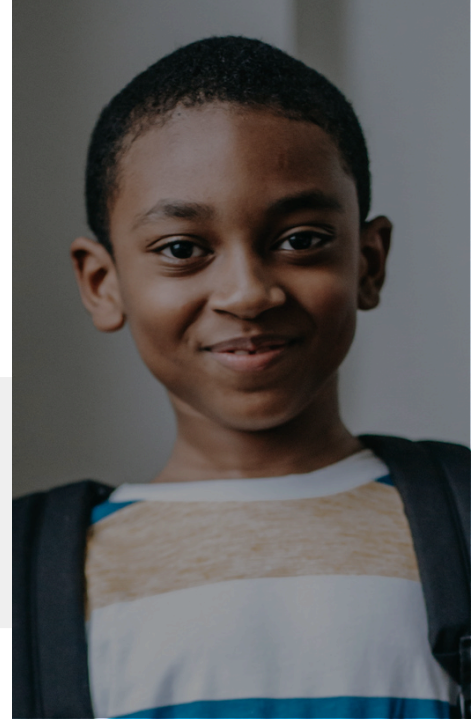


# Hoot



## Student Impact Report

SY 2022–2023  
Ontario, Canada

### Overview

When students are able to meet frequently and consistently in a 1:1 setting with a qualified teacher, all assessments and instruction can then be calibrated to the individual to identify and target specific skills that need improvement: this is high-impact tutoring. This student impact report provides an in-depth review of Hoot Reading’s impact among participating K-8 students between September 2022 and April 2023. The report describes Hoot Reading’s impact on student achievement in literacy across Ontario, Canada’s largest province, including its most populous school district.

### The Hoot Approach

Hoot Reading is the leading online tutoring service providing 1:1, evidence-based literacy instruction with qualified teachers. We are a team of educators and innovators on a mission to change children’s lives through literacy.

Incubated on a research project at the Nokia Research Lab with Sesame Workshop (the creators of Sesame Street) and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center, Hoot Reading partners with school districts across North America to close achievement gaps in literacy.



**One-to-One:** Hoot Reading lessons are always live and 1:1 to create a safe and private learning experience where tutoring can be customized to the student’s abilities.



**Evidence-based Instruction:** All tutoring is based on results from the Hoot Reading assessment and based on structured literacy informed by the Science of Reading.



**Qualified Teachers:** All tutors are educators who hold a B.Ed or higher. They are rigorously screened and hand-selected to ensure the highest quality instruction.



**Diverse Texts:** Hoot Reading’s library has over 2,500 complex texts including our original decodables, developed by educators. Our library is curated with a particular eye for diversity, equity, and inclusion.



**Turn-key Solutions:** Our team handles implementation including operational logistics, parent engagement, and student data reporting. Our live help team (yes, real people!) are available any time lessons are happening.

## Hoot Reading's Work With Ontario School Districts

---

Hoot Reading partnered with schools and districts across Ontario to provide students with literacy tutoring and intervention. Tutoring programs were district funded, with support from the Ontario Ministry of Education, at no cost to families. Principals selected students from their schools to participate in online, at-home tutoring on evenings and weekends. High needs students were prioritized for this tutoring support, based on information available at the school level. Parents and caregivers were invited to select a lesson schedule (ranging from 1 -4 weekly lessons) that best suited their own schedules and Hoot Reading held multiple information sessions where families were able to learn about the program and ask questions.

Students receiving tutoring participated in at least 1 tutoring cycle, which includes 15 lessons plus our pre- and post-assessment at the beginning and end of the cycle. This program design is informed by efficacy research done by Dr. Susan B. Neuman, Professor of Early Childhood & Literacy Education (New York University).

