

Once

# ONCE EARLY-READING PROGRAM

Once

The Once model teaches school support staff to implement high-dosage, one-on-one tutoring based in the science of reading, so that kindergarteners learn how to read fluently and independently.

Scan QR code with your phone's camera to access this content online.



## OVERVIEW

Once has developed a high-dosage, one-on-one reading-tutoring program for kindergarten students that is rooted in the science of reading and does not require certified teachers to implement. Existing school support staff are trained to deliver scripted reading lessons that explicitly and systematically introduce letter-sound correspondences and give students the opportunity to apply those when reading authentic, decodable texts. Students also practice deliberate writing activities related to the sounds they are learning each session. Each lesson is video recorded, so that the school staff member can receive feedback from a Once coach to continuously improve their tutoring instruction.

Once offers various supports to schools interested in implementing their model, from free resources to a deeper partnership. [▶ Once Early-Reading Program Demo](#)



## What Makes This Model Innovative?



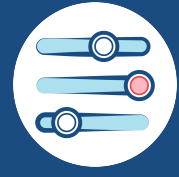
### High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities

Once emphasizes all students reading fluently by the end of kindergarten, enabling them to progress regardless of the time and support needed.



### Rigorous Learning

Students learn to read through explicit, systematic instruction rooted in the science of reading and are applying learned skills to interesting decodable texts right away.



### Customization

Students move through the curriculum at their own pace based on mastery of sounds and skills and receive one-on-one tutoring from a trusted adult.

## DESIGN

### Goals

Once's daily, one-on-one reading tutoring empowers school support staff to implement explicit, systematic reading instruction, so that students can read fluently and independently by the end of kindergarten.

#### Fluent, Independent Readers

Students gain the knowledge and skills to become fluent and independent readers.

#### Empowered Support Staff

Existing school staff are trained and supported with coaching and material resources to enact one-on-one reading tutoring with students in the school.

### Experience

Once's model consists of daily, one-on-one, 15-minute tutoring sessions for all kindergarten students. The model is intended to be delivered in person, with a caring school support staff member and student side by side. The tutors are existing school staff members who are familiar faces. These school support staff members are trained in the Once curriculum and receive ongoing coaching and support.

Although high-dosage tutoring is typically seen as a Tier III intervention, in the Once model it is most often used as a universal Tier I support. Once’s focus on providing each student with one-on-one tutoring during their kindergarten year stems from 30 years of research that shows clear efficacy for early interventions and improved outcomes in word reading, fluency, and comprehension in the early grades (K–2). Intervention outcomes for later remedial efforts—a point at which learning disabilities are typically identified—are much weaker. [📖 Learning Disabilities from Identification to Intervention](#)


## In-Person, One-on-One Tutoring

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Once’s curriculum and approach are rooted in the science of reading. Tutoring sessions are scripted and accompanied by images and detailed directions for the tutor to follow. [📖 Once Sample Instructional Content](#) Sessions are anchored in teacher modeling and explicit, systematic instruction of foundational reading skills. Throughout the course of the lesson, students receive precise feedback around each error to ensure quick adoption of new skills and sounds.

In a 15-minute session, students experience the following:

