

Using Data to Drive Instruction:

How Imagine Language & Literacy Supports Academic Intervention



Introduction

Literacy skills are critical for students' success in school and beyond (Glover, 2017; Lesnick et al., 2010; Watts, 2020), but many students struggle to develop foundational literacy skills. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2019), only 35% of fourth-grade students scored *Proficient* in reading. If students do not reach proficiency during the elementary years, they will likely experience greater difficulty learning later.

Many schools and districts rely on a tiered system of support to help mitigate or prevent future reading difficulties and ensure students make adequate progress. Tiered systems, such as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Response to Intervention (RTI), proactively support students through early identification and evidence-based interventions to prevent pervasive achievement problems.¹ For example, MTSS capitalizes on **universal screening and ongoing assessment**, frequent **progress monitoring** to inform data-based decision making, and implementation of evidence-based practices to **individualize instruction** to promote academic success (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). The model typically includes three tiers.

Tier 1 instruction includes high-quality, evidence-based core programs designed to meet the needs of all students. Tier 1 curricula should be accessible (i.e., include multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement) and provide opportunities to differentiate instruction with scaffolded support to boost student learning. **Tier 2** intervention supports small groups of students who do not make adequate progress in Tier 1 (typically around 15% of students). It includes time-limited, evidence-based, explicit intervention to target skill deficits and help students master grade-level content. **Tier 3** intervention provides individual students with more intensive intervention if they do not make adequate progress in Tier 2 (typically around 5–8% of students). Teachers may need to increase the dosage (i.e., frequency) and strength of the intervention or determine whether the instruction aligns with students' strengths and weaknesses.

This preventative framework ensures all students have optimal and equitable access to instruction that best aligns with their needs (Benedict et al., 2021; Berkeley et al., 2020). The increasing academic diversity in classrooms highlights the need for teachers to adapt or differentiate instruction to adequately meet the needs of all students at scale. Research supports blending high-quality online instruction with teacher-led, evidence-based intervention to increase the efficiency of instructional delivery (Means et al., 2013). This guide outlines how Imagine Language & Literacy—an adaptive online learning solution for Grades PreK–6—can support tiered prevention and intervention systems through screening and ongoing assessment, progress monitoring, and tools to drive data-based individualization.

¹Note that some districts use MTSS and some use RTI to refer to their preventative systems of support. This brief uses MTSS for brevity. In addition to prevention, MTSS addresses systemic change (e.g., at the district or school level) and students' behavioral and social-emotional needs. The guidelines provided in this brief are in line with both models of prevention.

How Imagine Language & Literacy Supports MTSS

Designed to supplement core literacy instruction, Imagine Language & Literacy provides instruction and practice in all the critical domains of literacy—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and oral language development. The program can be used flexibly to support all three instruction tiers, and delivers explicit, targeted, and adaptive instruction with personalized learning paths and ongoing informative feedback.

After an initial placement test, students begin literacy instruction at their current level of knowledge. Ongoing predictive and evaluative checkpoints ensure students work in their zone of proximal development and progress toward grade-level content and beyond. Ongoing data collection empowers teachers to monitor students' progress and differentiate instruction based on student performance. To best assess students' progress toward their learning goals, Imagine Learning & Literacy recommends reviewing multiple data points, both within and outside of the program, to effectively meet students' learning needs.

Screening and Ongoing Assessment

Imagine Language & Literacy incorporates various embedded assessments and integrations with third-party assessment providers (e.g., MAP Growth Reading) to offer multiple data points to assess student learning. Teachers should monitor student data at screening (Benchmark 1), in the middle of the year (Benchmark 2), and at the end of the year (Benchmark 3), and continuously monitor progress against grade-level skills to ensure students are on track to meet their learning goals.

Benchmark 1 places students on the appropriate learning path based on their incoming knowledge. To view these data, teachers click on the **Growth** tab in the classroom data dashboard to review students' placement levels. Benchmark 2 (middle of year) and Benchmark 3 (end of year) allow teachers to monitor achievement during the year. The **Growth** tab updates student data during each testing window, allowing teachers to compare classroom and individual student scores across time to highlight changes in performance level (Figure 1).



Student performance falls into one of four levels: *Above Level*, *On Level*, *1 Below Level*, or *2+ Below Level* (Figure 2). Teachers can organize student performance by category by clicking on the **PL** (placement level), and should expect students' scores to increase with each administration. If a student falls below the *Literacy Test Score Range* for their grade level (Figure 3), the dashboard marks their score with a yellow or red marker to indicate they may need additional support to advance toward grade-level content. This dashboard also shows the student's Lexile level from the *Reading Level Assessment*, with an interpretation based on grade level (Figure 4). Data from these dashboards and other progress-monitoring data can be used to identify students at risk for reading difficulties and outline areas requiring additional support.

Teachers must attend to multiple data points across time to better understand their students' progress and achievement. In the example below, Homer, Barry, and Charlena increased their scores between Benchmark 1 and Benchmark 2 (Figure 2), while Sara's scores decreased.² The teacher should pay careful attention to Sara's usage, progress, and achievement in the program, and reteach and remediate to address any existing skill gaps (see p. 8 to learn how to use in-program data to individualize instruction). Teachers should review these benchmark data with their district's outlined metrics (e.g., performance on a third-party standardized assessment) when determining if students require tiered intervention. Students who qualify for Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention should be carefully monitored.

