

WordFlight Provides Age-Appropriate Literacy Intervention—and Moves Students Out of Tier 3 Support

Reese Elementary School | Reese, Michigan

Meet the Teacher: Teresa Karney

- 5th grade teacher
- 30 years of K-8 teaching experience
- Spring 2024 WordFlight grantee

The Challenge

Reese Public Schools is a small, rural district in northern Michigan. For the 2023-2024 school year, Teresa taught 62 fifth graders across science and language arts. She sees a lot of academic diversity, but the students who were struggling with decoding caught her attention.

“Their spelling wasn’t even phonetically correct. They would leave out vowels. They would use the wrong vowel. They would often have the right consonants but not necessarily in the right order,” she adds.

Some of the students hadn’t made progress in years: “There was one girl who was experiencing the same challenges at the beginning of this year, fifth grade, that I was seeing when she was in kindergarten when I was her Title 1 teacher,” says Teresa.

The Solution

Teresa learned about WordFlight in a Facebook group dedicated to the science of reading. She immediately identified its benefits.

“A lot of the interventions we have are academically appropriate for fifth graders, but not appropriate content. They’re baby-ish. WordFlight isn’t baby-ish,” says Teresa.

The Solution (continued)

The WordFlight Instructional Program leverages adaptive technology to provide personalized, structured practice in an engaging game-like environment. It helps students achieve fluency by moving beyond decoding to learning how to use letter-sound relationships in a way that results in automatic word recognition, a critical but often overlooked foundational reading skill.

“Everybody was on the computer so [the WordFlight users] felt like they were absolutely a part of the class.”

— Teresa Karney

The Implementation

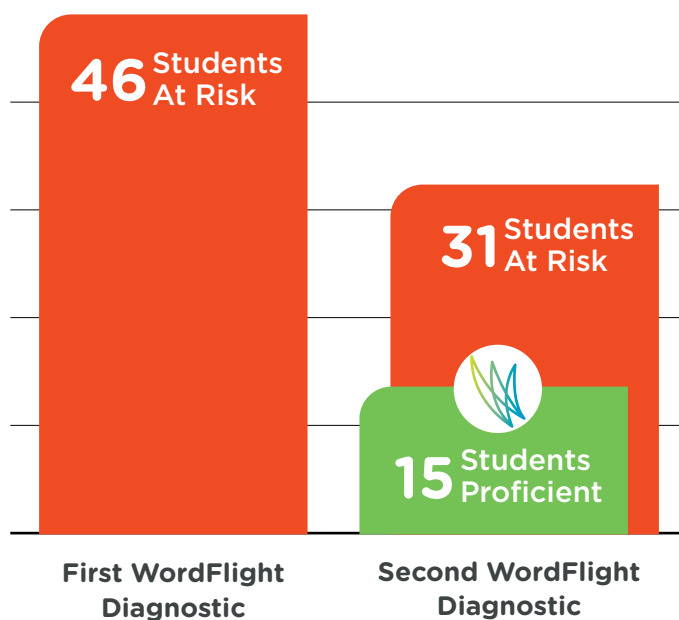
Teresa began using WordFlight in January 2024 after being awarded a Spring 2024 WordFlight Grant. She established a class routine: While the students who scored as proficient on the WordFlight Screener continued to use their main language arts curriculum program, Amplify Boost, the students who scored at risk on the Screener used WordFlight. They used the program for 80-120 minutes per week.

Teresa says, “They would come into class, open up their computers, and just get started on WordFlight. They liked that they didn’t stand out as ‘different.’ Everybody was on the computer.”

To keep her students motivated, Teresa awarded points for completing their assigned WordFlight tasks and extra credit if they went above and beyond. She also excused them from completing the Amplify work because it didn’t have the phonics practice the students needed.

The Results

Thirty-three percent of students who scored as at-risk on the first WordFlight Diagnostic became proficient in decoding and automatic word recognition, key skills needed to reach fluency, after just four months of using WordFlight.



The Results (continued)

Teresa says that WordFlight was especially effective for smart students who were missing foundational reading skills.

