

What role does a father play in influencing a child's reading ability?

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Introduction

Fathers can be a critical link in motivating and engaging their children in reading. However, many research studies that discuss parental involvement in supporting their children's literacy development, or learning in general, report predominantly on the mothers' perceptions and experiences (see, for example, Fletcher, Greenwood, & Parkhill, 2010; Nichols, 2000; Nutbrown & Hannon, 2003; Wylie & Hodgen, 2007). Other studies when discussing fathers, report on the mothers' or teachers' views of how fathers are involved (see, for example, Eirini, 2006; Morgan, Nutbrown, & Hannon, 2009). Undoubtedly, both mothers and fathers have a direct influence on their children's attitudes to and success in reading, or lack of it, but as educators we would benefit from having a deeper understanding of the influence and perspectives of fathers.

Our interest in this area had been ignited by earlier research. In an investigation with colleagues (Fletcher, Parkhill, & Fa'aoi, 2005; Parkhill, Fletcher, & Fa'aoi, 2005) on Pasifika students' perspectives on barriers and supports in reading in New Zealand schools, the influence of fathers on success in literacy achievement was evident. Pasifika is a term of convenience used to encompass a diverse range of peoples from the South Pacific region now living in New Zealand, who have strong family and cultural connections to their Pacific Island countries of origin. In New Zealand, Pasifika students are overall underachieving in reading (Alton-Lee, 2003; Crooks, Smith, & Flockton, 2009). In our earlier study of Pasifika students who were achieving in reading and writing according to results from standardised tests, some of the students reported that their fathers were actively involved in supporting their literacy development. This included taking their child to the library, teaching spelling words and encouraging reading for pleasure.

In a more recent study with colleagues (Fletcher, et al., 2010) parents representing children from a range of schools were interviewed. The research explored parents' perceptions of what

supports 11-to-13 year-old New Zealand students in their reading. These parents had been selected by the school principals but as it transpired the parents selected were mothers. Accessibility to fathers as interviewees had been problematic, mainly because of their work and other wider commitments. In this study many of the mothers reported that their child's father had a direct influence on their child's attitude and interest in reading. For some underachieving boys who had fathers not interested in reading, this, according to the mothers, appeared to have been influential in the development of a negative attitude towards reading. This was the case even when the mother was an avid reader.

We were interested in the issues surrounding the role of fathers in the literacy learning of their children and aware of a dearth of research in the area of fathers, particularly those of young adolescent students. Therefore, we responded to Morgan, Nutbrown and Hannon's (2009) call for research that involves fathers as informants.

The research reported in this article investigated twelve fathers of 11-to-13 year-old students in New Zealand schools. It sought to uncover these fathers' perceptions of what supports reading of the children and their involvement in this process. We believe that the qualitative research presented in this article is of specific relevance for the reflective professional in classrooms and the wider school sector including libraries both within New Zealand and internationally.

The literature

Motivating and engaging children to read and enjoy books can occur from birth. In many western countries there is an expectation that parents will read and share books with their children. In Morgan and colleagues (Morgan, et al., 2009) UK study of fathers' involvement in young children's literacy development they reported on fathers' involvement in a family literacy programme. They interviewed mothers and used home visit records made by the teachers. They concluded that according to these data, the majority of fathers were involved to some extent in supporting the development of their child's literacy skills. However, the fathers were involved to a lesser degree in literacy related activities with their children, than the mothers.

In another UK study, using a longitudinal data from the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70), Erini (2006) investigated the long-term influences of both mother's and father's interest in their children's education at age ten. The sample included 1,737 men and 2,033 women. Erini concluded from this data that the mothers' interest in their child predicted the educational attainment of both daughters and sons, but the fathers' interest when their child was aged ten only predicted a daughter's educational attainment. Although this article is more recently published, the data collected relating to the child at ten years of age (in 1980) was reflective of attitudes of an earlier generation of parents. Another limitation of the research was that there was only a one-item question on parents' interest in their child's education. Furthermore, this question was completed by the teacher. Both Morgan and colleagues' (2009) and Erini's (2006) studies give an insight as to the role and perceptions of fathers but this is tempered in that the data was not collected from the fathers.

