



 **Discovery**  
EDUCATION

DISTRICT PURCHASING

# Considerations for Foundational Reading



Is your district considering purchasing a supplemental foundational reading solution? This guide can help to ensure that your investments in learning technology improves student growth and achievement and supports educators.

### Important Considerations

An effective supplemental learning program provides engaging, adaptive, conceptual-based foundational reading curriculum to help personalize and increase learning outcomes. Identifying the right program can be a significant undertaking.



### Consider these questions when evaluating solutions that help young students learn to read:

- Does the program engage young learners? What is the fun factor? Does it have fun characters and motivating storylines?
- In what ways does the program address the specific learning needs of young learners (Pre K-5)? Intervention use cases?
- How does the solution automatically differentiate learning? Does it provide just-in-time scaffolding that supports students as they need it?
- How is educational technology and adaptivity used to deliver learning outcomes?
- How does the program build mastery of critical foundational reading skills?
- Does the solution align to Science of Reading and use a structured literacy approach?
- Does the solution provide fluency practice?
- How does the solution support student agency and help drive their motivation to learn?
- How are learning paths personalized? Does the program adjust instruction and practice on the basis of progress and productive struggle?
- How does the program motivate and engage students? Are students incentivized as they master skills? How is gamification used?
- Does the subscription include implementation, onboarding and ongoing customer success?
- Is ongoing customer support included in your subscription?
- Does the solution follow best practices for instructional design?



## Sample Questions For Foundational Reading Solutions

The right questions can help you uncover the nuanced differences between potential solutions and identify the fit that offers the best return on investment. **Questions you may want to consider include:**



### Adaptivity / Acceleration

**How can the solution support the instructional needs of all students? How does it adapt to each student's unique needs?**

#### Some requirements to consider:

- How does the product personalize learning pathways to address MTSS, RTI, and offer differentiated learning for both acceleration and remediation?
- How does the program speed-up, slow-down, and sequence lessons for each student to ensure their skills mastery?
- If a student does not have a prerequisite sub-skill needed to complete an activity, does the program identify, rectify and return the student to grade level play?
- How does the program determine what each student needs, based on their unique starting point?
- How can educators make supplemental assignments for accelerated or struggling students?



## **Student Engagement/Agency**

**Do students want to return to the product again and again because they enjoy the play?**

**Some requirements to consider:**

- How does the program delight, engage, and motivate students? Does it use gamification, rewards and other incentives?
- How, specifically, does the student experience agency over their own learning?
- How does the program promote a growth mindset in foundational reading skills?
- Is the solution age-and grade-appropriate? How is student play built around storylines and themes that are attractive to young learners?
- Can students track their own progress in the program?

## **Assessment & Curricular Insights**

**How is formative and summative assessment used to inform learning? How do potential solutions use technology to personalize the student experience?**

**Some requirements to consider:**

- Describe the use of assessment technology, both summative and formative.
- How does the solution assess student productive struggle and strategies?
- How well does the solution correlate to your state standards?
- Does the solution align with your core curriculum? Ask them to provide examples.
- Describe how capstones, milestones, and summative assessments are presented to students? How does the solution mitigate test anxiety?

## Instructional Design

How does the curriculum and instructional design address foundational reading skills? How is technology used to reinforce reading skills mastery?

Consider these questions:

- How does the program use targeted personalization to develop reading skills mastery?
- How is explicit instruction provided? How is practice provided and does it support explicit instruction?
- Describe the use of virtual manipulatives.
- How do students receive feedback on their play? How does this feedback inform instruction?
- Does the program address the foundational reading standards for grades K-5 as outlined in Common Core State Standards? Describe how the solution also follows best practices for Pre-K learning.
- How does the program build on prior learning and strategically move from simple to complex concepts?
- How does the solution use instructional design and adaptivity to provide accelerated learning outcomes?



## Implementation Success & Ongoing Professional Learning

How are your administrators and educators supported during implementation and use? Does the solution offer opportunities for training and development?

Some considerations:

- Describe the implementation and ongoing support provided by the vendor.
- How accessible is PD to educators, paraeducators, and administrators?

## Integrations

How do you integrate rosters and support single sign-on? Will your method translate to ongoing ease of use by staff and students?

Some requirements to consider:

- How are students rostered?
- Does the program support SSO and rostering via Clever or ClassLink?
- What support does the provider offer during implementation?

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