

Navigating the What Works Clearinghouse for Alignment With the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Tiers of Evidence

A Step-by-Step Guide for Ohio Striving Readers Subgrant Applicants

This guide is intended for Ohio Districts applying for 2018 Striving Readers subgrants. Before using this guide, it is expected that districts will have conducted a needs assessment and are ready to choose evidence-based interventions that meet their needs based on the data.

Table of Contents

Step 1: Visit the What Works Clearinghouse website	2
Step 2. Navigate to the Literacy page on the Find What Works page	2
Step 3. Watch the five-minute How to Use FWW video.....	3
Step 4. Align interventions and outcomes with ESSA standards	4
Step 4.1. Does the intervention have a positive or potentially positive effectiveness <i>rating for the outcomes I am interested in?</i>	5
Step 4.2. Determine whether outcomes of interest have a large sample.....	6
Step 4.3. Determine whether the outcome of interest has a multisite sample.	6
Step 4.4. Determine whether outcome aligns with Strong (Tier 1) or Moderate (Tier 2) evidence.	8

Step 1: Visit the What Works Clearinghouse website

Located at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>, this URL will bring you to this page:

The screenshot shows the homepage of the IES WWC What Works Clearinghouse. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the IES WWC logo, the text "What Works Clearinghouse", a "MENU" button, and a search bar with a "Go" button. Below the navigation bar is a green banner with the text "Select topics to Find What Works based on the evidence". Underneath the banner is a grid of 12 topic icons: Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Behavior, Children and Youth with Disabilities, English Learners, Teacher Excellence, Dropout Prevention, Early Childhood (Pre-K), K-12 Kindergarten to 12th Grade, Path to Graduation, and Postsecondary. Below the grid are two main sections: "WELCOME TO THE WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE" and "HIGHLIGHTS". The "WELCOME" section contains a paragraph about the clearinghouse's mission. The "HIGHLIGHTS" section features a green megaphone icon and a call to action: "Calling all certified reviewers! Learn about how reviewers certified on version 3.0 of the WWC group design standards can update their certification to standards version 4.0." Below the highlights is a "QUICK LINKS" section with three buttons: "INTERVENTION REPORTS", "PRACTICE GUIDES", and "REVIEWS OF INDIVIDUAL STUDIES". At the bottom, there is a "Connect With the WWC" section with social media icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

Step 2. Navigate to the Literacy page on the Find What Works page

To view all reviewed literacy interventions, click on the Literacy icon:

This screenshot is identical to the one above, showing the IES WWC What Works Clearinghouse homepage. The only difference is that the "Literacy" icon, which depicts an open book, is circled in red to indicate it is the target for the next step.

This will bring you to the following page:

The screenshot shows the IES WWC What Works Clearinghouse search results page. The header includes the IES WWC logo, the text "What Works Clearinghouse", a menu icon, a search bar with "Go", and the main heading "Find What Works based on the evidence". Below the header, there is a green button "FIND RESEARCH WITH STUDENTS LIKE YOURS" and a link "How to Use FWW" with a video icon, and a "Print" button. The main content area shows "223 Results filtered by:" with a filter for "Literacy x". A table lists various literacy interventions with columns for "Evidence of effectiveness", "Intervention", "Grades examined", and "Compare".

Evidence of effectiveness	Intervention	Grades examined	Compare
<input type="checkbox"/>	Literacy Express	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phonological Awareness Training	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading Recovery®	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	READ 180®	4-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sound Partners	K-1	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phonological Awareness Training plus Letter Knowledge Training	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Instructional Conversations and Literature Logs	2-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	SpellRead	5-6	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dialogic Reading	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Success for All®	K-4	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DaisyQuest	PK-1	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Earobics®	K-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leveled Literacy Intervention	K-2	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stepping Stones to Literacy	K	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies	K-6	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 3. Watch the five-minute How to Use FWW video

Before you start searching for interventions, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has a useful 5-minute video demonstrating all the features of the site. Click on “How to Use FWW.”

This screenshot is identical to the one above, but with a red circle highlighting the "How to Use FWW" link in the top right area of the page.

