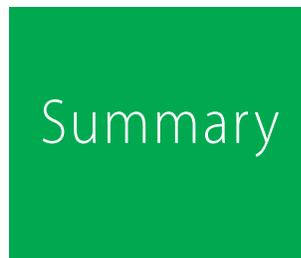




Evidence-based decisionmaking: assessing reading across the curriculum interventions



Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education



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Summary

June 2007

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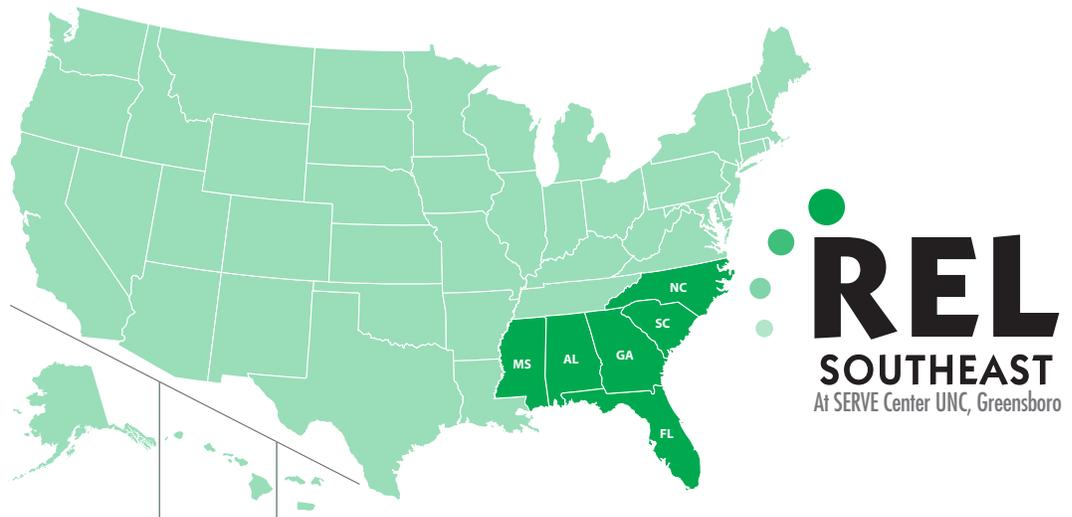
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Summary

Evidence-based decisionmaking: assessing reading across the curriculum interventions

When selecting reading across the curriculum interventions, educators should consider the extent of the evidence base on intervention effectiveness and the fit with the school or district context, whether they are purchasing a product from vendors or developing it internally. This report provides guidance in the decisionmaking.

Many states, districts, schools, and educational support organizations have identified improving adolescent literacy outcomes as a pressing need. For example, the Georgia Department of Education incorporated Reading Across the Curriculum Standards as part of its 2004 revisions to state performance standards. These new standards represented a significant challenge for content-area teachers. Georgia, among other states, was interested in information on the kinds of professional development interventions available to support teachers' efforts to integrate these new expectations about reading in the content areas into their teaching. This report looks at what reading across the curriculum interventions states and districts might consider in their plans to improve reading outcomes at the secondary level.

Seven interventions were identified for review: ReadAbout, Reading in the Content Areas, Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), CCreating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS), Reading Apprenticeship, Literacy First, and Strategic Instruction Model–Content Literacy Continuum (SIM–CLC). While not an exhaustive list of the professional development interventions available, these seven represent the types of external support that schools might access. Of the seven interventions, only Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction has had several quasi-experimental studies and an experimental study conducted on its effectiveness. In addition, four interventions—ReadAbout, CCreating Independence through Student-owned Strategies, Reading Apprenticeship, and Strategic Instruction Model–Content Literacy Continuum—are currently the focus of federally funded studies that will examine the interventions' effectiveness through experimental studies.

A primary purpose of this report is to compare these interventions in a way that is helpful to decisionmakers. One important dimension of comparison is the extent of evidence of intervention effectiveness.

In addition, the report offers the following practical guidance to decisionmaking teams tasked with finding ways to support content-area teachers in improving reading across the curriculum:

1. Consider professional development interventions in light of a clear understanding of the changes desired and the local context.
2. Think about the selection of a professional development intervention as part of an evidence-based decisionmaking cycle.

3. Consider structuring a comprehensive planning process that goes beyond selecting a professional development intervention.

Following a thoughtful evidence-based decisionmaking process should enhance the likelihood that a district or school reading across the curriculum initiative will achieve the desired outcomes.

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