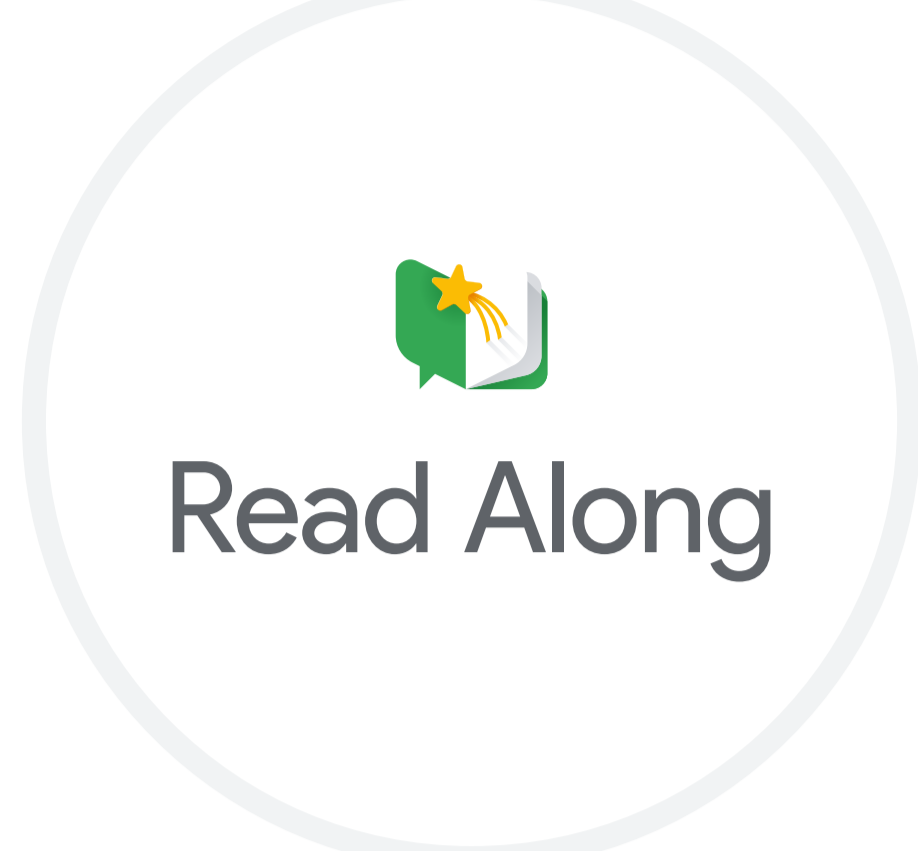


# Initial Pilot Findings

March 2019

## Summary

- Google piloted the Read Along app in 200 villages in Unnao district, UP India from Oct '18 to Jan '19 with the help of operational support from the ASER Centre
- Early results are encouraging, and we have found that 64% of pilot participants with access to the app showed an improvement in reading proficiency
- We are interested in researching the broader applicability of Read Along; we are releasing the app on the Play Store and expanding pilots with more partners across different regions
- We welcome additional partnerships to test Read Along in different settings and to study its impact; for inquiries, please contact us at [readalong@google.com](mailto:readalong@google.com)



## About Read Along

Read Along is a speech-based reading app designed to help primary grade kids learn to read - anytime, anywhere - just using their voice. See [g.co/readalong](http://g.co/readalong) for details.

