

# **PRESS RELEASE:**

## **Non-Phonic Reading Program Involved in Landmark Brain Research**

FEBRUARY 2010 — Failure Free Reading, a reading company housed in Concord, NC, was recently cited in a Carnegie Mellon University study that provided the first ever evidence of actual brain rewiring in poor readers. The study produced, on one year follow-up scans, dramatic visual evidence that certain reading interventions can actually rebuild cortical white matter in underperforming brain areas of poor readers - bringing them back to the normal range.

Published in *Neuron* 64, 624-631 December 10, 2009, this study mirrors and extends the results of a joint research study Carnegie Mellon and MIT researchers published in *Neuropsychologia* in 2008. Both studies used cutting edge neurological brain imaging to research and document actual brain rewiring in students with sentence comprehension and word reading difficulties.

Failure Free Reading - one of only four 100 hour interventions involved in both studies - was the only non-phonics intervention. The remaining interventions used traditional print-based phonics programs. In addition, Failure Free Reading was the only intervention to use a combination of print and computer based technology.

“This study is significant because it provides conclusive evidence that while phonics can be successful with some students, it is not the only academic solution educators have available to improve word recognition and sentence comprehension. It clearly answers the question of “what happens when students just don’t get phonics?” The answer is that our non-phonics approach will produce the same brain effect. They can still have dramatic long term reading success.” states Dr. Joseph Lockavitch, program author of Failure Free Reading.

D.O. Hebb, Professor of Psychology and director of Carnegie Mellon’s Center for Cognitive Brain Imaging (CCBI) said, “Showing that it’s possible to rewire a brain’s white matter has important implications for treating reading disabilities and other developmental disorders, including autism.”

“We have known that behavioral training can enhance brain function. The exciting breakthrough here is detecting changes in brain connectivity with behavioral treatment,” said Dr. Thomas R. Insel, director of the National Institute of Mental Health.

The brain imaging research was supported by a grant from the R.K. Mellon Foundation, as well as the National Institute of Mental Health and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. In addition to Meyler and Keller, other study co-authors included Vladimir Cherkassky of the CCBI and John D.E. Gabriel of the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

An electronic version of the Carnegie Mellon University journal article is available from the publisher Elsevier’s press office, which can be reached at [newsroom@elsevier.com](mailto:newsroom@elsevier.com). For additional information on the article or the research, contact Just at 412-268- 2791 or visit [http://www.ccbi.cmu.edu/P4K\\_fmri](http://www.ccbi.cmu.edu/P4K_fmri).

Founded in 1988, and listed in What Works – The National Reading Research Clearinghouse, Failure Free Reading’s non-phonics language-based material and methodology has been serving lowest literacy students of all ages in such diverse populations as : at-risk, special education, low income, minority and English language learners. For more information on Dr. Lockavitch or Failure Free Reading call 1.800.542.2170 or visit [www.failurefree.com](http://www.failurefree.com).

