

What Works Clearinghouse



Voyager Reading Programs

Effectiveness¹ No studies of the *Voyager* reading programs (*Voyager Passport*[™], *Voyager Passport Reading Journeys*[™], and *Voyager Universal Literacy System*[®]) 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 *Voyager* reading programs on students with learning disabilities.

Program Descriptions² *Voyager Passport*[™] is a supplemental reading intervention system for students in grades K–5. The program integrates five components of reading (phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, word reading, sight words, and vocabulary) into a 30–40 minute instructional routine. An assessment and data management system is integrated into the intervention, allowing teachers to monitor progress and differentiate instruction. The program provides instruction, corrective feedback, and practice time in a small group setting. Each level of *Voyager Passport*[™] consists of 120 lessons that are divided into ten-day units called Adventures.

Voyager Passport Reading Journeys[™] is a reading intervention program designed for adolescents who struggle with reading. The program incorporates direct, explicit instruction into a systematic 50-minute routine with whole-group and small-group

instruction. The program provides instruction in comprehension, vocabulary, and word study using fiction and non-fiction texts based on age-appropriate science and social studies topics. Assessments are embedded in the curriculum to enable teachers to monitor progress and differentiate instruction. The program offers four levels of instruction appropriate for middle and high school. Each level includes 120 lessons that are divided into ten-day units called Expeditions that focus on topics related to science or social studies. Each week, students spend four days on lessons designed to build their fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. They spend the fifth day online using SOLO[®], an interactive online learning package.

The *Voyager Universal Literacy System*[®] is a K–3 reading program that includes a core reading curriculum; a progress monitoring system that measures each student's reading

1. The studies in this report were reviewed using WWC Evidence Standards, Version 2.0 (see the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Chapter III).
2. The descriptive information for this program was obtained from a publicly available source: the program's website (<http://www.voyagerlearning.com>, downloaded February 2010). 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.

Program Description *(continued)*

progress and identifies struggling readers; a struggling reader intervention that includes additional instruction time and summer school; professional development for teachers, principals, and specialists; a home study curriculum; and computer-based practice and reinforcement in phonological skills, comprehension, fluency, language development, and writing. The program

uses individual reading instruction, higher-level comprehension activities, problem solving, and writing, as well as whole classroom, small group, and independent group settings. The program emphasizes regular assessments, with biweekly reviews for struggling students and quarterly assessments for all students.

The WWC identified 44 studies of *Voyager* reading programs for students with learning disabilities that were published or released between 1989 and 2009.

This includes 33 studies of *Voyager Passport*[™], six studies of *Voyager Passport Reading Journeys*[™], and eight studies of *Voyager Universal Literacy System*[®]. The total of 47 individual studies (33 + 6 + 8) is more than the overall number of studies (44) because one study included all three programs and one study included both *Voyager Passport*[™] and *Voyager Universal Literacy Systems*[®].

***Voyager Passport*[™]**. None of the 33 studies meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations. Seven studies fall within the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol but do not use a comparison group, two studies are ineligible for review because they are not primary analyses of the effectiveness of an intervention, and 24 studies are out of the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol because the sample of students does not meet protocol criteria.

***Voyager Passport Reading Journeys*[™]**. None of the six studies meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations. All six studies are out of the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol because the sample of students does not meet protocol criteria.

***Voyager Universal Literacy System*[®]**. None of the eight studies meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations. One study is ineligible for review because it is not a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention, and seven studies are out of the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol because the sample of students does not meet protocol criteria.

References Studies that fall outside the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol or do not meet evidence standards

Voyager Passport™

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- Bell, J. N. (2008). The effects of three reading intervention programs on third grade students' reading achievement. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Louisiana at Monroe, 2008). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 69(5-A), 1649. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Peyton, J. A., & Macpherson, J. R. (2008). *Students receiving special education services succeed on OCCT after using Voyager Passport reading intervention*. Dallas, TX: Voyager Expanded Learning. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Peyton, J. A., & Macpherson, J. R. (2008). *Substantial reading gains for third grade students during summer reading intervention in Sarasota County schools*. Dallas, TX: Voyager Expanded Learning. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Peyton, J. A., & Macpherson, J. R. (2008). *Third and fifth grade students success on TAKS after using Voyager Passport reading intervention*. Dallas, TX: Voyager Expanded Learning. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.

- Peyton, J. A., & Macpherson, J. R. (2008). *Third grade students success on FCAT after using Voyager Passport reading intervention in the school district of Manatee County, Florida*. Dallas, TX: Voyager Expanded Learning. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Slavin, R. E., Cheung, A., Groff, C., & Lake, C. (2008). Effective reading programs for middle and high schools: A best-evidence synthesis. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(3), 290–322. 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.
- Additional source:**
- Slavin, R. E., Cheung, A., Groff, C., & Lake, C. (2008). *Effective reading programs for middle and high schools: A best evidence synthesis*. Educator's summary. Retrieved February 24, 2009, from <http://www.bestevidence.org>.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Alabama summer reading academies significantly accelerate first-grade reading skills*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Alabama summer reading academies significantly accelerate kindergarten reading skills*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
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- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Expect Results in Florida schools: A report highlighting student reading achievement*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Additional sources:**
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Crestview Elementary (FL) FCAT scores continue to increase*. Dallas, TX: Author.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *District-wide progress on FCAT for Miami, FL tier 2 and tier 3 students*. Dallas, TX: Author.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Larkdale Elementary (FL) ranked in top 5% of district reading first schools after Voyager Passport*. Dallas, TX: Author.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Norwood Elementary (FL) at-risk students increase fluency with Voyager Passport*. Dallas, TX: Author.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (n.d.). *Manatee County school district achieves highest summer gains in the state of Florida*. Dallas, TX: Author.
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- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Texas fourth-graders accelerate their reading fluency with Voyager Passport*. Dallas, TX: Author.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *First-graders receiving special education services at Oxford Elementary (AL) make gains in key reading skills*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Kindergartners receiving special education services at Oxford Elementary (AL) make significant gains in key reading skills*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
- Voyager Expanded Learning. (2006). *Schools in Bowling Green, KY significantly decrease referrals to special education*. Dallas, TX: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.
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Voyager Passport Reading Journeys™

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Voyager Universal Literacy System®

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