



Rhode Island Reading First

Fluency:

Why is it so important?



Acknowledgements

- Center for the Improvement of Reading Achievement (CIERA)
- Teacher-to-Teacher, USDOE
- Texas Primary Reading Academies
- *The Fluent Reader* by Timothy Rasinski



Decoding

Children learn about words, letters and sounds

Important Landmarks for Children:

- begin to read independently
- learn basic letter-sound correspondences
- develop sight vocabulary

Kathleen Heubach
Virginia Commonwealth University



How does word recognition develop?

- Visual Cue Recognition
- Partial Alphabetic Cuing
- Full Alphabetic Cuing
- Automatic Word Recognition

Steven A. Stahl
University of Georgia



Survey of Knowledge: Fluency

(listed alphabetically)

- Accuracy
- Automaticity
- Fluency
- Grade-level texts
- Independent level
- Instructional level
- Prosody
- Rate
- Reading level
- WPM



Fluent Readers:

- Read with speed and accuracy
- Display smooth and effortless reading
- Read quickly in a meaningful way
- Display freedom from word identification problems
- Decode and comprehend simultaneously



Fluency – What is it?

Reading quickly, accurately, and with expression:

- ◇ combines rate and accuracy
- ◇ requires automaticity
- ◇ includes reading with prosody



Prosody – What is it?

Prosody is language's rhythm and flow.
It makes the reading sound effortless.



Fluency:

Integral to Comprehension

Rate

Accuracy

Automaticity

Phrasing

Smoothness

Expressiveness



Dysfluency:

When the reader focuses all of his/her attention on word recognition, it drains cognitive resources and leaves little room for comprehension.



Why focus on fluency?

- “It provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.”
- “44% of a representative sample of the nation’s fourth graders (NAEP) were low in fluency.”
- “Fluency is a neglected skill in many American classrooms, affecting many students’ comprehension.”

(Put Reading First 2001, 22-23)



Some Factors that Inhibit Fluency:

- Unfamiliarity with the text
- Limited vocabulary
- Difficulty with syntax
- Decoding breakdown



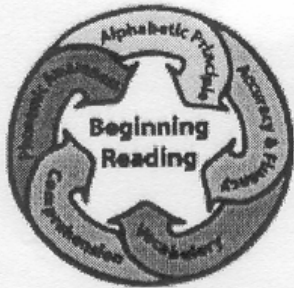
Fluency Instruction

Usually begins in the middle of the first grade

Children need to have some entering knowledge about words to benefit from fluency instruction.

Kuhl and Stahl, 2000

Instructional Priorities



Big Ideas in Beginning Reading

Phonemic Awareness

Alphabetic Principle

Fluency with Text

Vocabulary

Comprehension

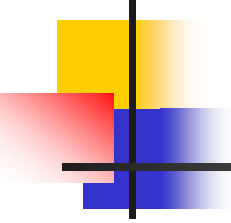
Big Ideas **Assessment** **Instruction** **Logistics**

BIG IDEAS in Beginning Reading

Mapping of Instruction to Achieve Instructional Priorities Second Grade

Instructional Priority: Fluency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Focus 4: Reading Connected Text									
* 4a: Reads 90-100 wpm	40-60	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	90-100
4b: Reads with phrasing and expression			X	X	X				
4c: Listens to fluent oral reading and practices increasing oral reading fluency	10 ^a	10	10	15	15	20	20	20	20
4d: Reads and rereads to increase familiarity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4e: Self-corrects word recognition errors	X	X							