This will bring you to the following page:

The screenshot shows the IES What Works Clearinghouse website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the IES WWC logo, the text 'What Works Clearinghouse', a 'MENU' button, a search bar with a 'Go' button, and a 'Search' button. Below the navigation bar, there is a 'MULTIMEDIA' section with a play button icon. The main heading is 'Find What Works Video Tour'. To the left of the text is a video player thumbnail with a play button and the text 'Click the image to play the presentation (4:24)'. The main text describes the video: 'The What Works Clearinghouse's (WWC's) Find What Works resource allows users to identify interventions, programs, policies, and practices that have been shown to have a positive impact on student outcomes. Watch this video for a quick overview of how to search Find What Works, sort and filter your search results, and dig deeper into specific interventions and studies. If you have any questions or comments, **let us know!**' Below this text is the release date: 'Released: January 2017'. To the right of the main text is a 'RELATED MATERIALS' section with a link to 'Video Transcript'. At the bottom of the page, there is a 'Connect With the WWC' section with social media icons for YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Watch the video for an informative tour of the features of the site, including:

- how to filter and sort the list of interventions by several different criteria, including how to find programs for students like yours and limiting to certain grades, delivery methods, evidence ratings, and outcomes;
- how to compare interventions;
- how to read the summary of evidence pages; and
- links to evidence snapshots, intervention reports, and review protocols.

Step 4. Align interventions and outcomes with ESSA standards

After watching the video, you can search for interventions that may meet the needs of your students. After you have chosen an intervention, you need to determine each outcome’s level of evidence under ESSA. To align WWC reviewed interventions and corresponding outcomes with ESSA standards, there are three important pieces of information to identify within the clearinghouse: effectiveness ratings, the number of students across all samples, and the number of locations the studies were conducted in.

Study/Program ratings	Criteria	Alignment with Every Student Succeeds Act evidence tiers
Meets standards without reservations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-designed, well-implemented experimental study with low attrition • Well-designed, well-implemented regression discontinuity design 	If positive effects with large multisite sample = Strong Evidence If positive effects without large multisite sample = Promising Evidence
Meets standards with reservations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-designed, well-implemented quasi-experimental design with baseline equivalence (a randomized controlled trial with high attrition can be reviewed as a quasi-experimental design) 	If positive effects with large multisite sample = Moderate Evidence If positive effects without large multisite sample = Promising Evidence

Step 4.1. Does the intervention have a positive or potentially positive effectiveness rating for the outcomes I am interested in?

The filtered and sorted list of interventions will show you at the top what interventions have positive or potentially positive outcomes within any literacy outcome and any grade level. To determine the evidence rating for each outcome, click on the intervention:

The screenshot shows the 'Find What Works' interface with the following data:

Evidence of effectiveness	Intervention	Grades examined	Compare
	Literacy Express	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Phonological Awareness Training	PK	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reading Recovery®	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
	READ 180®	4-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sound Partners	K-1	<input type="checkbox"/>

Clicking on an intervention brings you to the Summary of Evidence page.

The screenshot shows the 'Summary of Evidence' page with the following data:

Outcome domain	Effectiveness rating	Studies meeting standards	Grades examined	Students	Improvement index
Alphabetics	0	1 study meets standards	K-2	422	--
Reading achievement	++	2 studies meet standards	K-2	747	11
Reading fluency	+	1 study meets standards	K-2	281	11

Interventions often have more than one outcome domain. Outcomes that align with ESSA Tiers 1–3 must have positive (demarcated with [++]) or potentially positive (demarcated with [+]) effectiveness ratings. If an outcome has a positive or potentially positive effectiveness rating, continue to Step 4.2. If an outcome has an effectiveness rating of mixed effects (some positive and some negative effects, demarcated with [+ -]), no discernable effects (demarcated with [0]), potentially negative effects (demarcated with [-]), or negative effects (demarcated with [--]), that outcome does not meet the criteria for ESSA Tiers 1–3.

Step 4.2. Determine whether outcomes of interest have a large sample.

The “Students” column on the summary of evidence page lists the number of students across all studies that meet WWC standards. For the Ohio Striving Readers grant applications, a large sample means at least 500 students across all the studies included that meet the WWC standards. If an outcome has at least 500 students, continue to Step 4.3. If an outcome has a total sample size of fewer than 500 students (while also having an effectiveness rating of positive [++] or potentially positive [+]), that outcome meets Tier 3, Promising Evidence under ESSA.

Outcome domain	Effectiveness rating	Studies meeting standards	Grades examined	Students	Improvement index
Alphabetics	0	1 study meets standards	K-2	422	
Reading achievement	++	2 studies meet standards	K-2	747	11
Reading fluency	+	1 study meets standards	K-2	281	11

Step 4.3. Determine whether the outcome of interest has a multisite sample.

To determine whether an outcome meets the multisite criteria (a “site” under ESSA nonregulatory guidance is defined as a local education agency, locality, or state), users need to investigate details of the studies that meet standards within the Summary of Evidence page. First, click on the “Studies meeting standards” column for the respective outcome:

Outcome domain	Effectiveness rating	Studies meeting standards	Grades examined	Students	Improvement index
Alphabetics	0	1 study meets standards	K-2	422	--
Reading achievement	++	2 studies meet standards	K-2	747	11
Reading fluency	+	1 study meets standards	K-2	281	11

This will bring up all the studies that meet WWC standards:

Beginning Reading					
September 2017					
EVIDENCE SNAPSHOT INTERVENTION REPORT (863 KB) REVIEW PROTOCOL					
Outcome domain ⓘ	Effectiveness rating ⓘ	Studies meeting standards ⓘ	Grades examined ⓘ	Students ⓘ	Improvement index ⓘ
Alphabetics	0	1 study meets standards	K-2	422	--
Reading achievement	++	2 studies meet standards	K-2	747	11
		Ransford-Kaldon, C., Flynt, E. S., Ross, C. L., Franceschini, L., Zoblotsky, T., Huang, Y., & Gallagher, B. (2010)	K-2	427	14
		Ransford-Kaldon, C., Ross, C., Lee, C., Sutton Flynt, E., Franceschini, L., & Zoblotsky, T. (2013)	K-2	320	7
Reading fluency	+	1 study meets standards	K-2	281	11

Clicking on individual studies will take you to the study's summary page:

RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL EXAMINING 320 STUDENTS, GRADES K-2

Review Details | Findings | Sample Characteristics | Study Details

Reviewed: September 2017

For: [Leveled Literacy Intervention Intervention Report - Beginning Reading](#)


Using:


- [Beginning Reading Review Protocol 3.0](#)
- [Review Standards 3.0](#)

Rating:

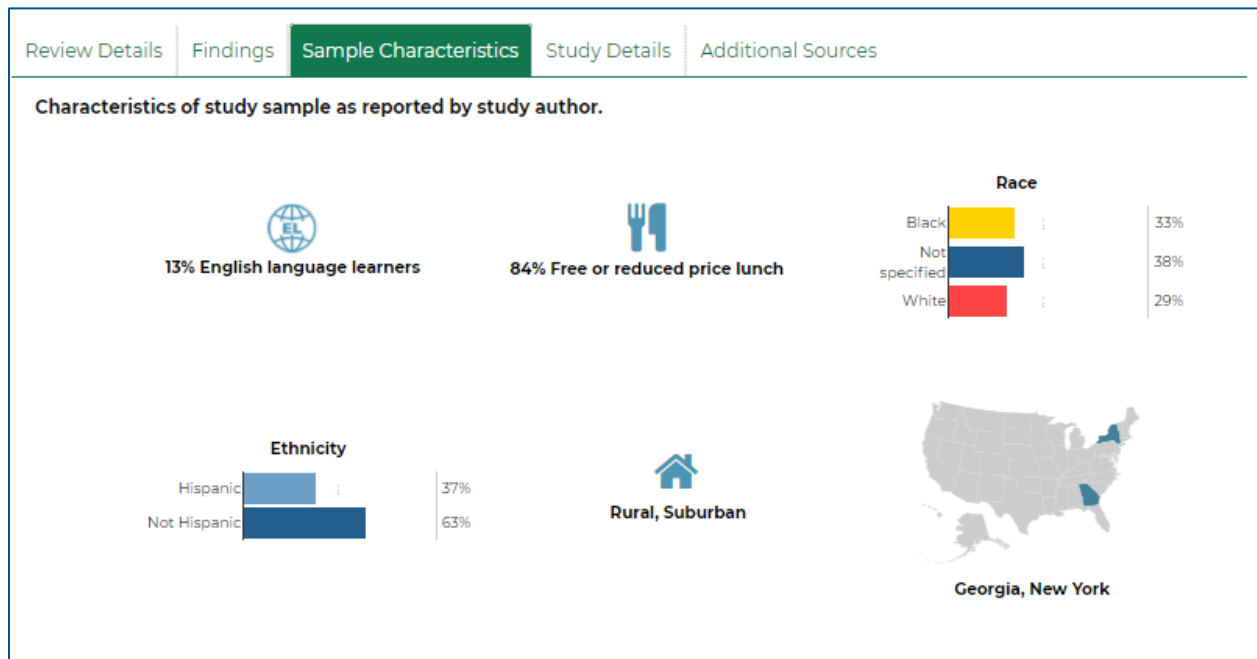
Meets WWC standards without reservations because it is a randomized controlled trial with low attrition.

