Schools Using Accelerated Reader® Devote More Time to Reading Practice

Student reading ability correlates to the amount of in-school reading practice


**Introduction**

This large-scale study, which appears in a peer-reviewed journal, examines whether differences in reading practice explains differences in student-reading performance. The researchers analyzed state-by-state performance differences, small versus large school differences, and private versus public schools.

**Main Findings**

- Student reading ability is strongly and positively related to the amount of in-school reading practice received.
- The amount of in-school reading practice declines after grade six.
- The amount of reading practice is negatively correlated with school size.
- More reading practice occurs in private schools than public schools.

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![Reading Practice Declines After Sixth Grade](image)

(more information on back)
Methodology

To investigate the relationship between reading ability and reading practice, Accelerated Reader data and standardized reading test data from two previous large-scale studies were aggregated and re-analyzed:

- A 1992 study that involved 4,498 elementary and middle school students from 64 schools.
- A 1993 study that included 10,124 students from 136 schools.

For analyses on the differences between states, grades, and types of school, new Accelerated Reader data was collected from 659,214 students (grades K–12) in 2,193 schools. This sample of students was found to be ethnically and socio-economically similar to student populations in the U.S.

Results

The researchers determined that student reading ability is strongly correlated to the amount of in-school reading practice a student receives. In fact, students in the highest quartile of achievement practiced reading 3.4–4.1 times more than students in the lowest quartile. And, the top five percent of all readers read 144 times more than the bottom five percent.

Analysis also revealed that students in high-performing states (according to the 1994 National Assessment of Education Progress study) receive more reading practice (as indicated by the number of Accelerated Reader points) than students in average or low-performing states.

Researchers determined that on average, the amount of literature-based reading practice increases until the sixth-grade and then declines (see graph on front).

Further, the study indicates that the longer Accelerated Reader has been used at a school, the more students read. In fact, schools that used Accelerated Reader for four or more years experienced a 64% higher level of reading practice than schools using the program for just one year.

The researchers also discovered that students in private schools appeared to engage in an average of 67% more reading practice than students in public schools. The study also suggests that small schools provided significantly more reading practice time than large schools. In fact, public elementary schools with fewer than 200 students appeared to provide more than twice as much reading practice as schools with more than 1,000 students. And schools with fewer than 400 students received 73% more reading practice than schools with more than 800 students.

Conclusion

The study’s findings support the recommendation that schools set aside reading practice time during the school day. In addition, the study suggests that reading practice time is most beneficial when students read at their correct level and teachers monitor their reading regularly to ensure that they stay on task. Accelerated Reader provides the information needed to make sure these things happen so that the reading practice time is well used.