

Controversial Topics on Whether Supported by Research

- **The Effectiveness of Scripted or Direct Instruction –**
There is a lot of controversy as to whether scripted or direct instruction is an effective method for teaching reading. Some believe it takes away the unique teaching qualities or style that each teacher has. Reading First schools must use programs that use explicit, systematic instruction and follow the core program with fidelity.
- **The Effectiveness of Retention of Students –**
Numerous research studies on the long-term effects of retention have shown that retaining children does not help them academically.
- **The Effectiveness of Technology to Raise Achievement –**
Technology, when used appropriately, can be very effective at enhancing or supplementing instruction. However, too often, especially in Title I, it is used to replace direct services from a certified teacher. No program can replace the benefits of direct instruction from a highly qualified teacher.
- **Hiring Aides/Paraprofessionals to Replace Certified Staff –**
A trend several years ago, especially in Title I, was to hire aides/paraprofessionals instead of certified staff. The NCLB Act clearly states that aides must be used to assist teachers in reinforcing instruction, not replace them.
- **Sustained Silent Reading –**
It is important for adults to role model the importance and enjoyment gained from reading. However, it is uncertain how beneficial SBR is when many students don't have access to books at the appropriate level and therefore "fake" silent reading.