Socio cultural theory

A socio-cultural perspective of how children learn suggests that when children's own family backgrounds and cultural experiences are compatible with that of their teacher and the wider school environment, students are more likely to succeed (Grenfell, 2009; Lai, McNaughton, Amituanai-Tolosa, Turner, & Hsiao, 2009; Macfarlane, 2010). Socially constructed interactions with peers and teachers that are authentic and relevant enable students to develop meaningful understandings (Cullen, 2002). Teachers who can relate home and cultural knowledge and experience to learning in classrooms offer a significant bridge in the learning process. This informal or 'unschooled' knowledge that children bring to the learning environment in the classroom can vary substantively in character to the 'school knowledge' which is often more formally obtained (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978). Acknowledging this and that children's prior and existing knowledge are strong and influential when learning to read are crucial issues in improving reading achievement (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Ruddell & Unrau, 2004; Stanovich, 2004).

A child's family and community, and to some degree the school have some bearing on their sociocultural beliefs and values in regard to reading and reading goals (Ruddell, 2004). Thus it is possible to assume that fathers' contributions can be influential in terms of their own educational successes and understanding of the importance of reading. Additionally, fathers can offer support to their child by working and developing reading skills with their children

in the home environment. Vygotsky (1978) is central to such theoretical perspectives, in particular the identification of the zone of proximal development. This occurs when there is specific teaching and cooperation with and by fellow students, teachers and arguably fathers and mothers.

Home-school partnerships

Successful and positive home-school partnerships support children in their learning. These partnerships are further enhanced by families who have high expectations for their children (Alton-Lee, 2003; Biddulph, Biddulph, & Biddulph, 2003; Wylie, 2004; Wylie & Hodgen, 2007). Effective teachers recognise the importance of a positive link between the school and home (Ortiz & Ordonez-Jasis, 2005). When parents are well informed about what is happening in the classroom learning programmes this supports the child, particularly when an intervention programme is being planned. For example, Padak & Rasinski's (2006) research on a home reading involvement programme for primary grade students demonstrated increases in reading achievement. Throughout daily 10 -15 minute sessions the parents read a short passage both to and with their child, listened to the child read the text, and discussed and engaged in a related word study activity. These programmes have been instigated both in the early and middle years of schooling. The children in this study achieved in reading well above what would normally be expected.

Attitudes to reading by New Zealand children

Children's attitudes to reading in New Zealand have appeared to decline as they reach adolescence. For example, the 2008 New Zealand National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) reading assessment of Year 4 students (children eight to nine years of age) and Year 8 students (children 11 to 12 years of age) showed that reading as a preferred leisure activity outside of school declined markedly between 2004 and 2008 (Crooks, et al., 2009). In 1996, 77% of Year 8 students cited reading as a preferred leisure activity. By 2008, that percentage had dropped by 18 percent. The NEMP data indicated that in Year 4, 80% of the students were positive about reading in their own time compared to 59% of the Year 8 students. With these factors in mind, and the lack of research on fathers and their influence on their

children's attitudes in reading, particularly as they reach adolescence, it seemed timely to investigate the perceptions of fathers.

Thus our research investigation sought to explore the influences of fathers in supporting their young adolescent children's attitude and interest in reading. Our study looks at a key issue in regards to the partnership between fathers and their children when reading in the home environment.

Methodology

Qualitative researchers are focused on appreciating human behaviour and circumstances from the research participants' own perspectives (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2007; Hammersley, 1992). Our investigation paid attention to exploring the participants in their normal setting, teasing out meaning in an inductive way and looking for cultural patterns (Hammersley, 1992). By employing in-depth interviewing we sought to give truthful explanations of the social world and what was taking place (Neuman, 2003). As the qualitative approach is responsive to actual experiences, as researchers, we wanted to acquire the insiders' perspectives by interviewing in the home environment. The resulting thick descriptions provided us with a rich and comprehensive description of the social phenomena of how fathers viewed reading. We wished to explore the effects this had on their own children's attitudes to and success in reading (Punch, 2009).

The authors of this study asked principals of six schools, which represented a wide variety of school types in New Zealand, to nominate fathers of Year 7 and 8 students who represented a range of reading abilities. Twelve fathers were selected by the principals. However, the principals, similar to our earlier study (Fletcher, et al., 2010) previously discussed, had difficulty locating fathers as volunteer research participants due to the work commitments and other availability issues.

