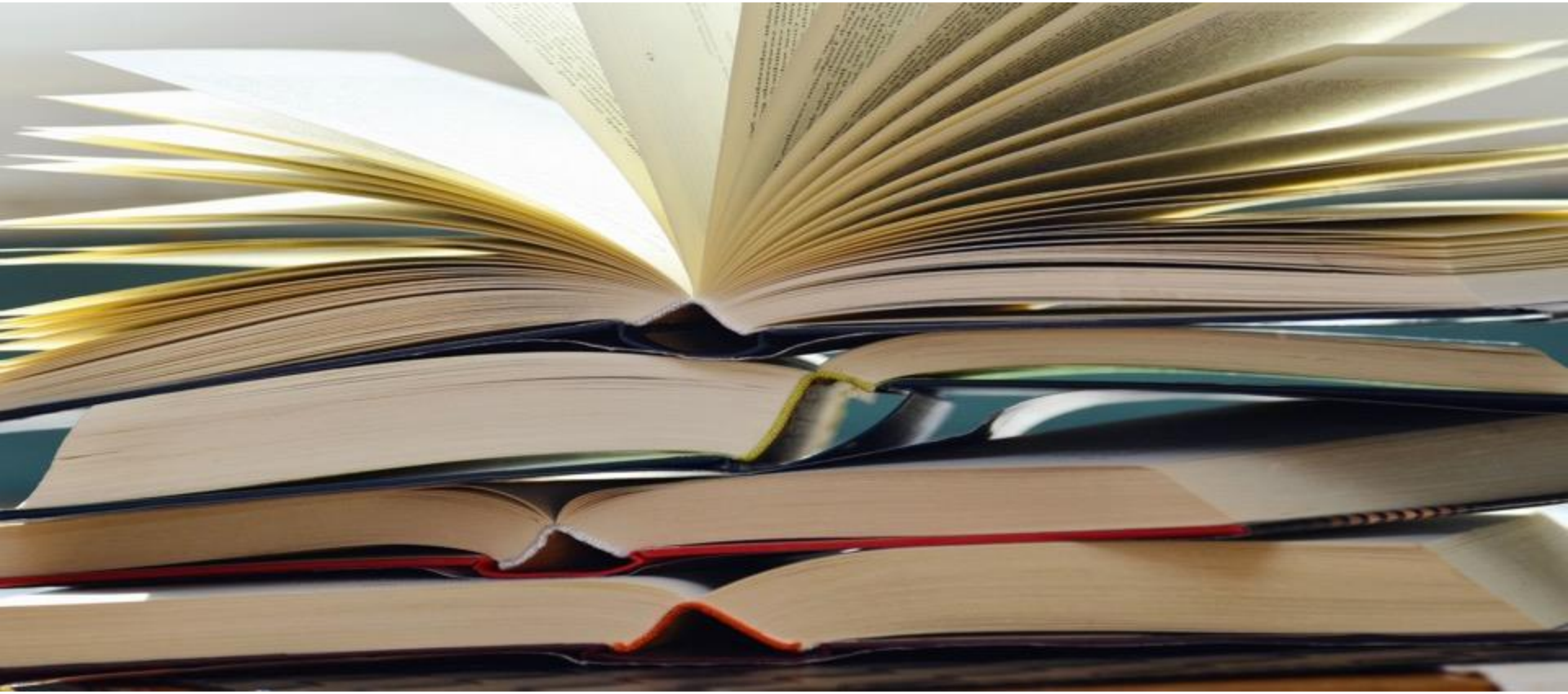
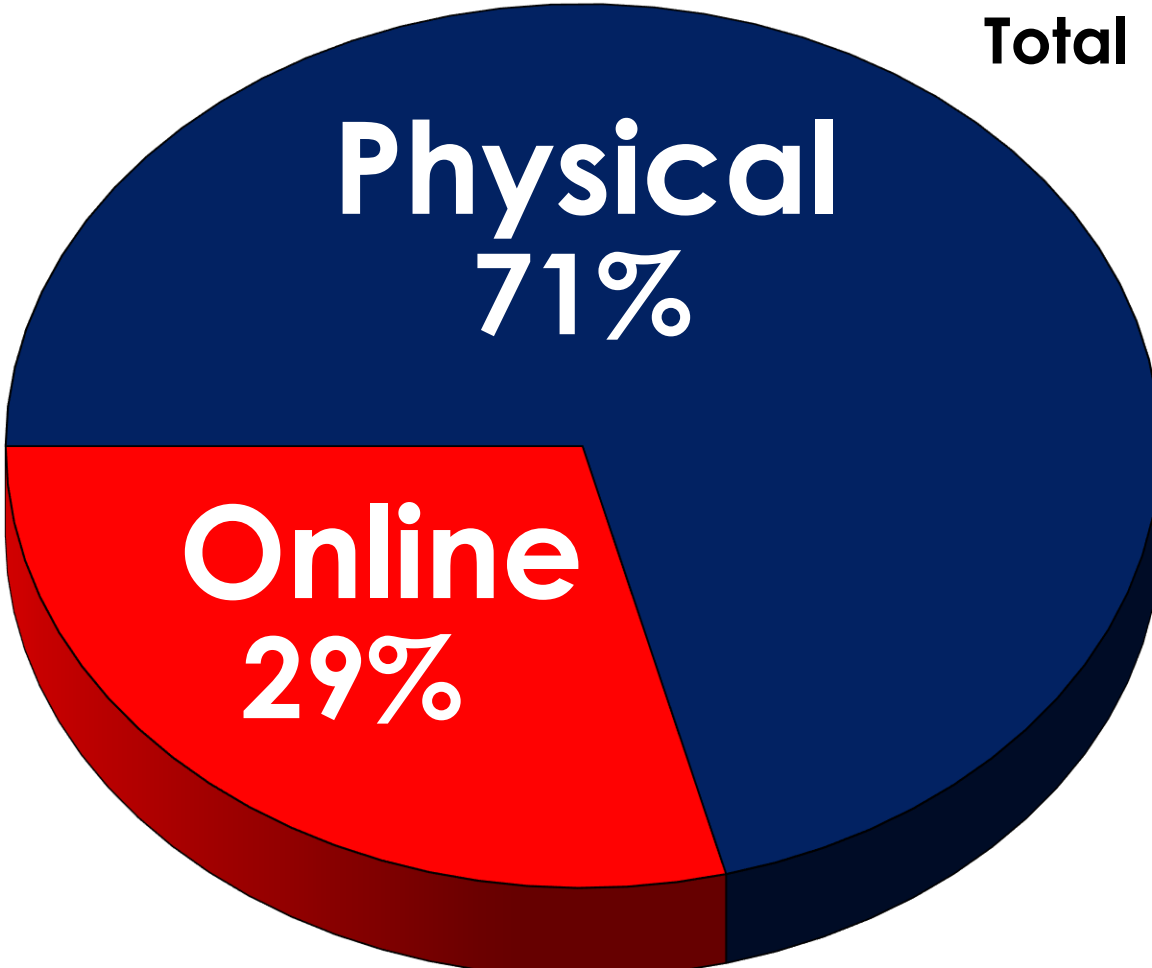
The Case for Physical Textbooks



What parents want & expect from the learning materials in their children's schools

Physical books are an impactful electoral motivator for school board elections

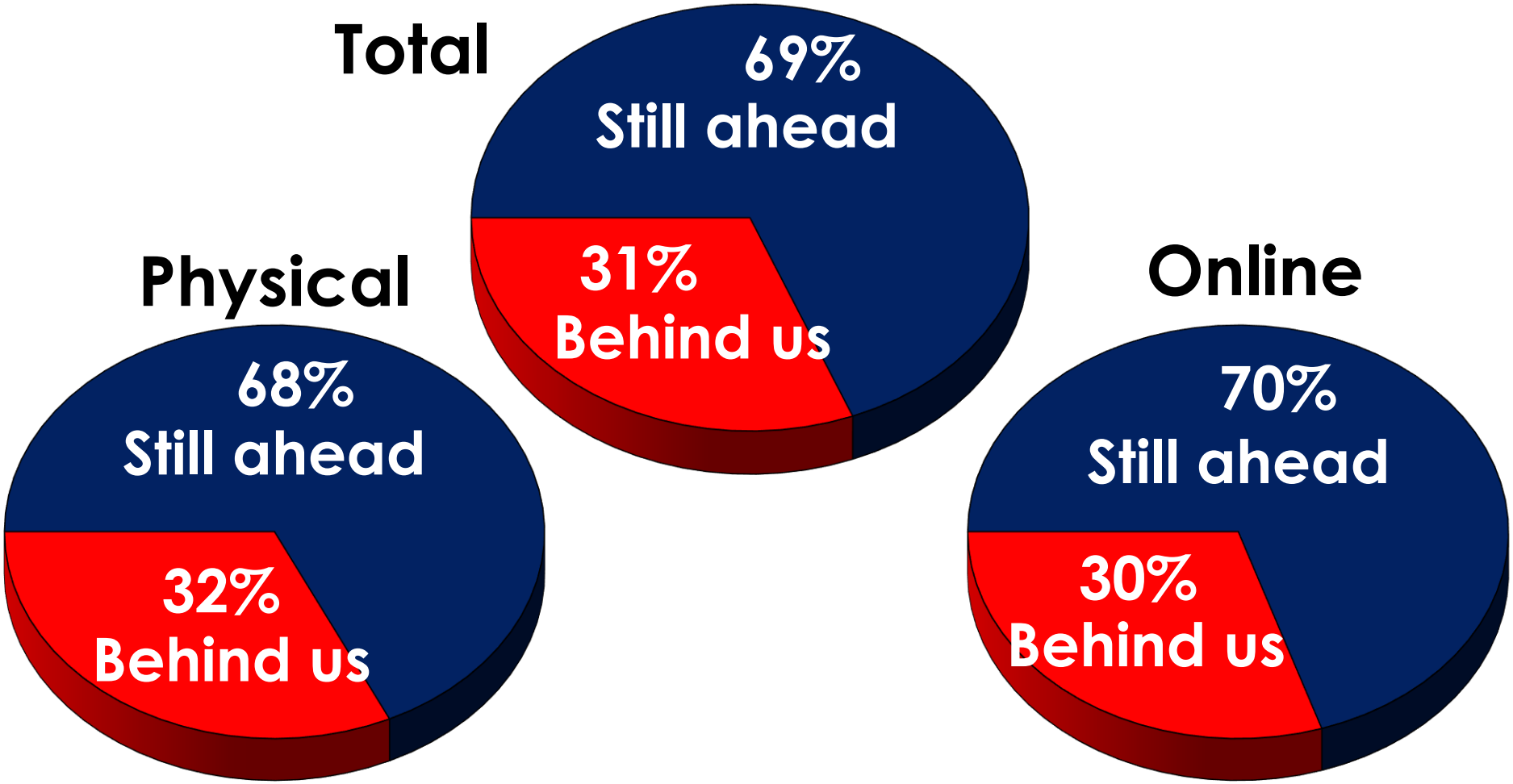
Would you be more likely to vote for someone running for school board if they supported student learning in schools primarily using... books?



Education at a Glance

Regardless of preference for learning, parents are optimistic for the future

When you think about the future of America's schools and education, are the best days behind us or are they still ahead?



Parents are more approving of their own schools than America's schools

What grade would you give America's schools?

Total	Physical	Online	
30%	26%	52%	A (NET)
27%	26%	15%	B (NET)
31%	36%	24%	C (NET)
10%	7%	9%	D (NET)
3%	4%	-	F (NET)

What grade would you give your own children's schools?

Total	Physical	Online	
56%	52%	63%	A (NET)
26%	29%	21%	B (NET)
14%	15%	11%	C (NET)
2%	1%	4%	D (NET)
2%	3%	1%	F (NET)

Not Prepared for real life is top of mind
(though online frustrations is a close 2nd)

What is the biggest issue facing American schools post-COVID?

Total	
35%	Children are not being prepared for real life
30%	Too much focus on computers and online and not enough focus on reading, writing and the basics
27%	Money is spent on the bureaucracy, not the students
25%	Children are not being prepared for college
25%	Children are not being prepared for a job or career
21%	Lack of morals/values among students
21%	Lack of student accountability
20%	Lack of parental involvement

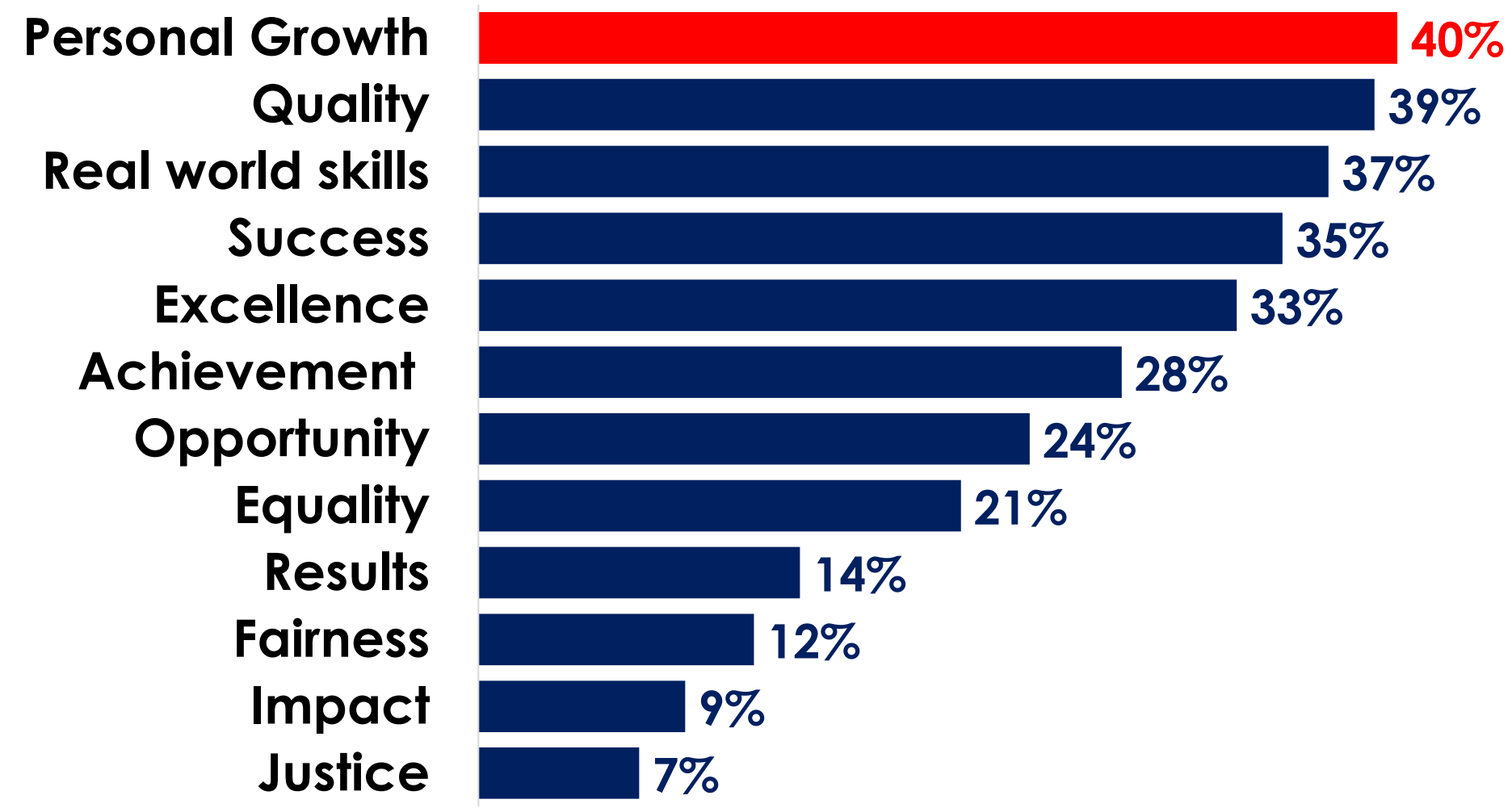
Teacher issues are among the least important to parents right now

What is the biggest issue facing American schools post-COVID?

