



Achieve3000 Supports the Orton-Gillingham Approach to Instruction and Serves Students with Dyslexia

Achieve3000's mission is to work together with educators to unlock potential and accelerate learning for every student, including those with dyslexia and other reading challenges. Used as a complementary solution to the Orton-Gillingham's direct and explicit instructional approach, our Smarty Ants and Achieve3000 Literacy solutions deliver age-appropriate texts on each student's reading level to build comprehension and fluency as they also develop excitement about reading. Students use Achieve3000's solutions to:

- Improve decoding skills, academic vocabulary, background knowledge, and fluency in the lower grades;
- Improve comprehension, critical thinking skills, context, and inference for middle and high school students;
- Build reading stamina, especially for high school students with dyslexia who need to handle larger workloads; and
- Perhaps most importantly, give students with dyslexia access to grade-level content so they can participate in whole group discussions, building confidence and self-esteem.

This ensures that all students, including students with dyslexia, do not miss out on grade-level, standards-aligned instruction. Additionally, this document will focus on Smarty Ants and Achieve3000 Literacy and the support these solutions provide to students with dyslexia.

Smarty Ants®

Build students' foundational literacy skills with this effective, research-driven solution that teaches phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, sight-word vocabulary, and comprehension in an engaging, interactive online learning environment.

Achieve3000 Literacy™

Achieve3000 Literacy powers equitable literacy learning across the content areas. Rated "Strong" by Evidence for ESSA and proven to drive up to 3X expected Lexile® growth, Achieve3000 Literacy offers a patented instructional methodology that combines benchmarking and embedded assessment with leveled texts and scaffolds to differentiate instruction in grades 2-12. Achieve3000 Literacy with Boost for Intervention focuses on the practice and instruction around reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing for students in need of intervention, with supports for targeted fluency, phonics, and language development.

Personalized

Teaching begins with recognizing the differing needs of learners. While those with dyslexia share similarities, there are differences in their language needs. In addition, individuals with dyslexia may possess additional problems that complicate learning, such as attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity (ADHD).

Smarty Ants: The program begins with an initial assessment that identifies each student's foundational skill gaps. Based on this information, the system automatically generates a learning path that includes those lessons that are necessary for building the foundational skills for reading comprehension and writing. Smarty Ants provides students with dyslexia the opportunity to reinforce and practice what they have learned in a fun and engaging format.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Students begin by taking the LevelSet™ assessment to establish their baseline Lexile level. The system then delivers grade-appropriate lessons differentiated to that Lexile level for each student. This allows every student in the same class to work on the same grade-appropriate content and standards-aligned lessons, but at a level that allows them to successfully build reading strategies, acquire new words, engage in academic discussion, and communicate ideas through writing.

Multisensory

It uses all the learning pathways: seeing, hearing, feeling, and awareness of motion, brought together by the thinking brain. The instructor engages in multisensory teaching to convey curricular content in the most understandable way to the student. The teacher also models how the student, by using these multiple pathways, can engage in multisensory learning that results in greater ease and success in learning.

Smarty Ants: Graphics, videos, and interactive learning games are available throughout the solution to engage all students as they acquire foundational literacy skills. All instruction is audio-enabled video and can be returned to at any point while students work through a lesson.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Various multisensory tools are available. Teachers have the option to enable or disable these tools, which include:

- Text-to-speech and speech-to-text audio with slow, medium, and fast options so students can control the speed at which they work
- Digital highlighter
- Links to videos in select lessons to help introduce the topic and provide background information in a different format that may better conform to a student's learning style
- Audio-support tool and dual-language dictionary for multiple opportunities to hear the pronunciation and see the spelling of words
- Picture dictionaries to help students make nonlinguistic connections to words, as well as animated songs and videos for further engagement

Diagnostic and prescriptive

An Orton-Gillingham lesson is both diagnostic and prescriptive. It is diagnostic in the sense that the instructor continuously monitors the verbal, nonverbal, and written responses of the student to identify and analyze both the student's problems and progress. This information is the basis of planning the next lesson. That lesson is prescriptive in the sense that it will contain instructional elements that focus upon the resolution of the student's difficulties and that build upon the student's progress noted in the previous lesson.

Smarty Ants:

- The system monitors acquisition of specific foundational skills as students progress through each lesson.
- A dashboard helps teachers track student progress as well as gaps.
- Students automatically receive additional practice when the system identifies skill gaps.
- For additional support, teachers can use the included program materials to provide direct instruction.

Achieve3000 Literacy:

- In each lesson, students progress through a patented and proven literacy routine.
- Step 3 of the literacy routine is a standards-aligned activity, which provides diagnostic information on standards and skills each student has mastered or still needs to develop.
- A corresponding report provides detailed information to inform teachers' direct instruction based on these gaps.
- New lessons are prescribed to provide students with additional practice on specific standards and skills.

Direct instruction

The teacher presentations employ lesson formats which ensure that the student approaches the learning experience understanding what is to be learned, why it is to be learned, and how it is to be learned.