A semi-structured interview schedule was constructed. The critical question underlying the development of the interview schedule was, 'What are we trying to find out about the father's attitudes to reading and the links from this to their children's reading?' The order of the questions was considered and if the questions would progressively develop and the fathers would feel at ease from the start of the interview (Punch, 2009). A final consideration was to trim down the number of questions to a size that would make the research manageable to

make them acceptable to the fathers from a time perspective. As the interviews were semi-structured, the number of questions was also limited to allow for the interviewers to follow up on issues and for the interviewee to add additional information that they perceived as relevant. Questions were asked such as: ‘How do you encourage your child to read at home?’, ‘Can you tell me about your child’s reading?’, ‘How do you rate your child’s ability to read?’, ‘What kind of texts does your child read for enjoyment?’, ‘Can you tell me about your own school experiences, particularly relating to learning to read?’ and ‘Do you go to the library and if so do you take your child?’

The children of the twelve fathers interviewed had been identified by their teacher as above average, average or below average in reading. Six fathers had a child in Year 7 or 8 whose reading was categorised by their teachers as above average, four fathers had children of average ability and one father and one grandfather (who was the primary care-giver) had children below average in reading. The greater number of fathers who had children in the above average category was an interesting factor. Although we did not explore the actual selection process with the principals who had nominated the fathers, it would be intriguing to know if some fathers of children who had below average ability in reading had turned down the opportunity to participate, and if so, what their reasons were.

The fathers were interviewed individually. The interviews were recorded digitally, then transcribed. Initially the interview data were categorised according to three identified ability groups in reading. The strategy drew on particular analysis processes used in grounded theory which included open/initial coding, axial coding and selective coding (Charmaz, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1990a). This provided a model of systematic inquiry where the data could be compared (Punch, 2009). Once the data collection was completed early codes were developed, in consideration of the research questions. These were influenced by the literature and the theory (Harry, Klinger, & Sturges, 2005). These codes tended to be descriptive requiring minimal or no inference further than the portion of data itself (Punch, 2009). This included father’s attitudes to reading, their early educational experiences and their perceptions of their children’s reading. This provided a clearer definition of the data that fitted with particular codes and helped to define coding categories as precisely as possible (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Harry, et al., 2005). Using these categories as a guide, the overall data were scanned to look for patterns and any discrepancies.

All the data were read and reread to begin to create provisional labels. These labels became a first level of inference. Axial coding was then used to carry out a second order analysis of the interview transcripts (Neuman, 2003). Axial coding, contrasting to open coding which breaks the data open, endeavours to link things to each other (Punch, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1990a). The axis is put through the data, connecting the codes identified throughout the process. In our study this involved looking for themes in the data which linked with one another to provide a denser web of support for emerging main ideas within the qualitative data (Neuman, 2003). For example, attitudes to reading of the father had clear links to their child's attitudes to reading. Charmaz (2003, p. 260) explained this as "making connections between a category and its subcategories."

The final stage used selective coding to examine the data and prior codes in order to sort out the overall analysis around core ideas (Charmaz, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1990b).

Throughout this procedure of selective coding the major codes that re-emerged frequently led the research (Charmaz, 2003; Neuman, 2003). These included concepts such as the source and availability of books in the home, the fathers' beliefs about the importance of reading, and the expectations of their children's abilities in reading at school. Using these core ideas we then examined the transcripts from the fathers of high achievers, average achievers and low achievers in reading. This enabled us to better understand major concepts in order to explore relationships between achievement levels in reading and fathers' involvement and attitudes.

Discussion and findings

The findings are reported as three groups relating to fathers of high achieving children, fathers of average achieving children, and fathers of children underachieving in reading.

1. Fathers of children with above average ability in reading

This was the largest group interviewed as six out of the twelve fathers had children of high ability in reading. The children came from four schools: two intermediate schools (Years 7 and 8), a full primary school (Years 1 to 8) and an integrated (Catholic) full primary school (Years 1 to 8). There were three boys and three girls represented and all of the children lived in two parent families, with the father being employed outside the home. Interestingly, not only were all the children from two parent homes, but they also had in common a high

number of siblings and none were only children. Fifty percent came from families with four children and 50 percent came from families with three children. Fifty percent were the eldest in the family, and 33 percent were the youngest in the family.

Other factors in common included the ethnicity of the fathers. All but one, who was African, were of European descent. All of the fathers were either qualified tradespersons, in a profession or a manager of a large workplace.

Common themes

The fathers interviewed had a number of background factors in common. All of the fathers reported having little difficulty educationally, although two regretted that they had not been pushed harder to achieve more. One father reflected on this by articulating his own experiences which had made him determined to do better with his own children. He said:

To be honest, probably (I) wasn't pushed enough to read (at school) ... And I wasn't encouraged at home... I'm from a single parent family and my mother was never a big reader.

