

**National High School Center Research Studies: High School Literacy
January 2010**

The research pieces included in this document have been vetted using the National High School Center's research review criteria and received a score of 3 or 2, which are ratings reserved for the most rigorous study designs. A score of 3 or 2 indicates more confidence in the researchers' conclusions. Further explanation of the criteria is available at <http://betterhighschools.org/docs/ResearchReviewCriteria09232008.pdf>.

Alfassi, M. (1998). Reading for meaning: The efficacy of reciprocal teaching in fostering reading comprehension in high school students in remedial reading classes. *American Educational Research Journal*, 35(2), 309–332. (quantitative study)

This study investigated whether students who were instructed with reciprocal teaching methods (strategic instruction) would outperform students who were instructed with more-traditional methods of remedial reading (skill acquisition). Participants included 75 freshman high school students who were enrolled in Chapter 1 remedial reading classes from two high schools. Groups were similar on reading measures, SES, and gender. Although the students in the strategic instruction group (treatment group) outperformed their control counterparts on the experimenter-designed reading comprehension tests, there were no significant differences between the groups on two standardized measures of reading.

Link: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1163426>

Aguhob, M. (2006). *READ 180 in Seminole County, Florida*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc. (quantitative study)

This study examined the effects of READ 180 in high schools in Seminole County Public Schools. Researchers randomly assigned almost 300 9th and 10th grade students in 7 high schools to 12 READ 180 classrooms. Florida's Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Reading assessment results showed that after 6 months, 25% of READ 180 students showed an increase of at least one reading level. White students achieved greater gains than other racial subgroups; there were no significant differences by gender or socioeconomic status. Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) data indicated that 9th and 10th grade students demonstrated one year's reading growth. Students also showed improvements in reading grades. As a whole, READ 180 students had significantly higher gains than overall district gains.

Link: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/read180/research/pdfs/SR_Seminole_FL_Full_April_07.pdf

Catone, W., & Brady, S. (2005). The inadequacy of Individual Educational Program (IEP) goals for high school students with word-level reading difficulties. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 55(1), 53-78.
(qualitative study)

This study analyzed the goals from the IEP of 54 high school (HS) students diagnosed with reading disabilities in basic reading skills (e.g. letter/word identification and/or decoding) to determine whether IEP appropriately acknowledged and addressed these issues. When available, the authors also examined the students' IEPs from elementary school (ES) and/or middle school (MS) and compared these to the high school IEP. It was found that most of the HS IEPs failed to address student deficits in basic reading skills. Comparisons with ES and MS IEPs found that the rate in which these skills were address declined as the student progressed through school. There was an increase in comprehension goals from ES to MS and HS. This study also investigated whether there was a systematic relationship between the severity of student skills deficit and their IEP objectives. No significant relationships were found. The authors conclude that the limited or lack of attention to basic skill deficits in IEPs as students progress in their schooling may explain why these problems remain when they reach MS or HS.

Link: No public link available.

Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center. (2006). *CSRQ Center report on middle and high school comprehensive school reform models*. Washington, DC: Author. (synthesis)

This research synthesis reviewed the research on middle and high school comprehensive school reform (CSR) models. Different CSR models are described and the research evaluating these models is examined across several areas, including impact on student achievement, overall and by subject; effects for diverse populations; and other outcomes, such as parent, family, and community involvement; and services and support provided to schools to enable successful implementation.

Link: <http://www.csrq.org/MSHSreport.asp>

Curtis, M. E. (2002). *Adolescent reading: A synthesis of research*. Paper presented at the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development & National Institute for Literacy conference Adolescent literacy—research informing practice: A series of workshops, Baltimore, MD, May 20, 2002. (synthesis)

This synthesis aims to (1) present a framework for characterizing the questions researchers have asked regarding adolescent reading; (2) determine the extent to which those questions have been answered; and (3) suggest some questions that have yet to be considered. For the 155 studies reviewed, outcomes examined included print (accuracy, fluency), language (word meaning, sentence and discourse processing), cognition (content knowledge, strategic knowledge, ways of knowing), and situation (motivation, context).

Link: <http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adolescent/overview.html>

Davis, M. H., & McPartland, J. M. *Supporting high school teachers with instructional approaches for adolescent struggling readers*. Baltimore, MD: Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University. (quantitative study)

Each of the three types of teacher support--workshops, instructional materials, and ongoing coaching--resulted in better implementation of three recommended instructional practices for struggling adolescent readers: teacher modeling (read-aloud), student team discussions, and self-selected reading. Even when timing of implementation was consistent across the three practices, coaching yielded the highest quality of implementation. Furthermore, the teachers with the least amount of self-reported preparation benefited the most from coaching. Researchers also found that while use of traditional teaching strategies (meaning NOT the recommended strategies) declined after treatment conditions were implemented, the quality of the traditional teaching strategies increased, particularly when coaching was provided to teachers. Schools with coaching also produced the greatest gain in normal curve equivalent comprehension – an average of 3 after the first term and 5 after the second term.

