

Decoding and Fluency Instruction

Ensuring Accurate and Fluent Reading

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Decoding - What?

The ability to utilize letter- sound associations and structural elements to determine the pronunciation of unknown words.

- **Letter-sound associations** (phoneme-grapheme associations):
 - Consonant and vowel letters,
 - Consonant combinations (blends, digraphs)
 - Vowel combinations (digraphs, diphthongs, r-controlled vowels)
- **Decoding of regular, single syllable words**
 - CVC, CVVC, CV, CVVC

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Decoding - What?

- Structural elements including:
 - Inflectional endings
 - Prefixes
 - Suffixes
- Decoding of multi-syllabic words
- Reading of irregular words in which letters don't represent most common sounds
- Reading decodable text

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Decoding - Why?

- Necessary, though not sufficient, for **comprehension**.
"There is no comprehension strategy powerful enough to compensate for the fact you can't read the words."
- English is an **alphabetic language**.
- **Ability to blend** individual sounds into recognizable words is critical component of reading. (Beck, 2006)
- Good readers **rely primarily on the letters** in a word rather than context or pictures to identify familiar and unfamiliar words. (Ehri, 1994)

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Decoding - Why?

- Poorly developed word recognition skills are the most pervasive and debilitating source of **reading challenges**. (Adams, 1990; Perfetti, 1985; Share & Stanovich, 1995)
- Helps students **overcome reading difficulties** and increases ability to comprehend text. (National Reading Panel, 2000)
- That explicit instruction in alphabet coding facilitates early reading acquisition is one of the most well established conclusions in all of behavioral science. (Stanovich, 1994)

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Decoding - Why?

- Reexamining the THREE CUEING SYSTEMS
 - **Primary System**
Phonological cueing system
(*Letter-sound associations*)
 - **Confirmation Systems**
Syntactical cueing system
(*Word-order*)
Semantic cueing system
(*Contextual meaning*)

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Letter-Sound Associations - How?

- Utilize a well-organized, **systematic sequence** to introduce the most common letter-sound associations.
- Provide **explicit instruction** (rather than implicit instruction) to introduce letter-sound associations.
- Differentiate between **continuous and stop sounds**.
- Teach letter-sound associations to a **high level of mastery**.
- Provide **cumulative review**.

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Example

Teaching Letter-Sound Associations

sat

1. (Point to example word.) This word is sat . What word? *sat*
2. (Point to the underlined grapheme.) The sound of this letter is /aaaa/.
3. What sound? /aaaa/

OR

a

1. (Point to the isolated grapheme.) The sound of this letter is /aaaa/.
2. Say the sound with me. /aaaa/
3. What sound? /aaaa/

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Decoding of Regular Words - How?

- As letter-sound correspondences are learned, **incorporate the letters into words.**
- **Model blending of sounds** into words.
- Provide an **adequate amount of practice** on decoding words.
- Provide **parallel spelling** (encoding) instruction.
- Use consistent **instructional routines.**

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Decoding Strategy for Short Words

1. **Say the sounds.**
2. **Say the sounds quickly.**
3. **Say the word.**
4. **Ask yourself**
Is it a real word?
Does it make sense?

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Example A

Sounding Out VC, CVC, CVCC, CCVC words

sip fit lip tip rim

Instructional Routine

1. When I touch a letter, I'll say its sound. I'll keep saying the sound until I touch the next letter. I won't stop between sounds.
2. My turn to sound out this word. (Touch under each letter and say the sound. Hold continuous sounds and say stop sounds quickly. Don't stop between sounds.)
3. Sound out this word with me. (Touch under each letter.)
4. Your turn. Sound out this word by yourselves. (Touch under each letter.)
5. What word?

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Example B

Sounding Out VC, CVC, CVCC, CCVC words letter by letter
mom top shop dot

Instructional Routine

1. (Write the first letter on the board.) What sound?
2. (Write the second letter on the board.) What sound?
3. (Move your hand under the two letters.) Blend it.
4. (Write the third letter.) What sound?
5. (Move your hand under the letters.) Blend the sounds.
6. What word?

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Example C

Sounding Out Words with Letter Combinations

rain train paint sail seal

Instructional Routines

1. (Point to the underlined letters.) What sound?
2. Sound out the word to yourself.
3. (Point to the word.) What word?
4. (Have students reread the list without the pre-correction.)
5. (Have individual students read the words or have them read the words to their partner.)

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Example D

Decoding CVCE words

bake rate rat brake mane man

Instructional Routine

1. An e at the end of a word tells us to say the name of this letter. (Point to the vowel letter.)
2. (Guide students in applying the rule.)
 - a. Is there an e at the end of this word?
 - b. (Point to the vowel letter.) So do we say the name of this letter?
 - c. What is the name of this letter?
 - d. (Point to the word.) What word?

