

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Requirements

Alignment for BrightFish Reading to
ESSA Standards and Requirements



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| <p>1. Case Studies</p> <p>Overview of published Case Studies</p> | <p>BrightFish Reading was first released for classroom trials in February 2016 and has been generally available for K12 schools since September 2017. BrightFish Reading is being used with students in Tier 1 supplemental and Tier II/Tier III instructional groupings in grades 2 through high school. English Language Learners, Economically Disadvantaged and Exceptional Education students have successfully used the program to improve reading proficiency.</p> <p>6th Grade Case Study: https://www.brightfishlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/case.study_escambia.al_.pdf</p> <p>9th Grade Summer School Case Study: https://www.brightfishlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/victor.case_.study_2017.pdf</p> <p>A longitudinal study with Hillsborough County Public Schools in Florida will measure the impact on FSA scores for Level 1 students using BrightFish Reading in grades 6 through 10. Year 1 results will be available in 2020.</p> |
| <p>2. Category of Evidence</p> <p>Description of the research-based instructional model</p> | <p>ESSA Tier 4: BrightFish Reading fits within the Tier 4 framework, for practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness.</p> <p>BrightFish Mastery-based Learning Model</p> <p>BrightFish Reading is a structured, online program that enables struggling learners in grades 2 through high school to read independently while improving their word recognition fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills. Using a deconstruction model, BrightFish Reading breaks down text into manageable components and uses mastery-based learning to improve foundational skills in word recognition fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Scaffolded lessons are paired with continuous feedback and a points-based reward system to motivate students to keep reading. Questions and feedback are written by classroom teachers to correspond to grade-level language and standards.</p> <p>An overview of the research-based instructional design is described below. A full research bibliography can be found here: https://www.brightfishlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/research_backgrounder.pdf</p> <p>Instructional Design</p> <p>The BrightFish Reading instructional design was developed from foundational research in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word recognition: LeBerge and Samuels (1974) found that mastering reading sub-skills to the level of automaticity allows readers to have the cognitive capacity to attend to meaning. Fiedorowicz & Trites (1987) measured the impact of computer-based automaticity training to improve component subskills in reading-delayed students. Begeney (2013) isolated the effects of slow, effortful word recognition to inhibit reading comprehension by consuming working memory needed for comprehension of the text. |

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| <p>2. Category of Evidence continued</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency: Fluent reading requires simultaneous operation of multiple processes, including word identification and comprehension (Samuels and Farstrup, 2006). Beginning and struggling readers focus inflexibly on word level; learning words to the point of rapid recognition improves fluency and reading comprehension (Tan and Nicholson, Breznitz, 1997). • Vocabulary: At higher grades, vocabulary skills are increasingly important when content-area instruction becomes central to school success (Balajthy, 2010); struggling readers learn one-third of words acquired by their proficient peers (White, Graves, and Slater, 1990) and require direct instruction to increase word knowledge. • Comprehension: Combining word recognition and comprehension training is significantly more effective than working on these skills in isolation to improve reading (Berninger et al 2003). |
| <p>3. Implementation Model</p> <p>Recommendations related to foundational areas of need and student use (3 times a week/20 min, etc.)</p> | <p>BrightFish Reading employs a holistic approach to the development of reading comprehension through active reading of text. BrightFish deconstructs passages and enables students to build it from words to phrases to paragraphs and finally the full text.</p> <p>The web-based program can be accessed at any time from a connected device. Each activity is completed in a structured sequence in short, discrete building blocks and all work is saved so that students can resume working the next time they log into the program. Each story unit takes an average of 60-90 minutes for students to complete. Depending on the level of skill deficits, students may take longer. Each student develops a personal reading pace after completing 3 stories, which teachers can monitor in the data dashboard.</p> <p>BrightFish Reading is a supplementary instructional tool that can be used in a wide range of program environments to meet student needs.</p> <p>The following is a list of minimum usage recommendations by subgroup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 supplemental: 2 times per week/ 30 minutes; 4 times per week/15 minutes • Tier II intervention: 3 times per week for 30-45 minutes. • Tier III/intensive: 3-5 times per week for 45 minutes. |

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| <p>4. Instruction and feedback</p> <p>Description of the program and the learning theory applied.</p> <p>Word recognition</p> | <p>The BrightFish Reading instructional design uses a structured, sequential process to help students become independent readers by building essential skills in word recognition fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.</p> <p><u>Word recognition</u></p> <p>Students begin their work in BrightFish Reading by selecting a fiction or nonfiction story from their menu. After completing an introduction activity, students start Word and Phrase Fluency. To comprehend text, readers need sufficient working memory to draw out the meaning from the words they read. The goal is to make the process of decoding words and phrases fluent and automatic to reduce this “cognitive load.”</p> <p>Starting at word level, students work on visual match and sound match activities, moving from one and two-letter words up to the most difficult words in the passage. For each response, the BrightFish system measures accuracy and speed. Students must demonstrate automatic recognition within mastery parameters of 97 percent accuracy and 2.5 seconds at each level before moving to increasingly higher levels of difficulty. After completing word-level fluency, students move on to phrases. Students demonstrate mastery by accurately processing phrases in visual and sound match, moving from the simplest to most complex phrases in the text.</p> <p>Required ability level: BrightFish Reading develops word- and phrase fluency to the level of automatic processing. Students require letter decoding skills to start at level 1 words (the, at, one, etc.). Students use a touch-enabled device, a mouse or touchpad to make their selections.</p> <p>Interventions: Modifications to the student training stream can be made for weak decoders, such as removing the mastery speed requirement until accuracy is achieved. For hearing impaired and deaf students, the sound match activity can be disabled.</p> <p>Students who struggle to master a level will be given a series of interventions by the BrightFish system, allowing repeated trials where the order and distractors are changed. After three failed attempts, the system reduces the mastery criteria by 20 percent. After five attempts, the teacher receives a notification to review the missed activity with the student.</p> |

