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## Proven digital curriculum platforms foster personalized learning

Adaptive software can provide highly individualized instruction to remediate, reinforce, accelerate

### Why is there such an emphasis on personalized learning today for K12?

Educators want to work with students the way they learn best, and we know that one-on-one or small-group instruction is effective. But for the sake of efficiency, schools often employ the “factory” model to teach large numbers of students in a classroom, assuming their age equates to similar positions in their learning progress. Because any two students are rarely at the same point in their learning, educators need to find a way to reach large numbers of students individually.

At the same time, as digital natives, students are very accustomed to technology adapting to their needs, plus teachers have access to a variety of innovative tools—such as adaptive learning software—to more easily reach students where they are. All these trends create strong interest in personalized learning platforms.

### What is adaptive software, and what is its relationship to personalized learning?

Adaptive software provides educational material that changes the instruction and content students experience based on ongoing input, making learning personal for each student. It is a curriculum resource that not only enables teachers to meet each student at their individual learning levels simultaneously, but also provides data about student learning, so teachers can adjust lessons or facilitate learning outside of the software.

### What is “productive struggle,” and why is it important?

Productive struggle describes the “just right” level of difficulty where students learn most effectively. If the work is too easy, students become bored and disengaged, but if it is too difficult, they become frustrated and give up. The level of challenge needs to be a reach in order to foster learning, and to create high levels of satisfaction for students when they succeed. Adaptive learning tools support productive struggle by delivering the right content

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at the right time, to assure full engagement during the learning process.

### Where does competency-based learning fit into this?

Student learning goals should be rigorous, meaningful and high-quality. Personalized learning is about mastering each learning goal, rather than just moving forward based on a schedule for covering standards.

Personalized learning accommodates the way students learn at different paces and in different ways. Adaptive software ensures that each student masters foundational content before moving on to more advanced material.

### In what ways can this type of software adapt?

First, the content can adapt: Helps, hints, additional instruction and feedback are all based on what students understand or are struggling with.

Second, assessment can adapt: Assessment items adjust based on answers, providing clearer results with fewer questions and reducing the potential for student fatigue that clouds the data.

Third, the sequence can adapt: Based on student input, adaptive algorithms change what the student experiences, which could be the order of content, the amount of practice, the repair of foundational understanding, enrichment opportunities, or acceleration options. The instruction students experience depends on where they are and on what they need to achieve proficiency.



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