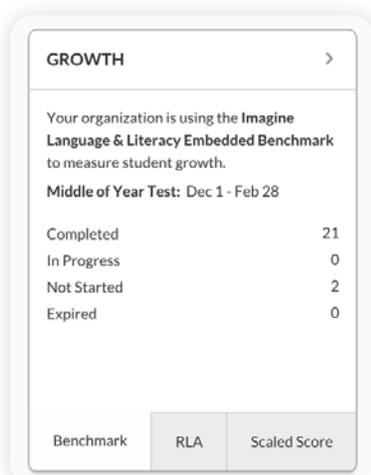


Figure 1. Monitor students' growth on the Imagine Language & Literacy data dashboard.

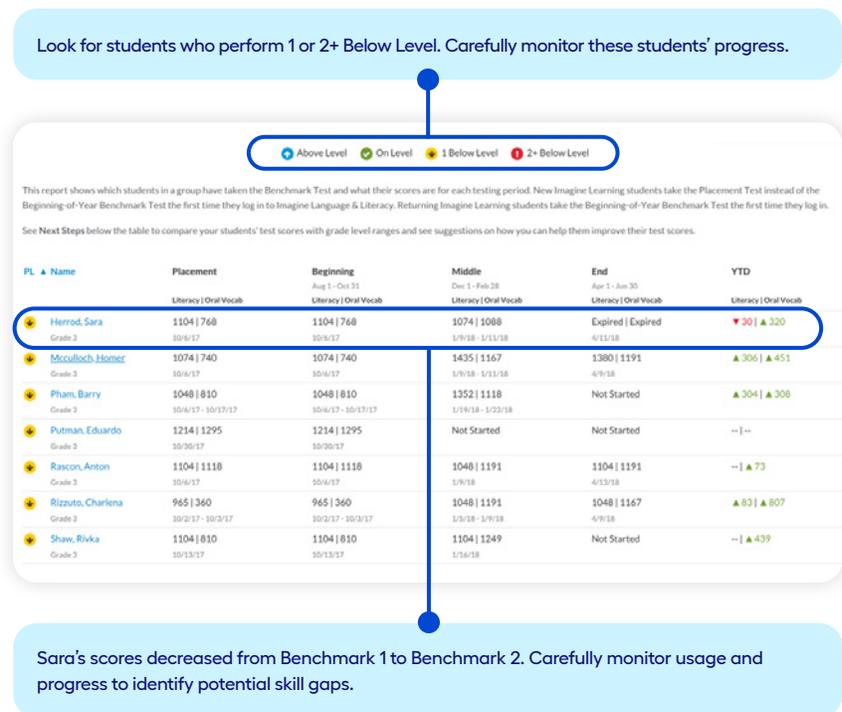


Figure 2. Review students' performance levels to determine which students need to be carefully monitored.

²Note that all data in this report are fictional.

Progress Monitoring

To evaluate student performance, Imagine Language & Literacy provides data for time on the program, lessons passed, and mastered skills. Teachers can monitor the progress of individual students and how students perform relative to their peers. Imagine Learning recommends teachers critically assess students' usage, progress, and achievement at least once per week to effectively make data-based instructional decisions to support student learning. These data can help teachers identify skill gaps requiring targeted instruction to support core and tiered instruction.

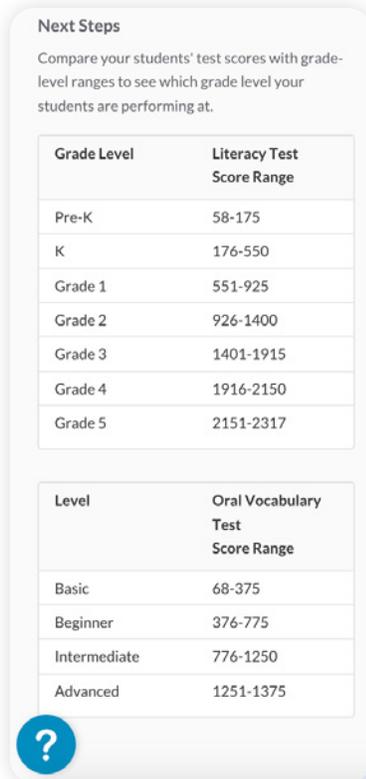


Figure 3. Compare students' placement scores to grade-level ranges.

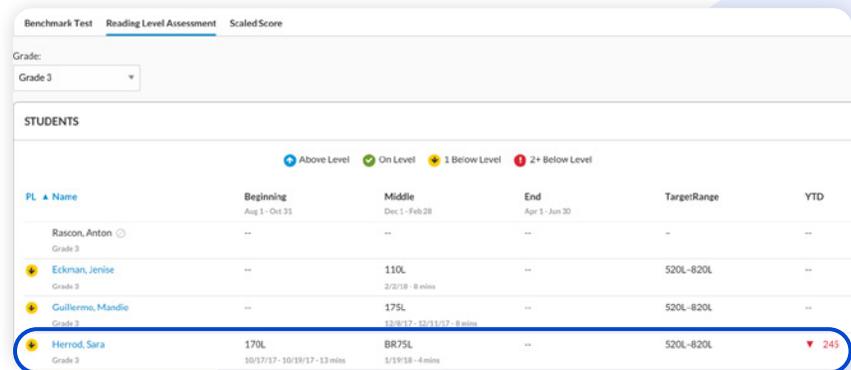


Figure 4. Compare students' Lexile levels to target ranges.

