

# RESULTS FINDINGS ONLINE Survey 2021

86% of respondents had **visited** a public library  
1,025 residents  
70% of respondents had **used library online resources**

**common uses** of the library were borrowing books, picking up museum passes or attending programs

digital perspective  
**borrowing** eBooks audiobooks  
**attending** virtual programming  
**accessing** magazines/newspapers online

## 2021 Library Usage Survey Findings

**The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners created and distributed an online survey to residents of Massachusetts.** Over the course of several weeks, 1,025 residents completed the survey. Survey distribution was done through organic outreach via the library community as well as paid social media ads to target individuals of specific demographics that we wanted to hear from.

### Survey Findings: Overall Results

86% of respondents had visited a public library within the past 2 years and 70% of respondents had used library online resources. This indicates that despite the fact that this survey was conducted online and distributed online, a higher percentage of residents are using libraries in a physical, in-person manner. Residents reported that their most common uses of the library were borrowing books, picking up museum passes or attending programs. 50% of respondents visit more than one library in their area, in-person. From a digital perspective, the most commonly reported uses of library services were: borrowing eBooks and audiobooks, attending virtual programming and accessing magazines/newspapers online. While 37% of respondents who visit the library in-person reported doing so once a week, 39% of digital library users reported doing so multiple times a week. With the expanded offerings of digital resources, libraries can continue to engage the community more often. 40% of respondents were not aware of Library eBook lending, but were interested in learning more. There is an appetite across the Commonwealth for accessing eBooks/audiobooks and therefore an opportunity for libraries to increase awareness of this program.

### Survey Findings: Residents of Color

While 92% of respondents had physically visited a library in the past 2 years, only 63% had used online library resources; highlighting an area of opportunity for libraries in the Commonwealth to expand the awareness of virtual offerings. Further, 33% of respondents were not aware of what eBook lending was, but 66% of respondents were interested in learning more about and participating in eBook lending. Again, emphasizing a need for the library community to better position themselves in the community as a digital resource.

### Survey Findings: Residents under 18

85% of respondents had visited the library physically within the past 2 years and 60% indicated they use online library resources. Of those respondents who used digital resources, the vast majority either downloaded eBooks or accessed streaming media. Over 50% of respondents use online library resources more than once a week.

## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Employed  
**47%**

Visited the  
library in the  
past two years:  
**86%**

Parent or  
Guardian  
**24%**

People who  
identified as a  
person of color:  
**6%**

65 or older  
**33%**

Female:  
**78%**

25-34  
**10%**

Have a  
library card  
**81%**

## LIBRARY USERS

### Top 3 reason for visiting the library:

To borrow books

To attend program or class

To pick-up  
museum passes

### Top 3 online services used by the library users:

Borrowed eBooks

Used online database

Attended virtual  
programs & classes

### Top 3 websites or apps used to access online services:

Local library website

My library network

Libby/Overdrive

**39% of library users use online library services more than once a week;  
21% visit the library in-person more than once a week.**

## NON-USERS

### Top 3 reasons for not using the online library services:

Don't know how to access  
online library services

Not aware that library  
had online services

Hard to use

### Top 3 interested library services:

Museum Passes

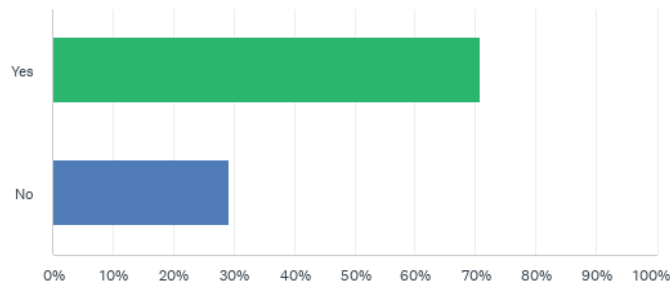
Borrow print books

Borrow download eBook

**41% are not aware of library eBook and audiobook lending  
but are interested in borrowing from the library.  
51% of non-users don't want a library card; 21% don't know how to get one.**

