
Reading Competence as Predictor of Economics Academic Achievement among Lagos State Senior Secondary School Students in Nigeria

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Abstract: This article investigated the influence of reading competence on academic achievement of senior secondary school students in economics in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a self-constructed questionnaire and an Economics achievement test as data collection methods. Two research questions were raised, and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical approaches. The findings revealed that Economics academic achievement of students is below average. It also showed that reading comprehension had a significant relative influence on Economics academic achievement of students in Lagos State ($\beta = .169$, $P < 0.05$). Furthermore, a significant joint contribution of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on academic achievement of students in Economics in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools ($F_{2, 305} = 2.115$, $P < 0.05$) was found. It was recommended based on the findings, among other things that there should be relevant strategies introduced to content-area instruction such that all economics teachers will foster reading competencies in their classrooms, which will culminate into improved academic achievement in Economics.

Keywords: Academic achievement, Comprehension, Economics, Fluency, Reading Competence

1. Introduction

Economics academic achievement of students is of utmost importance for the realisation of the aims, goals and objectives of secondary school education in Nigeria. Considering the current spate of underdevelopment, unemployment, economic meltdown, recession and inflation plaguing the country nowadays, there is need for students in the educational institutions to have proper knowledge and understanding of Economics. This will culminate in demonstrable academic achievement in the subject, allowing the student to constructively contribute to the nation's economic growth and development.

Economics is a social science subject, studied at the post primary schools as well as higher institutions in Nigeria. It is a subject that deals with the services development, commodity markets, distribution, and consumption. It studies how, business, government, and nations like Nigeria make choices about how to allocate scarce resources. Economics' driving principle as a subject is perhaps the need to furnish students with the fundamental knowledge and abilities necessary to comprehend the nature of economic challenges in any society such as Nigeria (Aliyu et al., 2021). Academic achievement of senior secondary school students in such a subject therefore becomes imperative.

Economics academic achievement represents the understanding of secondary school students about different concepts and skills developed in Economics (Moore, 2019). It is how well students are able to assimilate, retain, recall, master, and communicate their knowledge of what they have learnt in Economics (Kenni, 2020). In the context of this study, Economics academic achievement of secondary school students is viewed as their grades or scores in Economics which determine their academic status as well as their mental ability, prowess and capacity in Economics as a subject (Ile & Nkiruka, 2020).

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Despite the important role of Economics to every nation, it has been observed that students' academic achievement in the subject in Lagos state senior secondary schools is not encouraging, as the available statistics from West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) showed a drop in the number of students who obtained credit passes (A1 – C6) in Economics for period of five years 2018 to 2022. In this data, Lagos state was ranked 14th position in the proportion of candidates who obtained credit passes as a percentage of the proportion of candidates who sat for the examination each year (2018 - 2022). Within this period, Lagos state recorded 77.2%, 71.3%, 81%, 83%, and 69.0% for the year 2018 – 2022 with a mean percentage of 76.3%. Whereas, in a similar study which evaluated achievement of credit passes by candidate in Nigeria, between the period of 2014 – 2018, Lagos State was ranked 8th position (Mohammed, 2023; Oguguo & Uboh, 2020).

Few factors have been proffered for this drop in academic achievement of students in Economics in Lagos state. These factors include – school facilities and teaching methods (Ikegbusi et al., 2022; Salahudeen et al., 2018). However, in order to fully understand the interconnected factors that may be causing this drop in performance, this study looked into the reading competence of students in Lagos State senior secondary schools in Nigeria, to determine the extent to which reading competence fosters or impinges on their academic achievement in Economics. It is seemingly evident that any discussion of reading competency in a multilingual setting like Nigeria must recognise the liberator potential of English language, being the vehicle of knowledge transfer across the curriculum. Reading development is an area of study that crosses a variety of disciplines, therefore, any investigation or discussion on achievement in any school subject of secondary level of education in Nigeria must of necessity centre on reading in English as prescribed by the National policy on Education (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), 2013).

