

WHAT THE ARTICLE SAID:

Reading Recovery is 'failing', Justine Ferrari, The Australian 18 June 2007

A review of 20 years' research into Reading Recovery, just published in the International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, says the program has not delivered all it promised, particularly long-term benefits for students and a significant reduction in the need for special education services. The article was co-authored by Kevin Wheldall.

THE FACTS

The What Works Clearinghouse – an institution which some believe works to specifically to discredit non-phonics-only programs – shows, on the contrary, that Reading Recovery is a success. Four studies of Reading Recovery met the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standard. These included about 700 schools in diverse settings across the United States. All studies focused on low-achieving students who received the Reading Recovery® intervention. The WWC rates the effects of an intervention in a given outcome domain as positive, potentially positive, mixed, no discernible effects, potentially negative, or negative. The rating of effectiveness takes into account four factors: the quality of the research design, the statistical significance of the findings, the size of the difference between participants in the intervention and the comparison conditions, and the consistency in findings across the studies.

Fluency. The WWC confirmed positive and statistically significant effects on fluency.

Comprehension. Two studies examined the effects of Reading Recovery® on the reading comprehension construct. One found a positive and statistically significant effect.

Overall, based on these studies, the WWC found Reading Recovery to have positive effects in the *alphabetic* and *general reading achievement* domains and potentially positive effects in the *fluency* and *comprehension* domains.