

## Fluency

**A fluent reader is one who has the ability to read with accuracy, expression, comprehension, and an appropriate rate.**

- An **accurate reader** is one who recognizes most words automatically. If the reader **misses more than one in ten words** the material is too difficult.
- A student who reads with **expression** uses correct phrasing, tone, and pitch. The slashes in the sentence below provide an example of what proper expression would look like when reading orally.  
**The students / walked quietly / into the classroom.**
- A student who reads with **comprehension** understands what he/she is reading. Reading without comprehension is merely word calling.
- A student's **rate** of reading is determined by the number of words read per minute (**WPM**) or number of correct words per minute (**WCPM**). The following table indicates the suggested targets of oral reading fluency by grade level.

Grade Level	Suggested "Targets"
1	50
2	90
3	110
4	120
5	130
6	145
7	150
8	155

Compiled by Jerry L. Johns (2003)

### Factoids

- Fluent readers are better able to devote their attention to comprehending text (LeBarge and Samuels, 1974).
- Instruction in fluency appears to work best with students from mid-first to late second grade reading levels (Kuhn and Stahl, 2003).

- Fluency develops gradually over considerable time and through practice (National Reading Panel, 2000).
- A recent study of the National Assessment of Educational Progress found that 44% of the nation's fourth graders were low in fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000).

### How Can a Teacher Help?

A teacher can improve a student's fluency through instruction. Listed below are several activities that will increase a student's fluency.

1. Read to your students on a daily basis placing emphasis on good oral reading skills.
2. Provide students with opportunities to read material on their instructional level.
3. Provide students with opportunities to learn the basic sight words.
4. Provide opportunities for students to participate in the following instructional activities such as, Readers Theater, Echo Reading, Partner Reading, and Rereading.

### What instructional activities do you use to insure that your students are fluent readers?

Learn more about fluency activities by reviewing the material in this Appendix.

#### References

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- LeBarge, D. and Samuels, S. (1974). Toward a theory of automatic information processing in reading. *Cognitive Psychology*, 6, 293-323.
- National Reading Panel. (2000). Teaching Children to Read. Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
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