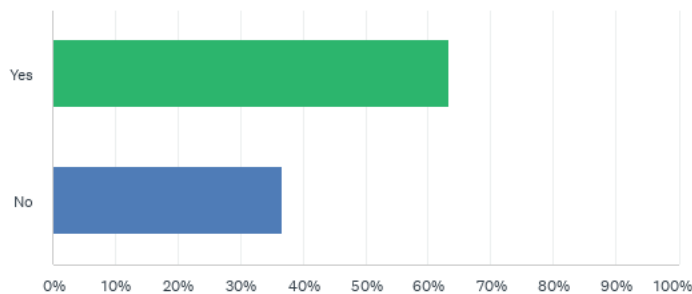
## Library-users and Non-library Users

Q4 Have you used a public library's online resources in the past year? (e.g., eBooks, online magazine and newspaper, virtual language learning, genealogy databases)



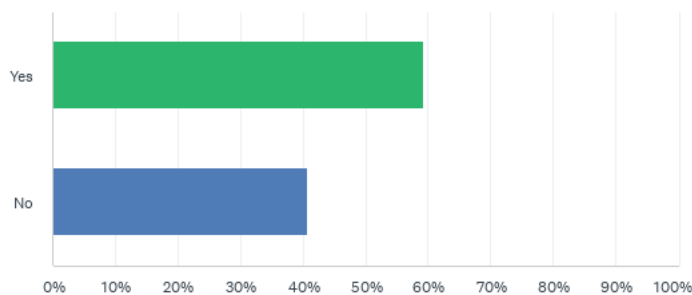
## Person of Color Respondents

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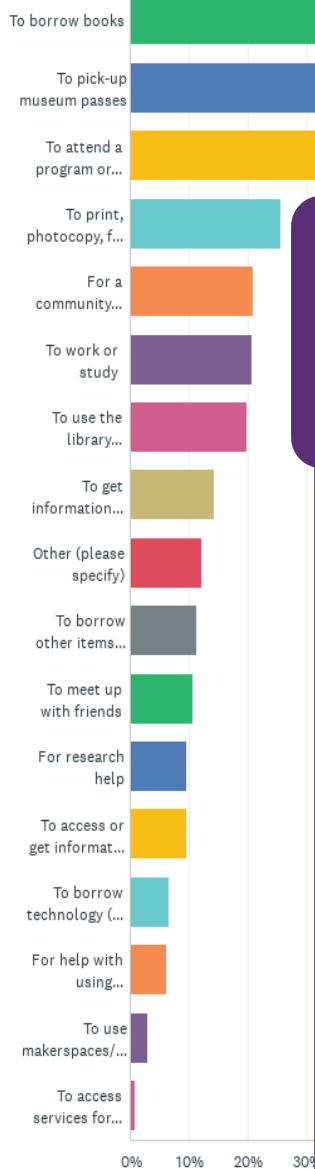


