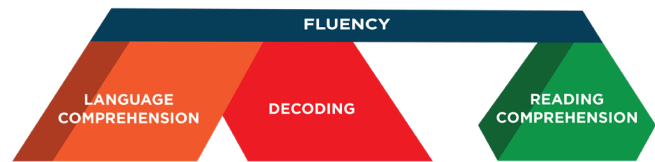


Building Fluent Readers Lesson Plan Tool

Reading fluency matters

In 1986, Philip B. Gough and William E. Tunmer proposed their Simple View of Reading (SVR). This theory provides a simple equation for the complex process that forms the foundation for reading comprehension. The SVR framework shows that reading comprehension is the product of word recognition (or *decoding*) and language comprehension.¹



Within this framework, accuracy and rate are a by-product of increasingly effortless word recognition, while prosody is a by-product of comprehending syntactic and semantic structures while reading. Accuracy, rate, and prosody form reading fluency. When readers can decode accurately and automatically, they can focus on comprehension.

Repeated reading can help build fluent readers

When students first learn to read, they spend much of their mental load reading words accurately. Students often gain accuracy at the expense of speed. Reading fast is not the goal, but laborious reading negatively affects comprehension. Repeated reading aims to build up accuracy and speed, allowing more mental load to be available for reading comprehension. The [compiled oral reading fluency norms²](#) help educators identify students in need of additional support. The norms also help educators monitor students' progress against typical words correct per minute (WCPM) benchmarks.

“Oral reading, including repeated reading, is the most effective technique for improving word recognition, speed, accuracy, and fluency. . . . The re-reading of the same text provides the repeated exposures of words needed for the reader to form new or access previously formed orthographic images of letter patterns and words.”³

—Suzanne Carreker

Preparing for the routine

A repeated reading protocol is conducted individually. It starts with an introduction to the text. The next steps include a first read, where the educator tracks WCPM, gives feedback, and sets a WCPM goal with the student. The student repeats this process with independent practice until they achieve their WCPM goal. Consider trying one or more of the extensions to enhance the repeated reading routine. When selecting a text for repeated reading, remember these essentials:

Length: Use a short passage of between 100 and 250 words.

Complexity: Students should be able to read the text with 90% accuracy and at a rate of at least 15 words per minute.

Topic: Students should have enough background knowledge to access the text.

Building Fluent Readers Lesson Plan

TASK	MIN.	INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES
<p>Introduction</p> <p>Introduce the components of reading fluency: accuracy, rate, and prosody.</p> <p>Preview the repeated reading routine.</p> <p>Introduce the text.</p>	1	<p>Read the title of the text and introduce the topic to establish whether the student has background knowledge on the topic. If the student does not have background knowledge, consider selecting a different text.</p> <p>Text is appropriate: Length Complexity Topic</p> <p>Title of text:</p> <p>Question to gauge background knowledge:</p>
<p>First read</p> <p>Have the student read a short passage of between 100 and 250 words for one minute to set a baseline WCPM.</p>	1	<p>As the student reads, mark errors on your copy of the text. Errors include words provided to the student, omitted words, and substituted words. Self-corrected words do not count as errors, but make note of them.</p> <p>Words correct: Words read:</p> <p>Accuracy %: WCPM:</p> <p>More than 10% errors: Select a new text</p> <p>10% or fewer errors: Move forward with feedback</p>
<p>Feedback</p> <p>Engage the student in feedback and indicate what to work on during independent practice.</p> <p>Connect feedback and instruction to skills and strategies the student has been taught.</p> <p><i>Tip: Because a student spends much of their mental load on fluency and decoding during the first read, comprehension should not be the priority for this round of feedback. Comprehension will improve across later readings.</i></p>	1	<p>Identify errors, provide support, and indicate focus for practice.</p> <p>Feedback on accuracy:</p> <p>Attend to parts of words (e.g., “<i>ph</i> spells /f/...”).</p> <p>Track with your finger or pen as you re-read a sentence.</p> <p>Note “tricky words” and connect them to meaning.</p> <p>Feedback on prosody:</p> <p>Model appropriate expression.</p> <p>Have the student echo read the selection focused on prosody.</p> <p>Feedback on rate:</p> <p>Ask, “Can you put these words together like you are speaking?”</p> <p>Feedback on comprehension:</p> <p>Ask student to summarize what they read in the passage.</p> <p>Ask student to identify any words they did not understand.</p> <p>Address any misunderstandings.</p>