## The Hoot Reading Assessment

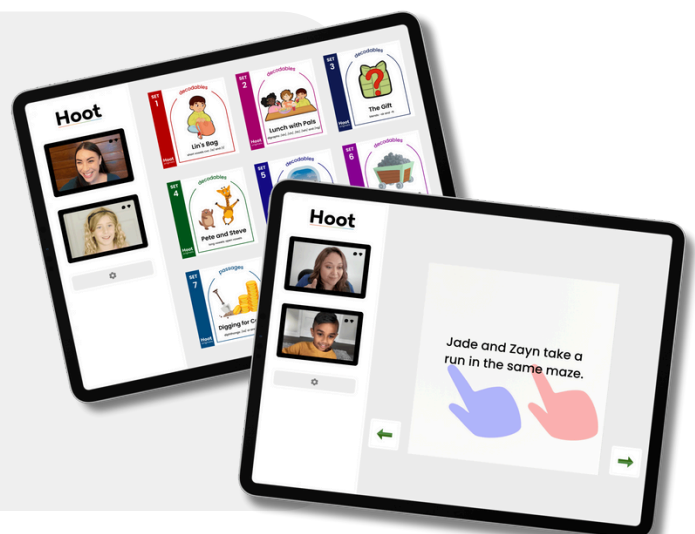
---

Hoot Reading uses an evidence-based teaching model to deliver reading instruction to students, aligned with the Structured Literacy approach. Structured Literacy is the instructional application of the large body of research commonly referred to as the “Science of Reading”, which incorporates decades of scientific knowledge from disciplines that include educational psychology, developmental psychology, and cognitive neuroscience.

All students receiving Hoot Reading tutoring begin with a pre-assessment and conclude with a post-assessment to measure progress. The continuum of literacy learning starts with pre-word reading, where students are assessed on a set of skills that curriculums expect have been mastered by Kindergarten such as letter sounds.

The next level is word-reading, which focuses on decoding simple and complex words by strengthening their knowledge of sound-spelling (phonics) correspondences. Word reading skills are assessed on 7 skill categories that curriculums expect students should possess by the time they are finishing Grade 2.

- CVC Words
- Digraphs
- Initial Consonant Blends
- Final Consonant Blends
- Long Vowels
- R-Controlled Vowels
- Vowel Teams



## Hoot Reading's Work With Ontario School Districts

---



**4,220**

# of students enrolled in 2022-2023



**26,600**

# of hours of lessons



**79,800**

Total # of lessons



**80%+**

Engagement/attendance



**220**

Total # of schools

### Praise For Hoot

---

"When we look at all the learning supports that we've invested in, Hoot has by-far the highest engagement from both students and parents. Our partnership with Hoot Reading exceeds our expectations from student achievement to implementation and I highly recommend them to other districts."

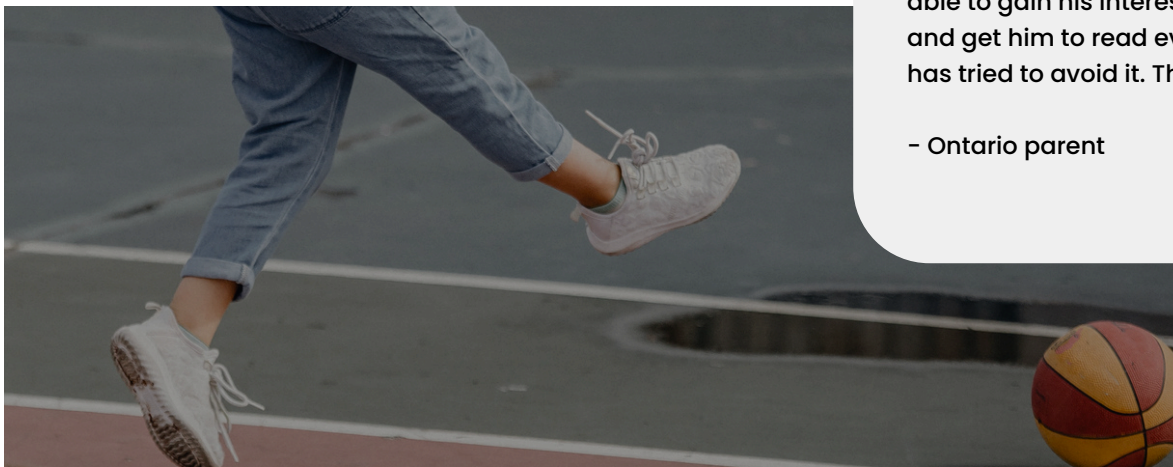
- Ontario District Administrator

"My daughter was struggling with reading and after being in this program she received the reading award at school in her class for the month of November! Her whole family is VERY proud of her and she was so happy!"

- Ontario parent

"The [Hoot] teacher was very personable, encouraging, able to connect with my son who struggles with reading (ADHD, very likely dyslexia). She has been able to gain his interest and trust and get him to read even when he has tried to avoid it. Thank you."

- Ontario parent



## Grades K-2 Findings

---

### Cohort description: Over 1,000 students (1,037 students)

Predominantly Grades 1-2; only 8 kindergarten students were represented in this sample

### Our Findings: Letter-Sound Instruction Required

Our work with this cohort highlights the need for phonics instruction in the early grades in order to become a skillful reader. This is revealed by students' performance on the Letters and Sounds portion of the Hoot Reading Assessment.

At Hoot Reading, mastery of Letters and Sounds means that students are able to recognize and produce the most common consonant sound for consonants (like the sound the letter c represents in the word "cat" or the sound that letter g represents in the word "gum"), in addition to the 5 short vowel sounds.

