

## SELECTED PROGRAMS PROVEN EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING READING SKILLS

*Stepping Stones to Literacy (SSL)* is a supplemental curriculum designed to promote listening, print conventions, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and serial processing/rapid naming (quickly naming familiar visual symbols and stimuli such as letters or colors). The program targets kindergarten and older preschool students considered to be underachieving readers, based on teacher's recommendations, assessments, and systematic screening. Students participate in 10- to 20-minute daily lessons in a small group or individually. The curriculum consists of 25 lessons, for a total of 9–15 hours of instructional time. Two studies met the WWC standards. They included 120 kindergarten students in 17 elementary schools in the Midwest.

*Stepping Stones to Literacy* was found to have positive effects (average 30 percentile points) on student outcomes in the alphabetics domain.

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning%5Freading/ssl>

*Kaplan SpellRead* is a literacy program for struggling readers in grades 2 or above, including special education students, English language learners, and students more than two years below grade level in reading. *Kaplan SpellRead* integrates the auditory and visual aspects of the reading process and emphasizes specific skill mastery through systematic and explicit instruction. The program takes five to nine months to complete and consists of 140 lessons divided into three phases. Two studies of *Kaplan SpellRead* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The two studies included 208 students from first to third grades in Pennsylvania and in Newfoundland, Canada.

*Kaplan SpellRead* was found to have positive effects on alphabetics (average 18 percentile points) and potentially positive effects on fluency (average 9 percentile points) and comprehension (average 20 percentile points).

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning%5Freading/spellread>

*Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> is a short-term tutoring intervention intended to serve the lowest-achieving (bottom 20%) first-grade students. The goals of *Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> are to promote literacy skills, reduce the number of first-grade students who are struggling to read, and prevent long-term reading difficulties. *Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> supplements classroom teaching with one-to-one tutoring sessions, generally conducted as pull-out sessions during the school day. Tutoring, which is conducted by trained *Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> teachers, takes place daily for 30 minutes over 12–20 weeks.

Four studies of *Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards, and one study meets WWC evidence standards with reservations. The five studies included approximately 700 first-grade students in more than 46 schools across the United States.

*Reading Recovery*<sup>®</sup> was found to have positive effects on alphabetics (average 34 percentile points) and general reading achievement (average 32 percentile points) and potentially positive effects on fluency (average 46 percentile points) and comprehension (average 14 percentile points).

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning%5Freading/reading%5Frecovery>

## SELECTED PROGRAMS PROVEN EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING MATH SKILLS

*The I CAN Learn<sup>®</sup> Education System* is an interactive, self-paced, mastery-based software system. Studies included in this WWC review assess the effectiveness of the *Pre-Algebra* and *Algebra* components of the *I CAN Learn<sup>®</sup> Education System*. One study of *I CAN Learn<sup>®</sup> Pre-Algebra* and *Algebra* meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards and four studies meet WWC evidence standards with reservations. The five studies included 16,519 eighth-grade students from middle schools in California, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana.

*I CAN Learn<sup>®</sup> Pre-Algebra* and *Algebra* was found to have positive effects on math achievement (average 5 percentile points).

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/middle%5Fmath/iclprea>

*Saxon Math* curricula and materials are available for grades K through 12, with the content and skills designed to meet National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards and various state standards. This WWC report focuses on middle school math curricula. One study of *Saxon Middle School Math* met What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards, and five studies met standards with reservations. The six studies included over 5,300 students in sixth to ninth grades from over 70 schools in Georgia, Missouri, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas.

*Saxon Middle School Math* was found to have positive effects on math achievement (average 8 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/middle%5Fmath/smsm>

*The Expert Mathematician* is designed to help middle school students develop the thinking processes for mathematical applications and communication. *The Expert Mathematician* uses a software and consumable print materials package. Each lesson ranges from 40–120 minutes, or one to three class periods, and combine integrated computer software with workbook activities. One study on *The Expert Mathematician* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The one study included 90 eighth-grade students in a middle school in St. Louis, Missouri. <sup>1</sup>

*The Expert Mathematician* was found to have a potentially positive effect on math achievement (average 14 percentile points).

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/middle%5Fmath/expert%5Fmath>

*Everyday Mathematics* is a core curriculum for students in kindergarten through grade 6 covering numeration and order, operations, functions and sequences, data and chance, algebra, geometry and spatial sense, measures and measurement, reference frames, and patterns. The distinguishing features of *Everyday Mathematics* are its focus on real-life problem solving, student communication of mathematical thinking, and appropriate use of technology. This curriculum also emphasizes balancing different types of instruction, using various methods for skills practice, and fostering parent involvement in student learning. Four studies of *Everyday Mathematics* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations. These studies included a total of approximately 12,600 students in grades 3–5 from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds and attending schools in urban, suburban, and rural communities in multiple states. <sup>1</sup>

*Everyday Mathematics* was found to have potentially positive effects on students' math achievement (average 6 percentile points).