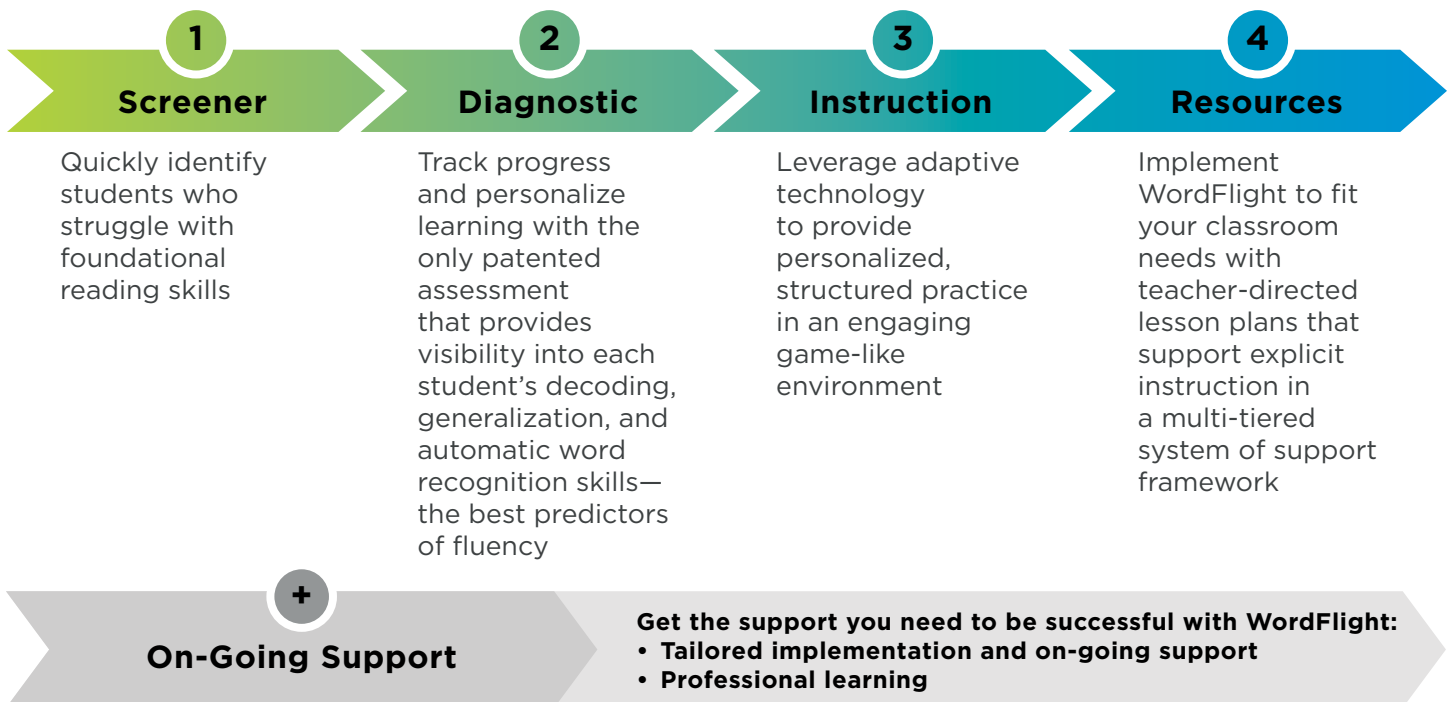
“I had a couple kids who were very academically strong but were really lacking in the phonics department, They were one of my groups that I was really impressed with. I think even they realized how much WordFlight was helping them.”

— Teresa Karney

Teresa recalls how one student in particular made her emotional. They had been in Tier 3 since kindergarten and finally moved to Tier 2 after just four months using WordFlight.

“She asked me to help her find a book to read. I wanted to cry,” she remembers. “Her mom knew that her daughter was struggling. She told me that ‘for the first time she’s asking me to read with her.’”

How WordFlight Works:



Get in touch to see how WordFlight can help your students.

For more information, please visit wordflight.com,
email info@wordflight.com or call (888) 701-3009



From WordFlight to Fluency