1.1 Language Provision in the National Policy on Education

The Nigerian National Policy on Education acknowledges the value of language in education and encourages the use of both English and indigenous languages. The language policy in Nigeria encourages multilingualism. Since its imposition on Nigerians by the colonial administration edict, English language has held a dominating place as the official language and in certification (Owolabi & Okebukola, 2009). The policy states that local languages are utilized as the Language of Instruction (LOI) in the first three years of primary school (primary 1-3), while English is taught as a subject (i.e English Language Teaching - ELT). English language becomes the LOI throughout the remaining years of the child's education, that is, from primary 4 onwards, and the local language is taught as a subject (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), 2013).

This implies that at the secondary school level, students should be able to understand written or printed symbols, receive, recognize, retain, recall or remember ideas or information from any piece of writing. In other words, they must have attained considerably high level of competence in reading to thrive academically both in language arts and content-area instruction that is, other subjects in the school curricula (Muhid et al., 2020). Reading competence is the most important instrument for mastering any subject. It is the ability or potential to read, and it suggests that a student has the aptitude and capacity to decode or make logical sense of written content (Dickens & Meisinger, 2017). Reading competence is therefore a quality that secondary school students must possess in order to operate and succeed academically in all subjects. A good reading competence will make secondary school students to stand at a vantage position to be motivated to read and learn because they are making meanings from the printed text in Economics subject (Gbadegesin, 2019; Okebukola et al., 2013).

A number of studies indicate that reading competence is influenced by a variety of motivational elements, including self-perceived competence and task values as important predictors of motivation and task engagement. For instance, Wigfield and Eccles (2000) presented an expectancy-value hypothesis, which claims that one's perceived success or failure of a task, as well as the value placed on relative attractiveness of the activity, have a substantial influence on competence. Cox (1991) considers the optimal reader to be one who feels knowledgeable and sees reading as having personal and practical benefit. These statements suggest that an individual's perception of their success or failure in a reading task, as well as the importance they attach to the activity, significantly impacts their competence. In other words, if a person believes they are capable of understanding and comprehending economic texts and considers reading in economics to be valuable, they are more likely to develop better reading skills in that subject. On the other hand, if they perceive themselves as unsuccessful or lack motivation and interest in economics, their competence in reading economic texts may be hindered. Thus, the individual's mindset, motivation, and perception of the task's value play a crucial role in their ability to effectively read and understand economics-related materials. Owolabi and Okebukola (2009) averred that the value placed on self-concept is supported by a robust research literature that documented the link between competence and academic achievement.

Within this theoretical framework, reading competence in this study is defined as the ability to make meanings from printed text in Economics as a school subject at the secondary level of education, and it is evaluated based on self-concepts of students as readers and the importance they place on reading. The researchers in this article believe that the qualitative research conducted herein holds significant importance, specifically for teachers who engage in reflective practice, not limited to the field of Economics but applicable to various subject-specific classrooms as well. A few studies related to the influence of reading competence on academic achievement of students in content-area subjects have been documented. However, empirical evidence of the influence of reading competence on the achievement in Economics in

Lagos state appears sparse. This provides a basis for concerns to be addressed. Current research about this area of study shapes our understanding of practical concerns.

1.2 Evidence from Research

Researchers have established links between reading competence of students and the scores they attain in tests. It has been recognized that reading competence is at the heart of the pervasive problems faced in teaching subjects in the school curricula. As noted by Okebukola (2019), the reason Nigerian youths experience failure in their examinations across different subjects is not solely due to their failure to read their textbooks but also stems from their inadequate reading skills and lack of competence in reading comprehension. Findings of a study by Ayça (2022) in Turkey revealed that comprehension levels and reading speed had a significantly strong effect on students' mathematical skills. Akbasli, Sahin, and Yaykiran (2016) also reported that reading comprehension contributes positively to academic achievement in the sciences. Also researchers (Okebukola et al., 2013; Okebukola, 2019; Owolabi & Okebukola, 2009) found that students' level of comprehension influences academic achievement in the sciences and that the following reading strategies foster internal comprehension monitoring and metacognitive abilities in the sciences; (a) PQRST (Preview Question, Read Summarise and Text), (b) QAR (Question-Answer Relationship), (c) TWA (Teaching with Analogy) and (d) Multiple intelligence based method. A study carried out by Iheakanwa, Obro, and Akpochofo (2021) revealed that there is a significant relationship between reading competence and academic achievement in social studies. The results of these studies clearly indicate the need to increase teachers' understanding of how learners' reading competence and academic achievement in Economics can be bolstered.