- **Introduction to a new phoneme:** Students are introduced to a new phoneme visually and by hearing the sound aloud from the tutor. They see a visual cue on the screen that shows where to start reading, indicated by a circle, and which direction to blend the sounds, indicated by an arrow. [📖 Once Phoneme Guide](#)
  - **Practice with segmenting and blending:** In this portion of the lesson, the tutor is supporting students to break up a word into phonemes (segmenting) or blend phonemes together to identify a word (blending). The tutor may introduce this practice by saying a word slowly and stretching out the sounds, then having the student identify the word.
  - **Rhyming:** The tutor displays a letter that students will use to rhyme (for example “r”). Then, the tutor introduces the sounds with which the students will rhyme. The tutor then prompts students to combine the initial letter and the ending sounds to create a rhyme.
  - **Word reading:** At the beginning of the lesson, the tutor displays words that have the phoneme introduced or phonemes that students have already learned. The displayed word includes visual indications for students about which direction to read the word and how many phonemes the word includes. The tutor prompts students to read the word slowly, then read it fast, focusing on giving students as many “at-bats” as possible.
  - **Story reading:** The tutor shows the students a story before they see a picture that accompanies it. They are first asked to identify how many words are in the story. Then, the student reads the story line by line while the tutor asks comprehension questions. The story contains the same visual prompts for reading that the word reading and rhyming include, such as (in the earlier stories) arrows to indicate direction to read and dots to indicate the number of phonemes. The earlier stories also include a symbol to show when a new word is beginning. After reading the story, the tutor prompts the student to explain what they think the picture will show, then reveals the picture and connects it to a future lesson. [📖 Once Printable Decodable Books](#)
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- **Writing:** The tutor shows the student on the screen how to write the phoneme that was introduced at the beginning of the lesson. The tutor models the writing of letters the same way each time and narrates how they are writing (i.e., “Watch how I write this sound in four steps...”). The student begins by tracing the sound, then connecting the dots to write the sound, and finally attempting to write the sound on their own.  [Sample Student Writing Practice](#)


Every lesson in the Once curricular materials provides an opportunity for students to apply the skills they are practicing in isolation by reading an authentic text at the end of the session. Although the systematic progression of skills is often mirrored by other science-of-reading-based curricula, the tutoring approach allows students to get pre-exposure or follow-up practice in what they are learning in the classroom during whole group instruction.

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## Supporting Structures

Once offers schools a clear path toward utilizing existing staff members who may not already have the skills to deliver high-quality tutoring. Once’s tutoring model can be integrated into the regular school day, but some adjustments are needed in adult roles, scheduling, and more.

### **Schools implementing the Once model leverage the scripted curriculum for explicit and systematic literacy instruction.**

Once provides all curricular materials including detailed, scripted plans for instruction and corresponding assessments.  [Curriculum Key](#) Each plan follows a similar routine to ensure consistency and a systematic approach to learning new phonemes, supported by the science of reading. Lessons begin by introducing a new phoneme, which is presented visually to students. Then, students practice segmenting and blending, rhyming, word reading that applies the new phoneme learned that session, story reading, and finally, writing the new phoneme.



### **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT**

At the beginning of the curricular materials, students are shown sounds using a specialized orthography that supports beginning readers in learning letter-sound relationships more quickly. As the program progresses, these representations are phased out and replaced by letters in a serif font.

Students are assessed via weekly oral reading tests. Tutors, with the support of their coaches, analyze multiple data points to inform future instruction, including percentage complete in Once scope and sequence, accuracy in the weekly oral reading fluency assessment, and mastery as measured by the grade-level benchmark assessment.

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## SCHOOL COMMUNITY & CULTURE

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### **Once's tutoring model is low-lift for classroom teachers, but their buy-in is essential for success.**

Classroom teachers do not need to actively manage or plan around Once tutoring. They will not have to change their lesson plans or schedule to accommodate this model; however, their buy-in is critical to success. Students will be pulled from their classrooms throughout the day, and teachers need to believe in the rationale behind each student missing 15 minutes of class each day.



## ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

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### **Schools must identify existing support staff for Once to train to deliver one-on-one tutoring informed by the science of reading.**

Once's model enables schools to leverage existing support staff as tutors. Tutors are trained by Once to deliver a scripted, science-of-reading-based curriculum one on one and in person with students. Each lesson has supporting materials with visual prompts and decodable texts for students to explore. Once has developed a training and coaching program to support school staff that are not trained as teachers to deliver the tutoring to students. Tutors receive weekly coaching and support from an expert Once reading coach.

Before beginning one-on-one tutoring, tutors receive three hours of training that focuses mostly on understanding the technology and logistics of the model. Over the course of their first year of implementation, tutors receive over 20 hours of training and coaching support in the science of reading to improve their facilitation of the Once reading instructional content. Once coaches provide just-in-time instructional coaching, so tutors are able to adjust instruction immediately and give corrective feedback that is tailored to each student's strengths and areas for growth. Each lesson is recorded and shared with the Once coach for feedback. Some tutors are eligible to get college credit for their training within the program. Additionally, Once offers many print resources, such as the reading correction flowchart.

