

## **A Guide to Finding Information on Studies Reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse**

Are you searching for a particular study to see if it has been reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse? Do you want to search broad topic areas to find studies that have been reviewed by the Clearinghouse? This video will show you how to do both tasks using the What Works Clearinghouse's Reviews of Individual Studies page.

An initiative of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, the WWC evaluates research studies that look at the effectiveness of education programs, products, policies, and practices. The Reviews of Individual Studies page on the WWC website can help you learn more about studies the WWC has reviewed.

You can use the WWC Reviews of Individual Studies page to find out whether a specific study has been reviewed by the WWC. For example, imagine you want to know whether the WWC has reviewed a 2015 study by Clark & colleagues. On the home screen of the Reviews of Individual Studies page, you can search for:

- Clark, one of the study authors
- Or Clark 2015, adding the year the study was published

Searching for "Clark" returns a number of results that include "Clark" as an author. You're looking for a study where Clark is the first author. So, click through the search results to find the study you want. Note that the results are sorted alphabetically.

By scrolling through these results, you will find the study you want near the top of the second page. Each of the citations listed is a link that you can click to go to the study page.

As you scroll through the search results, one entry may catch your attention: A study by Clark that's also about Teach for America, but it's from 2013, not 2015. Because this citation is so closely related to the study you're looking for, you may want to examine this one as well.

To find out about the WWC rating for the 2015 study by Clark and colleagues, click on the citation. On the individual study page, you will see:

- The research design, sample size, and grade level of the student sample.
- You may also see different reasons for review. If a study has been reviewed for different purposes, you will also see a pull-down menu on the page, allowing you to select a specific review. For instance, a study may have been reviewed for a grant competition and also for an Intervention Report.

The study page also shows:

- The WWC rating for the study (if it has been reviewed) and whether there were any statistically significant positive findings.
- The Protocol and Handbook version under which it was reviewed.

- And the Products associated with the study review. These products may include Intervention Reports, Single Study Reviews, Quick Reviews, and Practice Guides.

For studies that meet standards, like this one, the study page shows information about findings, sample characteristics, and, in some cases, details about the study. For studies reviewed for Intervention Reports, you can connect to the Evidence Snapshot for that program, product, policy or practice.

In this case, you can see the effectiveness ratings across the 7 studies of Teach for America that meet WWC standards, and download a copy of the Intervention Report. You can also click on the link “Intervention” and get more details about the studies that contributed to the Intervention Report.

The WWC summary of evidence for an intervention provides details about findings from the individual studies in each outcome domain. From here you can also return to the Evidence Snapshot, get a copy of the Intervention Report, or view the Protocol that guided the review.

For studies whose authors have common names, like Clark, you can use other key words or terms in your search. For example, you can search for Clark 2015. When you do this, one result appears. This approach gets you to the study more quickly.

You can also narrow the search in other ways. For example, you can search for “Clark Teach for America.” When you do this, you will see listings for the 2015 study as well as two other studies. The Reviews of Individual Studies page can also be useful to look for information about the effectiveness of a specific education program, product, policy or practice.

To get started, search for terms commonly used to characterize the program, product, policy or practice.

The terms can be general, like “dropout prevention” or “professional development,” or they can be more specific, like “learning communities” or “Teach for America.”

Let’s start our search by looking for studies about “professional development.” The search returns a number of results that appear to be relevant to your search for “professional development.”

To narrow the results, you can choose a topic from the topics menu. Most studies reviewed by the WWC are given one or more topic area or population designations to help narrow search results. Say, for example, you are interested in professional development for reading teachers. To narrow your search, select the “Literacy” topic. This results in fewer studies, many of which look relevant. To narrow the results even further, you can look for studies that meet WWC Standards with this menu or find studies with at least one statistically significant positive finding by clicking here.

For some studies, the study findings may not appear on the first screen you see. For instance, if looking for studies on learning communities, you may find the study by Sommo and colleagues

from 2012. You can select another WWC review of the study to check for findings. You can also use the 'print' button to print the details of all WWC reviews for a study.

There are many other useful resources on the WWC Website. For example,

- Intervention Reports
- Practice Guides
- And Find What Works from Systematic Reviews

The What Works Clearinghouse continually adds new products and updates existing ones. You can keep up to date by following us on twitter @whatworksed or visit whatworksclearinghouse on Facebook.