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/elementary%5Fmath/eday%5Fmath>

## SELECTED PROGRAMS PROVEN EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING GRADUATION RATES

**Accelerated middle schools** are self-contained academic programs designed to help middle school students who are behind grade level catch up with their age peers. If these students begin high school with other students their age, the hope is that they will be more likely to stay in school and graduate. The programs serve students who are one to two years behind grade level and give them the opportunity to cover an additional year of curriculum during their one to two years in the program. Accelerated middle schools can be structured as separate schools or as schools within a traditional middle school.

One study of accelerated middle schools met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards, and two studies met them with reservations. The three randomized controlled trials included more than 800 students in school districts in Georgia, Michigan, and New Jersey.

Accelerated middle schools were found to have potentially positive effects on staying in school (average 18 percentile points) and positive effects on progressing in school (average 35 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/ams>

**ALAS**, an acronym for “Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success” that means “wings” in Spanish, is a middle school intervention designed to address student, school, family, and community factors that affect dropping out. Each student is assigned a counselor who monitors attendance, behavior, and academic achievement; provides feedback; and coordinates students, families, and teachers. Counselors also serve as advocates for students and intervene when problems are identified. Students are trained in problem-solving skills, and parents are trained in parent-child problem solving, how to participate in school activities, and how to contact teachers and school administrators to address issues. One study of *ALAS*, involving 94 high-risk Latino students entering seventh grade in one urban junior high school in California, met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards.

*ALAS* was found to have potentially positive effects on staying in school (average 42 percentile points) and potentially positive effects on progressing in school at the end of the intervention (ninth grade)(average 19 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/alas>

**Talent Search** aims to help low-income and first-generation college students (those whose parents do not have four-year college degrees) complete high school and gain access to college through a combination of services designed to improve academic achievement and increase access to financial aid. Services include test taking and study skills assistance, academic advising, tutoring, career development, college campus visits, and financial aid application assistance.

Two studies of *Talent Search* met What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations—one conducted in Texas and another in Florida. Together, the studies included about 5,000 students.

*Talent Search* was found to have potentially positive effects on completing school (average 17 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/talent%5Fsearch>

## SELECTED PROGRAMS PROVEN EFFECTIVE AT IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

*Peer Tutoring and Response Groups* aims to improve the language and achievement of English language learners by pairing or grouping students to work on a task. Three studies of *Peer Tutoring and Response Groups* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. These studies included 118 English language learners from first to sixth grades in Florida, Texas, and Washington state. *Peer Tutoring and Response Groups* was found to have positive effects on English language development (average 17 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english%5Fflang/ptrg>

The *Vocabulary Improvement Program for English Language Learners and Their Classmates (VIP)* is a 15-week vocabulary development program for English language learners and native English speakers (grades 4–6). It includes 30–45 minute whole class and small group activities. One study of *VIP* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations. It included 142 English language learner students in the fifth grade in 16 classrooms in California, Virginia, and Massachusetts. *VIP* was found to have potentially positive effects on reading achievement (average 19 percentile points) and English language development (17 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english%5Fflang/vip>

*Reading Mastery* is a direct instruction program designed to provide explicit, systematic instruction in English language reading in elementary school grades. Although not designed exclusively for English language learners, *Reading Mastery* can be used with this group of students. One study of *Reading Mastery* met the WWC evidence standards. This study included both English language learners and English speaking students in grades K–4 in Oregon. The investigators used the *Reading Mastery* program as a supplement to normal reading instruction for Spanish speaking students who were markedly behind expected reading achievement.

*Reading Mastery* was found to have potentially positive effects on the reading achievement of English language learners (average 28 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english%5Fflang/read%5Fmaster>

*Instructional Conversations* and *Literature Logs* are used in combination. *Instructional Conversations* are small-group discussions. Acting as facilitators, teachers engage English language learners in discussions about stories, key concepts, and related personal experiences, which allow them to appreciate and build on each others' experiences, knowledge, and understanding. *Literature Logs* require English language learners to write in a log in response to writing prompts or questions related to sections of stories. These responses are then shared in small groups or with a partner. Two studies of *Instructional Conversations and Literature Logs* met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards with reservations. The two studies included over 200 Hispanic English language learners from grades 2–5.

*Instructional Conversations and Literature Logs* was found to have potentially positive effects on reading achievement (average 29 percentile points) and English language development (average 23 percentile points). <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english%5Fflang/icll>