



READING LINKS

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# Fluency Manual

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# The LINKS Project

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The mission of the LINKS project is to develop educational multi-media products that can support school improvement and educational reform. The project has focused on the development of a website and the development of web assisted professional development programs.

Reading LINKS is a multi-media program that provides information and models ways that scientific reading research may be incorporated in classroom instruction. Reading LINKS began with the filming of teachers demonstrating the five components of reading instruction included in the Report of the National Reading Panel (NRP). These include phonemic awareness instruction, phonics instruction, fluency instruction, vocabulary instruction, and comprehension instruction. Reading LINKS was expanded to include early oral language development, English language learners, turning a school around, and strategic change. A total of 18 lessons are provided on the LINKS website ([www.linkslearning.org](http://www.linkslearning.org)) as well as on CDs.

Reading LINKS also includes eight training modules and participant materials that can be used in three to six hour workshops at schools, districts, regional or state conferences or meetings. The information provided in the lessons endeavors to provide teachers, administrators, parents, and citizens with information about ways reading research can be used to increase children's reading skills.

The LINKS project partnered with teachers and staff from Washington Alliance of Schools to highlight the importance, complexity, and elegance of effective teaching and learning.

These teachers along with a reading consultant and a Scottsdale, Arizona teacher are featured in the videos. They demonstrate a wealth of reading knowledge, skills in curriculum design, instruction and assessment, as well as an obvious concern and caring for the children they teach.

The LINKS project wishes to express its appreciation to the Washington Alliance that played a major role in the Reading LINKS project, the teachers who were filmed, and the teachers who participated in field-testing and evaluation.

In addition staff from the Longview, Washington School District and teachers from Washington Alliance districts have provided valuable feedback and suggestions.

It is our hope that the electronic and print Reading LINKS materials will provide information and models for new teachers, will stimulate discussion and experimentation with experienced teachers, and be useful in ensuring that all children learn to read and read well by the end of third grade and to continue their reading skills development throughout their school experience.

Shirley McCune  
Links Project Director

## Reading LINKS

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The LINKS project wishes to thank the many persons who contributed to the training materials that support and extend 18 Reading LINKS videos. ([www.linkslearning.org](http://www.linkslearning.org))

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# READING LINKS AGENDA

<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>Introduction and Expectations</b>
<b>10 - 15 minutes</b>	<b>Overview</b> Reading Links Project ROPES Guiding Structure Participant Manual Layout
<b>25 - 30 minutes</b>	<b>Section 1: Review Participant Background Knowledge and Understanding</b>
<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>Section 2: Overview</b> Key Learning Goals Building Blocks
<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>Section 3: Presentation</b> Research-based Information and Content
<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>75 - 85 minutes</b>	<b>Section 4: Engagement and Practice</b> Classroom Strategies and Applications Assessment Video Modeling Action Planning
<b>10 - 15 minutes</b>	<b>Section 5: Summarizing Key Learnings</b>
<b>10 - 15 minutes</b>	<b>Evaluation and Feedback</b>



## Reading LINKS Lessons

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Parent: Early Oral Language Development	Joan Moser: Comprehension II
Marti MacPhee: Oral Language/ Pre-Reading Development	Robin Totten: Upper Elementary Comprehension Strategies (Non-Fiction)
Kessler School: Phonemic Awareness	Robin Totten: Upper Elementary Comprehension Strategies (Fiction)
Kessler School: Phonics Instruction	Judy Rex: Comprehension and Vocabulary
Anita Archer: Primary Grades Reading	Judy Rex: Vocabulary and Pre-writing
Gail Boushey: Early Guided Writing	Kathy Garcia: ESL Instruction I
Gail Boushey: Early Comprehension/Fluency	Kathy Garcia: ESL Instruction II
Anita Archer: Intermediate Grades Reading	Kessler School: Turning a School around
Joan Moser: Comprehension I	Mark Jewell/Tom Murphy: Strategic Change

Also available at: [www.linkslearning.com](http://www.linkslearning.com)

## ROPES: A GUIDING STRUCTURE FOR LEARNING

R	<b>Review</b> – entry learning designed to activate and assess prior knowledge and to focus the session
O	<b>Overview</b> – explicit statement of the goals and objectives of the session
P	<b>Presentation</b> – presentation and discussion of research-based concepts that are needed to build background knowledge
E	<b>Engagement and Practice</b> – modeling, practicing, and demonstrating understanding of the concepts; viewing video lessons; action planning for identifying and implementing instructional practices and interventions
S	<b>Summary</b> – summarizing key learnings

(adapted from a model designed by R. Carkhuff)

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# FLUENCY

## SECTION 1: REVIEW

## What Do I Already Know About Fluency?

### Think – Ink – Pair - Share

**Think:** Rate your familiarity with the research on fluency by placing an X on the continuum and then completing the Guiding Questions below.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

---

**Unfamiliar**

**Very familiar**

**Ink:** Respond to the Guiding Questions below.

1. What is fluency?	2. Why is fluency important?
3. How do you assess fluency in your classroom?	4. How do you help your students improve their reading fluency?

## What Is Fluency?

### Fluency is

- reading with speed, accuracy and proper expression
  - without conscious attention
  - while simultaneously constructing meaning

### Children who are fluent readers can

- recognize words automatically
- group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read, and
- read aloud effortlessly and with expression

(Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001; NRP, 2000)

## Why Has Fluency Been Neglected, Underemphasized, and Ignored?

Fluency has been labeled the *most*

- neglected reading skill
- under-emphasized aspect of reading instruction

**because** both researchers and practitioners assumed that fluency was the immediate result of word recognition proficiency.

(Allington, 1983; Burns, Roe, & Ross, 1999; NRP, 2000; Snow et al., 1998)

## **Why Is It Important for Students to Be Fluent Readers?**

**The NAEP assessment results for fourth graders** indicated a high correlation between accuracy, rate, fluency, and scores on comprehension. Low scores in fluency may mean difficulty in comprehension.