Imagine Learning recommends students spend a minimum of 60 minutes per week in the program, though more time (i.e., greater dosage) may boost performance for students performing below grade level. The **Usage** tab (Figure 5) in the classroom data dashboard provides an overview of the average active time for the class across the last four weeks. To view student-level data, click on this **Usage** tab. This view (Figure 6) provides details on the student's active time in the program relative to their weekly goal and peers' usage. In the example on the next page, many students are well behind their weekly usage goals. Notably, Sara placed below grade level on Benchmark 1 (Figure 2) and is not meeting her weekly usage goals. The teacher should determine factors contributing to her low weekly usage (e.g., difficulty sustaining attention) and encourage Sara to increase her usage time within the program. For example, the teacher may suggest that Sara break up her program usage into smaller chunks (e.g., six 20-minute sessions) to promote success.

The **Progress** tab (Figure 7) on the data dashboard provides an overview of average lessons passed for the class. To view these data, click on the Progress tab for a quick and easy high-level view of student performance relative to others in their class, including lessons completed and the grade level of their content (Figure 8). To review an individual student's progress, click the link for an individual student. In the example on the next page, a new window shows Sara completed four literacy lessons but only passed one (Figure 9), so Sara may need additional instructional support to help her pass these three lessons (see p. 8 to learn how to use in-program data to individualize instruction).

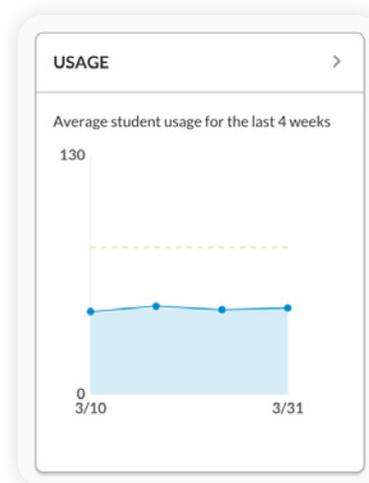


Figure 5. Teacher tracks classroom usage.

THIRD GRADE CLASS						
Students						
Name	Grade	Total Usage	Weeks Active	Average Weekly Usage	Current Weekly Goal	Avg Percent Of Current Weekly Goal
Cannady, Harlan	Grade 3	4h 22m	4	1h 6m	1h 20m	83%
Eckman, Jenise	Grade 3	4h 24m	4	1h 6m	1h 20m	83%
Guillermo, Mandie	Grade 3	1h 52m	3	28m	1h 20m	35%
Hanson, Jason	Grade 3	4h 22m	4	1h 6m	1h 20m	83%
Hendrick, Alfonso	Grade 3	3h 34m	4	54m	1h 20m	68%
Herrod, Sara	Grade 3	2h 46m	4	41m	1h 20m	51%

Sara placed one level below grade level on Benchmark 1 (Figure 2). Because she qualified for Tier 2 intervention, the school increased her dosage to one hour and 20 minutes per week. She is not meeting her goal. The teacher should increase Sara's weekly usage.

Figure 6. Track students' weekly usage relative to target weekly time and peers' usage.

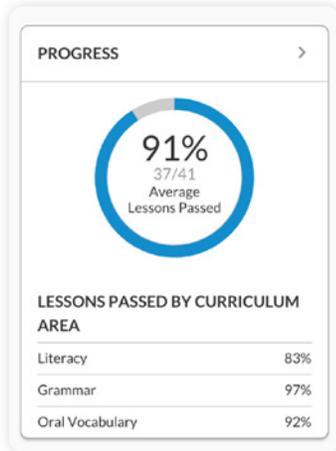


Figure 7. Teachers track classroom lessons passed.

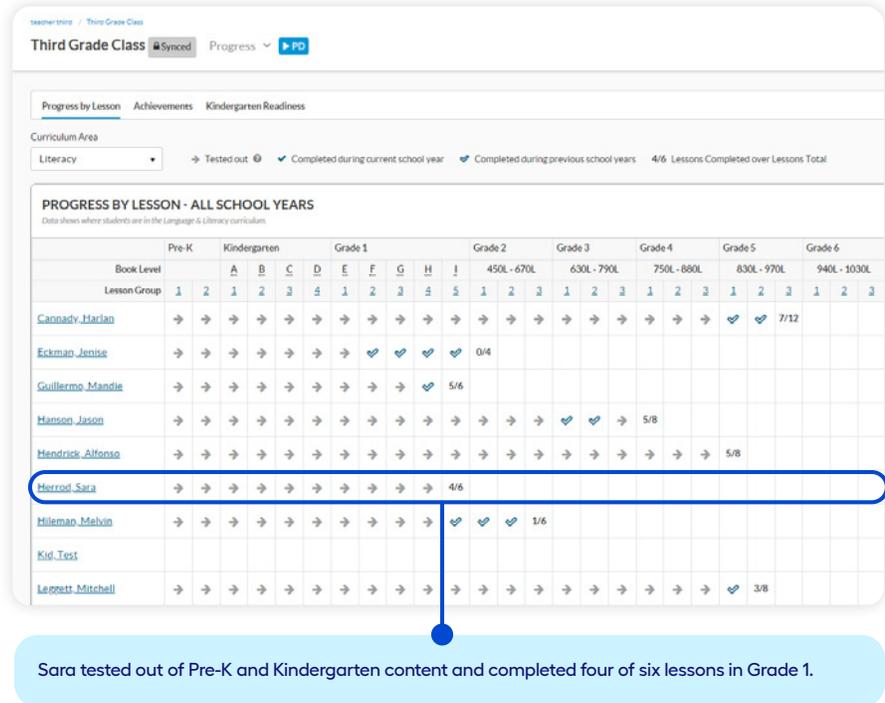


Figure 8. Teachers track students' lessons completed (numerator) out of total lessons (denominator) relative to peers.

