

FLUENCY

ACTIVITIES

and

PASSAGES

Repeated Reading

Focus Area: Fluency

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Materials:

- A copy of independent reading material for the student (50 – 200 words in length)
- Timer

Procedure:

1. Choose assisted or unassisted approach.
 - Assisted: The teacher (or coach) reads aloud with the student. Use the assisted approach when children are reading with few errors, but below 45 words per minute. The model gives children support and a sense of the proper phrasing and speed of fluent reading.
 - i. Predetermine a goal level for speed, particularly for very slow word-by-word readers and delayed students. Students move to a new passage once they reach the goal for wpm on the passage they have been practicing. 100-120 wpm is reasonable for most students, while 85wpm is better for older dysfluent students. Check out grade level norms.... but keep in mind those are for first time readings and we're looking at rates for repeated readings.
 - Unassisted: The student reads independently, but the teacher (or coach) supplies any unknown words. Use the unassisted approach as soon as a student reaches a rate of over 60 wpm on their first reading of a practice passage. This approach supplies more practice with less support.
2. Have the student read the selection orally while the teacher (or coach) times the reading and counts the number of words that are pronounced incorrectly. Record the reading time and the number of words pronounced incorrectly. You may use two different color pencils for recording time and errors, or you may use a circle to indicate points on the line for time and an X or a square to indicate points on the line for errors.
3. Between timings, ask the student to look over the selection, reread it, and practice words that caused difficulty in the initial reading. When the student is ready, have him or her reread the same passage. Once again, time the reading, and record the time and number of errors. Have the student repeatedly practice reading the selection as you chart progress after each trial until a predetermined goal is reached or until the student is able to read the passage fluently with few mistakes. Research on repeated reading suggests that fluency can be improved as long as students are provided with specific instructions and procedures are used to monitor their progress (Mastropieri et al., 1999). Word recognition on the passage should be at about 85% the first time through – otherwise the passage is too hard. Keep passages at the same level of difficulty until an acceptable rate of speed and accuracy is reached on the first or second reading. Then move to a harder passage. During one session, students minimally read the same passage at least two times. Research has shown that repeated reading is an effective way for students to develop reading fluency. When reading the same passage over and over, the number of word recognition errors decreases, reading speed increases, and oral reading expression improves. (Samuels, 2002).

Paired Partner Reading

Focus Area: Fluency

Timing: 10-15 minutes

Materials:

- A copy of independent reading material for each student of about 50 words
- Paired Partner Reading form

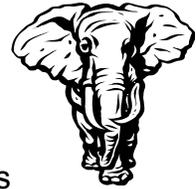
Procedure:

1. Pre-teach students the reading and partner feedback procedures, including:
 - How partners will move to a shared space
 - How partners will sit together?
 - Who will read first? (Stronger reader should read first)
 - What students will say when an error is made: ("Try again," or "That word is...")
 - Examples of praise at the end of each practice ("Good reading," or "Well done," etc.)
 - How to use the Paired Reading form
2. Partners silently read the passage
3. Reader 1 reads the passage 3 times in a row
 - Stopping each time to self-evaluate reading
 - Getting feedback on 2nd/3rd reading from partner
4. Reader 2 reads the passage 3 times in a row
 - Stopping each time to self-evaluate reading
 - Getting feedback on 2nd/3rd reading from partner

I noticed that my partner.

After the 2nd reading After the 3rd reading

Remembered more words



Read faster



Read smoother



Read with expression



Phrasing

Focus Area: Fluency

Timing: 10 minutes

Materials:

- A copy of independent level reading material for each student (independent sentences to begin with – moving to connected text as the technique is mastered)
- Colored pencils or pens for scooping phrases

Procedure:

1. Present simple sentences on an overhead or chart paper and demonstrate scooping the sentence into phrases for smooth fluent reading. Point out that there is more than one correct way to break a sentence into phrases. Teach students to pay attention to mid sentence and ending punctuation.

- “Everything happened just the way Big Eddie said it would.”



- “There was no doubt Bluebell was a star.”



