

Reading Fluency: Essential for Comprehension— And Motivation!



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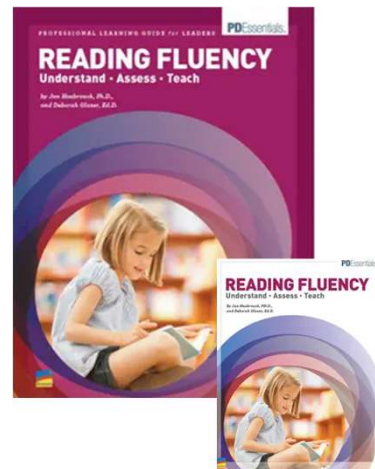
Reading Fluency

Understand * Assess * Teach

Jan Hasbrouck, Ph.D.

Deborah Glaser, Ed.D.

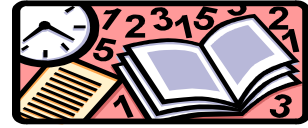
- Ch. 1 Defining Reading Fluency
- Ch. 2 Assessing Reading Fluency
- Ch. 3 Teaching Reading Fluency
- Ch. 4 Integrating Fluency Skills



www.benchmarkeducation.com

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Agenda



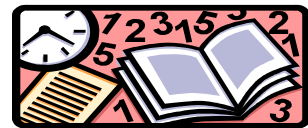
Defining passage/text reading fluency (**necessary** but not **sufficient** for comprehension– and motivation).

Appropriate instruction is needed at each developmental stage:
Reading fluency starts **EARLY**.

Fluency is a complex **outcome**, not a “skill”.

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The process through which individuals derive meaning from written text.



“...includes understanding, inferring, judging, interpreting, relating, and remembering...”

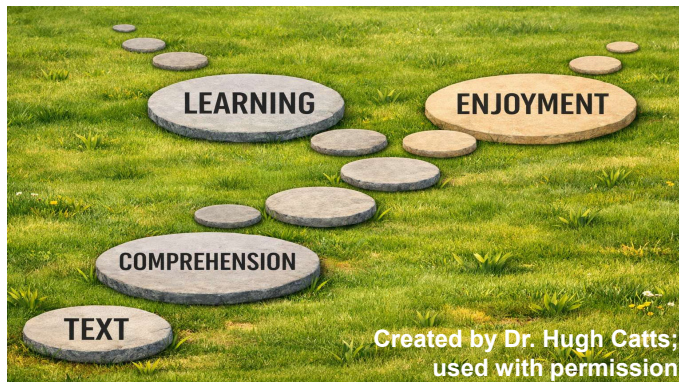
Shanahanonliteracy Blog 5.9.26

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The process through which individuals derive meaning from written text.



The “goal” or “purpose” for reading?

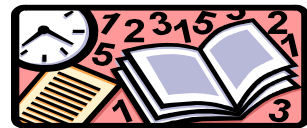


Essential
component of
reading!

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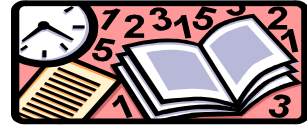
“We define (*passage*) fluency as:

- reasonably **accurate** reading
- at an appropriate **rate**
- with suitable **expression**
- that leads to accurate and deep **comprehension** and **motivation.**”



Hasbrouck & Glaser (2019)

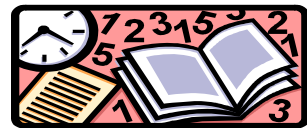
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“Using [a] blend of science and practice, we conclude...that the performance standards for [the] three components of fluency should vary depending upon the demands of the task.”

Hasbrouck & Glaser (2019, p.14)

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Reasonably accurate?

Correctly decoding or identifying a word [AND correctly identifying the meaning or function of the word in context].

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Reasonably **accurate**?

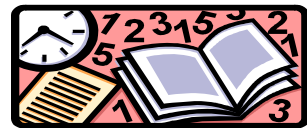


First!
Foremost!
Forever!
Foundation of
Fluency!

ACCURACY!

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Reasonably accurate?



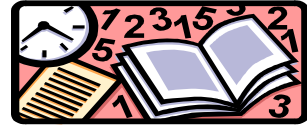
During **INSTRUCTION**?

During **INDEPENDENT READING**?

Emerging readers?

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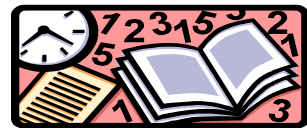
Appropriate **rate**?



