



## **RIME MAGIC: A BREAKTHROUGH FOR STRUGGLING READERS**

### **BACKGROUND**

Reading is an essential skill for school and life success. Beginning in the earliest grades, many students struggle to acquire basic reading skills on time and adolescents who have been struggling with reading for many years face significant challenges in trying to master fundamental reading skills. While comprehension—understanding of content—is critical for reading success, many students struggle at a more basic level with the words themselves—understanding how letters translate into sounds and words, a process known as decoding. Children who go beyond third grade without mastering the ability to readily decode new words in the text are ultimately doomed to school failure.

Scholastic, Inc., recently published a breakthrough system of reading instruction that both prevents decoding issues at the outset and brings fast success to students who have fallen behind in word recognition. (*Rime Magic: Prevention and Intervention For All Students*, Scholastic, 2017). Rime Magic is not a program. Rather, it is a seven-step, highly engaging process based on quick immersion. Five to ten minutes a day dropped into any reading curriculum will prevent first- and second-grade students from falling behind in word recognition. It is also effective with older students who are struggling with decoding. Although it is now being used throughout the Berkeley School District and many other schools in the Bay Area and around the country and has received many accolades from educators and parents, it has not yet been formally evaluated. With two pilot projects currently underway, Fresno is leading the nation in taking a rigorous look at this transformational reading instruction technology.

Youth Safety Partners, together with Cradle to Career (C2C), are collaborating with the Fresno County Probation Department to conduct a pilot in Fresno County Juvenile Hall to determine the efficacy of Rime Magic in helping struggling readers in juvenile justice settings who are experiencing significant issues with decoding. A second pilot just underway extending through school year 2017/18 is being conducted at Malaga Elementary School in Fowler to determine the impact of Rime Magic on both early learners in first and second grade in preventing decoding issues from the outset and also on struggling fourth and fifth graders. C2C is providing technical assistance to both the Juvenile Hall and Fowler pilots by measuring and documenting the efficacy of Rime Magic intervention through systematic collection and analysis of the data.

### **RIME MAGIC FRESNO JUVENILE HALL OUTCOMES**

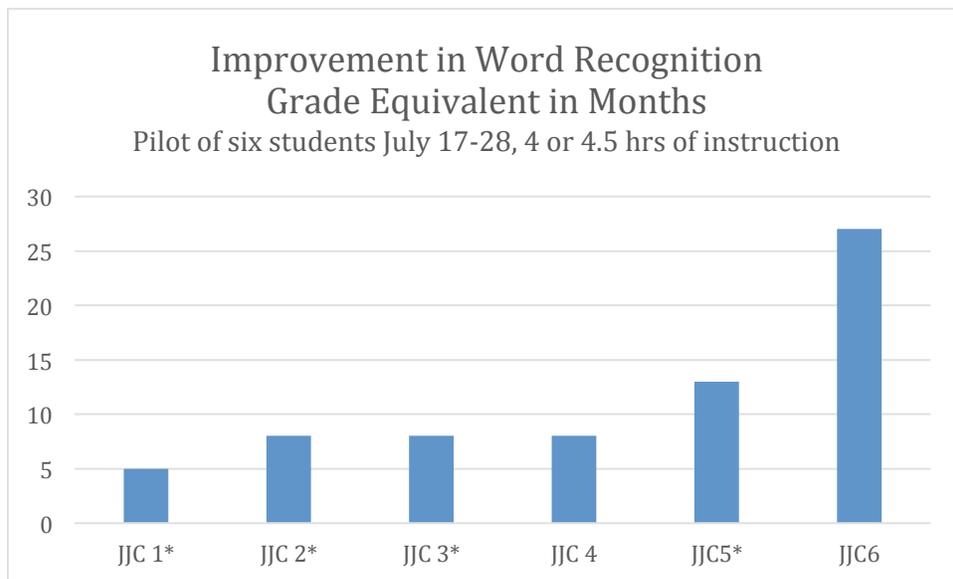
The pilot at Juvenile Hall has now been completed. The study was conducted for two weeks from July 17 to July 28, 2017 in 5 thirty-minute sessions a week. Thirty minutes total were subtracted for pre- and post-assessments and a questionnaire with the students at the end. Each session consisted of Rime Magic and supported reading with a challenging book of high interest to the student. The total time for instruction if a student

had 100 percent attendance over the two-week intervention was 4.5 hours. Two students missed a day, as noted below, so their total instruction time was 4.0 hours each.

There was marked improvement by all students as measured by the Slosson assessment. The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT-R3) is designed to quickly assess a student’s level of word recognition, word calling, or reading level. It is used for pre-school through adult, with confidence levels of 95% and 99% established.

The Slosson scores are shown below, with the level of improvement in months following in the chart. Four of the six students are identified through FCSS as Special Education. The highest level of improvement was 27 months. One student’s first language was not English.

Slosson Pre Score Date	Slosson Pre Score	Slosson Post Score Date	Slosson Post Score	Hours Spent	IEP	Word Recognition Improvement in months
July 17, 2017	1.8	July 28, 2017	2.3	4	yes	5
July 17, 2017	1.4	July 28, 2017	2.2	4.5	yes	8
July 17, 2017	2.8	July 28, 2017	3.6	4.5	yes	8
July 17, 2017	2.8	July 28, 2017	3.6	4	no	8
July 17, 2017	3.3	July 28, 2017	4.4	4.5	yes	13
July 17, 2017	4.2	July 28, 2017	6.5	4.5	no	27



\* Special Ed Students

## **OTHER GAINS MADE BY STUDENTS**

The scores above reflect gains in word recognition grade equivalent (Slosson Oral Reading Test) only. There were also huge breakthroughs for each participant in their attitudes, confidence and enthusiasm for reading, which will affect future growth. This information is reflected in a questionnaire done with each of them on the final day. Each student achieved significant growth and had positive things to say about themselves and their progress.

“I can read better now – Rime Magic did good for me. Showed me how to sound words out so I can get the full effect. I can read in front of people now. If it’s something interesting to me I’m a read it. If not, I’m not.... Still some words I can’t read but instead of skipping it, I just figure it out.” (Student #1 achieved 5 months growth)

“Ever since you started helping me, I started reading every day...I can comprehend the words better and it ain’t that hard how it used to be. I feel better... it’s the little part that’s magic that helps me read it better.” (Student # 2—achieved 8 months growth) On the eighth day student burst through the door and declared. “You made me addicted to reading! I’m stuck on it! Now you made me read more—I like this book! I read all day in my room! I read at night till twelve 0’clock! I never used to read.”

“At first I didn’t understand some of the words but now it’s getting easier.... I really didn’t like reading but now I like reading. Last night I finished the whole book. (Bronxwood)....A lot of stuff happening in that book. At the end it got really exciting.” (Student #3—achieved 8 months growth)

“Thanks for coming and teaching me reading. And for helping us. I’m better at reading. It’s easier” (Student #4—achieved 8 months growth) On Wednesday of the second week probation staff reported that he volunteered to read aloud in class for the first time.

“Before Rime Magic reading was kind of hard. I couldn’t understand the words. I always tried to avoid reading and watched movies instead. I have a library card so now I’ll probably go to the library and look for the same author.” (Student # 5—achieved one year, one month growth)

“It helped with reading different, difficult words...I learned new words, different words. It helped my reading.” (Student #6—achieved two years, 3 months of growth)

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