6. Provide students with copies of sentences initially (begin with simple sentences and move to more complex sentences as students become more efficient with phrasing) and then move on to paragraphs. Allow students time to read the sentences silently and to scoop the phrases with a colored pen.
 - There isn't one right or wrong way to scoop the phrases, but there are breakpoints that won't sound fluent. Use this opportunity to point out that prepositions begin phrases.
7. Read the scooped sentences chorally or in pairs 2-3 times each.
8. As students begin to recognize phrases in sentences more easily move away from the colored pen and begin having students read silently and scoop with their fingers or the eraser end of a pencil before reading and practicing smooth fluent reading.

NOTE: Do not use slashmarks to indicate phrases as these can be visually confusing to students and disrupt fluency.

Reading Group

“Good, Andrew. I’m glad to hear that. Now will you please pick up your chair and join your reading group? We’re all waiting for you.”

Andrew stood up in a hurry. His reading group giggled. Especially Sharon. He couldn’t stand that Sharon. She thought she knew everything! He picked up his chair and carried it to the corner where his reading group sat.

“You may begin, Andrew,” Miss Kelly said. “Page sixty-four.”

Andrew turned the pages in his book. Sixty-four ... sixty-four. He couldn’t find it. The pages stuck together. Why did Miss Kelly have to pick him? Everybody else already had their books open to the right page.

Sharon kept giggling. She covered her mouth to keep in the noise, but Andrew knew what was going on. He finally found page sixty-four. Right where it was supposed to be ... between pages sixty-three and sixty-five. If he had his own freckles he wouldn’t have to count Nicky Lane’s. Then he’d hear Miss Kelly when she called reading groups. And nobody would laugh at him.

Getting the Recipe

Sharon was already at her desk when Andrew arrived. He went right over to her.

“Did you bring it?” he asked.

“Bring what?” Sharon opened her eyes real wide.

“You know what! The secret recipe for freckle juice.”

“Oh that! I have it – right here.” Sharon patted her pocket.

“Well, let’s see it.”

“Do you have the fifty cents?” Sharon asked.

“Sure – right here.” Andrew patted *his* pocket.

“I’m not going to show it to you until you pay,” Sharon said.

Andrew shook his head. “Oh no! First I want to see it.”

“Sorry, Andrew. A deal’s a deal!” Sharon opened a book and pretended to read.

“Andrew Marcus!” Miss Kelly said. “Will you please sit down? The second bell just rang. This morning we’ll begin with arithmetic. Nicky, please pass out the yellow paper. When you get your paper begin working on the problems on the board.”

Andrew went to his seat. Then he took the tissue with the five dimes out of his pocket. He held it near the floor and aimed it toward Sharon. She sat in the next row. Sharon stuck her foot out and stepped on the tissue.

The Secret Formula

Andrew didn't answer him. He sat in class all day with his blue freckles. A couple of times Miss Kelly looked at him kind of funny but she didn't say anything. Then at two o'clock she called him to her desk.

"Andrew," Miss Kelly said. "How would you like to use my secret formula for removing freckles?" Her voice was low, but not so low that the class couldn't hear.

"For free?" Andrew asked.

"Oh, yes," Miss Kelly said. "For free."

Andrew scratched his head and thought it over.

Miss Kelly took a small package out of her desk. She handed it to Andrew. "Now, don't open this until you get to the Boy's Room. Remember, it's a secret formula. Okay?"

"Okay," Andrew said.

He wanted to run to the Boy's Room, but he knew the rules. No running in the halls. So he walked as fast as he could. He couldn't wait to see what was in the package. Could there really be such a thing as freckle remover?

As soon as he was inside the Boy's Room he unwrapped the package. There was a note. Andrew read it. It said:

TURN ON WATER. WET MAGIC FRECKLE REMOVER AND RUB INTO FACE.

Making Pudding

It was hot by the stove. My father loosened his collar and pushed at his sleeves. The stuff in the pan was getting thicker and thicker. He held the beater up high in the air.

“Just right,” he said, and sniffed in the smell of the pudding. He whipped the egg whites and mixed them into the pudding. The pudding looked softer and lighter than air.

“Done!” he said. He washed all the pots, splashing water on the floor, and wiped the counter so fast his hair made circles around his head.

