

# Florida Center for Reading Research

## Six Minute Solution

### What is Six Minute Solution?

*Six Minute Solution* is a reading fluency program that may be used as a supplement to a school's core reading program or as an intervention. The goal of the program is to help teachers provide students in grades K-9 with concentrated practice on phonetic elements, sight word vocabulary, and expository passage reading in order to build overall reading fluency and boost achievement. *Six Minute Solution* is based on the research of repeated readings and peer-assisted learning strategies, and partner reading is the primary activity of the program. Once an instructional reading level is determined by assessment and teachers have trained students in the partner reading procedure, it takes only six minutes of instructional time per day. Fluency lessons are easily extended and adapted to incorporate extra work in phonics and comprehension. *Six Minute Solution* lends itself to flexible use in a variety of settings and can be used with the entire classroom where students work in pairs, during small group teacher-led instruction, with cross-age pairs, and with students working individually.



Assessments of letter sound knowledge, phonetic elements, high frequency words, and graded oral reading fluency passages are included in the instructional manuals of *Six Minute Solution*. Teachers use the assessments to determine the oral reading fluency rate and instructional reading level of each student in order to form appropriate, closely matched pairs. The pairs are referred to as student partnerships, each consisting of Partner 1 and Partner 2. Each student partnership has a fluency folder that contains two copies of the fluency sheet of phonetic elements, high frequency words, or reading passages, two copies of the fluency record, and a fluency graph or the partner points sheet. Whether the fluency folder of a student partnership contains fluency practice sheets of phonetic elements, high frequency words, or fluency passages is determined uniquely by assessment. To begin the instructional week, students review their new fluency building sheets or practice passages by whisper reading and underlining unknown words without being timed, while the teacher monitors and assists with identifying unknown words. After this, the six minute instructional format involves the teacher announcing that it is fluency time. Partner 1 reads the fluency sheet or passage and continues reading until the timer rings, while Partner 2 listens, marks errors and then gives feedback after the one minute reading. Partner 1 listens to the feedback, pronounces the misread words, and then records this information on the fluency graph. Finally, the students switch roles and begin the same process. Throughout the week, each student receives 3-5 opportunities to read the fluency sheets with phonetic elements, words, or the practice passages. At the end of the week, students turn in their fluency sheets or practice passages for new sheets to be read and practiced the following week. Only by teacher review and an assessment of oral reading fluency, can the reading level of the practice passage be changed.

*Six Minute Solution* consists of three instructional manuals: Primary Level, Intermediate Level, and Secondary Level. The manuals are clearly written, user-friendly, and contain all the necessary information for implementation of the program including assessments, partnership management information, an explicit instructional

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model with detailed descriptions that may be used for training the students in partner reading, information on expectations for student behavior during partner reading, all of the fluency building sheets, decodable long and short vowel stories, practice passages, and the fluency record and fluency graph. Additionally, there are sample schedules, tips for students who are not making progress, suggestions on making instructional decisions based on the fluency graph, as well as error correction procedures.

### How is *Six Minute Solution* aligned with Current Research?

The ability to read fluently is strongly linked with comprehension (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) and helping students build fluency is an important aspect of reading instruction (National Reading Panel, 2000). *Six Minute Solution* is a fluency development program that also includes the possibility of extending lessons to include optional work with comprehension strategies and phonetic elements. Instructional formats are explicit, systematic, and include multiple opportunities for practice with teacher guidance and feedback. The repeated reading and partner reading strategies in *Six Minute Solution* derive from a strong research base.

The predominant instructional format of *Six Minute Solution* involves partner reading, where Partner 1 reads for one minute and then Partner 2 reads the same passage. Although the partners are closely matched, Partner 1 is the stronger reader, setting the stage pertaining to rate, accuracy and expression of the passage reading for Partner 2. Accuracy is the main aspect of fluency explicitly addressed by the listening partner. After Partner 1 finishes reading, partner 2 states how many words were read and the number of errors heard. If a small group instructional format is chosen, accuracy and expression are addressed through echo reading and through partnerships formed within the small group.

