

Cunningham and Stanovich (1993) present strong evidence for “print exposure” (book, newspaper, and magazine reading, as measured knowledge of titles, authors etc) as a predictor of knowledge in a number of areas (cultural literacy. (science and social science), practical knowledge, acronyms, cultural knowledge, and multicultural literacy. The subjects were undergraduates.

Cunningham and Stanovich (1991) got interesting results with children in grades 4,5,and 6. Print exposure was a test of title recognition of books. The titles were generated by children the same age as the subjects and represented out-of-school reading.

The children took a test of “General Information” (from the Peabody Individual Achievement test), testing “general world knowledge.” It had 18 items.

Example: What branch our national government makes the laws?

And: What is a piece of land called that is completely surrounded by water?

Here is one of the results:

The correlation of the title recognition test and the world knowledge test was  $r = .43$ .

Predictor	Beta
Age	0.122
Raven matrices	.187
TRT test	.337

All significant  $p < .01$ , 2 tailed

This suggests that recreational reading is related to overall knowledge for children as well as older subjects.

Cunningham, A. and Stanovich, K. 1991. Tracking the unique effects of print exposure in children: Associations with vocabulary, general knowledge, and spelling. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 83,2: 264-274.