

DNA markers can help explain children's reading ability

An international team of scientists from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Sweden has used a genetic scoring technique to predict reading performance throughout school years from DNA alone.

Led by Saskia Selzam, a Ph.D. candidate in social genetic and developmental psychiatry at [King's College London](#), UK, the study shows that a genetic score comprising around 20,000 of DNA variants explains five per cent of the differences between children's reading performance.

Students with the highest and lowest genetic scores differed by a whole two years in their reading performance.

These findings highlight the potential of using genetic scores to predict strengths and weaknesses in children's learning abilities.

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"These scores could one day be used to identify and tackle reading difficulties early, rather than waiting until children develop these problems at school," Selzam and co-authors said.

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"We hope these findings will contribute to better policy decisions that recognize and respect genetically driven differences between children in their reading ability," said study senior author Professor Robert Plomin, also from King's College London.

The [findings](#) were published online this week in the journal *Scientific Studies of Reading*.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Genetic Researchers Predict Children's Reading Ability from DNA](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP](#) on Wikipedia.