## Pilot Details

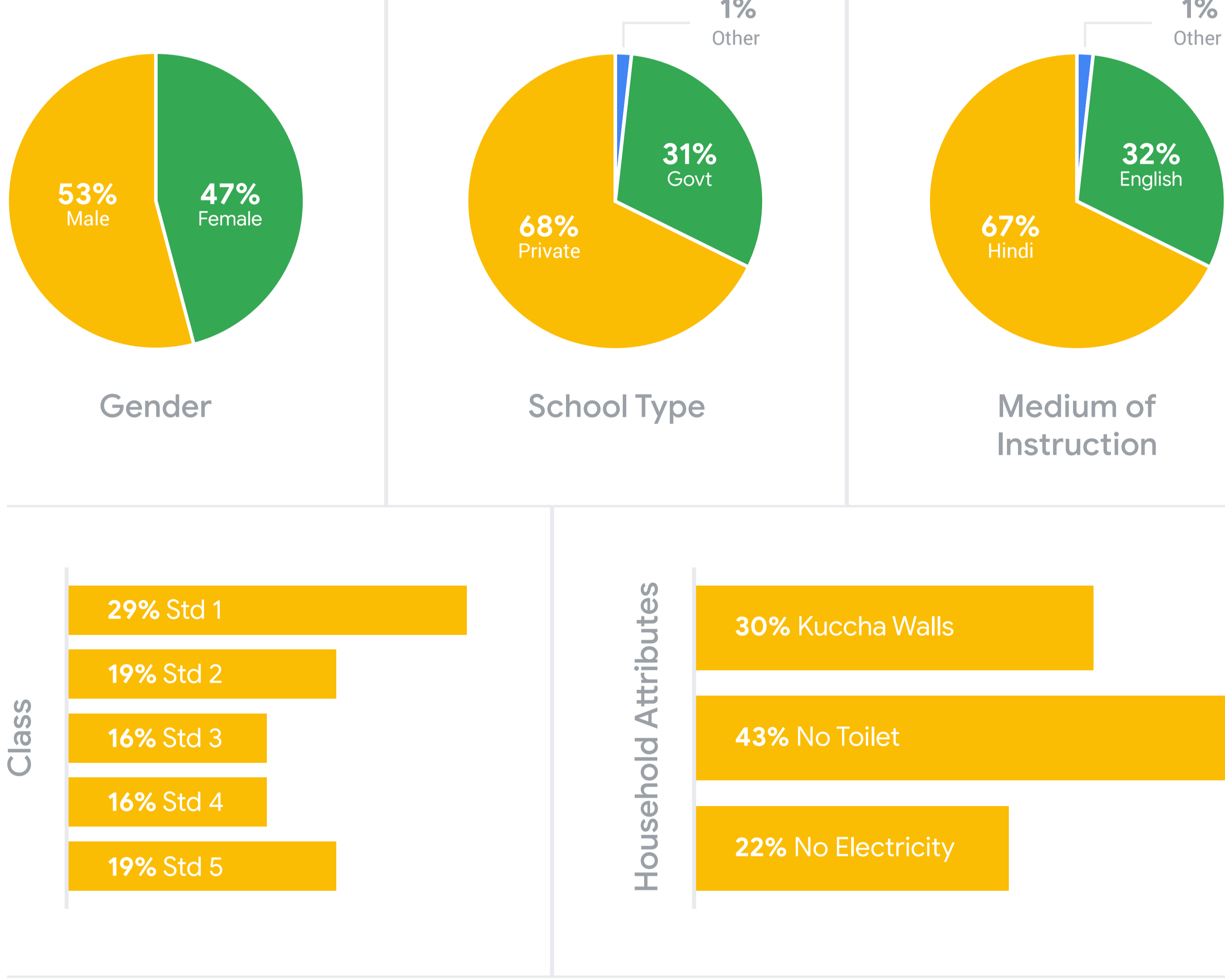
**Note**  
Additional research should be conducted to validate the broader applicability and impact of Read Along.

- Scale of ~1500 children
- One region of India (Unnao) in a rural setting
- A 3 month time period
- An older version of the app
- Unsupervised use of the app

## Pilot Approach

- Participants were recruited from a household census in 200 villages in Unnao, and children in grades 1 to 5 with access to an Android phone at home were selected
- 920 children were placed in a treatment group with the app installed
- 600 children were placed in a control group who did not get the app
- Trained surveyors of the ASER Centre conducted a Hindi reading assessment\* for all children (in both groups) at the start of the study (baseline), after 45 days (midline), and after 90 days (endline)
- A brief demonstration of the app was given to the children and their families at the time of app installation; thereafter, the app usage was completely self-driven (i.e., no additional incentives were given)
- At the end of the study, children and parents in the treatment group were also asked a set of survey questions

