

Why some people become lifelong readers

They can be identified by the bound, printed stacks of paper they flip through on their *lap*. They are, for lack of a more specific term, readers.

lap 膝盖

Joining their tribe seems simple enough: Get a book, read it, and voilà! But behind that simple process is a question of motivation — of why some people grow up to derive great pleasure from reading, while others don't.

As Daniel Willingham explains in his book *Raising Kids Who Read*, three variables have a lot of influence over whether someone becomes a lifelong reader.

First, a child needs to be a “fluent decoder,” — that is, able to smoothly “go from print on the page to words in the mind.” This is something that schools teach, but parents can help with it by reading to and with their kids.

Second, Willingham said, these fluent decoders benefit from having wide-ranging background knowledge about the world. “The main predictor of whether a child or an adult understands a text is how much they already know about the topic,” Willingham noted.

Once those two things are in place, the final component is “motivation — you have to have a positive attitude toward reading and a positive self-image as a reader,” Willingham said.

There are, as so many parents are all too aware, loads of benefits to being able to read in terms of later-in-life outcomes, but the focus should be on helping kids discover the *intrinsic* value in it, in the moment. After that, other good things will come.

intrinsic 本质的；固有的