## Under 18 Years Old Respondents

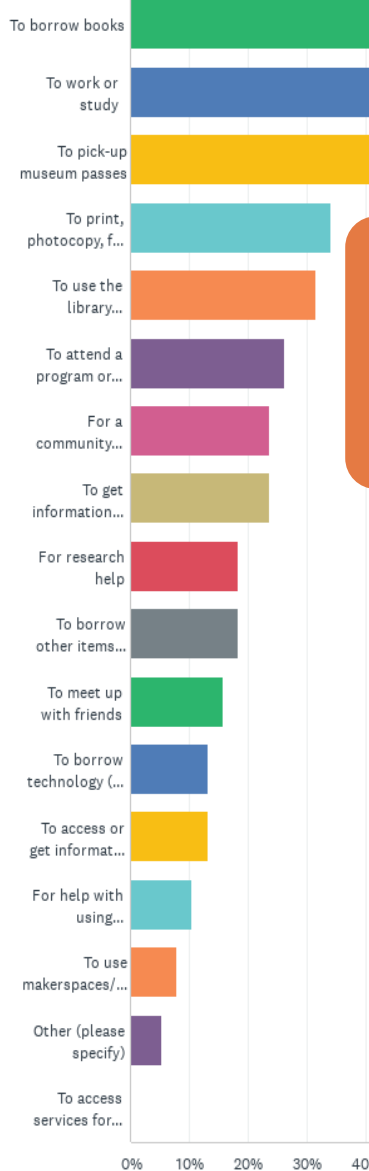
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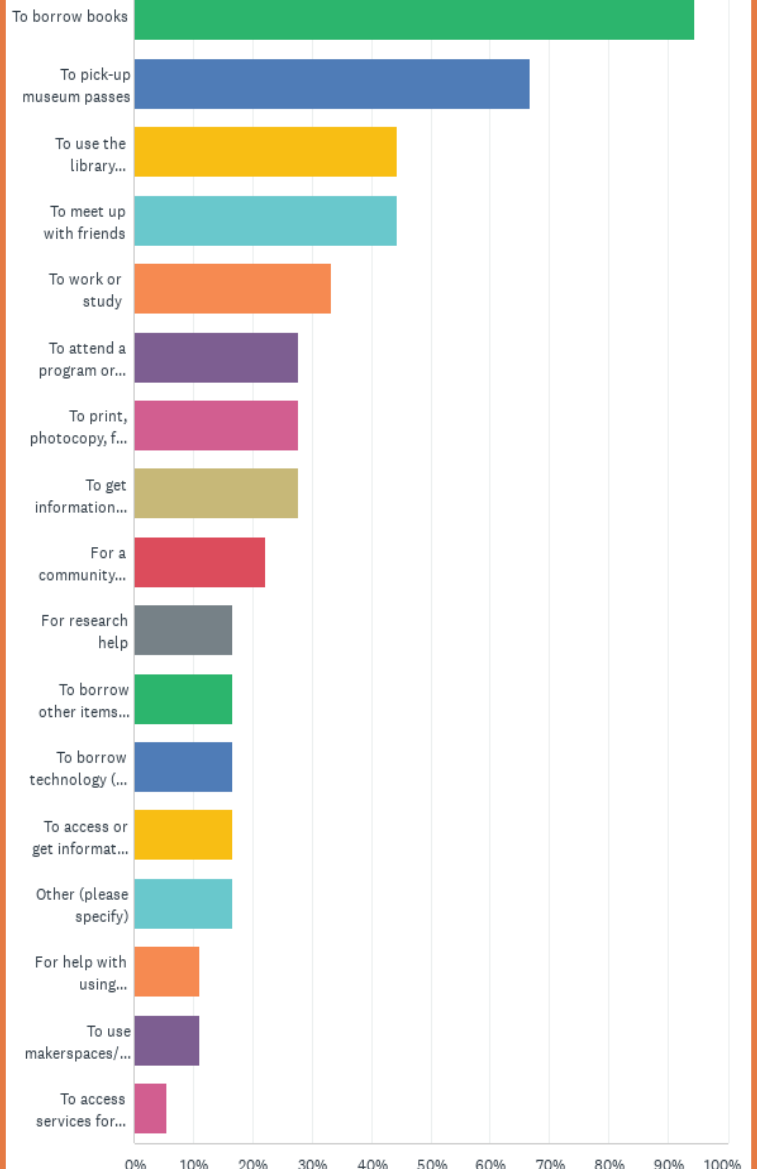
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## Person of Color Respondents



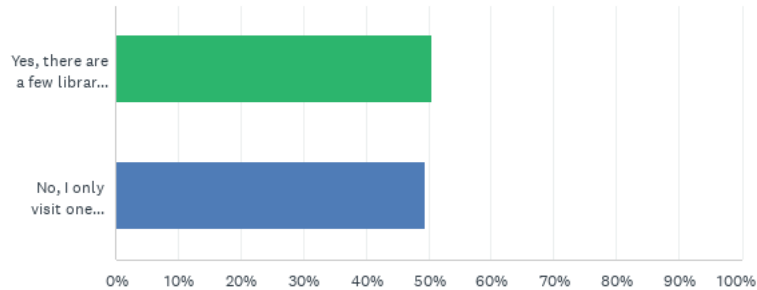
## Under 18 Years Old Respondents



Q5 For which of the following reasons did you visit a public library in-person?

