

Early executive function predicts reasoning development

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Although analogical reasoning is a core cognitive skill that distinguishes humans from other animals, its origins are still not well understood. Psychological scientists Lindsey Richland of the University of Chicago and Margaret Burchinal of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill analyzed data from children who were part of the Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development.

They assessed children for vocabulary knowledge, sustained attention, short-term [memory skills](#), executive functioning skills, and analytical reasoning skills and found that children's early vocabulary knowledge and executive-functioning predicted their analytical reasoning skills at age 15.

These results indicate that composite executive-function skills make specialized contributions to the development of children's analytical reasoning. They also support the idea that language and knowledge are necessary for the development of analytical-reasoning skills.

More information: pss.sagepub.com/content/early/.../97612450883.abstract

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