

# What Works Clearinghouse



## Barton Reading & Spelling System<sup>®</sup>

### Effectiveness<sup>1</sup>

No studies of the *Barton Reading & Spelling System*<sup>®</sup> 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 the *Barton Reading & Spelling System*<sup>®</sup> on students with learning disabilities.

### Program Description<sup>2</sup>

The *Barton Reading & Spelling System*<sup>®</sup> is a one-to-one tutoring system designed to improve the reading, writing, and spelling skills of children, teenagers, or adults who struggle due to dyslexia or another learning disability.<sup>3</sup> Although the program is designed to be one-to-one, it may also be used in a small group setting, but each level will take longer to complete. The program is divided into ten levels, each with 10 to 15 lessons that cover the methods and sequence of teaching reading, spelling, and writing.

The *Barton Reading & Spelling System*<sup>®</sup> was designed for students of any age who have, or are suspected of having, dyslexia.

Program participants must speak and comprehend English at or above a second-grade level, have an IQ of 70 or higher, and be struggling with reading accuracy, fluency, spelling, or writing. The developer strongly recommends that students also be able to pass a basic screening which tests for significant deficits in auditory discrimination and/or auditory memory.

Tutors must be able to pass a five-minute sound (phoneme) discrimination test.

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.bartonreading.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. The *Barton Reading & Spelling System*<sup>®</sup> 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 *Alphabetic Phonics, Foundations*<sup>®</sup>, *Herman Method*<sup>™</sup>, *Orton-Gillingham-based Strategies (Unbranded)*, *Wilson Reading System*<sup>®</sup>, *Project Read*<sup>®</sup>, and *Dyslexia Training Program*.

## Program Description (continued)

### The WWC identified 13 studies of the *Barton Reading & Spelling System*® for students with learning disabilities that were published or released between 1989 and 2009.

None of the 13 studies meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations for the WWC review protocol for Students with Learning Disabilities.

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.

Twelve studies are out of the scope of the Students with Learning Disabilities review protocol and are ineligible for review.

- Six of these studies have an ineligible study design; specifically, they do not use a comparison group.
- Four studies do not include a primary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention.
- Two studies have samples that are not aligned with the WWC review protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students with learning disabilities.

## References

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

Arndt, E. J. (2007). *Barton Reading & Spelling System*. 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.

Barton Reading & Spelling System. (n.d.). *Benton School District: Benton, Arkansas intensive reading intervention report for the school year 2006–2007*. San Jose, CA: 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.

Barton Reading & Spelling System. (n.d.). *Research evidence of the effectiveness of the Barton Reading & Spelling System*. San Jose, CA: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Campbell, D. R., & Nosbisch, T. (2009). *Significant gains demonstrated in reading after utilizing the Barton Reading and Spell-*

*ing Program*. San Jose, CA: Bright Solutions for Dyslexia, Inc. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Carretero, M., Pope, M. L., Simons, P. R., & Pozo, J. I. (1991). *Learning and instruction: European research in an international context, vol. 3*. Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press. 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.

Foorman, B. R., Fletcher, J. M., & Francis, D. J. (1997). *A scientific approach to reading instruction*. Houston, TX: Center for Academic and Reading Skills. 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.

Giess, S. (2005). Effectiveness of a multisensory, Orton-Gillingham-influenced approach to reading intervention for high school students with reading disability. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida, 2005). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66(06A), 193–2152. The study does not meet WWC

## References *(continued)*

evidence standards because it uses a quasi-experimental design in which the analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

Hoyt, S. (n.d.). *Florida early intervention study*. Retrieved October 14, 2009, from <http://www.bartonreading.com/research2.html>.

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.

Lewis, E., & Bowers, C. (2003). *Research supports phonological gains with intervention: Barton Reading & Spelling System*. San Jose, CA: Authors. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Maldonado, E. (n.d.). *Texas TAKS study*. Retrieved October 14, 2009, from <http://www.bartonreading.com/research2.html>.

The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Snow, C. E., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. 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.

STRIVE Project. (2009). *STRIVE Project U.S. Department of Education grant performance report*. Craig, AK: Author. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.

Taylor-Redmond, C. (n.d.). *West Virginia special education study*. Retrieved October 14, 2009, from <http://www.bartonreading.com/research2.html>. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a comparison group.