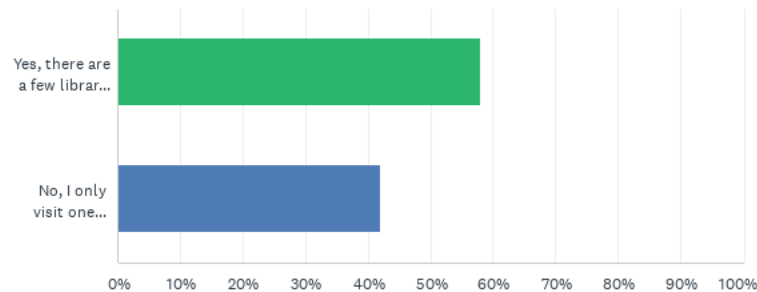
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Q8 Do you visit multiple public libraries in-person, in your area?



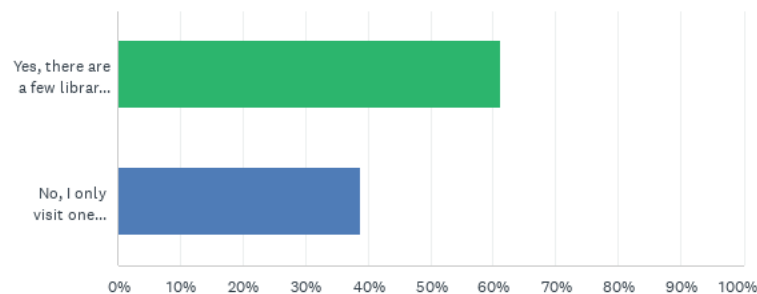
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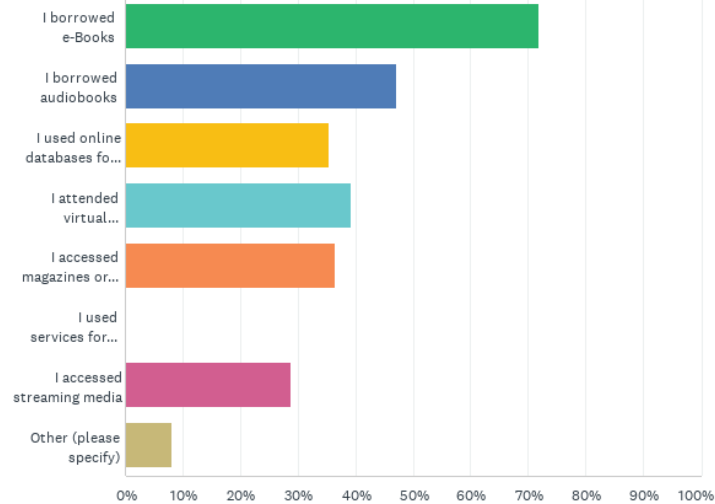
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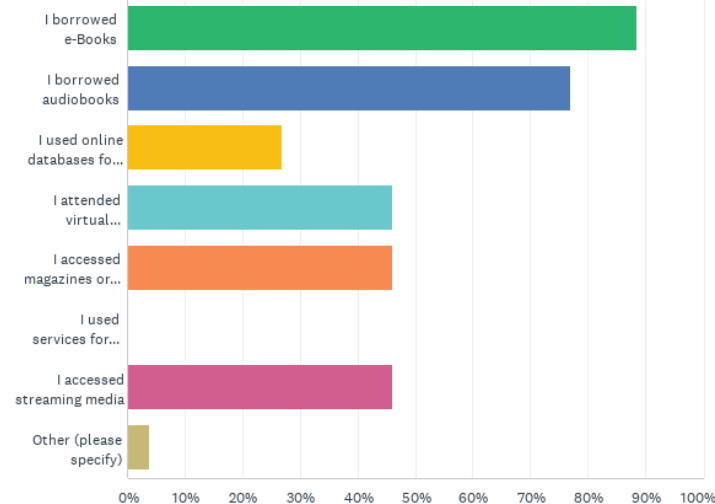
## Library-users and Non-library Users

Q9 Which of the following online library services did you use in the past year?



