



**Examining Access to Books in Preschool Classrooms: Book Genres and Child Reading Outcome**

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**Introduction:**

- The importance of Reading: Reading can bring about a variety of very important skills for children including increased vocabulary, comprehension of story line, and reading interest (Pentimonti, 2011).
- Books Exposure and Access to Books: Book exposure (Cunningham, 1991) and access to books (McGill-Franzen, 1999; Neuman, 1999) predicts early reading outcome.
- Measuring Access to Books
  - Book title checklist (Cunningham 1991): May work as an indirect measure of book exposure, but more of a measure of book knowledge.
  - Survey of the number of home books or the frequency of home reading (Griffin & Morrison, 1997): Parent report may not be accurate.
  - Observation of available book resources in classroom: Can provide a detailed measure of access to different types/genres of books in a classroom setting.

It is not clear specific kinds/genres of book resources in classroom are associated with children's early reading outcomes

**Research Questions:**

- Is the amount of books in the classroom library related to children's reading skills and behaviors?
- Is there a specific genre (narrative, narrative informational, or informational) more strongly related to children's reading skills and behaviors?
  - By seeing how reading outcome may be dependent on book genre, this may give researchers an idea as to what books to provide to children that best helps early literacy development.

**Methods:**

Participants

- A total of 263 children, from three different Head Start sites in the Mountain West region.
- 50 percent of participants were boys, 49 percent of participant were Hispanic, 3 percent were Native American, 6 percent African American, 14 percent Asian, and 4 percent other race. 2 percent of participants had a home language other than English.

## Measure

- The number of books in classroom: Monthly recording book titles of classroom library. Book titles were coded in terms of genre (narrative, narrative informational, or informational). We calculated the mean number of books and the mean rate of changes in the book number.
- Early Reading Outcome: measured in the beginning and the end of the school year
- Reading skills: Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement III Letter Word Identification, WJ III Picture Vocabulary, story comprehension (Paris & Paris, 2003) Print Awareness (Justice, Bowles, & Skibbe, 2006)
- Reading behaviors: Teacher-reported children's engagement in classroom reading, (Son & Baroody, 2017), teacher-reported children's reading enjoyment and participation (Baroody & Diano.
- Data analysis of material: Correlation and regression analysis of the number of all the books as well as narrative, narrative informational, or informational books in the classroom and its associated with reading outcome. SPSS was used.

## **Results:**

### The Nature of Books in Classroom Library

- Overall mean of books in the classroom library: 46.25
- Higher number of narrative books in classroom libraries (M=25.65) than informational (M=10.68) or narrative informational books (M=9.46)
- Not much monthly change in the amount of books (mean number of change = .08)

Classroom Library Books	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
<b>#All Books</b>	46.25	16.99	19.14	96.2
<b>#Narrative</b>	25.65	8.32	14.00	49.4
<b>#Narrative Informational</b>	9.46	4.09	2.71	17.25
<b>#Informational</b>	10.68	6.74	2.43	32.80
<b>ΔAll Book</b>	.08	.19	-.18	.55
<b>ΔNarrative</b>	.10	.21	-.29	.70
<b>ΔNarrative Informational</b>	.19	.47	-.33	1.56
<b>ΔInformational</b>	.36	.27	-.19	.87

### Correlation Between Classroom Books and Child Spring Outcome

- The number of narrative, narrative informational, and informational books in the classroom is significantly and positively correlated with story comprehension
  - The number of narrative books was correlated with story comprehension:  $r=.305^{**}$
  - The number of narrative informational books was correlated with story comprehension:  $r=.188^{**}$
  - The number of informational books was correlated with story comprehension:  $r=.263^{**}$

- The number of books was negatively correlated with children’s reading engagement, enjoyment and participation

Genre	#Narrative	#Narrative Informational	#Informational	#All Genres
<b>Story Comprehension</b>	<b>.305**</b>	<b>.188**</b>	<b>.263**</b>	<b>.294**</b>
<b>Picture Vocabulary</b>	.006	-.106	-.014	-.024
<b>Letter Word</b>	<b>-.193**</b>	-.129	<b>-.245**</b>	<b>-.214**</b>
<b>TR Child Engagement in Classroom Reading</b>	-.090	<b>-.151*</b>	<b>-.206**</b>	<b>-.158*</b>
<b>TR Reading Enjoyment</b>	-.112	<b>-.192**</b>	<b>-.210**</b>	<b>-.183**</b>

#### Regression of Classroom Library Books

- More narrative books predicted higher story comprehension, reading engagement and reading enjoyment
- Higher number of informational books predicted lower scores in letter-word, reading engagement and enjoyment

Predictor	Story Comprehension (Beta)	WJ Picture Vocabulary	WJ Letter Word	Print Awareness	TR Engagement in Classroom Reading	TR Reading Enjoyment
<b>Boy</b>	-.003	.019	-0.34	-.018	-.017	-.037
<b>Age</b>	<b>.403**</b>	.049	<b>.137**</b>	<b>.274***</b>	<b>.116**</b>	<b>.153**</b>
<b>Home Language</b>	<b>-.132*</b>	<b>-.132*</b>	<b>-.124*</b>	<b>-.146**</b>	-.018	.015
<b>Fall Score</b>	<b>.225***</b>	<b>.720***</b>	<b>.546***</b>	<b>.249*</b>	<b>.715***</b>	<b>.511***</b>
<b>#Narrative</b>	<b>.303*</b>	.084	.146	-.073	<b>.411***</b>	<b>.317**</b>
<b>#Narrative Informational</b>	.055	-.088	-.005	-.195	.002	<b>-.134*</b>
<b>#Informational</b>	-.002	-.034	<b>-.270**</b>	-.195	<b>-.455***</b>	<b>-.275**</b>

#### **Discussion:**

- Greater access to narrative books in classroom led to higher story comprehension, reading engagement and enjoyment.
- Greater access to informational books led to lower engagement and enjoyment
- Young children seem to enjoy narrative books more than informational books
- Future research may observe how teachers use and read the book resources in the classroom
- Researchers and teachers need to find new ways to read and share informational books in an educational and enjoyable way.