TASK	MIN.	INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES
<p>Goal setting</p> <p>Together with the student, set a goal and graph WCPM to track growth across readings.</p>	1	<p>Introduce the graph, share the first read WCPM, and support the student in coloring boxes up to the appropriate line on the graph.</p> <p>Set a goal of a 5-10% increase and help the student mark it on the graph.</p> <p>5% Goal: $\text{Goal} = \text{WCPM} + (0.05 \times \text{WCPM})$</p> <p>10% Goal: $\text{Goal} = \text{WCPM} + (0.10 \times \text{WCPM})$</p> <p>During later reads, repeat the marking and tracking process.</p>
<p>Independent practice</p> <p>Have the student practice reading the same text independently while applying strategies.</p>	3-5	<p>Whisper reading: Quietly reading to oneself in a whisper</p> <p>Partner reading: Taking turns reading and correcting errors</p> <p>Audio support: Listening and reading along to mimic the recording</p> <p>Other strategy:</p>
<p>Later reads</p> <p>Have the student read the same text. Track errors, calculate WCPM, and graph progress.</p>	2	<p>Goal not met: Move forward with feedback.</p> <p>Goal met: Move forward with celebration.</p> <p>If the goal is not met by a fifth read, reevaluate the goal and text.</p>
<p>Celebration</p> <p>Celebrate growth and learning.</p>	1	<p>After the student has met their goal, discuss the strategies they used and which ones worked and celebrate how they have improved their fluency.</p>

Additional resources

- [“How to use progress monitoring to close gaps in foundational reading skills”](#)
- [“How MAP® reports help reading teachers scaffold instruction”](#)
- [“The power of prosody: Why faster reading isn’t always better reading”](#)

Evidence-based extensions

TASK	MIN.	INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES
<p>Partner reading</p> <p>Encourage independent practice with the support of peers.⁴</p>	8	<p>To partner students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather oral reading fluency data. • Rank students from highest to lowest score. • Cut the list in half and place the halves side by side. • Pair students based on reading level, with one student more proficient than the other. • Adjust partnerships as needed. <p>Protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner A, the stronger reader, reads. • Partner B listens and correct errors. • Partners swap roles, with partner B re-reading the passage partner A read initially.
<p>Varied practice</p> <p>Practice with multiple texts that share a high degree of overlapping words to encourage generalization.⁵</p>	8	<p>Have students follow the repeated reading protocol with two to four texts that have a high degree of overlapping vocabulary.</p> <p>Consider how to engage partners in this extension to provide additional feedback and support across multiple texts and reads.</p>
<p>Repeated oral-assisted reading</p> <p>Support sentence-level fluency with modeling, choral practice, and independent practice.⁶</p>	8	<p>Have students follow the repeated reading protocol, but practicing sentence by sentence using the practice protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My turn:</i> Partner A, the educator or a more fluent reader, reads a sentence from the text. • <i>Together:</i> Both partners read the same sentence. If there are any errors, they repeat the first two steps until accurate. • <i>Your turn:</i> Partner B reads the same sentence. If there are any errors, they repeat the full protocol until accurate.
<p>Data mountain</p> <p>Encourage growth in reading fluency with self-determination.⁷</p>	8	<p>Educator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess student readiness for reading fluency. • Model positive self-talk by reviewing scenarios of reading difficulties. • Discuss possible strategies for growth connected to the scenarios. • Implement a framework to support student ownership. <p>Student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have them create a personal-best goal, set one word higher than their previous best. • Have them share a positive thought and reading strategy they intend to use during reading. • Have them graph their new data and reflect on their growth.

Building Fluent Readers Goal Setting Graph (0-50 WCPM)

Student: _____

Grade: _____

Directions: Use this graph to plot your progress. Mark your goal by drawing a line on the graph. After each read, write down the date, the number of words correct per minute (WCPM), and the number of errors. Color in the boxes up to the number of WCPM.

50

FIRST READ

SECOND READ

THIRD READ

FOURTH READ

FIFTH READ

45

40

35

30

25

20

15

10

5

Date					
WCPM					
Errors					

Endnotes

1. Philip B. Gough and William E. Tunmer, “Decoding, Reading, and Reading Disability,” *RASE: Remedial & Special Education* 7, no. 1 (1986): 6-10.
2. Jan Hasbrouck and Gerald Tindal, *An Update to Compiled ORF Norms (Technical Report No. 1702)* (Eugene, OR: Behavioral Research and Teaching, University of Oregon, 2017), 10.
3. Suzanne Carreker, “Teaching Reading; Accurate Decoding” in *Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills* 4th edition, ed. Judith R. Birsh and Suzanne Carreker (Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2018), 376-377.
4. E. Swanson, J. Wexler, A. Shelton, L. A. Kurz, and S. Vaughn, *Partner Reading: An Evidence-Based Practice: Teacher’s Guide* (Austin, TX: The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk, 2018).
5. For more information on Deborah K. Reed’s research into Varied Practice Reading, visit the [project webpage](#) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville’s Tennessee Reading Research Center website.
6. Jane Flynn Anderson, “[Saint Mary’s University i.t.a. Literacy Clinic ROAR Protocol Checklist,](#)” Initial Teaching Alphabet Foundation website, accessed September 29, 2023.
7. Lisa Didion and Jessica R. Toste, “[Climb Data Mountain: How Components of Self-Determination Can Support Oral Reading Fluency Practice,](#)” *TEACHING Exceptional Children* 54, no. 6 (2001): 424-432.



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