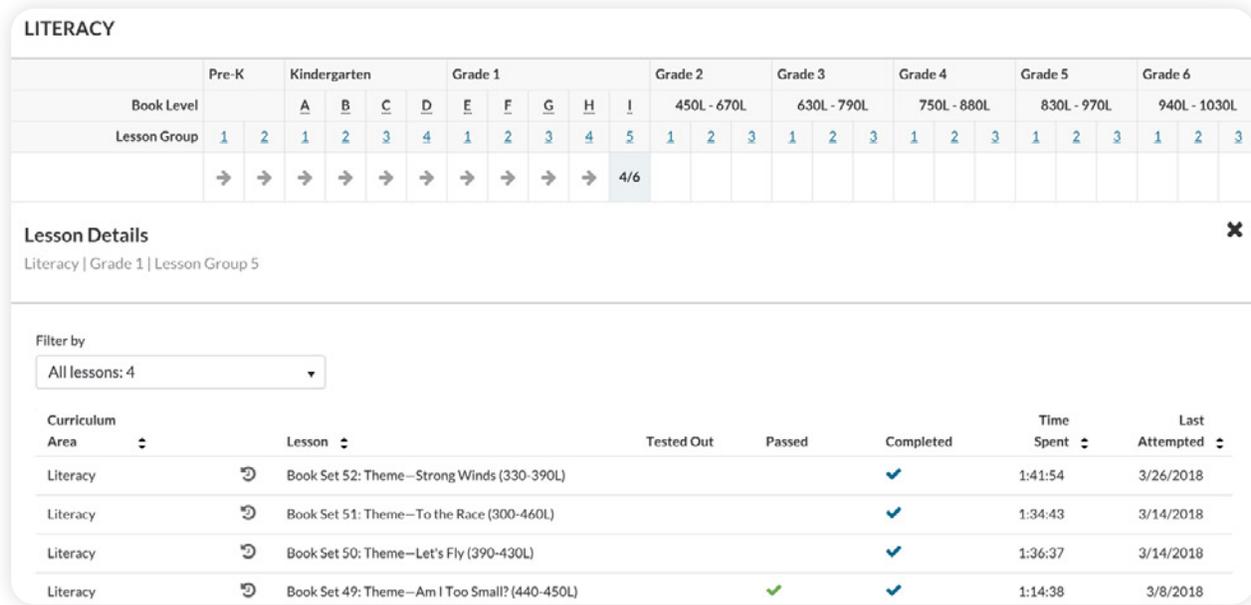


Figure 9. Teachers track individual students' progress by assigned lessons. In this example, the teacher sees a detailed view of Sara's work and which lessons she may require support to complete.

Administrators have access to school-, classroom-, and district-level reports outlining students' growth and progress to track system-wide success within the MTSS model. This access allows them to quickly assess whether program-level gains match gains outside of the system. Administrators can click on the **Progress** tab on the data dashboard to view a color-coded snapshot of growth over time (Figure 10), easily identifying areas of progress and areas that require further support³.

For example, when the administrator looks at Sara's third-grade class, the class shows overall literacy growth from Benchmark 1 to Benchmark 2. Notably, the number of students in the *2+ Below* performance level decreased by 19% from the beginning of the year. The administrator can zoom out and view the entire school's progress (Figure 11), where they see that Grades 2, 3, and 5 may need additional support to master grade-level content. The administrator should compare these results to other school-level metrics of MTSS success and potentially address improving intervention efforts at these grade levels.

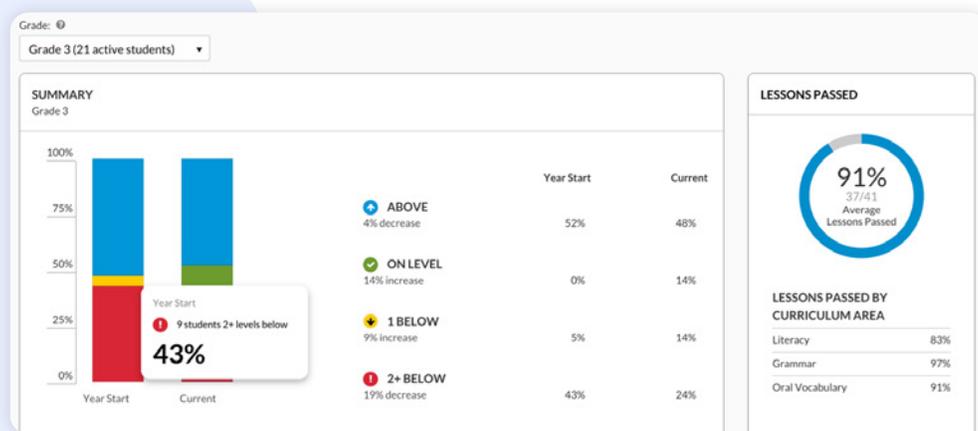


Figure 10. Administrators track classroom-level growth and progress.