Total	
19%	Textbooks and written materials that are out of date and/or irrelevant
17%	Bad school leadership
17%	Teacher unions
15%	Lack of good school choices for parents
15%	Lack of American history/civic education
13%	Bad teachers

The social justice attributes are not what parents are seeking from schools today

When you think about schools and educating your children, which principle is most important to you?



Overall Textbook Perceptions

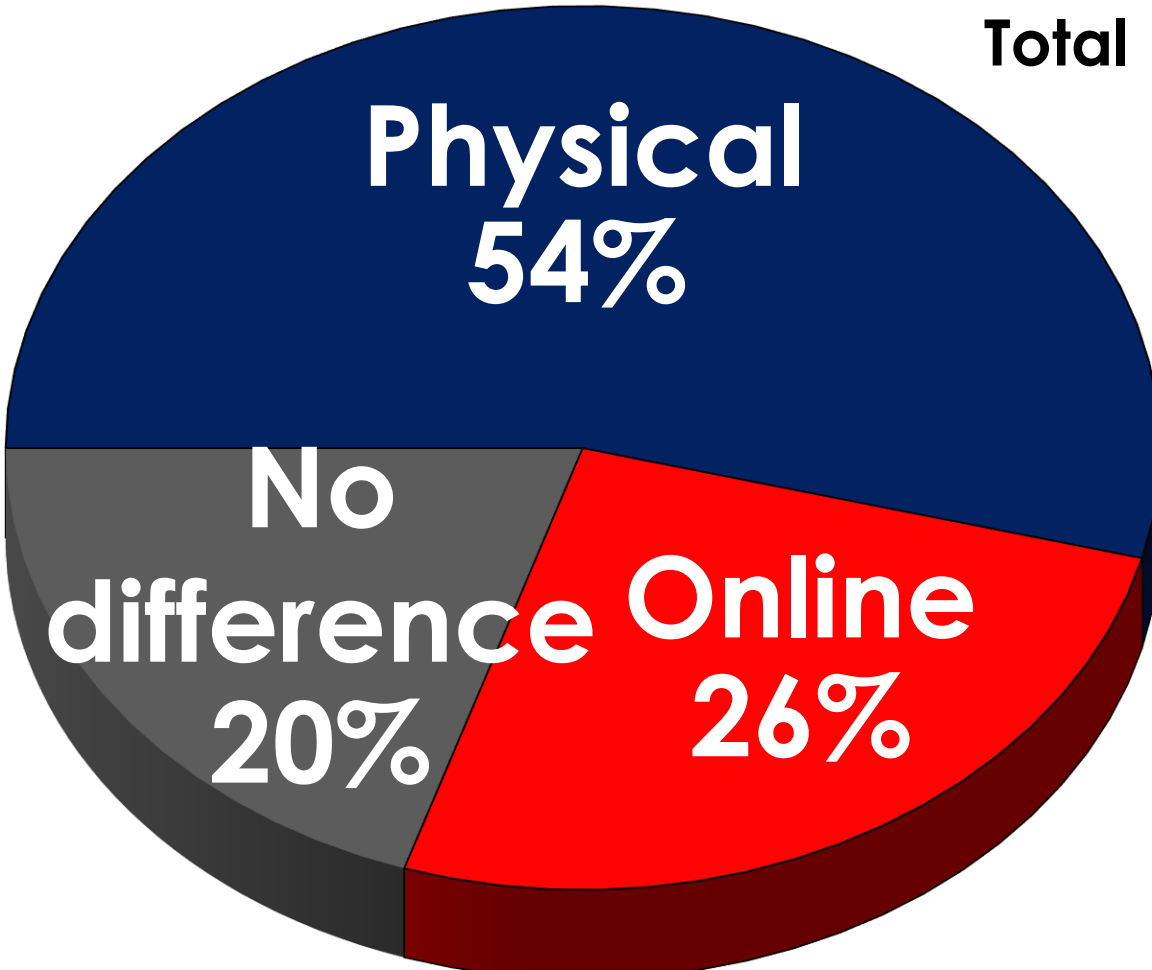
A greater impact for physical textbooks

Total	*How important and impactful is your child/children using physical textbooks, workbooks and educational materials to their educational success?*
42%	Extremely important/impactful
34%	Very important/impactful
19%	Somewhat important/impactful
5%	Only a little important/impactful
1%	Not important/impactful at all

Total	*How important and impactful is your child/children using online textbooks/ workbooks and learning systems and educational materials to their educational success?*
34%	Extremely important/impactful
34%	Very important/impactful
24%	Somewhat important/impactful
6%	Only a little important/impactful
2%	Not important/impactful at all

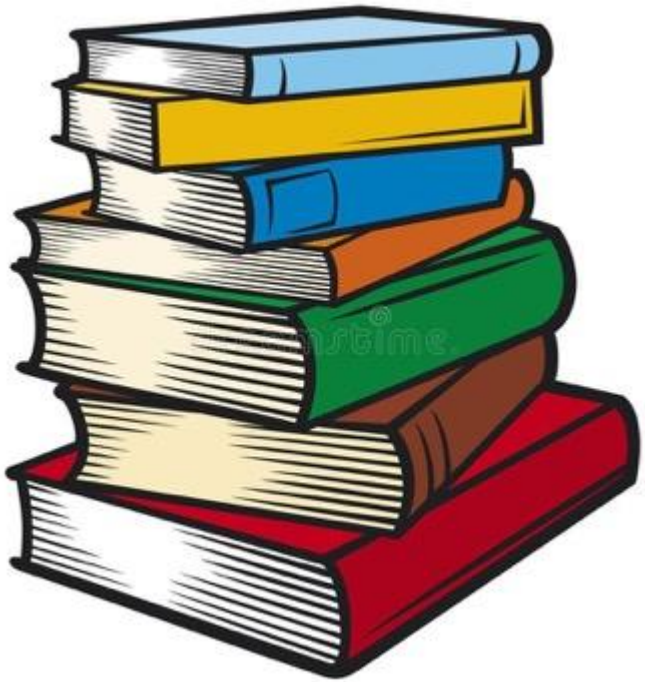
When given the choice, a majority of parents would select physical books

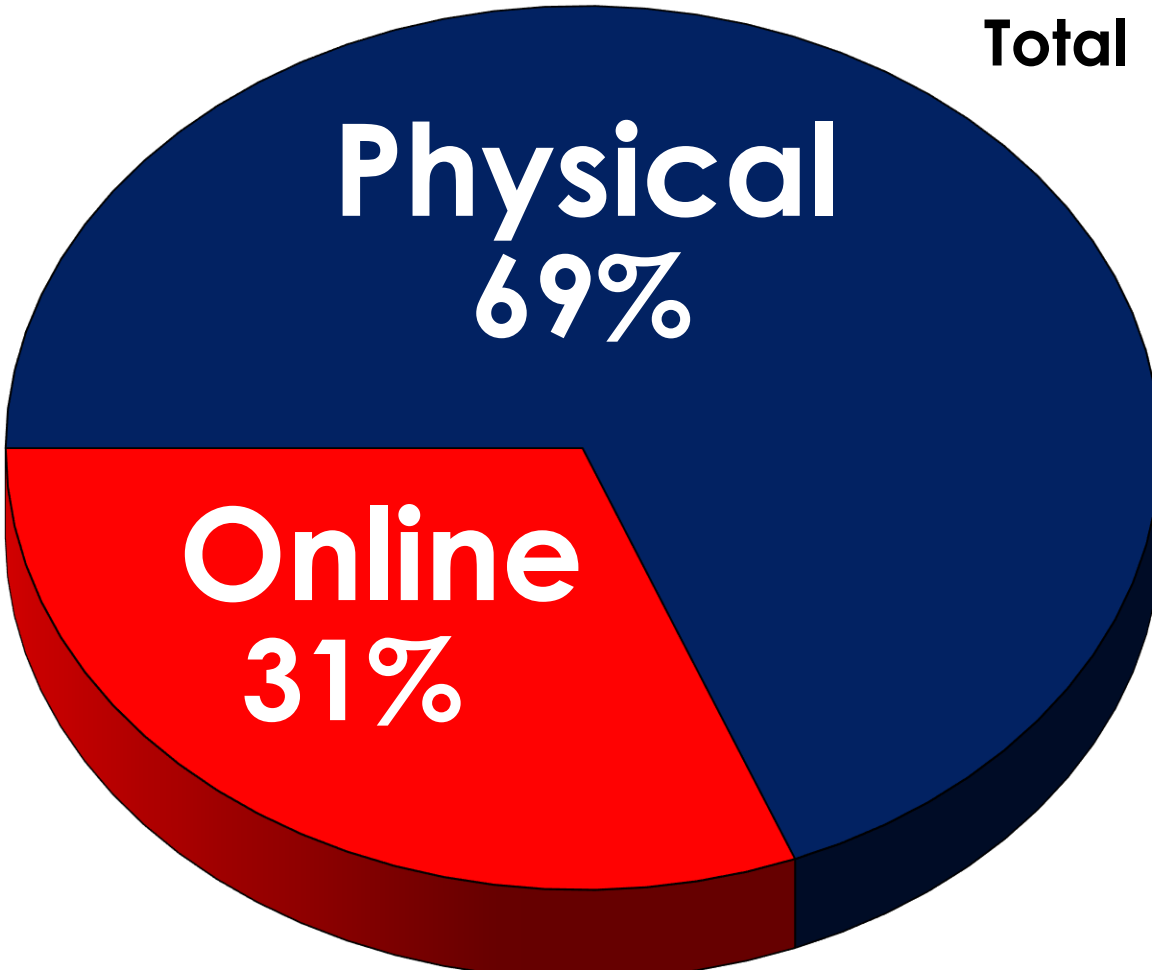
Which format is more likely to help students absorb and master the material? ….books/textbooks/workbooks



And when forced to choose, parents overwhelmingly pick physical over online

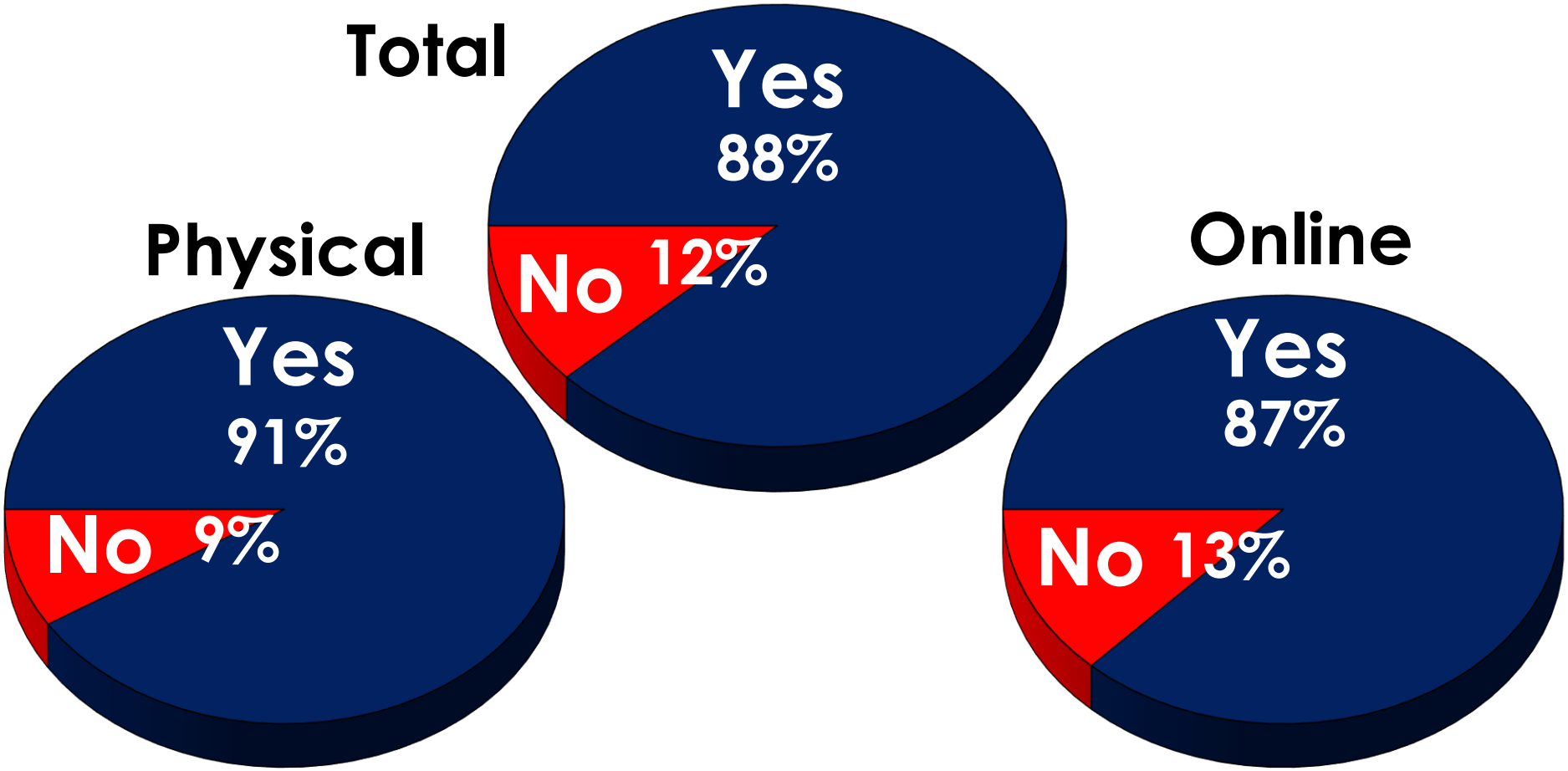
If you had to choose, which format is more likely to help students absorb and master the material? ….books/textbooks/workbooks





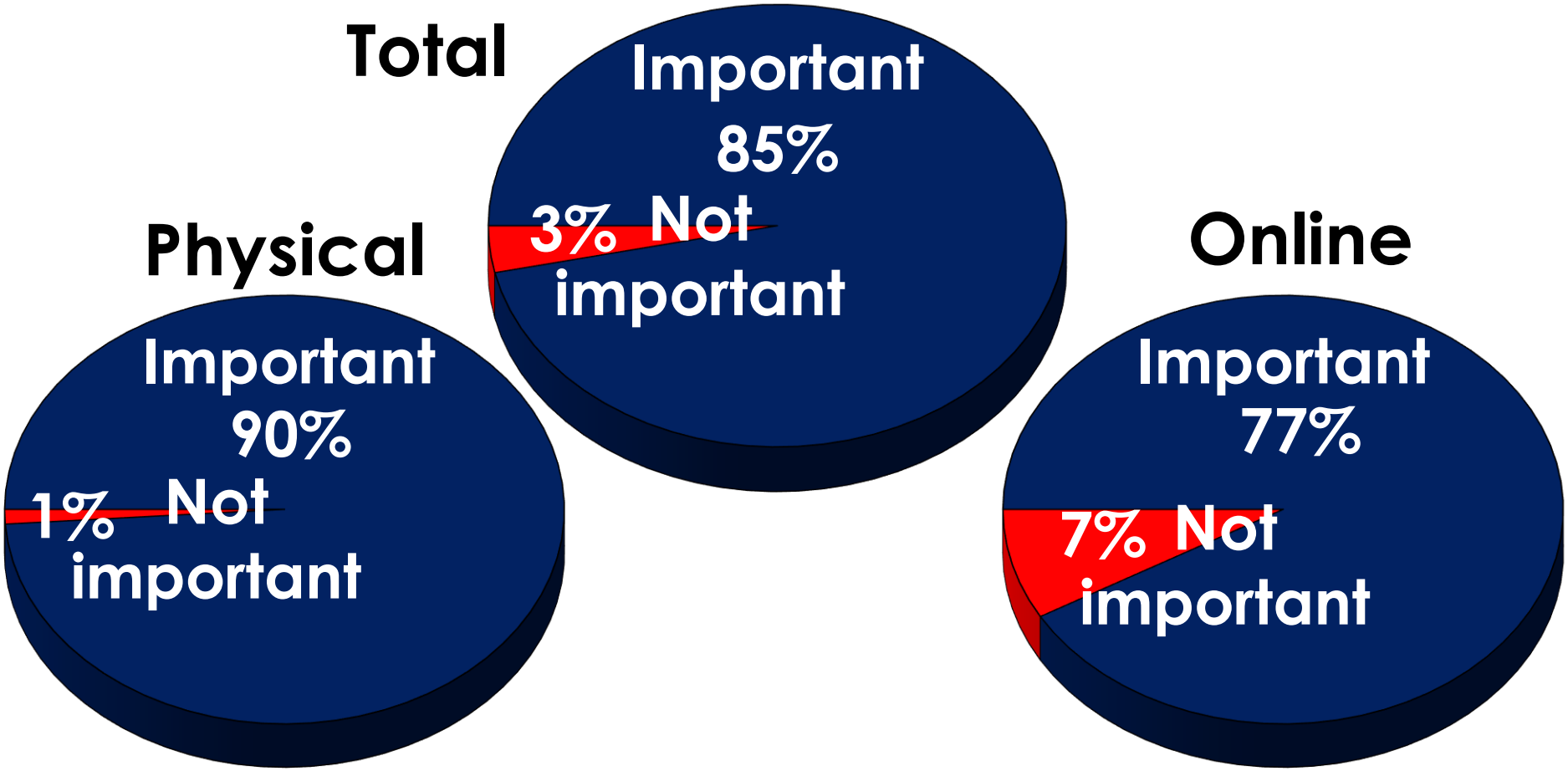
Virtually EVERY parent wants physical books as a part of student learning in some form

Should school districts ensure there are always printed materials available classroom learning, even as a compliment to digital/online textbooks?



