

HOW WELL DOES HONG KONG'S EDUCATION SYSTEM WORK?



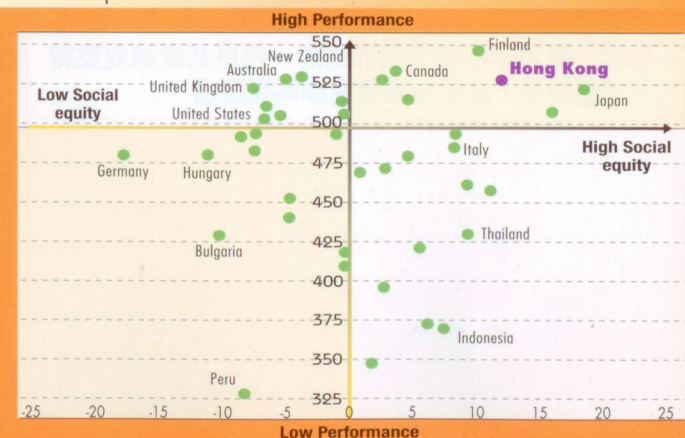
The Facts

Hong Kong is one of the top 10 countries/regions.

Mathematical Literacy		Scientific Literacy		Reading Literacy	
Country/Region	Mean Score	Country/Region	Mean Score	Country/Region	Mean Score
Hong Kong	560	Korea	552	Finland	546
Japan	557	Japan	550	Canada	534
Korea	547	Hong Kong	541	New Zealand	529
New Zealand	537	Finland	538	Australia	528
Finland	536	United Kingdom	532	Ireland	527
Australia	533	Canada	529	Hong Kong	525
Canada	533	New Zealand	528	Korea	525
Switzerland	529	Australia	528	United Kingdom	523
United Kingdom	529	Austria	519	Japan	522
Belgium	520	Ireland	513	Sweden	516
OECD Average Score : 500					
Brazil	334	Brazil	375	Albania	349
Peru	292	Peru	333	Peru	327

The table above shows the literacy performance of the 10 best-performing countries/regions and two that have relatively low scores among the 41 participating countries/regions. The average scores of the top 10 territories do not differ greatly.

The socio-economic background of our students has little impact on their performance.



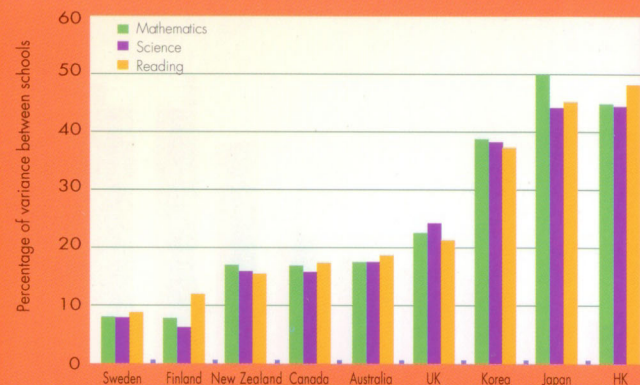
The chart above shows that Hong Kong students perform better than those in most other countries/regions. At the same time there is less inequality associated with students' socio-economic status than in countries like the UK, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Professor Jouni Valijarvi, Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, Finland :

"Finland has a non-selective education system where students of different abilities are provided with the same kind of comprehensive schooling. Teachers need to adapt their teaching methods, select the materials, and design the tasks according to the students' needs, capabilities and interests."

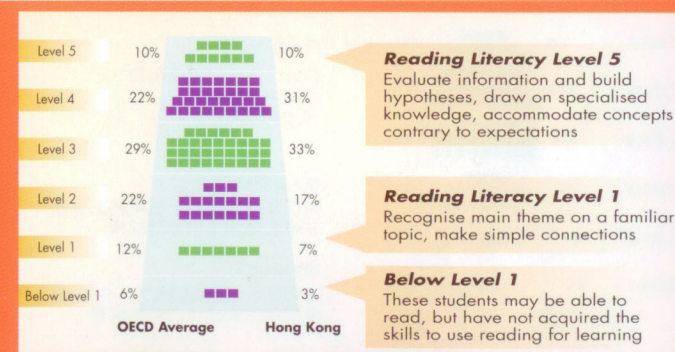


We have relatively larger between-school variation than most well-performing countries.



The chart above shows that most of the countries that perform well are able to maintain small variation between schools. This indicates that the reform of the Secondary School Places Allocation System is on the right track by reducing the banding of students from five bands to three.

We have fewer low achievers in reading literacy, but we need to work further on the percentage of top performing students.



The illustration above shows that the percentage of Hong Kong students at Level 5 of the reading scale is at the OECD average. The percentage is smaller than other well-performing countries.



Hints for Educators

- Disparities in the literacy performance between our high and low achievers are small. One possible reason is that our educators can effectively help students of relatively low ability meet the standard.
- The world trend is to maintain small between-school variation. This is the ideal type of system towards which Hong Kong should strive.
- We should help our students develop the skills and attitude to use various self-regulated learning strategies and rely less on "competitive learning" and "memorisation".
- Our schools should establish a more caring environment to strengthen students' sense of belonging and all-round development.

Professor Esther HO, Head of the Hong Kong PISA Centre:

"We need to establish **SCHOOLS WITH HEARTS**. To achieve this, support from school heads and teachers is the prerequisite. Parents' involvement is essential too."

PISA is developed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It compares and evaluates the effectiveness of education systems by assessing the level of knowledge and skills that 15-year-old students have acquired for full participation in society as they approach the end of compulsory education. Over 40 countries and regions have joined the Programme. In Hong Kong, more than 4,000 students from 140 schools took part in the first cycle of PISA in 2002. Their achievements were reviewed in relation to those of about 200,000 students from around the world. The results provide evidence-based data for evaluating the effectiveness of our basic education.

Further information on PISA can be obtained from the following websites:

www.pisa.oecd.org
www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/~hkpisa

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Tips for Parents

Parental involvement has a great impact on students' literacy performance.

Do you often engage in the following activities?
 (Put a ✓ if your answer is yes)

- communicate with your child e.g. discussing schoolwork, spending time talking, and having the evening meal together
- talk with your child on "cultural" topics e.g. discussing books, movies, television programmes and political and social issues
- take part with your child in cultural activities e.g. visiting museums, going to concerts and watching live theatres
- spend on educational resources such as books, calculators, dictionaries and a quiet place to study, rather than on material resources such as cellular phones, television sets and cars
- cultivate a reading habit in your child, e.g. reading with him/her during leisure time, encouraging him/her to spend time on reading for enjoyment and taking him/her to the library regularly

The more ✓ you score, the more you are helping to improve your child's performance.

Reading 30 minutes daily for enjoyment will make a difference!

Hong Kong emerges as one of the top performing education systems among some 40 countries/regions in a global study, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

PISA shows that Hong Kong ranks among the top 10 countries/regions. The performance of our students in reading, science and mathematics is well above the international average.

The study also shows that we have succeeded in maintaining quality and equality in our education system.

Mr. Andreas Schleicher, Head of the Indicators and Analysis Division of the OECD's Directorate for Education :

"Hong Kong students are star performers."



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