Figure 11. Administrators track student-level growth.

³ Note this view is only available to administrators.

Individualizing Instruction

To appropriately monitor student learning, teachers should monitor **Usage, Growth,** and **Progress** weekly. If usage is adequate (note that usage goals may differ by student) but students do not make adequate progress (e.g., not passing lessons, scoring lower on Benchmark 2 or Benchmark 3), the teacher should use Imagine Language & Literacy’s targeted resources to address possible learning gaps and individualize instruction to improve student learning.

For example, to better understand why Sara only passed one out of four completed literacy lessons, the teacher can click on the **Skills Inventory** to review Sara’s strengths and weaknesses on her completed activities. The teacher can identify skills that may require remediation or reteaching (Figure 12). In this case, the **Skills Inventory** suggests Sara struggles with reading comprehension.

Recognizing that students may struggle with similar concepts, Imagine Language & Literacy provides an **Action Areas Tool** for teachers to efficiently group students based on skill gaps. Teachers can also use these data to assign supplemental activities to support student learning, as the Action Areas Tool supports the delivery of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instruction. For Tier 1, students receive a customized learning path based on progress and built-in support to scaffold learning. In Tier 2, the **Action Areas Tool** offers detailed skill reports to help teachers form groups for small-group intervention. In Tier 3, it helps teachers identify offline materials to incorporate with the intensification of intervention.

The **Action Areas Tool** also supports individualization: The teacher can assign additional online activities to the student or group of students, and the program further supports individualization by providing downloadable resources specific to the skill not mastered. These targeted supplemental resources help students develop the necessary skills and background knowledge needed to succeed with the concept independently.

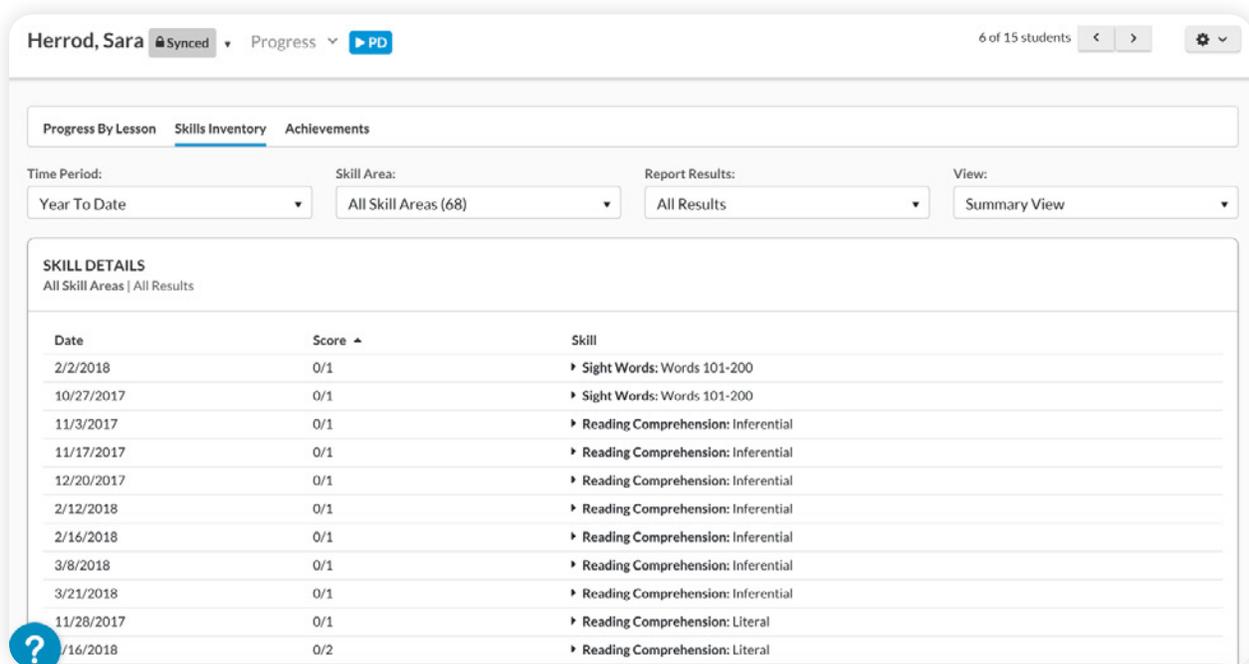


Figure 12. Teachers track learning gaps by skill.

