



Stepping Stones to Literacy meets ESSA's "Strong" evidence criteria

ESSA Evidence EXPLAINED

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) emphasizes “evidence-based” approaches that have demonstrated a statistically significant positive effect on student outcomes.

ESSA identifies these levels of evidence:

1. Strong
2. Moderate
3. Promising
4. Demonstrates a rationale

Evidence levels are used to classify an activity, strategy, or intervention based on the research study design.



Stepping Stones to Literacy is an effective, research-based program for early learners who have been identified as at risk for reading failure. **Stepping Stones to Literacy's** proven, research-based principles help below-benchmark readers in PreK, 1st and 2nd grades learn foundational skills for reading fluency and build basic phonemic awareness skills through listening, letter naming, phonological awareness, and serial processing. Students learn the crucial skills necessary for reading fluency and come away with a framework for reading comprehension that can be applied to all content areas.

What Does the Evidence Say About *Stepping Stones to Literacy*?

1 "Strong" Evidence Criteria	Alignment to Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes • Based on strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What Works Clearinghouse confirmed statistically significant positive effects of Stepping Stones to Literacy on all outcomes ✓ The Nelson, Benner, & Gonzalez (2005) study* findings are based on the performance of Stepping Stones to Literacy students and comparison students on the following outcome measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three measures of phonological awareness (Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP): Phonological Awareness subtest and <i>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)</i>: Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Initial Sound Fluency subtests) • One measure of letter knowledge (<i>DIBELS: Letter Naming Fluency</i> subtest) • One measure of phonics (<i>DIBELS: Nonsense Words Fluency</i> subtest).



RESEARCH EVIDENCE & RESULTS

Published Studies:

Nelson, J. R., Benner, G. J., & Gonzalez, J. (2005). An investigation of the effects of a prereading intervention on the early literacy skills of children at risk of emotional disturbance and reading problems. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 13(1), 3–12.

Research Reviews: [What Works Clearinghouse](#)