



A helping hand for literacy ◀

Academy of READING®

Program Overview

The Academy of READING® is a research-based software intervention solution that enables at-risk students to develop fluency in the foundation skills of reading. Designed to supplement reading curriculum for K-12 students, the program provides effective intervention for emergent readers, students at risk of reading failure, students with limited English language proficiency, and students reading below grade level.

The Academy of READING stands apart from other instructional programs not only due to its unique instructional approach, but also because of its complete integration with the Academy of MATH®, allowing the set-up and management of both programs from one interface.

The Academy of READING systematically targets foundation reading skills that are trained to automaticity, including phonemic and grapho-phonemic awareness, phonics, fluent and accurate decoding, and important comprehension skills. The program offers individualized, self-paced instruction based on a task-analytic approach and incorporates mastery learning principles and immediate positive or corrective feedback. The built-in management system tracks performance and progress and provides data in highly accessible, graphical formats for both teacher and student.

The Academy of READING delivers rapid and permanent results. Expected student outcomes include decreased cognitive demand required for decoding, increased attention for drawing meaning from print, increased engaged reading practice and significant gains in reading comprehension.

Program Features

Management System & Reports

- Full integration of the management system for Academy of READING and Academy of MATH enables set-up and management of both programs from one interface.
- Easy-to-navigate pull-down menus and graphically engaging charts and graphs make finding and sorting data easy and immediate.
- Automated reports provide options for school, class, or individual-level data, generated from a common database. Reports include Time on Task, Levels Mastered, Time in Program and Test Results.
- Student program usage is monitored through SuccessTrack, which aligns to your own defined usage criteria.

- Student progress is monitored through the Training Monitor, which shows graphically how students are progressing and provides information on each intervention and error for every student.

Training Methodology

- The Academy of READING employs a training approach that follows a sequence of Tutorial – Practice – Train.
 - Tutorial – For each training activity, students begin by navigating through multi-stepped, graphically engaging instruction that explains the purpose and mechanics of the task.
 - Practice – Once the tutorial has been viewed, students are presented with a mandatory practice task with a requirement to demonstrate understanding of the task. Should a student struggle with this task, the teacher will be notified.
 - Train – Once students have demonstrated an ability to complete the task, they are presented with the actual training activity. Once proficiency with the task has been achieved, the next training activity is presented automatically.
- In an effort to ensure student progress while simultaneously decreasing the program’s administrative requirements for teachers, the Academy of READING offers a self-adjusting Intervention Engine that monitors student progress and automatically intervenes and adjusts training when necessary. Interventions can include:
 - Acceleration – Phonemic Awareness and Sound-Symbol Association training: once students master these skills at 100% they move on to the next skills in the training sequence, spending more time on skills they need, less on skills they already have.
 - Review – all skill areas: when a student is struggling with a task, tutorial and practice sessions are automatically reviewed.
 - Modification – all skill areas: when a student continues to struggle, minor changes to the mastery criteria are made to prevent frustration and to maintain a sense of progress and accomplishment. Please note that any modified skill is automatically re-presented to the student at default mastery criteria at the end of the training stream if the student has not demonstrated sufficient reading gains.
 - Recess – all skill areas: when a student continues to struggle, training on the skill is interrupted, an alternative activity is presented through to mastery and the student is returned to the previously interrupted skill.
 - Teacher Notification – all skill areas: teachers are made aware of each student’s interventions. When a student demonstrates an inability to master a skill, training is put on hold and the teacher must become involved in order to re-start training.

Instructional Components

- Phonemic Awareness – The Academy of READING includes a comprehensive Phonemic Awareness Training component that follows a task-analytic approach in which the awareness of phonemes is trained in small, individual units. Each unit is considered an essential part of a complete awareness of phonemes. The units are presented in an order that is in line with the natural developmental sequence of the learner.

Students begin with matching words that rhyme, moving on to matching words with the same beginning, then ending, then middle sounds. Students progress to matching words with sounds in the beginning, ending and middle position. Then, exercises requiring the blending of three then four phonemes are followed by exercises requiring the segmentation of words with three then four phonemes.

- Sound-Symbol Association – The development of Sound-Symbol Association knowledge, or the Alphabetic Principle, is a major component of the Academy of READING. The Academy of READING offers a structured opportunity to develop Sound-Symbol Association knowledge through the exercises found in Letter-Sound Match training. Having focused on isolated phonemes in Sound Match training, Letter-Sound Match training works through a series of activities in which students hear the word pronounced by the computer and must match it to one of three text options. Students work with letters, letter combinations and words. Activities include blending and word building. Students who work through these exercises reinforce their phonological awareness and develop their grapho-phonemic knowledge.
- Phonics & Decoding – In order to offer effective decoding fluency training for students, a combination of task-analytic and process-oriented approaches has been incorporated into the Academy of READING program. In the Phonics & Decoding section, letters, letter combinations, syllables progressing to words of different phonetic patterns, sentences and finally paragraphs are learned to a level of fluency and accuracy that ensures that the student has mastered key component skills required to become an effective reader.

What is more, the Academy of READING is built upon the theory of automaticity. This theory contends that the basic components of reading (i.e.: letters, syllables and words) must not only be learned, but learned to a rapid skill level such that processing becomes automatic. Students must demonstrate automaticity (measured by a high accuracy rate and consistent response time) before progressing to the next skill. This automaticity of response facilitates the attainment of higher level reading skills, namely comprehension. Students can decode new text with a high degree of proficiency and fluency while attending to the meaning of the words they read.

- Comprehension – The Academy of READING includes a set of silent reading paragraphs to help students practice comprehension abilities. The comprehension exercises help students develop strategies for better comprehension, including the development of a reading vocabulary, and the ability to identify the main idea, understand relationships, make inferences, note specific facts and details, and retain information.

The paragraph content for the Academy of READING was selected from a variety of real-world sources to help young children to adults develop life skills while practicing their reading comprehension.

Motivation

- The Academy of READING utilizes a Mastery Learning approach. As students master a component of their training, they are presented with an award and printable certificate to demonstrate their achievement. Once a skill has been mastered, the student moves on to the next skill, clearly indicating to the student that he or she is progressing. Students have concrete evidence of achievement that they can present to their parents and show to their friends. This positive reinforcement has a tremendous impact on building self-esteem and motivation in students who have experienced little success in school.
- Short but intense training periods of 25 to 30 minutes allow students to stay focused without placing a heavy burden on their attention span.
- Customizable classroom graphics with age-appropriate options allow students to personalize their own learning environment.
- Motivational and instructional characters provide assistance and positive feedback to guide students through the program in a non-threatening way.
- Additional best practices guidelines, professional development and classroom incentive tools to help teachers reinforce motivational concepts are available through the tiered Advantage[®] program support and services plans.

Technical Specifications

- Installation at the Client/Server
- Browser-based access
- LAN installation
- WAN/Centralized server installation