Link: http://www.every1graduates.org/PDFs/ToolsModels/Davis_McPartland_Ad_Lit.pdf

Deshler, D. D., Palincsar, A. S., Biancarosa, G., & Nair, M. (2007). *Informed choices for struggling readers: A research-based guide to instructional programs and practices*. New York: Carnegie Corporation. (synthesis)

This book discusses issues and practices in adolescent literacy. The first part of the book highlights research on strategies that have worked and discusses implementation issues to fit needs unique to specific schools and districts. The second half of the book describes several adolescent literacy programs and synthesizes their evidence.

Gersten, R., & Baker, S. (2001). *Teaching expressive writing to students with learning disabilities: A meta-analysis*. *The Elementary Journal, Special Issue: Instructional Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities*, 101(3), 251-272. (synthesis)

This report presented a meta-analysis of writing interventions for students with learning disabilities. Interventions focused on writing expository or narrative texts. Thirteen studies were found that fit the authors' criteria. Results indicated that interventions had a positive effect on students' writing and understanding of the writing process. It was also found that three key factors should be made explicit when implementing writing interventions with students with disabilities (1) the steps of the writing process, (2) the critical dimensions of different writing genres and (3) the process of giving feedback to students on the quality of their writing.

Link: <http://www.jstor.org/view/00135984/ap030665/03a00020/0>

Goe, L. (2007). *The link between teacher quality and student outcomes: A research synthesis.* Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. (synthesis)

This research synthesis reviews the most recent research conducted on the impact of teacher characteristics on student achievement. The review aims to address the following questions: (1) What is teacher quality? (2) How can it be measured? (3) How important is it to student learning? (4) Do certain aspects of teacher quality have a stronger impact on student achievement for specific students, subjects, or grade levels? (5) How important is teacher experience? (6) How can teacher quality be better understood?

Link: <http://www.tqsource.org/publications/LinkBetweenTQandStudentOutcomes.pdf>

Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools—a report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. (meta-analysis)

This study conducted a meta-analysis on 11 research-based practices aimed at improving the writing skills of 4th to 12th graders. The practices are (1) writing strategies, (2) summarization, (3) collaborative writing, (4) specific product goals, (5) word processing, (6) sentence combining, (7) prewriting, (8) inquiry activities, (9) process writing approach, (10) study of models, and (11) writing for content learning. The results of the meta-analyses indicate that the practices examined had a large to medium effect size on students' writing skills.

Link: <http://www.all4ed.org/files/WritingNext.pdf>

Hewes, G. M., Palmer, N., Haslam, M. B., & Mielke, M. B. (2006). *Five years of READ 180 in Des Moines: Improving literacy among middle school and high school special education students.* Des Moines, IA: Scholastic, Inc. (quantitative study)

This is a quasi-experimental study on more than 1,200 special education students who participated in Scholastic READ 180 in Des Moines Independent Community School District. Data show that students who participate in more years of READ 180 perform better than students who did not continue in the program. While former READ 180 students continued to make gains, these gains were not as large as scores for those who continued in the program. For three of the five achievement measures—Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test for comprehension and total score and the Scholastic Reading Inventory—the effects of READ 180 were positive and statistically significant.

Link: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/read180/pdfs/SR_Des-Moines-5-Year_IA_Full_June_06.pdf

International Reading Association. (2007). *Teaching reading well: A synthesis of the International Reading Association's Research on teacher preparation for reading instruction.* Newark, DE: Author. (synthesis)

This synthesis identified six main research-based components of effective teacher preparation programs designed to teach students how to read well. The components are (1) content; (2) faculty and teaching; (3) apprenticeships, field experiences, and practica; (4) diversity; (5) candidate and program assessment; and (6) governance, resources, and vision. Each component is described and implications for program design are discussed.

Link: http://reading.org/downloads/resources/teaching_reading_well.pdf

Kamil, M. L. (2003). *Adolescents and literacy: Reading for the 21st century*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. (synthesis)

This research synthesis reviews the research on adolescent literacy. It adds to existing reviews by including less-rigorous studies and other genres of research that address motivation, alphabetic principle, fluency, and comprehension.