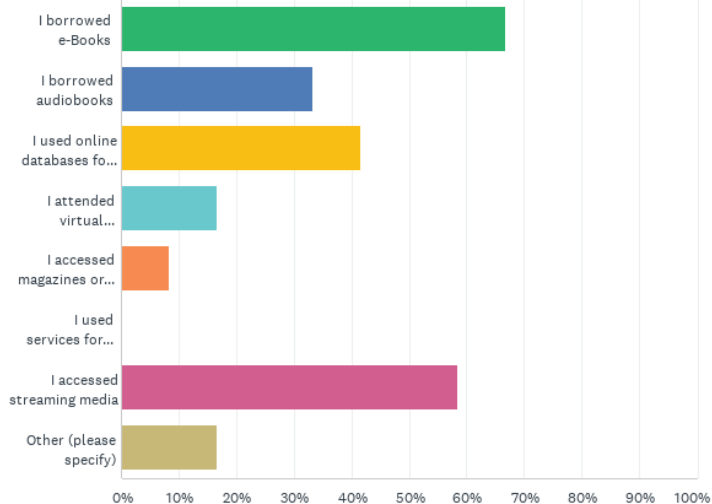
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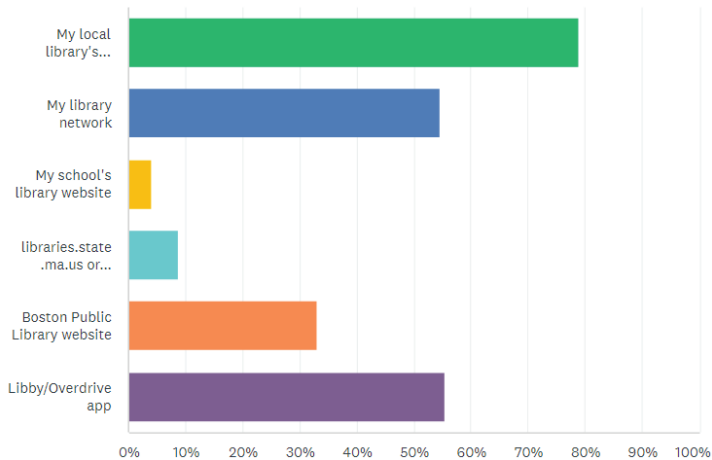
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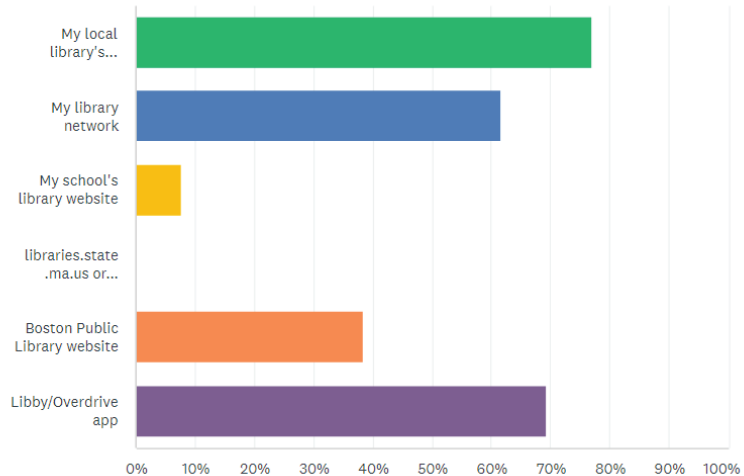
## Library-users and Non-library Users

Q11 Which website or app do you use to access online library services? (select all that apply)



