Mini-Lessons for FLUENCY

Rate

1. **Fast finger:** Guided Reading levels A-D) Prompt the child to "Read it with a fast finger." Demonstrate this by having the students read it with their finger while you read it aloud quickly. Then ask the students, "How fast did your finger move?"

2. **Make your eyes do the work.** (Guided Reading levels D+) Get their finger out of the text. What originally helped their eye track the line will now slow down their reading. It's time to train their eyes to do the work alone. Say, "I'm going to read this part to you. Use your eyes to follow the words I read and then tell me how fast your eyes moved." Read the passage and ask, "How fast did your eyes move?"

3. **Fluent Shared Reading:** Use this one sparingly! Rarely! (It robs independence). Do a shared reading of the text. While reading, provide a model of good pace and phrasing.

4. **Making words and lines to increase rate**
   Push words: move a masking card over words in a line of text from left to right forcing the student's eyes to stay ahead of the mask.
   Push lines: move the masking card over a line of text, top to bottom, forcing students to keep their eyes ahead of their voice. When the line disappears, their eyes must be ahead of their voice.

Phrasing

O. **Masking phrases**
   Use a single copy of the text placed so that every child can lean in and look off the same page to read. Hold two small cards to mask 2-3 words together and prompt the student to, "Read it all together." Read it with them to provide a correct model for the phrasing. Continue masking and chorally reading. Then have the students read some phrases without teacher support. Look for a shift in behavior. In later lessons, increase the number of words between the masking cards until the students' phrasing becomes natural or 5-7 words per phrase.

l. **Tape record** a student individually reading the guided reading book and have them rewind and read with it. Direct them to notice fluency. "How did it sound? What can you change?" Have the student record their reading again and listen to the change they made.

Expression

1. **Clues from printing:** Bolded print, exclamation, and question marks: Point it out in the text and explain what it means. Demonstrate how that expression sounds. Do it with the students.
2. **Neurological impress** (This is a shared reading): The teacher and a student sit together and read aloud. The teacher takes the lead by providing a model of expressive reading while reading with the student.

Punctuation

1. **Noticing punctuation:** "There is punctuation in everything we read. Look here, and here, and here. When we read we should look at the punctuation; we don't say anything, we just look. Read this with me. (Everyone reading from the teacher's copy). I'll point at the punctuation, don't say anything for the punctuation, just look at it and then read on." Read aloud with the students while the teacher points at the punctuation. Next have the students do the pointing and reading in their own copy and validate the pauses they make as they attend to the punctuation.

2. **Reading inside the quotation marks:** "Quotation marks look like little lips. They are used to show us what someone is saying. When we see the first quotation marks, we know that the character is opening their lips to say something. The second set of quotation marks show us that the person is closing their lips. Let's read what some of the quotes say. Here is one that is starting. It will end here. Let's read the part between the quotation marks." Read together then ask, "Who said this?" Locate more beginning and ending quotation marks and read the quotes.

3. **Character voices:** Do the lesson prescribed above but locate who is saying the quote. Then instruct the students to change their voice to sound like the character.

4. **Different ways to say "said"** Look for quotations and find how the character said it; shouted, asked, told, begged, laughed... Make a list of different ways to say 'said'.

Instructional Strategies for Teaching Fluency

"Notes taken from Fluency: Strategies and Assessments by Jerry L. Johns and Roberto L. Berglund

Paired Reading: Adult supports student by supplying word recognition help and extending understanding of the text, as well as a model for fluent reading.

- Child chooses the reading material
- Use a starting signal
- Adjust your reading speed to match the student's
- Deal with mistakes by simply repeating the work correctly and pointing to the part the student needs to notice.
- Have a signal for independent reading.
- Praise independent reading.
- Wait 4 seconds for students to self-correct errors, and then give help if needed.
- Talk about the reading material.

Reader's Theater: A presentation of text read aloud expressively and dramatically by two or more readers. Students can read from commercially prepared scripts or develop scripts from materials they are reading, either narrative or expository in nature. General characteristics of RT include: no full memorization; holding scripts during performance; full costumes or staging not required; narration provides framework for action conveyed by readers. (Johns, 2002)

- Develop or select a text to be used with students.
- Read aloud from the story on which the script is based. Proved a good model of fluent reading.
- Provide a brief lesson on one aspect of fluency. This discussion should help provide insights about how the text/characters might sound.
- Distribute scripts to the students and have them read silently or with a buddy. They may be encouraged to take the scripts home for additional practice.
- Have students practice reading the script and aloud again; then determine who will be reading each role for performance purposes.
- Have students highlight their parts and read and reread their assigned roles with their group. Encourage them to think about how they might best convey the feelings of the character they are representing.
- Finally, in front of an audience, have students perform their production.

Repeated Reading: "Engaging students in repeated readings of text is particularly effective in fostering more fluent reading for students struggling to develop proficient reading strategies." (Allington, 2001 quoted by Johns, 2002)

- Select a brief passage or story (at an appropriate level of difficulty) for the student to read.
- Ask the student to read the passage orally. Teacher should note miscues and keep tract of the time it took the student to read the passage.
- Do a quick comprehension check by asking the student to tell you about the passage.
- Encourage the student to practice rereading the passage independently for the next few days.
- Repeat the process of having the student read the passage to you. Record the time and number of miscues.
- Charts can be kept by the teacher or the student.
- Continue this general procedure over a period of time until a suitable rate is achieved.

Echo Reading: Involves modeling fluent reading for students and then encouraging them to reread the same text with support as needed. The student immediately echoes or imitates the performance of a more skilled reader.

- Select fairly easy reading material.
- Read a phrase or sentence aloud. Call attention to any textual signals that help you determine the rate and expression you used.
- Reread the phrase or sentence and have student(s) echo the same text immediately after you finish.
- If students echo effectively, continue modeling the next phrase or sentence. Then have the students again echo your reading.
- If students do not echo your reading effectively on the first try, model the phrase or sentence again and have students echo your reading again.
- As students become proficient with easy materials, gradually move into more difficult text.

Choral Reading: Reading done by a group or unison.

- Select a text.
- Provide copies of the text to each student or display it in a manner so that all can see.
- Read the text aloud to students, modeling fluent reading. Tell students why you chose to read it as you did.
- After modeling, invite students to follow along and read with you. Practice reading together chorally several times. Vary the experience as you see fit.

4 Corners Reading:

- Students select a text or passage they would like to share.

- Have them practice reading the text independently. This may take place over the course of a few days.
- At the designated time, divide the class into four groups, one group for every corner of the classroom.
- Each student brings their chosen text to the group.
- Students take turns reading their text or passage to the group.

Radio Reading: Students read fluently for the purpose of performing and sharing a selected portion of text with others. It provides an opportunity for students to use their experience with audio-only technology to model fluent reading and communicate a message to their peers.

- Select material that is at the student's instructional level.
- Explain the procedure to the students. Emphasize that it is the reader's responsibility to communicate a message. Assign segments to text to students to prepare for the next day.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice their segments.
- In addition to practicing the selection, invite each student to prepare a question or two about the material that can be asked of the listeners following the reading.
- On the day of the Radio Reading, review with the students the following procedures:
  o Read your selection aloud with meaning and expression.
  o If you have trouble with a word:
    ▪ Correct it and go on.
    ▪ Ask, "What is that word?"
  o After reading:
    ▪ Ask the questions you have prepared for your selection.
    ▪ Ask someone to tell you what your selection was mainly about.
    ▪ Reread portions of text to clarify and correct confusions.
- At the conclusion of the experience, each student then poses his or her questions to the group or you may lead a brief discussion about the entire text. It may also be appropriate to reflect on the elements of effective read-alouds and how the group did in modeling them.

Easy Reading: is just that----EASY!

Timed Reading: Allows students to practice and record their progress. Provides a visual documentation of their fluency growth and improvement.

- Provide a chart for students to record their wpm.
- Time the reading of a selected text and record the wpm on the chart.

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- Encourage the students to practice the passage multiple times over the next day or two.
- Time the reading of the selected text and record the wpm on the chart next to the first reading.
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- This process can be repeated a few times per selection. When the goal is achieved, select a new piece of text for practice.

Reading Wave: This is a fun one! And results in a pretty silly reading.

- Ask each student to select *one sentence* from the text they are reading.
- Have them practice reading that sentence until it is fluent.
- On the signal, each student will stand in turn, read their sentence and sit down.
- The result should be "wave-like" and the final reading is much like a "mad lib".

Reading Train: Another fun one!

- Have each student select a short passage from the text they are reading.
- Have everyone stand in a circle and count off by 2s.
- Ask the 1s to turn left, while the 2s turn right. They should be facing a partner.
- The 1s read their passage, then the 2s read their passage.
- Have everyone turn around so they are facing a new partner.
- Take turns again reading the chosen passage.

Super Speed X3:   This makes for great independent practice.

- Students will read their selected text for one minute.
- At the end of that minute, they will place a small sticky note where they stopped.
- Ask them to go back to the beginning of the text and read again for one minute. Then move the sticky note to where they stopped.
- Repeat the process a third time.
- Help them to celebrate the progress they made in just three short minutes.

Shadow Reading: The purpose of this procedure is to provide an explicit model of prosody. In this procedure, the teacher and student are reading the text

simultaneously. The teacher is the stronger voice so the child is better able to mimic the fluent reader.

Oral Recitation of Lesson: A structured process that involves both direct and indirect instruction using narrative text. The lesson includes the modeling of effective oral reading and both guided and independent practice.

- Read a story aloud to students.
- Following the reading, elicit the major story elements. Individually or as a group, complete a story map graphic organizer.
- Using the story map as a guide, help students write a summary of the story.
- Following the completion of the story map and summary, read aloud a selected portion of the story, perhaps one that was particularly exciting, meaningful, or eventful.
- After reading the segment of the text aloud, have students read it chorally with you until they appear to be reading with a good rate, accuracy, and expression.
- Next, put students into pairs and have them read the story segment to each other. Ask them to read the passage just as you have practiced it together.
- When students have completed partner reading, read aloud another portion of the text and follow it with choral reading and partner reading, until several segments of the text have been modeled and practiced.
- On another day, ask students to select one of the modeled and practiced passages and read it aloud to a peer group. Following each reading, ask listeners to make one or two positive comments about each reader's performance.
- On successive days (2-4), ask students to read aloud in a soft voice to themselves for about 10 minutes, using the same passages previously practiced. Move around the class or group and listen to students as they read, providing feedback as appropriate.

Teacher Directed/Silent Readings: SSR encourages students to practice reading self-selected materials. The purpose is to provide an opportunity for students to develop fluency, expand their vocabulary and comprehension abilities, develop broader knowledge of written language, and provide powerful source for world knowledge.

- Proved an opportunity for students to locate the materials and have them read for the SSR period.
- Designate a specific time during the day when all students will participate in SSR. Some teachers chose to do this during reading workshop.

- Review the procedures and guidelines so students understand the expectations during this time.
- Start with a short period of time and expand the time, as students are ready. When students ask if they can continue reading after the time is up, consider that a signal to increase SSR time.
- Provide materials for students who can't find something to read or who run short of materials before the time is up.
- Be a model of good reading. Share with the students what you are reading so they will grow to understand that adults choose to read for pleasure, too.
- Following the SSR time, compliment students on their behavior and consideration of others. Invite students to comment on their reading.

Fluency Resources

Language Arts State Core
Fry Phrases
High Frequency/sight words
Fountas and Pinnell grade level phonics programs (K-3)

What Research Has to Say About Fluency Instruction Edited by S. Jay Samuels and Alan E. Farstrup   ISBN 0-87207-587-7

Practical Fluency by Max Brand & Gayle Brand ISBN 1-57110-410-0

The Fluent Reader by Timothy V. Rasinski
        ISBN 0-439-33208-7

Building Fluency: Lessons and Strategies for Reading Success
        By Wiley Blevins   ISBN 0-439-28838-X

Fluency Lessons for the Overhead Grades 2-3 by Alyse Sweeney
        ISBN 0-439-58852-9

Fluency Lessons for the Overhead Grades 4-6 by Alyse Sweeney
        ISBN 0-439-58853-7

What's after assessment? Follow-up Instruction for Phonics, Fluency, and Comprehension
by Kathleen Strickland   ISBN 0-325-00572-9

Fluency in Focus by Prescott-Griffin and Witherell
        ISBN 0-325-00622-9

Source for Reading Fluency by Nancy B. Swigert
        ISBN 0-760-60445-2

Teaching for Comprehension and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Reading, K-8
by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
        ISBN 0-325-00308-4

Fluency Strategies and Assessments by Jerry L. Johns and Roberta L. Berglund
        ISBN 0-7575-2899-6

DIBELS website: http://dibels.uoregon.edu
        Login: dibelsuser   Password: 980679

