

Curriculum Associates RESEARCH

Magnetic Reading Foundations Positively Impacts Grade 2 Reading Achievement

Reading

Research Summary, October 2023

Magnetic Reading Foundations is a foundational skills program designed for Grades K–2 that combines explicit, systematic instruction with rich and engaging texts for students (Curriculum Associates, 2023a). It is designed to be used as the foundational skills block of a full English language arts curriculum in non-intervention settings, and it provides supports for individualizing instruction for all learners, including multilingual learners and students who need additional instructional support.

During the 2022–2023 school year, Curriculum Associates conducted research to examine the impact of *Magnetic Reading Foundations* on reading achievement for Grade 2 students. The study found that *Magnetic Reading Foundations* had a positive and significant impact on students' overall reading score on the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for Reading, and it suggests that the use of *Magnetic Reading Foundations* may help more students achieve grade-level proficiency. This study included a large sample of students from four states and used a rigorous quasi-experimental design. The rigorous quasi-experimental design and large-scale sample used in this study qualify it for Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Level 2 (i.e., Moderate) evidence.

Key Findings

Students using Magnetic Reading Foundations achieve higher reading scores than comparison group students.

- Grade 2 students in schools who used *Magnetic Reading Foundations* scored an average of about nine points higher on their spring *i-Ready Diagnostic* than similar students from schools that did not use *Magnetic Reading Foundations*.
- The effect size of the score difference between *Magnetic Reading Foundations* students and comparison group students was .15, which is considered a moderate effect size for a study and intervention of this type.
- An additional 49 students (i.e., 6% of the comparison group) would have been on grade level by the end of the school year if they had scored nine points higher due to receiving instruction with *Magnetic Reading Foundations*.

Study Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of *Magnetic Reading Foundations* in improving students' overall reading achievement. The reading assessment used in this study is the *i-Ready Diagnostic for Reading*.

The treatment group for this study is a convenience sample of schools that used *Magnetic Reading Foundations*, had demographic data and *i-Ready Diagnostics for Reading* from the beginning of the school year for most Grade 2 students, and had not administered their spring *i-Ready Diagnostics* at the time of the first stage of data collection. The comparison group was selected by first identifying schools that met the same criteria but were not using *Magnetic Reading Foundations* and that had characteristics similar to one or more treatment school(s). Then, propensity score matching was used to select treatment and comparison students who were similar. The final sample included 1,615 students from 40 schools.

Researchers used a multilevel model to examine spring score differences while accounting for the clustered nature of the data and controlling for other important covariates. Student-level covariates were fall *i-Ready Diagnostic for Reading* score, the number of days between the fall and spring assessments, and the number of hours of *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* completed by the student throughout the year. The school-level covariates included a binary indicator of whether the school used *Magnetic Reading Foundations* (i.e., the treatment effect estimate) and indicators to represent in which state the school was located. To give additional context to the treatment effect estimate, the researcher calculated a new, hypothetical placement for each comparison group student if that student had scored nine points higher (i.e., the treatment effect estimate) on their spring Diagnostic.

Read the [full research report](#) to learn more.

Full Report Reference

Duncan, M. K. (2023). *Impact of Magnetic Reading Foundations on overall reading scores in Grade 2*. Curriculum Associates.

https://cdn.bfldr.com/LS6J0F7/at/sb6q7gn3phshkvkq68st24/Impact_of_Magnetic_Reading_Foundations_on_Overall_Reading_Proficiency_in_Grade_2.pdf