



**September 30, 2014**

In this edition of NIFDI News!

- Math Practice Sheets Accompany Connect Math Concepts
- Register Now for Fall Leadership Academies!
- NIFDI Research Office Releases Reports on WWC Shortcomings

If you have questions or need additional information, you can reach us at 877.485.1973 or [info@nifdi.org](mailto:info@nifdi.org).

## Math Facts Practice Sheets Accompany Connecting Math Concepts

Math facts are a cornerstone of mathematics instruction. The newest Direct Instruction math program, *Connecting Math Concepts: Comprehensive Edition*, offers math facts practice sheets in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division skills to accompany lessons throughout the program. Users can access the blackline masters through McGraw-Hill's online system, ConnectED\*. Once logged in, follow these steps to locate the sheets:



1. Click on *Connecting Math Concepts: Comprehensive Edition* (Teacher Edition) icon
2. Choose "Resource Library"
3. Select "Math Fact Worksheets" located in the left hand menu

Information for administering the practice sheets are provided with the set of blackline masters, including:

- a table listing when each worksheet should be introduced,
- indication of whether the practice sheet incorporates a new group of facts that have been taught in previous lessons but not included before on the worksheets,
- steps for a verbal presentation of the worksheet to students, and
- an answer key.

\*If you do not see *Connecting Math Concepts: Comprehensive Edition* as a program in your ConnectED account, you will need to contact your McGraw-Hill representative for a redemption code. Only McGraw-Hill can issue these codes.

## Register Now for Fall Leadership Academies!

There is still time to sign up for either of NIFDI's Leadership Academies. We will be in Orlando (October 21 & 22) and in Houston (October 23 & 24). These two-day trainings, co-sponsored by McGraw-Hill Education, are designed for administrators, instructional coaches, curriculum directors and school board members. Participants will be shown how to set up schools for success with Direct Instruction. They will identify steps they should take to implement Direct Instruction effectively as they develop an action plan tailored to their schools that can be followed through the year. A full brochure and registration information is available on our [website](#).

### **REGISTER ONLINE**

**October 20-21, 2014: Orlando, FL**

**October 23-24, 2014: Houston, TX**

**Don't forget! Members save 20% on their registration!**

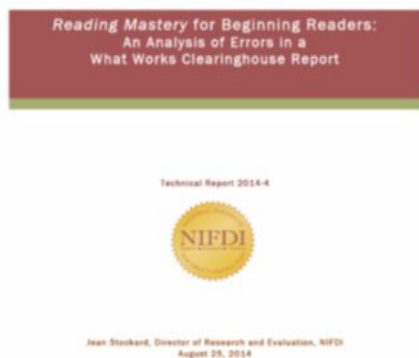


## NIFDI Research Office Releases Reports on WWC Shortcomings

NIFDI recently released two new technical reports on the procedures used by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) and the ways in which they differ from those typically used within the social sciences, as well as errors in the actual WWC reviews.

The two new reports include:

- **Reading Mastery for Beginning Readers: An Analysis of Errors in a What Works Clearinghouse Report** (Technical Report 2014-4)
- **What is a Valid Scientific Study? An Analysis of Selection Criteria Used by the What Works Clearinghouse** (Technical Report 2014-3)



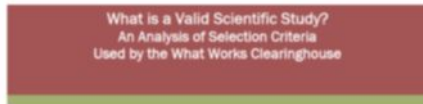
### **Reading Mastery for Beginning Readers: An Analysis of Errors in a What Works Clearinghouse Report**

A November 2013 report of the What Works Clearinghouse stated that it could find "no studies of Reading Mastery that fall within the scope of the Beginning Reading review protocol [and] meet What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards" (WWC, 2013b, p. 1). This technical report documents substantial errors in the WWC's compilation of studies to examine and in the interpretations of individual studies. Effect sizes (Cohen's *d*) were computed for results of more than three dozen studies identified by the WWC but rejected for analysis. The average effect size associated with Reading Mastery was .57. This value is more than twice the .25 level traditionally used to denote educational significance. The results replicate meta-analyses that have found strong evidence of the efficacy of Reading Mastery. Given the high rate of error in this and other WWC reports, consumers are advised to consult reviews of studies in the standard research literature rather than WWC summaries.

### **What is a Valid Scientific Study? An Analysis of Selection Criteria Used by the What Works Clearinghouse**

Meta-analyses and reviews of the educational research literature have identified hundreds of efficacy studies. Yet the What Works Clearinghouse reports that very few of these analyses meet its selection criteria and standards of evidence. This report examines why these differences occur. It finds that the WWC procedures differ markedly from standard practices within the social sciences. The WWC gives no academic or scholarly justification for their policies. Moreover, an

empirical, quantitative analysis of the utility of the WWC approach indicates that it provides no "value added" to estimates of a curriculum's impact. The costs of applying the WWC standards are far from minimal and result in highly selective and potentially biased summaries of the literature. This reports suggests that the public would be better served if the WWC adopted the standard methodological practices of the social sciences.



Technical Report 2014-3



Joan Stockard, Director of Research and Evaluation, NIFDI  
August 25, 2014

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