**The National Reading Panel (2000) concluded that** there is a close relationship between fluency and comprehension.



# FLUENCY

## SECTION 2: OVERVIEW

## Key Learning Goals

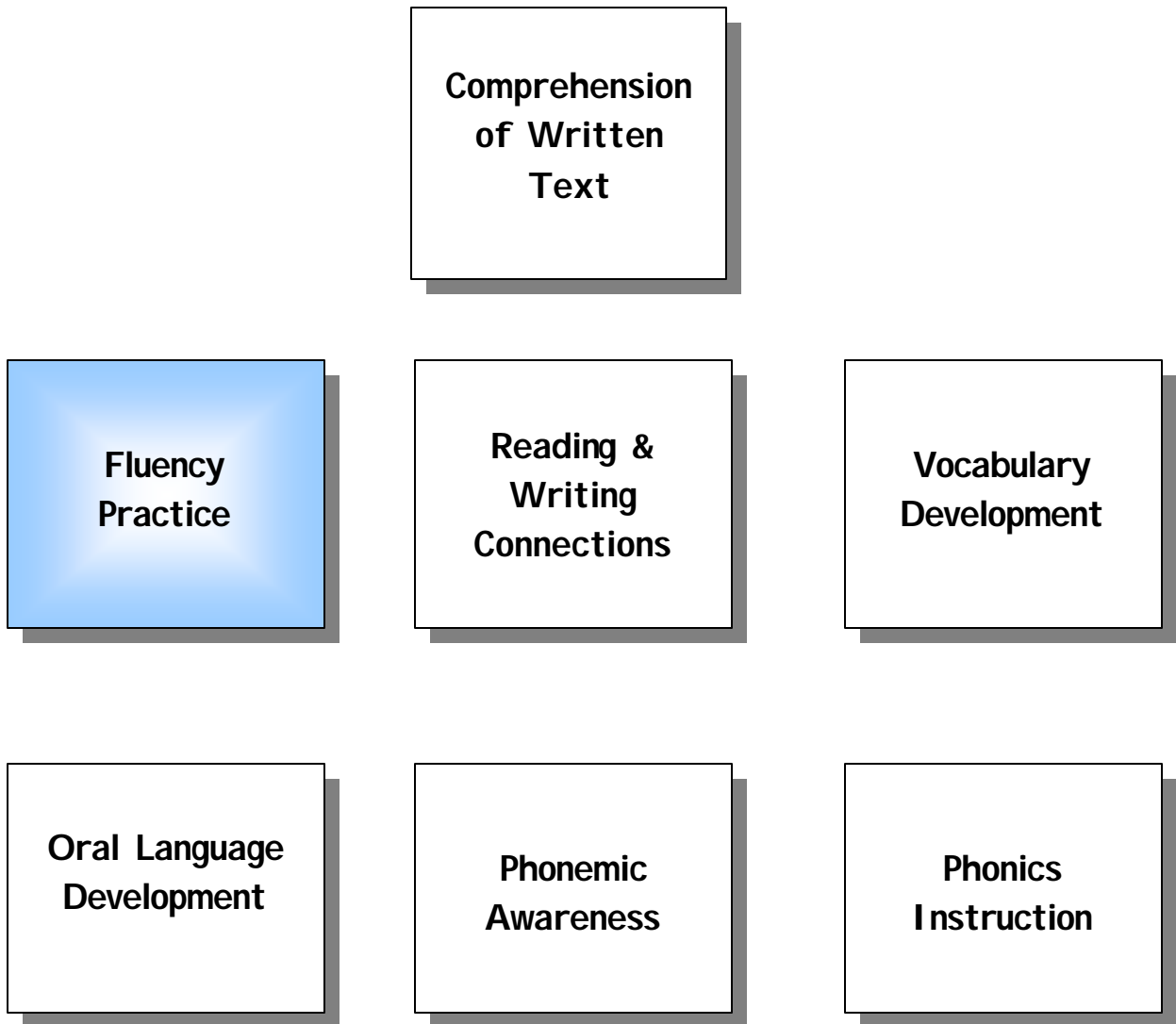


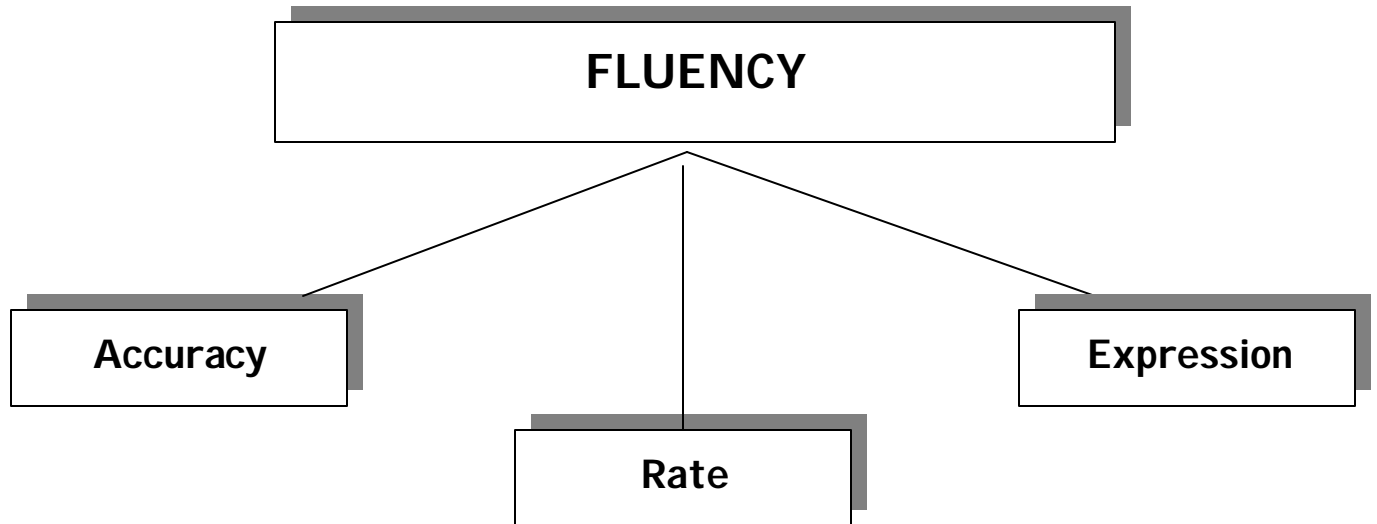
### The Participants will:

- Understand the connection between fluency and reading development – especially as it relates to comprehension.
- Learn the differences between fluency and automaticity.
- Learn, model, and teach research-based strategies for fluency instruction in the classroom.
- Learn to assess students' level of fluency, practice instructional strategies, and explore appropriate interventions.
- Create an action plan to apply key learnings from this module to their classroom practice.



# Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read





## MULTI-TASKING

Fast Processing

- Language systems
- Punctuation
- Voice qualities

Automaticity

Pacing

Phrasing or chunking

Confirming by continuous cross-checking for meaning



# FLUENCY

## SECTION 3: PRESENTATION

## What Does Oral Reading Fluency Look and



Sound Like?



### Oral reading fluency is characterized by

- Smooth, expressive production
- Appropriate phrasing or chunking
- Rapid use of punctuation
- Determination of where to place emphasis or where to pause to make sense of text

(McGee & Richgels, 2000; NRP, 2000)

## Why Is Fluency Important?

Fluency is important because it **provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.**

While fluency doesn't ensure comprehension, **comprehension is difficult without fluency.** To comprehend texts, students must be able to:

- decode fast enough and automatically enough
- keep the content in short term memory so that meaning can be constructed.

