YOUNG READERS' INTERACTIONS WITH STORYBOOK APPS
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ABSTRACT

Traditional (print) storybooks have long been the major media where young children are exposed to new concepts and narrative structure, thus developing their comprehension skills. In recent years, these reading materials have evolved dramatically with increasing production and usage of digital storybook apps.

This study is part of a larger project that included a well-controlled, empirical study examining the impact of interactive features of storybook apps on key reading processes and outcomes for young children, including listening and reading comprehension, engagement and motivation, and reading behaviors. The research addressed critical gaps in the current literature by controlling for the presence of a digital device and by varying the genre of the text. Included in the larger project were hours of video data showing young readers' interactions with storybook apps. This study examined the video data to address the current lack of understanding about young readers' interactions with storybook apps, looking at issues such as the number and types of interactions that young readers spontaneously choose to implement. This research will increase the existing knowledge of children's behaviors in working with storybook apps.

The results of this study specifically make a contribution to the research literature as much needed empirical evidence on the nature and extent of children's interactive use of storybook apps. The study found that when young readers are presented with storybook apps that have a higher ratio of story related interactive features than non-story related interactive features

they do, in fact, tend to engage more with the story related interactive features. This is consistent across ability levels, gender, and grade-level. This new understanding about children's interactive behaviors during reading storybook apps can help in developing storybook apps that can serve as educational tools that support young readers' comprehension of stories and help teachers in determining which apps would be best to use in the classroom.