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| Do different methods actually achieve different results when it comes to a student becoming proficient in reading?  How is this measured?  Who first tested this?  When and Where?  What factors impact the results? Positively and negatively? | Authors intend to describe what they have learned about reading and school reform, what they suspect and what future research is needed for schools to become or remain successful sites for reading development in the 21st century.   * History * Curriculum-based school reform efforts * Teacher development   Historical:  Successful schools shared these characteristics:   1. Strong principal leadership—both administrative and instructional 2. High expectations for both teacher and student performance 3. Teaching that emphasizes cognitive development as well as warmth toward students 4. Teacher choice in approaches that respond to individual students’ needs 5. Reliance on teacher-developed tests and teacher judgments of student achievement 6. Students’ self-efficacy   Research shifted from identifying these features to studying the impact of the context in which schools are nested and the processes that school faculty and staff engage in within those contexts to improve the quality of their instructions.  Focuses include:   * Policy * Changes in teachers’ knowledge and practices * Changes in leadership and school organization   How do policy makers and practitioners differ in terms of implementing reform? The former focuses more on the measurements and tools to assess while for latter focuses more on the ‘how’ of the matter.  The report goes on to cover:  Curriculum based reform efforts that emphasize effectiveness and fidelity as underlying criteria for success  Professional development based reform efforts that emphasize effectiveness, adaptability, and sustainability. (p. 597)  **CURRICULUM BASED REFORM EFFORTS: COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS REFORM** |
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| What is a: ‘quasi-experimental interrupted time-series analysis?  is an [empirical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empirical) [study](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quasi-experiment) used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on its target population. Quasi-experimental research designs share many similarities with the traditional experimental design or [randomized controlled trial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Randomized_controlled_trial), but they specifically lack the element of random assignment to treatment or control. Instead, quasi-experimental designs typically allow the researcher to control the assignment to the treatment condition, but using some criterion other than random assignment (e.g., an eligibility cutoff mark) | Comprehensive School Reform—CSR  Focus on schools as a system—all components must function well in order for the system to work properly and effectively.  Three models for CSR—   * Accelerated Schools * America’s Choice * Success for All   ***Accelerated Schools—***  Set high standards for all—including disadvantaged students—and with cooperation and creativity, students will rise to the challenge  Difficult to assess achievement  Success took years to be seen  Highest success evident in middle ground students  ***America’s Choice—***  Started in 1998 with 40 schools.  Standardized assessment  Instruction aligned to those standards  Strong instructional leadership building the community of both educators and community  Provides schools with materials and strategies  Emphasis on quantity of reading by students with incentives  Some gains were noted, but overall the positive impact on these schools was nonexistent and could not be sustained at any rate  ***Success for All***  First implemented in 1987  Focus on phonics and long periods of instruction by teachers using scripted lessons  Smaller groups within classes allows for grouping by skill levels  Testing quite regularly with students receiving tutoring or raising group level based on scores  Widely used and extensively evaluated  Differs from accelerated schools (cultural) and America’s Choice (professional control) with more emphasis on procedural control  Not very flexible, however, and regrouping was difficult to administer  No real alternatives for students who did not achieve success  Boredom had negative impact on students and teachers alike |
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|  | The more prescriptive the program, the easier it is for teachers and administrators to implement; however, prescriptive programs lack flexibility and not reflexive and therefore not reactive to the actual student body for each individual case.  Long term gains are negated by the use of pre-packaged curriculum as resources become shop-worn and outdated.  **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BASED REFORM EFFORTS**  Emphasis more on the teacher as a person than on the resources and plans   1. Participating teachers and administrators must have good understanding of key principles 2. Must have internal commitment to the process of change 3. Must understand that the reform effort will change over time and that local adaptations are needed 4. Strong building leadership and district support are needed to sustain and scale a successful reform effort 5. Successful reform effort requires high quality professional development in which participants work together as a professional learning community 6. Successful reform effort requires that teachers develop deeper content knowledge and more effective pedagogy   The authors go on to discuss in great detail seven different approaches to implementation.  A variety of results is documented but the overall findings indicate that teachers need support- both externally and internally- and that they must understand that change takes time.  Vision, commitment and ownership of change process  Leadership  Principled use of data—data driven or evidenced based instruction  Analysis, feedback, discussion  Collaborative school community-  peer coaching teaming and program consistency 🡪 success  teachers develop a sense of collective self-efficacy meaning that together they can effect positive change  “Share decision-making and teachers’ participation in a number of collaborative teaching and learning communities helped teachers and administrators develop a sense of ownership and collective efficacy that in turn helped them sustain their continual literacy improvement efforts.” (p. 612)  In other words, in working together on this project, teachers gained confidence with could translate to their teaching and ultimately their students’’ higher success. |
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| What is a ‘staircase curriculum’?  **The staircase curriculum: Whole-school collaboration to improve literacy achievement**  The article offers information on the concept of the staircase curriculum in reading and writing which require a whole-school collaboration to improve literacy achievement. It notes that staircase concept builds on curriculum coherence for teachers to understand collaboration and coordination to align their goals for student learning, assessment, and instruction. It adds that the staircase curriculum will be customized to address literacy learning needs of the schoolchildren.  u, Kathryn H.; Raphael, Taffy E.  PUB. DATE  June 2011  SOURCE  New England Reading Association Journal;2011, Vol. 46 Issue 2, p1 | ***Focus on Individual Change***  Individual teacher development impacts overall success of programs   1. Professional learning and changes in teaching 2. Curriculum coherence and balanced instruction 3. Providing for complex thinking and motivating learning activities   Au (2005) observed that it was the coherent curriculum developed by teachers within a school, not the materials a school had purchased, that led to increasingly effective literacy instruction. (p. 617)  What is a ‘literacy circle’?  http://www.asdk12.org/depts/els/images/lit_circle_home.jpg  What is an ‘action research project’?  Good resource: <http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/0200-08.htm>  Although research frequently focuses somehow on new ideas in adult literacy [programs](http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/0200-08.htm) or instruction, the research process involves more than simply trying them out. "Trying out" frequently involves trial-and- error; research, on the other hand, is planned and systematic inquiry based on one or more questions related to the new ideas. Our purpose in this brief paper is to provide guidance for adult literacy practitioners who are interested in conducting research about their programs.  We will comment briefly about each of four stages of the research process:  1. Identifying questions to guide the research  2. Collecting information to answer the questions  3. Analyzing the information that has been collected  4. Sharing results with others. |