This review may not reflect the full body of research evidence for this intervention. Please see the [WWC summary of evidence for Leveled Literacy Intervention](#).

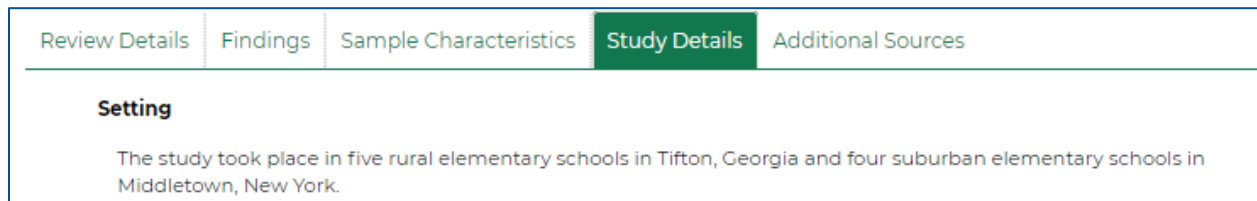

 MEETS WWC STANDARDS WITHOUT RESERVATIONS


 AT LEAST ONE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE FINDING

This summary page shows review details and individual tabs for findings, sample characteristics, and study details. The Sample Characteristics tab will show users (where available) a map of the United States, with the states included in the study shaded in blue.



In some cases, it will be necessary to read further in the Study Details tab:



After reviewing the Sample Characteristics or the Study Details tab, if the user determines that the study sample(s) were multisite, continue to Step 4.4. If the user determines that the study sample(s) took place in only one site, the outcome meets Promising evidence (Tier 3) under ESSA.

Step 4.4. Determine whether outcome aligns with Strong (Tier 1) or Moderate (Tier 2) evidence.

Studies that meet WWC standards without reservations align with the design criteria for Strong evidence under ESSA, and studies that meet WWC standards with reservations align with the design criteria for Moderate evidence under ESSA. Under the Review Details tab, the page lists whether the study met WWC standards with or without reservations. Some outcomes will have more than one study that meets standards, and each of those studies has their own rating. Alignment can be determined by the following scenarios:

- If all studies under a relevant outcome meet WWC standards without reservations, the outcome meets the criteria for Strong evidence (Tier 1) under ESSA.


- For outcomes where some studies meet standards without reservations and some meet standards with reservations:
 - If the pooled samples for the studies that meet standards without reservations are large and multisite, the outcome meets the criteria for Strong evidence (Tier 1).
 - If the pooled samples for the studies that meet standards without reservations are not large and multisite, the outcome meets Moderate evidence (Tier 2).
- If all studies under a relevant outcome meet WWC standards with reservations, the outcome meets the criteria for Moderate evidence (Tier 2) under ESSA.


RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL EXAMINING 320 STUDENTS, GRADES K-2


Review Details | Findings | Sample Characteristics | Study Details

Reviewed: September 2017


For:


 **MEETS WWC STANDARDS WITHOUT RESERVATIONS**

 **AT LEAST ONE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE FINDING**

 **Leveled Literacy Intervention Intervention Report - Beginning Reading**

Using:

 **Beginning Reading Review Protocol 3.0**

 **Review Standards 3.0**

Rating:

Meets WWC standards without reservations because it is a randomized controlled trial with low attrition.

This review may not reflect the full body of research evidence for this intervention. Please see the [WWC summary of evidence for Leveled Literacy Intervention](#).