

**From:** Esther Eustice <deefe@westriv.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2012 12:41 PM  
**To:** What Works  
**Subject:** Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy

Dear Susanne James-Burdumy:

As a practitioner who used the Read Naturally strategy with fidelity for seven years, I am concerned about the What Works Clearinghouse postings of the studies by Hancock, Denton, Kemp, and Chenault who have stated publicly that they did not correctly implement the Read Naturally steps. Their studies continue to be posted and are misleading to fellow educators who search for a strategy to improve their students' fluency and comprehension. The success that our school district's students achieved is well-documented. During the seven years that students in the Title I program used Read Naturally to improve their fluency and comprehension, most students were released from Title I because of marked improvement. For those who remained in the program until grade five, 95% were reading at grade level. When the Read Naturally strategy is used correctly, students make significant gains.

Thank you for your consideration of removing studies that mislead educators.

Sincerely,

Esther F. Eustice  
Retired, Hazen Public Schools  
Hazen, ND

**From:** WhatWorks  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2012 4:55 PM  
**To:** 'deefe@westriv.com'  
**Subject:** RE: Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy (WWC 3601)

Hello,

Thank you for contacting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). We have received your email below. WWC staff are reviewing your request and will prepare a response.

#### What Works Clearinghouse

The What Works Clearinghouse was established by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. For more information, please visit <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>.

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**From:** Esther Eustice [<mailto:deefe@westriv.com>]  
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**To:** What Works  
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Dear Susanne James-Burdumy:

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Sincerely,

Esther F. Eustice  
Retired, Hazen Public Schools  
Hazen, ND

**From:** Esther Eustice <deefe@westriv.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 15, 2012 11:07 PM  
**To:** What Works  
**Subject:** Re: Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy

Thank you for your extensive respons to the questions I raised.

Esther Eustice

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [What Works](#)  
**To:** ['Esther Eustice'](#)  
**Sent:** Friday, May 11, 2012 11:18 AM  
**Subject:** RE: Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy

Dear Ms. Eustice,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your April 6 message to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Thank you,

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**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2012 12:41 PM  
**To:** What Works  
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Sincerely,

Esther F. Eustice  
Retired, Hazen Public Schools

| Hazen, ND

**From:** What Works  
**Sent:** Friday, May 11, 2012 12:19 PM  
**To:** 'Esther Eustice'  
**Subject:** RE: Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy  
**Attachments:** QRT 2012009.pdf

Dear Ms. Eustice,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your April 6 message to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Thank you,

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**From:** Esther Eustice [mailto:deefe@westriv.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2012 12:41 PM  
**To:** What Works  
**Subject:** Reviews of Read Naturally Strategy

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Sincerely,

Esther F. Eustice  
Retired, Hazen Public Schools  
Hazen, ND



# What Works Clearinghouse **WWC**

A central and trusted source of scientific evidence for what works in education.

May 11, 2012

Ms. Esther F. Eustice  
Retired, Hazen Public Schools  
Hazen, ND  
deefe@westriv.com

Reference: QR2012009

Dear Ms. Eustice:

Thank you for your email regarding your experience with Read Naturally® and your concerns with the WWC reviews of Read Naturally®. In response to your email, we conducted an independent quality review to address the concerns you've raised. The WWC quality review team responds to concerns raised about WWC reviews published on our website. When a quality review is conducted, a researcher who was not involved in the initial review undertakes an independent assessment of the studies in question. The researcher also investigates the procedures used and decisions made during the original review of the studies. These quality reviews are one of the tools used to ensure that the standards established by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) are upheld on every review conducted by the WWC.

Regarding your concern that the steps for Read Naturally® were not implemented fully or correctly in the Hancock, Denton, Kemp, and Chenault studies, the quality review found that the WWC followed protocol in the manner in which the four studies are described in WWC publications. As noted in the WWC Handbook (available in the Review Process section of our website at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewProcess.aspx>), "The WWC makes no adjustments or corrections for variations in implementation of the intervention; however, if a study meets standards and is included in an intervention report, descriptions of implementation are provided in the report..." (page 16). This approach is appropriate because there is no standard metric for fidelity to intervention design. Thus, the WWC includes studies with variation in fidelity and does not evaluate implementation fidelity.

The quality review team verified that variations in implementation that are noted in the four studies and that may affect the interpretation of findings were properly included in the WWC publications. Specifically, for each of these four studies, the quality review had the following findings:

1. Hancock (2002). This study is reviewed in a WWC Intervention Report under the Beginning Reading Evidence Review Protocol. The study does not note any deviations in implementation. However, following an inquiry from the CEO of Read Naturally® about implementation in this study, the WWC contacted the author. Hancock's response indicated that the study excluded Read Naturally's pre-reading vocabulary instruction component and the placement system to individualize instruction. The WWC Intervention Report was revised to note these variations in implementation (see

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<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/interventionreport.aspx?sid=407>, specifically footnote 4 on page 2 and Appendix A1.). The record of correspondence with Hancock did not note any other variations in implementation.

2. Denton, Anthony, Parker, and Hasbrouck (2004). This study is reviewed in a WWC Intervention Report under the English Language Learners Evidence Review Protocol. The quality review found that the study notes that Reading Naturally® was combined with additional activities. The WWC Intervention Report properly identifies this as a “modified version” of Read Naturally and describes the modifications (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/interventionreport.aspx?sid=408>, specifically footnote 7 on page 3 and Appendix A1). There were no other variations in implementation noted in the study and there is no record of correspondence with Denton about other variations in implementation.
3. Kemp (2006). This study is reviewed in a WWC Intervention Report under the English Language Learners Evidence Review Protocol. The quality review found that the study does not provide any indication of variation from program design. Specifically, the study states, “...it could be concluded that all teachers implemented the Read Naturally® program as prescribed” (page 40). Furthermore, there is no record of correspondence with the author about variations in implementation. Based on this information, the quality review concluded that there was no evidence that variations in implementation should have been noted in the WWC Intervention Report.
4. Chenault, Thomson, Abbott, and Berninger (2006). This study is reviewed in a WWC Intervention Report under the Students with Learning Disabilities Evidence Review Protocol. In accordance with the study, the WWC Intervention Report notes that the students in the study were identified by researchers as dyslexic and that they were provided only 10 sessions of Read Naturally® (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/interventionreport.aspx?sid=409>, specifically pages 2-3 and Appendix A1). No other variations in implementation were noted in the study and there is no record of correspondence with the authors about deviations in implementation.

Based on these findings, the quality review team recommends no changes to the descriptions of the Read Naturally® in WWC publications. However, the WWC is in the process of updating the Intervention Report for Read Naturally®, reviewed under the Beginning Reading Evidence Review Protocol. In this update, the WWC will use the current WWC evidence standards to review all studies identified for the previous report and all studies identified since that time. If the WWC needs any further clarification related to the four studies you mentioned or any other studies, we will contact the author(s).

# What Works Clearinghouse **WWC**

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I hope that this letter has addressed your concerns. If you have other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the WWC through [info@whatworks.ed.gov](mailto:info@whatworks.ed.gov).

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jill Constantine  
Director, What Works Clearinghouse

cc:

(b)(6)