

Xtreme Reading

Intervention Snapshot | Adolescent Literacy Topic Area

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WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE™

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Literacy skills are critical to students' academic achievement and for setting them on a path to successful high school graduation and readiness for college and careers. *Xtreme Reading* is a supplemental literacy curriculum designed to improve the literacy skills of struggling students in grades 6 to 12. The curriculum is primarily designed to help students improve their vocabulary, decoding, fluency, and reading comprehension skills. To ensure a productive learning environment, students initially learn social skills associated with creating a supportive learning community, including how to participate in certain class activities (for example, whole-group discussion, small-group work, partner work, transitions). They also participate in a motivational program whereby they discuss their hopes and dreams for the future and set personal goals related to reading and other life areas. The *Xtreme Reading* program includes teacher-led whole-group instruction, cooperative group work, paired practice, and independent practice.

This What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention report, part of the WWC's Adolescent Literacy topic area, explores the

effects of *Xtreme Reading* on student literacy achievement and comprehension (including reading comprehension and vocabulary skills). The WWC identified four studies of *Xtreme Reading*, two of which meet WWC standards. The evidence presented in this report is from studies of the effects of *Xtreme Reading* on ninth-grade students—including 81% non-White and 19% White students—from largely urban and diverse school districts.

Findings on *Xtreme Reading* from the two studies that meet WWC standards are shown below. The table reports an effectiveness rating, the improvement index, and the number of studies and students that contributed to the findings. The effectiveness rating is based on the quality of the designs used in studies, whether the findings are favorable or unfavorable for the intervention, and the number of studies that tested the intervention. The improvement index is a measure of the intervention's effect on an outcome. A positive improvement index does not necessarily mean the estimated effect is statistically significant.

What Happens When Students Participate in *Xtreme Reading*?

	Effectiveness rating	Study Findings	Evidence meeting WWC standards (version 4.0)	
		Improvement index (percentile points)	Number of studies	Number of students
The WWC found that implementing <i>Xtreme Reading</i> :				
May result in little to no change in comprehension	No discernible effects	+2	1	2,329
May result in little to no change in general literacy achievement	No discernible effects	0	2	1,870

FINDINGS ARE BASED ON:

2 studies with 3,008 grade 9 students in 39 high schools in 12 districts in 9 states



STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

Free & reduced-price lunch: 54%	Gender: 51% female	Race: 19% White	Ethnicity: 33% Hispanic
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What Does *Xtreme Reading* Cost?

Xtreme Reading is delivered in a classroom setting by a teacher as a supplement to students' regular English language arts or reading instruction. As of June 2020, a complete classroom set for the *Xtreme Reading* program, including resources for one teacher and 15 students, costs \$2,200. The classroom set includes (a) an

instructor notebook for use in teaching the Xpect to Achieve component and each of the strategies; (b) a set of multimedia materials for instructors, including materials to use for remote learning; (c) student passages books for the decoding and comprehension strategies; and (d) student workbooks. The teacher training includes 5 days of workshops and costs about \$1,500 per day plus expenses for a certified professional developer.

LEARN MORE



Read more about the *Xtreme Reading* intervention and the studies that are summarized here in the [Intervention Report](#). Contact the Center for Research on Learning at The University of Kansas (<https://sim.ku.edu/xtreme-reading>) for additional information on implementing *Xtreme Reading*.