Reader's Theater websites:
www.ReadingLady.com
www.readers-theater.com
www.aaronshep.com/rt
www.loiswalker.com
www.lisablau.com
www.teachingheart.net/rreaderstheater.htm
www.readinga-z.com/fluency/index.htm

Metacognition and Fix-up Strategies

"Using Metacognition in the Reader's Workshop: Some Key Ideas
- Proficient Readers monitor their comprehension during reading- they know when the text they are reading or listening to makes sense, when it does not, what does not make sense, and whether the unclear portions are critical to the overall understanding of the piece.
- Proficient readers can identify when text is comprehensible and the degree to which they understand it. They can identify ways in which a text becomes gradually more understandable by reading past an unclear portion and/or by rereading parts or the whole text.
- Proficient readers can identify confusing ideas, themes, and/or surface elements (words, sentence or text structures, graphs, tables, etc.) and can suggest a variety of different means to solve the problems they have.
- Proficient readers are aware of what they need to comprehend in relation to their purpose for reading.
- Many readers must learn how to pause, consider the meanings in text, reflect on their understandings, and use different strategies to enhance their understanding. This process is best learned by watching and listening to effective models of think aloud. As developing readers learn these processes, they can gradually take responsibility for monitoring their own comprehension as they read independently."

Keene, E.O. & Zimmerman, S. (1997) *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Fix-Up Strategies for Surface Meaning:
- Look for a word-part you know
- Slow down
- Take sentence apart
- Get an alternate pronunciation
- Look up possible word meanings
- Check text features for help
- Substitute a synonym that makes sense
- Record and study related vocabulary

Fix-Up Strategies for Deeper Meaning
- Reread
- Read it aloud
- Keep reading and see if it gets clearer
- Read the sentence above and below
- Talk to someone about a part

- Read an easier text on the same topic then return to the more difficult text
- Take notes and write your connections and questions in the notes
- Create a picture or diagram to hold meaning
- Stop and reflect

Teaching Fluency Mini-Lessons

(go to www.forthegoodofallstudents.blogspot.com for clickable links)

Fluent readers are better at comprehending their reading. They do not constantly think about solving words and the meaning shines through. The most important part of reading is being able to understand it, so become a fluent reader so you do not miss meaning.

- Introduce the Acronym and the meaning of each:

  - Expression = voices for characters, tone of voice that shows mood, inflection to support punctuation

  - Accuracy = number of words correctly read

  - Rate = speed, how fast or slow (this will change based on the setting, mood and characters but should never be so fast so that we can't understand or so slow that we become bored or confused)

  - Smoothness = reading in long meaningful phrases, heading all punctuation

- As we focus on fluency, we will use a rubric to remind us what fluent reading should sound like and what it should not.

Foundation Strategy

- Read a story or passage with poor fluency. Ask the students to identify the problems. Next, fix the identified problems and try again. You will need model the importance of repeated practice continually.

  - As you do this throughout your fluency lessons, help the students describe the problems more specifically, using the vocabulary on the rubric.

Guided Reading/Mini-lessons: Expression focus

- Introduce "Mood" - read a passage with good fluency but the total wrong mood and ask the students to identify what was wrong with your reading.

- Mood - (you can use the emotional wheel to help students describe moods) have students go through each page and decide the mood of the scenes and characters. Have them label these in the book with their sticky notes. In their small groups, have them do a few and then practice making their voice change with each page to reflect the mood. (The Rough Faced Girl is a good mood book that you can contrast)

- Mood - have students read various passages with a different emotion: happy, excited, mad, sad, in love, silly, serious, bored etc. Have them practice those different emotions both with you and then on their own. They will laugh and enjoy the lesson as they play with their voice. If students are feeling very shy about this, make sure you boldly model for them. If you can make them laugh or even laugh at yourself, you will lower the affective filter (maybe not enough for them to step out today, but definitely in the future).

