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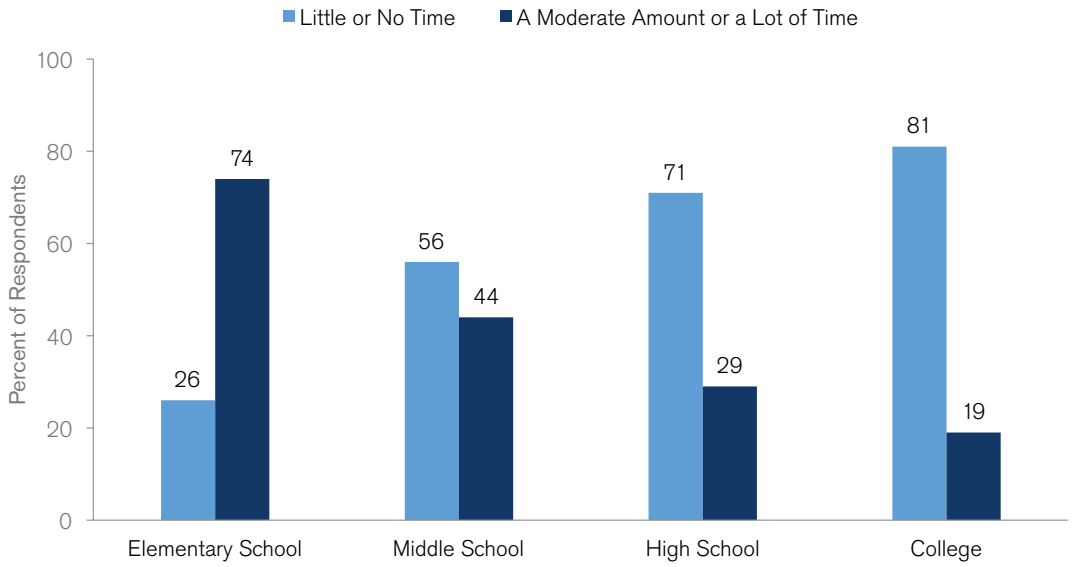
ACT National Curriculum Survey®: Mathematics Educators' Estimates of Time Spent Teaching Strategies for Reading Course Materials

The amount of time spent teaching strategies for reading mathematics course material appears to decrease with educational level.

Every three to five years, the ACT National Curriculum Survey asks educators about what they teach (or don't teach) in their courses and how important they feel various topics in their discipline are for students to know to be successful in future coursework. The survey also asks educators for their opinions on educational topics of current interest, such as the college readiness of their students or the implementation of improved standards like the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards or the Common Core State Standards.

This brief highlights a finding from the 2012 *Mathematics* survey.

Percent of Mathematics Educators Reporting How Much Time They Spend Teaching Students Strategies for Reading Course Materials



Note: Educators who did not respond to the question were excluded from the analysis.

The 2012 ACT National Curriculum Survey asked how much time mathematics teachers at various educational levels spend teaching students how to read course materials.[1] The results are shown in the figure above.

The amount of time spent teaching reading strategies decreases steadily as educational level increases, with elementary school teachers substantially more likely to spend a moderate amount or a lot of time than teachers in the higher levels. One might well expect this: as students improve their reading comprehension skills, they are likely to become better able to learn mathematics by means of the reading strategies they already possess. But given that most elementary school teachers teach a variety of subjects (including reading itself), it is also possible that the time they reported spending on reading strategies may not be specific to mathematics, but rather to strategies applicable across the curriculum, including mathematics. ■

[1] ACT, Inc., *ACT National Curriculum Survey 2012: Mathematics* (Iowa City, IA: Author, 2013). http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/NCS-Mathematics.pdf.