[📄 Reading Correction Flowchart](#) These tools support tutors' understanding of instructional strategies like giving feedback and modeling, thus building capacity of the adults to continue providing strong reading instruction.



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### **Once's tutoring program relies on students getting 15 minutes of one-on-one tutoring each day.**

There are many options for organizing the schedule in a way that maximizes teacher and tutor time with students. If a tutor is dedicated to Once fully, they could meet with approximately 20 students per day. Schools must

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## SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME

consider what is missed when students step away from their classroom instruction to engage with their Once tutor, and ensure that there is consistency and balance in their learning experience.

In addition to time for one-on-one tutoring, schools must ensure Once tutors have dedicated time for weekly coaching calls, approximately 30 minutes. Once works closely with teachers and schools to develop a plan that works within the constraints of the individual school to maximize time and staffing efficiencies and to create a schedule that works for the school.

[!\[\]\(eafc244b53721dd1ec133f0772f70fc7\_img.jpg\) Sample Tutoring Schedule](#)



### **Tutoring can be done anywhere that makes sense for the school.**

Once's tutoring model relies on in-person instruction but can take place anywhere. Tutoring can happen in the general-education classroom at a small table, in a small space outside of the classroom, in the library, or any other space available in the school.

## SPACE & FACILITIES



### **Once lessons require the use of a computer for the tutor to facilitate, but student practice is hands-on and not based on the use of technology.**

Although technology underpins Once tutoring, students are not utilizing technology independently. Teachers and students look at the same screen in the slide decks provided by Once to see the content for the lesson. A portion of the screen shows images intended for students while the other portion of the screen shows the tutor's script for that activity.

## TECHNOLOGY & INFRASTRUCTURE



### **Access to Once curriculum and coaching has an upfront and ongoing cost for schools.**

Once charges \$375 per student per year. This includes access to the instructional materials and weekly coaching and feedback for the tutor implementing those materials. Most of the cost goes toward the coaching services that Once provides.

## BUDGET & OPERATIONS



### **Tutors receive ongoing instructional coaching and consistently look at student data to inform upcoming instruction.**

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## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Once tutors receive initial training as well as weekly coaching by a skilled literacy coach. Once proudly “sweats the small stuff” to ensure students are accurately developing phonemic awareness and knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Coaches watch recordings of lessons and meet virtually with tutors to offer specific feedback, to model what instruction should look and sound like, and to help tutors improve through practice. This structure creates the space for ongoing weekly data cycles, where tutors are supported in looking at individual student progress and planning for individualized next steps.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Supports Offered

[Once](#) offers the following supports to help you implement their model.

### Once Partnership

*Cost associated*



Partnering with Once Reading gives a school access to virtual instructional coaching and training for all tutors, as well as the curricular resources to be able to implement the program.

[Express Interest](#)

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## Reach

30

Schools

350

Students  
Served

9

States

100%

Title I  
Schools

# Impact

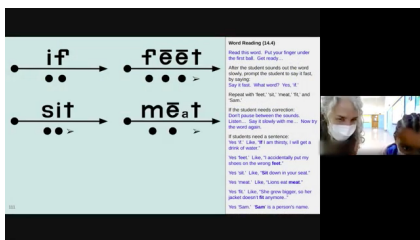
Once is currently participating in multiple research studies to determine program impact. Early grades students are typically assessed three times per year to measure growth in their foundational literacy skills. The assessments measure student progress in phonological awareness and word reading, beginning with consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words and progressing to harder vowel patterns and more complex consonant blends. Mastery of these skills indicates readiness for reading at higher grade levels and with more complex texts.

- In one study, mid-year results showed that the percentage of students on track for grade level success grew from 0% at the beginning of the year to 63% by the middle of the year, after receiving at least 30 sessions of Once tutoring. [Kindergarten Preliminary Outcomes Study](#)
- A second study, a randomized controlled trial run by the Annenberg Institute at Stanford University, is currently underway. Results will be available upon publication.