Smarty Ants:

- After the initial assessment, an ongoing cycle of assessment and adjustment begins as students move through all activities in the program. This provides more practice, instruction, and guidance as needed while allowing students to move quickly through concepts and skills they easily master.
- Each new lesson concept is introduced in one or more teaching videos, many of which are interactive.
- Teachers have access to instructional materials to provide direct instruction in whole-group, small-group, or individual settings.
- Lesson structure is very clear in Smarty Ants. Students are able to monitor their progress through each stage of the lesson.
- The Daily Woof virtual newspaper is delivered to students and announces what they accomplished the previous day, and Coach and Flea are always available to provide guidance as students move through activities.

Achieve3000 Literacy:

- Best-practice recommendations are provided for a lesson, often using visuals (images, maps, and charts) or videos, along with recommendations for guiding students through their routines.
- Instructional supports are available for struggling readers, often with graphic organizers to promote their comprehension of the content.
- A bank of reading comprehension and vocabulary lesson plans is available for teachers to use in whole- or small-group instruction.

Direct instruction

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- Achieve3000 Literacy features a wealth of teaching resources to support a structured vocabulary-acquisition routine. This helps students create shared meaning of words, including nonlinguistic representations of those words, a routine for academic discussion, and a guided writing routine.
- Specific emphasis is given to text features (such as headers, images, and captions) and how they can promote comprehension.
- Select lessons include direct-instruction lessons plans around English language development and phonics. This instruction—embedded into the student’s literacy routine—is targeted to a particular lesson.

Systematic phonics

It uses systematic phonics, stressing the alphabetic principle in the initial stages of reading development. It takes advantage of the sound/symbol relationships inherent in the alphabetic system of writing. Spoken words are made up of individual speech sounds, and the letters of written words graphically represent those speech sounds.

Smarty Ants provides systematic, spiraled, and explicit instruction to each student based on individual learning needs and pace, with a goal of getting through phonics “first and fast” as the student’s growth permits. The lessons for PreK start with upper- and lowercase letter names and progress to letter sounds.

Automatic notifications in Smarty Ants let teachers know right away when students are ready for the greater challenge of reading comprehension in Achieve3000 Literacy.

Phonics instruction in Achieve3000 Literacy with Boost is targeted to specific skill gaps based on information that teachers learn through Smarty Ants or from the Skills Report.

Applied linguistics

It draws upon applied linguistics not only in the initial decoding and encoding stages of reading and writing but in more advanced stages dealing with syllabic, morphemic, syntactic, semantic, and grammatic structures of language and our writing system. At all times the Orton-Gillingham Approach involves the student in integrative practices that involve reading, spelling, and writing together.

Smarty Ants: Smarty Ants addresses these components based on each student’s “zone of proximal development”—the term coined by pioneering psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) that refers to the space between tasks a child can do alone and those requiring help to complete.

- Students begin with the simplest foundational skills and strategies (e.g., phonological awareness, and letter names) and progress to more complex concepts (e.g., blending sounds to decode words, spelling conventions, affixes, and multisyllabic words).
- Later concepts are built on earlier ones, and students have many opportunities to apply the knowledge they have accumulated.
- A large proportion of the words presented in the program are decodable based on the sound-spelling relationships students have cumulatively mastered in the lessons.

This strategic, scaffolded instruction—leading to production of a contextual, phonics-based book—helps students develop a robust vocabulary and builds the foundation for writing.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Our literacy routine was designed around the integration of reading and writing.

- Informal and formal writing is incorporated into every lesson, along with the essential practice of reading strategies and close-reading techniques needed to support evidence-based writing.
- Students can receive extra scaffolds, delivered at the discretion of the teacher, to guide them through reading and writing.

Systematic and structured

It increases linguistic competence by stressing language patterns that determine word order and sentence structure and the meaning of words and phrases. It moves beyond this to recognizing the various forms that characterize the common literary forms employed by writers.

Smarty Ants: As students progress through the program, the phonics component continually reinforces and builds upon what they have learned about the alphabetic principle and basic phonemic awareness.

- Skill-building activities give students practice in relating sounds to spellings and thereby learning to decode words.
- If they play all the skill-building games within a lesson, students encounter decodable words multiple times.
- Teaching videos and “word bubbles” strengthen the sound-spelling cues that students are mastering in skill-building games such as Treadmill and Climbing Wall.
- Once the phonics skills for a particular lesson are taught and mastered, students use what they have learned to build engaging and amusing decodable stories, which they can print out and read at home.
- Over 470 learning songs throughout the program support instruction and facilitate memory of the letter-sound correspondences and other phonics skills.

Sequential, incremental and cumulative

Step by step, learners move from the simple, well-learned material to that which is more and more complex. They move from one step to the next as they master each level of language skills.

Smarty Ants: A learning path is built for each student after completing the initial assessment.

