

**Critical Review:**

**Do the reading skills of children with nonsyndromic cleft lip with or without cleft palate resemble their noncleft peers?\***

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This critical review examines the literature on the reading skills of children with and without nonsyndromic cleft lip and palate. All four articles included in this review had a between groups study design. Overall, the results of this review provide suggestive evidence that children with nonsyndromic cleft lip with or without cleft palate score lower on measures of reading as an overall group however the evidence does not suggest that this group is scoring within the deficit range. Recommendations for clinical practice and future research are discussed.

Orofacial clefts occur as a result of a disruption in the embryological development of the structures of the face (Bender, 2000). According to Bender (2000), cleft lip with or without cleft palate (CL/P) is one of the most common structural birth defects occurring in approximately one in seven hundred newborns. The presentation and severity of the cleft varies considerably

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appropriate linear regression analyses comparing children with clefts to controls was completed and multiple comparisons were controlled for to decrease the probability of Type 1 error. Results revealed that children with clefts scored significantly lower than controls on measures of basic reading, phonological memory, and reading fluency although the mean scores fell within the average range on all measures.

This was a well

recommendations from ASHA (2016), every child with a orofacial cleft should be evaluated and monitored by a speech language pathologist on a consistent basis throughout their development. By doing so, intervention can be implemented at the earliest possible time. This is critical as research has indicated that intervention for reading difficulties ideally will start before 7 years of age (Collett et al., 2010b).

American Speech-Language Hearing Association.  
(2016). *Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/CleftLip/>

Bender, P. L. (2011). Genetics of cleft lip and palate. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing, 15*(4), 242-249.