



The Reading Room: Amira: The AI Reading Tutor December 2024

About a week ago I was listening to National Public Radio while having my coffee in the morning. Something I heard caught my attention, so I went online to listen to the entire segment. As a reading tutor myself, I was particularly interested in this segment. It was about Amira.

Amira is an AI (artificial intelligence) reading tutor. This particular broadcast was about the use of Amira in schools in Louisiana. In fact, approximately 100,000 students are using Amira as a supplement to direct instruction in the Science of Reading. Teachers and administrators are very excited to have this tool. They caution that this is not a substitute for a human teacher but can provide additional individualized support for each student. Many of the students in Louisiana are ELL students so Amira can also tutor in Spanish. Amira can analyze where a particular student is struggling and deliver appropriate research-based practices and strategies to help develop that student's reading skills. One administrator commented, "I'm old-school. I still believe people, especially with reading for little kids - that's where it's at. But this, to supplement good science of reading instruction in the classroom? This is great." We know that many parents can't afford private tutoring, so an AI tutor can be very effective.

As I started my research for this article, it became very clear that there are now many AI reading tutors to choose from. Amira is only one of them. The school-based cost for Amira is \$20.00/year per student, which seems quite reasonable.

"The cost of Amira Learning depends on the version and how it's used:

School version: \$20 per student per year, with no cost to the student. This version includes a parent report with information on student progress, vocabulary, and reading age. Teachers also receive training on how to use Amira.

Direct-to-parents version: \$7.99 per month, or \$72 per year with a 25% discount

Amira Assessment: \$8.00 per student per year

Amira was developed to use with students, K-3. I think a good use of an AI tutor would be to use it as a station if you must rotate students through centers. My main concern about using AI tutors would be that some teachers might just use the tutor and not deliver direct instruction.

The preliminary data shows that AI tutors can really help improve students' reading skills. It will be interesting to see the data from Louisiana's two-year pilot at the end of this school year. Amira has an assessment associated with it based on the TPRI (Texas Primary Reading Inventory) Amira has a very favorable report from the Stanford SCALE Initiative Accelerator for Learning. See link below.

These AI tutors show very promising results. Please remember they should NEVER replace human direct instruction in the Science of Reading!

Resources:

Some of the other tutors available are:

Readability Tutor - <https://read.readabilitytutor.com/> \$19.99/per month

Luca Tutor - <https://luca.ai/> \$27.00

More detailed information on Amira.

<https://www.hmhco.com/programs/amira>

[Amira Learning | National Student Support Accelerator](#)

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