If a reader is stopping constantly to decode and figure out unknown words, the likelihood is that

- meaning will be disrupted or
- the process will become long and laborious

(Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001; Burns, & Doll, 1999; Pinnell & Fountas, 1998; Routman, 2000)

## What Are the National Reading Panel's Findings about Fluency Instruction?

Fluency instruction is most effective when it includes **guided repeated oral reading**.

## What Did the National Reading Panel Report Say About Guided Repeated Oral Reading?

The NRP concluded that guided repeated oral reading:

- Is more effective than silent reading
- Has a significant positive impact on word recognition/accuracy, reading fluency, and comprehension (with feedback)
- Clearly impacts the reading ability of non-impaired readers through at least grade 4, as well as students with various reading problems throughout high school
- Works well under a wide variety of conditions and with minimal special training
- Is effective (when used with guidance and feedback) in improving a variety of reading skills for good readers, as well as those who are experiencing difficulties
- Is equally effective with feedback from teachers, parents and/or peers; however, children who are struggling the most might benefit from more skilled guidance.

## Why Isn't Round Robin Reading an Effective Fluency Strategy?

### Round Robin Reading

- Provides limited engagement
- Gives an inaccurate view of reading
- Promotes faulty reading habits
- Invites inattention and disruption
- Gets in the way of effective strategies
- Consumes valuable classroom time that could be spent in more meaningful ways
- Causes anxiety and embarrassment
- Hampers listening comprehension

(Opitz & Rasinski, 1998)



## But Why Is Oral Reading Important?

Oral reading is important because it:

- whets students' appetites for reading
- encourages students to share and perform
- demonstrates how speaking, reading and writing connect with one another and impact our lives
- develops listening, comprehension and vocabulary
- assists students in developing a range of reading skills (e.g., fluency, expression and correct phrasing)
- promotes language learning
- builds confidence
- provides children with the additional reading time necessary for ongoing reading development

(Opitz & Rasinski, 1998)

## What Does Effective Fluency Instruction Include?

- Ongoing assessment
- Modeling and explicit instruction
- Focus on automaticity and comprehension as goals
  - Guided repeated reading experiences
  - Word study
- Meaningful texts connected to students' instructional needs and interests
  - Encouraging students to read more (using approaches such as SSR, DEAR, Accelerated Reader) might be beneficial; however, existing research has not yet demonstrated this in a clear and convincing manner.
  - Although independent, recreational, sustained, silent reading, and programs such as AR are not empirically supported to increase fluency, they may have instructional value in other areas.

## What Are the Challenges for Teachers?

### Teachers need to:



- Understand, choose, model, and use varied teaching and learning strategies that show fluent reading is more than fast reading
- Design lessons requiring active participation
- Motivate students with energy, support, and positive reinforcement
- Match reading materials to students' instructional needs and interests
- Provide multiple opportunities for authentic repeated reading experiences
- Use classroom management strategies (e.g., small groups, partner reading,) that increase each student's time on task.

# Checking for Understanding Partner Review

## What Have You Learned So Far?

- Review your notes.
- Partner 1 reviews new learning for 90 seconds.
- Partner 2 for 45 seconds.
- Partner 1 again for 30 seconds.
- Partner 2 finishes by reviewing for 15 seconds.
- Write any remaining questions.



**Remember:** You cannot repeat what your partner shares!



# FLUENCY

## SECTION 4: ENGAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

## SECTION 4: ENGAGEMENT AND PRACTICE

[Subsection 1: Classroom Strategies and Applications](#)

[Subsection 2: Assessment](#)

[Subsection 3: CD/Video Modeling](#)

[Subsection 4: Action Planning](#)

Subsection 1  
Classroom Strategies and Applications

## **Classroom Strategies and Applications for Improving Fluency**

### **Guided Repeated Reading Experiences**

[Application 1](#): Repeated Reading

[Application 2](#): Neurological Impress Method (NIM)

[Application 3](#): Echo Reading

[Application 4](#): Radio Reading

[Application 5](#): Reader's Theater

[Application 6](#): Screen Readings of Captioned Programs

[Application 7](#): Building Reading Rate

### **Modeling and Explicit Instruction**

[Application 1](#): Oral Recitation Lesson

[Application 2](#): Fluency Development Lesson

[Application 3](#): Look for the Signals

[Application 4](#): Teacher Prompts for Supporting Fluency

### **Incorporating Meaningful Texts**

[Application 1](#): Predictable Language



## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 1: Repeated Reading

This procedure involves rereading text (often self-selected) until it can be read accurately and fluently. It encourages the use of contextual meaning and sentence structure to predict upcoming words and to correct miscues.

#### Suggested Procedure:

The student chooses the text to be read (selection can be based on "leveled books"), or the teacher assigns a passage.

1. The teacher takes anecdotal notes or keeps a running record of miscues as well as rate of reading during the first reading of the text.
2. Progress is tracked on a chart or graph.
3. The student practices rereading the text orally or silently several times.
4. The student rereads the text for the teacher a second time, and the teacher once again takes anecdotal notes and/or running records (Using a different colored pen helps to indicate the student's growth between readings).

**NOTE:** To support a cooperative learning approach, have students complete their repeated readings with partners.

(Koskinen & Blum, 1984; Samuel, 1972; Topping, 1987)

## Application 1: Repeated Reading (continued)

### Variation:

#### Oral Previewing

### Suggested Procedures:

1. Begin by having the student preview the text by first listening to an expert reader.
2. After listening to the expert fluent reader several times, the student reads the passage independently.

**NOTE:** Rasinski (1990) found that oral previewing and repeated readings are equally effective in improving fluency.

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 2: Neurological Impress Method (NIM)

In this approach, the teacher and the student read orally in unison. It might be helpful to initiate this approach using short, rhythmic, and repetitive texts, such as poems or song lyrics.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. Sit on the side of your student, so that you will be able to read into the student's ear.
2. Begin reading along with your student. Your voice may be a second or two ahead of the student's, especially if the student has a limited sight vocabulary.
3. Model fluent, expressive reading. Do not stop if the student falters.
4. Instruct the student to continue to read along – or slightly behind you—as much as possible.
5. Move your finger along the line of print so that the student can follow along more easily.

(Heckelman, 1969)

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 3: Echo Reading

This approach is similar to both the neurological impress method and repeated reading procedures; it, too, involves teacher modeling and the student “approximating” or imitating the reading. It is recommended for students who focus too much on the words in a passage rather than on the meaning, or for those students who read without expression or attention to punctuation/other cues.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. The teacher reads one sentence of text aloud with appropriate intonation and phrasing.
2. The student tries to imitate or repeat the text—and the reading of the text--as modeled.
3. The text reading continues in this manner until the teacher feels the student can imitate more than one sentence at a time.