The speed or pace with which text is read (words per minute).

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Appropriate **rate**?



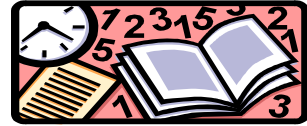
Number of words read correctly per minute:

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

- Unpracticed passage
- 1:1 for 60-seconds
- Standardized scoring protocol
- Grade level text for screening

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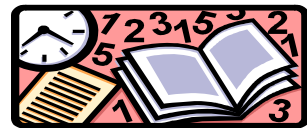
Common ORF assessments:



Amplify/DIBELS 8 th Ed.	U of Oregon K-8
Acadience	Dynamic Measurement Group K-6
AIMSweb	Pearson K-8
easyCBM	Riverside K-8
FastBridge	FastBridge K-8
ISIP	Istation K-3
others...	

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Appropriate rate?



Research suggests 50-75th+ %ile range of ORF/WCPM norms supports comprehension; the 50th %ile necessary for comprehension.
There may be unique issues with students with dyslexia.

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COMPILED ORF NORMS

Hasbrouck & Tindal (2017)

Grade	%ile	BOY WCPM	MOY WCPM	EOY WCPM
1	90		97	116
	75		59	91
	50		29	60
	25		16	34
	10		9	18
2	90	111	131	148
	75	84	109	124
	50	50	84	100
	25	36	59	72
	10	23	35	43
3	90	134	161	166
	75	104	137	139
	50	83	97	112
	25	59	79	91
	10	40	62	63
4	90	153	168	184
	75	125	143	160
	50	94	120	133
	25	75	95	105
	10	60	71	83
5	90	179	183	195
	75	153	160	169
	50	121	133	146
	25	87	109	119
	10	64	84	102
6	90	185	195	204
	75	159	166	173
	50	132	145	146
	25	112	116	122
	10	89	91	91

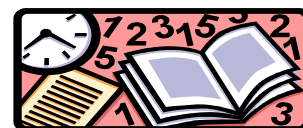
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What does ORF measure?

Number of **words read correctly per minute**:

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

- Unpracticed passage
- 1:1 for 60-seconds
- Standardized scoring protocol
- Grade level text for screening



Words read correctly:

ACCURACY

Words per minute:

RATE

Accuracy + rate =

AUTOMATICITY

“text reading efficiency” Leachman, Wolters, & Kim (2025)

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**"Automaticity is the core
of what makes fluency
important."**

-Jan Hasbrouck

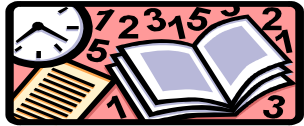
MELISSA
& LORI
LOVE
LITERACY

Melissa & Lori Love Literacy

Podcast
May 30, 2025

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Understanding ORF



The **NAME** of the assessment tool: Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

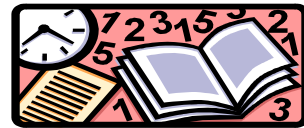
What it **MEASURES**: Automaticity (accuracy + rate)

How is the result **REPORTED**: Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)

What does the score **INDICATE**: Efficiency of reading for understanding

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Assessments for Automaticity

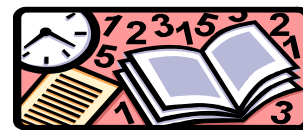


- Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assesses automaticity/efficiency in *text/passages*.
 - Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)
 - Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)
 - Letter Sound Fluency (LSF)
 - Nonword/Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)
 - Word Reading Fluency (WRF)

These assess **automaticity** in developing foundational skills of word reading.

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Assessing **PASSAGE FLUENCY**? (not ORF)

