



# Reading Recovery Research Brief

## Reducing Retention and Learning Disability Placement Through Reading Recovery: An Educationally Sound Cost-Effective Choice

C. A. Lyons & J. Beaver. (1995). In R. Allington & S. Walmsley (Eds.), *No Quick Fix: Rethinking Literacy Programs in America's Elementary Schools* (pp. 116–136). New York: Teachers College Press and the International Reading Association.

### Background

Lyons and Beaver conducted a cost comparison analysis for first-grade retention in Lancaster, Ohio 4 years after Reading Recovery was implemented systemwide.

### Findings

The study revealed that the first-grade retention rate had dropped from 4.3% (76 of 1,772 students) in the 3 years prior to implementation of Reading Recovery to 2.9% (63 of 2,123 students) 4 years after systemwide implementation. Using teachers' salaries and students' time in the program, these figures represented a cost savings of \$163,020. In addition, the Lancaster district looked at special education placements. In the 3 years prior to full implementation of Reading Recovery, 32 students were placed in learning disabilities classrooms at the end of Grade 1 or during the first few months of Grade 2. In the 3 years after Reading Recovery implementation, 10 children were classified as learning disabled. The cost of educating one learning disabled student at the time was conservatively estimated at \$9,100 across 4 years of service compared with the per-pupil cost of \$1,708 for Reading Recovery. The authors found that considerable savings were realized after the district established Reading Recovery as a prevention program.