In Sara’s case, her teacher can click on **Open Intervention Tools** to assign additional online activities to reteach or reinforce her reading-comprehension skills (Figure 13). The teacher can also assign these activities to Melvin and Anton, who show similar difficulties with inferential reading comprehension (Figure 14). If Sara completes all the additional assigned online activities and still requires support, the **Action Areas Tool** provides printable resources for small-group or one-on-one instruction (Figure 15). The teacher can click on

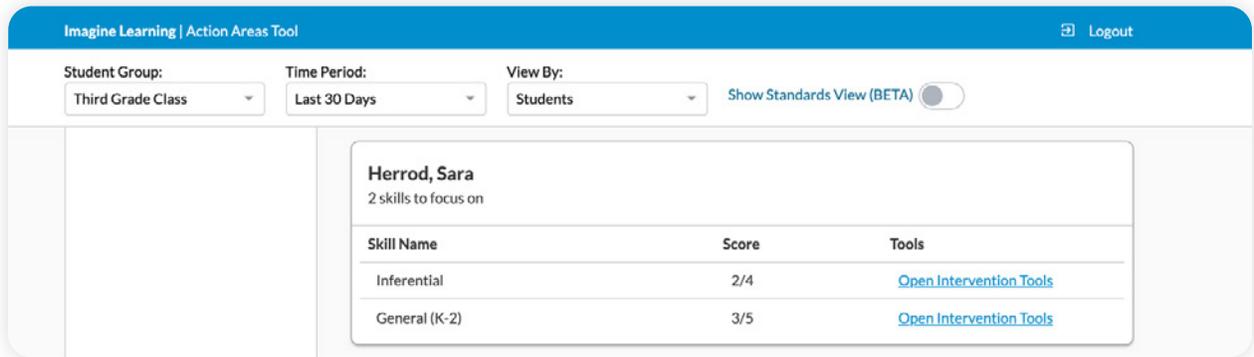


Figure 13. Teachers identify common learning gaps to inform small-group instruction.

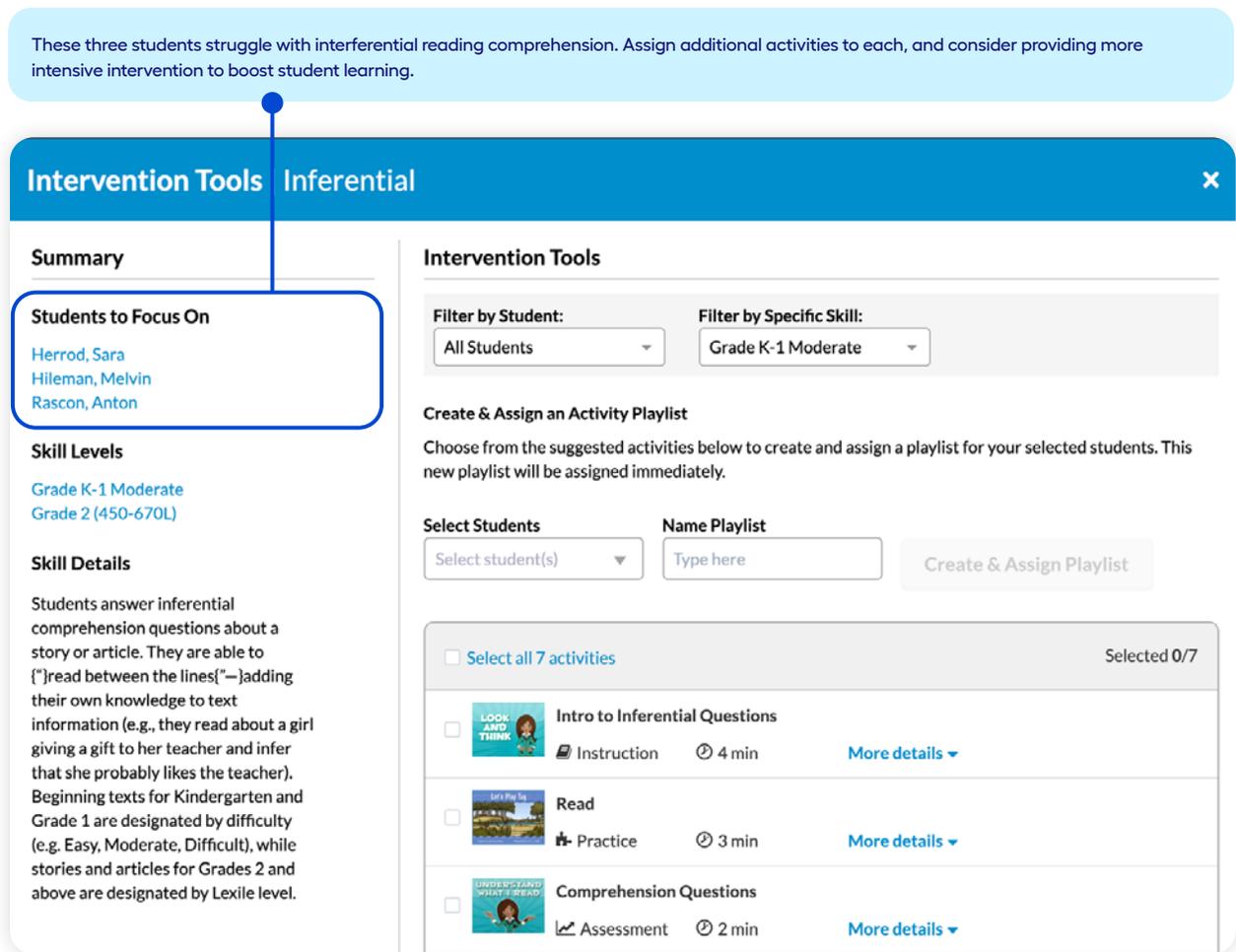


Figure 14. Teachers assign online activities to struggling learners to close learning gaps.