“Perfect!” he said. “Now I am going to take a nap. If something important happens, bother me. If nothing important happens, don’t bother me. And – the pudding is for your mother. Leave the pudding alone!”

He went to the living room and was asleep in a minute, sitting straight up in his chair. Huey and I guarded the pudding.

“Oh, it’s a wonderful pudding,” Huey said.

“With waves on the top like the ocean,” I said.

Traffic Light

“But we have to be careful getting out of here. Come this way.”

They ran out of the burrow onto a low wall. Suddenly Adam stopped.

“What is it?” said Amanda. “What’s wrong?”

“Look! Up there! Look at that great red jewel in the sky!”

“Adam,” Amanda said gently. “That’s a traffic light.” The red jewel disappeared. Now a bright emerald seemed to be hanging in the air.

“It’s beautiful!” Adam whispered. “Why does it change its color?”

“It keeps changing from red to green,” Amanda explained. “When the light is red, people and cars have to stop. When the light turns green, they can go.”

“What a clever idea!” Adam marveled. “Who ever thought of that?”

He would have stood rooted there watching the changing light, but Amanda hurried him on.

“It’s not safe here,” she told him. “We lost a dear friend here last week.”

Adam shivered, even as he admired the steadiness of Amanda’s voice.

“I live across the street, but we don’t have to wait for the traffic light,” she said with a laugh.

Apples

“Amanda,” said Adam, “do you know where apples come from?”

“Why, yes,” she replied. “In boxes. I’ve seen them.”

“They may end up in boxes,” Adam told her. “But they grow on trees.”

He thought of the young tree he so loved to sit under.

“In the spring,” he went on, “the apple tree is covered with the nicest pink and white flowers. I don’t think there’s anything that can make you feel as happy as an apple tree in blossom.”

“What’s the bee buzz?” Amanda wanted to know.

“The bees love the sweet-tasting blossoms. Sometimes there are so many bees in the apple tree that it sound as if the tree is singing. Later, the blossoms fall off and the apples begin to grow.”

“—and end up in boxes in the fall.” Amanda laughed.

Then she said thoughtfully, “You know a lot of important things, Adam.”

Adam pondered that. “In the country,” he said, “you get to know about roots – about where things come from.”

The Bathing Suit

“I am sorry, Toad,” he said. “Everyone wants to see how you will look.”

“Then I will stay right here until they go away,” said Toad.

The turtles and the lizards and the snake and the dragonflies and the field mouse all sat on the riverbank. They waited for Toad to come out of the water.

“Please,” cried Frog, “please go away!”

But no one went away.

Toad was getting colder and colder. He was beginning to shiver and sneeze.

“I will have to come out of the water,” said Toad. “I am catching a cold.” Toad climbed out of the river. The water dripped out of his bathing suit and down onto his feet.

The turtle laughed. The lizards laughed. The snake laughed. The field mouse laughed, and Frog laughed.

“What are you laughing at, Frog?” said Toad.

“I am laughing at you, Toad,” said Frog, “because you do look funny in your bathing suit.”

“Of course I do,” said Toad. Then he picked up his clothes and went home.

The Tea Set

“If I buy yours, I will have a tea set,” said Frances.

“You said you didn’t want it,” said Thelma. “And anyhow, I don’t want to sell it now.”

“Why not?” said Frances.

“Well,” said Thelma, “It is a very good tea set. It is plastic that does not break. It has pretty red flowers on it. It has all the cups and saucers. It has the sugar bowl and the cream pitcher and the teapot. It is almost new, and I think it cost a lot of money.”

“I have two dollars and seventeen cents,” said Frances. “That’s a lot of money.”

“I don’t know,” said Thelma. “If I sell my tea set, then I won’t have one anymore.”

“We can have tea parties at my house then,” said Frances. “And you can use the money for a new doll.”

“Well, maybe,” said Thelma. “Do you have your money with you?”

“I’ll run home for it,” said Frances.

The Thing

“What are you making, Charley?” asked Mr. Sizemore.

“A Thing,” said Charley as he rolled another piece.

“You come with me,” Mr. Sizemore said. “Bring your clay.”

Mr. Sizemore led the way to the room where the blocks were kept. The other children went on painting.

