

What is Fluency?

Fluency refers to a student's speed, smoothness, and ease of oral reading. Fluent readers read more quickly and smoothly, allowing them to focus on comprehension. Fluent readers gain more meaning from the text they read. Because fluency leads to comprehension, fluent readers enjoy reading more than students who devote all their energy to sounding out words.

Reading A-Z's [Fluency Passages](#) and Reader's Theater Scripts motivate students and help them build oral fluency and accuracy. A special set of passages is provided for [Fluency Assessment](#).

Fluency Passages

Passages are provided for each level F through Z. Some passages have been written to explicitly support the content and vocabulary of specific leveled readers. Build more confidence and increase comprehension by introducing the passages before the books so students can quickly and accurately recognize new words in their leveled readers. Look for a leveled reader title next to the fluency passage title. Please select a level below for a list of passages at that level.

[Fluency Passages](#)

Fluency Assessment Passages

A collection of passages is provided for the sole purpose of administering official fluency assessments. A passage is provided for each level--F through Z.

[Fluency Assessment Passages](#)

Fluency Standards Table

Recommended reading rates, or words read per minute, for grades one through six were examined from three separate research studies. The findings of these studies were used by Reading A-Z to establish an average early and end reading rate per grade level. Your student's reading rates can be compared to these average rates as a way to determine whether they are making progress in their ability to recognize words automatically. The comparison can also be used to determine whether a student's reading rate is near the grade level standard. For example, a beginning third grade student with a reading rate of 110 WPM can be considered on level. However, a third grade student with a reading rate of 60 WPM is recognizing words at a rate similar to a first grader and will likely need additional instructional support to increase his or her reading rate.

[Fluency Standards Table](#)

Fluency Teaching Tips

Reading A-Z's Fluency Passages are designed for a one-minute read, allowing students to do several readings of each passage to improve reading rate and accuracy. For more help on how to use the Fluency Assessment Passages see [Fluency Teaching Tips](#)

Using Reader's Theater to Teach Fluency

What is Reader's Theater?

[Reader's Theater Scripts](#) are adapted from our leveled readers and other sources. They are simple play scripts that students can perform in the classroom without the need for props, costumes, or a set. Reading scripts aloud gives students essential practice in oral reading fluency and public speaking. The scripts also provide a great opportunity for group interaction and student cooperation. Reader's theater offers an easy and dynamic way to practice reading. The [Reader's Theater Teaching Tips](#) offer great ideas on various ways to use the scripts in the classroom.

According to research, reader's theater is an excellent way to promote fluency. By using Reader's Theater Scripts, you encourage students to read with expression and to practice important fluency attributes, such as pause, inflection, and intonation.

Taking on character roles helps students understand literary elements, such as motivation and characterization. Reader's Theater Scripts also promote listening skills as students follow along silently and listen for spoken cues. The scripts provide a great opportunity for student cooperation, and they're a fun break from the usual reading routine

Fluency Teaching Tips

Reading A-Z's Fluency Passages are designed for a one-minute read, allowing students to do several readings of each passage to improve reading rate and accuracy.

- One-on-One: Read the Fluency Assessment Passage to the student so she or he can hear fluent reading. Have the student read the passage. If the student gets stuck on a word, read the word and have her or him repeat it. Repeated one-on-one readings will increase speed, accuracy, smoothness and expression.
- *Independent Timed Reading*: Have a student start a stopwatch as she or he begins a passage, and stop it at the end of the passage. The student can record the reading time on a chart or graph. Reading time will drop as the student repeats the reading. You can also calculate the words read per minute and record it on the bottom of the passage.
- *Paired Readings*: One partner times the other partner reading a passage. At the end of one minute, the partner says "Stop" and circles the last word the reader has read. The partner then marks the number of words read on the words-per-minute chart at the bottom of the page. After several readings the partners then switch roles.

Procedures for Timed Readings

You will need:

- Two copies of the assessment passage—one for the student and one for the instructor
- Stopwatch or clock
- Pencil
- Clipboard (so students will not see what you are writing)

Administer a one-minute reading, starting the stopwatch when the student begins the first word of the passage (student will not read titles). Tell the student that if she or he has trouble (struggling for more than 3 to 5 seconds), you will say the word so she or he can keep reading. After one minute, say "Stop," stop the stopwatch, and circle the last word read.

During the reading, resist the urge to correct mistakes. Mistakes and self-correction will be counted in the score. If the student has extreme difficulty, stop the test. Reassure the student that she or he will redo the assessment after further reading practice. You should select a lower level passage for the next assessment.

Follow along on your copy word by word with your pencil. Make a slash (/) through any words the student misses or cannot read without help. Mark a dash above words skipped. Errors include:

- Skipped words
- Mispronounced words
- Word substitutions, including incorrect forms of the word
- Words in the wrong order; both or all words are counted as wrong
- Struggling that lasts for 3 to 5 seconds, or more

The following are not considered misses:

- Added words
- Varying pronunciation due to accent, dialect, or speech impediment
- Repetitions in which the wording is correct
- Self-correcting a mistake; the word is scored as correct.

Scoring Timed-Readings

1. Count the total words the student reads in one minute using the words-per-line totals listed in the margin. This is the student's words-per-minute reading rate. Mark this on the chart at the bottom, along with the date of the reading.
2. Count the number of errors (slashes). Record the number in the "errors" box under 1 if this is the first reading, 2 if it is the second reading, and so on.
3. Subtract the number of errors from the total number of words read to find the number of correct words read.
4. Divide the number of correct words by the total words read and multiply this result by 100. This is the student's accuracy percentage.
5. Record this number in the box.

After about four to six readings, students should reach the target words-per-minute standard for their grade level with an accuracy rate of 90 to 95 percent.

Example:

Total words read: 60
Number of errors: 6

Number of correct words:
 $60 - 6 = 54$

Accuracy percentage:
 $54/60 = .9$

$.9 \times 100 = 90\%$