(Anderson, 1981)

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 4: Radio Reading

This procedure is for developing oral reading fluency in a group setting with students “acting” or reading texts (e.g., print media, newspapers, magazines or any print source that can be converted into a news story).

#### Suggested Procedures:

1. Only the reader and the teacher have copies of the script; the other students act as listeners.
2. Students rehearse until they have gained confidence in their reading.
3. Unlike round robin reading where all mistakes are visible to anyone following along, this approach allows students to deviate from the text –and paraphrase--without embarrassment by stressing the idea that their reading should make sense.

(Searfoss, 1975)

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 5: Reader's Theater

This approach (like other approaches that involve performances or dramatic readings for others, e.g., strategy use performances, chamber theater, Wolf, 1994) provides a realistic opportunity for students to read orally and practice their use of intonation, inflection, and fluency. It is helpful not only for fluency, but also for comprehension, because the students must decide how to convey their interpretation of the text (through their oral reading/performance) to an audience.

#### Suggested Procedures:

1. Students select texts/tasks, or they are assigned parts/roles for a "performance."
2. Students practice reading the text and/or completing the task, getting help from others before the performance with unfamiliar words, phrasing, intonation, and expression.
3. Students read their scripts/texts or perform their tasks orally for an audience.

(Sloyer, 1982)

The following websites offer ideas for reader's theater:

<http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/readers.html>

[www.aaronshep.com](http://www.aaronshep.com) (Stories on stage. Scripts for readers theater performances, how-to tips for scripting, staging, and performing, and links to related sites)

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 6: Screen Readings of Captioned Programs

Captions were first developed for hearing-impaired viewers, but they can also be used for fluency instruction. Rereading captioned programs provides opportunities for students to practice reading that is entertaining and self-correcting.

Koskinen and her colleagues found that less fluent readers and bilingual students become more motivated readers when they use captioned television and video, perhaps because of the multisensory processing involved.

#### Suggested Guidelines:

1. Choose programs related to literature and content-area instruction as a pre-reading activity.
2. Introduce the program, reviewing vocabulary as needed.
3. Plan related activities to use after viewing the program.
4. Allow English language learners to view the program several times.
5. Create a text set of books and other related materials to use with the program.
6. Provide opportunities for students to review the program and read related texts.

(Koskinen, Wilson, Gambrell, & Neuman, 1993; Tompkins, 2001)

**For more information about captioned television programs and videos, contact The National Captioning Institute at 1-800-533-WORD.**

## Guided Repeated Reading Experiences

### Application 7: Building Reading Rate

Some students read accurately, but slowly. One technique for building fluency rate is suggested by Carnine and Silbert (1979).

1. Select a passage on which the student is at least 90% accurate.
2. Establish a base rate on a one-minute timing (words read per minute).
3. Set a target for the passage that is 20%-40% above the initial rate (e.g., if the student read 60 wpm x .30, the new target would be  $60 + 18 = 78$  wpm).
4. Graph the target in the student's folder and have him or her reread the passage as many times as necessary to reach the target on a one-minute timing.
5. Continue to increase the student's target by 20%-40% (on passages of similar difficulty) until the student's average rate reaches the established criterion for his or her grade level (with accuracy maintained).
6. Once the criterion rate has been reached, the level of difficulty of the passage may be increased.



## Modeling and Explicit Instruction

### Application 1: Oral Recitation Lesson

This approach has been recommended as a solid alternative to the traditional but ineffective practice of round robin reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2000; Reutzel & Hollingsworth, 1993). It consists of two basic components (direct instruction and indirect instruction) with a series of subroutines.

#### Suggested Procedures:

##### I. Direct Instruction

###### A. Comprehension

1. Introduce a new selection (e.g., activating prior knowledge, predicting, making connections).
2. Read the selection aloud and lead the students in an analysis of the content (e.g., questions/answers, story features, connections, etc.)
3. Record student responses (e.g., chart, board, overhead, etc.).

###### B. Practice

1. Work with students to improve their oral reading expression by modeling fluent reading with sections of the text.
2. Have students "approximate" your reading (e.g., use choral reading, unison reading, echo reading, etc.).

## Application 1: Oral Recitation Lesson (continued)

### C. Performance

1. Have students select a text segment to perform for others in the group/class.
2. Encourage the listeners to comment positively on the performance.

## II. Indirect Instruction

### A. Fluency practice

1. Have students select a story or other text that they will practice reading until they become fluent or "expert."
2. Observe their reading (e.g., take anecdotal notes, running records, etc.).
3. Help them to decide (self-assess) when they are ready to demonstrate or perform their fluent reading.

### B. Demonstrating fluent (expert) reading

1. Have students perform their fluent reading in front of peer or parent audience.
2. Encourage the listeners to give positive feedback.

(Hoffman, 1987)

## Modeling and Explicit Instruction

### Application 2: Fluency Development Lesson

The Fluency Development Lesson (FDL) is a combination of read aloud, choral reading, listening to children read, and reading performance. It is meant to supplement other reading experiences and to promote meaningful reading, fluency, and word recognition. During the lesson, students listen to the teacher read a short text (e.g., a poem, a patterned story, or a portion of a text), read the text chorally, pair up and practice, and then perform the reading for an audience.

#### Procedures:

1. Prepare two copies of text per child and teacher as well as an overhead transparency or big chart of the text.
2. Read the text several times while the students follow along on their copies.
3. Discuss the meaning of the text. Point out how reading with expression can enhance the meaning as well as entice others to listen.
4. Read the text chorally several times.
5. Pair the students with a partner or buddy. Each student reads the text orally to his/her partner at least three times with the listener giving positive feedback and help when needed. Circulate/observe their reading, noting which pairs appear to be ready to perform.

## Application 2: Fluency Development Lesson (continued)

6. Call the class together as a whole group. Invite some pairs to perform their text for the rest of the class.
7. Have students choose three words from the text that they would like to include in their word banks for future word study.
8. Have students place the copy of the text in a folder or text box for future readings (e.g., to parents at home, with a different partner).
9. To prepare students for another interactive reading experience, begin the next FDL with a quick choral rereading of a previously read text.

(Rasinski, Padak, Linek, & Sturtevant, 1994)

### Application 3: Look for the Signals

Look for the Signals is a strategy that helps students to see how punctuation and other typographical signals (e.g., punctuation marks, large and bold print, underlining, italics) affect meaning and help readers better understand an author's intended message.

Signal	What It Conveys	Example
Comma	Need to pause  Placement affects meaning	Mary, my daughter is as tall as you. Mary, my daughter, is as tall as you.
Period	Need a longer pause	The clouds looked strange.
Question mark	Need to raise intonation at the end of the sentence	Did you sleep well last night?
Exclamation point	Need to read with a certain emotion	It was a wonderful party!
Underlined, enlarged, bold or italicized print	Need for special stress	<u>This</u> is what I said. This <u>is</u> what I said. This is what I <u>said</u> .
Combination	Used to show meaningful units	The coach said, "I am <u>SO</u> proud of how all of you played this game!"

