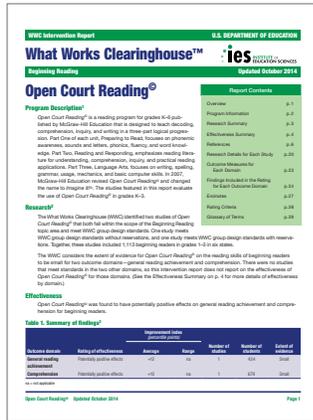


Open Court Reading Meets Top Tiers of ESSA Criteria



The What Works Clearinghouse™ (WWC) report from 2014 details two studies of the core literacy program *Open Court Reading*. This evidence-based report examined two studies which meet Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) criteria, one meeting Tier 1 (Strong Evidence) criteria while the other meets Tier 2 (Moderate Evidence) criteria.

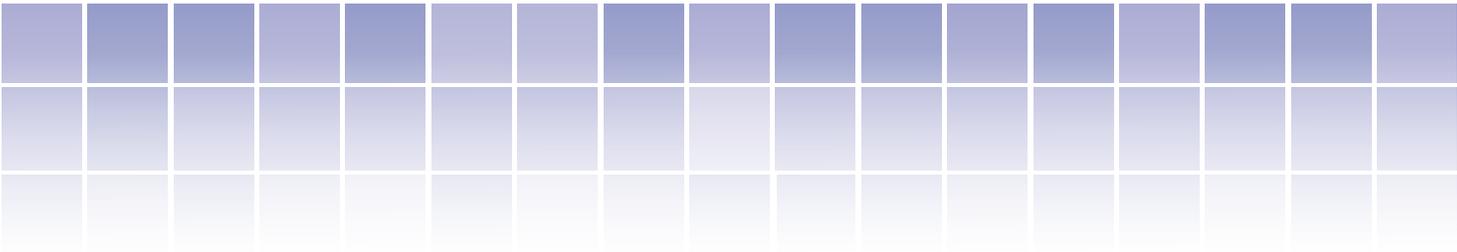
The studies in the WWC report are research-based proof of how the *Open Court Reading* program leads the way to literacy success through systematic teaching and learning. This report can help guide decisions about evidence-based curriculum.

Summary of Findings of What Works Clearinghouse™ Report (October 2014)

- Studies conducted and cited in this report met WWC design standards and comprised a total of 1,113 students in grades 1 through 3 located in six states.
- With regards to effectiveness, the report states: “Open Court Reading was found to have potentially positive effects on general reading achievement and comprehension for beginning readers.”
- Skindrud and Gersten (2006) found an average improvement index of +12 in general reading achievement. Borman et al. (2008) found an average improvement index of +10 in comprehension. These improvement indices show the expected percentile gain of the average student due to the intervention and usage of *Open Court Reading*.

Why does *Open Court Reading* lead to these findings?

- Systematic, explicit instruction is clearly linked across five major areas of reading instruction—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Students learn comprehension strategies and skills as they read a selection. Vocabulary development is always in progress – before, during, and after reading a selection.
- Students move from phonemic awareness to phonics to morphology, or the study of word structure. Students learn to identify and read meaningful chunks of words rather than decode individual spellings.
- A logical progression of skill-building in an overlapping pattern allows teachers the opportunity to introduce new skills while simultaneously reinforcing those previously learned.



Details of Study in General Reading Achievement Domain

The Skindrud and Gersten (2006) study examined the effects of the program in students in 12 Sacramento schools. The study looked at student outcomes both at the end of second grade and the end of third grade. Outcomes at the end of third grade reflected what the report called “maximum exposure” to the program. The study’s outcomes were based on the Reading subtest of the SAT-9. In the area of general reading achievement, Skindrud and Gersten (2006) found an average improvement index of +12.

When aligned with ESSA tiers of evidence criteria, the Skindrud and Gersten (2006) study and its outcomes fall in Tier 2, the Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness category. This means the study was a well-designed and well-implemented yet quasi-experimental design and had a significant favorable effect.

Details of Study in Comprehension Domain

Borman et al. (2008) looked at effects of the program in students from five schools located in five states. This study reported outcomes after 7 months of implementation. These outcomes were based on the Reading Composite score of the CTBS/5 Terra Nova test. In the area of comprehension, Borman et al. (2008) found an average improvement index of +10.

When aligned with ESSA tiers of evidence criteria, the Borman et al. (2008) study and its outcomes fall in Tier 1, the Strong Evidence of Effectiveness category. This means the study was a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design and had a significant favorable effect.

Citation:

What Works Clearinghouse, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2014, October). WWC Intervention Report: *Open Court Reading*. Retrieved from <http://whatworks.ed.gov>