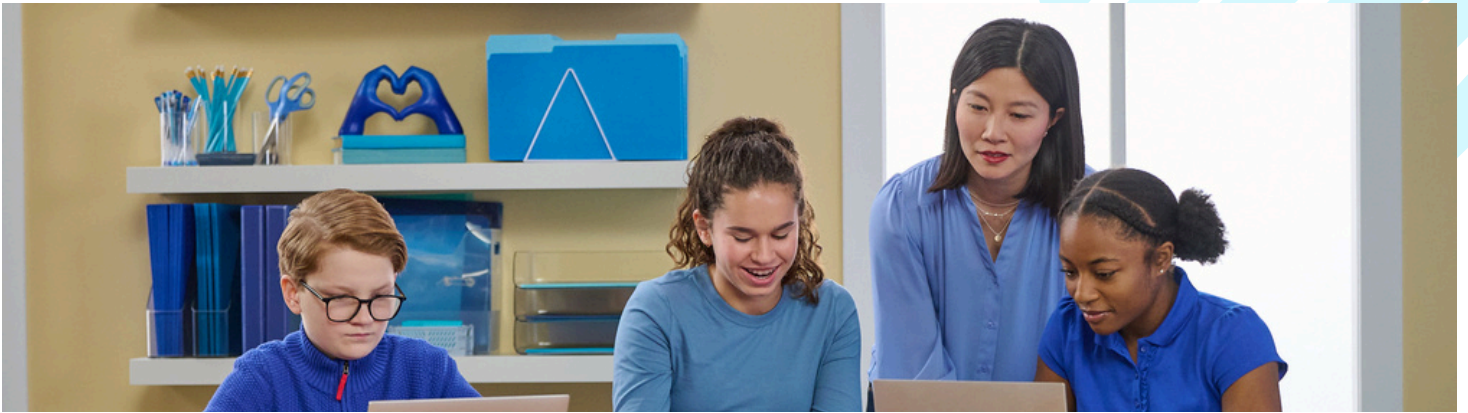




Efficacy studies at Newsela

Proven solutions that drive meaningful classroom
learning for every student



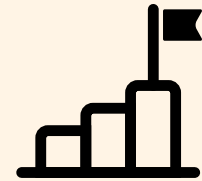
Research and efficacy at Newsela

At Newsela, we pride ourselves on accountability, regularly conducting robust and rigorous qualitative and quantitative research to ensure that our solutions are engaging and effective.

Our **PhD-trained researchers** have expertise in the science of reading, program evaluation, and data science, and are constantly conducting high-quality in-house research. We also frequently **contract leading independent third-party evaluators to conduct unbiased evaluative research**. Newsela's content and features are **validated against outside standardized assessment data** with a growing panel currently representing **over 100 school systems from 24 states and the District of Columbia**.

Newsela's efficacy has been proven via well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental research meeting ESSA standards for "Tier 2 - Moderate" research.

We conduct research projects following major new features or product releases, which are reviewed for quality by an outside technical advisory committee to ensure Newsela's efficacy evidence base keeps pace with product innovation.



Newsela products are rooted in research and learning science, and proven to drive learning outcomes by a growing number of efficacy studies conducted by Newsela and third-party evaluators.

Research trends

Newsela's products work because they are purpose-built to align with standards and pedagogical best practices while also driving student motivation.



1 Frequent Newsela use drives student growth in literacy and social studies achievement

These studies indicate that students benefit significantly from using Newsela weekly. Students who read and take quizzes 2x per week see 4 additional months of literacy skill growth by the end of the school year. Students who used Newsela Social Studies 1-2 times weekly showed nearly an additional year of social studies achievement.

2 Students see greater gains in ELA achievement with digital Newsela usage

Assigning texts on the Newsela platform, rather than distributing printed copies, is associated with a 3 percentile increase in ELA achievement at the end of the year. Students who completed more Newsela Writing assignments saw an average 18-point boost to their overall ELA scores at the end of the year.

3 Students who require intervention benefit from Newsela

Newsela studies show positive results across ability levels. With Newsela products, teachers can meet at-risk learners where they are to help build the confidence, motivation, and reading skills they need to close the gap.

