Rate is the speed at which a person reads text. **Phrasing** is the ability to group words together, as in normal speech, pausing appropriately between phrases, clauses, and sentences. **Expression** is the ability to read words in text with the appropriate stress and intonation. These elements, along with accuracy, make up the basis of fluent reading. The skills on this checklist help to support children in learning to read with appropriate rate, phrasing, and expression, at different stages of their reading development. These skills align with the following Common Core Standards:

Grade	CCSS Standard
K	**RF.K.4:** Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.

1–2	**RF.1.4/RF.2.4:** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
	    RF.1.4.A/RF.2.4.A: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
	    RF.1.4.B/RF.2.4.B: Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
	    RF.1.4.C/RF.2.4.C: Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

3–5	**RF.3.4/RF.4.4/RF.5.4:** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
	    RF.3.4.A/RF.4.4.A/RF.5.4.A: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
	    RF.3.4.B/RF.4.4.B/RF.5.4.B: Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
	    RF.3.4.C/RF.4.4.C/RF.5.4.C: Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

At the emergent reading stage (levels A–C), look for the reader to first develop concepts of print and book awareness. These skills will lay the foundation for the development of fluent reading behaviors later on:

- ☐ Hold a book face up, with the spine to the left.
- ☐ Turn the pages appropriately.
- ☐ Differentiate between pictures and print.
- ☐ Look at the pictures to understand what is happening.
- ☐ Scan the page from left to right.
- ☐ Track print with finger/return sweep.
- ☐ Match their voice to print, so one spoken word matches one written word.
- ☐ Stop at the end of sentences.
- ☐ Use pictures to help them word-solve.
- ☐ Locate known sight words on a page.
- ☐ Use the pattern to support reading.
- ☐ Notice punctuation as a signal that the sentence is complete.

At the early reading stage (Levels D–I), look for the reader to:

Levels D–F

- ☐ Group words together so reading sounds smooth
- ☐ Read and understands punctuation marks
- ☐ Recognize when reading doesn't sound right or make sense
- ☐ Reread for accuracy and meaning

Levels G–I

- ☐ Read in phrases instead of word by word
- ☐ Self-correct at points of error
- ☐ Read with increasingly more expression
- ☐ Reread to figure out new words

At the transitional reading stage (Levels J–M), look for the reader to:

Levels J–K

- ☐ Read fluently but slows down to figure out a new word
- ☐ Read with increasingly more intonation and phrasing
- ☐ Is aware of function of punctuation and uses it appropriately while reading
- ☐ Read dialogue with expression
- ☐ Read entire texts silently

Levels L–M

- ☐ Read with expression that matches dialogue, feelings, and events in the text
- ☐ Use other sources of information to support fluency (pictures, font size, italics, punctuation)
- ☐ Read silently at expected rate

At the early fluent and fluent reading stage (Levels N+), look for the reader to:

Levels N+

- ☐ Read with appropriate intonation and expression
- ☐ Read with variable rates based on the text and reading purpose
- ☐ Use word stress to communicate text meaning
- ☐ Use different tones to show the meaning of the text
- ☐ Use punctuation to phrase texts with appropriate pauses
- ☐ Demonstrate phrased, fluent oral reading with appropriate stress on words
- ☐ Read silently at expected rate
- ☐ Vary reading rate based on genre
- ☐ Read dialogue differentiating for various characters

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