Responding to Critics

Background on Reading Recovery Criticism

Reading Recovery is a scientifically based early literacy intervention used in the United States since 1984. Because it is widely studied and well known, Reading Recovery has drawn criticism from a small but vocal minority who hold differing views about the beginning reading process. Although critics often quote research, advocates can be confident that the vast majority of research evidence supports Reading Recovery. The following links provide needed detail to respond to Reading Recovery critics.

Allington, Richard (February 14, 2007). Think Tank Review of Whole Language High Jinks Education Policy Studies Laboratory. Published online. Response to:


The Effectiveness of Early– Intervention Tutoring Programs—When is a Research Brief Too Brief?
Response to:

Response to:
Internet letter distributed to members of Congress in Spring 2002.

Letter Says Evidence Distorts Research (2002)
Signed by 200 academics and literacy scholars
Response to:
  Internet letter distributed to members of Congress in Spring 2002.
Signed by 31 academics.

Pinnell, G. S. (1999)
Comments in Response to Critics
Response to:
  Grossen, B., & Coulter, G. “Reading Recovery: An evaluation of benefits and costs: The claims versus the facts”. Published online.

Pinnell, G. S., & Moriarty, D. J. (1999)
Open letters to the editor of Investors Business Daily
Response to: