

Data-Driven Success for RTI Students in Wrightstown, WI

Wrightstown Middle School



**Lee Mierow,
Principal**



**396 students
Grades 5 to 8**



Study Island



**20.1% economically
disadvantaged
20% response to
intervention**

The Challenge:

Wrightstown Middle School (WMS), located in rural Wisconsin, has nearly 400 students in grades 5 through 8. Twenty percent of those students are part of Response to Intervention (RTI) programs for reading and math. Teachers needed additional resources for RTI students who fell below the 20th percentile in those subjects. They wanted a comprehensive solution to improve students' skills in Common Core English language arts and math, track individual student progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide students with instant feedback.

Wrightstown Middle School in rural Wisconsin, with 20 percent of its students in RTI programs, needed a comprehensive solution to boost reading and math skills, track student progress, and provide instant feedback. Since the school implemented Study Island in 2009, students have tested out of the RTI program, and the school has seen an increase in standardized test scores.

How They Did It:

With Study Island's capacity to support individualized learning and track student progress, the program was ideal for the school to fulfill its goals. WMS first implemented Study Island as part of its RTI program in the 2009–10 school year. Since then, Study Island has been used on a daily basis by students in the RTI Resource Room to reinforce concepts that are taught in class but are difficult to grasp or retain. Teachers have found the program to be an effective enrichment resource that provides differentiation for all levels of students.

WMS uses a student's NWEA™ Measures of Academic Progress (MAP®) assessment results to create an individualized learning path within Study Island. That way, students can work independently at their

own pace on customized instruction when they are not learning in small groups or one-on-one with an RTI specialist. “Each student having their own individualized path allows students to receive exactly what they need, without their peers being aware that they are doing different work,” explained WMS principal Lee Mierow.

In addition to its use with RTI, WMS teachers have found Study Island valuable in the special education environment for continuous practice to stress fundamental skills and build upon existing knowledge. Special education teachers especially like Study Island’s game mode for motivating students to do their best. Finding Study Island to be a beneficial program for its RTI and special education needs, WMS expanded its accessibility to all students in the school for improving math, reading, and grammar skills.

After analyzing MAP testing data, teachers discovered that students in grades 6 and 8 struggled most with the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy. To analyze student performance more deeply in this area, they used Study Island’s test builder. Teachers constructed pretests by selecting two questions from each of the 14 literature categories in the language arts Common Core Study Island content area. After administering the tests to students, teachers got an in-depth look at the results and were able to pinpoint specific areas needing improvement. This helped them refine their instruction and target specific content areas for their students.

WMS teachers utilized Study Island’s many features to leverage the program in broad ways. They sent out parent notifications each week to inform parents of student progress. Parents also had easy access to achievement reports, helping to strengthen the connection between school and home. The WMS staff also took advantage of Study Island’s valuable teaching tools, like printable flash cards and worksheets to provide students with additional practice and teacher resources like lesson plans and videos to help them introduce concepts. After students earn Blue Ribbons to represent mastery in Study Island, some teachers post them in their classrooms for extra motivation. “Study Island gives students many opportunities to be successful and be proud of their achievements,” Mierow stated.

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Success:

WMS teachers have seen measureable success since implementing Study Island as part of their RTI program, and students’ standardized test scores have steadily increased. From the 2009–10 school year to the 2013–14 school year, students who were proficient or advanced in reading climbed 14 percent. Between those same school years, students who were proficient or advanced in math soared 16.8 percent.

Study Island is filled with dynamic, high-quality content, engaging games and rewards, immediate feedback, and built-in remediation. If students are struggling in a particular topic, they will be automatically bumped down to a “building block topic,” helping them work back up to grade-level proficiency and lessening frustration. All of these qualities combine to keep students engaged, motivated, and eager to learn—even outside of normal school hours. “After two RTI students have tested out reaching the 50th percentile this fall, they still come down to the RTI room before school to go through their learning path to get the chance to play more games on Study Island,” said Mierow. One eighth grader even advanced 8 RTI points on the math MAP test after using Study Island’s math lessons over summer break.

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Lee Mierow,
Principal

The Future:

In the 21st century, classroom instruction is more data driven than ever before. With Study Island’s robust reporting, Wrightstown Middle School teachers have a clear picture of each student’s knowledge and progress. “It is a great benefit to have a tool like Study Island, which allows us to dive deeper into the language arts strands,” Mierow said. “We look forward to using Study Island as a post-test data collection resource.”

For more information:

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