# Contact

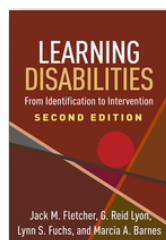
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# RESOURCES



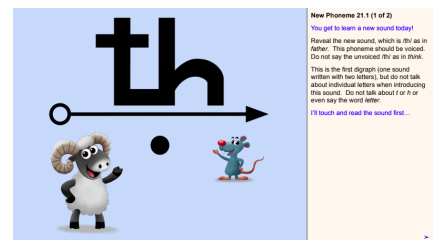
## [Once Early-Reading Program Demo](#)

This video depicts a Once tutor providing one-on-one tutoring to a pre-K student over just three months.



## [Learning Disabilities from Identification to Intervention](#)

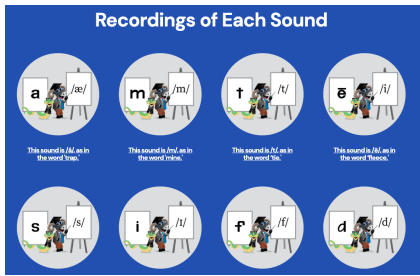
This text includes research Once used to inform their decision around the suggestion to provide tutoring to all students early in their educational career.



## [Sample Instructional Content](#)

This is a sample lesson that a tutor would deliver with a student. It shows the images students would see as well as the scripting that tutors would follow to support student learning.





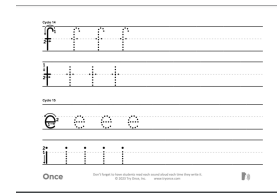
### Once Phoneme Guide

Once offers access to a pronunciation library of all phonemes in the English language and a guide for systematically introducing those sounds to beginning readers.



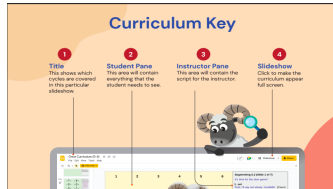
### Once Printable Decodable Books

Once offers free access to a library of printable decodable books and phoneme tracing sheets aligned to the Once scope and sequence. Teachers or tutors can use the decodable books by printing, folding, and stapling them.



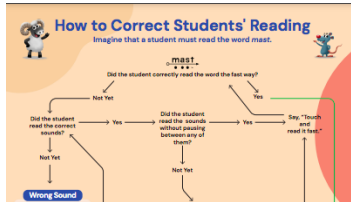
### Sample Student Writing Practice

In each lesson, students get practice writing sounds. They are prompted to read each sound aloud as they write it.



### Curriculum Key

This visual key supports tutors in understanding how to navigate the curricular materials and all of the components that are included in the visual decks that support student learning.



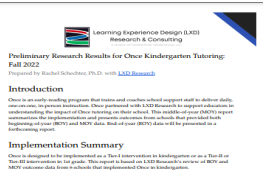
### Reading Correction Flowchart

This flowchart supports tutors in developing skills for correcting student reading in a quick, explicit, and precise way.

Kinder Class Schedule		Once
Time	Activity	Instructor Assign
8:00-8:25	Morning Routines/Transitions	Students 1
8:25-8:50	Morning Routines/Transitions	Students 2
8:50-9:15	Morning Routines/Transitions	Students 3
9:15-9:40	ELL	Students 4
9:40-10:05	ELL	Students 5
10:05-10:30	ELL	Students 6
10:30-10:55	ELL	Students 7
10:55-11:20	ELL	Students 8
11:20-11:45	ELL	Students 9
11:45-12:10	ELL	Students 10
12:10-12:35	ELL	Students 11
12:35-1:00	ELL	Students 12
1:00-1:25	ELL	Students 13
1:25-1:50	ELL	Students 14
1:50-2:15	ELL	Students 15
2:15-2:40	ELL	Students 16
2:40-3:05	ELL	Students 17
3:05-3:30	ELL	Students 18

### Sample Tutoring Schedule

This sample tutoring schedule shows how one school integrated tutoring into the school day for students.



### Kindergarten Preliminary Outcomes Study

This research study identifies trends across students in one district that engaged with Once Reading for approximately one semester.