- Lessons are built sequentially and incrementally to ensure that all skills needed to complete a level have been mastered.
- Assessments take place within each lesson to ensure mastery.
- If gaps continue to be detected, the system cycles back to provide additional instruction and guided practice.
- At the end of each level, the system determines whether the student is ready to move on to more complex skills.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Students receive grade-level content delivered at their specific Lexile level based on the LevelSet assessment.

- With up to 12 English and 8 Spanish Lexile levels for every lesson, students receive the version of the lesson that is most precisely matched to their level. This ensures true equity by meeting the needs of students reading below or far below grade level, at grade level, or above or far above grade level.
- As students complete the embedded formative assessments, the system detects when they are ready for text that is more complex.
- Text complexity is continually adjusted based on student performance using a proprietary algorithm developed by MetaMetrics®, ensuring that content is always differentiated to each student’s needs. This ongoing adjustment helps students move to increasingly complex text while continuing to practice the same skills.

Continuous feedback and positive reinforcement

The approach provides for a close teacher-student relationship that builds self-confidence based on success.

Smarty Ants: Smarty Ants encourages and motivates students to move from lesson to lesson and level to level as they learn and strengthen pre-reading and reading skills at their own pace.

- Motivational tools include virtual games, awards, coins, books, DVDs, ribbons, trophies, the Daily Woof newspaper, Super Ant Animal Rescue, Readers Theatre, recordings, and songs.
- As students move through lessons, they are given choice; they can select the games they want to play in order to master a particular skill.
- Each game on the Activity Board allows students to master the same skill, but the choice allows the program to be personalized to the student's learning temperament and pace.
- Rewards are scattered throughout the entire student experience to keep them engaged in learning. For instance, at the end of each level students receive a graduation trophy, which is kept on a shelf in a Rewards Room.
- Teachers have an easy-to-access dashboard that allows them to monitor students' progress and provide additional feedback and instruction as needed.

Achieve3000 Literacy: As students move through the activity questions, they receive feedback. In addition to this ongoing feedback, a number of tools are designed to motivate students and provide choice, as the element of choice is central to engagement:

- Before students begin to work on lessons, they visit the Career Center, where they are able to read about hundreds of different careers, select a top career, and track their Lexile growth as it pertains to that career goal.
- As students move through the literacy routine, they earn points and achievements to keep them engaged with the process.
- Teachers can award points and achievements for noteworthy work that students have completed.
- The Lesson Search function allows students to find topics of interest in addition to lessons assigned by their teacher.
- Teachers have easy access to all student work and can provide ongoing feedback—both informal and formal—throughout the independent student work, helping learners build self-confidence based on their successes.

Cognitive approach

Students understand the reasons for what they are learning and for the learning strategies they are employing. Students gain confidence as they develop their literacy skills and apply newly gained knowledge.

Smarty Ants: The Story Game Show, which is accessible after completing a variety of games on the Activity Board, is the main site of reading comprehension activities.

- A variety of questions asked in a game show format allow the student to demonstrate mastery of a library of stories.
- Metacognitive thinking strategies are modeled throughout, both by the host of the show and by the ant friends that the child invites to play along and react to the story.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Once students are ready to transition to reading comprehension in Achieve3000 Literacy they will move through an instructional routine that is designed to enhance higher-order critical-thinking skills.

- In our patented literacy routine, students start out by expressing an opinion based on experience and prior knowledge in an informal written response. For some students, academic discussion in which students create a shared understanding of the topic will better serve the student in forming an opinion statement.
- From there, students read multiple sources of information at their specific Lexile level. This is the level at which students can build reading strategies and close- reading techniques.
- Text-to-speech and speech-to-text tools, a highlighting tool, and graphic organizers are available to support comprehension.
- As students read, they look for evidence to help them respond to a Thought Question, a written prompt that requires evidence from the text.
- Point-of-use supports give students a metacognitive understanding of the routine's steps, what needs to be done within each step, and why.
- Sentence and paragraph frames are provided to support struggling writers.

Emotionally sound

Students' feelings about themselves and about learning are vital. Teaching is directed toward providing the experience of success. With success comes increased self-confidence and motivation.

Smarty Ants: Smarty Ants engages younger students in a 3D virtual world that motivates them through a game-based environment, encouraging students to “play” their way to mastery.

- Each student's progress is tracked, and the pace and learning support is adapted based on that student's needs. This ensures that the student succeeds every step of the way, which instills confidence and pleasure in reading.
- For students with advanced reading skills or those who quickly grasp new reading concepts, the program accelerates to keep them engaged and challenged.
- For students who are struggling, the system slows the pace and increases support and scaffolding. As students progress, they begin to discover the joy of reading.

Achieve3000 Literacy: Central to Achieve3000 Literacy is the premise of true equity—that all students in the same grade are able to read about the same grade-appropriate topic at their individual reading levels, so they can demonstrate success. For many students, this will be the first time they are working on the same lesson as everyone else in the classroom, thus helping to build their confidence and motivating them to learn more.

Combined with tools for motivation and acceleration, this equity of access empowers students to double or even triple their expected gains over the course of a school year.

For more information, please contact: