

What Works Clearinghouse



Reading Recovery®

Effectiveness^{1,2}

No studies of *Reading Recovery*® that fall within the scope of the English Language Learners (ELL) review protocol meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The lack of studies meeting WWC evidence standards means that, at this time, the WWC is unable to draw any conclusions based on research about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of *Reading Recovery*® on ELL.

Program Description³

Reading Recovery® is a short-term tutoring intervention designed to serve the lowest-achieving (bottom 20%) first-grade students. The goals of *Reading Recovery*® include: promoting literacy skills; reducing the number of first-grade students who are struggling to read; and preventing long-term reading difficul-

ties. *Reading Recovery*® supplements classroom teaching with one-to-one tutoring sessions, generally conducted as pull-out sessions during the school day. The tutoring, which is conducted by trained *Reading Recovery*® teachers, takes place for 30 minutes a day over a period of 12 to 20 weeks.

The WWC identified 13 studies of *Reading Recovery*® for English Language Learners that were published or released between 1997 and 2008.

Three studies are within the scope of the ELL review protocol but do not meet WWC evidence standards. These studies do not establish that the comparison group was comparable to the treatment group prior to the start of the intervention.

Eight studies are out of the scope of the ELL review protocol because they have an ineligible study design. These studies do not use a comparison group.

One study is out of the scope of the ELL review protocol for reasons other than study design. The study does not include a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention.

One study uses a single-subject design for which the WWC is currently developing standards and, therefore, could not be reviewed at this time.

1. The English Language Learners review protocol includes only those interventions conducted in English in the review. It does not include interventions conducted in Spanish. Therefore, the Spanish version of *Reading Recovery*® frequently used for English language learners, *Descubriendo la Lectura*, was not included in this review and will not be discussed in this intervention report.
2. The studies in this report were reviewed using WWC Evidence Standards, Version 2.0 (see the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Chapter III).
3. The descriptive information for this program was obtained from a publicly available source: the program’s website (www.readingrecovery.org, downloaded August 2009). The WWC requests developers to review the program description sections for accuracy from their perspective. Further verification of the accuracy of the descriptive information for this program is beyond the scope of this review.

References Studies that fall outside the ELL review protocol or do not meet evidence standards

- Ashdown, J., & Simic, O. (2000). Is early literacy intervention effective for English language learners? Evidence from *Reading Recovery*. *Literacy Teaching and Learning: An International Journal of Early Reading and Writing*, 5, 27–42. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.
- Gilliam, K. E. (2002). *Exploring the effect of the Reading Recovery program on the reading achievement of first grade English-as-a-Second-Language students*. Unpublished master's thesis, Mercer University, Atlanta, GA. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.
- Kelly, P. R. (2001). Working with English language learners: The case of Danya. *The Journal of Reading Recovery*, 1(1), 1–11. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Kelly, P. R., Gómez-Bellengé, F., Chen, J., & Schulz, M. M. (2008). Learner outcomes for English language learner low readers in an early intervention. *TESOL Quarterly*, 42(2), 235–260. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- McRight, R. L. (2002). A longitudinal descriptive case study of an English language learner in a *Reading Recovery* program: Factors in success for an LEP student. (Doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University - Commerce, 2002). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 63(06A), 227–2181. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Mykysey, N. (2004). The sustainability of gains in reading measures of Spanish-speaking children who experience *Reading Recovery*: A four-year retrospective quasi-experimental study. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66(01A), 104–191. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.
- Neal, J. C., & Kelly, P. R. (2003). The success of *Reading Recovery* for English language learners and *Descubriendo la Lectura* for bilingual students in California. In S. Forbes, & C. Briggs (Eds.), *Research in Reading Recovery* (pp. 257–280). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Paine, D. S. (2000). To what degree have the effects of *Reading Recovery* been sustained in second and third grade as measured by standardized test scores in reading and their relationship to exiting text reading levels? (Doctoral dissertation, University of La Verne, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 61(09A), 157–3506. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Reading Recovery Council of North America. (2002). *More than one million children served: Reading Recovery results, 2000–2001*. Worthington, OH: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it is not a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention, such as a meta-analysis or research literature review.
- Reid, L. (2001). *How does the use of Reading Recovery techniques and individualized reading strategies affect the reading skills of middle-school, second language learners? Action research project*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED456646). The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.
- Rock, C. L. (1998). The effectiveness of *Reading Recovery* for limited English proficient students with varying personality types. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Central Florida, 1998). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 59(3-A), 0772. The

References *(continued)*

study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Yerington, L. (2004). Language interactions between *Reading Recovery* teachers and their English-language learners. (Doctoral dissertation, University of San Diego, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65(05A), 191–1635. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Studies with disposition pending

Clark, K. A. (2003). A single-subject experimental design: A *Reading Recovery* child's change over time in writing. Unpublished master's dissertation, The College at Brockport, State University of New York. The study is not included because it uses a design for which the WWC is currently developing standards.