Go to **Teacher Resources** to open a library of downloadable classroom activities, worksheets, reading texts, graphic organizers, and other materials that work with Imagine Language & Literacy (Figure 16). The teacher can also review Sara's **Portfolio** to evaluate her reading fluency and writing gaps (Figure 17), as this area stores students' audio recording and writing artifacts.

Use Printouts:

-  [Let's Play Tag](#)
-  [Stuck](#)
-  [The Cool Ball](#)

[Go to Teacher Resources](#) 

Figure 15. Teachers assign offline activities to struggling learners to close reading gaps.

TEACHER RESOURCES Literacy ▾ Language ▾ Tools ▾ Lesson Explorer Offline Resources ▾

 **TEACHER RESOURCES** ▶ PD

Teacher Resources include supplemental classroom activities, worksheets, reading texts, graphic organizers, and other materials that work hand-in-hand with Imagine Learning digital curriculum in a blended learning environment.

LITERACY			LANGUAGE		
 Print Concepts Learn uppercase and lowercase letters.	 Phonological Awareness Learn rhyming, blending, phoneme position, and segmentation skills.	 Letter Sounds Learn letter sounds, consonant blends and digraphs, vowel teams, and more.	 Basic Vocabulary Learn basic vocabulary words grouped by topic.	 Academic Vocabulary Learn academic vocabulary words grouped by skill level and topic.	 Conversational Phrases Learn basic and fluent conversational phrases and how to apply them in context.
 Decodable Words	 Sight Words	 Spelling	 Listening Comprehension	 Grammar	

Figure 16. Teachers access additional resources from the Action Areas Tool to close student learning gaps.

To provide further options for supporting students, teachers can access the **Activity Explorer** directly from the classroom data dashboard and assign students additional online activities outside of their personalized learning paths (Figure 18). These supplemental resources incorporate explicit instruction, modeling, visual supports (e.g., graphic organizers), and scaffolded prompts. Teachers can create custom **Playlists** of practice and reinforcement to help students progress through their individual learning paths (Figure 19). For example, Sara struggles with inferencing. Her teacher sets up a playlist that targets this skill, and when Sara progresses through content that has already been assigned, her teacher can then assign this online playlist for her to complete. The teacher can track progress on these individual playlists to assess whether continued support is needed outside of the program.

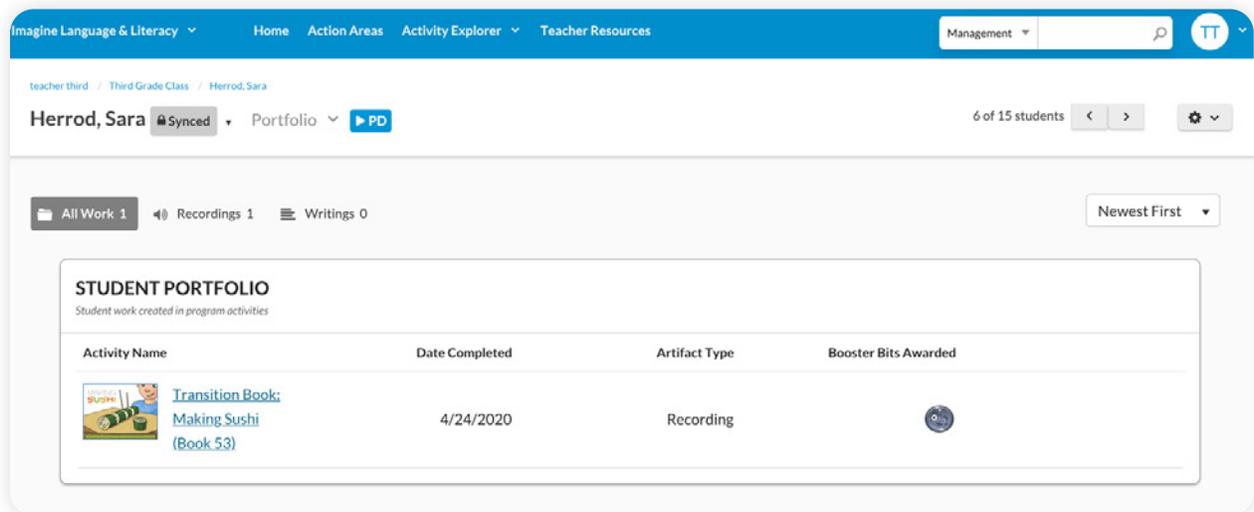


Figure 17. Teachers track students' progress by reviewing their work artifacts.