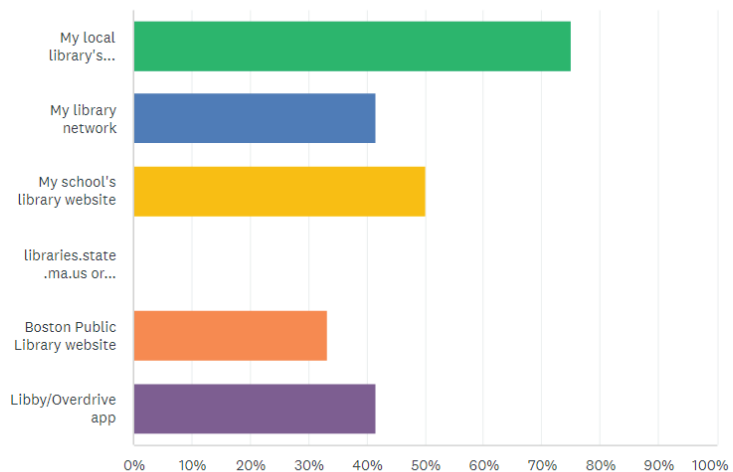
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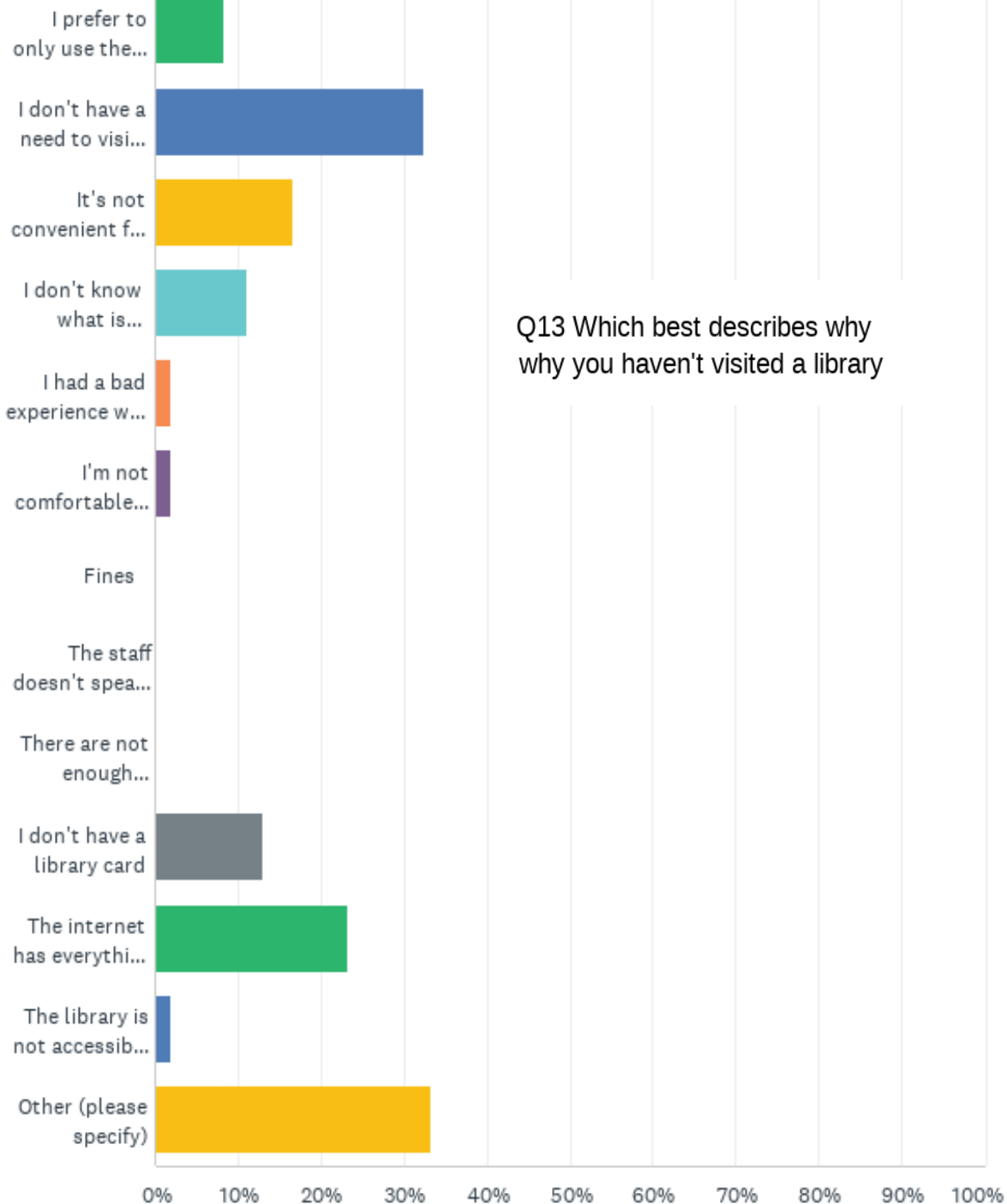


