Effective Programmes in Secondary Reading
Educator’s Summary

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Students who enter secondary school with poor literacy skills face huge challenges. They often have difficulty understanding the increasingly complex narrative and expository texts that they encounter in individual subjects. Students’ performance on these more difficult texts, which include context-dependent vocabulary, concept development, and graphical information, also provides the strongest indication as to whether or not they will be able to succeed in higher education and the workplace.

For many students who read at low levels, secondary school does provide a last chance to build sufficient reading skills. Clearly, well-evaluated programmes capable of enabling such students to meet the demands of complex texts are needed, and remedial reading courses are becoming more widespread at secondary level. However, as yet, there is little understanding of which particular programmes are likely to be effective for secondary students, and remarkably a review of all existing research on secondary reading programmes has never previously been done.

This review summarises research on reading programmes for secondary students. We looked at all available evidence on programmes designed to improve secondary reading achievement, in order to establish what we know works for students aged 11-18. We examined all studies of secondary reading programmes from all countries, as long as a report was available in English.* (NB Most studies took place in the US). We were then able to assess and compare the effectiveness of these programmes. Descriptions and ratings for all the programmes are listed further down this summary.

The review concludes that programmes which change the way the teacher teaches (instructional process programmes), especially those involving co-operative learning, had a positive impact on achievement. The successful approaches also provided extensive professional development. In contrast, the effects of supplementary computer-assisted instruction were small.

The full report (which this review summarises) is available at www.bestevidence.org.uk

**Instructional Process Strategies (IP)**
(Changing the way the teacher teaches, eg co-operative learning)

The largest number of high-quality studies evaluated instructional process programmes, especially forms of co-operative learning (ES= +0.28 in 7 studies). Mean weighted effect size across 14 studies: +0.21.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**
(Programmes based on ICT)

Studies of ICT find minimal achievement outcomes. Mean weighted effect size across 8 studies: +0.10.

**Combined ICT and Instructional Process Programmes (ICT + IP)**
(Programmes that both change how the teacher teaches, and include ICT)

Our review showed that positive effects were found for READ 180. Mean weighted effect size across 9 studies: +0.22.
Combined Curriculum and Instructional Process Programmes (Curr + IP)
(Programmes that both change how the teacher teaches, and include innovative curricula, eg Success for All and Direct Instruction)

A randomised study of REACH found an effect size of 0.00, and the same study found an effect size of +0.17 for RISE.

* Overall, 36 experimental-control comparisons met the inclusion criteria, of which 7 used random assignment to treatments. No studies of reading curricula qualified, but there were 8 studies of ICT, 16 of instructional process programmes, 10 of combined ICT and instructional process programmes, and 2 of combined curriculum and instructional process programmes. Effect sizes were averaged across studies, weighting by sample size.

Programme Ratings

Listed below are currently available programmes, grouped by strength of effectiveness. Within each group programmes available in the UK are listed first, and then the remainder in alphabetical order. The type for each programme corresponds to the categories above (eg IP = Instructional Process Strategies).

Key to Programme Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact / Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Evidence of Effectiveness: At least one large randomised or randomised quasi-experimental study, plus at least one additional study of any qualifying design, with a collective sample size of 500 students and an overall weighted mean effect size of at least +0.20.</td>
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<td>Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness: Two large studies of any qualifying design or multiple smaller studies with a collective sample size of 500 students, with a median effect size of at least +0.20.</td>
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<td>Limited Evidence of Effectiveness: At least one qualifying study with an effect size of +0.10 or more.</td>
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<td>Insufficient Evidence of Effectiveness: Studies show no significant differences</td>
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<tr>
<td>N No Qualifying Studies: No studies met inclusion standards</td>
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Strong Evidence of Effectiveness

None

Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness

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<tr>
<td>The Reading Edge</td>
<td>IP, Co-operative Learning</td>
<td>Students work in teams of four or five to help each other build reading skills. They engage in partner reading, story re-telling, story-related</td>
<td>UK website: <a href="http://www.successforall.org.uk/">www.successforall.org.uk/</a> (Product training provided)</td>
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<td>Student Team Reading</td>
<td>IP, Co-operative Learning</td>
<td>Uses the same structure and design as The Reading Edge, except that students are grouped by age.</td>
<td>UK website: <a href="http://www.successforall.org.uk">www.successforall.org.uk</a> (Product training provided)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>READ 180</td>
<td>ICT + IP</td>
<td>90 minute sessions each day include a shared reading and skills lesson, and computer-assisted reading, modelled or independent reading, and small-group instruction with a teacher.</td>
<td>UK/US website: <a href="http://www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/read180">www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/read180</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jostens</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Assessments place students according to their current level. Exercises designed primarily to fill in gaps in their skills are then provided. Teachers are provided with information on progress. Typically used for 15-30 minutes per day, 2-3 days per week.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.compasslearning.com">www.compasslearning.com</a></td>
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**Limited Evidence of Effectiveness**

