

Young children's environmental print reading.

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Year of Publication: 1986

Publication Information: *Childhood Education*, 63(2), 118-125.

Type of Review: Narrative.

Purpose: To review environmental print research and discuss its significance for understanding children's emerging literacy.

Inclusion Criteria: Not Reported.

Search Method: Not Reported.

Review Method: Not Reported.

Number of Studies: Approximately 17.

Population of Participants: (1) North American and Australian children.
(2) Normally developing children.

Age of Participants: Preschoolers.

Concerns Raised: Not Reported.

Outcome Measures of Interest: (1) Reading outcome measures.

Conclusion/Results: Studies have shown that:

- (1) Long before they learn to read, preschoolers are aware of the symbolic potential of environmental print.
- (2) Though preschoolers can recognize words found in familiar environmental print items, they seem to use environmental cues rather than graphic cues (print) to identify those words.
- (3) Isolated print is more likely to be seen as meaningless and less interesting.
- (4) Reading signs and labels available in the environment does not directly lead to the development of reading ability, but can serve as a precursor to more skilled reading.
- (5) In order to learn to read, preschoolers need to switch from a strategy where they rely on visual cues in the environment to one where they rely on letter and graphic cues.
- (6) Different activities could be used in the classroom where teachers could use environmental print integrated into the reading process.

Comments: Useful implications for classroom instruction.