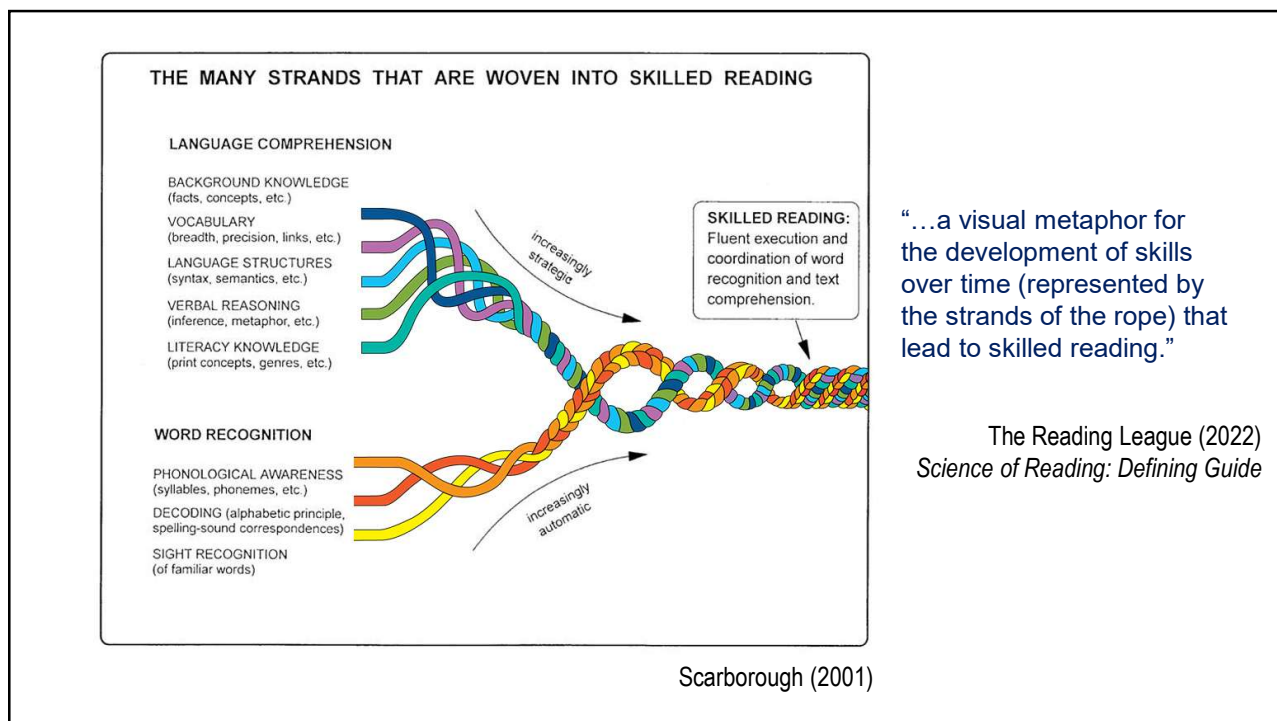


Able to read unpracticed, grade level text:

- with sufficient **ACCURACY**
at least 95%
- at an appropriate **RATE**
50 to 75th%ile+ range on H&T norms 1st 60 seconds
- with suitable **EXPRESSION**

PLUS: Check for understanding

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The development of passage/text reading fluency starts early...

Fluency develops in **progressions**:

Accuracy then automaticity at the **letter**, **letter-pattern**, and **word** levels plus semantic and syntactic processes at the **phrase** and **sentence level**.

THEN: fluent effortless reading of **text**, so attention can be fully allocated to comprehension.

Wolf & Katzir-Cohen (2001)

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Fluency instruction?



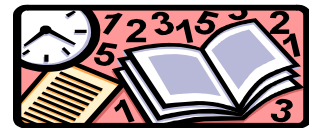
“The growth of reading fluency, in all its multifaceted glory, is an outcome of **many different kinds of instruction**...

...coupled with large amounts of **carefully orchestrated reading practice.**”

Hudson, Lane, & Pullen (2005)

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Fluency instruction?



TRIPLE A!

- ACCURACY!
- AUTOMATICITY!
- ACCESS meaning!

Always
informed by
data!

Hasbrouck & Glaser (2019)

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THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION Emergent (PreK-early Gr. 1)

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING (inference, metaphor, etc.)

LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

SKILLED READING:
 Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)

ASSESSMENT

PSF

LNf

LSF

+ language

AAA INSTRUCTION

PA (*blending; segmenting*)

Letter names

Letter sounds

+ language

PLUS...carefully
 orchestrated practice

Scarborough (2001)

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THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION Novice (early-mid Gr. 1)

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING (inference, metaphor, etc.)

LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

SKILLED READING:
 Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)

ASSESSMENT

WRF

NWF

Phonics Skills

+ language

AAA INSTRUCTION

Decoding words

Decodable text

+ language

PLUS...carefully
 orchestrated practice

Scarborough (2001)

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THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)
- VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- VERBAL REASONING (inference, metaphor, etc.)
- LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

- PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- DECODING (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)
- SIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)

Transitional
(mid Gr. 1 to early Gr. 2)

ASSESSMENT

ORF
+ language

AAA INSTRUCTION

Passage reading of instructional level text
Building sight word lexicon
+ language

PLUS...carefully orchestrated practice

Scarborough (2001)

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THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)
- VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- VERBAL REASONING (inference, metaphor, etc.)
- LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

- PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- DECODING (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)
- SIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)

Established & Proficient
(mid Gr. 2+)

ASSESSMENT

ORF (BOY; MOY? EOY?)
Maze

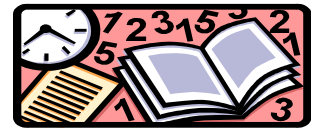
AAA INSTRUCTION

Passage reading of complex text (with support); multiple genres
+ language

PLUS...carefully orchestrated practice

Scarborough (2001)

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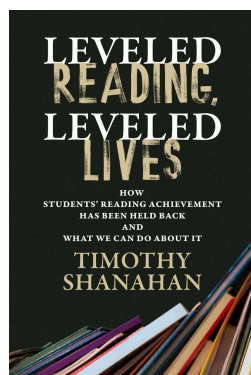
“The notion that kids should be taught to read with relatively easy texts [instructional level] is **great for beginners**...

but by grade 2, this approach is more likely **to hold kids back** than to help them to read better.”

Shanahanonliteracy Blog 10.1.14

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ReadWA Webinar



2025



Dr. Tim Shanahan

**The SCIENCE of
Text Levels**

readwa.org

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THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)
- VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- VERBAL REASONING (inference, metaphor, etc.)
- LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

- PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- DECODING (alphabetic principle, spelling-sound correspondences)
- SIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)

SKILLED READING: Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

Scarborough (2001)

ASSESSMENT

ORF
+ Skills diagnostics

AAA INTERVENTION

Targeted to identified needs:

- Phonics/decoding (multisyllable words, morphemes)
- Fluent passage reading (decodable/complex text)
- + language

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**Triple A
Phonics & Decoding**

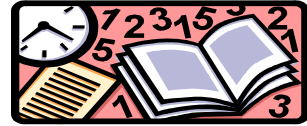
Show students letter/grapheme; letter/phoneme; word; phrase

- ✓ Say it
- ✓ See it
- ✓ Write it
- ✓ Access meaning (or function)

Using
I do it; We do it; You do it

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Fluency Intervention:
Triple A

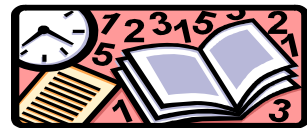


- ✓ Accuracy
- ✓ Automaticity
- ✓ Access meaning
- ✓ Clear goals & graphing for motivation

www.readnaturally.com

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Fluency Intervention:
Triple A



Placement **FIRST** www.readnaturally.com

Place students in appropriate level:
CHALLENGING!

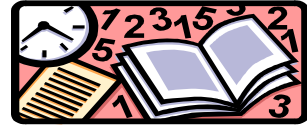
Assign wcpm goal:

Placement baseline **+ 30** for Gr. 1.5 to Gr. 4

Placement baseline **+ 40** for Gr. 5+

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Fluency Intervention:
Triple A

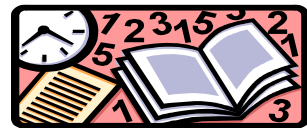


(1) FOLLOW A MODEL

Reading along with a model of **ACCURATE** reading
from a recording or...
with a skillful reader

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Fluency Intervention:
Triple A

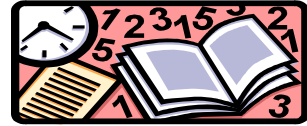


(2) REPEATED READING– 60 sec

Students **REREAD** passage orally to themselves or a
partner until **AUTOMATICITY** goal (WCPM) is achieved
(4-10 times)

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Fluency Intervention: Triple A



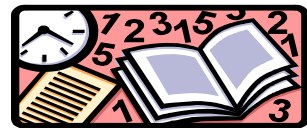
(3) MONITORING PROGRESS

Students **GRAPH** their performance (before and after practice) after a “PASS”:

- WCPM goal achieved
- No more than 3 errors
- Good expression
- Demonstrate comprehension **ACCESS MEANING**

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Takeaways:



Passage/text fluency is a complex *outcome*; necessary but not sufficient for comprehension (& motivation).

Appropriate instruction is needed at *each developmental stage*:
TRIPLE A!

FLUENT reading is **NOT** fast reading!

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