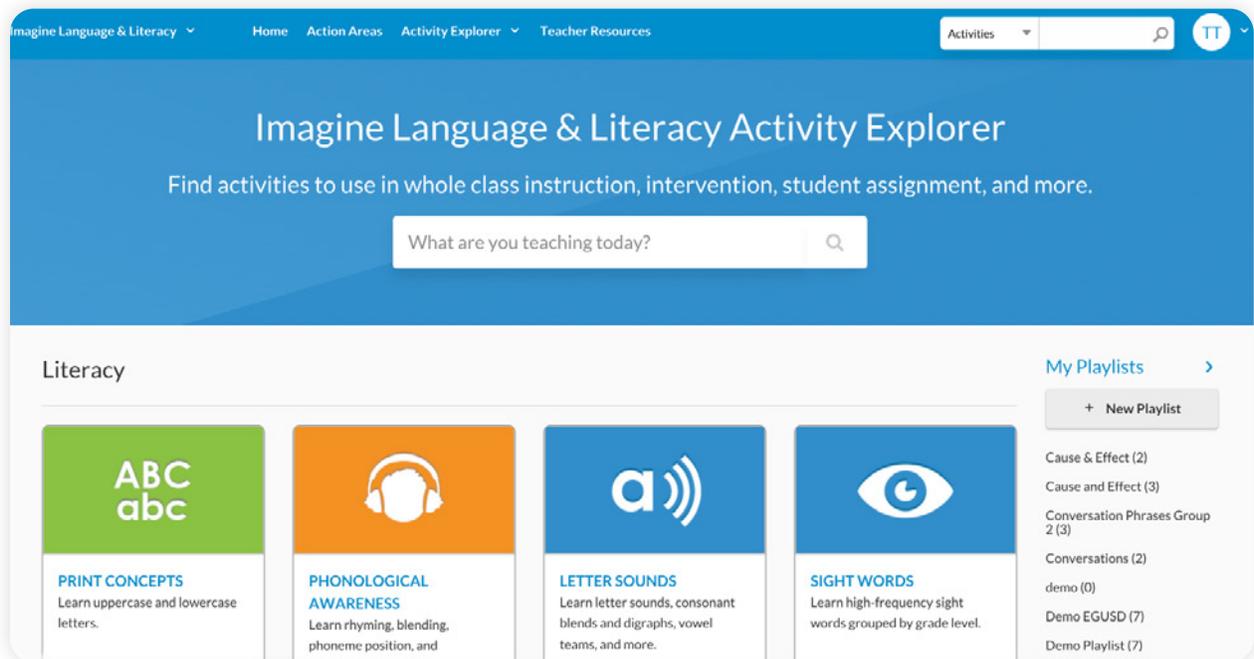


Figure 18. Teachers access the Activity Explorer to assign online and offline supplemental activities.

Imagine Language & Literacy also includes more than 200 offline reteaching lesson plans in the **Teacher Resources** section (Figure 20). These lesson plans target specific skills such as letter sounds, onset-rime blending, vowel teams, sight words, etc. Each reteaching lesson plan includes a list of materials (including printouts such as flashcards) and preparation tasks, as well as a scripted lesson plan suitable for delivery by any classroom staff. Each plan also includes a link to download a PDF of the lesson plan and printouts.

The screenshot shows the 'Inferential Intervention' dashboard. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Home, Action Areas, Activity Explorer, and Teacher Resources. A search bar and a user profile icon are also visible. The main content area is titled 'Inferential Intervention' and includes a 'Print Report' button. Below this, there are statistics: '5 activities' and 'Time to complete: Approx. 28m'. A progress indicator shows five categories: 'In progress or not started', 'Developing: 0-59%', 'Approaching: 60-69%', 'Proficient: 70-100%', and 'Complete, no score'. The 'Students' section features a table with columns for Name, Average Score, Activities Completed, Time Spent in Playlist, and Date Assigned. The student 'Cook, Sophia' is highlighted with a 50% average score. The 'Activities' section lists activities with their average scores: 'Learn about Inferential Questions' (6/6 students), 'Read Aloud: What a Bike!' (5/6 students), and 'Assess Reading Comprehension: What a Bike!' (66%). A 'Practice' section is also visible, showing a 6m duration and a learning objective: 'Practice phonics, high-frequency word recognition, and language production to read and record a beginning text aloud.'

Figure 19. Teachers create custom online playlists to address students' learning needs.

The screenshot shows the 'ALL RETEACHING LESSON PLANS' page under the 'TEACHER RESOURCES' section. The page has a blue header with navigation tabs: Literacy, Language, Tools, Lesson Explorer, and Offline Resources. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main heading is 'ALL RETEACHING LESSON PLANS' with a 'PD' icon. Below the heading, there is a paragraph explaining that Imagine Language & Literacy includes over 200 offline reteaching lesson plans for Print Concepts, Phonological Awareness, and Phonics and Word Recognition skills. Another paragraph states that each reteaching lesson plan includes a list of materials, preparation tasks, and a scripted lesson plan suitable for intervention specialists, reading paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, or other assistants. Below the text, there is a list of categories under the heading 'LITERACY': PRINT CONCEPTS, PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS, LETTER SOUNDS, DECODABLE WORDS, SIGHT WORDS, SPELLING, READING COMPREHENSION, and READING VOCABULARY. A question mark icon is visible in the bottom left corner.

Figure 20. Teachers access reteaching lesson plans to support individualization.

Conclusion

The purpose of tiered systems of support is to maximize academic performance by proactively supporting students through early identification and intervention. The tiered frameworks screen students' skills, use ongoing assessment to monitor progress and identify learning gaps, and continuously collect data to help teachers make data-based instructional decisions. Imagine Language & Literacy translates data into actionable reports so teachers can measure engagement, progress, and achievement over the school year. The program also offers extensive online and offline instructional resources to individualize instruction and meet students' needs. These additional resources can increase dosage and opportunities to respond and practice a specific skill with feedback. Combined with teachers' continuous progress monitoring and data collection within their classrooms, they provide unparalleled support for delivering effective instruction within tiered systems of support.



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