- Mood - Show the kids one of the mash-up trailers for a children's movie. Demonstrating how if you change the music or mood you can take a well-known story and make seem very different. I like the **Marry Poppins Scary Movie Trailer,** you don't need to show all of it to give the kids the idea. If you think it is too scary, there are many other choices. Examples: **Toy Story 3 Scary Trailer** or **What if Jaws was a Disney Movie.**

- Mood - Facial Expressions: Explain how facial expressions are vital to expressing mood. Ask the students to watch your face as you read a picture book. Make sure you read expressively and exaggerate your facial expression. Ask what they notice (ignore the heat of your self-conscious facial capillaries as they blush from the many penetrating eyes). Next, tell your students to read a phrase (I usually choose one from a bulletin board around me). Ask the students to read it in a happy voice with a frown on their face. Have them try saying, "I am happy" with a frown on their face. Then repeat asking them to say, "I am sad" with a smile on their face. They will notice that you cannot make it really sound happy with a frown on your face and you really cannot sound sad with a smile on your face. They will giggle and think it is funny. Have them practice using facial expressions while they read. It will be uncomfortable for a while but let them know they will soon forget they are doing it; good readers do it naturally. Praise it when you see it.

- Mood: Action or drama - Good readers get into their story when reading aloud. They often use actions along with their facial expressions. Model this expressive reading then demonstrate a lack of expression. Finally, have student share the differences they noticed.

- Smoothness: model reading where you are stopping at the end of each line instead of with the punctuation. Ask the students to identify the problems. Talk about how much this changes the meaning of the text and how often it occurs. Model correctly after.

- Smoothness: a really fun activity to help students notice punctuation is to have them do actions or make sounds for each punctuation mark in a reading passage. Pause, sigh, or tap pencils once for a comma. Make a stop sign with your hand, tap twice, hop, or click your tongue twice at each period, question mark (you can shrug your shoulders here), or exclamation point. You can slide at hyphens etc.

- Smoothness: Have students work on their breathing while reading. Model being out of breath with a really long sentence. Show how punctuation helps us know when to breathe. Make sure you have some challenging sentences for them to practice with.

- Smoothness: Read the book 20 Odd Ducks. This shows how punctuation can completely change the meaning of the text. A fun extension we did was a class book where they had

to write sentences about Earth Science, with different punctuation. They had to draw pictures to illustrate the various meanings.
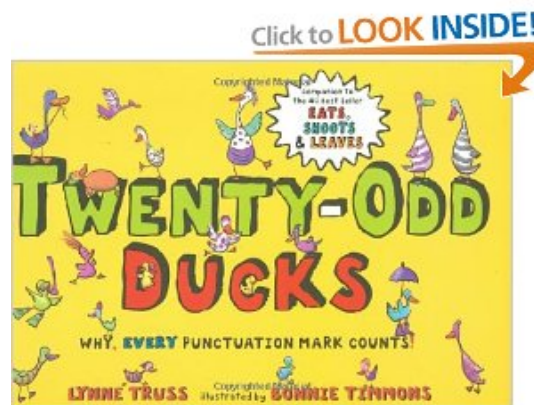
Fluency and Character Ed in Five Minutes or Less

According to Utah Law (Utah Code Title 53A, Chapter 13, Section 109), we are supposed to teach character education in public schools. Described in 645 words, this law includes teaching about honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service, obedience to law, as well as respect, dignity and the idea of common good.

With an integrated curriculum, we can meet these needs in many ways. One affective way to integrate fluency is to do it through music (with lyrics). **Why would you do this?**
- More time with eyes on text (highly researched)
- Engaged students because they want to sing along and/or learn the lyrics
- Extra oral reading practice
- Sets the tone of the classroom and brings in more joy
- Comprehension skills are used to analyze/determine the meaning
- Character education issues are often addressed

We call this "Song of the Day" at my school. It is one of our students' favorite traditions and we have received extensive positive parent feedback from this. So, how does "Song of the Day" work?
- First, pick a song, find the lyrics and determine if it is appropriate and has a message about the topic you are addressing. **CLICK HERE for a list of 114 possible songs.**
- Next, you need to display the lyrics for the class - preferably using a projector.
- After that, you play the song and highlight the lyrics with your mouse as they proceed. I like to push their eyes ahead so I highlight a line ahead of where the lyrics are.
  - The goal is to have the students read along, but if possible, we want them to sing along. (The best way to lower their affective filter and get them to sing with you is to start out by singing loudly yourself, even badly.... model that it is safe. - Dr. Waite @UVU)

- Finally, have students write what they think the message of the song was, share with their table and then have one from each table share with the class if time permits. They should adjust or add to their thoughts if someone said something they really liked or agreed with. Sometimes we allow students to submit songs. **CLICK HERE for a Student SOD Submission**

Sometimes I use the idea of song of the day to open up a topic, and every once in a while I go overboard and create something a little more special...