When asked if he considered reading important he responded:

Absolutely, yeh!!

Considering his own childhood background it was clear he was determined to ensure his child had more positive experiences in reading support.

All of the fathers were active readers. Some read fiction and non-fiction while others preferred Internet articles, newspaper articles or Bible related literature. They all reported success in English within the school system, including the father for whom English was a second language. The six fathers also described themselves as regular library users and comfortable with and knowledgeable about library resources. They also showed themselves to be well informed about their children's progress in reading. This was clear from their discussions about school reading programmes, reporting methods to parents, interviews with teachers and conversations with their children. They uniformly commended their child's school reading programmes and said their children loved reading and had been well taught. The father who was of African descent said:

I think I should thank the primary school. They have done a lot to help (my child read). And one thing I just discovered recently is ... kids in New Zealand, they learn in primary schools.

Another father said:

I've got no complaints at the moment. I mean, we've probably been quite lucky because she loves reading.

As a group they were knowledgeable about the types of books their children read and their preferred authors and genres. A father describing his daughter's reading spoke in detail about it. He explained, as did other fathers in this group:

She loves history books. Those 'My Story' books. They are like historical novels... It's a range of different authors. She was reading one about a little Roman child and she was reading one about a little Irish child being brought up on the West Coast...She has read all the Harry Potter books as well.

The strong connections between the home culture and the school culture in relation to knowledge of books and authors was clearly evident with this group of fathers (Alexander & Fox, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978).

The fathers had accompanied their children to public libraries when time permitted, although in most cases they said they left this to their wives as they were working. One father said:

We go and we get a stack of books out with the children.

Another father added to this by saying:

Yeh, I go with them (to the library) but because of my work-load I find it a bit hard sometimes.

Even so, when asked which person took most responsibility for encouraging reading at home, most fathers thought they took an active role. This was particularly so for bedtime reading and modeling reading as an enjoyable pastime. There was a clear focus on the need, as a responsible father, to take an interest in their son or daughter and ask them about school and their current reading pursuits.

Only two fathers felt qualified to recommend titles and authors to their children although there was a feeling that it would be good if libraries and schools provided lists to move children beyond their favoured author or series. All fathers rated the library as highly important in providing good reading material and saw this as a key ingredient to encourage reading. A minority purchased books for their children. Additionally, the group unanimously rated reading as very important as a success factor in adult life and an interesting and enjoyable leisure pursuit. One father stated:

Well like I said, it's the basis of everything and the children, if they are reading fiction, then it's good for (them)...It keeps their imaginations going and things like that.

This theme, evident amongst this group of fathers with children of above average reading ability, was in line with sociocultural theory. When a child's own family background and experiences are well-matched with that of their schooling, students are likely to be more successful (Grenfell, 2009; Lai, et al., 2009; Macfarlane, 2010).

In this investigation the fathers of children with above average reading ability they had a successful educational background, read widely and expected to be involved in their children's reading development both at home and in school.

2. Fathers of children of average reading ability

This group of four fathers had children at three different schools. Two were intermediate schools and the other was an integrated full primary school. The schools covered a wide range of socio-economic levels. Three girls and one boy were represented and they came from a range of family sizes from two siblings to five siblings. Three of the children were of European descent and one was of Pasifika descent. The fathers were mostly employed in semi-skilled positions but one was a qualified tradesperson.

Common themes

For this group of fathers of children who were of average reading ability being a good reader related more to succeeding in education and occupation rather than reading being a pleasure and an exciting way to learn new things of interest. One father expanded on this by explaining:

The rate of change is so phenomenal right now and it's scary. And the more you can equip them with a better vocabulary and a way of expressing themselves and understanding of concepts and things then the better.

This father saw reading as a way of achieving with an end product of high literacy skills ensuring that his child would do well in our fast-paced and highly literate world.

One other father explained the notion of successful reading as being important job and vocation for reading by saying:

It's important (reading) because she will go for a job interview or something.

This father recognized the links between reading and employment. It was a repeated theme with this group was the belief that reading was important primarily as a vocational tool to develop employable skills.

Only two of these fathers regularly visited the library but one who did not said his wife ensured the children went regularly. He said:

My wife is ... definitely regular with, taking them down (to the library) and bringing books home for them.

He added that his wife was more involved generally. He explained that:

Due to the fact that, you know, she's been a stay-at-home mum, you know, so she's had the time, obviously... I've been the worker of the family... away working all day, and you come home and you spend as much time as you can with the kids. But you can never make up for someone who stays home all day.