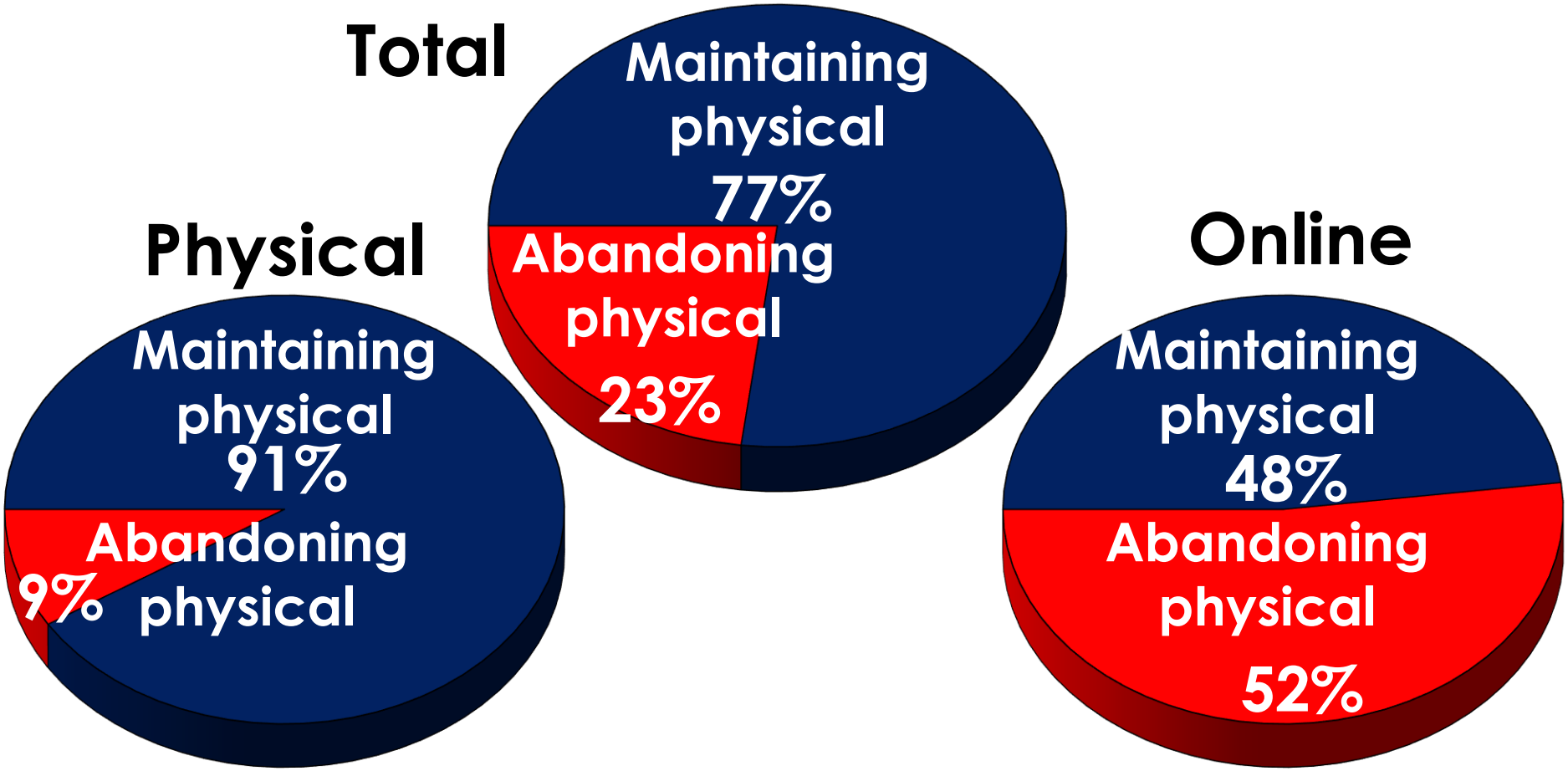
And virtually EVERY parents thinks physical books are important for student learning

How important is it that students have access to physical books as part of their learning tools for school?



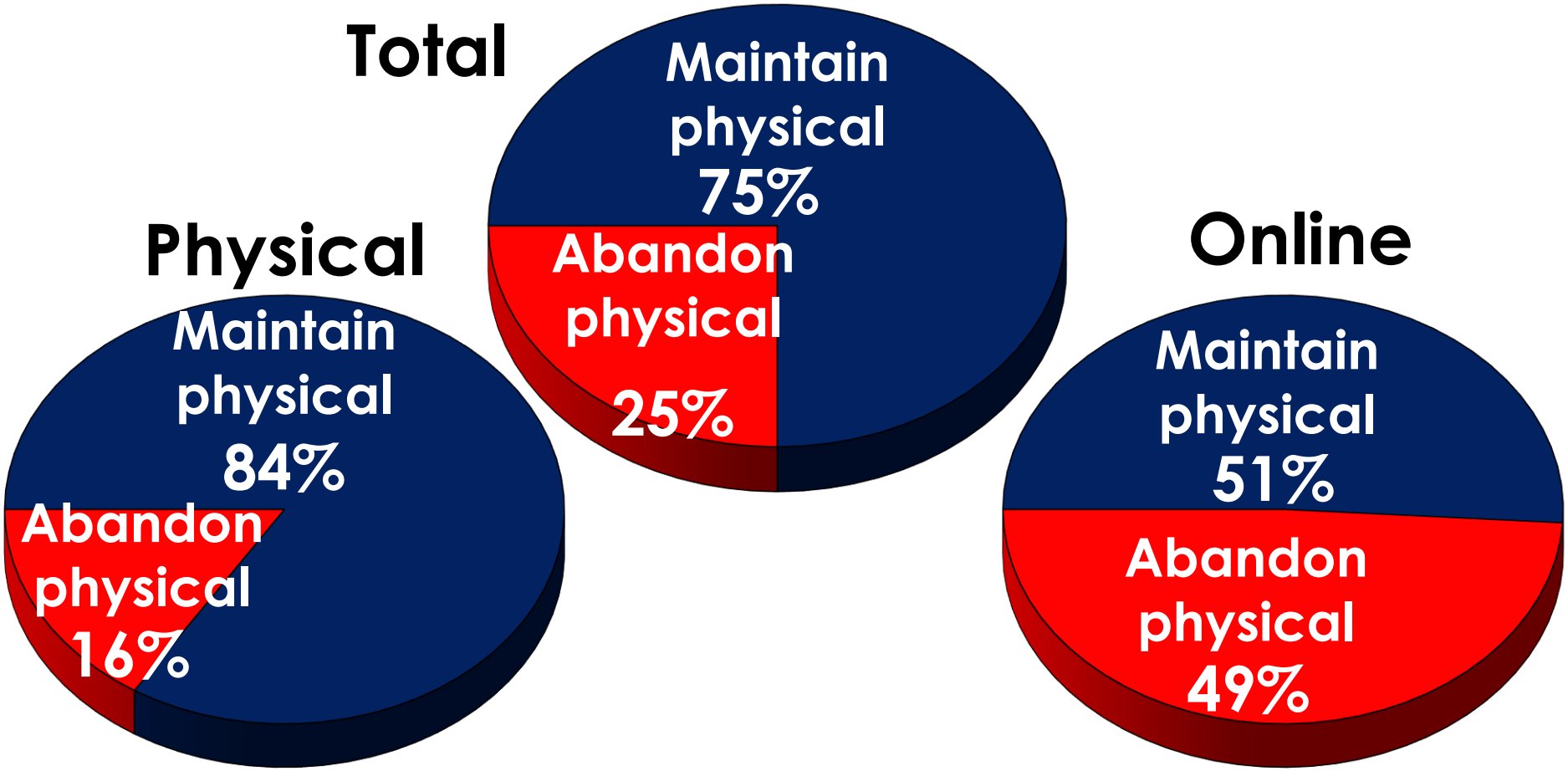
Even half of parents favoring online books are persuaded by the learning vs. cost comparison

Studies demonstrate that students tend to learn and absorb more when they're reading on paper. But fully online learning is slightly less expensive for the school than maintaining physical books. Which would you support?



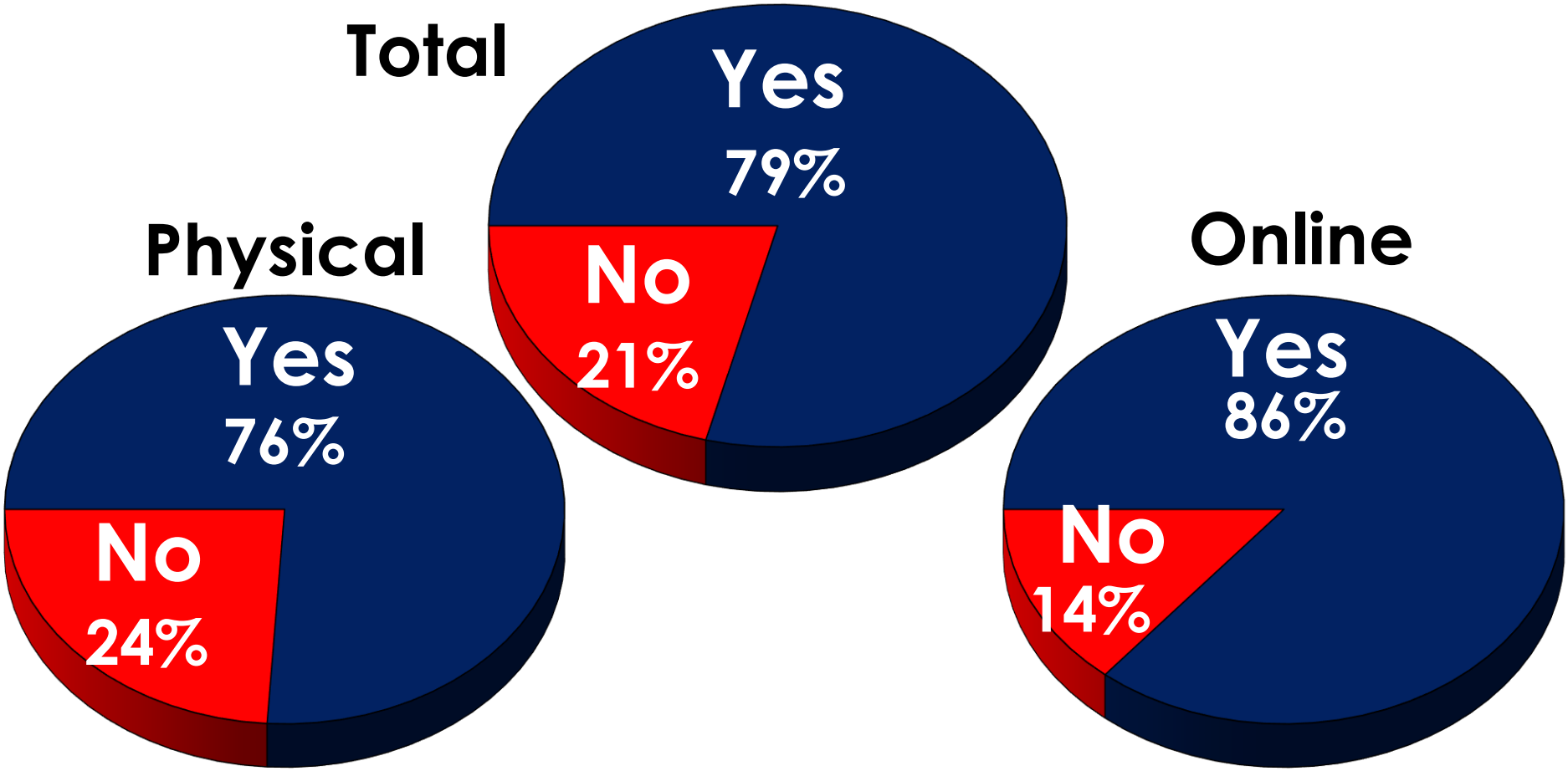
Student comprehension persuades over half of parents favoring online to keep physical books

Students learning using online materials rather than physical ones may read faster but are less likely to absorb what they learn. Based on this, should schools keep physical books or abandon physical books?



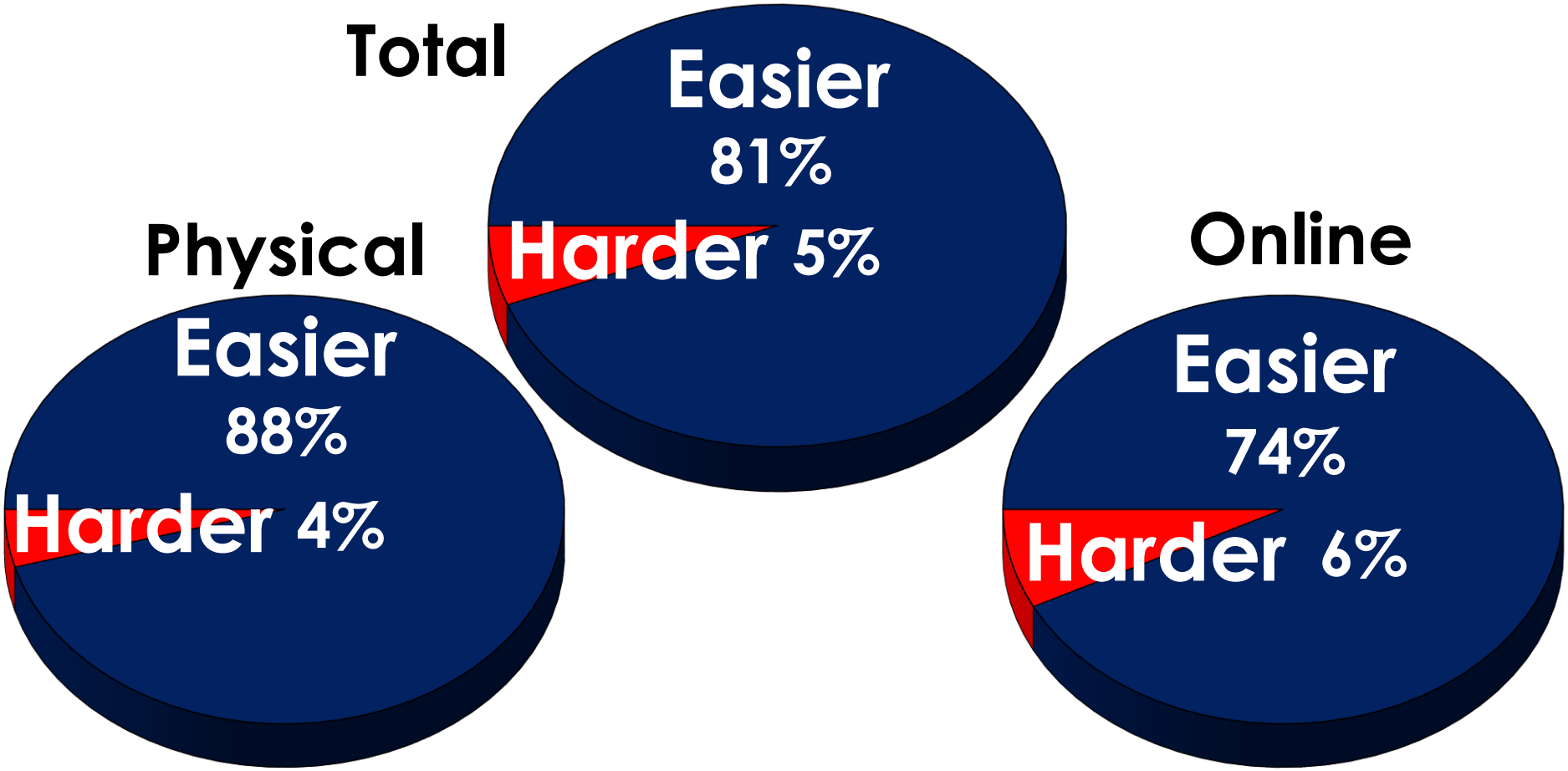
The vast majority of parents have had a role in online learning during the pandemic

During the last year, did you have to help teach a child who was learning online?