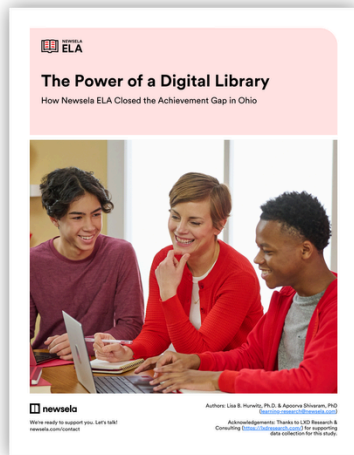
4 Newsela's positive impact persists across demographic subgroups

Reading gains are seen in studies across all student subgroups. Notably, Newsela content can be especially valuable for diverse subgroups because it allows teachers to seek out the most culturally relevant and representative texts for diverse learners.

5 Completing assessments with Balanced Assessment by Formative supports test prep and student growth

when compared to control group students, students using Formative saw a ~75% boost to their ELA achievement. Completing more digital assessments in Formative was also associated with greater math achievement at the end of the year. Teachers emphasized how effective Formative was at helping students practice navigating and completing online assessments.

Completed studies



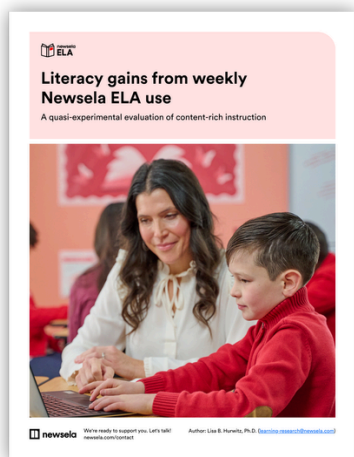
[See Report](#)

How Newsela ELA Closed the Achievement Gap in Ohio

A quasi-experimental evaluation of the power of digital literacy meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence

Highlights:

- In a district that historically had supplemented English Language Arts (ELA) instruction with classroom magazines, 8th-grade classrooms volunteered to try Newsela ELA as an alternative supplement.
- Newsela users gained four (4) additional months of literacy growth relative to peers who used the classroom magazines.
- Newsela ELA was 2x as effective as the average 8th-grade reading program.
- Results were robust for all students, including both white students and students of color.



[See Report](#)

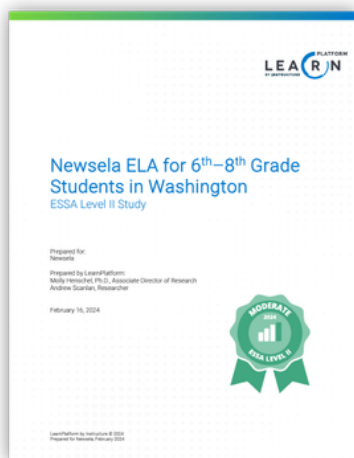
Literacy Gains From Weekly Newsela ELA Use

A quasi-experimental evaluation of content-rich instruction meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence

Highlights:

- Over the course of the school year, 4th-grade Newsela ELA users gained 3 additional months of literacy skill growth more than peers.
- Newsela classes read 44% more nonfiction texts and engaged in more frequent multiple choice practice.
- Newsela teachers were less reliant on Google to source classroom texts.

Completed studies



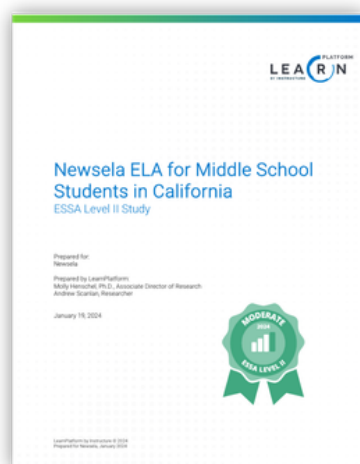
[See Report](#)

Newsela ELA for 6th–8th Grade Students in Washington

Third-party evaluation meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence

Highlights:

- Overall, Newsela users outscored non-users on the i-Ready Reading Diagnostic assessment (i-Ready) by about 5 percentiles.
- In follow-up analyses just focused on students of color, Newsela users outscored non-users on i-Ready by about 3 percentiles.



[See Report](#)

Newsela ELA for Middle School Students in California

Third-party evaluation meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence

Highlights:

- Overall, Newsela users outscored non-users on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) summative assessment by about 4 percentile points.
- In follow-up analyses just focused on Hispanic students, Newsela users outscored non-users on SBAC by about 5 percentiles.

Completed studies



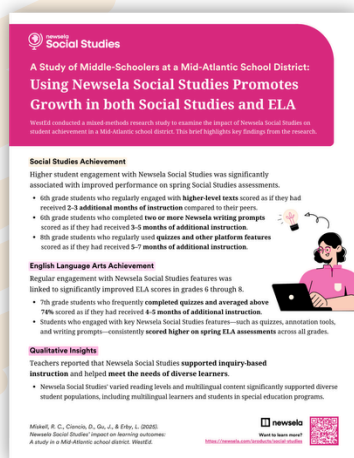
[See Report](#)

Consistent Newsela Social Studies Use Linked to Nearly One Additional Year of Growth in Middle School Social Studies

A quasi-experimental evaluation meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence

Highlights:

- This study compared the social studies achievement of middle school students with weekly Newsela Social Studies use to those with no Newsela use.
- Eighth-grade students who used Newsela Social Studies 1-2 times per week showed the equivalent of nearly an additional year of social studies achievement, or double the expected outcomes, when compared to control students.
- Use of Newsela Social Studies allowed students to practice key comprehension skills applicable to both ELA and social studies.
- The positive impact of Newsela Social Studies use on social studies achievement was consistent regardless of student race, gender, and/or language status.



[See Report](#)

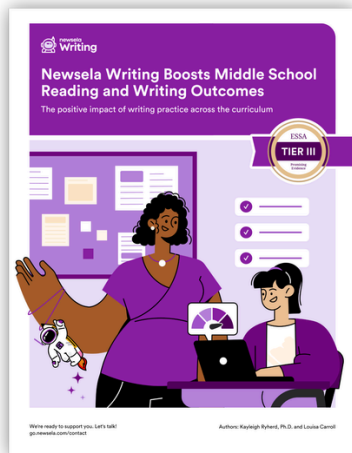
Using Newsela Social Studies Promotes Growth in both Social Studies and ELA

A WestEd-conducted study of middle-schoolers at a Mid-Atlantic school district

Highlights:

- Higher student engagement with Newsela Social Studies was significantly associated with improved performance on spring Social Studies assessments.
- 6th-grade students who regularly engaged with higher-level texts scored as if they had received 2–3 additional months of instruction compared to their peers.
- Students who engaged with key Newsela Social Studies features—such as quizzes, annotation tools, and writing prompts—consistently scored higher on spring ELA assessments across all grades.

Completed studies



[See Report](#)

Newsela Writing Boosts Middle School Reading and Writing Outcomes: The Positive Impact of Writing Across the Curriculum

A 2024-2025 study that meets ESSA Tier III/Promising requirements for evidence

Highlights:

- Newsela Writing was implemented in all classes, from core subjects to those less frequently associated with writing, like physical education. Students completed assignments on Newsela Writing approximately once every 3-4 weeks.
- Students who completed more Newsela Writing assignments scored higher on their end-of-year ELA assessment than students completing fewer assignments, with the average student seeing an 18-point boost to their overall ELA score.
- For every 5 to 6 assignments a student completes, their writing subscore can be expected to go up by 10%.
- This study meets ESSA Tier III requirements for evidence.



[See Report](#)

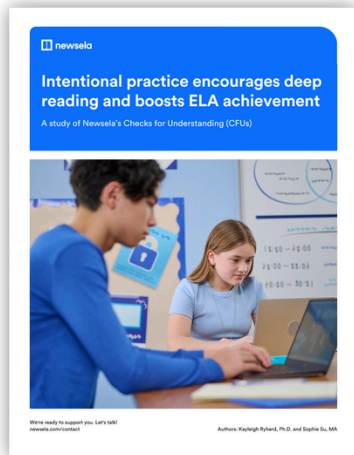
Newsela Writing boosts student writing and earns teacher support

A summary of pilot research findings

Highlights:

- A summary of research findings show Newsela Writing students outscored controls on an end-of-year writing assessment.
- Students who used Newsela Writing showed a 10 percentile increase in overall writing ability, in addition to 14 percentile increase in organizing essays and using supporting evidence.
- Teachers reported they used tools' automated scoring to focus comments and feedback when conferencing with students and to develop their instructional practice.