“Since the Thing is so long, why don’t you work in here by yourself?” asked Mr. Sizemore. “We’ll spread a newspaper on the floor, and you can make your Thing on the paper.”

“It’ll have to be a long newspaper, Mr. Sizemore,” Charley told him. “Because this sure is a long Thing I’m making.”

Together Mr. Sizemore and Charley spread the newspaper on the floor from the middle of the room up to the door. Then Mr. Sizemore went back into the classroom where the other boys and girls were painting.

Alone in the room, Charley looked at the row of jars of clay standing on the shelf. He took down the jar containing the pink clay and went to work, rolling and rolling and rolling, each piece a little thicker than the one before, and pinching the ends together.

The Lost Present

This must be where she lost my present and was looking for it. Sludge sniffed the snow. I looked in the snow for a package or the snow print of a package. But the snow next to the sled marks was unbroken. I, Nate the Great, was puzzled. How could something drop off the sled and not be in the snow or leave a mark in the snow? There were no footprints either.

So I, Nate the Great, knew that no one had come along and taken the birthday present. But how did the present get off the sled, and where was it?

“This is a tough, ice-cold case,” I said to Sludge.

Sludge shivered. We trudged on. We saw Annie and her dog Fang. Sludge shivered some more. He was afraid of Fang. I, Nate the Great, was afraid of Fang. Fang ran toward us. Sludge leaped over a big pile of snow. I had never seen Sludge leap that high.

“Fang is so friendly,” Annie said. She was making a snow dog. It looked just like Fang. It had icicles for teeth.

Finding the Present

Did Sludge know something I didn't know? I thought about footprints and sled marks in the snow and snow that had no marks in it, and six cartons of milk and other chilly things.

The milk was for Rosamond's four cats. But she bought six cartons. Who or what needed the two extra cartons of milk? And what would Rosamond think was the most beautiful present ever? Suddenly I, Nate the Great, knew what my present was, and where it was, and how it got there.

I said to Sludge, "I know what is heavy, strange, and ugly and can get off a sled without landing in the snow. The case is solved, and you were a big help. But we must go out into the cold world again."

Sludge and I went back to the place where Rosamond had lost the present. This time I did not look down at the snow. I looked up at the tree. There was my birthday present sitting high up in the tree! It was heavy and strange and ugly, all right.

The Snow Storm

When Anna woke up she thought it was still night. No light came through the skylight. She turned on her side in bed and looked through the doorway into the kitchen. Tony was at the table eating his oatmeal. Grandpa was pouring a bucket of coal into the big stove.

Anna jumped out of bed and ran into the kitchen to get dressed. Mama came in from the parlor.

“What time is it, Mama?” Anna asked, warming her hands over the hot stove.

“Almost seven thirty,” Mama said. “Go to the front window and see what is happening outside.”

Anna looked out of the window. It was snowing so hard, she could scarcely see the houses across the street.

“Don’t worry, it won’t last,” Grandpa said. “After all, it’s almost the middle of March.”

Mama put a bowl of hot oatmeal on the table for Anna. “Maybe you should stay home from school today,” she said.

“I can’t, Mama. Today is the last day of the spelling bee. If I win, I’ll be in the City Finals.”

A Lightning Storm

Thomas thought Grandfather answered, but he couldn't hear, as just then a bolt of lightning cracked into the big beech tree. It ripped off a mighty bough, which crashed to the ground. This was too much for Ringo. He leaped onto Thomas's lap and shivered there.

"Poor boy," said Thomas. "He's frightened."

"I had a dog when I was a boy," said Grandfather. "He was so scared of storms that I had to hide under the bed with him when one came. He was afraid even to be frightened alone."

"I'm not afraid of anything," Thomas said, holding his cat close.

"Not many people can say that," said Grandfather. Then he added, "Well, I suppose anybody could say it."

"I'm not afraid of thunderstorms, like Ringo and your dog. What was his name?"

"Melvin."

"That's not a good name for a dog," Thomas said.

"I thought it was," Grandfather said calmly. "He was my dog."

"I like cats," said Thomas. "I want to own a tiger!"

"Not while you're living with me," said Grandfather.