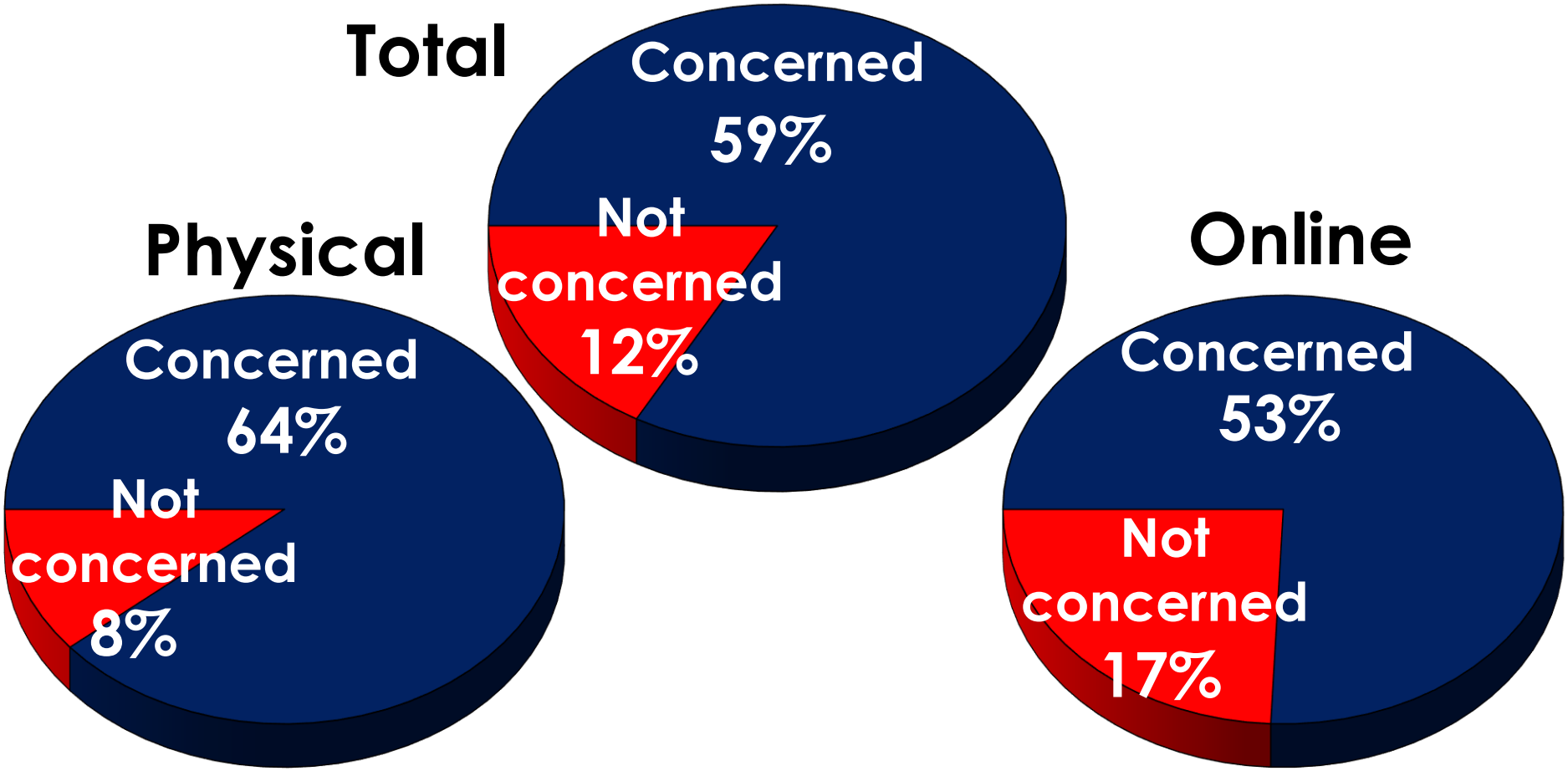
Almost every parent – even those who favor online books – concede physical books help

If you had/have physical textbooks and/or workbooks, would that make/have made your efforts easier or harder?



Online learning has made parents concerned… even those favoring online textbooks

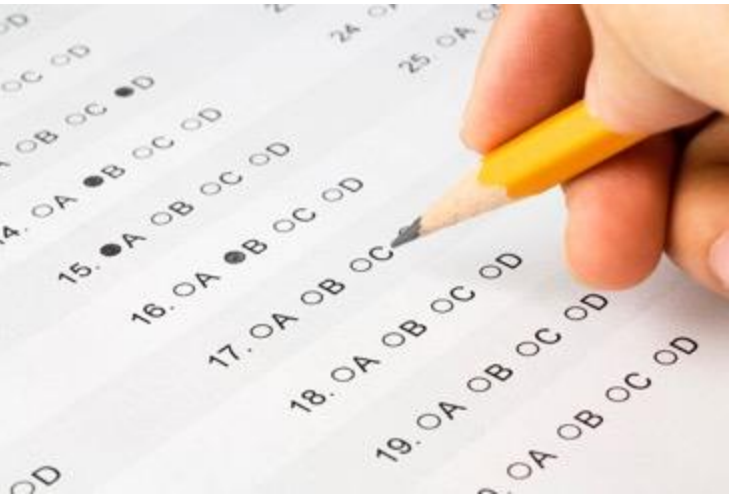
With screen time for school age children increasing significantly, particularly with the online learning required during COVID-19, how concerned are you that your child is less focused when online than in a classroom?

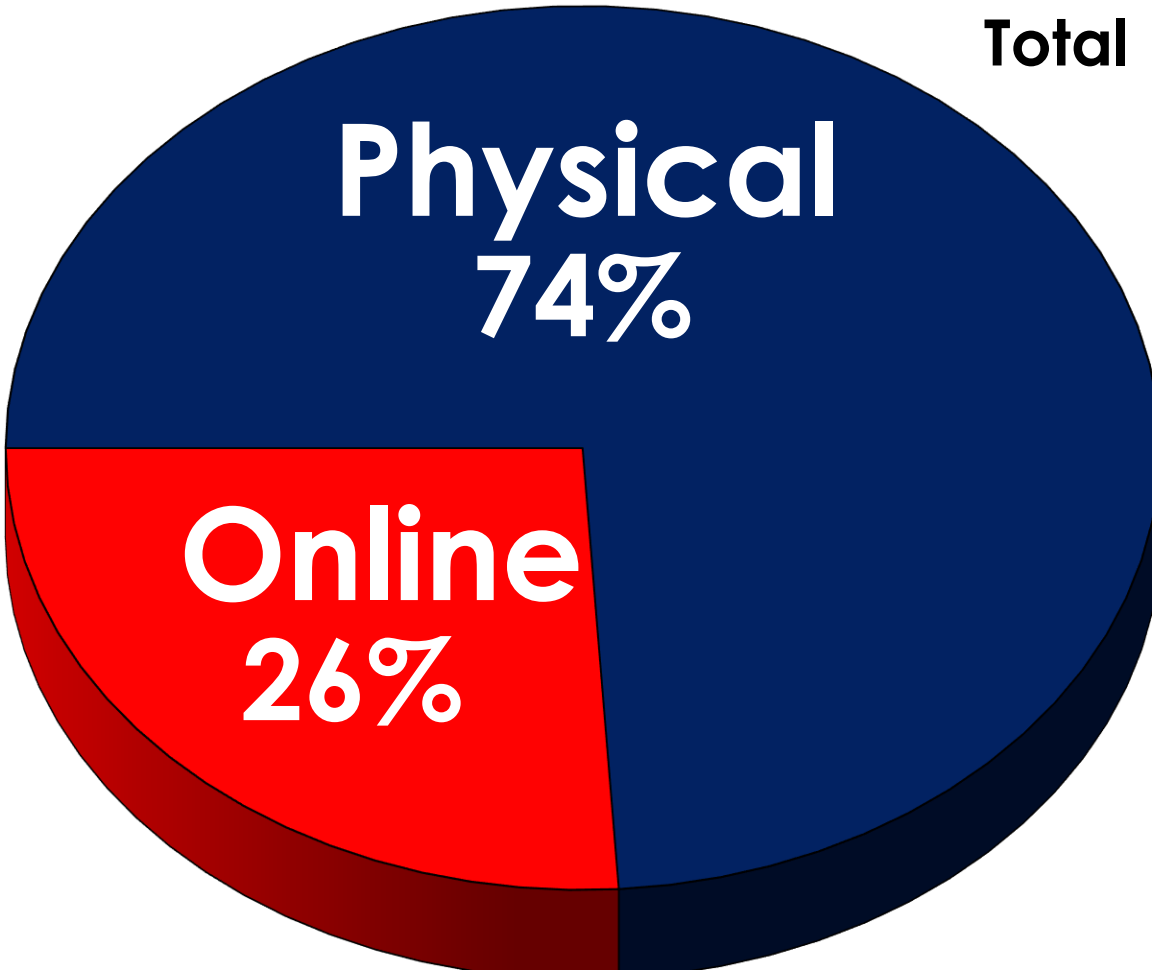


Physical vs. Online Proof Points

Testing is the best argument for physical books over online or digital books

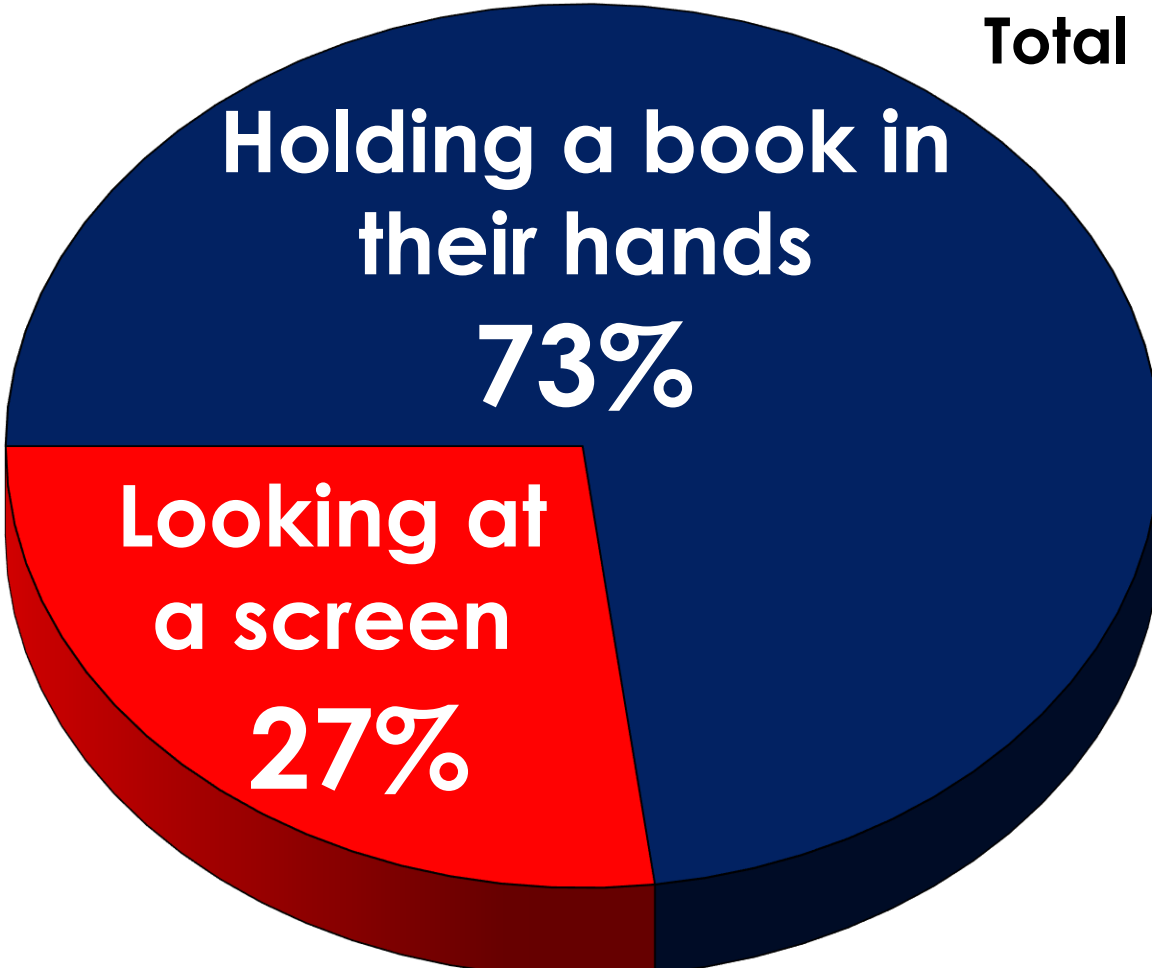
Would students perform better on exams and tests in school if they learned primarily using... books?





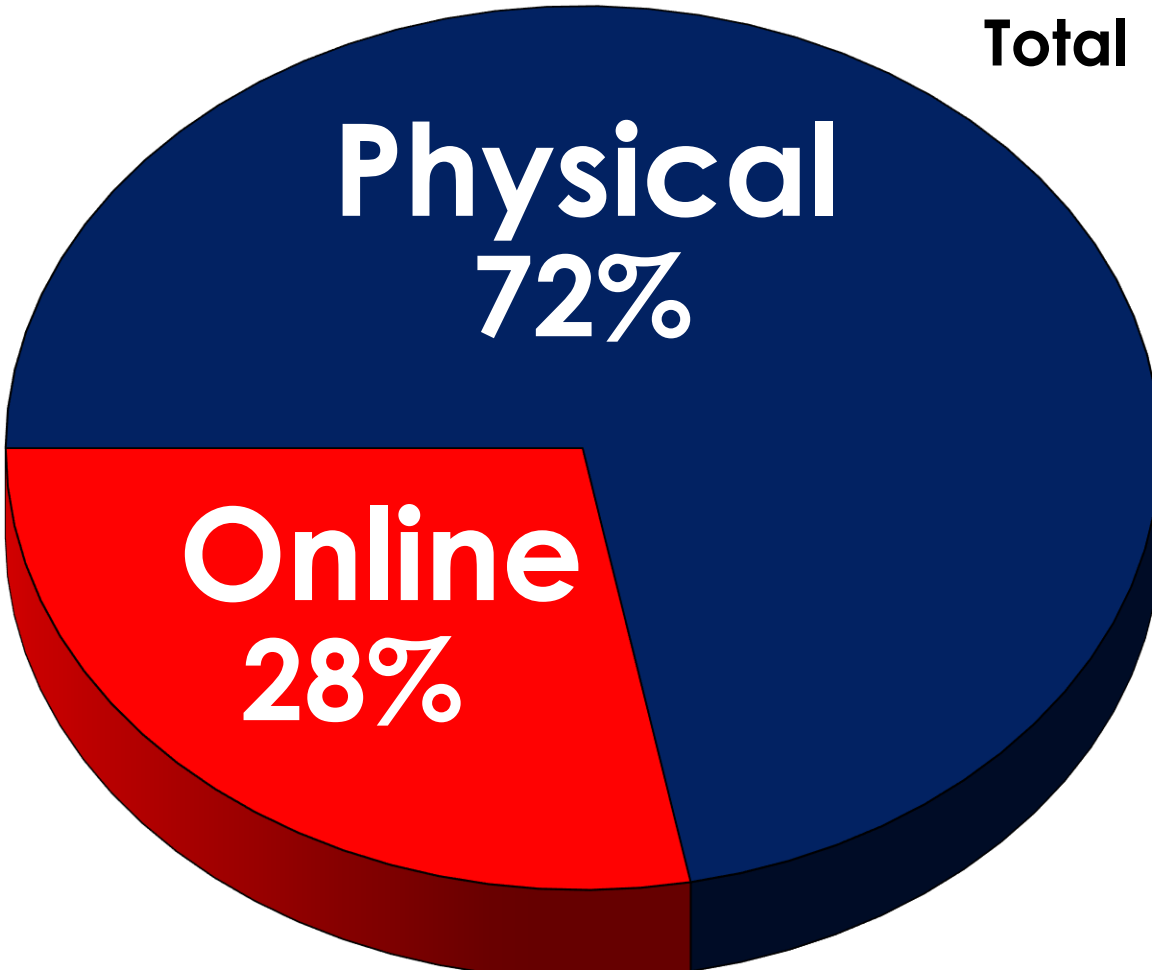
The physical sensation of holding a book is a persuasive argument for parents

Do you think children would be more successful in school if they primarily learned...?