Completed studies



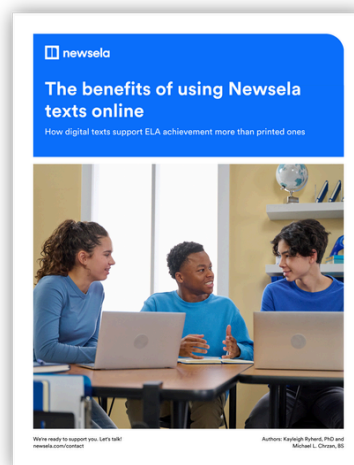
[See Report](#)

Intentional Practice Encourages Deep Reading and Boosts ELA Achievement

A 2024-2025 school year correlational analysis of Newsela's Checks for Understanding

Highlights:

- A study of ~40,000 students in grades 3-8 evaluated the impact of Newsela's Checks for Understanding (CFUs) feature on student ELA achievement.
- Regular usage of CFUs is associated with a 2.5 percentile point boost to ELA achievement, even after accounting for overall use of Newsela.
- In particular, students with thoughtful, consistent use of CFUs showed a 3.5 percentile point advantage over those engaging with CFUs in a more shallow and sporadic manner.



[See Report](#)

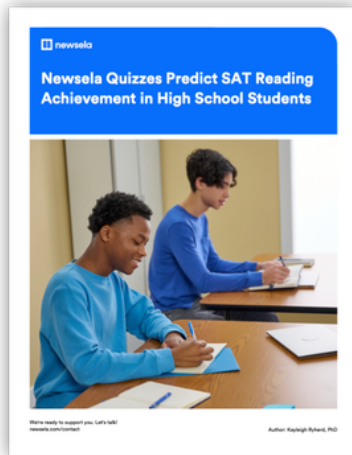
The Benefits of Using Newsela Texts Online

A quasi-experimental evaluation of digital text usage

Highlights:

- A study of ~3,000 teachers and ~80,000 students in grades 3-8 evaluated the impact of Newsela ELA, Newsela Social Studies, and Newsela Science usage on student ELA achievement via NWEA MAP Growth.
- Assigning texts on the Newsela platform rather than distributing printed copies is associated with a 3 percentile increase in ELA achievement at the end of the year.
- Teachers in the top 25% of assignment usage saw a 4 percentile point increase in their students' spring MAP Growth scores compared to teachers in the lowest 25%.
- Teachers should aim to use Newsela ELA, Newsela Social Studies, or Newsela Science 1-2 times a week.

Completed studies



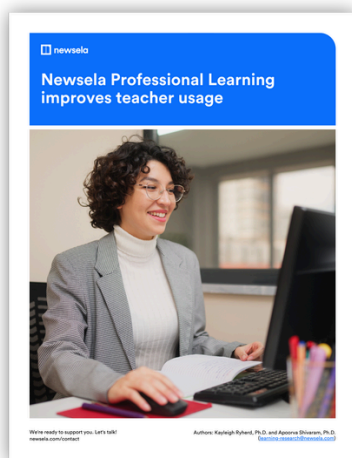
[See Report](#)

Newsela Quizzes Predict SAT Reading Achievement in High School Students

A correlational analysis of quiz scores and SAT results

Highlights:

- Newsela usage and performance from 1,059 high school students were compared to their achievement on the Reading/Writing portion of the PSAT/SAT assessments. Over half of the students were Hispanic, and a quarter were English learners (ELs).
- Students scoring at or above 75% on Newsela quizzes were about twice as likely to reach grade-level PSAT/SAT benchmarks than students scoring below 75%.
- Newsela quiz scores are helpful leading indicators for college readiness in reading and writing.