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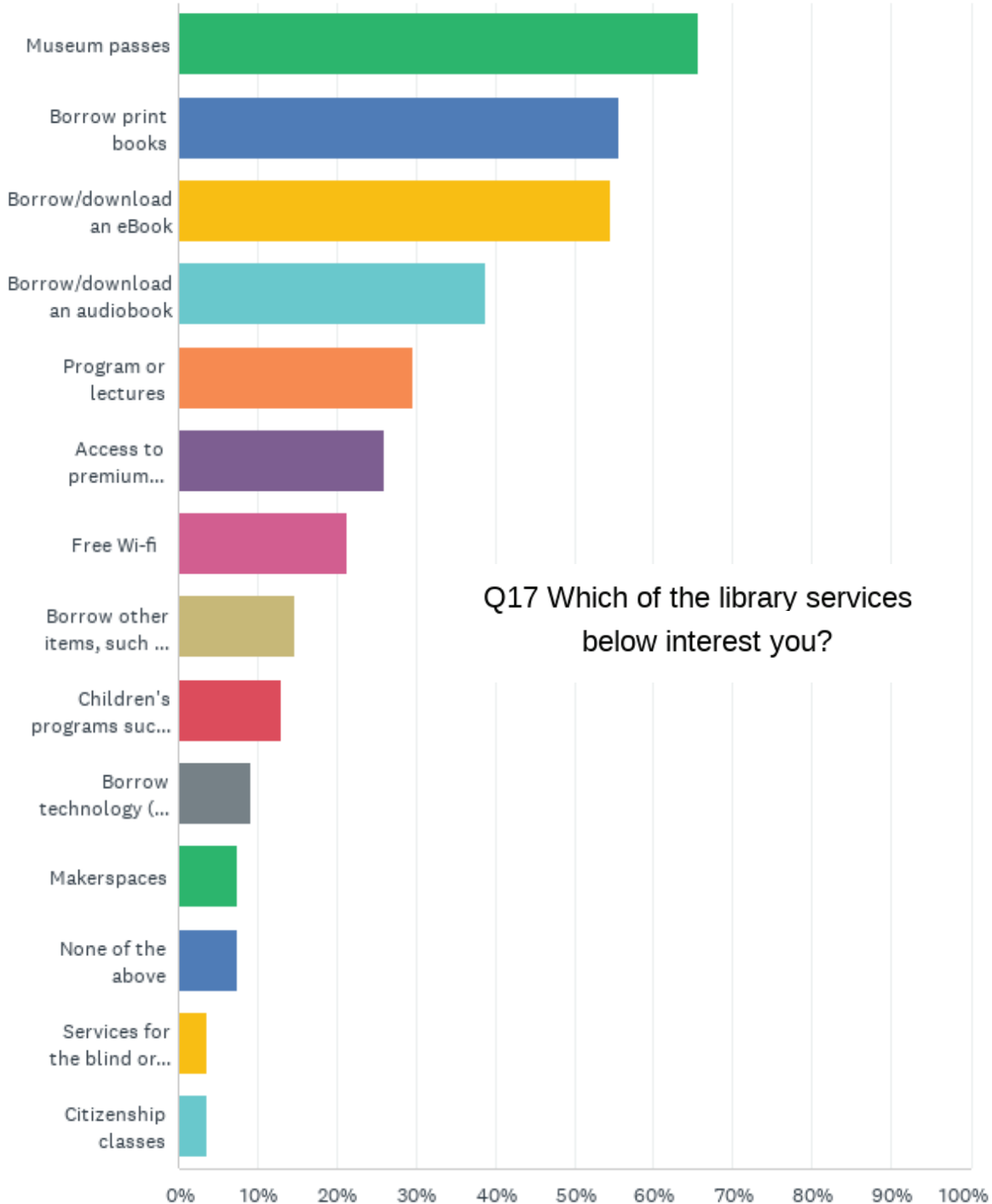


