

From: Kevin Feldman [kfeldman@scoe.org]  
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 2:32 PM  
To: What Works  
Cc: carol egan  
Subject: Comments form the Field re: Read Naturally evaluation

Greetings,

I am a 41 yr professional educator, co-author of a reading intervention program

(Scholastic's READ 180) and long time supporter of "evidence based practices".

In that spirit I would like to give you some feedback re: problems with one of

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WWC reviews re: the Read Naturally (RN) program. While my remarks are specifically

re: the RN program they would apply to any/all reviews conducted by the WWC.

First off let me begin with a strong caveat, I am a SOLID supporter of the

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As a colleague who is not in the employ of RN (they are colleagues too), in point of fact, I am in an author on a competitors program as noted above, I have a keen interest in fairness and objectivity in the information we provide to the educational community. I think the WWC needs to be more thorough in disclosing what is actually being evaluated in the studies it chooses to review, and should go back and adjust/clarify any existing reviews that are misleading, such as that for RN as noted above.

Thank you for listening and considering my suggestions.

Sincerely,

Kevin  
Kevin Feldman Ed.D.  
Educational Consultant  
636 Brown St.  
Healdsburg, CA 95448  
kfeldman@scoe.org

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Thank you.

**From:** WhatWorks  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 22, 2012 4:29 PM  
**To:** 'kfeldman@scoe.org'  
**Subject:** What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 3571)

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:** Kevin Feldman <kfeldman@scoe.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 11, 2012 11:16 AM  
**To:** What Works  
**Subject:** Re: Comments from the Field re: Read Naturally evaluation

Thanks so much - appreciate the detailed and thoughtful review... look forward to the updated RN review...

Best regards,

Kevin

Kevin Feldman Ed.D.  
Educational Consultant  
636 Brown St.  
Healdsburg, CA 95448  
kfeldman@scoe.org

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Dear Dr. Feldman,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your March 22 message to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Thank you,

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**From:** What Works  
**Sent:** Friday, May 11, 2012 10:59 AM  
**To:** 'Kevin Feldman'  
**Subject:** RE: Comments from the Field re: Read Naturally evaluation  
**Attachments:** QRT 2012004.pdf

Dear Dr. Feldman,

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# What Works Clearinghouse **WWC**

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

May 11, 2012

Dr. Kevin Feldman, Ed.D.  
Educational Consultant  
636 Brown Street  
Healdsburg, CA 95448  
KFeldman@scoe.org

Reference: QR2012004

Dear Dr. Feldman:

Thank you for your email regarding 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 WWC should not have reviewed the study by Hancock (2006) because the author did not intend the study as an evaluation of Read Naturally®, the quality review found that the WWC followed protocol in choosing to review this study. The WWC screens studies based on a number of factors including relevancy and methodology criteria. The WWC does not screen based on whether the author explicitly intended the study as an evaluation of an intervention or whether the developer indicates implementation was acceptable, but rather whether the study presents a primary analysis of the effect of an intervention. This screening process allows for a wide range of relevant and methodologically sound studies to be reviewed. These procedures are described in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook available in the Review Process section of our website at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewProcess.aspx> (see pages 8-10).

Regarding your concern that Read Naturally® was not implemented fully or correctly in the Hancock study, the quality review found that the WWC followed protocol in the manner in which the study is described in the WWC Intervention Report. As noted in the WWC Handbook, "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.

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The quality review team verified that variations in implementation were properly noted in the WWC Intervention Report. The Hancock study is reviewed in the 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 footnote 4 on page 2 and Appendix A1, <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/interventionreport.aspx?sid=407>),). The record of correspondence with Hancock did not note any other variations in implementation.

Based on these findings, the quality review team recommends no changes to the description of the Hancock study in the WWC Intervention Report. However, the WWC is in the process of updating the Intervention Report for Read Naturally®. 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 Hancock study or any other studies, we will contact the author(s).

Finally, I appreciate you providing information about the Christ and Davie (2009) study of Read Naturally®. The WWC is committed to a comprehensive and systematic literature search process for every review. As part of the search process for the in-progress review of Read Naturally®, we have identified this study and all of the studies available on the Read Naturally® website. We also have requested and received studies from the developers of Read Naturally®.

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,



Jill Constantine  
Director, What Works Clearinghouse

cc: Joy Lesnick, IES