

# Understanding ESSA EVIDENCE



In 2015, as part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Congress passed and the President enacted the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaced No Child Left Behind. ESSA encourages local and state educational agencies and schools to place a strong emphasis on evidence-based interventions, strategies, or approaches when purchasing and adopting solutions and services.

Within the law, evidence-based solutions are described as programs showing evidence of producing positive results on student outcomes. Specifically, the type of evidence backed by formal research and studies.

## ESSA defines four tiers of evidence:

### Tier 1—Strong:

Supported by one or more experimental studies.

### Tier 2—Moderate:

Supported by one or more quasi-experimental studies.

### Tier 3—Promising:

Supported by one or more correlational studies.

### Tier 4—Demonstrates a Rationale:

Practices that have a logic model, are supported by research, and have some effort of study underway.

## LANGUAGE!® Fourth Edition

**LANGUAGE!**® Fourth Edition is an intensive, comprehensive literacy curriculum for students in **grades 4–12** who are substantially below grade-level expectations. With an explicit, systematic approach that is proven to accelerate the growth of struggling readers and nonreaders, **LANGUAGE!** Fourth Edition integrates instruction in foundational skills, writing, vocabulary, fluency, grammar, comprehension, and spoken English. **LANGUAGE!** Fourth Edition:

- Rapidly advances struggling readers to grade-level literacy
- Fills gaps in literacy learning and ensures strong foundational skills
- Builds student experience with literary and informational text
- Prepares students for literacy in all content areas

TIER

1

### STRONG Criteria as Defined by ESSA

- Based on strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study
- Demonstrates a strong and measured impact on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes

### How LANGUAGE Fourth Edition Meets the Strong Criteria

- ✓ Study\* used a pre/post design with comparison to an equivalent group drawn at random from similar groups of students at similar institutions.
- ✓ Participants in this study included adjudicated youth who were functioning significantly below grade level in written language (reading, writing, and spelling).
- ✓ Study was conducted in six multiple Associated Marine Institute (AIM) programs across the U.S.
- ✓ Treatment group gains were significant ( $p < .0001$ ) for all measures, with gains ranging from approximately one-half to in excess of one full standard deviation.
- ✓ In addition to being statistically significant, gains recorded by the treatment group also were educationally meaningful.

\*Study used for ESSA classification: Greene, J. F. (1996). *LANGUAGE!* Effects of an individualized structured language curriculum for middle and high school students. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 46(1), 97-121. doi:10.1007/bf02648173

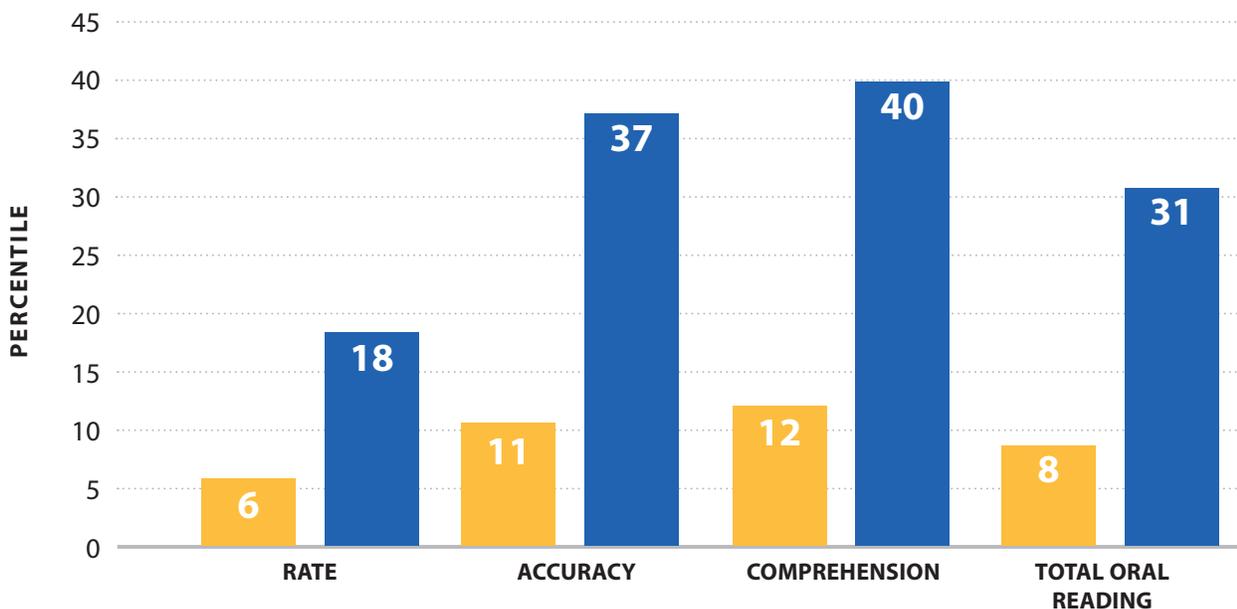
**Research Evidence:** [LANGUAGE! Fourth Edition Research Summary: Independent Articles](#)  
[LANGUAGE! Fourth Edition Research Foundations: Why We Need Comprehensive Literacy Solutions for Adolescents](#)

**Case Studies:** [Hawthorne School District, CA](#)  
[Caldwell County Public Schools, NC](#)

## Evidence Summary

Greene (1996) documents the success of a 12-month individualized structured language curriculum, **LANGUAGE!**<sup>®</sup>, provided to middle and high school juvenile offenders (n = 45; 43 males, 2 females). The average length of participation in the program was 22.73 weeks (SD = 8.51). The evaluation employed a pre/post design with comparison to an equivalent group drawn at random from similar groups of students at similar institutions. Based on pretest scores, the treatment group had greater deficits than did the comparison group. For the treatment group, the average percentile gain for the total battery (*Gray Oral Reading Tests, GORT-3*) was 23 points, or more than three grades, in word identification, spelling, comprehension, and composition during a typical six-month enrollment period.

### Gains for **LANGUAGE!** Treatment Group



- In six months of intervention, these at-risk students with significant written language deficits made substantial gains in their percentile standing on all measures.
- The average percentile gain for the total battery (GORT-3) was 23 points.
- In terms of grade equivalent scores, student in treatment group gained an average of more than three grades in word identification, spelling, comprehension, and composition during a typical six month enrollment period.

Greene, J. F. (1996). *LANGUAGE!* Effects of an individualized structured language curriculum for middle and high school students. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 46(1), 97–121. doi:10.1007/bf02648173