



Research and Efficacy at Newsela

Creating proven solutions that drive meaningful classroom learning for every student



We are ready to support you. Let's talk!
newsela.com/contact



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 Learning Team is [staffed by PhD-trained researchers](#) with expertise in the science of reading, program evaluation, and data science, and is 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 80 school systems from over 20 states](#).

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 feature 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.

Schools and districts that are interested in partnering to understand Newsela's impact on learning should reach out to learning-research@newsela.com.



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

Across research initiatives, the following trends emerge:

Frequent Newsela use drives positive learning outcomes

Classrooms that use Newsela more see better outcomes. While Newsela flexibly supports a range of instructional use cases, these studies indicate that students would benefit from using Newsela multiple times per week.

Students see literacy gains quickly with consistent Newsela usage

Multiple short-term studies covering a range of student subgroups and implementation models show that consistent use of Newsela content drove measurable literacy outcomes in as little as 3 weeks (or 11.5 instructional hours).

Students who require intervention benefit from Newsela

Newsela studies show positive results across ability levels, with recent studies focusing on the needs of our most vulnerable learners. With Newsela, teachers can meet at-risk learners where they are to help build the confidence, motivation, and reading skills they need to close the gap.

Newsela's positive impact persists across demographic subgroups

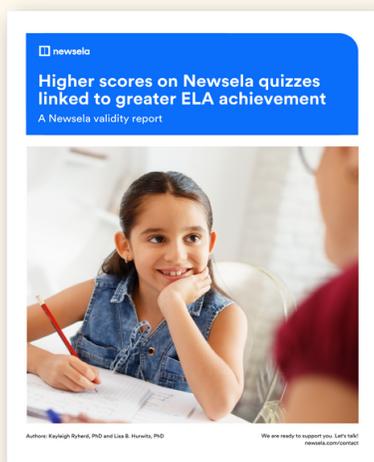
Reading gains are seen in studies across all student subgroups. Notably, Newsela can be especially valuable for diverse subgroups because it allows teachers to seek out the most culturally relevant and representative texts for diverse learners. Outcomes were particularly pronounced for BIPOC students in one study where teachers made a concerted effort to seek out culturally relevant content.

High scores on Newsela quizzes are linked to greater ELA achievement

Newsela's standards-aligned quizzes, along with other student-facing activities, allow educators to formatively assess students using engaging, relevant content. The quizzes are low-stakes, aligned to standards, and best of all, can predict how students will perform on standardized assessments without sacrificing valuable instructional time.



Completed studies



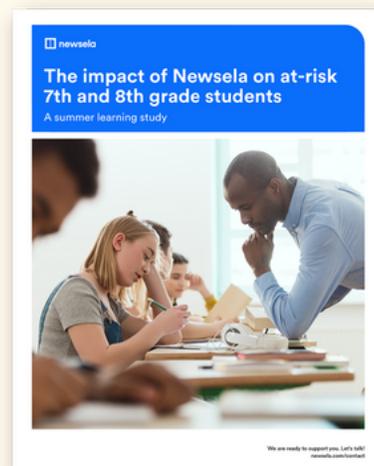
[See Report](#)

NWEA MAP Growth Study

2020-2021 school year correlational analysis

Highlights:

- This study analyzed Newsela quiz performance and MAP Growth assessment performance for nearly 10,000 3rd-8th graders from 33 districts across 16 states.
- All students benefited from Newsela similarly, regardless of class size, median household income, or race/ethnicity.
- These outcomes demonstrate that Newsela scores can help in understanding any student's ELA performance.
- Students who improved their Newsela quiz scores throughout the year showed corresponding growth on the MAP Growth assessment from fall to spring.



[See Report](#)

Reading Skills Summer Learning Study

2021 Newsela summer school study

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.
- This study meets federal standards for ESSA Tier III/Promising evidence.

Completed studies



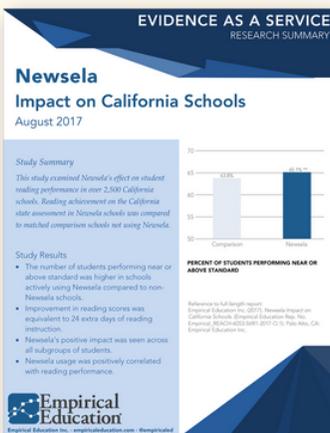
[See Report](#)

Hispanic-Identifying Students Study

2021 Newsela summer school study

Highlights:

- A 4-week program with daily Newsela usage was 70% more effective than the average summer reading program.
- 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.
- 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.



[See Report](#)

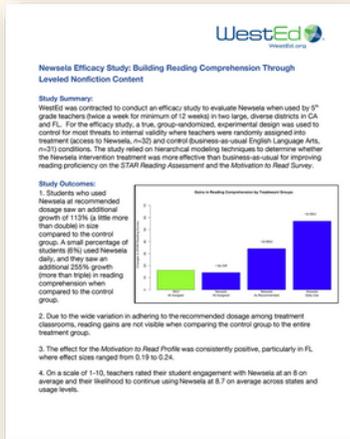
California School Year Study

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.
- Newsela has a positive impact on ALL learners, including economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students of varied race-ethnicity.
- This study meets federal standards for ESSA Tier II/Moderate evidence.

Completed studies



[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 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.



How does Newsela drive learning outcomes?

Newsela works because it is purpose-built to drive student motivation and learning while maintaining alignment to state standards and pedagogical best practices.



CONTENT RELEVANCE

Newsela enables teachers to incorporate culturally responsive, 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 on Newsela (15,000 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 quizzes present on every Newsela text. Students receive immediate feedback and teachers use quiz insights to personalize instruction. Correlational studies show that performance on these quizzes predicts performance on interim assessments like MAP Growth or STAR.



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, lesson resources like graphic organizers, and in-context Power Words that have shown to drive gains in vocab acquisition.

Newsela was one of just 13 EdTech products certified by Digital Promise to be backed by rigorous research.