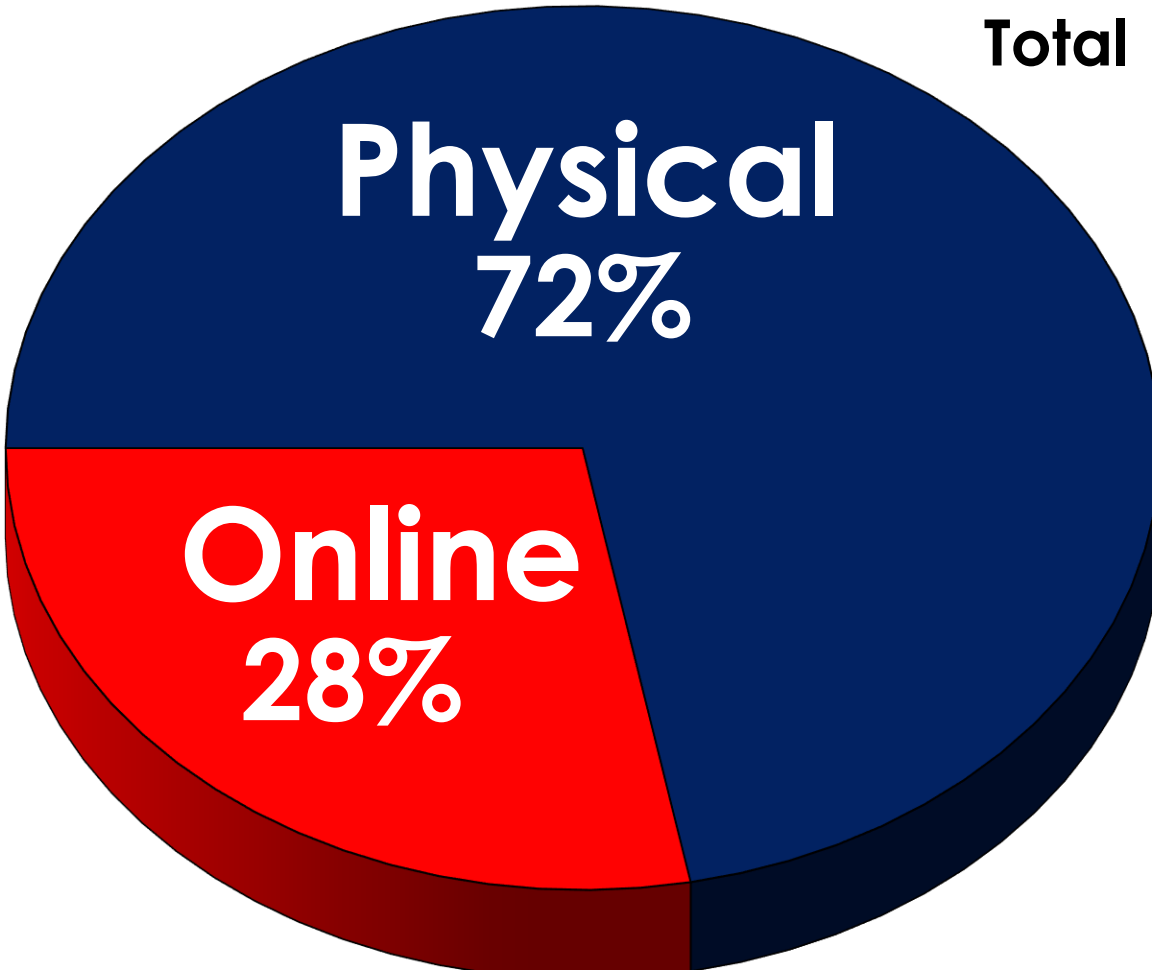
Parents would attribute student success to physical books over online ones

What will have a more meaningful and measurable impact on a student's success in school, if they primarily learn using... books?



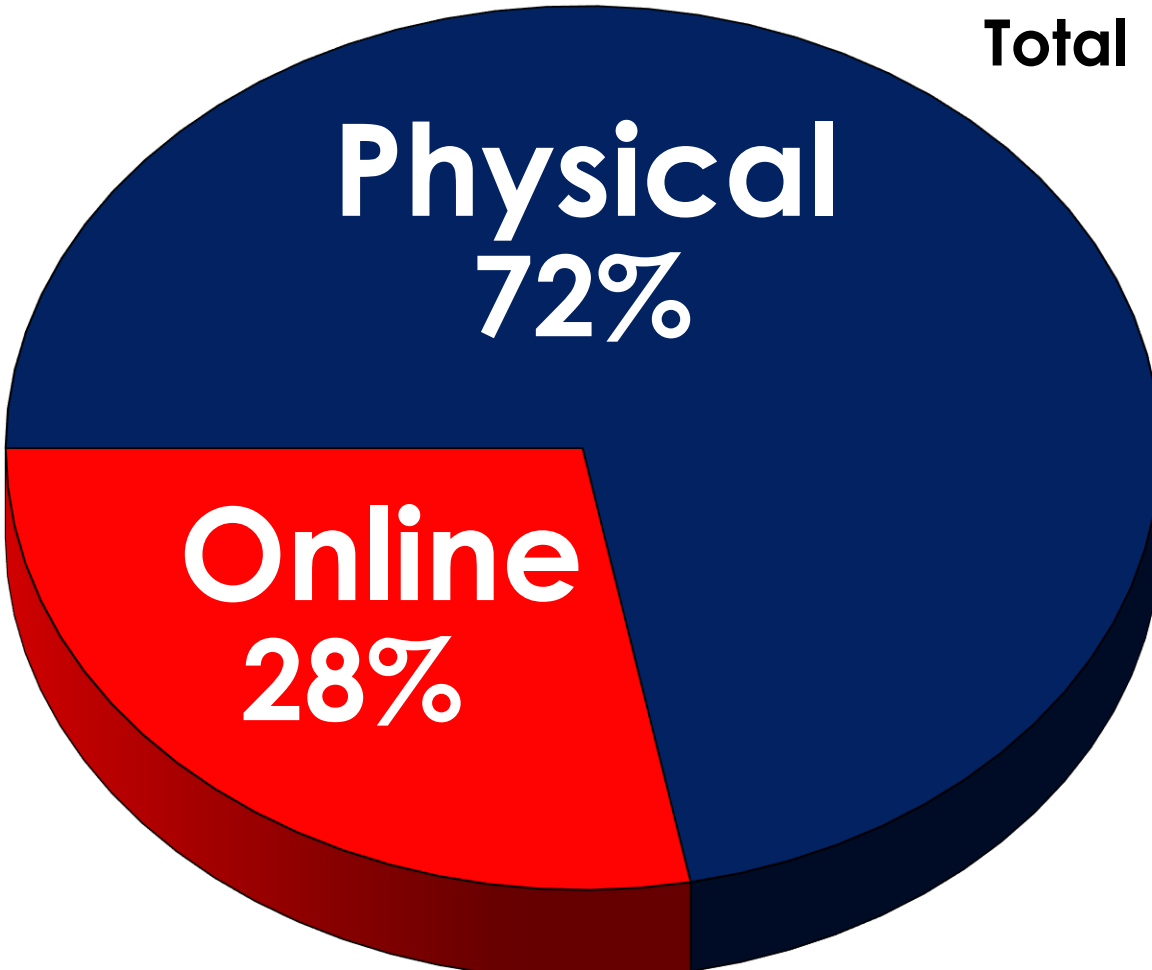
Attention and focus in the classroom give a natural advantage to physical books

Which method are students more likely to stay engaged, focused, and undistracted in school ... if they learn primarily using... books?



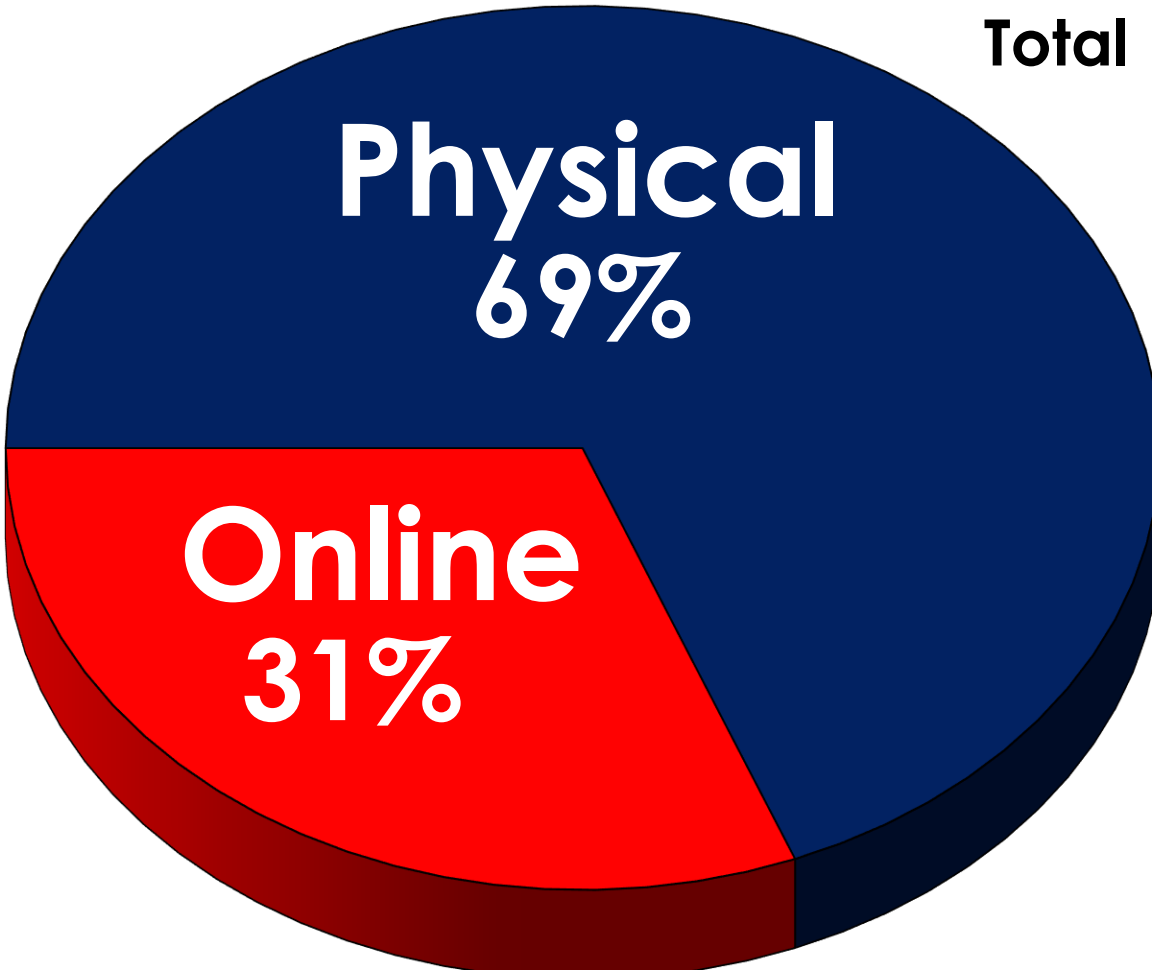
Long-term retention of knowledge greatly favors physical books over online books

Would students be more likely to retain what they learn in school years after they graduate if they learned primarily using... books?



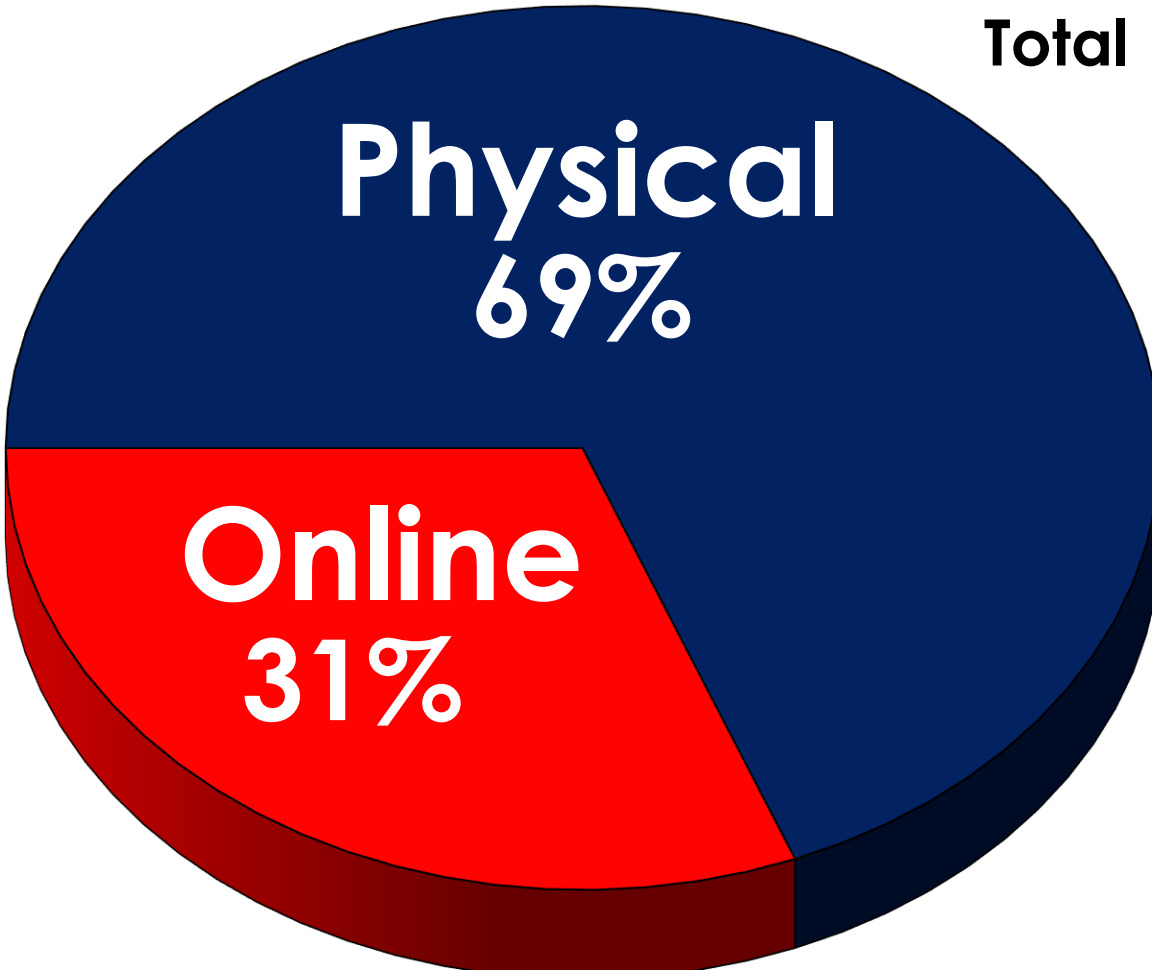
College prep favors physical books but there are more effective arguments

Which method would better prepare students for college and higher education if they learned primarily using... books?



