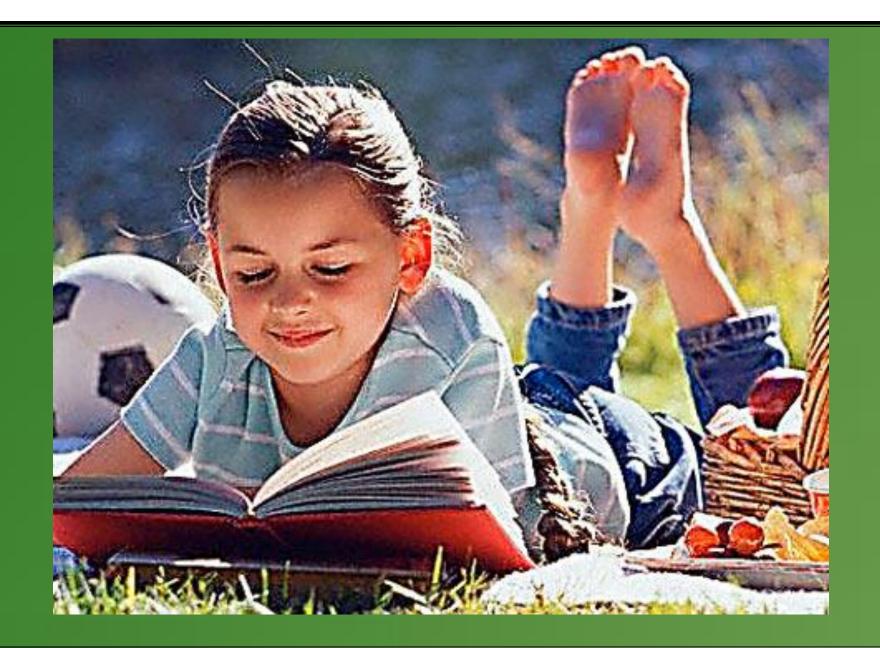


# **Factors That Affect Children's Literacy** Amy Bellotte, Department of English, College of Arts and Sciences, and Honors College Faculty Mentor: Susan Eve, Department of Sociology, **College of Public Affairs and Community Service, and Honors College**

# **RESEARCH TOPIC**

For my research prospectus, I would like to investigate factors that affect children's reading habits, and how reading habits can be improved.



## **ABSTRACT**

Reading is a skill that is essential for children to grow and develop as learners. Children's literacy is a topic that needs to be addressed in school systems, as many children are at a disadvantage when it comes to literacy due to outside factors such as their parent's literacy. Illiterate parents can unintentionally create an environment where it is difficult for a child to become literate. During this project, I have been researching factors that affect children's literacy. I have also been researching methods by which parents and educators can promote children's literacy. My research has consisted of studies and papers written by other researchers. In my research, I have discovered ways that teachers and illiterate parents can help to improve children's literacy.

# **METHODOLOGY**

As a tentative plan for research, I would like to begin by looking at multiple studies done in children's literacy and organize the findings of other researchers. I would also like to conduct a study of my own in children's literacy. I would like to determine how socio-economic class affects a child's literacy. In order to do this, I would need to randomly select children of different socioeconomic backgrounds and look at their reading levels. I will try to determine if there is a pattern among the different socioeconomic classes. It will be difficult to research this as an undergraduate, so I might have to rely on data that has already been gathered. I will have to ensure that this follows all of the NIH's rules, as well as ensure that all of my information and sources are cited correctly and given credit. I will have to be especially careful when doing research involving children. I will have to ensure that the child and parent understand what is going on and consent to the research. This is only a tentative idea, and I will need to further study research methods and my topic before I decide on how I will conduct research of my own.

# **LITERATURE REVIEW**

There are many factors that can affect a child's reading habits, as well as many methods of improving a child's reading habits.

### Why Is It Important for Children to Read?

- Reading is essential for a child's development.
- Children can explore different time periods and places without actually traveling there.
- Children can learn to view situations from different perspectives.
- Children can learn how to empathize with people who are different from them.
- Children quickly learn to distinguish authors and illustrators and develop their own personal reading styles.

### **Factors that Affect Children's Reading Habits**

- There is a lack of strong language examples and quality literature in homes of children with illiterate parents.
- This phenomenon generally occurs among less educated and lower income parents. • Teachers and educators also have an effect on children's reading habits. Teachers who are knowledgeable about children's literature and encourage children to read outside of class
- have a positive effect on children's readings habits.
- By discussing literature with children, teachers can help students develop critical reading skills.

### Methods of Improving Children's Reading Habits

- Parents can talk to their child at length each day.
- Parents can use a more expansive vocabulary when talking to their children.
- Parents can encourage children to use toys to tell stories.
- Mothers who respond verbally to their children when they are young tend to help children develop a better vocabulary.
- Instead of actually reading stories to children, illiterate parents can simply create stories of their own to go along with the pictures in a picture book.
- Parents can also increase the amount of two-way conversations with their children.
- children's literature, and encourage their students to read voluntarily outside of class.
- Parents can also use magazines and catalogs to help children develop language skills • Teachers should know what types of children's literature are preferable, have access to • Teachers should be familiar with the books they are teaching, know how and when to use
- books in the classroom, and understand how children develop as readers.
- Teachers should also read as many children's books as they can and teach good reading habits as well as books.



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