## Application 3: Look for the Signals (continued)

### Procedures:

1. Select specific text excerpts that students have already read or will be reading that correspond to the specific signals you will be teaching or emphasizing.
2. Enlarge the text excerpt on an overhead transparency or chart paper or use big books that show the specific text.
3. Tell students that you will read the text twice and that you want them to listen to see which reading gives them the best idea about the character or event. Use a monotone voice for the first reading. Reread the text using expression and all typographical signals. Discuss the differences in the readings with the students (e.g., Which reading interested you more? Did emphasizing different words and pausing at different times give you a better understanding of the author's message?). Point out the different typographical signals you used and how these helped you to better convey the author's intended meaning.
4. Provide students with meaningful practice, reminding them to look for the signals when reading to themselves.
5. After the practice session, have students read aloud one or more sentences in which they used a typographical signal and explain what the signal indicated they needed to do.

(Opitz & Rasinski, 1998)

## Application 4: Prompts for Supporting Fluency

### Teacher Prompts for Supporting Fluency While Reading

- ▶ How do you think your reading sounds?
- ▶ Read the punctuation.
- ▶ Make your voice go down when you see the period.
- ▶ Make your voice go up when you see the question mark.
- ▶ Take a short breath when you see the comma [or the dash].
- ▶ Use emphasis when you see the exclamation point.
- ▶ Make it sound like the characters are talking.
- ▶ Read it like this [model phrasing or chunking].
- ▶ Read this much all together [cover part of print to show only the phrase or chunk].
- ▶ Put your words together so it sounds like the way you talk.
- ▶ Make your voice show what you think the author meant.

(Fountas & Pinnell, 2001, p. 352)

## Incorporating Meaningful Texts

### Application 1: Predictable Language

This method takes advantage of the rhythmic, repetitive language structures in children's literature and nursery rhymes (Walker, 1992). The assumption is that word identification is facilitated by the predictive nature of the text.

#### Suggested Procedures:

1. Select text that contains a predictable pattern.
2. Read the text aloud to students completely through, so they can hear the whole story. Emphasize the predictable parts using an enthusiastic voice.
3. Read the text again, but this time ask the students to join in whenever they know the pattern.
4. During additional readings, you could use an oral cloze procedure to give students practice in predicting upcoming words.
5. Students can read the text on their own, using the predictable language patterns and picture clues to aid them.
6. An extension could be to ask students to write their own predictable pattern story using the pattern from the text read.



## Subsection 2 Assessment

# Administering Oral Reading Fluency Measures

## Materials

- **Passage for the student to read** (sometimes called a “probe”) If the student is reading for practice, the probe may be used more than once. If the student is reading for assessment purposes, the probe must be secure and unpracticed.
- **Administrator’s Scoring Sheets** You will need one for each student. You will be recording the rate and accuracy for each student on a separate sheet.
- **Stopwatch or other timing device to determine one minute**

**Note:** It is a good idea to administer fluency assessments at a desk or table, rather than having the student just sit and hold the probe. Students are able to do better if their hands are free for guiding or pointing.

## Suggested Procedures:

1. Introduce yourself (if you are not the student’s teacher).
2. Say: “Hi, (name). I would like you to read a story out loud to me. Read it as quickly and as carefully as you can. Just skip any words you do not know or cannot read. If you get to a word you do not know and you are stuck, I’ll say, ‘Go on’ and you should go on to the next word. At the end of one minute, I’ll ask you to stop. I am going to take some notes while you are reading, so I can remember what you say. Do you understand what I want you to do?”

## Administering Oral Reading Fluency Measures (continued)

3. Then say: "The title of this story is \_\_\_\_\_.  
When you say your first word, I will start my stopwatch. You can start whenever you're ready."
4. Start the stopwatch when the student says the first word of the passage. If a student does not know a word, wait three seconds and say, "Go on." Do not give the student the word.
5. As the student reads, record any errors using a marking system.
6. At the end of one minute, make double slash marks and tell the student he or she may stop reading. (Another option is to make the double slash marks at the end of one minute and let the student continue to the end of the passage, noting time used.)

**Note:** Depending on the purpose of the fluency timing (practice or assessment), you may want to discuss the student's errors with him or her when the reading is completed.

## Administering Oral Reading Fluency Measures (continued)

### Marking

Using a uniform marking system is important because you want to be able to examine the probes over time and be able to quickly determine the kinds of errors the students are making. Knowing the kinds of errors will inform your instruction.

- **Count as Errors:** Omissions, mispronunciations, substitutions, insertions

**Circle** any words the student omitted or those you told him or her to "skip."

**Single slash** any words the student read incorrectly (either a mispronunciation or a substitution). Above the error, **write** what the student actually said. (Note: If a student mispronounces the same word in the same way more than one time; the errors are noted, but they count together as only one error.)

**Record** any inserted words above a caret ( ^ ).

- **Do Not Count as Errors:** Self-corrections, repeated words

Write **SC** above a word that was mispronounced, but then self-corrected.

Make a **double underline** beneath repeated words or phrases.

## **Administering Oral Reading Fluency Measures** (continued)

### **Scoring**

Determine the total number of words read.

Count the number of errors and subtract from the total.

The difference between the number of words read and the number of errors is the Words Correct per Minute (WCPM). This is the score that is recorded and graphed.

## Fluency Probe Development

It is very useful and easy to develop fluency probes from basals or texts that are being used by the student in a grade level. Make sure the passage selected is at the correct level of difficulty for the student.

1. Select a passage of 110-120 words in length at the student's independent level. This passage should not have been read recently. (See sample on next page.)
2. Type the probe, leaving room on the right side to place word count numbers. Comic Sans and Century Gothic are both clear fonts that are easy for students to read. Make sure you record the basal or text you used, with the page number at the bottom of the page, along with the student name and date. This helps when documenting growth and/or recording student data.
3. Don't forget that you will need to run off two copies per session: one for the student to read from and one for recording the students' responses onto.
4. To start the teacher says:  
"I am going to have you read a passage aloud to me. Read it as best you can. I will not be able to help you, so if you come to a word or words you don't know, try your best and go on. After one minute I will stop you." Start the timer "as" the student reads the first word.
5. Have the student read the passage. As the student reads, record mistakes and words read correctly. Stop the student after one minute.
6. One way to calculate a student's fluency is to take the total number of words read in one minute and to subtract the errors.

