

What Works Clearinghouse



Fundations®

Effectiveness¹ No studies of *Fundations*® that fall within the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The lack of studies meeting WWC evidence standards means that, at this time, the WWC is unable to draw any conclusions based on research about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of *Fundations*® on students with learning disabilities.

Program Description² *Fundations*® is a prevention and early-intervention program designed to help reduce reading and spelling failure.³ The program is aimed at students in grades K–3 and involves daily 30-minute lessons which focus on carefully-sequenced skills that include print knowledge, alphabet awareness, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, decoding, spelling, and vocabulary

development. *Fundations*® is designed to complement existing literature-based reading programs in general education classes, but can also be used in small groups of low-achieving or learning disabled students for 40–60 minutes each day. Students rotate through different targeted interactive activities. The program is based on the principles of the *Wilson Reading System*®.

The WWC identified two studies of *Fundations*® for students with learning disabilities that were published or released between 1989 and 2009.

One study is within the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol but uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

One study is out of the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol and is ineligible for review because it is not a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention.

1. The studies in this report were reviewed using WWC Evidence Standards, Version 2.0 (see the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Chapter III), as described in protocol Version 2.0.
2. The descriptive information for this program was obtained from a publicly available source: the program’s website (<http://www.fundations.com>, downloaded October 2009). The WWC requests developers to review the program description sections for accuracy from their perspective. Further verification of the accuracy of the descriptive information for this program is beyond the scope of this review. The literature search reflects documents publicly available by October 2009.
3. *Fundations*® is one of many curricula that are based, in part, on the principles of the sequential, multisensory Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching reading. Other WWC intervention reports related to the multisensory Orton-Gillingham approach include *Barton Reading & Spelling System*®, *Alphabetic Phonics*, *Herman Method*™, *Orton-Gillingham-based Strategies (Unbranded)*, *Wilson Reading System*®, *Project Read*®, and *Dyslexia Training Program*.

References [Studies that fall outside the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol or do not meet evidence standards](#)

Pang, R. V. (2007). *The effects of the Wilson Reading System and Foundations on the decoding skills of elementary students with reading disabilities*. Unpublished master's thesis, California State University–San Marcos. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

Robinson, C., & Wahl, M. (2004). *Foundations*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Center for Reading Research. The study is ineligible for review because it is not a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention, such as a meta-analysis or research literature review.