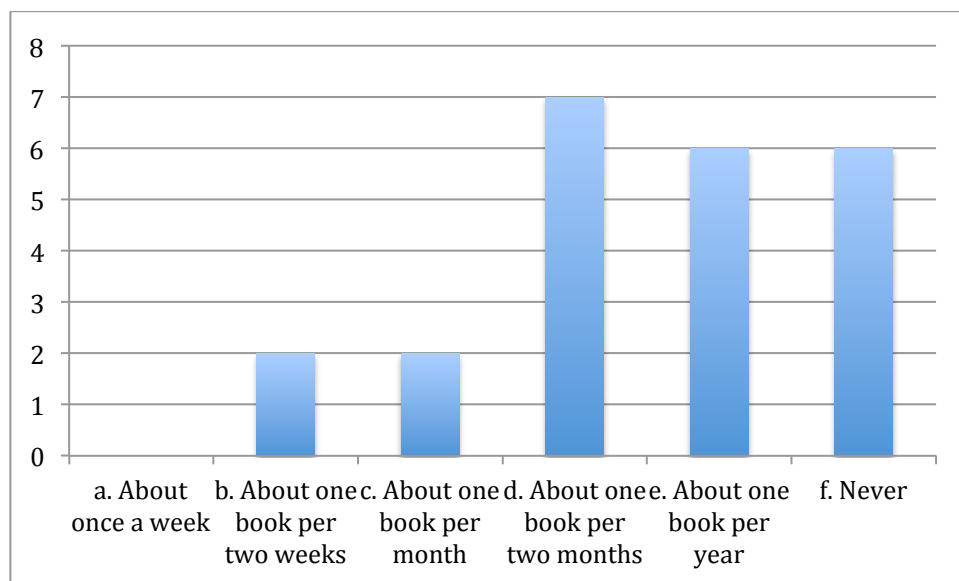
The majority of the students states that they would prefer more reading education (56.5%), while only six students claim that they would have preferred less reading education (26.1%). Four students had a neutral standpoint and chose for option c (17.4%).



Reading pleasure

15. How often do you read a book for pleasure in any language at the moment?

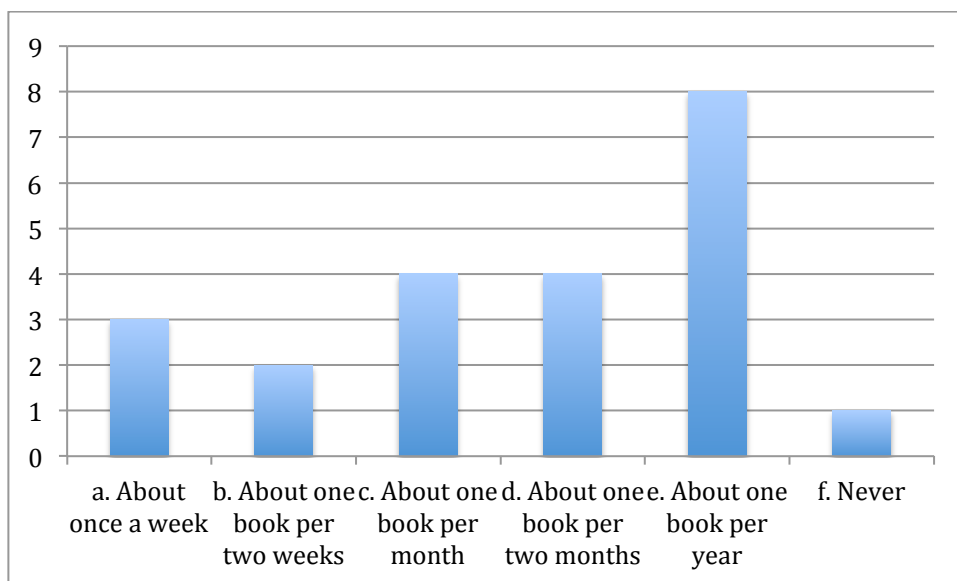
- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**
- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**

f. never

The amount of reading for pleasure has declined, as only four students can be considered regular readers: two of them read one book per two weeks for pleasure (8.7%) and the other two read about one book per month (8.7%). There were seven students who read about one book per two months (30.4%) and six students who read one book per year (26.1%). Lastly, there were six students who did not read at all (26.1%).

