

ESSA Evidence Summary: Phonics Skill Bags

Current ESSA Evidence Level: Level 3: Promising

Available Document: *Benchmark Education Phonics Skill Bags Research Foundation and Results*

Results Summaries Table

Phonics Skill Bags Study Title	ESSA Evidence Level
<i>Arkansas Reading First</i>	Promising
<i>Phonics and Word Study Use in a School District in the Midwest</i>	Promising
<i>Large District in Arkansas</i>	Promising
<i>Large District in Virginia</i>	Promising
<i>Dissertation Review: Targeted Instruction for Struggling Readers: It Takes a Team</i>	Promising
<i>Thesis Review: Effective Methods of Instruction to Increase Phonics Achievement of Kindergarteners</i>	Promising

Results Summaries

Title: *Arkansas Reading First*

Duration of study: Across the 2003–2004 school year

Assessment used in study: DIBELS

Grades of participants: Kindergarten to 3rd grade in 54 of the 67 (81%) Reading First schools

Notable Results: The Arkansas Reading First schools using the Phonics Skill Bags outperformed schools with similar socioeconomic and academic characteristics that were not Reading First schools. The schools using the Phonics Skill Bags had 10 to 19 percent more students at each grade level scoring at or above the benchmark goal on the DIBELS ORF measure than did comparison schools.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising

Title: *Phonics and Word Study Use in a School District in the Midwest*

Duration of study: Across the school year as a pilot

Assessment used in study: AIMSweb and DRA

Grades of participants: Kindergarten and 1st grade

Notable Results: At the winter administration of the DRA for all Kindergarten students, 83% of students across the district were at or above expected DRA levels, indicating that students were on grade level. Comparing the AIMSweb’s Letter Sound Fluency and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency before and after implementation of the Phonics Skill Bags, Kindergarten and 1st-grade students exceeded the spring average score, weekly average gain, and overall growth, after students using the Phonics Skill Bags started with a lower average in the fall.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising

Title: *Large District in Arkansas*

Duration of study: Across the 2011–2012 school year

Assessment used in study: Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA)

Grades of participants: 1st to 3rd grades, six schools: three treatment and three comparison

Notable Results: In a study conducted by MainStreet Academix, from the fall to spring administrations, 60% of students using the Phonics Skill Bags and Word Study and Vocabulary Skill Bags moved up at least one DSA level, compared to only 37% of students using other literacy programs.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising

Title: *Large District in Virginia*

Duration of study: Across the 2011–2012 school year

Assessment used in study: DRA

Grades of participants: 1st to 6th grades, two schools: one treatment and one comparison

Notable Results: In a study conducted by MainStreet Academix, for 1st- and 2nd-grade students using the Phonics Skill Bags and Word Study and Vocabulary Skill Bags, average DRA

growth was 13.0, compared to 10.6 DRA levels for the comparison group. Effect sizes¹ from the beginning to the end of the school year were $d = 0.60$ and $d = 0.70$ for 1st- and 2nd-grade students, respectively. For 3rd- to 6th-grade students, average DRA level growth was 8.8, compared to 5.7 DRA levels for the comparison group. The effect size for 3rd to 6th grade students was $d = 0.70$.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising

Title: *Dissertation Review: Targeted instruction for struggling readers: It takes a team*

Reference: Richburg-Burgess, J. (2012). *Targeted instruction for struggling readers: It takes a team* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3530073)

Duration of study: Across the school year, in 7-week cycles of Phonics Skill Bags for 6 weeks (30 minutes, 5 days per week) and 1 week of Reader's Theater for fluency and comprehension practice.

Assessment used in study: DIBELS ORF and DRA

Grades of participants: Twenty-eight 2nd- and 3rd-grade struggling readers, 27 African American and 1 Latinx.

Notable Results: Richburg-Burgess stated, "results revealed that [DIBELS] posttest scores ($M=67.10$, $SD=18.97$) were significantly higher than [DIBELS] pretest scores ($M=37.53$, $SD=9.93$) for students in the program ($t(27) = 10.98$, $p < .001$)" (p. 106). Additionally, 35 percent of the participants achieved the goal of gaining at least 36 to 38 words correct per minute on the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Assessment.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising

Title: *Thesis Review: Effective methods of instruction to increase phonics achievement of kindergarteners*

Reference: Driscoll, B. (2014). *Effective methods of instruction to increase phonics achievement of kindergarteners* (Unpublished master's thesis).

Duration of study: Approximately four to five months during the first half of the school year across two years.

¹ Effect sizes are based on Cohen (1988). An effect size of $d = 0.2$ is considered small, $d = 0.5$ is medium, and $d = 0.8$ is large.

Assessment used in study: DIBELS 6th Edition

Grades of participants: 1st year: eight students taught with Open Court phonics curriculum;
2nd year: seven students taught using Phonics Skill Bags

Notable Results: For the NWF measure, there was a statistically significant difference in the mid-year average scores of the two groups, $t(13) = -2.249$, $p < .05$, in favor of the Benchmark Education phonics group where both the letters and letter sounds were taught simultaneously. The Open Court phonics curriculum taught letter names first, and then later in the school year letter sounds were taught. The mean for the Open Court group was 7.38 correct letter sounds, with a status of Below Benchmark or Some Risk. The mean for the Benchmark Education group was 16.0 correct letter sounds, with a status of Benchmark or Low Risk.

ESSA Evidence Level: Promising