1.3 The Present Study

Literature search showed that very little attention has been given to the influence of reading competence on students' academic achievement in Economics. It is on this premise that the current study was undertaken with the aim of addressing the following inquiries.

1.3.1 Research Question

- i. What is the level of academic achievement in Economics among students in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools?
- ii. What is the reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) of students in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools?

1.3.2 Hypotheses

At a significance level of 0.05, the following null hypotheses were formulated and subjected to testing:

- H₀₁:** There will be no significant joint contribution of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on Economics academic achievement among Lagos State senior secondary school students.
- H₀₂:** There will be no significant relative influence of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on Economics academic achievement among Lagos State senior secondary school students.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A descriptive type of survey design was employed to carry out the study. The chosen design for this study was deemed appropriate as it enables the researcher to accurately portray the characteristics of the participants without introducing any interference or manipulation to the variables.

2.2 Population/Sample

The target population used in the study consisted of all the public senior secondary school three (SSS 3) students in Lagos State. Senior secondary school three students were used because they are at the final stage of the secondary school level and also an examination class. They have also learnt the subject of Economics for about nine terms. The sample for the study consisted of 503 students selected by simple random and purposive sampling techniques.

2.3 Instrumentation

Primary data was obtained through the use of a self-constructed questionnaire and Economics Achievement Test (EAT). The questionnaire was titled – "Reading Competence and Academic Achievement in Economics Questionnaire (RCAAEQ)". The questionnaire consisted of 14 items. Section one consisted of the demographic data of the students such as gender and age; Section two consisted of six items on reading comprehension; and section three consisted of six items on reading fluency. The questionnaire was validated using content and face validity type and subjected to reliability test using Cronbach's alpha and a value of .793 was obtained. This value meant that the questionnaire is, internally consistent. The Economics Achievement Test (EAT) consisted of five subjective questions of which the students were allowed to answer any three of the questions. Each question was allotted 10 marks. Students were given 20 minutes to

answer the questions. Kuder Richardson twenty-one (KR_{21}) was used to determine the reliability of the achievement test. A high reliability value of .912 was obtained.

2.4 Procedure

The instruments were produced and administered to the 503 sampled public senior secondary school students in Lagos state. However, only 445 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved while 419 were found to be valid. Also, out of the 503 EAT, only 337 were retrieved while 328 were found to be valid.

2.5 Data Analysis

The collected data underwent analysis employing descriptive statistics, which were utilized to present the demographic information through frequency counts and percentages. Additionally, mean and standard deviation were employed to address the research questions. Inferential statistics, including multiple regression, were then applied to test the hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05.

3. Results

3.1 Demographic Data of the Students

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Public Senior Secondary School Students

Demographic Variable		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	142	41.3
	Female	202	58.7
	Total	344	100
Age	Below 15 years	85	24.9
	15-19	251	73.4
	Above 19 years	6	1.8
	Total	342	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

This showed the frequency distribution of public senior secondary school students' demographic variables in Lagos State. It reveals more female, 202(58.7%) to male, 142(41.3%) students. The age of the students reveals that 85 (24.9%) are below 15 years of age, 251 (73.4%) are within 15-19 years of age and the remaining 6 (1.8%) are above 19 years of age. This implies that a major fraction of the students are adolescents.

3.2 Answers to Research Questions

3.2.1 Research Question one: What is the level of Economics academic achievement among Lagos State senior secondary school students?

Table 2 Students' Academic Achievement in Economics (n = 328)

S/N	Scores from the Economics Achievement Test	Rating	Freq	Perc.	Mean (\bar{x})	SD	Decision	Observation
1	0-14	Fail	260	79.3%	1.207	.41	Fail	The students were more familiar with questions on banking system (CBN) followed by definitions of Economics as a subject followed by labour system. They were least familiar with questions on taxation system and demand/supply
2	15-30	Pass	68	20.7%				
Total	30 Marks		328	100				

Field Work, 2023;

KEY: Freq. = Pass (P) = 2; Fail (1); Freq = Frequency; Perc. = Percentage; SD = Standard Deviation; Threshold mean value of 0.000-1.499 = Fail; 1.500-2.000 = Pass.

