

**From:** tpotter@madison.k12.wi.us  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2009 7:41 AM  
**To:** info@whatworks.ed.gov  
**Subject:** IES Website: Contact Us: Publications, Intervention Reports, Reference ID Number: 2023543274

info@whatworks.ed.gov, this email was automatically sent through the Contact link on the WWC website.

From: tpotter@madison.k12.wi.us

Message: For the Reading Recovery evaluation the following statement is made about a report I did (which was submitted by someone else) &quot;Potter, T. (2004). Reading Recovery evaluation. Madison, WI: Planning, Research and Evaluation, Madison Metropolitan School District. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because the intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent at baseline.&quot;

On pages 12-13 of the report a t-test was run comparing the RR students and the non-RR students showing that there were no significant differences on any pre-score (except for Sound Word). Please explain why this does not demonstrate equivalency at baseline. They sure look equivalent to me (and also they were equivalent on a number of demographic and socio economic factors as well.

Thank you.

Tim Potter

**From:** WhatWorks  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 01, 2009 4:11 PM  
**To:** 'tpotter@madison.k12.wi.us'  
**Subject:** What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 1337)

Dear Dr. Potter,

Thank you for contacting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). We have received your email about the study "Reading Recovery evaluation." WWC staff are reviewing your email 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/>.

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

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Tim Potter

**From:** What Works  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 16, 2009 10:54 AM  
**To:** 'tpotter@madison.k12.wi.us'  
**Subject:** What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 1337)  
**Attachments:** Response 2009006.pdf

Dear Mr. Potter,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your June 30 message to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Thank you,

What Works Clearinghouse

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Thank you.

Tim Potter

# What Works Clearinghouse **WWC**

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

September 15, 2009

Tim Potter  
Research and Planning Analyst  
Madison Metropolitan School District

Reference: QR2009006

Dear Mr. Potter:

In response to your June 30, 2009, email concerning the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) description of your study (Potter, 2004) in the WWC Topic Report for Beginning Reading, we conducted a quality review of the published study description. The WWC Quality Review Team responds to concerns raised by study authors, curriculum developers or other relevant parties about WWC reviews published on our website. These quality reviews are undertaken when concerned parties present evidence that a WWC review may be inaccurate. When a quality review is conducted, a researcher who was not involved in the initial review undertakes an independent assessment of the study in question. The researcher also investigates the procedures used and decisions made during the original review of the study. If a quality review concludes that the original review was flawed, a revision will be published. These quality reviews are one of the tools used to ensure that the standards established by the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) are upheld on every review conducted by the What Works Clearinghouse.

The finding of the quality review, discussed in detail below, is in agreement with the published description: The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it does not establish that the comparison group is comparable to the treatment group prior to the start of the intervention.

Estimates of the overall impact of Reading Recovery should be based on outcomes for the comparison group relative to Reading Recovery students regardless of successful completion in the program. To meet evidence standards, the study must show baseline equivalence between the full sample of Reading Recovery students and the comparison group. The baseline comparisons presented in the study (Table 8) do not include Reading Recovery Round 1 students who were not successfully graduated from the program. Therefore, the study does not establish baseline equivalence.

I hope that this letter has addressed your concerns.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Deborah Reed  
WWC Quality Review Team