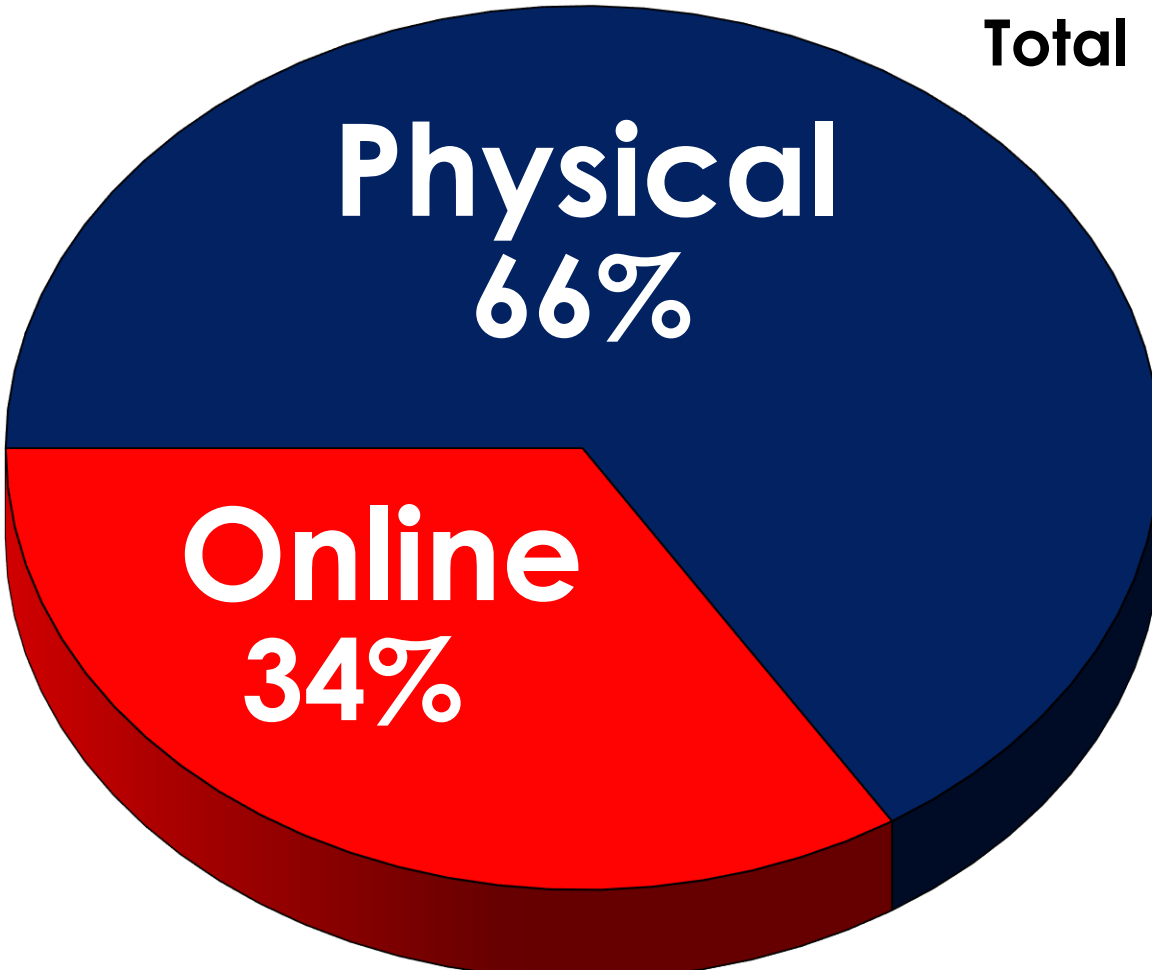
By 2:1 parents want their tax dollars going to physical books over online books

As a parent, would you be more supportive of your local school district using taxpayer dollars to teach students primarily with …?



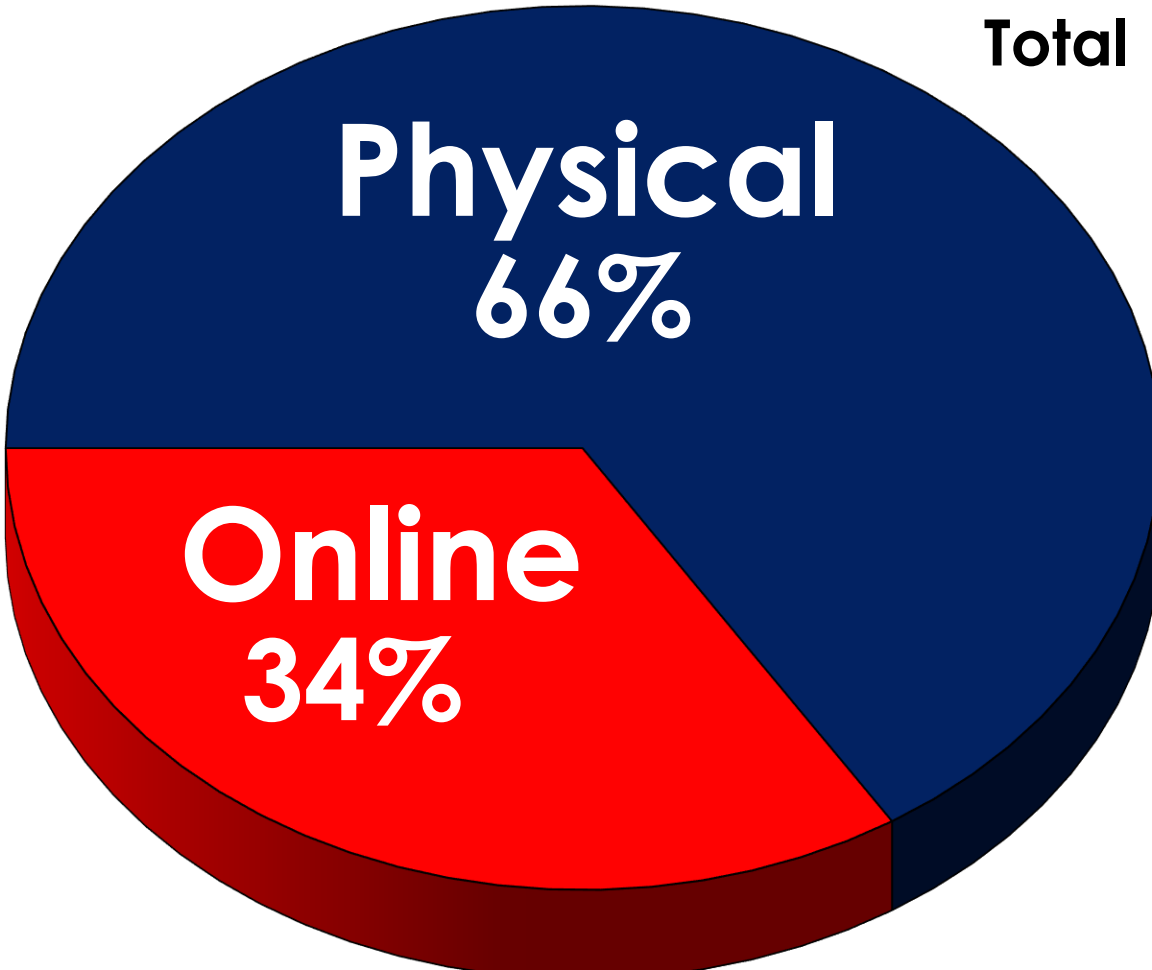
2/3rds of parents believe physical books will help students better with homework

Would students do a better job completing their homework accurately and on-time if they learn primarily using... books?



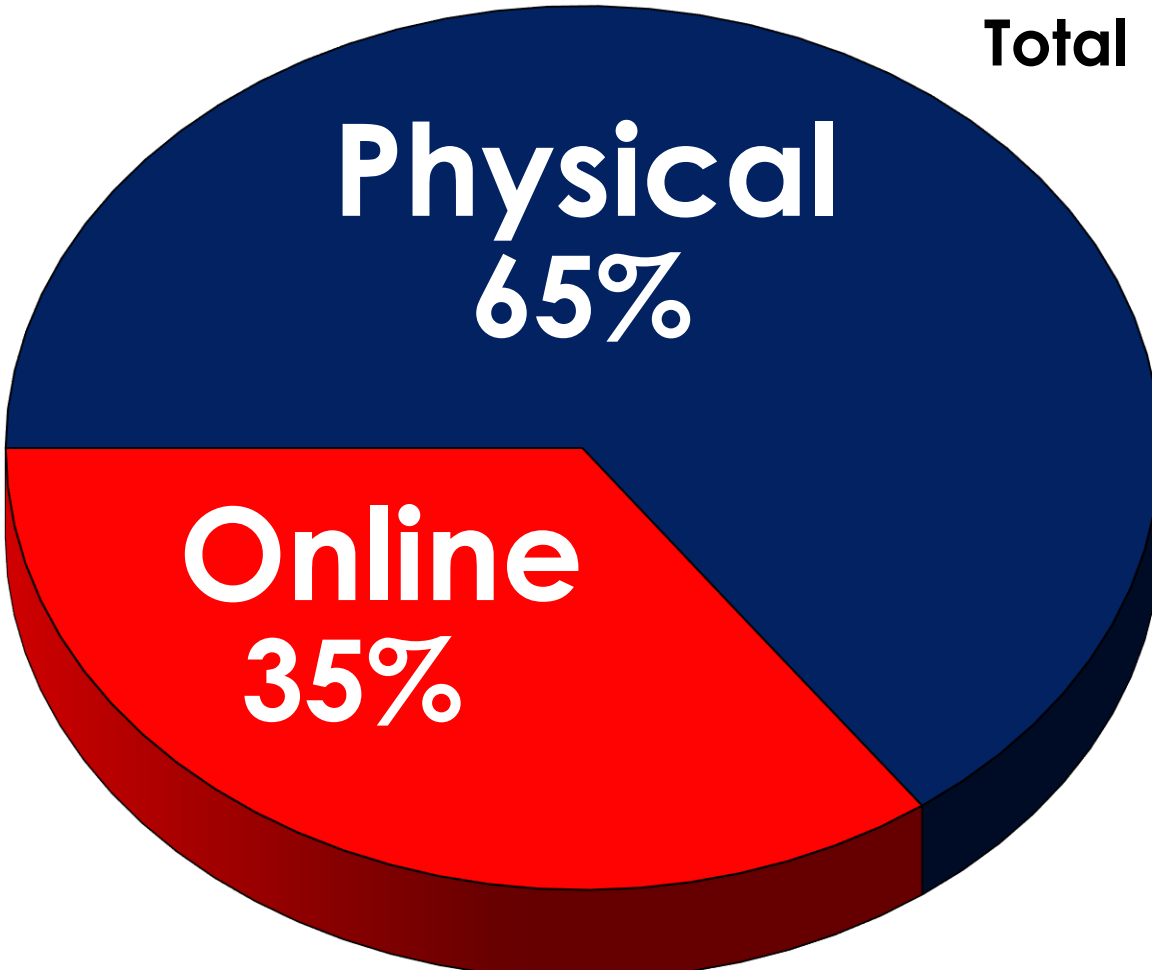
Physical books hold a decided edge when it comes to comprehension

How would students more likely to process, internalize, and truly understand what they learn in school if they primarily use... books?



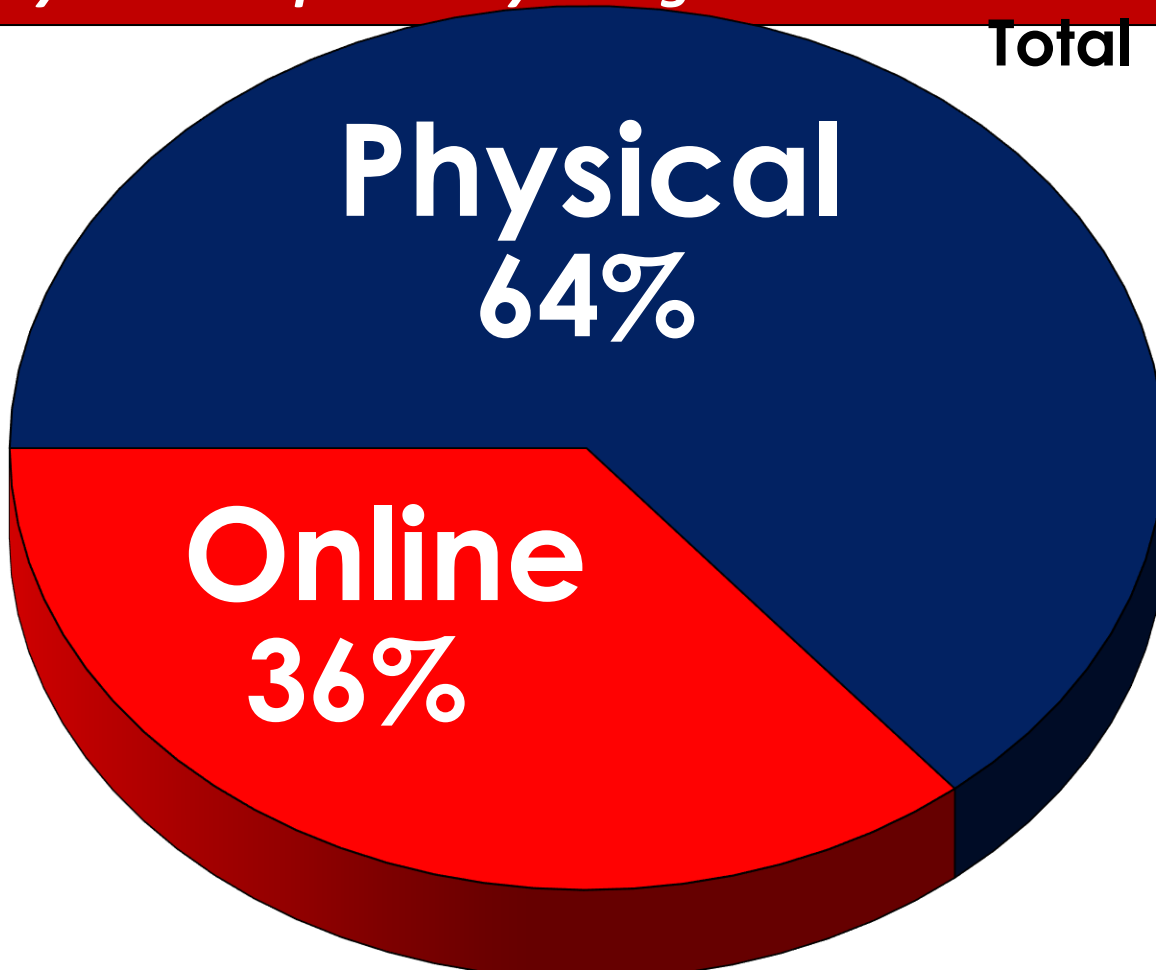
It is more persuasive to frame the book debate around students than teachers

Which method would teachers do a better job helping students succeed in the classroom if they taught primarily using... books?



