

HEADSPROUT EFFICACY PROJECT: RECRUITING FOR THE 2020 SPRING COHORT

**Looking for resources to support your reading instruction and
personalize your students' learning experience?**

This is a study for you!

Headsprout is an online reading program aimed at improving the reading skills of K-3 students. The key features of Headsprout include:

- Adaptive instruction that tailors the learning path and pace for each student
- Built-in benchmark assessments enable teachers to monitor student progress and provide differentiated instruction to support diverse learners
- Comprehensive reporting provides timely data to inform instructional decisions
- Built-in incentives keep students motivated and excited to learn
- Online and mobile instruction is accessible at school, at home, or on the go

Previous studies examining the effect of Headsprout show promising results. The purpose of this study is to build upon previous research and implement a rigorous evaluation design to understand the extent to which Headsprout improves student reading outcomes within K-3 classroom settings.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

For this study, we are inviting schools that serve students from kindergarten to third grade to participate. Within participating schools, K-3 English/language arts (ELA) teachers will be invited to participate in the study. Of those agreeing to participate, half will be randomly assigned to the treatment condition and the other half will be assigned to the control condition. Teachers who are current Headsprout users or had prior experience with Headsprout will be excluded from the study. Right now, we are looking for schools and teachers that would like to participate in the study during spring 2020.

BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATION

For students. Every student receives personalized instruction within an individualized learning path that continually adjusts to their learning needs.

For teachers and schools. Educators have access to Headsprout's learning products and materials and comprehensive reports on an individual student or long-term progress by class. Teachers have access to professional development (PD) trainings and implementation services. Schools participate in efficacy research that meets ESSA Strong Evidence Standards. Honoraria are provided to schools and teachers as compensation for the time and effort dedicated to assist with the research (see Study Activities and Expectations for detail).

STUDY ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Expectations for schools. Schools that agree to participate will provide school-, teacher-, and student-level demographic data for the research. School principals will support the recruitment of teachers; however, participation is completely voluntary, and individuals can stop participating at any time without consequence. Each participating school will assign a staff as a point of contact and assist McREL with data collection and coordination and will receive an honorarium of \$200.

Because this is not an evaluation of teachers or schools, there are no known risks for participating in this study.

Expectations for treatment teachers. Teachers who are randomly assigned to treatment will participate in the following activities:

- Attend two sessions of professional development (PD) designed to support teachers' use and implementation of Headsprout in the classroom (one in the beginning of the spring semester, and the other one in four-five weeks after program launch)
- Implement Headsprout following the prescribed implementation guideline
- Take one online teacher perception and experience survey at the end of the spring semester (May 2020; approx. 15 mins)
- Complete a monthly implementation log (approx. 5 mins)
- Participate in one interview at the end of the spring semester (May 2020; approx. 30 mins).
- Administer an online student survey in the beginning of the spring semester (January 2020; approx. 10 mins) before starting the program and at the end of the spring semester after finishing the program (May/June 2020; approx. 10 mins)
- Administer the Measures for Academic Progress (MAP) with students two times throughout the spring term: in the beginning of spring (January 2020) and at the end of spring (May/June 2020).

Expectations for control teachers. Teachers who are randomly assigned to control will participate in the following activities:

- Take one online teacher perception and experience survey at the end of the spring term (May 2020; approx. 15 mins)
- Administer an online student survey in the beginning of the spring term (January 2020; approx. 10 mins) and at the end of the spring term (May/June 2020; approx. 10 mins)
- Administer the Measures for Academic Progress (MAP) with students two times throughout the spring term: in the beginning of spring (January 2020) and at the end of spring (May/June 2020).

We are aware of the many demands on teachers' time and appreciate teachers working with us to conduct this study. Table below summarizes honorarium plan for each data collection activity by treatment condition.

Data Collection	Treatment teachers	Control teachers
Teacher Perception and Experience Survey	Three \$25 gift cards will be offered as raffle prizes for teachers who complete the survey during each round of survey.	Three \$25 gift cards will be offered as raffle prizes for teachers who complete the survey during each round of survey.
Monthly Implementation Log	Teachers who completed at least three out of four implementation logs during the spring term will receive \$25.	NA
Student survey	Teachers who administer the ERAS to at least 80% of their students whose parents give consent will receive \$50 for survey administration (beginning and end of spring).	
MAP	Teachers who administer the MAP to at least 80% of their students whose parents give consent will receive \$50 for the assessment (beginning and end of spring).	

Data Collection	Treatment teachers	Control teachers
Implementation fidelity	Teachers who implement the program according to the prescribed implementation guideline will receive \$50 at the end of the spring term.	NA
Total	Up to \$300 in gift cards	Up to \$225 in gift cards

This study is funded by Learning A-Z, the developer of Headsprout. Learning A-Z is an education technology company dedicated to expanding literacy through thoughtfully designed resources for empowering teachers to have a greater impact on student learning through personalized instruction. For more information about the Headsprout program, please visit <https://www.headsprout.com/>. For more information about the study, please contact Mathias Smrekar (msmrekar@mcrel.org; 303.632.5590) at McREL.