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Total words read in one minute} \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \\ \text{Subtract errors} \quad \quad \quad - \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \\ \text{= Words Correct Per Minute} \quad \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ (WCPM)} \end{array}$$

## Fluency Probe Development (continued)

### Sample Fluency Probe

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Animal Homes* by I Ila Podendorf

Some animal homes are under the ground.	9
Ground squirrels build homes under the ground.	16
Their home is a long hall. This hall is called a tunnel.	28
Sometimes the ground squirrels leave a pile of dirt at the door to their home.	38
	43
Badgers live underground, too. If you look for them, it is easy to see where they dig their tunnels.	52
	62
Skunks often make their homes in holes in the ground.	72
They sometimes dig new holes. But they may use a hole that some other animal has made. Sometimes skunks crawl under buildings and make their homes there.	82
	90
	98
	99
Some kinds of ants build their homes underground.	107
They dig on and on until they have a long tunnel underground.	118
	119

Total words read in one minute - errors = \_\_\_\_\_ WCPM

*(Open Court Collections for Young Scholars, 2-1, pp. 147-148, Open Court Publishing, 1995)*

## Assessment: Rate Goals

Grade	Percent	Fall WCPM	Winter WCPM	Spring WCPM
2	75	82	106	124
	50	53	78	94
	25	23	46	65
3	75	107	123	142
	50	79	93	114
	25	65	70	87
4	75	125	133	143
	50	99	112	118
	25	72	89	92
5	75	126	143	151
	50	105	118	128
	25	77	93	100

**NOTE:** Rates are reported for grade level (goal) materials and reflect words read correctly per minute (WCPM). Norms listed above are not for practiced materials; therefore, they may be low compared to practiced readings. (Data for these norms was collected since 1981 from 7000-9000 Grades 2 - 5 students in general, remedial/compensatory, and special education programs.)

(Hasbrouck & Tindal, 1992)



# ASSESSMENT TOOL #1

## NAEP's Oral Reading Fluency Scale

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- Level 4** Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.
- Level 3** Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some smaller groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present.
- Level 2** Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage.
- Level 1** Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax.

(U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (1995) *Listening to Children Read Aloud*, 15. Washington, DC)

## ASSESSMENT TOOL #2: OSPI 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Oral Reading Rubric

	Accuracy	Rate	Phrasing*
1	85% or fewer words read correctly	30 or fewer words per minute	ALL WORD BY WORD -- no phrasing, awkward word groupings, no use of punctuation
2	86-89% words read correctly	31-49 words per minute	MOSTLY WORD BY WORD -- some 2-3 word phrasing, appropriately grouped, occasional use of punctuation
3	90-95% words read correctly	50-89 words per minute	MOSTLY PHRASING --some word-by-word, but mostly meaningful phrases; uses punctuation most of the time
4	96-100% words read correctly	90 or more words per minute	LARGE MEANINGFUL PHRASES -- very few word-by word slowdowns, expressive interpretation guided by punctuation and meaning

\* Adapted from Fountas & Pinnell (1996)

### RETELLING RUBRIC

1	Retelling is unfocused and/or sketchy; misinformation or little information is provided; little or no content is included in the retelling; may include some points from the passage, mostly details, but misses the main idea or problem and significant ideas.
2	Retelling has some information from the passage but misses the main idea or problem; may have a few key events, information, or details, but they are not integrated into the larger story; has little organization or sequence.
3	Retelling includes main idea or problem, most significant events, and some details; retelling is generally organized and sequenced.
4	Retelling includes main idea or problem, all significant events or information, many supporting details; retelling is organized in proper sequence, and is coherent.

## Accuracy, Rate, and Phrasing (OSPI 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade continued)

**Accuracy** is based on the total number of words read (which varies depending on the passage) and the number of errors.

In order to convert the raw score into a percentage, divide the number of words read correctly by the total number of words in the passage.

$$\frac{\text{correct words}}{\text{total words}} = \text{accuracy}$$

Example:  $\frac{135}{150} = 90\%$

**Rate:** Words per minute is computed based on the amount of time it takes the student to read the entire selection.

$$\frac{\# \text{ words}}{\# \text{ minutes}} = \text{words per minute}$$

Example:  $\frac{165 \text{ words}}{3 \text{ minutes}} = 55 \text{ words per minute}$

$$\frac{153 \text{ words}}{2.5 \text{ minutes}} = 61 \text{ words per minute}$$

**Phrasing:** the ability to read a passage accurately with the awareness of syntax and expression.

## Combining Scores (OSPI 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade continued)

Use the Oral Reading Rubric for scoring. For each of the three main categories in the matrix (i.e., accuracy, rate, and phrasing), choose the criterion that most closely matches the child's performance, and mark that box. For instance, if the child's accuracy is 85 percent, mark the box with "85% or less" in it; if the child's rate is 35 words per minute, mark the box with "31-39"; and if the child's phrasing most closely matches the description for phrasing for "1", mark the box with "1" in it.

Then add the three scores together. In the above example, the teacher adds  $1 + 2 + 1 = 4$ . A score of **6 or below** indicates a child is "**substantially below grade level.**"

### Oral Reading Rubric (OSPI 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade continued)

	Accuracy	Rate	Phrasing
1	85% or fewer	30 or fewer	ALL WORD BY WORD
2	86-89%	31-49 words	MOSTLY WORD BY WORD
3	90-95%	50-89 words	MOSTLY PHRASING
4	96-100%	90 or more	LARGE MEANINGFUL PHRASES

**Determine** the child's performance by combining the 3 scores. When using the **retelling category**, follow the same procedure, except add all four scores together to get the total score. When retelling is included, a score of **8 or below** places the student "substantially below grade level."

<b>Total Scores for Accuracy, Rate and Phrasing</b>	
Score of 6 and below	= "Substantially Below Grade Level"
Score of 7 or 8	= "Borderline range"
Score of 9 or above	= "Satisfactory Progress"
<b>Total Scores for Accuracy, Rate, Phrasing and Retelling</b>	
Score of 8 and below	= "Substantially Below Grade Level"
Score of 9 -11	= "Borderline range"
Score of 12 or above	= "Satisfactory Progress"

**Retesting at a later date is required for "Substantially Below" students after appropriate classroom adaptations have been applied.**

## **ASSESSMENT TOOL #3**

### **Rubric for Fluency Evaluation**

#### **Nonfluent Reading**

- Word-by-word reading
- Frequent pauses between words (poor phrasing)
- Little recognition of syntax
- Little response to punctuation
- Some awkward word groupings

#### **Beginning Fluency**

- Frequent word-by-word reading
- Some two- and three-word phrasing
- May reread for problem solving or to clarify (strategic reading)
- Shows some awareness of syntax and punctuation

#### **Transitional Fluency**

- Combination of word-by-word reading and fluent phrase reading
- Some expressive phrasing
- Shows attention to punctuation and syntax

#### **Fluent Reading**

- Fluent reading with very few word-by-word interruptions
- Reads mostly in larger meaningful phrases
- Reads with expression
- Attends consistently to punctuation
- Rereads as necessary to clarify or problem solve

(adapted by Reutzel & Cooter, 2000, from Fountas & Pinnell, 1996)

## ASSESSMENT TOOL #4

### Multidimensional Fluency Scale

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Text \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use the scale in all three areas to rate reader fluency. Circle the number in each category that best corresponds to your observations.