These sound-letter correspondences serve as the basic foundation that enables kids to read simple words that use these sounds. Before students can move into reading words that use these letter sounds, they need mastery of Letters and Sounds.

### Initial Letter Sounds

m	t	a	s
i	p	e	r
d	f	o	l
g	h	u	c

# Grades K-2 Findings

We found that 61% of students were able to match these letters and sounds consistently on our pre-assessment.

After a cycle of working with a Hoot Reading Teacher, 82% of these students had mastered the letter-sound correspondences that put them on the path to decoding simple words.

## CVC Words

A CVC word has 3 letters and 3 sounds, with reliable consonant sound and short vowel sounds. These are among the first type of words that young students learn to decode, which is efficient and exciting. Hundreds of words become available to early readers once they understand the rules of a CVC word.

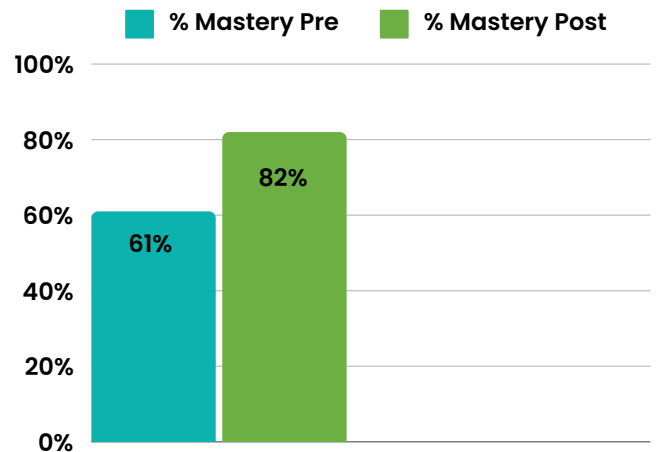
The Hoot Reading Assessment tests a student's ability to decode CVC words through providing real words in isolation, nonsense words, and words in simple sentences.

## Real Words: CVC

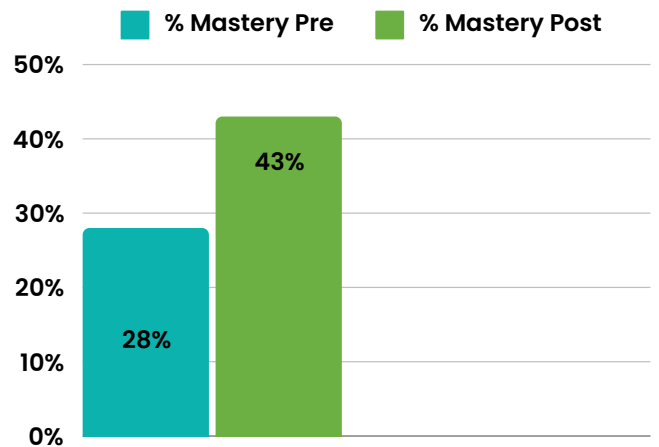
sad      jot  
rim      dug  
web

Only 28% of the Ontario students we worked with this year began their tutoring cycle having mastered the CVC word pattern. After a cycle of working with a Hoot Reading Teacher, 43% of these students had mastered CVC word reading. There is much work left to be done with these young students. Though their decoding work is underway, we know students need to be decoding a variety of words including digraphs, blends, words with long vowel sounds, words with R-controlled vowel sounds, as well as the less common sound-spelling patterns that we find in the English language.

Gr. K-2 Mastery of Letters & Sounds



Gr. K-2 Mastery CVC Words



## Grades 3–8 Findings

---

### Cohort description: Over 900 students (973 students)

Over 200 students from Grades 6–8 included in this sample

Despite differences in literacy instruction and curricula across Ontario, a safe assumption that students in Grades 3 and above are expected to be reading at the text level; meaning that instead of working on one type of word at a time, students in these grades can read books, poems, passages and articles across genres and topics. We also know that many students in Grade 3 do not reach the expected performance of them on summative and standardized assessments.

### Our Findings: Word Reading and Decoding Instruction Required

The Hoot Reading Assessment is designed to reveal the reading needs of every individual student; therefore, where a student is assessed depends on their performance in real time. As such, we were able to find that our cohort of Grades 3–8 students struggled with word reading and decoding – in the same areas where their peers in Grades K–2 are working.

We found that 83% of students in Grades 3–8 assessed had mastered the Letter and Sounds portion of our pre-assessment. As discussed previously, these are the most basic sound–letter correspondences that enable reading of the most simple words in English. This means that 17% of students in this cohort do not have sufficient letter–sound knowledge to begin reading words in earnest.