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Example E

Decoding Words with Onset Rime

Instructional Routine

1. (Point to rime.) This part is an. What part? **an**
2. Get ready to read words that end with an. **ran**
3. (Point to new word.) What word? **ban**
4. (Point to next word.) What word? **fan**
5. (Continue with additional word.) **man**
Stan

Note: Reading "word families" is an excellent way to build word reading fluency. Practice the "word family" until students are very fluent. Use echo reading, choral reading, and partner reading.

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Decoding Strategy for Long Words

1. Say the parts.
2. Say the parts quickly.
3. Say the word.
4. Ask yourself
Is it a real word?
Does it make sense?

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Example F

Decoding of Multisyllabic Words (Loop, Loop, Loop Strategy)

(Preparation: Segment the word into decodable chunks. Be sure that prefixes and suffixes are separate parts. Draw loops to segment the words.)

instruction commitment remarkable

Instructional Routine

1. (Move finger under the first part.) What part?
2. (Repeat for remaining parts.)
3. (Move finger quickly under the parts.) What part? What part? What part?
4. What word?
5. Is that a real word?

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Example G

REWARDS Strategy for Decoding Long Words (Sopris)

Overt Strategy

1. Circle the prefixes.
2. Circle the suffixes.
3. Underline the vowels.
4. Say the parts of the word.
5. Say the whole word.
6. Make it a real word.

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Fluency - What?

- The ability to effortlessly read words accurately and quickly.
- The ability to read connected text accurately with appropriate rate and expression (prosody). (Judson, Mercer, & Lane, 2000)

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Fluency - What?

- “The ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading such as decoding.” (Meyer & Felton, 1999)

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2005 Hasbrouck & Tindal Oral Reading Fluency Data

Jan Hasbrouck and Gerald Tindal completed an extensive study of oral reading fluency in 2004. The results of their study are published in the technical report, “Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Measurement.” (brtluoregon.edu/tech_reports.htm), and in the article, “Oral Reading Fluency Norms: A Valuable Assessment Tool...,” in the April 2006 issue of *The Reading Teacher* (www.reading.org/publications/journals/RT/).

The table below shows the mean oral reading fluency of students in grades 1 through 8 as determined by Hasbrouck and Tindal’s data.

You can use the information in this table to draw conclusions and make decisions about the oral reading fluency of your students. **Students who score 10 or more words below the 50th percentile using the average score of two unpracticed readings from grade-level materials need a fluency-building program.** In addition, teachers can use the table to set the long-term fluency goals for their struggling readers.

Average weekly improvement is the average words per week growth you can expect from a student. It was calculated by subtracting the fall score from the spring score and dividing the difference by 32, the typical number of weeks between the fall and spring assessments. For grade 1, since there is no fall assessment, the average weekly improvement was calculated by subtracting the winter score from the spring score and dividing the difference by 16, the typical number of weeks between the winter and spring assessments.

Grade	Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
1	90		81	111	1.9
	75		47	82	2.2
	50		23	53	1.9
	25		12	28	1.0
	10		6	15	0.6
2	90	106	125	142	1.1
	75	79	100	117	1.2
	50	51	72	89	1.2
	25	25	42	61	1.1
	10	11	18	31	0.6

Grade	Percentile	Fall WCPM*	Winter WCPM*	Spring WCPM*	Avg. Weekly Improvement**
3	90	128	146	162	1.1
	75	99	120	137	1.2
	50	71	92	107	1.1
	25	44	62	78	1.1
	10	21	36	48	0.8
4	90	145	166	180	1.1
	75	119	139	152	1.0
	50	94	112	123	0.9
	25	68	87	98	0.9
	10	45	61	72	0.8
5	90	166	182	194	0.9
	75	139	156	168	0.9
	50	110	127	139	0.9
	25	85	99	109	0.8
	10	61	74	83	0.7
6	90	177	195	204	0.8
	75	153	167	177	0.8
	50	127	140	150	0.7
	25	98	111	122	0.8
	10	68	82	93	0.8
7	90	180	192	202	0.7
	75	156	165	177	0.7
	50	128	136	150	0.7
	25	102	109	123	0.7
	10	79	88	98	0.6
8	90	185	199	199	0.4
	75	161	173	177	0.5
	50	133	146	151	0.6
	25	106	115	124	0.6
	10	77	84	97	0.6

Factors Effecting Fluency

1. Proportion of words in text that are recognized as “**sight words**”.
Sight words include any word that readers have practiced reading sufficiently often to be read from memory.” (Ehri, 2002)
2. **Speed of decoding strategies** used to determine the pronunciation of unknown words.
3. **Speed** with which **word meanings** are identified.
4. **Speed** at which **overall meaning** is constructed.

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Fluency - Why?

