



Ember User Guide

Step-by-Step Documentation for School Champions & Teachers

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Personalized, independent practice on foundational reading skills supercharging student growth.

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What Is Ember?

Ember extends Ignite Reading's focus on foundational reading skills beyond tutoring sessions, providing students with up to 10 minutes of personalized, independent practice each day. Students work with Ember for 1–5 minutes before their tutoring session and can continue for another 5 minutes after their session ends.

Ember focuses on building a wide array of early literacy skills, including letter-sound correspondence, phonological awareness, decoding, and reading fluency through targeted reinforcement activities. All Ember content is aligned to our curricular initiatives and designed by Ignite Reading's reading specialists while thoroughly grounded in the Science of Reading.

How Ember Uses Technology

Ember uses Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR), an AI-assisted technology that listens to students read aloud and analyzes their pronunciation at the phoneme level. This helps identify which sounds and skills students have mastered.

For the best experience, students should use headsets with working microphones in a relatively quiet environment. Background noise can affect ASR accuracy, so where possible, providing students with a calm, focused workspace will help Ember more accurately evaluate their reading.

Important for District AI Policies

Ember does NOT use generative AI, large language models (like ChatGPT), AI-generated instructional content, or chatbots. The ASR technology simply helps Ember listen to students read.

A Note on Speech Recognition

Ember's ASR technology is highly accurate. And, like any machine-based system, it may occasionally produce false positives or false negatives. Some speech patterns, accents, or pronunciations may be interpreted differently. Ignite Reading is continuously refining how ASR evaluates student responses to improve accuracy over time.

How Ember Works: The Student Experience

Before the Tutoring Session (Pre-Session)

1. Student logs in to their Classroom Portal 1–5 minutes before their scheduled tutoring time.
2. Ember automatically appears and presents personalized reading activities to the student.
3. The student reads words aloud. Ember's ASR technology listens and evaluates pronunciation.
4. When the tutor joins, the student transitions automatically to their tutoring session.

Tip

If a student logs in less than 1 minute before their session, they skip Ember and go directly to tutoring. Encourage students to log in a few minutes early!

After the Tutoring Session (Post-Session)

1. When the tutor ends the session, the student is automatically redirected back to the Classroom Portal.
2. Ember appears again for up to 5 minutes of additional practice.
3. The student continues practicing reading activities until the time expires or they have completed all available words.

Post-Session Timing

Post-session Ember is available immediately after the tutoring session ends within the same login session. Students will need to be able to navigate back to their classroom portal tab to access Ember. If a student logs out and then logs back in after their session ends, Ember will not reappear for that session.

Who Is Eligible?

All Ignite Reading students are eligible for Ember. Ember does not impact the 15-minute daily tutoring session. It serves as additional practice time.

New Students vs. Returning Students

New students can start using Ember right away. For brand-new students, Ember begins with foundational high-frequency words and base word decoding practice, then adapts as assessment data is collected. Returning students benefit from Ember's personalized content selection, which draws on their accumulated high-frequency word mastery data and assessment history to serve the most relevant practice words from day one.

Ember Activities Watch the [\[8-minute demo video\]](#)

Word Decoder

For students at the ULS level and above, Ember presents a personalized mix of mastered and newly taught high-frequency and skill gap words. Students read the various words aloud, and Ember evaluates their pronunciation.

High Frequency Words

Students revisit mastered High Frequency Words to ensure routine exposure and scaffolding of these high-priority words, thereby informing overall fluency.

- Mastered words are reinforced to build automaticity and reading speed.
- Newly taught words are introduced per cycle for additional practice beyond tutoring, as needed.
- Students who have limited or no mastered HFWs will engage with practice words aligned to their gaps from tutoring lessons (skill gap words).

Skill Gap Words

When students have exhausted their HFW lists, Ember serves personalized skill gap words. These are words specifically chosen to target phonics patterns where the student needs additional practice, based on their assessment data from various formal and informal components from tutoring and other assessments.

- When a student masters all their HFWs, Ember will also prioritize skill gap words after the student practices with one mastered HFW to build initial confidence and review.

Word Transformer

Word Transformer is our newest Ember activity, currently focused on supporting phonemic awareness and phonics alongside Word Decoding. Students in ULS and beyond will alternate between Word Decoding and Word Transformer between sessions. In Word Transformer, students practice modifying words by changing one sound (phoneme) at a time. For example, “cat” to “bat” to “bit.” This strengthens phonemic awareness and decoding skills.

Word Transformer will be personalized using Ember’s Knowledge Domain system to target specific phoneme-grapheme patterns each student needs.