16. How often did you read a book for pleasure at primary school?

- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**
- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**
- f. never**



One student did not fill in this question and the percentages have therefore been calculated for 22 students instead of 23. The students are much more regular readers at primary school: nine of them can be considered regular readers while thirteen can be seen as irregular readers.

There is only one student who did not read any books at primary school at all (4.5%). There were three students who read one book per week (13.6%), while there two students who read one book per two weeks (9.1%). Although the students are not reading immensely more, the number of students reading never, once a year or once per two months has declined. Four students now read about one book per month (18.2%), the same number of students read about one book per two months (18.2%).

17. How often did you read a book for pleasure in the lower years of secondary school?

- a. About one book per week**
- b. about one book per two weeks**
- c. about one book per month**
- d. about one book per two months**
- e about one book per year**
- f. never**

Five students can be regarded as regular readers, while 18 students can be seen as irregular readers. Two students read about one book per two weeks (8.7%), there are three participants who read one book per month (13%). The majority of the students reads about one book per

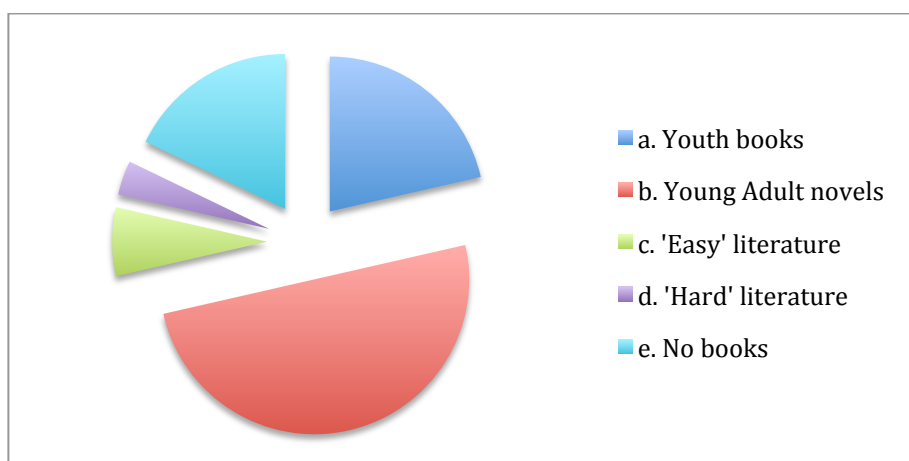
two months (34.8%), while there are six students who read one book every year (26.1%).

Four students do not read at all.

18. What kind of books did you read for pleasure in the lower years?

- a. Youth novels
- b. Young Adult novels
- c. 'Easy' literature
- d. 'Hard' literature
- e. No literature at all

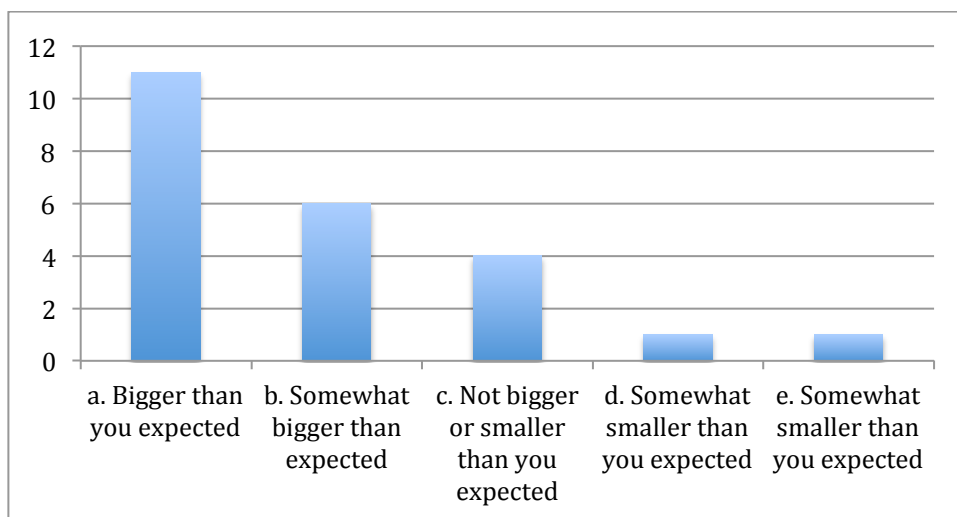
Most students stated that they read Young Adult novels (60.9%), while only one student already read difficult literature (4.3%) and only two students easy literature (8.7%). There were five students who stated that they did not read literature or books at all (21.7%) and six students who read youth novels (26.1%). Of these six students, two read youth novels only, while the rest of them read this in combination with YA novels or literature.



Transition lower to upper years

19. How did you experience the transition from the lower to the upper years in general for the subject of English? Did you find the transition:

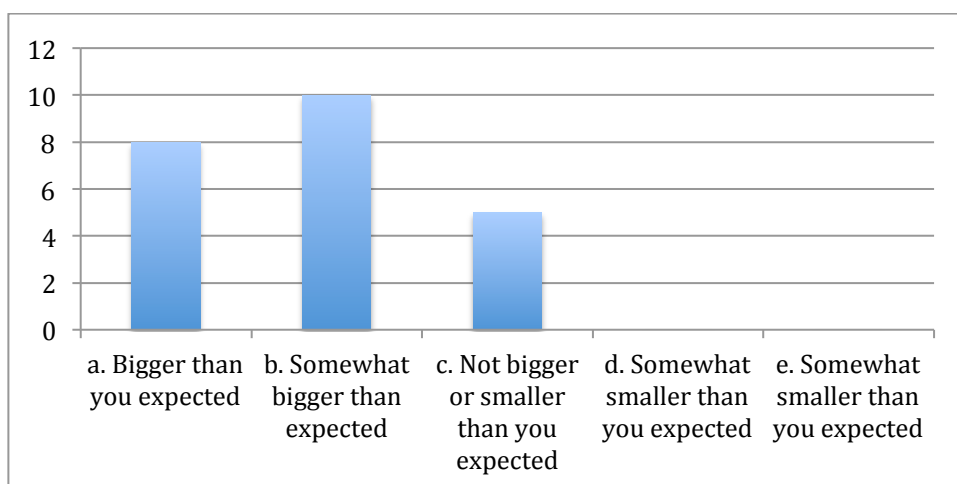
- a. Bigger than you expected
- b. Somewhat bigger than you expected
- c. Not bigger/not smaller than you expected
- d. Somewhat smaller than you expected
- e. Smaller than you expected



Seventeen students stated that they found the transition either bigger or somewhat bigger than they expected (47.8% and 26.1% of the students respectively). Only one student found the transition smaller than expected (4.3%) and another found it somewhat smaller than expected (4.3%). Four students had a neutral standpoint and did not experience the transition as bigger or smaller than their expectations (17.4%).

20. How did you experience the transition from the lower to the upper years in terms of literature or fiction education for the subject of English? Did you find the transition:

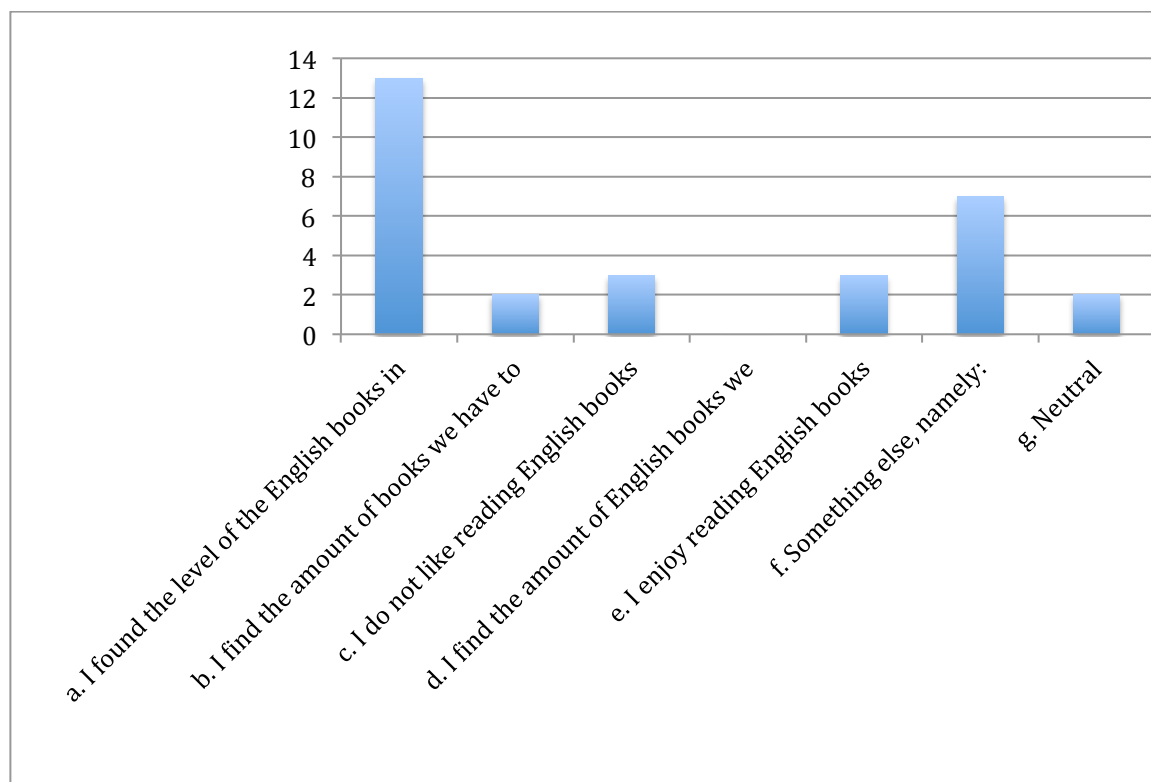
- a. Bigger than you expected**
- b. Somewhat bigger than you expected**
- c. Not bigger/not smaller than you expected**
- d. Somewhat smaller than you expected**
- e. Smaller than you expected**



Five students had a neutral standpoint (21.7%), but the majority of the students thought the transition somewhat bigger than they expected (43.5%) and a little more than one third of the students thought the transition bigger than they expected (34.8%).

21. Why did you experience the transition in this way?

- a. I found the level of the English books in the upper years more difficult in comparison to the English books in the lower years
- b. I find the number of books we have to read in the upper years too much
- c. I do not like reading English books
- d. I find the number of English books we have to read in the upper years too small
- e. I enjoy reading English books
- f. Something else: (provide an explanation)



Two students claimed that they were neutral and did not fill in the question (8.7%). Thirteen students found the level of the English books in the upper years more difficult in comparison to the English books read in the lower years (56.3%). Two students chose for the second option and found the number of books to be read for the upper years too much (8.7%). Three students do not like reading English books (13%), but there were also three students who did enjoy reading English novels (13%). Most of the students therefore seem to experience

difficulties with the difficulty of the books to be read and not necessarily with the number of books. Seven students filled in option f and were therefore asked to explain their answer (30.4%). One student stated that “we had to read more books and we did not just have to understand the most important parts of the story but also more details and concepts”.

Profile

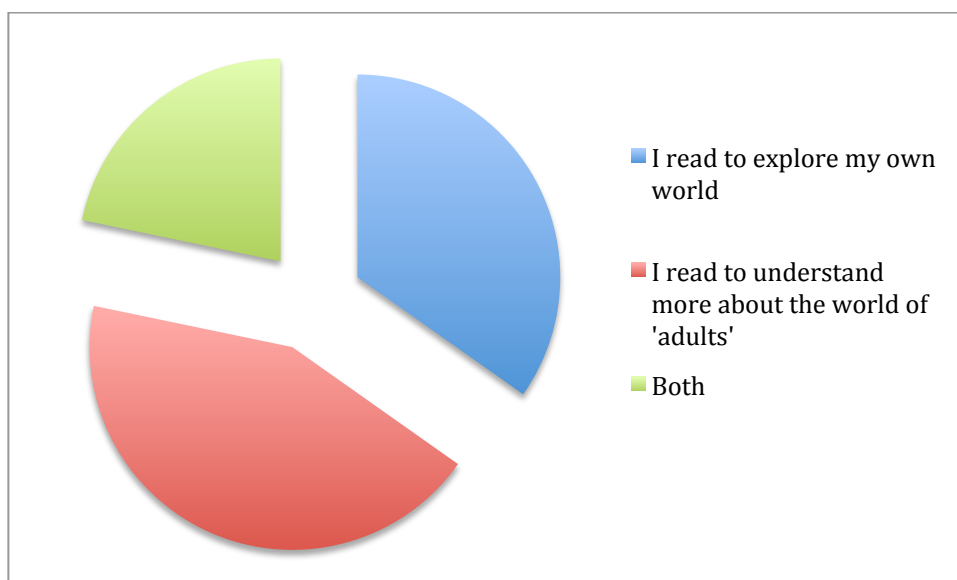
22.