Table 2 showed that the level of Economics academic achievement of public Lagos State senior secondary school students is poor as the majority of them, 260 (79.3%) scored below average in the Economics Achievement Test (EAT). These students scored below 14 marks. Only very few of them, 68(20.7%) passed the questions on the test as they scored 15

marks and above out of 30 marks. The mean (SD) of **1.207 (.41)** confirms that most of the students failed the Economics Achievement Test (EAT). This result implied that the students are performing poorly in Economics.

3.2.2 Research Question two: What is the reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) of students in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools?

Table 3 Level of Reading Comprehension among Public Senior Secondary School Students

S/N	Items	A	S	R	N	Mean (x̄)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	I grasp the central concept of the material during the process of reading Economics textbooks	126 (46.5%)	109 (40.2%)	22 (8.1%)	14 (5.2%)	3.280	.82	Good
2	When reading Economics textbooks, I find out more on the words that are new to me	107 (38.5%)	49 (17.6%)	89 (32.0%)	33 (11.9%)	2.827	1.07	Good
3	During the act of reading, I make an effort to interpret the writer's intended meaning or purpose in Economics textbooks	111 (38.3%)	107 (36.9%)	37 (12.8%)	35 (12.1%)	3.014	1.00	Good
4	In economics examinations, I have the ability to swiftly comprehend the overall meaning of a sentence before moving on to the subsequent one.	47 (15.3%)	49 (15.9%)	134 (43.5%)	78 (25.3%)	2.211	1.00	Poor
5	I easily understand Economics questions during examinations	59 (21.9%)	55 (20.4%)	97 (35.9%)	59 (21.9%)	2.422	1.06	Poor
6	I prefer to replace some difficult words with simple ones when I cannot remember the exact words during examinations	37 (16.7%)	102 (45.9%)	44 (19.8%)	39 (17.6%)	2.617	.96	Good
Criterion Mean = 2.500; Weighted Mean = 2.729; SD = .99; Overall Decision = Sometimes (Good)								

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Key: Always (A) = 4; Sometimes (S) = 3; Rarely (R) = 2; Never (N) = 1, Std. Dev = Standard Deviation

Mean Threshold: If the mean is 0.000-1.499 = Never (Very Poor); 1.500-2.499 = Rarely (Poor); 2.500-3.499 = Sometimes (Good) and 3.500 to 4.000 = Always (Very Good)

Table 3 showed that the level of reading competence in terms of reading comprehension among public Lagos State senior secondary school students is good as most of the students ‘sometimes’ comprehend their economics subject as revealed by the weighted mean of 2.729(SD = .99). However, a careful observation of the table shows that the students are poor in areas of comprehending and answering questions on tests/examinations. Perhaps, this could be responsible for the failure of students in the Economics Achievement Test.

Table 4 Level of Reading Fluency among Public Senior Secondary School Students

S/N	Items	A	S	R	N	Mean (x̄)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	When reading a text in Economics textbook, I find it easy to pronounce all the key words accurately	139 (33.2%)	40 (9.5%)	115 (27.4%)	125 (29.8%)	2.461	1.23	Poor
2	I am able to decode single words in Economics textbooks without making any error	128 (39.8%)	114 (35.4%)	55 (17.1%)	25 (7.8%)	3.071	.94	Good
3	I accurately and effortlessly make use of Economics specific words when writing examinations	101 (37.0%)	95 (34.8%)	49 (17.9%)	28 (10.3%)	2.985	.98	Good

4	I maintain proper speed during the reading Economics texts accurately	99 (36.9%)	75 (28.0%)	49 (18.3%)	45 (16.8%)	2.851	1.10	Good
5	I am able to read Economics texts with proper intonation, phrasing and expression	106 (39.3%)	95 (35.2%)	41 (15.2%)	28 (10.4%)	3.033	.98	Good
6	I often find it easy to respond correctly to some questions during examination	54 (19.0%)	69 (24.3%)	106 (37.3%)	55 (19.4%)	2.430	1.01	Poor
Criterion Mean = 2.500; Weighted Mean = 2.805; SD = 1.04; Overall Decision = Sometimes (Good)								