[See Report](#)

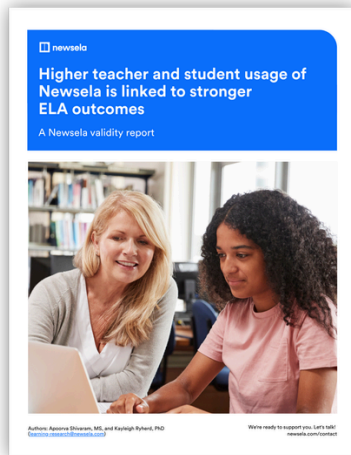
Newsela Professional Learning Improves Teacher Usage

Analysis of Professional Learning over the 2022 - 2023 school year

Highlights:

- This study compared two matched groups of teachers, some who attended Newsela PL and some who did not.
- Teachers who attended at least one PL session used Newsela ~12% more than teachers who did not receive PL.
- Teachers who returned to Newsela within 30 days of their first PL session used Newsela four times as much as teachers who did not.

Completed studies



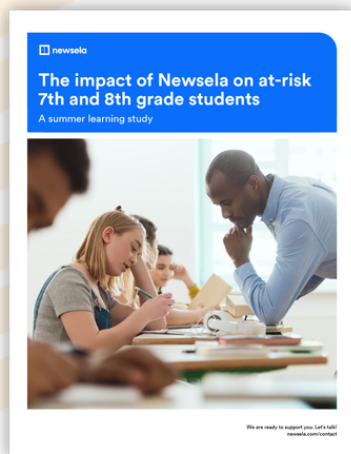
[See Report](#)

Higher teacher and student usage of Newsela is linked to stronger ELA outcomes

2022-2023 school year correlational analysis

Highlights:

- This study found that higher teacher and student usage of Newsela is linked to stronger ELA outcomes at the end of the school year.
- Using Newsela at least 2 times a week by reading 1-2 texts per week and completing at least 1 ELA quiz per week is associated with around a 5 percentile point increase in reading performance at the end of the year.
- Newsela assessment scores are helpful leading indicators in understanding student ELA performance. Higher scores on Newsela quizzes and writing prompts were associated with higher NWEA MAP Growth scores.



[See Report](#)

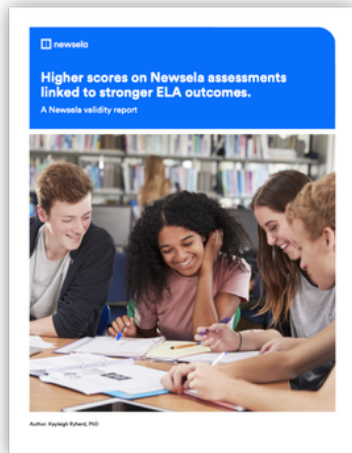
The Impact of Newsela on At-Risk 7th and 8th Grade Students

2021 Newsela summer school study meeting federal standards for ESSA Tier III/Promising evidence

Highlights:

- In as little as 3 weeks, students achieved statistically significant ELA performance gains.
- At-risk students reading below grade level demonstrated measurable gains in their vocabulary and comprehension skills. With another 3-4 weeks of instruction from experienced teachers using Newsela, these intervention students would have closed the performance gap.

Completed studies



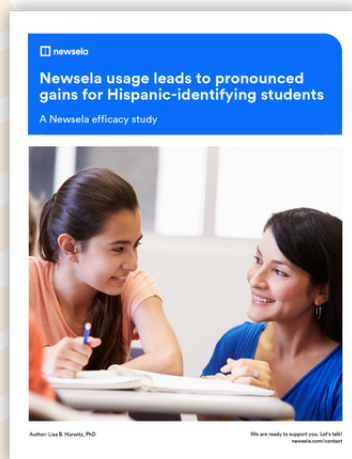
[See Report](#)

Higher Scores on Newsela Assessments Linked to stronger ELA Outcomes

2021-2022 school year correlational analysis

Highlights:

- In this study, Newsela usage and performance in the 2021 - 2022 school year was compared to i-Ready® Diagnostic scores for over 2,500 students from four different states.
- Students performing above average on formative assessments in Newsela ELA showed better outcomes on iReady than grade-level peers.
- Higher scores on Newsela assessments predicted more on and above-grade level performance in reading at the end of the year.
- This positive relationship was consistent across various student demographics, demonstrating that Newsela ELA can effectively measure and support student ELA achievement for students from varied backgrounds.