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| <p>4. Instruction and feedback</p> <p>Description of the program and the learning theory applied.</p> <p>Vocabulary</p> | <p><u>Vocabulary</u> Struggling readers typically have under-developed vocabulary and word knowledge skills and require multiple opportunities to work with new words in a variety of contexts. Knowing how words are used in context prior to reading a text can help to reduce barriers to comprehension.</p> <p>In pre-reading Vocabulary activities, BrightFish Reading enables students to work with the words they will encounter in a passage, through a variety of word study exercises designed to solidify understanding of usage and context.</p> <p>Key words for each passage are taught explicitly so that students will recognize the word and its meaning as applied in the passage. Students learn the definition of each word with a reinforcing image and usage examples. Read-aloud options provide further support. Students select the best usage example in multiple choice exercises. In the synonym-antonym activity, students use a graphic organizer to sort similar and opposite words. The integrated Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary provides additional support for unfamiliar words. Next, students fill in the blanks to complete new sentences using the target words. Finally, they write their own sentences using the words.</p> <p>In each exercise, tutorials and positive, corrective feedback provide guidance for finding the best answers among the distractors.</p> <p>Required ability level: Passages are assigned based on each student’s instructional reading level. Basic keyboarding skills are required for the writing activity. Direct instruction and positive, corrective feedback help each student master the vocabulary activities.</p> <p>Interventions: As students are completing vocabulary activities, the BrightFish system is collecting data on each response, errors and missed learning objectives. Teachers use this information for 1:1 data chats and small-group lessons. Data chat guides and downloadable worksheets are provided in the Teacher’s Guide section of the Teacher Dashboard.</p> |

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| <p>4. Instruction and feedback</p> <p>Comprehension</p> | <p>Explicit instruction along with extensive, scaffolded practice in the use of comprehension strategies produce improvements in reading comprehension. Enabled by the BrightFish model of text deconstruction and mastery learning, students build the skills and focus required for independent reading.</p> <p>After completing word/phrase fluency and vocabulary pre-reading activities for a story unit, the During Reading activities are unlocked. Text is broken down into paragraphs and students work on facts and details questions. Optional read-aloud settings support struggling readers and provide a model of fluent oral reading.</p> <p>In Post Reading, students read the full text and are asked to think about connections, cause and effect, sequencing, author’s purpose and literary features. Tutorials introduce concepts and provide support. Multiple choice, drag and drop, graphic organizer, short answer and longer essays offer students different ways to visualize concepts and demonstrate understanding. In levels 5 through 10, video questions for nonfiction stories offer multimedia content and opportunities to analyze information from different sources and formats.</p> <p>Nonfiction passages cover science and social studies content areas, providing students with relevant and grade-appropriate topics. At levels 5 and above, video questions engage students and help them to integrate information presented in different media as well as in text to develop a coherent understanding of a topic.</p> <p>Required ability level: Passages are assigned based on each student’s instructional reading level. Direct instruction combined with positive and corrective feedback help each student master the comprehension activities. Basic keyboarding skills are required.</p> <p>Interventions: Teachers use error data and missed standards for 1:1 data chats and small-group lessons. If students are not showing improvement in the comprehension scores after three consecutive stories and data chats, teachers can adjust the stream to a lower Lexile and difficulty level.</p> |
| <p>4. Instruction and feedback</p> <p>Motivation and Rewards</p> | <p>Struggling learners often lack the confidence, focus and motivation to be successful readers. To provide extrinsic motivation, we’ve integrated game theory principles into the BrightFish design to create an environment where students will want to keep moving forward. Using a mastery-learning method, students unlock levels by completing each activity with mastery, celebrating incremental achievements in increasingly challenging exercises and learning through positive and corrective feedback.</p> <p>In vocabulary and comprehension activities, short tutorials provide instructional support for concepts such as understanding tone, themes, main ideas, sequencing and figurative language. Teacher-written constructive feedback provides a customized response for each answer selected to help students understand and internalize concepts.</p> <p>As students work through the scope and sequence in each story unit, they</p> |

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| | earn points for completing each activity, monitor their own progress every step of the way, and collect certificates. Points can be redeemed for interactive educational games from the BrightFish games room and teachers can create their own class rewards based on the BrightFish points system. Certificates can be printed for celebration walls and to send home. |
| 4. Instruction and feedback Error Data | As students work through BrightFish Reading, their data is captured in real time and is viewable from the Teacher Dashboard. Convenient color-coding and notifications alert teachers to any issues that students are encountering as they work through the program. Error lists can be viewed and used for individualized instruction and feedback sessions. Activities are tagged by standard and teachers can see at a glance which objectives are being missed for further instructional opportunities. All reports can be printed and data can be exported into standard csv files. |