#### Phrasing

- 1 Monotone with little sense of phrase boundaries; frequent word-by-word reading
- 2 Frequent two- and three-word phrases, giving the impression of choppy reading; improper stress and intonation that fails to mark ends of sentences and clauses
- 3 Mixture of run-ons, mid-sentence pauses for breath, and possibly some choppiness; reasonable stress/intonation
- 4 Generally well phrased, most in clause and sentence units with adequate attention to expression

#### Smoothness

- 1 Frequent extended pauses, hesitations, false starts, sound-outs, repetitions, and/or multiple attempts
- 2 Several "rough spots" in text where extended pauses, hesitations, and so on, are more frequent and disruptive
- 3 Occasional breaks in smoothness caused by difficulties with specific words and/or text structures
- 4 Generally smooth reading with some breaks, but word and structure difficulties are resolved quickly, usually through self-corrections

#### Pacing

- 1 Slow and laborious
- 2 Moderately slow
- 3 Uneven mixture of fast and slow reading
- 4 Consistently conversational

(Zutell & Rasinski, 1991 as cited in Opitz & Rasinski, 1998)

Subsection 3  
CD/Video Modeling



## Contexts for CD/Video Viewing

### CD/Video Viewing

**Context #1:** Joan Moser, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Comprehension II  
Sherwood Forest Elementary School  
Federal Way, WA

**Focus:** Explicit modeling of fluency

**Context #2:** Gail Boushey, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
Sunrise Elementary School  
Kent, WA

**Focus:** First graders performing their fluency while using reciprocal teaching

## CD/Video Modeling Observation Chart

<p>What activities for teaching fluency did the teacher use?</p>	<p>What classroom management strategies did the teacher use to support instruction?</p>
<p>How did the teacher assess, engage, or reinforce student success?</p>	<p>What else did you observe? (e.g. other literacy enrichment, physical environment, and/or accommodations)</p>

## Subsection 4 Action Planning

## Action Planning: How Can I Put My New Learnings into Practice?

1. **Review:** Look over the notes you made during the Think-Ink-Pair-Share activities completed at the beginning of this session.
2. **Revise:** What additions or revisions can you make to your notes?
3. **Plan:** What are your next steps to incorporate fluency purposefully into your lesson plans tomorrow?

How will those plans meet the instructional needs of your students?

Using the form on the next page, **construct an action plan** that will help you address the instructional needs of your students.

## Constructing an Action Plan to Meet the Instructional Needs of Students

What plans can I try tomorrow?	How will the plans address the instructional needs of my students?



# FLUENCY

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY

## SECTION 5: SUMMARY

### Synecotics Search (Simile)

Summarize and document your key learnings about fluency by completing the following statement:

Teaching fluency is like \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_.

This synectics process involves constructing, comparing, and/or associating a mental image or picture of teaching fluency with other words, pictures, or experiences in your background knowledge.

## Evaluation and Feedback

1. What did you find most useful about this session?
2. What did you find least useful?
3. What additional information, materials, or resources would be useful?





# FLUENCY

## SECTION 6: HELPFUL RESOURCES

## SECTION 6: HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Suggested Texts to Use with Strategy Applications
- Checklist for CD/Video Modeling
- Checklist for Evaluating Instructional Materials

## Suggested Texts to Use with Strategy Applications

### Choral Reading

Verna Aardema, *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* (grades 2 – 3)

Betty Birney, *Pie's in the Oven* (grades 1 – 2)

Margaret Dunphy, *Here Is the Wetland* (grades 2- 3)

Paul Fleischman, *Joyful Noise* (grades 4 – 5)

Emily Rodda, *Yay!* (Grades 1 – 3)

Maurice Sendak, *Chicken Soup with Rice* (grades 1 –2)

Judith Viorst, *If I Were in Charge of the World and Other Worries* (grades 1 – 3)

### Fluency Development Lesson

Hames Barry, Christine McClymont, and Glen Huser, *Mystery Mazes* (grades 4 - 7)

Margaret Wise Brown, *The Important Book* (grades 1 – 3)

Ann Cameron, *The Stories Julian Tells* (grades 2 – 4)

Margaret Dunphy, *Here Is the Wetland* (grades 3 – 4)

Irene Watts, *Just a Minute* (grades 5 – 8)

### Look for the Signals

David Adler, *Chanukah in Chelm* (grades 2 – 3)

Kathi Appelt, *Watermelon Day* (grades 1 – 3)

Judith Bentley, *“Dear Friend”: Thomas Garrett and William Still*  
(grades 4 – 5)

Lady Borton, *Junk Pile!* (Grades 2 – 4)

J. Patrick Lewis, *The La-Di-Da Hare* (grades 2 – 3)

Collin McNaughton, *Oops!* (Grades 1 – 2)

Angela Medearis, *The Ghost of Sifty Sifty Sam* (grades 2 – 4)

### Poems of Two Voices

Paul Fleischman, *I Am Phoenix*

Paul Fleischman, *Joyful Noise*

### Radio Reading

Beverly Cleary, *Ramona Quimby, Age 8* (grades 2 – 5)

Arnold Lobel, *Days with Frog and Toad* (grades 1 – 2)

Ann Martin, *The Baby Sitters Club Chain Letter* (grades 2 – 5)

Cynthia Rylant, *Henry and Mudge Take the Big Test* (grades 1 – 3)

## Read Around

Rosalinda Barrera, Verlinda Thompson, and Mark Dressman,  
*Kaleidoscope: A Multicultural Booklist for Grades K – 8*

Children's Choices, *More Kids' Favorite Books* (K – 6)

Beverly Kobrin, *Eyeopeners II: Children's Books to Answer  
Children's Questions about the World around Them* (K – 12)

Michael Opitz, *Getting the Most from Predictable Books* (K – 3)

## Readers Theater

Suzanne Barchers, *Readers Theater for Beginning Readers*

Win Braun and Carl Braun, *A Readers Theater Treasury of  
Stories*

Neill Dixon, Anne Davies, and Colleen Politano, *Learning with  
Readers Theater*

Anthony Fredericks, *Frantic Frogs and Other Frankly Fractured  
Folktales for Readers Theater*

(Opitz & Rasinski, 1998)

## CD/VIDEO MODELING CHECKLIST

<b>EFFECTIVE TEACHING CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>If observed, make notes as to how the teacher handled this characteristic</b>
<b>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b>	
1. Communicates a warm interest in and respect for the students.	
2. Provides a literacy-rich learning environment.	
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	
1. States objectives, expectations, and routines.	
2. Takes actions to keep all students engaged.	
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	
1. Uses a variety of teaching/learning methods.	
2. Paces instruction to keep the class involved.	
3. Uses a variety of grouping strategies to increase student engagement and interaction.	
4. Models the designed behaviors and provides think-alouds.	
5. Asks open-ended questions and provides adequate wait time for thinking.	

