



Reading Fluency

Fluency in reading is the ability to read text with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. When readers have this ability they recognize words effortlessly and read with expression. They do not have to concentrate on decoding so they are able to focus on comprehension. When fluent readers read silently they group words quickly in ways that help them gain meaning from the text they read. Think for a while about the children you saw and heard in both videos; and about the children you teach. You will agree that not all children will need fluency instruction. The boy in the locally produced video is one who does not necessarily need instruction in fluency. It is important that we take into consideration that fluency is affected by the text that is read. If you have to read text on a highly technical subject with many unfamiliar words, it is quite likely that the level of fluency with which you read will be affected.

Fluency has three components:

- *Accuracy* - the ability to read words in text automatically
- *Rate* - the speed at which the reader reads
- *Prosody* - the elements of oral language such as stress, intonation and phrasing prosody.

As you might be thinking it is not necessary to use these terms with the children, but you should consider them as you plan instruction and as you model fluent reading.

Fluency instruction should have three components:

- A model of fluent reading
- Guided oral reading
- Opportunities to practice oral reading



Students need many opportunities to hear and see what fluent reading looks like.

These opportunities may be provided by you or by someone else who is a fluent reader. You will need to share with the students what goes on in your mind as you are reading the text. For example you may share with them why you group certain words together, or why you make a short pause at a particular point. Think of this sentence ‘*Give me my ball,*’ *cried the little boy.* You could explain that you grouped the words *Give me my ball* together because they are the words of the little boy. You knew that because the quotation marks told you. You made a short pause after you said the exact words of the boy to show that his exact words had ended. You could also explain why you changed your voice to match that of a little boy, or why you stressed the word *give*.

Guided oral reading instruction is a critical component in fluency instruction. It may be provided by you, the teacher, or by another fluent reader. This could be an adult or a peer. This may take the form of choral reading, peer/paired reading, tape-assisted reading, echo reading and buddy reading.

- In **choral reading** all the students led by you the teacher will read aloud together.
- For **peer/paired** reading you should have the students work as pairs. Each student should read his or her text silently.

You might need to guide the selection of material to ensure that it is at the appropriate level. When the students have read the text silently they should each take turn reading the passage three times orally to each other. The listening student is to act as the teacher giving suggestions and feedback. Think back to Dawn Martine and her students in the video that you watched on Monday. If the students are to act as the teacher you need to demonstrate how to give feedback and make suggestions for improvement. Great ideas for providing opportunities for practice were presented in the video on Monday.