**Increase Oral Reading Fluency**

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Fluency (i.e., reading accurately and quickly) is a vital dimension of reading. Reading fluency is needed to be a successful reader. Our education system tends to overlook instruction on reading fluency, while stressing decoding and comprehension. Subsequently, many children are not fluent readers, and a national concern has emerged (National Reading Panel, 2000). In fact, difficulty with reading is one of the primary reasons students are referred for special education services (Taylor, 2000), and challenges with reading fluency have long been considered a common characteristic of students with disabilities and special needs. The following strategies have been effective to increase oral reading fluency.

1 Use repeated reading. In this approach, learners practice reading one passage, at an appropriate instructional level, until some predetermined level of fluency is attained (Mastropieri, Leinart, & Scruggs, 1999). Each reading is timed, and then the level of fluency is charted, often by the students. A criterion (e.g., 100 words per minute) or a specific number of repetitions (e.g., 3-5 times) is generally specified.

2 Use repeated reading with a teacher model. One procedure for enhancing fluency is for teachers to model fluent reading by reading aloud to students (O'Donnell, McLaughlin, & Weber, 2003). This listening preview provides an opportunity for the learner to listen to a selection or a passage prior to instruction. Previewing increases the time a student interacts with the reading material and exposes students to the vocabulary, phrasing, and context before reading the text themselves.

3 Use repeated reading with modeling by a more proficient peer. In the context of ongoing classroom organization, peers can be used to model reading by reading aloud to target students. Skilled readers can provide rich oral reading models of appropriate reading rates and phrasal organization. Peers can be effective in providing the preview of the material before the student reads independently (Gut, Bishop-Goforth, & Farmer, 2004).

4 Use repeated reading, modeling with an audiotape/CD. Providing an audiotape/CD preview of the text to be read by the student improves reading fluency (Daly & Martens, 1994). The student listens to the model, then reads the passage independently. This activity allows for an appropriate previewing experience with limited personnel. For students who need more support, tape-assisted readings can be completed. Here, students read aloud simultaneously or as an echo with an audiotaped model.

5 Use prepractice preview. This method of previewing allows the student to read (aloud or silently) the assigned selection to themselves before the lesson. This pre-exposure allows the student to become aware of text vocabulary, context, and features.

6 Use paired reading. This read-along procedure is exemplified when the teacher, or another fluent reader, and the student read the text together (Nes, 2003). Read-along approaches would involve the learner spending more allocated time actively engaged in oral reading than a traditional round-robin procedure.

7 Use choral reading. This is another read-along procedure in which several children orally read the same passage in unison.

8 Use shared reading. The teacher introduces the student to the text and reads it to them. Then the student reads the text to the teacher. This is followed by the student reading the text over successive trials to others (e.g., peer, parents, etc.). In essence, the student shares the reading with many listeners.

9 Use praise/attention. The implication is that instructional attention to the aspects of fluency enhances students' awareness of fluency production. Reading fluency improves when students are cued to read faster. Rewards and praise, contingent on increased fluency, can have a functional effect on student performance (Chafouleas, Dobson, & Martens, 2004).

10 Use appropriate-level text. Matching the difficulty of the reading passage (e.g., length and vocabulary) with the ability of the student, while selecting engaging and appropriate texts, can foster oral reading fluency (O'Connor, Bell, Harry, 2002). Work with texts that are well within the reader's independent instructional range (i.e., minimum 90%-95% success rate).

11 Use predictable or patterned text. Rhythmic, repetitive language structures in children's literature and nursery rhymes can aid fluency (Douville, 2001).

12 Use a word drill. Words missed during an initial reading can be placed on flashcards and practiced in isolation. The direct instruction on challenging words can affect reading fluency by improving student's word recognition efficiency. The student reads the passage, again, after the drill.

13 Use a phrase drill. Similar to word drills, the phrase drill provides the opportunity to practice error words in contextual phrases. Hence, words are drilled using phrases in which they occur in the text. Students practice chunking or grouping thought units instead of focusing on single word-by-word reading.

14 Use a letter-naming drill. Letter-name knowledge facilitates letter-sound knowledge (Treiman, Tincoff, Rodriguez, Mouzaki, & Francis, 1998). Students must visually discriminate the letter before they can develop orthographic knowledge and the ability to decode words. Students can practice rapidly naming letters that are randomly presented, increasing the rate correct.

15 Use corrective feedback. Teachers can help students with accuracy by providing feedback and guidance. This is exemplified by teachers providing the correct words when students' read words incorrectly during oral reading. This can reduce the number of errors and, in turn, increase reading fluency (Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004).

16 Use models of fluent reading. By listening to good models of fluent reading, students learn how a reader's voice can help written text make sense. Teachers and other skilled readers should read aloud daily to students. By reading effortlessly and with expression, the teacher is modeling for the students how a fluent reader sounds during reading.

17 Use classwide peer tutoring. Peer tutoring can provide additional practice for readers. A reciprocal tutoring system allows for half the class to be reading at a particular time, while the other half is engaged in monitoring and feedback. Mentor/tutors support a less fluent reader by providing scaffolding.

18 Use readers' theatre. This activity has students rehearse a poem, joke, story, script, or speech until they can read it with fluency and expression (Keehn, 2003; Worthy & Prater, 2002). Readers' theatre provides an authentic reason to engage in repeated readings while providing a model of fluent reading.

19 Use a computer. Computers can be used effectively to provide practice on reading fluency. Some software includes game-like activities that promote reading speed by providing feedback on work-attack skills and reading comprehension (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2002). Additionally, computers can limit the number of words (i.e., the amount of text presented) to aid fluency.

20 Use a parent/school reading program. Encourage parents to increase the amount of time spent reading with their children at home. Schools can provide easily accessible materials, suggestions, and reinforcement to enhance reading curricula and provide additional opportunities for practice (Kelly-Vance & Schreck, 2002).

Persons interested in submitting material for 20 Ways To . . . should contact Robin H. Lock, College of Education, Box 41071, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 76409-1701.

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