

Fluency

Fluency is the rate at which one can recognize and read words correctly. Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension and therefore an important building block of reading. With young children who are just learning to read, letter-naming fluency is a strong predictor of reading success.

Fluency Chart (from DIBELS Next)

Below are the benchmarks fluency scores recommended by DIBELS Next. Fluency is measured by counting how many correct words a child can read in 1 minute. Of course, fluency is much more than words read per minute. A child should be reading with expression, using good phrasing and observing punctuation marks. 'Words per minute' (wpm) is just a baseline score to see if a child is attaining grade level expectations.

	September	January	May
1 st grade		23+ wpm	47+ wpm
2 nd grade	52+ wpm	72+ wpm	87+ wpm
3 rd grade	70+ wpm	86+ wpm	100+ wpm
4 th grade	90+ wpm	103+ wpm	115+ wpm

Modeling (listening to a good reader) is the one way to practice fluency at home - **but** one has to make sure your child is involved not just listening. If your child was able to learn just by listening then he/she could become proficient at playing the piano just by watching. Of course this can't happen so here are three ways to practice fluency.

Echo Reading: You model reading a sentence with expression, intonation and phrasing, and then your child echoes it back. They should sound just like you when they reread what you have modeled.

Paired Reading: Read a short passage three times to your child. The first reading is unpracticed. You will make some mistakes in words or expression, but as you practice you become more and more fluent. Your child is the listener and can critique your reading. Then they get to pick a short passage, and they read it three times to you. You critique them in a positive manner as they read three times.

Choral Reading: The third way to practice fluency is choral reading, which is as it says, done in chorus. You both read the passage at the same time. This way your child has to keep up with your pacing. Poetry is a fun way to use choral reading for fluency building.

Your child will also need some independent practice at reading fluently along with the modeling. Repeated readings are quick to do and children usually enjoy this because they get to use a timer as they read.

Repeated Readings: Choose a short passage for your child to read. This could be in their reading, science, or social studies book. Your child will read the passage for one minute. Make a note of where they stop. They will then reread the passage 3-5 times or until they are reading it fluently. Any words read incorrectly do not count towards the number of words read in a minute. The first reading is a cold read as it has not been read before. Their final reading is a warm read and the words per minute (wpm) should be much higher than the cold read. This can be done in five to ten minutes. A chart could be used to document progress.