Pop the Letters (BAK Students)

Students in the BAK (Basic Alphabet Knowledge) protocol engage with Pop the Letters, an interactive letter identification game that builds foundational alphabetic knowledge. Students are provided with target phonemes (letter sounds) and are required to identify the appropriate grapheme (letter) that corresponds to each phoneme based on its most common pronunciation.

Impact Data

In Ignite Reading's Fall 2025 pilot across 55 schools and 1,500+ students, students who spent just 3 minutes in Ember practiced 5+ words per session and mastered 10% more high-frequency words compared to words not practiced in Ember. Our 2026 analysis saw that words practiced on Ember saw a 8.3 percentage point increase in mastery for high frequency words and a 10 percentage point increase for skill gap words compared to words not practiced in Ember.

Setup & Technical Requirements

Since your school already hosts Ignite Reading, most of the setup is done. Please verify the following:

Requirement	Details
Headsets & Volume	Headsets should be on with volume turned up. Microphones must be unobstructed and fully plugged in. Students need to hear and speak to Ember.
Classroom Environment	Where possible, provide students with a calm, focused workspace. Reducing background noise helps optimize Automatic Speech Recognition accuracy, though we understand that every school environment is different.
Pop-Ups Allowed	Pop-ups must be allowed from students.ignite-reading.com to enable automatic transition from Ember to the tutoring session.
Analytics Tracking	Product analytics tracking should be allowed from heapanalytics.com , so Ignite Reading can research and improve the experience.

Note

Pop-Ups and appropriate permissions for Analytics Tracking may need to be enabled by your school or district IT department. Connect with school and/or district leadership if Ember fails to load, as it could be due to restricted permissions.

Troubleshooting Common Issues

Ember Is Not Appearing

- Confirm the student is logging in between 1 and 5 minutes before their scheduled session, or within 5 minutes after their session.
 - For post-session Ember, have the student navigate to the appropriate tab on the portal.
- Check that the student's browser allows pop-ups from students.ignite-reading.com.

Student Cannot Hear Ember

- Ensure the headset is fully plugged in, and the volume is turned up.
- Check that the browser has microphone and audio permissions enabled.
- Try refreshing the browser and re-logging in.
- Verify that the headset is functional or switch out headsets to test.

Ember Is Not Recognizing Student Speech Accurately

- Ensure the microphone is not obstructed, and the student is speaking clearly.
- Where possible, reduce background noise to help ASR analysis.
- Note that some speech patterns, accents, or pronunciations may occasionally be evaluated differently. This is normal. Ignite Reading is continuously refining ASR to improve accuracy across diverse student populations.
- If a specific student consistently has recognition issues, please report this through the Knowledge Base support form so our team can investigate.

Student Did Not Transition to Tutoring

- If audio is still playing when the tutor joins, Ember will wait until it finishes before transitioning.
- The student can press the pink "Go" button in Ember to manually transition.
- Ensure pop-ups are enabled for students.ignite-reading.com.

Still Having Issues?

Submit a support request through the Ignite Reading Knowledge Base at knowledge.ignite-reading.com and select "Ember" as the category. Your Technology Support Team will be in touch.

Best Practices for Maximizing Ember

- **Encourage early logins.** Even 3 minutes of Ember practice makes a measurable difference. Build a routine, so students know to log in a few minutes early.
- **Create a supportive environment.** Where school schedules and space allow, provide students with a quiet area and working headsets for the best speech recognition experience.
- **Ensure proper equipment.** Headsets with working microphones are essential. Test audio before sessions when possible.
- **Monitor engagement.** Your Literacy Success Partner (LSP) will share Ember data during Student Impact Updates. Use this data to identify students who may need encouragement to log in early.
- **Provide feedback.** Your input directly shapes Ember's development. Submit feedback through the Knowledge Base support form or share with your LSP.

Data & Reporting

Ignite Reading captures data on student attendance, engagement, and mastery through Ember. Key metrics include words practiced per session, mastery rates on high-frequency words, and total time in Ember activities.

Your Literacy Success Partner will share Ember data during Student Impact Updates (SIMs). Partners will also have access to Ember-specific growth data on the School Portal in the 26-27 academic year.

Getting Support

- **Knowledge Base:** <https://knowledge.ignite-reading.com/home/ember-resources>: Video tutorials, quick start guides, and FAQs.
- **Support Form:** Select "Ember" from the [Knowledge Base Support Form](#) for the fastest routing to our Technology Support Team.
- **Your LSP:** Your Literacy Success Partner is your primary Ignite Reading contact for questions about Ember usage and data.
- **Ember Overview Video:** Available on the [Knowledge Base](#) for a walkthrough of the full student experience.