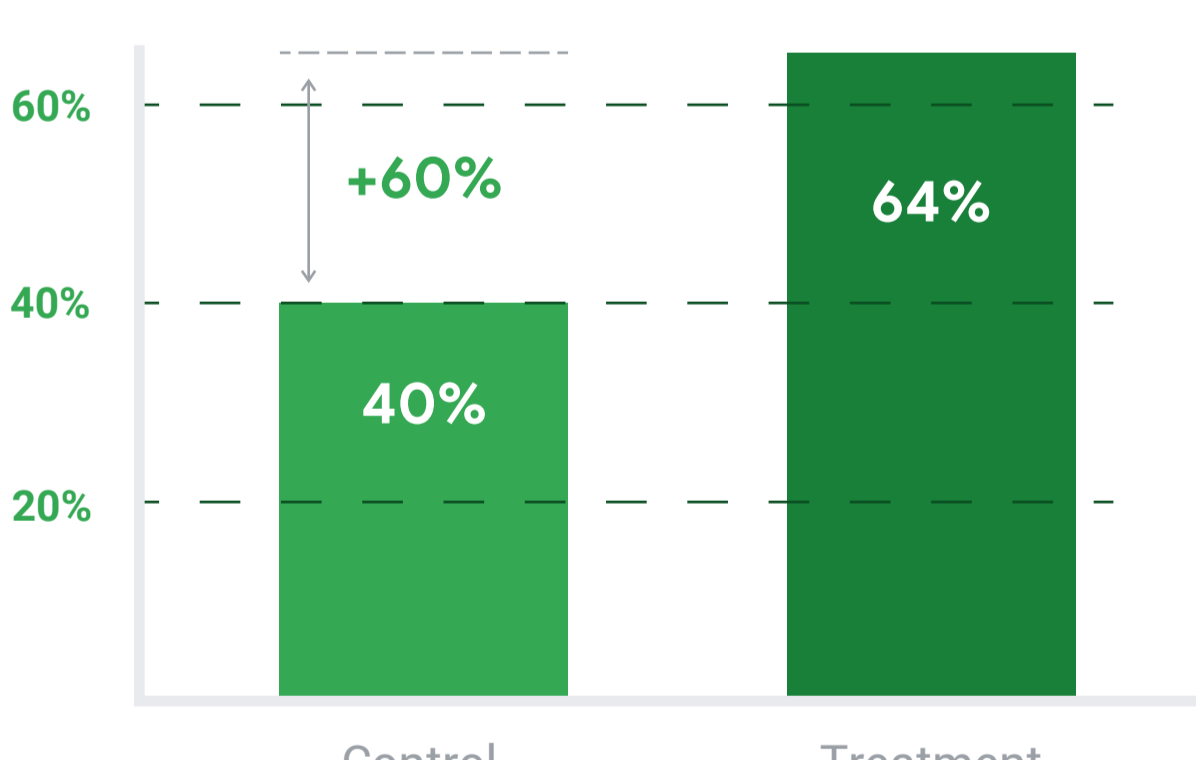
## User Demographics



## Key Findings

We analyzed the ASER assessment results provided to us and observed that:

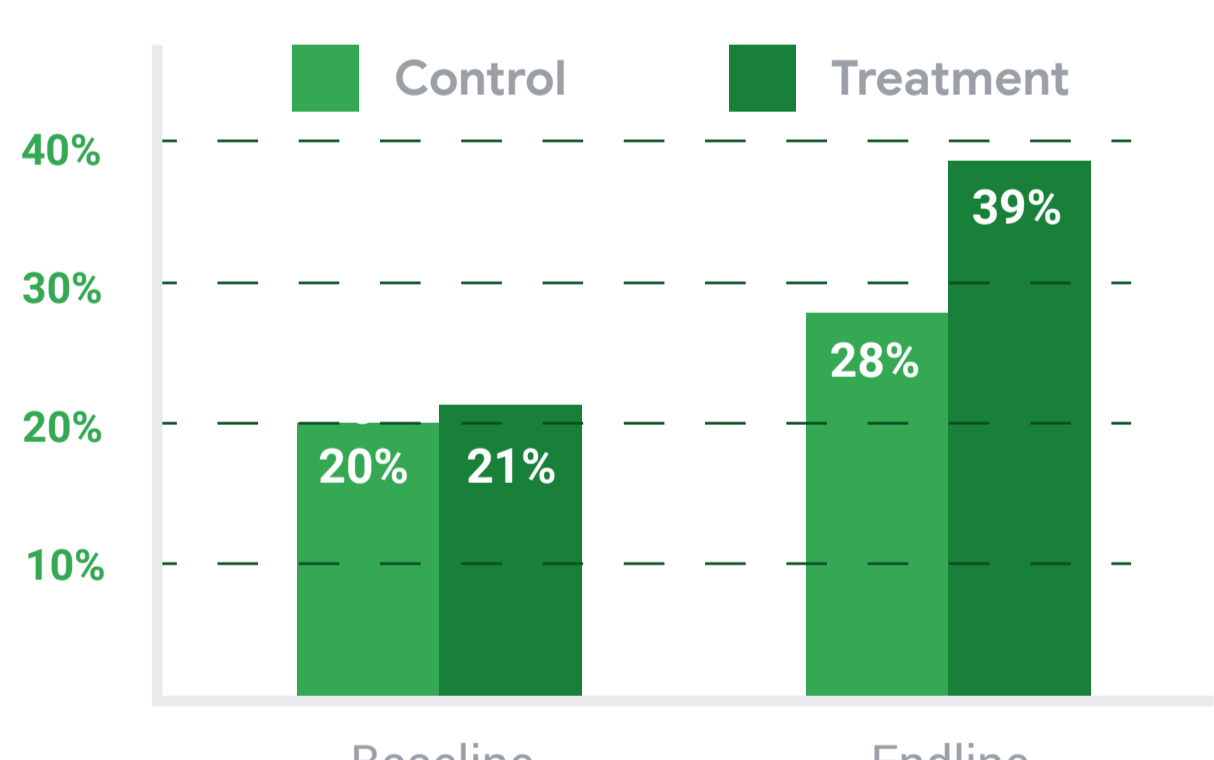
**Over the pilot study period, more participants improved their reading levels in the treatment group than in the control group (figure 1)**



**Growth in ASER reading level**  
%age of children whose reading level increased b/w Baseline and Endline  
*(Figure 1)*

Among participants for whom we have measures at baseline and endline, and who were not already at ceiling (Std 2) at baseline, **64%** of those in the treatment group saw an increase in scores (95% CI: 60%-68%), compared with **40%** of those in the control group - a statistically significant difference (P<0.0001).

**At the endline, more students in the treatment group reached the highest level (Std 2) than in the control group (figure 2)**