**CD/VIDEO MODELING CHECKLIST (continued)**

<b>INSTRUCTION (cont)</b>	
6. Ensures extensive reading/writing time for students on a daily basis (e.g. instructional as well as independent)	
<b>STRATEGIC TEACHING</b>	
1. Explicitly explains how strategies can help reader/writers.	
2. Makes connections between new strategies/information and what students already know.	
3. Provides opportunities for guided practice in strategy application.	
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	
1. Uses a variety of ongoing assessment techniques to improve instruction (observations, checklists, anecdotal records, informal inventories, etc.)	
2. Evaluates the lesson and diagnoses what was learned and what needs to be covered?	

## Checklist for Evaluating Instructional Materials

Use the checklist below to guide your decision-making processes when considering which instructional aids will best meet the needs of students.

### CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

TOPIC ADDRESSED	YES	NO	COMMENTS
<b>Content</b>			
1. Is the instructional material aligned with state/school standards?			
2. Is the information and approach research-based?			
3. Is the focus aligned with the scope and sequence of your school/district's reading program?			
4. Are the materials and strategies appropriate for your students' needs?			
<b>Instruction</b>			
1. Will the materials cover the range your students need?			



**CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**  
**(continued)**

<b>TOPIC ADDRESSED</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Instruction (cont)</b>			
2. Are the materials student and teacher - friendly and clearly presented?			
3. Does the instructional design provide for a balanced approach to reading?			
4. Is there a coherent instructional progression of skills and strategies?			
5. Do the lessons include a variety of engaging student activities?			
6. Are there teaching options offered to accommodate for a variety of teaching and learning styles?			
7. Are opportunities provided for skills development and strategies?			
<b>Support</b>			
1. Are supplemental materials provided?			
2. Is teacher support available?			
3. Is teacher in-service offered?			

**CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**  
**(continued)**

<b>TOPIC ADDRESSED</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Support (cont)</b>			
4. Are there opportunities for ongoing professional development?			
<b>Assessment</b>			
1. Is there an appropriate assessment component that is aligned with the standards/objectives?			
2. Does the assessment program include a variety of formal and informal evaluation activities?			
3. Are the performance skills and strategies identified in the lessons?			



# FLUENCY

## SECTION 7: REFERENCES

## SECTION 7: REFERENCES

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# FLUENCY

## SECTION 8: GLOSSARY

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- Fluency Terms

## FLUENCY TERMS

Term	Definition
Accuracy	The percentage of words read without a deviation or miscue from the text; determined by counting the number of errors/miscues, subtracting that number from the total number of words in the text passage, and then dividing the number of words read correctly by the number of words in the text
Automaticity	The ability to identify or spell words rapidly so that the literacy user's resources can be directed to comprehending and composing; quality of fluency; implies automatic level or response with various tasks, such as the speed of retrieving the sound of a specific letter; fluent processing of information that requires little effort or attention
Buddy reading	Same as partner reading
Choral reading	Unison reading
Chunking	Grouping or phrasing thought units instead of focusing on single word-by-word reading
Decodable text	Text that follows typical phonics rules
Expression	A meaningful manner of reading/speaking
Frustration level text	Text that is difficult or "too hard" for the reader; less than 90% success or more than 1 in 10 words miscued (Assessment should be based on accuracy and comprehension.)
Independent level text	Text that is relatively easy or "just right" for the reader; a minimum of 95% success or no more than approximately 1 in 20 words miscued (Assessment should be based on accuracy and comprehension.)
Inflection	Any change in tone or pitch of the voice (e.g., we signal a question with rising inflection.)

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Instructional level text	Text that is challenging but manageable for the reader; a minimum of 90% success or no more than approximately 1 in 10 words too difficult (Assessment should be based on accuracy and comprehension.)
Intonation	The system of significant levels and variations in pitch sequences within speech
Juncture	The transition from one speech sound to the next, either within a word or making the boundary between words
Mentor reading	A more fluent reader reads aloud to or supports a less fluent reader by providing scaffolding
Paired reading	A fluent reader and a less fluent reader sit side by side and simultaneously read one text aloud
Partner reading	Paired students take turns reading aloud to each other, often with a more fluent partner who provides a model of fluent reading, helps with word recognition, and provides feedback
Phrase boundaries	The place where a natural oral reading break should occur in text
Predictable or patterned text	Rhythmic, repetitive language structures in children's literature and nursery rhymes
Prosody	The ability to read a text orally using appropriate pitch, stress, and juncture; to project the natural intonation and phrasing of speech upon the written text
Radio reading	Students "act out" or read texts as though it were a news story on the radio
Rate	The pace at which a reader reads a passage; the speed at which oral or silent reading takes place; the number of words in a passage multiplied by 60 and then divided by the number of seconds it takes a specific reader to read a specific passage
Read around	Students read aloud to convey character's feelings and experiences, share favorite scenes, make connections, and prompt discussion
Readers Theater	The rehearsing and performing before an audience of a dialogue-rich script derived from a book

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Return sweep	The diagonal eye-movement from the end of one line of text to the start of the next
Shared reading	The teacher, tutor, or parent introduces the student or small group of students to a text and reads it to them. Then the students read the text with the teacher, tutor or parent. This is followed by the students reading the text to the teacher. Over the course of several days the students and teacher return to and reread the text, examine words and other features of the text, and engage in other extension activities based on the text.
Stress	A major marker in meaning; the emphasis from increased force of breath that makes a syllable, word, or group of words stand out
Tape-assisted reading	Students read along in their books as they hear a fluent reader read the book on an audiotape; reading aloud simultaneously or as an echo with an audio-taped model
Target rate	Rate or range of rates set as a goal or target for individual students
Timed reading	A process by which individual students read orally for a designated amount of time, often in one-minute increments
Typographical signals	Punctuation marks, large and bold print, underlining, and italics or any combination of these which help readers better understand an author's message
Word-by-word reading	Word calling; a halting, labored type of oral reading with a very slow rate of word identification, poor phrasing and comprehension
WPM	Words per minute; rate of reading or speaking in terms of the average number of words covered in one minute



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## SECTION 9: POWERPOINT/OVERHEADS

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ROPES OH #3

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WHAT DO I ALREADY KNOW ABOUT COMPREHENSION? OH#4

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WHY IS COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION IMPORTANT? OH #6

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BUILDING BLOCKS OH #8

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