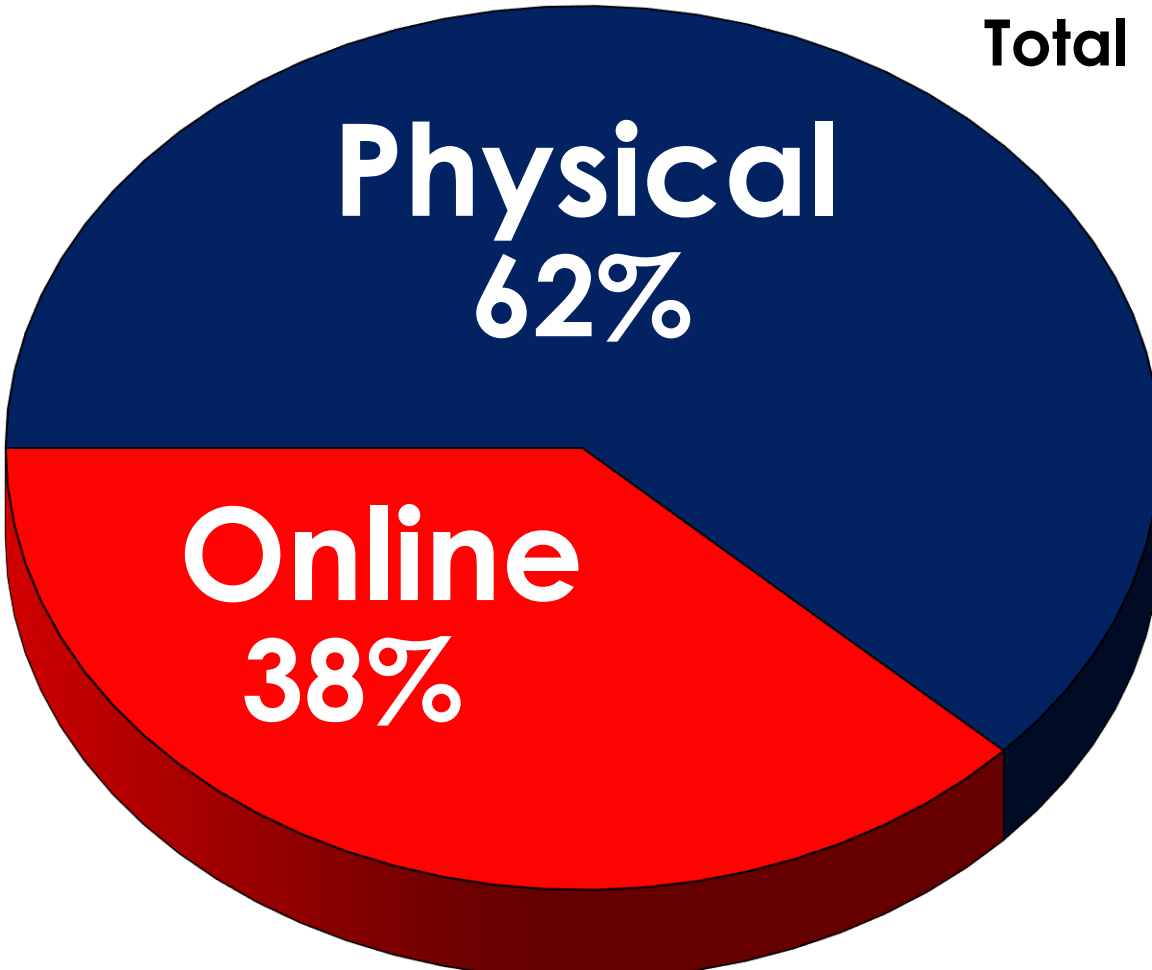
Parents think physical books are better for helping students discern the truth

Would students be more equipped to tell the difference between real and fake news, and to think critically and accurately about subjects affecting society if they learned primarily using... books?



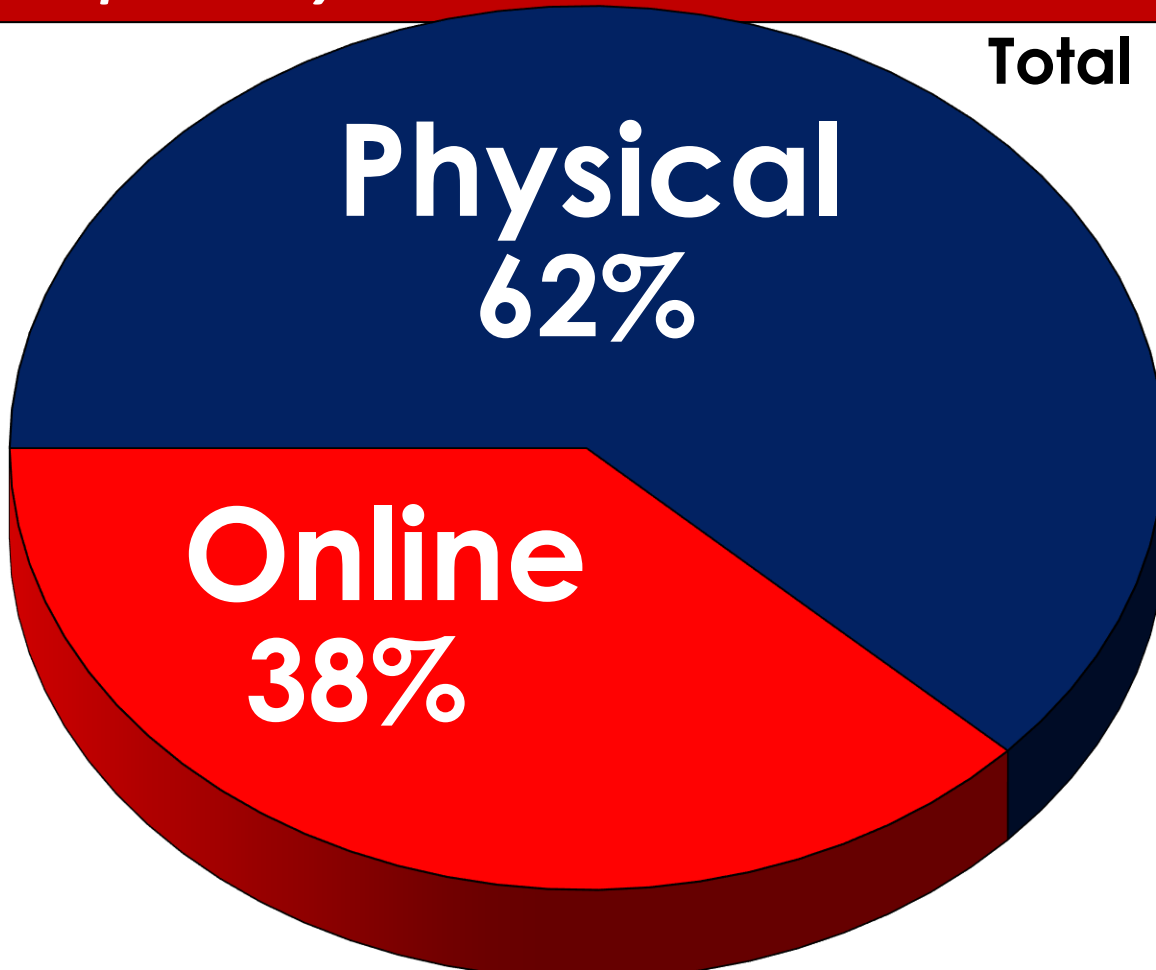
Physical books improving inter-personal skills is tied for least effective

Would students be more likely to develop team-building and collaboration skills if they learn primarily using... books?

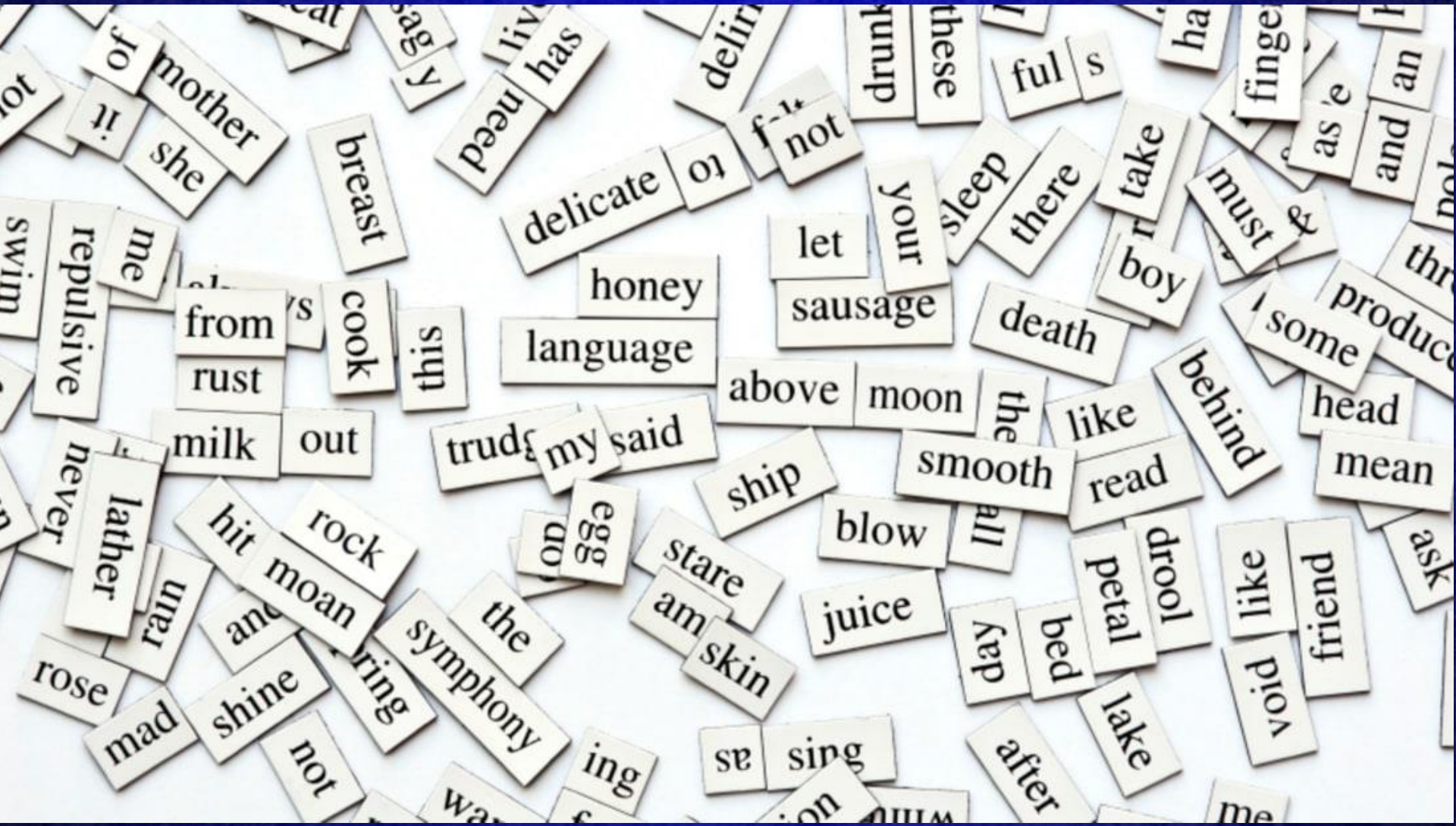


Physical books as a means to achieve social justice is least compelling

What would have a greater impact on breaking down the racial, socio-economic, and community divides among students, if schools decided primarily to use... books?

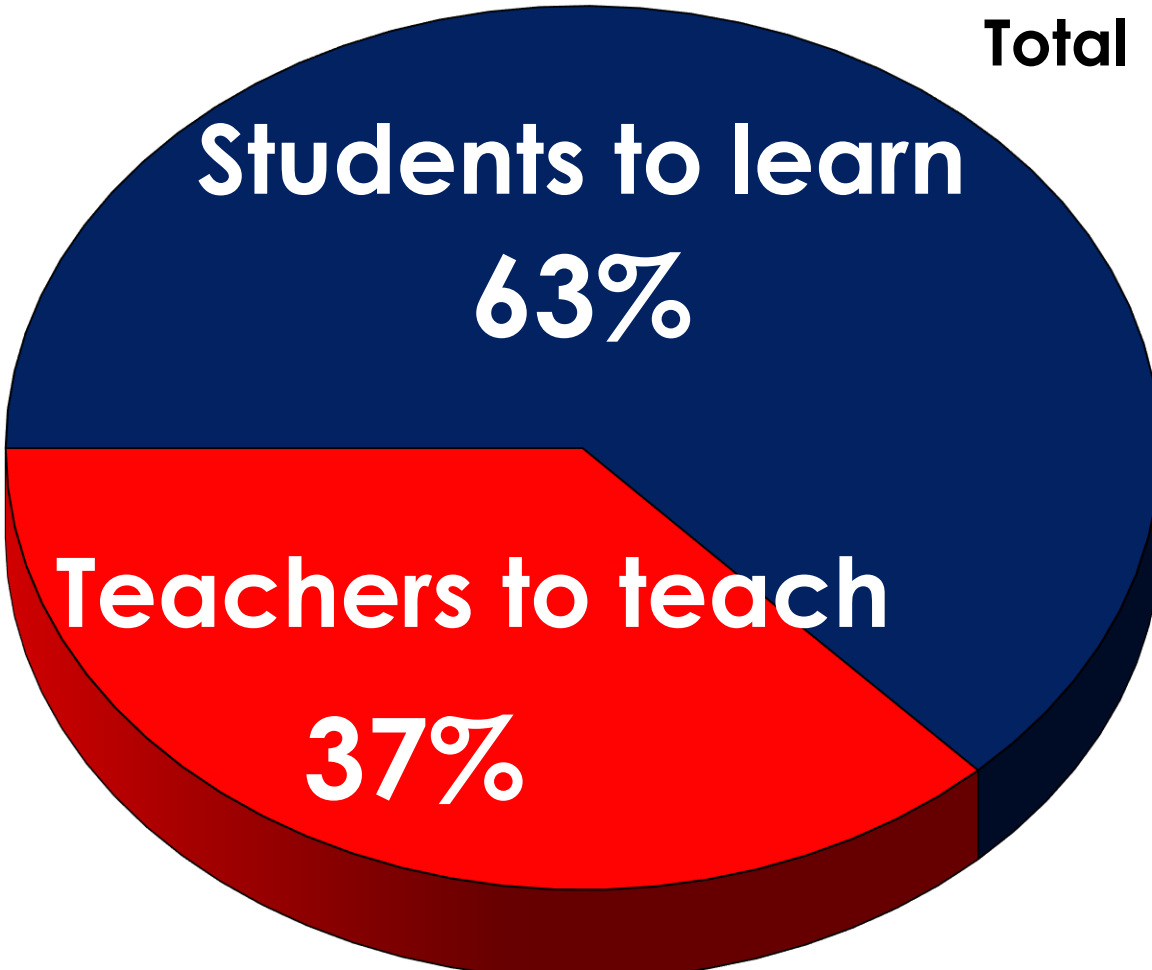


The Language of Physical Books



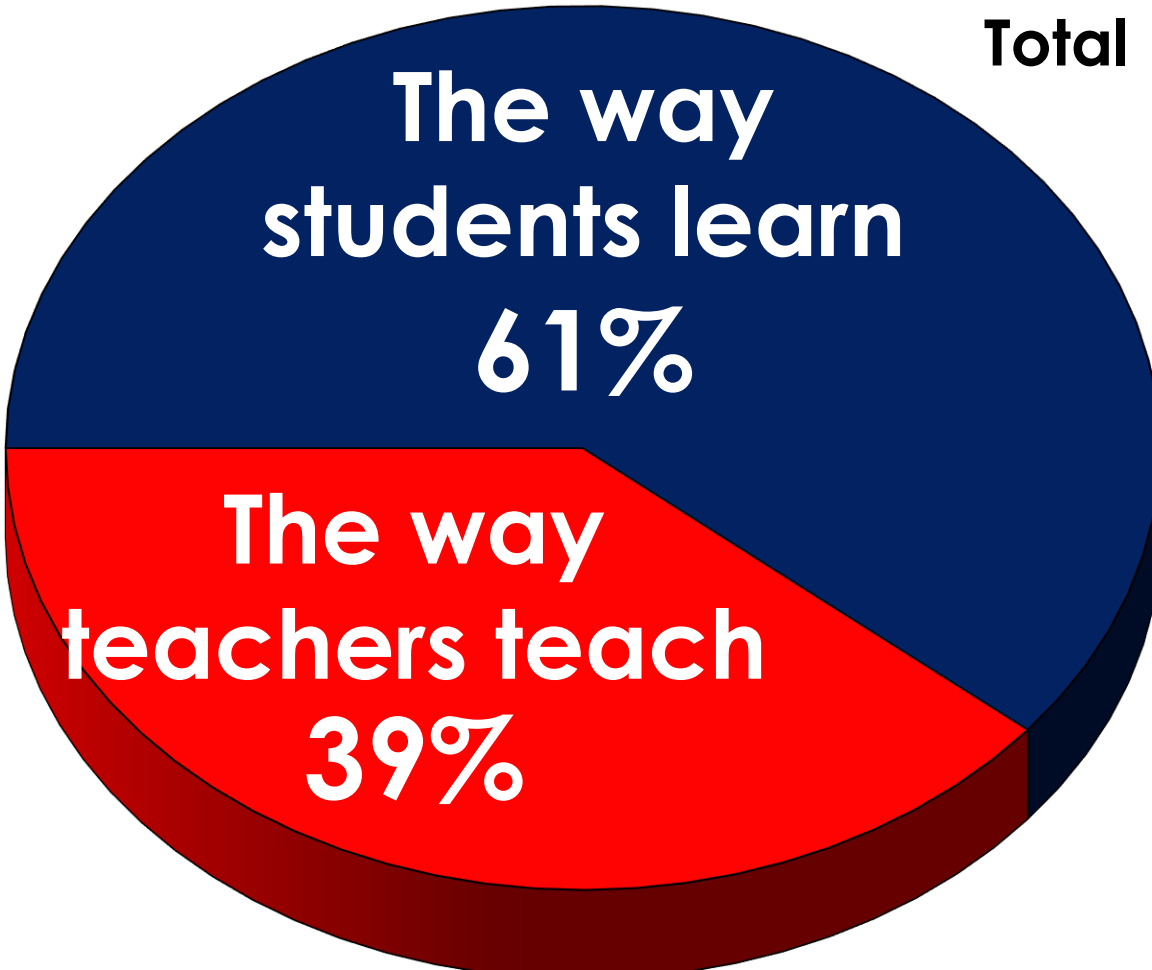
Your education language should lead with student learning…

Which should be a higher priority for our schools…
Finding the best way for…?



