

# USDE Gives High Ratings to Reading Recovery's Scientific Research

A long-awaited independent review of research in beginning reading programs revealed that just one program, Reading Recovery, has positive effects or potentially positive effects across all four domains studied:

- alphabetics (phonemic awareness, print awareness, letter knowledge, and phonics)
- fluency
- comprehension
- general reading achievement

The What Works Clearinghouse review procedure was established by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to help educators and school leaders select programs with proven effectiveness. No other early reading intervention measures up to Reading Recovery's overall ratings and improvement indices. In addition, Reading Recovery's rating and effect size for general reading achievement is the largest of all programs reviewed.

See [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning\\_reading/](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/) for the complete report.

## **Reading Recovery Produces Measurable Results in Weeks, Not Years**

Reading Recovery is a highly successful short-term intervention for the lowest literacy achievers in first grade. Children receive 30-minute daily lessons taught by specially trained teachers. After just 12 to 20 weeks, more than 75% of these lowest students reach grade-level standards. Evaluation data on over 100,000 children each year demonstrate the remarkably consistent results achieved in thousands of American schools.

## **Reading Recovery Provides Powerful Professional Development Linked to Student Achievement**

Reading Recovery's yearlong training develops remarkable literacy teachers and leaders for schools. In 2006–2007, the average Reading Recovery teacher taught 8 Reading Recovery students, plus 41 students outside Reading Recovery.

## **Reading Recovery's Instructional Approach Recognizes Individual Differences in Learning**

Reading Recovery achieves consistent results in schools because it relies on highly trained teachers who understand that learning to read is complex. Especially for struggling readers, individual instruction by an informed teacher provides flexibility to recognize individual differences and adapt teaching to meet each student's needs. Interventions that focus on single factors in the reading process do not achieve the same results.

## **Reading Recovery Can Play An Important Role in a School's Implementation of the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

Reading Recovery is by definition an early intervening service (EIS) and a response to intervention (RTI) approach. Reading Recovery provides early intervening service for the lowest-performing first graders. Reading Recovery's high success rate reduces referrals and placements in special education. As an RTI, Reading Recovery provides a full diagnostic history for the few children who may be identified as needing further, long-term literacy support.



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## **Reading Recovery:**

- **Extraordinary Professional Development**
- **School Tested**
- **Scientifically Proven**

# What Works Clearinghouse



## Beginning Reading

March 19, 2007

## Reading Recovery®

**Program description** *Reading Recovery*® is a short-term tutoring intervention program intended to serve the lowest achieving (bottom 20%) first-grade students. Students are chosen for *Reading Recovery*® by school staff, and selection is based on prior reading achievement, diagnostic testing (the Clay Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement), and teacher recommendations. The goals of *Reading Recovery*®

are to promote literacy skills and reduce the number of first-grade students who are struggling to read. The program supplements classroom teaching with one-on-one tutoring sessions, generally conducted as pull-out sessions during the school day. Tutoring, which is conducted by trained *Reading Recovery*® teachers, takes place daily for 30 minutes over 12–20 weeks.

**Research** Four studies of *Reading Recovery*® met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards, and one study met WWC evidence standards with reservations. These five studies included about 700 first-grade students attending elementary schools in diverse settings across the United States. All studies

focused on low-achieving students who received the *Reading Recovery*® intervention in first grade. Generally, outcomes at the end of first grade were used by the WWC to calculate a rating of effectiveness.<sup>1</sup> In one study, longer range effects were included.<sup>2</sup>

**Effectiveness** *Reading Recovery*® was found to have positive effects on students' alphabetic skills and general reading achievement outcomes. The program was found to have potentially positive effects on comprehension and fluency.

	Alphabetic skills	Fluency	Comprehension	General reading achievement
<b>Rating of effectiveness</b>	Positive effects	Potentially positive effects	Potentially positive effects	Positive effects
<b>Improvement index<sup>3</sup></b>	Average: +34 percentile points Range: –10 to +50 percentile points	Average: +46 percentile points Range: +32 to +49 percentile points	Average: +14 percentile points Range: +6 to +21 percentile points	Average: +32 percentile points Range: –5 to +50 percentile points

1. The evidence presented in this report is based on available research. Findings and conclusions may change as new research becomes available.

2. Additional findings on outcomes measured at later time points are shown in Appendix A4.4.

3. These numbers show the average and range of improvement indices for all findings across the studies.