Link: <http://www.all4ed.org/files/archive/publications/AdolescentsAndLiteracy.pdf>

Kemple, J., Corrin, W., Nelson, E., Salinger, T., Herrmann, S., & Drummond, K. (2008). *The Enhanced Reading Opportunities study: Early impact and implementation findings* (NCEE 2008-4015). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (quantitative study)

This report presents early findings from the Enhanced Reading Opportunities (ERO) study, which is a rigorous evaluation of two supplemental literacy programs, Reading Apprenticeship Academic Literacy and Xtreme Reading. The study examined the impact of the two programs on ninth graders' reading comprehension skills and found that overall, the programs did have a positive impact on test scores. However, students were still 2 years below grade level. Examination by the program found similar, although not statistically significant, results. Further, schools that started the implementation sooner and aligned their implementation more closely to the program's model had larger impacts on student comprehension skills.

Link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20084015.asp>

Killion, J. (2002). *What works in the high school results-based staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council. (synthesis)

This report gives an overview of the relationship between student achievement and teacher quality. The first part of the report highlights the impact of teacher quality on student achievement and the role of professional learning. The second part describes several staff development programs that were selected on the basis of a set of criteria and summarizes the impact these programs have on student achievement.

Link: <http://www.nsd.org/connect/projects/hswhatworks.pdf>

Langer, J.A. (2003). *Beating the odds: Teaching middle and high school students to read and write well*. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), 837–880. (qualitative study)

This qualitative study of 25 middle and high schools investigated characteristics of English language programs that differentiated higher-performing schools from more-typically performing schools. Schools were demographically similar. Analyses found six categories of characteristics that differentiated the schools: (1) approaches to skills instruction, (2) test preparation, (3) connecting learning, (4) enabling strategies, (5) conceptions of learning, and (6) classroom organization. Although the typically performing schools exhibited some of the characteristics, the higher-performing schools presented them all the time.

Link: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED435993>

Lewis, K., McColskey, W., Anderson, K., Bowling, T., Dufford-Melendez, K., & Wynn, L. (2007). *Evidence-based decision making: Assessing reading across the curriculum interventions (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007-No.003)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Laboratory Southeast. (synthesis)

This report describes reading curriculum initiatives that are being implemented in the southeastern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina). It also describes seven selected reading programs and discusses the evidence they have on student achievement.

Link: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/pdf/REL_2007003.pdf

Meltzer, J., Smith, N. C., & Clark, H. (2001). *Adolescent literacy resources: Linking research and practice*. Providence, RI: Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University. (synthesis)

This synthesis reviews the research on adolescent literacy from the past 20 years. Implications for classroom practice are discussed and organized as follows: Instructional Implications, Curricular/Program Implications, Structural/Systemic Implications, Professional Development Implications, and Assessment Implications. Implications for classroom practice based on this review are discussed.

Link: http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/adlit/alr_lrp.pdf

Scammacca, N., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Edmonds, M., Wexler, J., Reutebuch, C. K., & Torgesen, J. K. (2007). *Interventions for adolescent struggling readers: A meta-analysis with implications for practice*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. (meta-analysis)

This meta-analysis of 31 studies examined whether reading interventions could assist elementary, middle, and high school students with reading difficulties and learning disabilities. Overall, results showed that students who received a reading intervention outperformed students in the control group. This positive effect was also found for students with disabilities across all measures. Further, with few exceptions, studies that examined reading comprehension found that reading interventions could have a positive effect on reading comprehension. However, an examination of those studies that measured reading comprehension showed that the finding was not statistically significant.

Link: <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/COI%20Struggling%20Readers.pdf>

Slavin, R. E., & Cheung, A. (2003). *Effective reading programs for English language learners: A best-evidence synthesis (Report No. 66)*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University. (synthesis)

This report is a review of studies examining the impact of reading programs on English language learners (ELLs). The studies reviewed focus on comparisons between bilingual and English-only programs as well as replicable models that have been evaluated with ELLs. Results of the review indicate that there were a limited number of high-quality studies however the evidence favors bilingual education.

Link: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/techReports/Report66.pdf>

White, R. N., Haslam, M. B., & Hewes, G. M. (2006). *Improving student literacy in the Phoenix Union High School District 2003–04 and 2004–05: Final report*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc. (quantitative study)

This matched quasi-experimental study compared 9th- and 10th-grade students in 2003–04 and 2004–05 who received Read 180 with students who did not receive the program. Overall, Read 180 students significantly outperformed their counterparts on reading tests. Further, subgroup analyses found that English language learner (ELL) Read 180 students performed better than an ELL comparison group on reading achievement.

Link: http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/research/pdfs/R180_phoenixCollege_research.pdf