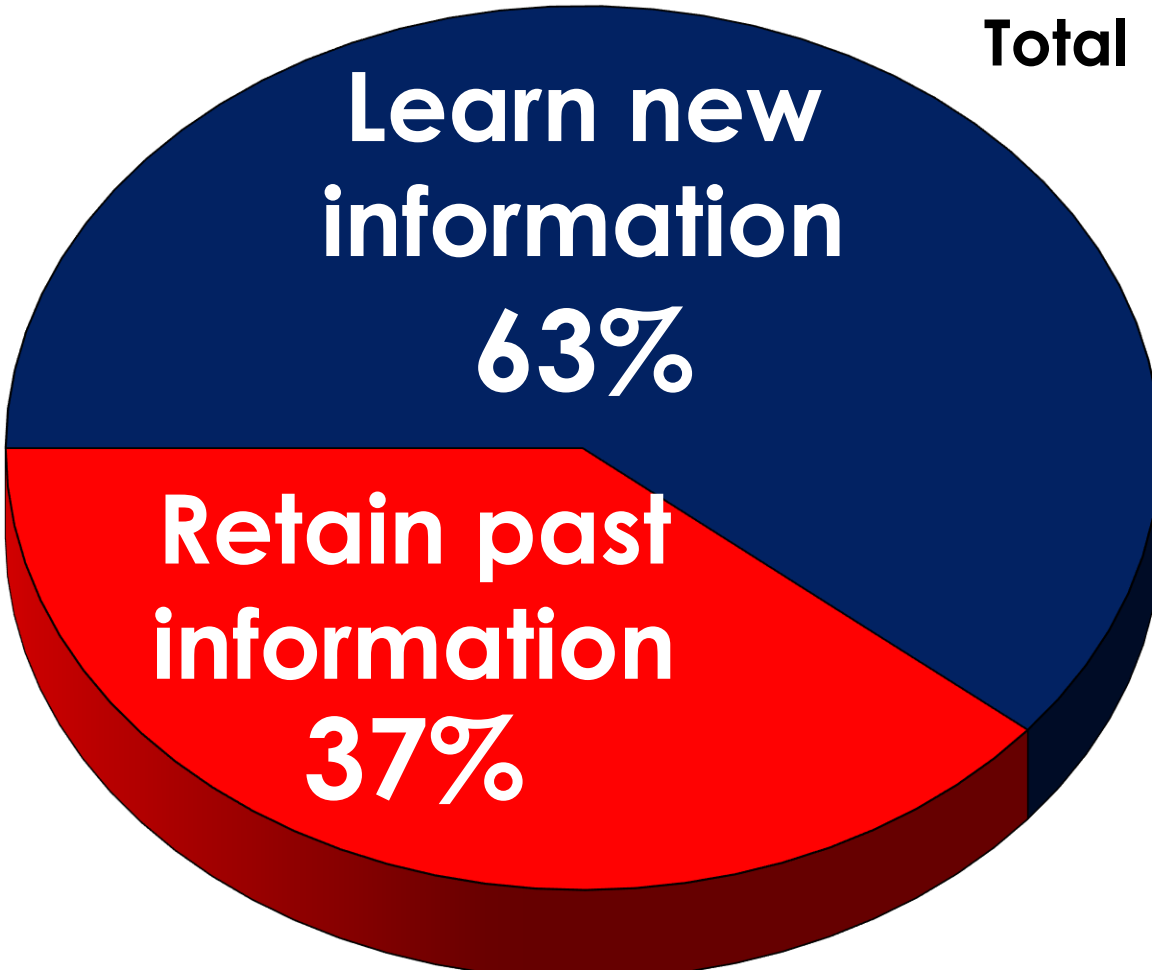
In arguing for physical books, students learning > teacher teaching

Are the types of textbooks and learning materials used in school more important for…?



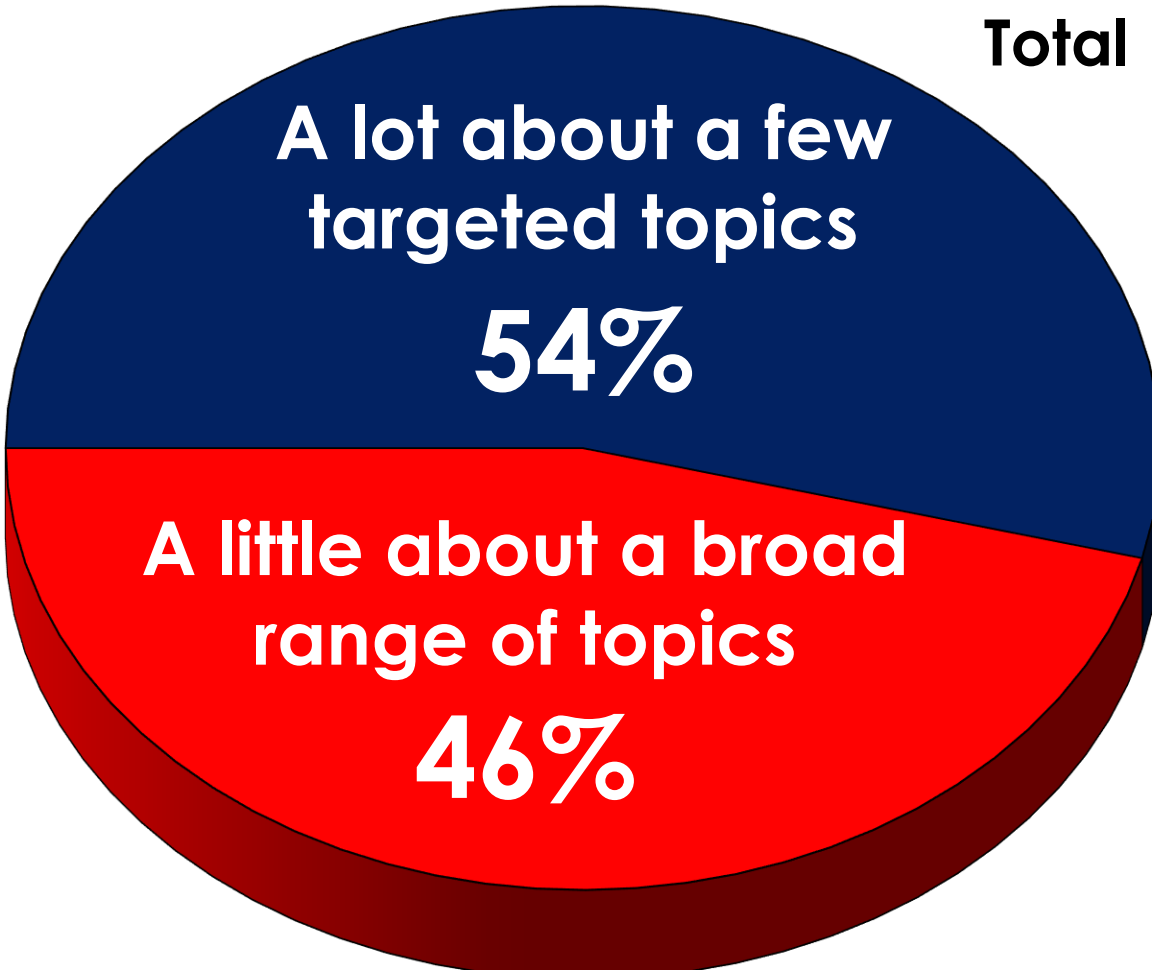
Argue that physical books support new learning, not retaining past learning

Is it more important that using the best possible textbooks and learning materials in schools ensure that students can...?



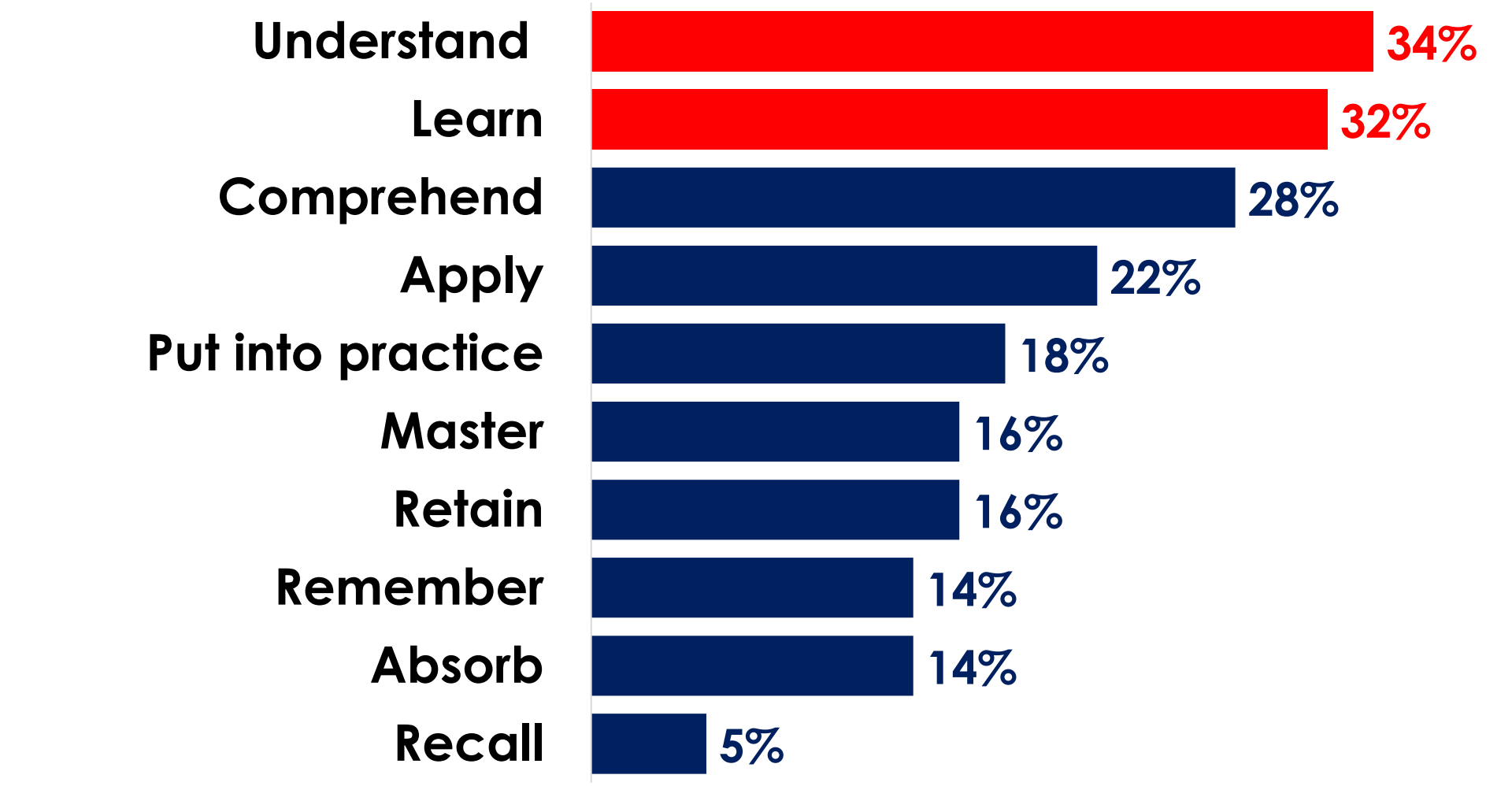
It's a greater priority for students to learn about specific, concentrated topics

If you had to choose, is it more important for students to learn a lot about a few targeted topics, or a little about a broad range of topics?



Physical textbooks put students in the best position to "understand" and "learn"

Should the type of textbooks and materials students use in schools put them in the best position to... what they are taught in the classroom?



More distractions and less learning are the most compelling consequences of no physical textbooks

If a school district decides to abandon physical textbooks, what outcome would concern you the most?

Total	
31%	Students would be distracted by other things online and would therefore not learn as much
18%	The quality of teaching will diminish
16%	Students would not retain the information they were taught/learned
14%	Student grades will suffer, making it harder for them to succeed in the future
13%	Student inequality will increase and students from disadvantaged backgrounds will suffer
8%	None of them would concern me

The long-form argument for physical books is best communicated by focusing on the classroom

Total	*What is the best argument for why physical textbooks and materials need to be a part of student learning?*
29%	When it comes to learning, what happens in the classroom is essential. When students have printed materials in front of them, they focus, and that's good for both teachers and students. But students reading from a computer quickly and easily becoming distracted. We need students concentrating on the task at hand.
20%	When it comes to student learning, it should not be an either/or situation. Having print and digital resources integrated into our curriculum helps adults identify and monitor student needs, and it helps students learn at their own pace and in their own way.
20%	There is so much research about the adverse effects of screen time on students—deteriorate social skills, lack of attention and focus, even physical ailments. We need to keep our kids physically and intellectually healthy. We can achieve that by limiting computer time and maximizing reading time with real books.

Parents aren't persuaded to support physical books talking about parents or the resulting societal divide

What is the best argument for why physical textbooks and materials need to be a part of student learning?

Total	
18%	**Print materials help with student-parent communication and intervention because parents are more likely to go over printed materials with their children. Parents can't keep up and are often more distant in the process of education when it's online. With printed books and materials, parents can be intimately involved.**
13%	**We already see the serious digital divide among students and how it contributes to academic inequality. Too many students come from homes that have poor internet connectivity or no or little access to tablets or computers. Physical textbooks provide all students with an equal opportunity to learn.**

The most effective case for personalized education talks about the student, not the parent

Why do we need a more personalized education system in America that is tailored to each student?

Total	
32%	Every child is unique, and every child deserves an education system that respects their uniqueness and individuality.
32%	When it comes to education, one-size-doesn't-fit-all. Different students have different needs.
16%	Parents should have the right to decide the education, the learning, the teaching and the classroom that best fits their child.
12%	Parents should be able to choose from a diverse selection of education options and choices when deciding what is best for their children.
9%	We should be rewarding innovation and not forcing parents into doing things the same way for their children regardless of the circumstances.

What We Did

- A survey of 1000 parents with school-aged children from across America
- A proper representative sample of demographics including public/private schools, age, gender, partisanship, ethnicity
- A comprehensive understanding of the the tradeoffs between physical and online learning materials in classrooms, and the most effective language in support of physical textbooks.

it's not what you **say**

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it's what people **hear**

Dr. Frank I Luntz