

CPI Research with Children Online-questionnaire

To test how children react to books
with or without an age guide on the
back cover

Methodology

- ◆ 230 children of both sexes (and their parents) age 7-12 years were interviewed by means of an online questionnaire
- ◆ All of these children had read at least one book and the parents had bought at least one book in the last year
- ◆ Each age group were sub divided into mirror samples (i.e. two groups of 7 year old boys)

Methodology

- ◆ One age group were shown a selection of three covers with an age guidance and one age group the same covers without age guidance.
- ◆ Two of the covers were aimed at their age, the other either at an older or younger age. The covers were rotated throughout the age groups
- ◆ Each child ranked the covers in order of their preference.

Methodology

- ◆ They were then asked to evaluate whether the books were aimed at their age, older or younger groups.
- ◆ On completion of the questionnaire, only the parents were asked their level of agreement to certain attitudinal statements about the idea of printing age guidance on the back of books.

Summary of findings - Children

- ◆ 85% of the children selected as their favourite the book which was primarily aimed at their age group irrespective of whether the book had age guidance or not printed on it.
- ◆ Only 15% of the children selected as their favourite a book that was primarily aimed at slightly older or younger age group. This result is the same whether or not the book had age guidance printed on it.
- ◆ Whether the book carries an age guidance or not, the ranking in appeal does not vary significantly amongst the children within their age groups. They do not appear to be put off by the age guidance on the back cover

Summary of findings - Parents

When choosing the book they feel most appropriate for their child, 75% of parent groups selected a book which is primarily aimed at the age group of their child, irrespective of whether the book carries an age guide or not. However 25% still needed this guidance

What do parents think about the idea of putting an age guide on back covers?

- ◆ Parents think that having age guidance on the back of books would be a good starting point in assessing whether or not a book is suitable.
- ◆ Some parents are aware and have some concerns that age guidance on the back of books may put off some children who are older than the age shown on the cover.
- ◆ But equally strongly they agree that it would reassure them that a book is suitable for their child
- ◆ Generally, parents thought that putting an age guide on the back cover is not regarded as patronising.

Overall summary of findings

- ◆ The majority of children and parents can choose a suitable book with or without the age guidance on the back
- ◆ Generally the book that appeals to each age group is one of those intended for that age group.
- ◆ 25% of some of the age groups (Boys 7-8, Girls 8 & 12) may be influenced to consider an older age group book.
- ◆ Conversely only 15% of children (Girls 7-8, Boys 8-9) may be put off by a younger age group shown.
- ◆ Overall the impact appears to be minimal, with the majority of children in selecting appropriate books.