Medical Xpress

Why do some children read more?

April 11 2018

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A new study of more than 11,000 7-year-old twins found that how well children read determines how much they read, not vice versa. Furthermore, the authors of the *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* study found that how well children read is highly heritable, while how much they read is influenced equally by genes and the

environment.

The findings indicate that children's reading level fuels how much they choose to read and that children therefore tend to avoid reading if they find it difficult. Interventions should focus not only on promoting reading skills but also motivation to read.

"It was known that how much you do something and how well you do it are related, but for reading this study seems to solve the chicken-and-egg problem," said lead author Dr. Elsje van Bergen, of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, in The Netherlands.

More information: Elsje van Bergen et al, Why do children read more? The influence of reading ability on voluntary reading practices, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* (2018). DOI: 10.1111/jcpp.12910

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Why do some children read more? (2018, April 11) retrieved 20 September 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-04-children_1.html

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