

READING FLUENCY

What might fluency practice look like in the classroom?

Actively teaching reading fluency to struggling pupils can be beneficial. This tool offers practical classroom examples to support developing pupils' reading fluency.



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What the evidence tells us:

Possible approaches–

Whole class fluency practice



Small group & 1:1 fluency intervention



Early Years Examples

Developing early reading can often be integrated successfully with communication and language approaches.

Children are likely to benefit from singing and rhyming activities focused on developing alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness to lay the groundwork for decoding.

- Routinely incorporate rich opportunities for children to sing songs, recite rhymes and learn poems by heart during story time. These can be rehearsed over and over, with and without a copy of the text.
- Read aloud from picture books with repeated refrains so that children can start to join in and emulate prosodic reading. For example, an adult might read 'I Want My Hat Back' by Jon Klassen daily with the children, sweeping their finger under the phrases to model expert prosody and pausing so that all children can chorally recite the refrain and practise using good prosody.
- For children at the upper end of the Early Years, find opportunities for them to re-read familiar books so that they can apply the skills of fluent reading with little difficulty. For example, an adult might ask a child to use their story-telling voice to re-read their familiar book to a partner, pretending to be the teacher.
- Use echo reading to model the prosody required to bring the text to life and re-read sentences until a good level of fluency is achieved by the child.

Key Stage 1 Examples

From the earliest opportunity, reading should be presented as the process of understanding a text.

As children learn the complex skill of reading, we help develop skills of word recognition, reading fluency and making sense of a text.

- Repeated reading aloud from picture books, ensuring children can see the text, helps to developing familiarity. Encourage children to read along (where words and phrases are accessible for them) and to read with good prosody.
- Sing songs and perform poetry together, providing the text for the children to follow, rehearse and perform.
- Find opportunities for children to re-read familiar books matched to their level of decoding so that they can confidently apply the skills of fluent reading with little difficulty.
- Incorporate repeated reading, self-correction and choral reading to explicitly improve children's prosody. For example, children might read and re-read 'What is Pink?' by Christina Rossetti, with the teacher modelling good prosody and the children echoing along.

* This resource was developed with the support of colleagues from Herts for Learning.

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Key Stage 2 Examples

Most pupils will benefit from being explicitly taught and being encouraged to practise through guided oral reading instruction and repeated reading.

Reading accuracy and automaticity can also be supported by building children's knowledge of aspects of word structure such as common letter combinations (orthographic awareness) and the meaningful parts within words (morphological awareness).

- When reading from a class text, model strategies such as exploration of morphology or etymology to read unfamiliar words with accuracy and find opportunities for repeated reading to build automaticity. For example, when reading 'Atlas of Adventures' by Lucy Letherland, the teacher might focus on and discuss the meaning of the word 'spectacular'. They might highlight the root word 'spect', model how to pronounce the word and then link to other words that contain the same root such as 'spectate', 'inspect' and 'respect'.
- Sing songs and perform poetry, speeches, monologues and playscripts together. Provide texts for pupils to follow, re-read, rehearse and perform.
- Provide motivational opportunities for pupils to re-read a text many times. For example, a group of pupils might practice and perform a text already shared with the class using 'Readers' Theatre' to support oral reading development.
- Provide pupils with bespoke book recommendations for independent reading, which are matched to interest and pitched at a level to enable effortless, confident reading.

Key Stage 3 Examples

While most pupils begin secondary school with the general skills and knowledge needed to read accurately, fluently and with comprehension, some do not.

Given the complexity of academic reading, pupils need to be able to deploy an array of reading strategies, which can be modelled and practised in the classroom to develop students as strategic readers.

- When reading from a class text, model appropriate strategies to tackle the meaning of unfamiliar words. Encourage repeated reading of the word to build accuracy and automaticity.
- For example, in a science lesson might involve pupils revisiting prior learning on reaction energy and catalysts. To support the decoding and automaticity of newly learned tier 3 words 'exothermic' and 'endothermic', the whole class might choral read a short paragraph in unison to ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to practise reading these words aloud in context
- Provide motivational opportunities for pupils to re-read familiar texts. For example, using a poem from 'The Crossover' by Kwame Alexander, pupils might practise reading a stanza each repeatedly, coming together to perform the poem.
- Use echo and choral reading when working closely with small groups or 1:1 to support oral reading development.

Terminology

Echo reading is a rereading strategy where the teacher reads a segment of text aloud and the pupils echo it back.

Choral reading is when a small group or whole class read aloud together.

Morphology is the study of words and their parts e.g. prefixes and suffixes.

Etymology is the study of the origin of words.