Acting Strange

“What are you doing, Huey?” I said.

“None of your business!” Huey said.

I closed the door again.

When he came to dinner, he didn’t look at me.

My mother brought out the food.

“Huey,” my mother said, “you have to have some broccoli. It’s good for you. It will make you strong.”

“All right,” Huey said.

He ate three helpings! I couldn’t believe it. Usually Huey only pretends to eat broccoli. Usually he stores it in his pants pockets and gets rid of it later.

“May I be excused?” Huey said.

He went upstairs to our room and closed the door again.

My father looked at Huey’s empty chair. “Seems like something strange is going on around here,” my father said. He had those dangerous yellow lights in his eyes. “Seems like I haven’t seen you and Huey talk to each other for three days. Did you two have a fight?”

“Oh no,” I said.

“No?” my father repeated.

“Really,” I said.

And just then there was a huge crash like a tree falling above us.

A New Job

“You want me to shine shoes on Grand Avenue?”

“If that’s what you want to do.”

Sarah Ida was quiet for a while. Things weren’t working out the way she’d planned. She’d never thought Aunt Claudia would let her work in the shoeshine stand, and Aunt Claudia didn’t seem to care!

Unless – Sarah Ida had another thought. Maybe Aunt Claudia didn’t believe she’d go through with it. Maybe she was thinking, *That child is playing another game.*

Sarah Ida said, “You really want me to go tell Al Winkler I’ll work for him?”

“If it’s what you want to do,” said Aunt Claudia.

Sarah Ida started down the steps. Aunt Claudia didn’t call her back. There was nothing for her to do but go.

She found Al sitting in one of his chairs.

“What did she say?” he asked.

“She said yes.”

“You want to start now?”

“I don’t care,” she said.

He opened a drawer under the platform and took out an old piece of cloth.

Only an Empty Pot

Ping was very worried. He put new soil into a bigger pot.

Then he transferred the seed into the rich black soil.

Another two months he waited. Still nothing happened.

By and by the whole year passed.

Spring came, and all the children put on their best clothes to greet the Emperor.

They rushed to the palace with their beautiful flowers, eagerly hoping to be chosen.

Ping was ashamed of his empty pot. He thought the other children would laugh at him because for once he couldn't get a flower to grow.

His clever friend ran by, holding a great big plant. "Ping!" he said. "You're not really going to the Emperor with an empty pot, are you? Couldn't you grow a great big flower like mine?"

"I've grown lots of flowers better than yours," Ping said. "Its just this seed that won't grow."

Ping's father overheard this and said, "You did your best, and your best is good enough to present to the Emperor."

Telling Stories

When Papa came home from work, he found Grace in the backyard. He sat beside her under the big old jackfruit tree. “This is where my grandma used to tell me stories when I was a little boy,” he said.

“Nana tells me stories too,” said Grace.

“Did she ever tell you the one about how your ma and I came to split up?” asked Papa.

“I know that one,” said Grace, “but I don’t want to hear it right now,” and she covered her up her ears.

Papa hugged her. “Would you like the one about the papa who loved his little girl so much, he saved up all his money to bring her to visit him?”

“Yes, I’d like that one,” said Grace.

“Okay. But if I tell you that story, will you promise to try to be nice to Jatou? You’re both very important to me,” said Papa.

Grace thought about it. “I’ll try,” she said.

The next day they went to the market. It was much more exciting than shopping at home.

On the Chair

I looked at the chair. Chester was already sitting in it, with a very large book open in front of him.

“I don’t think there’s going to be room for both of us, Chester,” I said.

“Come on, come on, you’re just wasting time. Just jump up here.”

I surveyed the scene carefully. I knew I would have to get a running start since there was just a tiny spot left for me and I would never be able to fit into it if I pulled myself up slowly. Apparently, I was taking too long for Chester’s liking.

“Will you get up here?” he hissed.

Okay, if that’s what you want. I ran and jumped onto the chair, landing with a great kerplop.

“Chester, where are you?” I cried. I couldn’t see anything but the back of the chair. I’d forgotten to turn myself around.

“I’m here, you great oaf!”

I turned my head. “What are you doing on the floor?” I asked.