Assessments determine which fluency building sheets or practice passages students will use for practice. A variety of phonetic elements fluency sheets are available for practice including letters, letter sounds, prefixes, suffixes, high frequency words, and words containing long and short vowels, digraphs, blends, and vowel combinations. The words used for practicing phonetic elements follow a continuum of word types from simple to complex. There is an explicit instructional routine for teaching the letters, sounds, and phonetic parts used for fluency practice. This routine includes introducing the element, group practice, independent practice and review. The decodable long and short vowel stories may be used to apply the phonetic elements practiced in the fluency building sheets.

For schools using a comprehensive reading program, teachers of kindergarten and first grade students may wish to use the phonetic elements practice sheets in an order that corresponds to the scope and sequence of their reading program. *Six Minute Solution* would be used to reinforce what has already been taught by offering repeated practice opportunities. In this way, teachers are not introducing phonetic elements out of sequence with the design of their reading program.

The instructional manuals for *Six Minute Solution* include specific, detailed information for program implementation that is self-explanatory. Optional half or full day trainings are available by contacting the author, Gail Adams, by email: [gail@gailadamsreading.com](mailto:gail@gailadamsreading.com).

## Research Support for Six Minute Solution



*Six Minute Solution* was originally developed as part of a district wide intervention program and was featured in the California Reading Grant-Teaching Reading in Every Classroom through the San Diego County Office of Education in 2000. The present version of *Six Minute Solution* was first published in 2003. Three field tests using the program indicate positive growth in students' oral reading fluency. However, more well-designed experimental research studies are needed that include large sample sizes and random assignment to both treatment and control groups with follow-up measures to see the long term and maintenance effects of the program. Reading comprehension outcomes should be included.

## Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths of *Six Minute Solution*:

- Repeated reading and paired reading derive from a strong research base.
- Materials are well-organized, user-friendly, and complete.
- Assessment is an integral part of the program.
- Readings that are timed and graphed can be motivating for students.

Weaknesses of *Six Minute Solution*:

- None were noted.

## Which Florida districts have schools that implement Curriculum?

Alachua	352-955-7880	Lee	239-337-8301
Bay	850-872-4329	Leon	850-487-7147
Bradford	904-966-6018	Levy	352-486-5231
Brevard	321-631-1911	Madison	850-973-5022
Broward	954-765-6271	Monroe	305-293-1400
Calhoun	850-674-5927	Okaloosa	850-833-3109
Citrus	352-726-1931	Okeechobee	863-462-5000
Clay	904-284-6510	Orange	407-317-3202
Columbia	386-755-8000	Osceola	407-870-4008
Dade	305-995-1430	Palm Beach	561-434-8200
Duval	904-390-2115	Pasco	813-794-2651
Escambia	850-469-6130	Polk	863-534-0521
Gulf	850-229-8256	St. Johns	904-819-7502
Highlands	863-471-5564	Santa Rosa	850-983-5010
Hillsborough	813-272-4050	Seminole	407-320-0006
Holmes	850-547-9341	Taylor	850-838-2501
Indian River	772-564-3150	Volusia	386-734-7190
Jackson	850-482-1200	Walton	850-892-1100
Lake	352-253-6510		

## For More Information

[www.sopriswest.com/sixminute](http://www.sopriswest.com/sixminute)

## References

- National Reading Panel (2000). *Teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implication for reading instruction*. National Institute for Child Health and Human Development, Washington, D.C.
- Snow, C. E., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.



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Important Note: FCRR Reports are prepared in response to requests from Florida school districts for review of specific reading programs. The reports are intended to be a source of information about programs that will help teachers, principals, and district personnel in their choice of materials that can be used by skilled teachers to provide effective instruction. Whether or not a program has been reviewed does **not** constitute endorsement or lack of endorsement by the FCRR.

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