## Library-users and Non-library Users



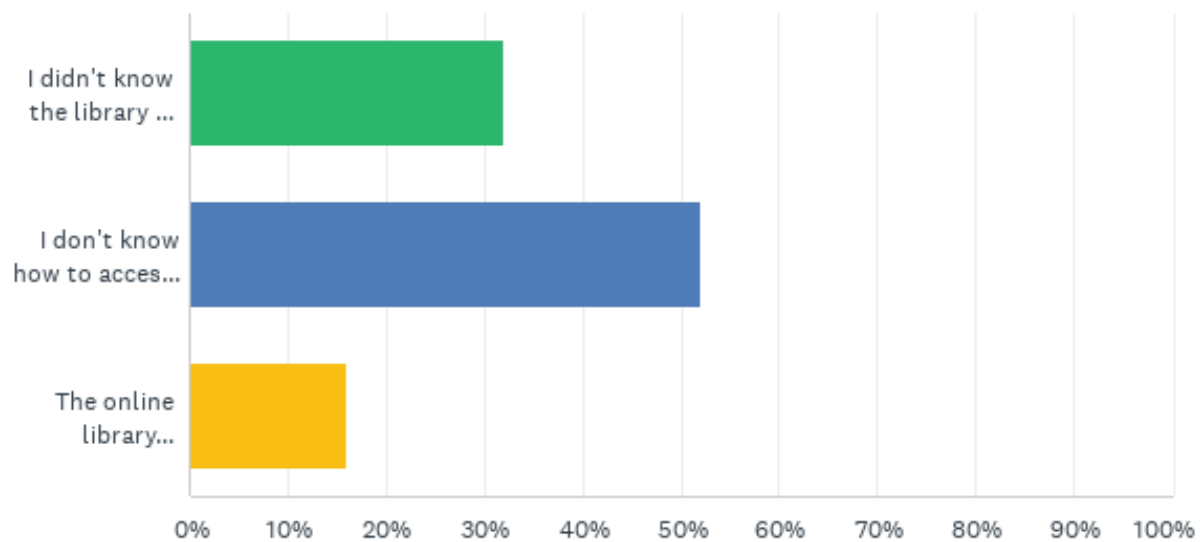


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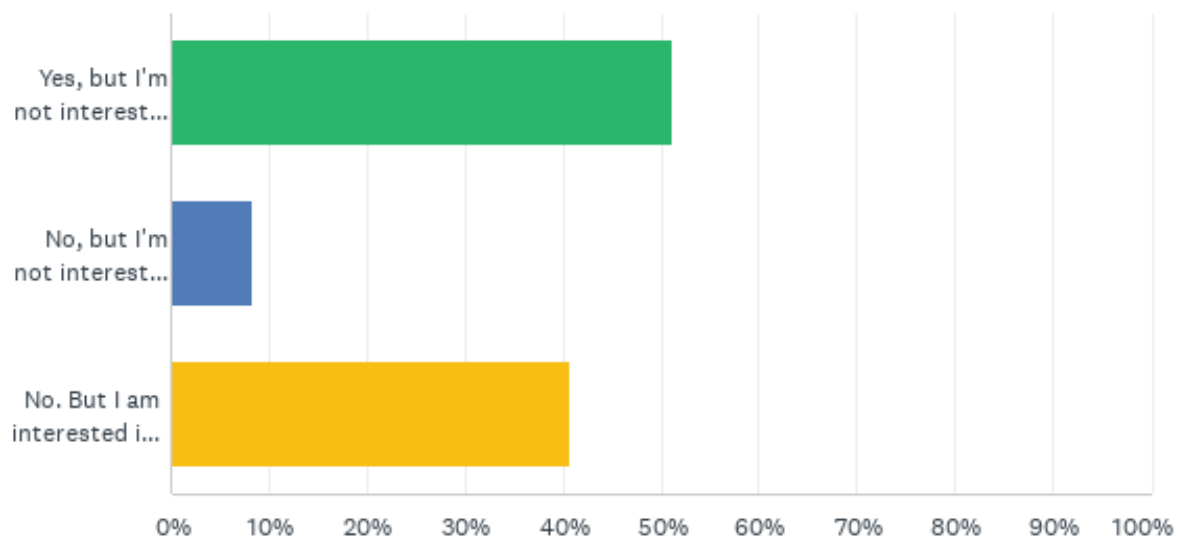
## Library-users and Non-library Users

Q18 Which of the following best describes why you haven't used online library services?



## Library-users and Non-library Users

Q19 Are you aware that the library offers free e-book and audiobook downloads (to borrow)?



Library-users and Non-library Users

Q22 Why don't you have a library card?