[See Report](#)

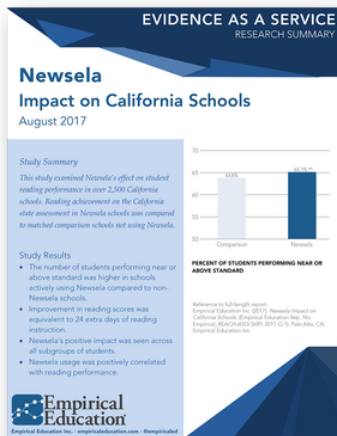
Newsela Usage Leads to Pronounced Gains for Hispanic Students

2021 Newsela summer school study

Highlights:

- A 4-week program with daily Newsela usage was 70% more effective than the average summer reading program.
- Study included 70 7th-8th grade students, of which 100% were below-level readers, 94% were low-income, 74% identified as Hispanic, 37% were English Learners, and 17% had IEPs.
- Positive results were especially pronounced for Hispanic students and for students with high summer program attendance.
- Outcomes were achieved with an average of only 11.5 instructional hours.

Completed studies



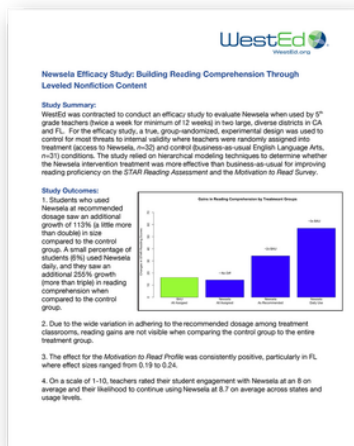
[See Report](#)

California School Year Study

2018 third-party evaluation by Empirical Education

Highlights:

- Over the course of the school year, Newsela users gained the equivalent of 24 extra days of reading instruction.
- This study meets federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence.
- Newsela has a positive impact on ALL learners, including economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students of varied race-ethnicity.



[See Report](#)

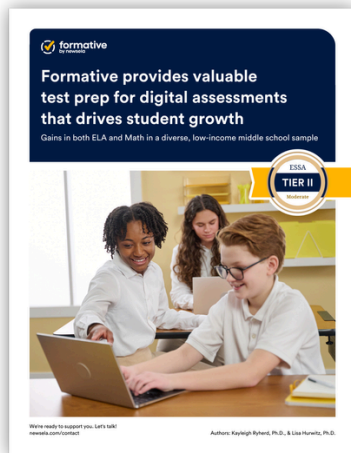
Usage & Motivation Study

2018 third-party evaluation by WestEd

Highlights:

- Students who used Newsela twice per week had over 2x the reading gains on STAR Reading compared to a control group. Students who used Newsela daily had over 3x the gains on STAR Reading compared to a control group.
- Newsela was found to have a “consistently positive” impact on students’ reading motivation.
- On a scale of 1-10, teachers rated their students' engagement with Newsela at an 8 on average and their likelihood to continue using Newsela at 8.7.

Completed studies



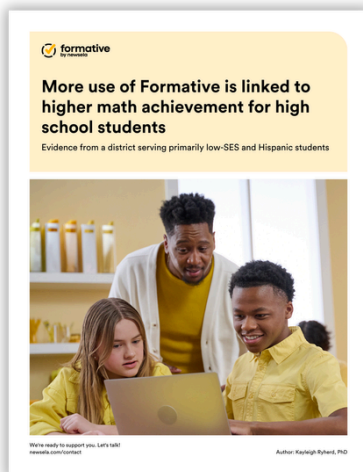
[See Report](#)

Formative provides valuable test prep for digital assessments that drives student growth

A study of a diverse, low-income middle school sample meets ESSA criteria for Moderate/Tier II efficacy evidence

Highlights:

- When compared to control group students, middle school students using Formative saw a ~75% boost to their ELA achievement, which is equivalent to an additional 6.75 months of instruction.
- Completing more digital assessments in Formative was associated with greater math achievement at the end of the year. The average student in this study completed 30 digital assessments, equivalent to a 10-point increase in spring i-Ready math percentile.
- Teachers using Formative reported that their students were more prepared for their year-end assessment than control group students. Teachers emphasized how effective Formative was at helping students practice navigating and completing online assessments.