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Key: Always (A) = 4; Sometimes (S) = 3; Rarely (R) = 2; Never (N) = 1, Std. Dev = Standard Deviation

Mean Threshold: If the mean is 0.000-1.499 = Never (Very Poor); 1.500-2.499 = Rarely (Poor); 2.500-3.499 = Sometimes (Good) and 3.500 to 4.000 = Always (Very Good)

Table 4 showed that the level of reading competence in terms of reading fluency among public senior secondary school students in Lagos State is good as most of the students are ‘sometimes’ fluent when reading their economics subject as revealed by the weighted mean of 2.805 (SD = 1.04). However, a careful observation of the table shows that the students are poor in areas of pronouncing key words accurately and responding to questions in tests/examinations. Perhaps, this could be responsible for the failure of students in the Economics Achievement Test. In answer to research question two, the level of reading ability in terms of reading comprehension and reading fluency with reference to economics subject is good.

3.3 Test of Hypotheses

3.3.1 H₀₁: There will be no significant joint contribution of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on Economics academic achievement among Lagos State senior secondary school students.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis and Model Summary

		ANOVA					
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	.709	2	.355	2.115	.122	Significant
	Residual	51.148	305	.168			
	Total	51.857	307				
Model summary							
R = .117							
R Square = .014							
Adjusted R Square = .007							
Standard Error of the Estimate = .40951							

Dependent Variable: Academic achievement of Students in Economics

Predictors: (Constant), Reading fluency, Reading comprehension

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

F-value is significant at 0.05*

Table 5 showed a significant joint contribution of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on academic achievement of students in Economics in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools ($F_{2, 305} = 2.115, P < 0.05$). The above results imply that reading comprehension and reading fluency jointly predict students’ academic achievement in Economics. The model summary (R = .117; $R^2 = .014$; Adjusted $R^2 = .007$; standard error of the estimate = .40951) shows that a variability of 0.7% (adjusted $R^2 = .007$) in students’ academic achievement in Economics can be explained by reading comprehension and reading fluency (independent variables) which are to keep in the model. The model summary shows a standard error of .40951 which can be easily ignored.

3.3.2 H₀₂: There will be no significant relative influence of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on Economics academic achievement among Lagos State senior secondary school students.

Table 6 Coefficients of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Coefficients				T	Significant value
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Beta		
	B	Standard Error				
1 (Constant)	1.211	.088			13.688	.000
Reading comprehension	.015	.007	.169		2.031	.043*
Reading fluency	-.013	.008	-.141		-1.702	.090

Dependent Variable: Economics Academic Achievement of Students

Source: Fieldwork, 2023; *Beta Coefficients significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 6 showed that the beta coefficient (β) and t-values for reading comprehension (Beta = .169; $t = 2.031$; Significance = .043) is relatively significant at $P < 0.05$. However, reading fluency (Beta = -.141; $t = -1.702$; Significance = .090) is not relatively significant on students’ academic achievement in Economics at $P > 0.05$. This implies that reading comprehension ($\beta = .169$) is the strongest predictor of Economics academic achievement of students. The Unstandardized Coefficients (B) imply that a one-unit increase in reading comprehension caused an increase (the positive sign of the coefficient) in Economics academic achievement of students by a score of 0.015. Also, a one-unit increase in reading fluency caused a reduction (the negative sign of the coefficient) in Economics academic achievement of students by a score of just 0.013. The small standard error values for each of the significant predictors indicates greater precision since the error values are small.

4. Discussion of Findings

This study was carried out to examine the influence of reading competence on Economics academic achievement among Lagos state senior secondary school students in Nigeria. Research question one showed that the level of public senior secondary school in Economics academic achievement of students in Lagos State is poor as majority of the students scored below average in the Economics Achievement Test (EAT). This result completely disagreed with that of (Akinloye et al., 2015) who carried out a research work on “A Comparative Analysis of Students’ Performance in Economics in Private and Public Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria” and reported a good academic achievement of students in Lagos state secondary schools. This result may be different from that of this present study probably because the former was carried out about eight (8) years ago. As at eight years ago, the academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Lagos was on a good standing, unlike the present state of the results, wherein it is beginning to decline as revealed by the students’ performance from WASSCE, 2022. Furthermore, the result of this study is in line with that of Akinyemi, Lawal, and Owosoro (2021) who revealed below average performance of students in various subjects including Economics in the Lagos State district V. This result is similar to that of the present study probably because it was carried out in 2021 of which the academic achievement has currently began to decline. This work therefore confirmed the result of this present study.