**Reached highest level of ASER assessment**  
%age of children at Std 2 reading level  
*(Figure 2)*

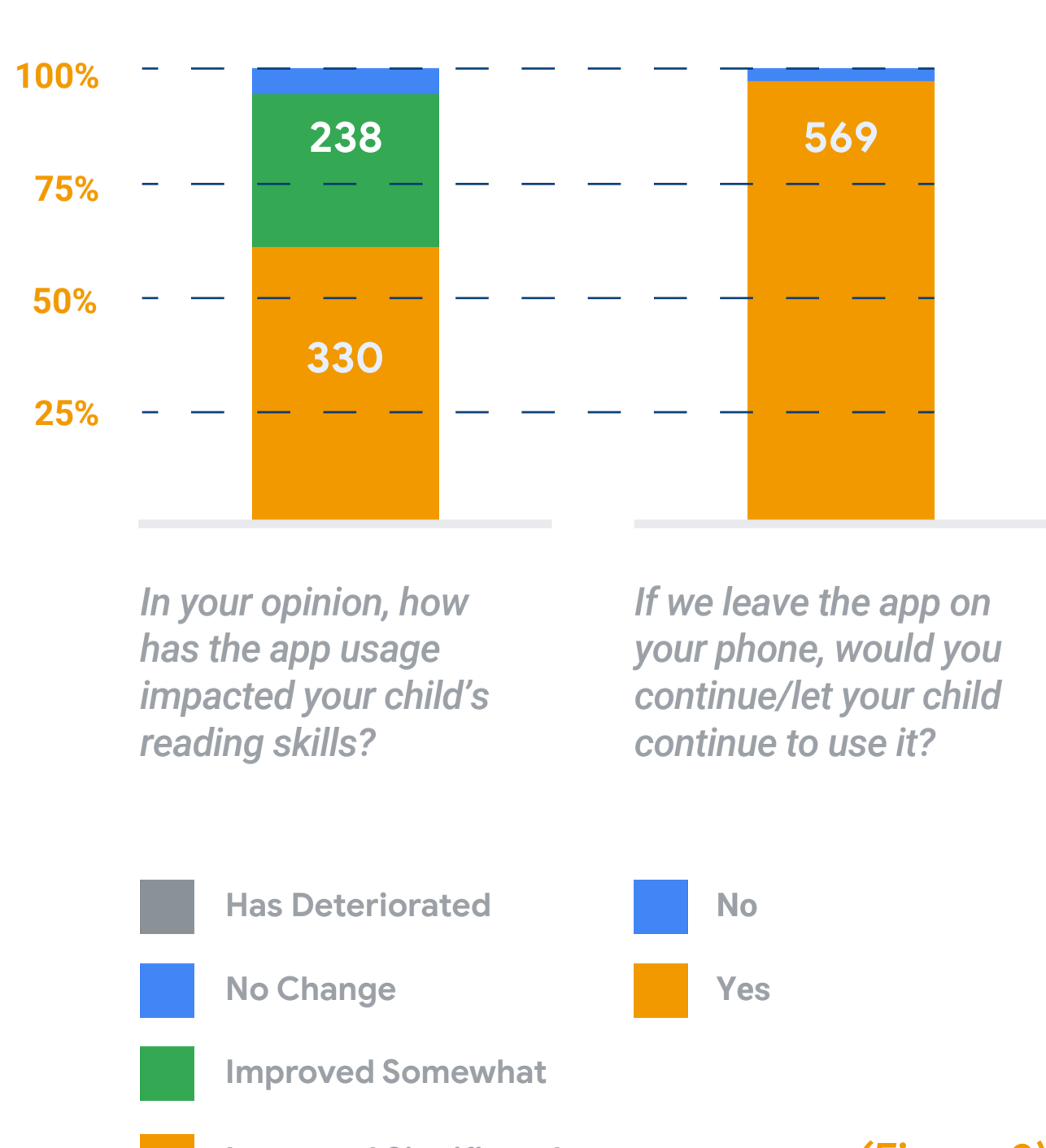
**39%** of the treatment group reached the highest level: Std 2 (95% CI: 36%-42%) in the endline, versus only **28%** of control (95% CI: 24%-32%). At baseline, control and treatment are not statistically significantly different from each other (P = 0.7562), but at endline they are (P < 0.0001).

## Survey Findings

Additionally, in a parent survey that was completed at the end of the study, we found that:

**~92%** of them noticed some improvement in their child's reading skills

**~95%** would let their children continue to use the app if we left it on their phones



## Next Steps

While these initial results are very encouraging, we recognize this was a limited pilot (1500 children in one region of India). We welcome additional partnerships to research Read Along broader applicability and impact with more students, across multiple regions, and in different settings.

\*ASER assessment tool consists of 5 levels: beginner, letters, words, a short paragraph (Std 1 level), and a longer "story" (Std 2 level). The child is marked at the highest level which she can do comfortably. See more details on [www.asercentre.org](http://www.asercentre.org)

For any queries, contact us at [readalong@google.com](mailto:readalong@google.com)