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<td></td>
<td>Accelerated Reader</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Accelerated Reader aims to help teachers make data-based decisions in order to meet the needs of diverse students.</td>
<td>UK website: <a href="http://www.renaissance-learning.co.uk">www.renaissance-learning.co.uk</a> (Product training available)</td>
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<td>Benchmark Detectives</td>
<td>IP, Strategy</td>
<td>Teachers receive monthly professional development in the use of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies across the curriculum.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.benchmarkschool.org/word_id_intro.html">www.benchmarkschool.org/word_id_intro.html</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>IP, Co-operative Learning</td>
<td>Structured pair learning strategy in which children take turns as teachers and learners.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals">www.kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals</a> (Teacher manuals can be ordered through this site)</td>
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<td>RISE</td>
<td>Curr + IP</td>
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<td>Strategy Intervention Model</td>
<td>IP, Strategy</td>
<td>Low-achieving secondary school-age students are taught metacognitive reading strategies, especially paraphrasing, to help them comprehend text.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.ku-crl.org">www.ku-crl.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Talent Development Middle School</td>
<td>IP, CRS</td>
<td>Comprehensive school reform model designed to change school organization, management, curriculum, and instruction. Teachers stay with the same class for multiple years, and are given ongoing professional development.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs">www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs</a></td>
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<td>Voyager Passport</td>
<td>ICT + IP</td>
<td>Voyager Passport combines large and Small group instruction, computer activities, and other elements to create a complete instructional approach.</td>
<td>US website: <a href="http://www.voyagerlearning.com/passport/index.jsp">www.voyagerlearning.com/passport/index.jsp</a></td>
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**Other Ratings**

- **Insufficient Evidence**
  - CCC (ICT), www.successmaker.com
  - REACH (Curr + IP), No contact information available
No Qualifying Studies

UK programmes lacking qualifying studies:
- Oxford University Press, Reading Tree (Curr) www.oup.co.uk
- Hodder & Stoughton, Fast Forward (Curr)
- Longman, various titles (Curr) reading.ilongman.com
- Heinemann, Library and Curriculum Support
  www.heinemann.co.uk/Secondary/Secondary.aspx
- Keytools (ICT) www.keytools.com
- CTAD (Cambridge Training and Development) (ICT) www.ctad.co.uk
- EasyTech (ICT) www.learnpath.com
- Everyday English Editor (ICT) www.optimum-uk.com/Editor.html
- Fun with Texts 4.0 (ICT) www.camsoftpartners.co.uk/fwt.htm
- Kar2ouche (ICT) www.kar2ouche.com
- Microsoft video case studies (ICT) www.microsoft.com/uk/education/learning/case-study
- Plato (ICT) www.platolearning.co.uk
- Reach Out Interactives Limited (ICT) www.reachout-interactives.com/
- SAM Learning (ICT) www.samlearning.com
- The Track Series (ICT) www.semerc.com
- www.wieser-software.com/spelling/ (ICT)
- Unlocking Literature (ICT) natehq@btconnect.com

If you use programmes which are not listed here, please let us know

Non-UK:
- 100 Book Challenge
- ABD's of Reading
- Academy of Reading
- Achieve 3000
- Achieving Maximum Potential
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
- AfterSchool KidzLit
- Alphabetic Phonics
- America's Choice-Ramp Up Literacy
- AMP Reading System
- Barton Reading & Spelling System
- Be a Better Reader
- BOLD
- Boys Town Reading Curriculum
- Breaking the Code
- Bridges to Literacy
- Caught Reading
- Charlesbridge Reading Fluency
- Classworks
- Compass Learning (current version)
- Comprehension Upgrade
- Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI)
Corrective Reading
CRISS / Project CRISS
Cross-Aged Literacy Program
Direct Instruction
Disciplinary Literacy
Electronic Bookshelf
Essential Learning Systems™
Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI)
Failure Free Reading
Fast ForWord
Fast Track Reading
First Steps
Fluent Reader
Glass-Analysis method
Glencoe
Great Leaps
Harcourt
HOSTS
Houghton Mifflin
IMPACT
IndiVisual Reading
InStep Readers
Intensive Reading Strategies Instruction (IRSI) Model
Intensive Supplemental Reading
Jamestown Education
Junior Great Books
Kaplan SpellRead
Knowledge Box
K-W-L strategy
LANGUAGE!
Learning Experience Approach
Learning Upgrade
Lexia Strategies for Older Students
Like to Read
Lindamood-Bell
LitART
Literacy First
Literacy Seminar
MacMillan
McDougal-Littell
McRAT
Merit Software
Multicultural Reading and Thinking
My Reading Coach
On Ramp Approach
Open Book Anywhere
Open Court
Pathway Project
Phonics for Reading
Phono-Graphix
Prentice Hall Literature
Project Read
Puente
Questioning the Author
Review Methods

An exhaustive search considered more than 300 published and unpublished articles. It included those that met the following criteria:

- Schools or classrooms using each programme had to be compared to randomly assigned or well-matched control groups.
• Study duration had to be at least 12 weeks.
• Outcome measures had to be assessments of the reading content being taught in all classes. Almost all are standardised test, or state assessments.
• The review placed particular emphasis on studies in which schools, teachers, or students were assigned at random to experimental or control groups.

The Full Report

• For the full report, which this review summarises, see Slavin, R.E., Cheung, A., Groff, C., and Lake, C. (2008) Reading Research Quarterly 43(3), 290-322. The full report is available at www.bestevidence.org.uk/