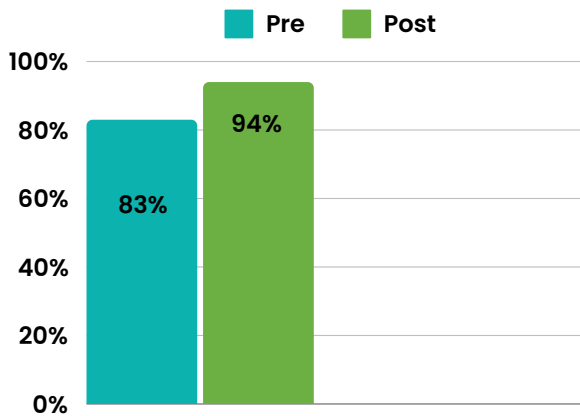
While this is certainly concerning, those students are not significantly behind their peers when it comes to foundational word reading skills. We found that only 54% of all 3–8 students we met this year were successfully reading CVC words (cat, log, pup) at the time of their pre-assessment. Here is an example of two short sentences that utilize CVC words.



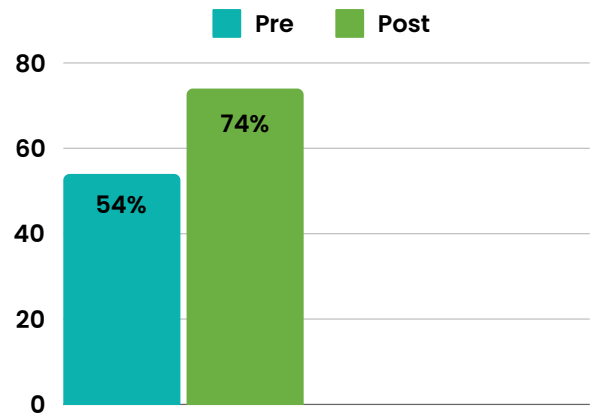
Our post-assessment shows that after just one cycle of Hoot Reading tutoring, 74% of these students had successfully crossed this important reading threshold.

# Grades 3–8 Findings

Gr. 3–8 Mastery of Letters & Sounds



Gr. 3–8 Mastery of CVC Words



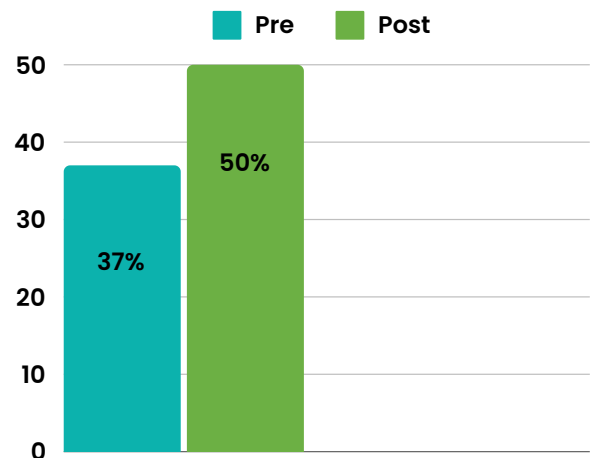
## Long Vowels

Although words with short vowels are the first words we teach children to read, they are not sufficient to enable a child to read an authentic, age-appropriate text.

Students will soon need to learn the other sounds that are represented by vowel letters, beginning with the most common types of words that feature long vowel sounds.

When assessed, we found that only 37% of Grades 3–8 students could read these words correctly. However, after participating in just one cycle of Hoot Reading tutoring, we were able to bring this number of students up to 50%.

Gr. 3–8 Mastery of Long Vowels



## Overall Findings

---

### Students Require Word-Level Instruction

While it is expected to see students in Grades K-2 working on decoding, most students were behind grade level expectations and many needed instruction at the most basic level of word reading.

Inadequate instruction or intervention in the early grades leads to learning gaps that students carry with them to the upper grades. The foundational skill gaps are obvious when looking at the assessment data from the students in Grades 3-8, where we see students struggling to read single-syllable words like *rug* or *beach*.

However, students in both cohorts responded quickly to instruction in the precise area where it was required. The Hoot Reading Assessment allows us to identify these areas for each individual student - this is where our work begins and allows us to provide high-impact tutoring at scale.

We can anticipate continued improvement because we have the assessment tools to see where students of all ages have gaps. Hoot Reading is well-equipped with qualified teachers and the instructional materials to work on those skills at the individual level, in a precise and targeted manner.

