

Survey: Children like e-books, parents not so much

September 29 2010, By HILLEL ITALIE , AP National Writer

(AP) -- Children are ready to try e-books, with some thinking that a bigger selection of electronic texts would make reading for fun even more fun, according to a new study. But a solid majority of parents aren't planning to join the digital revolution.

The 2010 Kids and Family Reading Report, released Wednesday and commissioned by Scholastic Inc., offers a mixed portrait of [e-books](#) and families. Around six out of 10 of those between ages 9 and 17 say they're interested in reading on an electronic device such as the Kindle or the [iPad](#). Around one out of three from the same age group say they'd [read](#) more "for fun" if more books were available on a digital reader.

Among the books that can't be downloaded: the "Harry Potter" series, published in the U.S. by Scholastic. J.K. Rowling has said she prefers her work to be read on paper.

The e-market has grown rapidly since 2007 and the launch of Amazon.com's Kindle device, from less than 1 percent of overall sales to between 5 to 10 percent, publishers say. But the new report is also the latest to show substantial resistance. Just 6 percent of parents surveyed have an [electronic reading](#) device, while 76 percent say they have no plans to buy one. Sixteen percent plan to have one within the following year.

In a recent Harris Poll of adults, 80 percent said they were not likely to get an e-reader.

"I'm not surprised to know that. I think we're still at the beginning of e-books," said Scholastic Book Club president Judy Newman, adding that the expense of digital devices was a likely problem for potential e-book fans.

The 2010 report shows, as other studies have, a decline in reading for fun as [children](#) grow older. More than half read for fun between ages 6 and 8, but the percentage drops to around 25 percent by ages 15 through 17 and just 20 percent for boys in that age group. Newman sees technology as both a problem and possible solution.

"We know that around age 8 they (children) start to lose interest in reading," Newman says. "Obviously, digital media is competing for kids' attention. It's very important that we as publishers make sure we're engaging kids in reading for fun. There's an opportunity to use technology to engage kids. ... We can have great content presented in a digital way."

The Kids and Family report was compiled by the Harrison Group, a marketing and research consulting firm. The survey was conducted in the spring of 2010, with 1,045 children and 1,045 parents interviewed. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

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