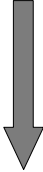
- Fluency is related to reading **comprehension**. (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Maxwell, 1988; Jenkins, Fuchs, Espin, van den Broek, & Deno, 2000)
- When students read fluently, decoding requires less attention. Attention can be given to comprehension. (Samuels, Schermer, & Reinking, 1992)
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that nearly half of American fourth graders had not achieved a minimal level of fluency in their reading, which was associated with significant difficulties in comprehension while reading silently. (Pinnell et al., 1995).

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Fluency - Why?

- The prosody component of fluency (expression and phrasing) directly connects to comprehension. (Dowhower, 1987, 1991; Schreiber, 1980, 1987, 1991; Schreiber & Read, 1980).

Decoding - Accuracy
Fluency - Quick and Automatic
Fluency - Expression
Comprehension



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Fluency - Why?

- Laborious decoding and low fluency results in **little reading**. (Moats, 2001)
 - An accurate, fluent reader will read more. (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Stanovich, 1993)
- The rich get richer. The poor get poorer.**
(Stanovich, 1986)

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Fluency - Why?

- Fluent readers complete assignments with more ease.
- Fluent readers will also perform better on reading tests.
- Fluency is a critical component of reading instruction. (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2000; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000)

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Fluency - How?

- Provide extensive reading practice.

**PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE
PRACTICE PRACTICE and more
PRACTICE**

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Fluency

Procedure #1. Provide extensive reading practice.

Utilize procedures such as augmented silent reading, choral reading, cloze reading, and partner reading.

Procedure #2. Encourage wide independent reading.

Procedure #3. Provide repeated reading practice at the word level.

When reading word lists, correct all errors, have students reread word lists until competent.

Procedure #4. Utilize repeated reading exercises within passages to increase fluency.

(Chard et.al, 2002)

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Fluency - How?

- Use reading procedures in class that promote maximum practice for all students (e.g., choral reading, cloze reading, partner reading).

- (See Example Passage Reading Procedures)

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Passage Reading - Echo Reading

■ **Echo Reading**

- Teacher reads a word, phrase or sentence.
- Students “echo” read the word, phrase or sentence.
- Useful for building fluency and expression.
- Needs to be faded as students grow in reading skills.

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Passage Reading - Choral Reading

Choral Reading

- Read selection with your students.
- Read at a moderate rate.
- Tell your students, “Keep your voice with mine.”

(You may wish to have the students pre-read the material silently before choral reading.)

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Passage Reading - Cloze Reading

Cloze Reading

- Read selection.
- Pause on “meaningful” words.
- Have students read the deleted words.

(Excellent practice for reading initial part of a chapter or when you need to read something quickly.)

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Passage Reading - Individual Turns

Individual Turns

- Use with small groups.
- Call on an individual student.
- Call on students in random order.
- Vary the amount of material read.

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Passage Reading - Silent Reading

Augmented Silent Reading

- Pose pre- reading question.
- Tell students to read a certain amount and to reread material if they finish early.
- Monitor students' reading. Have individuals whisper-read to you.
- Pose post- reading question.

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Passage Reading - Partner Reading

Assign each student a partner.

- **Reader** whisper reads to partner. Students alternate by sentence, paragraph, page, or time.
- **Coach** corrects errors.
Ask - *Can you figure out this word?*
Tell - *This word is _____. What word? Reread the sentence.*

Alternatives to support lowest readers

1. Lowest readers placed on a triad.
2. First reader (better reader) reads material. Second reader reads the SAME material.
3. Students read the material together.
4. Before reading, students can say ME (I will read.) OR WE (Please read with me.)

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Fluency - How?

Repeated Reading

- Student reads the same material a number of times (at least three)
- General procedure
 1. **Cold-timing** (one minute timing without prior practice)
 2. **Practice** (rereading of material to increase fluency)
 3. **Hot-timing** (one minute timing)
- Often coupled with the following interventions
 - Modeling done by teacher or listening to tape
 - Self-monitoring of progress through graphing

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Fluency - How? Small Group Procedure

1. Cold-timing

- Time the students for one minute as they whisper read.
- Have them underline difficult words and circle the last word read.
- Have them determine the correct number of words read.

2. Accuracy-Practice

- Chorally read the material with your students.
- You may select to do this more than one time.

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Fluency - How? Small Group Procedure (Continued)

3. Fluency Building - Practice

- Have students whisper-read as you time them for one minute.
- Students should try to read beyond cold-timing.

4. Hot-timing

- Have students exchange papers with their partners.
- Have the first reader read for a minute as the partner underlines any errors and circles the past word.
- Repeat the same step with the second reader.
- Have partners determine the number of correct words read for their partner.
- Have students graph their cold and hot timings.

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Let us not forget.

- **Comprehension is built on the foundation skills of decoding and fluency.**

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