*. high priority skill
a. Minutes of practice per day

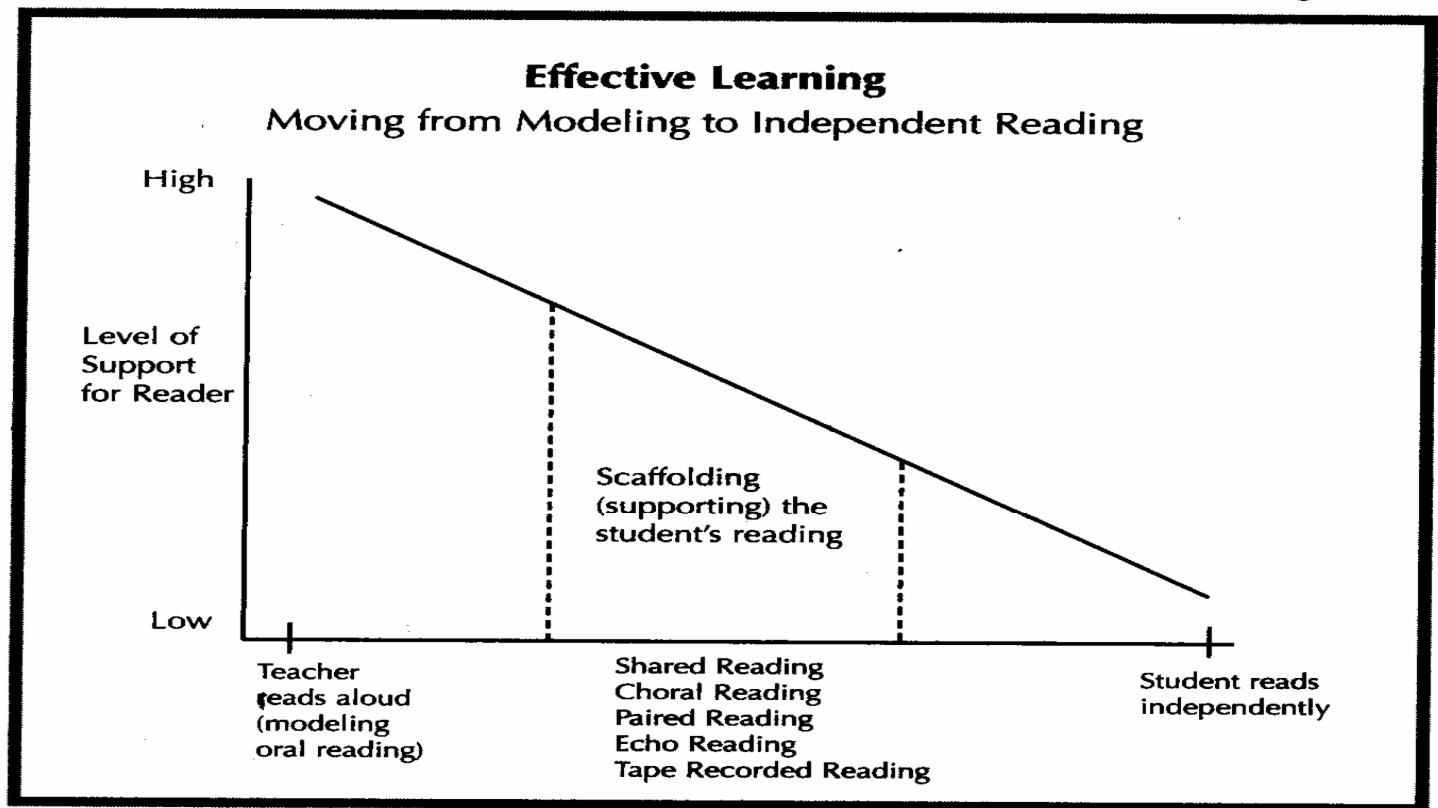


What does fluency instruction look like?

- **Fluency Development Lesson (FDL)**
Developed by Rasinski & Padak
- **Oral Recitation Lesson (ORL)**
Developed by James Hoffman

Scaffolded Instruction

Figure 3.1



Source: The Fluent Reader, p. 57, Figure 3.1



Measuring Student's Fluency Rate

One Minute Reading:

Total Number of Words Read
- Numbers of Errors
Words Correct per Minute (WPM)

EXAMPLE: If a student reads **53** words and has **7** errors, the student reads **46** words correct per minute.

NECAP & Local GLEs

Appendix C

Fluency Rates*	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Oral:	N/A	50 – 80 Words correct per minute	80 – 100 Words correct per minute	90 – 120 Words correct per minute	115 – 140 Words correct per minute	125 – 150 Words correct per minute	135 – 160 Words correct per minute	140 – 175 Words correct per minute	150 – 180 Words correct per minute
Silent:	N/A	N/A	N/A	115 - 130	130 - 175	160 - 200	190 - 220	215 - 245	235 - 270



Fluency:

Procedures for Assessing

- Have students read two or three unfamiliar instructional-level passages
- Record and graph the average wpm

More reliable than using a fluency score based on one passage



What do I do for students who do not reach fluency targets?

Determine whether the problem is accuracy or fluency:

◇ Look for possible patterns:

- * more than 1 error every 10 words
indicates a need to look at accuracy
- * few errors, but low rate – work on fluency
- * rates less than 30-40 wpm – typically indicates a need for word recognition instruction



Analyze findings...

- ◇ If students' word recognition skills are not firm, focusing on speed will be counter-productive.

Simmons & Kame'enui, 1998



When fluency is the issue

Students reading significantly below fluency targets will require:

- Fluency instruction
- Modeling
- Daily fluency practice



What we know from research

- Repeated and monitored oral reading improves fluency
- Repeated reading can benefit most students throughout elementary school
- Repeated reading can benefit struggling readers at the upper grade levels



Goal:

The student “primarily reads in large, 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.”

The NAEP Oral Reading Fluency Scale
Handout: *Assessment for Reading Instruction*



How to Build Reading Fluency

- Practice (daily)
- Time repeated readings
- Set goals
- Graph fluency progress
- Monitor and adjust, as needed

Recommended weekly improvement =
1.5 to 3 wpm



Considerations for English Language Learners

Fluency practice for English language learners involves:

- Listening to good models
- Repeated readings
- Choral readings
- Partner reading



Considerations for Students with Special Needs

Usually benefit from:

- Repeated reading practice (especially expository or informational texts)
- More time on task
- Paired reading and rereading
- Additional feedback and progress monitoring



Closing Thoughts

- Fluency is increased when students:
 - ◇ Develop instant, efficient word recognition (automaticity)
 - ◇ Practice repeated reading of a variety of text
 - ◇ Receive feedback and guidance from others
- Setting instructional goals will help students become fluent readers