Research question two revealed that the level of students’ reading competence in terms of ‘reading comprehension’ and ‘reading fluency’ with reference to economics is good. Most of the students ‘sometimes’ comprehend and are fluent when reading their economics texts which is good although not very good. This result disagreed with that of Gbadegesin, (2019) whose topic is on “Reading Ability and Public Secondary School Students’ Performance in English Language in Saki-West Local Government Area of Oyo State” revealed poor reading ability (comprehension and fluency) among the students. Although both studies were carried out in Southwest, Nigeria, this present study showed that the reading ability of students in Lagos State is better than those in Oyo State.

Hypothesis one showed a significant joint contribution of reading competence (reading comprehension and reading fluency) on academic achievement of students in Economics in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools. This finding completely in consonance with the work of Iheakanwa et al. (2021) who revealed a significant joint contribution of Reading ability and test of reading comprehension on performance of students in Social Studies in Delta State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two revealed that reading comprehension is relatively significant at $P < 0.05$ while reading fluency is not relatively significant on students’ academic achievement in Economics at $P > 0.05$. This finding partially disagreed with the work of Iheakanwa et al. (2021) who revealed that both reading fluency and reading comprehension are relatively significant on performance of students in Abraka Delta State, Nigeria.

5. Conclusion

This study was carried out to examine reading competence as predictor of students' academic achievement in Economics in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools. Findings from the study revealed below average academic achievement of students in Economics in the State. It also showed that their reading competence in terms of reading comprehension and reading fluency is good as most of them 'sometimes' comprehend and are fluent when reading their economics subject. Lastly, it was concluded from the findings of the study that reading comprehension and fluency had significant joint contribution on students' academic achievement in Economics. However, only reading comprehension had a significant relative influence of students' academic achievement in Economics in the State. Drawing upon these findings, it can be inferred that there is a substantial influence of reading comprehension on Economics academic achievement of students in Lagos State. Reading fluency though good did not have any significant influence on students' academic achievement in Lagos State.

6. Recommendations

The recommendations herein were provided based on the findings of the study:

- i. **Enhance reading comprehension instruction:** Given that reading comprehension had a significant positive influence on academic achievement in Economics, it is crucial to prioritize and strengthen reading comprehension instruction. Teachers should employ evidence-based strategies that explicitly teach students how to comprehend and analyze complex texts. This can involve teaching comprehension strategies such as predicting, summarizing, making inferences, and monitoring understanding. Providing students with ample opportunities to practice these strategies and offering feedback on their comprehension skills can help improve academic achievement in Economics.
- ii. **Provide targeted support for students with reading comprehension difficulties:** Recognizing the importance of reading comprehension in academic achievement, it is essential to identify and support students who struggle with this skill. Implementing diagnostic assessments to identify specific areas of weakness and tailoring interventions accordingly can be beneficial. Teachers can provide additional instructional support, such as small-group or individualized instruction, to address students' reading comprehension challenges. Utilizing research-based intervention programs and incorporating technology-based tools for reading comprehension practice can also be helpful in supporting struggling students.
- iii. **Foster a reading culture:** Despite the lack of a relative influence of reading fluency on academic achievement, promoting a reading culture remains important. Educators should encourage students to engage in regular independent reading, both within and beyond the scope of Economics. Providing a variety of reading materials related to Economics, such as books, articles, and online resources, can increase students' exposure to the subject and foster a deeper understanding. Additionally, organizing reading-related activities, book clubs, or discussion groups can further enhance students' interest in reading and its connection to academic achievement.
- iv. **Integrate reading comprehension across the curriculum:** Recognizing the interdisciplinary nature of reading comprehension, it is crucial to integrate reading strategies and practices across various subjects, including Economics. Teachers in different disciplines should collaborate to emphasize the importance of reading comprehension skills and provide opportunities for students to apply these skills in different contexts. By integrating reading comprehension into the curriculum, students can see the relevance of these skills beyond the realm of language arts and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

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