[See Report](#)

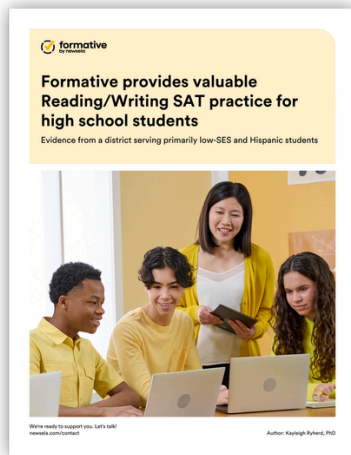
More use of Formative is linked to higher math achievement for high school students

A study that meets ESSA Tier III/Promising requirements for evidence

Highlights:

- A study of 1,265 9th and 11th graders in a low-SES, primarily Hispanic district in the suburbs of Chicago.
- Students used Formative twice a week on average.
- 9th-grade students gained the equivalent of 34 additional instructional days.
- Students completing more numeric questions outperformed peers on NWEA MAP and SAT.

Completed studies



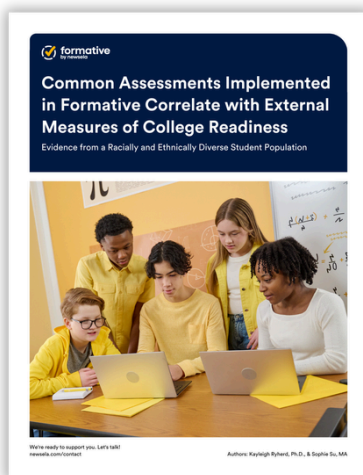
[See Report](#)

Formative provides valuable Reading/Writing SAT practice for high school students

A study that meets ESSA Tier III/Promising requirements for evidence

Highlights:

- A study of 757 11th-grade students in a low-SES, primarily Hispanic Chicago district.
- Students used Formative for assessments twice a week on average.
- Students who completed more questions on Formative showed higher SAT scores, with the average student expected to see 20-point increase.
- Students who received feedback messages from teachers also showed higher SAT scores than their peers who did not.



[See Report](#)

Common Assessments Implemented in Formative Correlate with External Measures of College Readiness

Evidence from a racially and ethnically diverse student population

Highlights:

- District-created interim common assessments administered via Formative were strongly correlated with concurrent ACT performance across all four subjects (English, Reading, Math, & Science).
- A gain of just 10 points on interim common assessments was associated with students being about 50% more likely to hit their ACT benchmark.
- Growth on bi-weekly skill checks reflected underlying growth measured by ACT. Specifically, a 10-point improvement in English skill checks across the year was projected to result in a corresponding 7-point boost to the ACT English score.

How do Newsela products drive learning outcomes?

Newsela's products work because they are purpose-built to align with standards and pedagogical best practices while also driving student motivation.



Alignment to standards

All content on Newsela is aligned to state standards across subjects. For ELA, content is aligned to standards via a low-stakes multiple choice quiz that assesses two key reading skills. Social studies and science standards are met via text and video content as well as embedded lesson activities.



Scaffolding features

Teachers can leverage a variety of features to scaffold Newsela content and promote active reading, reflection, and disciplinary literacy skills. These include customizable writing prompts, annotations, checks for understanding, read-aloud mode, lesson resources like graphic organizers, and in-context Power Words that have shown to drive gains in vocabulary acquisition.



Content relevance

Newsela enables teachers to incorporate authentic, relevant content into any lesson. Cultivating relevance, representation, and a sense of belonging for students in the classroom creates the best conditions for curiosity, motivation, and learning.



Differentiated instruction

Newsela content is automatically differentiated at five reading levels. Teachers maintain the ability to control the reading level students access and can use the adaptive leveling to scaffold lessons to be more accessible for striving readers or to challenge high fliers. Alternatively, students can exercise meta-cognitive skills, adjusting texts to be appropriately challenging for them.



Content depth and breadth

The vast library of diverse content available with Newsela's subject products (18,000 pieces of content and counting) makes it possible for teachers to introduce new concepts and themes using accessible texts and engaging videos, and build the background knowledge all learners need to comprehend grade-level lessons. Plus, students can exercise voice and choice in their learning.



Formative quizzes

Students show what they know through short, challenging-but-doable assessments available on every text. Students get immediate feedback and teachers use insights to personalize instruction. Correlational studies show that performance on the pre-built quizzes predicts performance on interim assessments like MAP Growth or STAR.