Another father said that no parent accompanied his children to the local public library. The father, who was Pasifika, and heavily involved in school governance as a member of a school board, said he did not go to the library himself and only one of his five children went. He added:

Yeh, the library up First Avenue ... once a month she (his daughter) goes.

This father did not see himself as the key person who helped with reading at home saying that the older children in the family, who were more fluent in English had helped the younger

ones. This father was the only widower in the study. His wife had died seven years ago and with employment and social responsibilities such as being on the school board he relied heavily on his older children to help the younger children with home reading tasks.

All of this group of fathers said they enjoyed reading, although the Pasifika father said that reading in English was difficult for him. Interestingly, they all had high expectations about their children's reading. Three out of four of the fathers said they thought their child was reading at an above average reading level, even though the teachers had rated the children from this group of fathers as of average ability in reading. Two of the fathers had read to their children when they were younger. Two fathers also articulated the importance of allowing time for children to read in bed before going to sleep. They were mostly happy with the school reading programme. One father, recently arrived from England commented very favourably about the library at his daughter's intermediate school. He said:

It is almost like an adult sort of coffee room with sofas everywhere. It's brilliant!

He had seen the library as part of a tour his daughter had given him of her classroom and school. This clearly impressed the father and made him feel part of his daughter's reading experience.

Two of these fathers were familiar with the books the children were reading which links with the information that they do not regularly go to the library with their children. One father when asked about library visits commented:

I wouldn't be able to tell you that (the use of the local library). My wife knows.

He added he did not discuss reading books with his son or take note of what he was reading. When asked what authors or books his son really liked to read he said:

Without asking him, I wouldn't know that either.

For these four fathers of children with average ability in reading, it appeared that they were not consistent in accompanying their children to the library and some relied on their wife or older family members to undertake this role. Personal circumstances influenced the home backgrounds. In line with sociocultural theory a child's background and cultural experiences influence learning and are enhanced when they are congruent with their teacher and the wider school environment (Grenfell, 2009; Lai, et al., 2009; Macfarlane, 2010). But where they are

lacking in compatibility, as in the widowed Pasifika father's circumstances, opportunities may be limited.

3. Fathers of low ability children

This small group of only two fathers included a grandfather who had adopted his two grandchildren because of a serious domestic situation. The children came from two schools, an intermediate, and an integrated full primary school. The schools were widely different in socio-economic status. The children were both girls, one from a family of two children and one from a family of three children. Both of the girls were the youngest in their families. The two fathers were or had been employed as semi-skilled workers, though the grandfather was now retired. Neither of them had had successful educational experiences and both read for information rather than pleasure. Both read newspapers regularly but only used books for information such as looking up recipes in cook books or technical diagrams in engineering textbooks. The father said his own reading was:

Usually just newspapers and the odd special interest magazine I subscribe to.

Common themes

The father and the grandfather were aware that their children, (one grandchild) were reading at a below average level. The father felt some frustration about the school's reporting system and level of support. He said:

We don't get a quarterly report. It's moved more into a teacher-pupil interview type of situation which doesn't give any grading or standing... but we have established that her comprehension is lower than average but we really had to push to find that information out.

The grandfather was satisfied with the school's help feeling that his grand-daughter's needs had been identified and the school was doing what it could. He explained:

You've got to realize that Penny (pseudonym) has had a pretty turbulent life and quite a few schools and not much parent support and now we've got her we are trying to recover quite a lot of time.

The father and grandfather did not visit the library regularly but said they encouraged their children to go independently. Neither of them could recall seeing their child read anything except magazines. They were unable to name their child's favourite authors or books but knew the names of the magazines they read. The father said that he had read to his children when they were younger. He explained:

We still read together (now), have them read to us or ask them explain it to us in their own words, the meaning of what they had read...and any words they might struggle to pronounce or understand, we have got a huge dictionary. We make them look words for correct spelling and meaning.

The father did not read for pleasure, only information and this attitude had followed through into his reading interactions for his child. The father did not rate himself as being a particularly involved parent in helping with reading at home. He said:

My wife, because she wasn't particularly well read too, and does have probably, feel she has, less reading comprehension than me, so she is very acutely aware of making sure all the children read well.

The grandfather had a positive attitude to reading but was aware of his grand-daughter's lack of interest in reading but had not been involved in school reporting until recently when he and his wife had taken over her care. They had always known that she did not like reading and had tried to encourage her by buying magazines and taking her to the library, where she took out more magazines. The grandfather tried to encourage his grand-daughter through formalized instruction. He said:

We notice a huge improvement once she started (living with us) ... We often play games in the car and it is just something I did to try and get her to recognise words.