I read to explore my own world

OR I read to understand more about the world of adults

Both

The first answer corresponds to a description belonging to the second level of Witte, while the second option corresponds to level 3. Students are expected to choose for the second option more, as this year should have made more progression than the regular vwo years. The majority of the students chooses for the second option corresponding to the third level (43.5%), although one third still chooses for the first option corresponding to the second level of Witte (34.8%). Five students choose for both of the statements (21.7%).



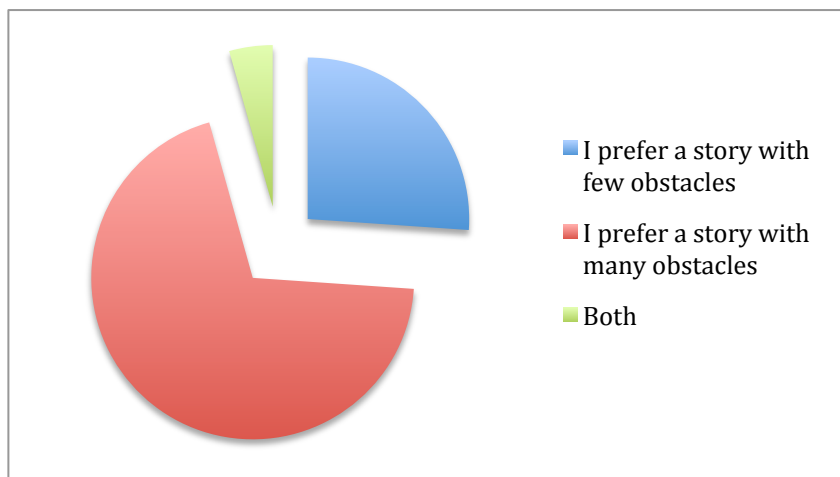
23.

I prefer a story with few obstacles

OR I prefer a story with many obstacles

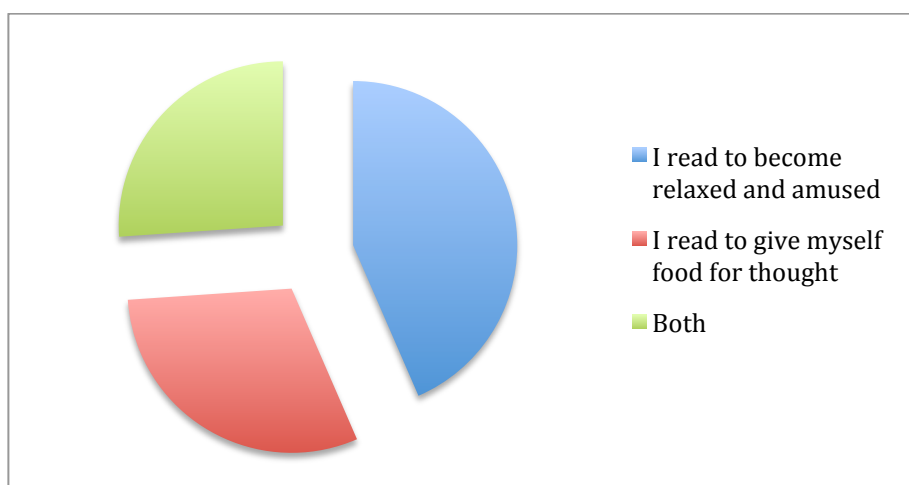
Both

The students again prefer the second option: a story with many obstacles (69.6%), while only six students prefer the first answer (26.1%). There is only one student who chose both options (4.3%). The students do seem to be more advanced in terms of preferences for statements than the students from the regular vwo.



24.
I read to become relaxed and be amused
OR I read to give myself food for thought
Both

A slight majority of the students now chooses for the first option, as was the case in the questionnaires filled in by the regular vwo students (43.5%), while seven students still chose for the second option (30.4%). Six students remained indecisive and opted for both of the statements (26.1%).



25.

**I prefer to read dramatic and exciting stories
OR I prefer to read books with a social, psychological or moral problem
Both**

Ten students now chose for option b (43.5%), which is a very slight majority considering the fact that nine students opted for the first answer (39.1%). There were four students who chose for both of the options (17.4%).