This was the only child in our study who was not living with one or both parents so it is difficult to be sure if these factors alone have influenced her low ability in reading. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there is possibly a link between the lack of compatibility between her earlier home environment and the school's culture. This would likely have exacerbated by the variety of schools she attended.

The only father in our study to voice dissatisfaction with their child's school reading programme was from this group of fathers who had a child with a low ability in reading. He perceived that he could have been better informed about his child's progress. He wanted to help but did not know how to do this beyond re-inventing his own school experiences with word study and dictionary work.

The grandfather, in particular, mentioned his frustration at being unable to help his granddaughter who had endured a turbulent life. Both the father and grandfather in this group had a realistic knowledge of their child's reading difficulties and clearly wanted to help but felt frustrated that the school staff did not give them many ideas on things they could do at home. They did not consider seeking private tutoring, possibly because they could not afford this added expense.

Conclusions

This research study explored the partnership between fathers and their young adolescent children when learning to read. The children who had been categorised as average or above average in reading had fathers who were more likely to view reading as a pleasurable pastime rather than a requirement for instructional advancement in education. This was particularly noticeable for the fathers with children above average in reading. These fathers articulated a keen interest in reading through their own recreational interests. They frequently used libraries alongside their children, and had strong perceptions that their child enjoyed reading. Additionally, these fathers demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of the genre and authors their children preferred. In contrast, the fathers of low ability children had less successful experiences educationally, were not recreational readers, viewed reading as an information requirement only, and did not visit libraries regularly with or without their children.

The fathers whose children were above average ability in reading showed detailed knowledge of the school and classroom reading programme and were kept informed by the school reporting system. This was also the case for most of the fathers who had children with average ability in reading. Conversely, both of the children with low ability in reading had less congruent experiences between home and school. In one case, the child had little home support and disrupted school experiences having attended several schools. The other child had a father who was unhappy with the school reporting system and frustrated with the

classroom reading programme. In both of these cases a lack of alignment between the school and home culture was evident (Cullen, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978). This was despite the father's and the grandfather's best intentions.

Teachers and school leaders both within New Zealand and internationally could consider the evidence put forward in this study when organising information sessions about classroom reading programmes. They could also encourage fathers to take a greater role in their children's reading by arranging school meetings in the local public library at times when fathers would be more likely to attend.

This research provides a starting point towards understanding the importance of a father's encouragement of and interest in reading in the home environment. It clearly showed that the fathers in this study who did this well, had 11 to 13 year old children with above average or average ability in reading. Teachers, teacher librarians and teacher educators need to take cognisance of the critical role father's play in supporting and influencing their child's attitude to and ability in reading. We call for further research internationally that explores these 'blank spots' in our research knowledge. By uncovering the role of fathers in supporting their children's literacy acquisition, particularly those of young adolescents whose attitudes and interest in reading tends to wane at this time in their schooling, as teacher educators and teachers we can better meet these young adolescents literacy learning needs.

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These children don't have to reread passages multiple times to gain comprehension because of not knowing words. They can read a passage and pronounce most of the words without difficulty, which frees up their brain to work on comprehending what they've read. On the other hand, students who lack fluency struggle with comprehension because they spend so much time trying to decode words that once they've moved on to a new paragraph they've forgotten what was in the previous one. Some have stated that fluency can become a problem if students do not understand that the point of fluency is to read with involvement influences the child's overall development including the intellectual development, gender-role development, and psychological development. He can be just as loving and nurturing as the mother. Most kids who share an intimate and warm relationship with their fathers tend to grow up to become more confident adults. As children grow up, fathers assume the role of a friend, guide and mentor. The presence of an actively involved father at home goes on to make a lot of difference in the lives of children. Read on to understand the different roles a father needs to play to effectively raise a child. Father As A Playmate. While mothers are better at singing rhymes and dancing silly, dads make excellent play mates, especially for rougher and physical games. Good genes can give a young child a head start when it comes to learning to read, but it's not enough to overcome the effects of a poorly rated school. Those are the findings of Florida State University researchers who looked at whether schools or genetics play a greater role in influencing a child's ability to read. The research is outlined in a new study published in the journal *Developmental Science*. The study indicates that while attending a top or "A" school will help a child's natural intellectual abilities flourish, that same child might falter if he or she attended a school with a low