The Effects of Fluency Instruction Incorporating
Readers Theatre on Oral Reading Fluency in an
Eighth-Grade Classroom

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of direction instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words, on the oral reading accuracy, rate, and prosody of eight students who read below expected grade level in an eight-grade classroom. Grade level passages were read for determining the number of Words Correct Per Minute, and Rasinski’s Multidimensional Fluency Scale was used to assess appropriate expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace while reading. After nine weeks of direct instruction that incorporated repeated oral reading and reading scripted dialogue, scores revealed that this instruction significantly improved the accuracy and rate of oral reading, and slightly improved the prosodic reading of this group of struggling readers.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In a 2006 report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Biancarosa and Snow stated that approximately eight million young people between fourth and twelfth grade struggle to read at grade level. They went on to say that nearly 70 percent of older readers require some form of remediation. The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) identified oral reading fluency as one of the five key components to overall reading achievement. However, numerous experts (Allington, 1983; NICHD, 2000; Rasinski, Padak, McKeon, Wilfong, Friedauer, & Heim, 2005; Rasinski & Young, 2009) have reported that reading fluency instruction is a neglected goal in the classroom. Rasinski et al. (2005) stated that the neglect of fluency instruction is especially true for middle and high school grades. Research (Laberge & Samuels, 1974; Rasinski, et al., 2005; Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003) strongly supports the notion that dysfluent readers are ultimately unable to comprehend what they read. Other literature (Goering & Baker, 2010; Morris & Gaffney, 2011; Rasinski, et al., 2005) suggests oral reading fluency instruction improves overall reading proficiency at all grade levels.

It is inarguable that American youth need to develop the highest literacy skills possible to be able to function at their best in a society that places ever increasing demands on their abilities to process information. It is vital for classroom educators to address all the skills necessary to acquire a high degree of oral reading fluency to help students gain a deep understanding of what they read. Explicit instruction that incorporates repeated oral reading fluency practices such as Readers Theatre may be an effective tool to motivate and engage older students in improving oral reading fluency.
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Background of the Problem

Many experts (Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski, Rikli, & Johnston, 2009; Rasinski et al., 2005) have stated that a lack of reading fluency appears to be the area of greatest impairment in reading. In addition to this, Pinnell, Wixson, Campbell, Gough and Beatty (1995) cited the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress study on the status of oral reading fluency which found 44 percent of the fourth graders tested to be dysfluent even with grade-level stories they had read prior to the actual assessment. Furthermore, Richard Allington (1983) argued that a lack of oral reading fluency is often noted, but is a seldom treated characteristic of poor readers. The effects of oral reading dysfluency are stated in the NICHD report of 2000 that suggests students who are low in fluency may have difficulty in getting to the meaning of what they read.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate the understanding of the research report, the following terms are defined:

1. Accuracy is defined as the number of misread words omitted, inserted, or substituted (Pinnell et al., 1995). Accuracy was operationalized to mean the number of words a student failed to pronounce correctly, insertion of words, omission of words, or words substituted.

2. Automaticity is defined as fluent processing of information that requires little effort or attention (Harris & Hodges, 1995). Automaticity was operationalized to mean the ease at which students could recognize words.

3. Expression or prosodic reading refers to the ability of readers to render a text with phrasing and intonations to sound like natural speech (Young & Rasinski, 2009). Expression or prosodic reading was
operationalized to mean the students’ ability to follow punctuation and read with feeling as if sounding like natural speech.

4. Fluency is defined as freedom from word identification problems that might hinder comprehension (Harris & Hodges, 1995). Fluency was operationalized to include accurate word recognition, appropriate pacing, and prosodic reading.

5. Oral reading fluency is defined as reading aloud accurately, with appropriate rate and expression to maximize understanding of the text (NICHD, 2000).

6. Oral reading practices are defined to include classroom routines and strategies that incorporate reading aloud for the purpose of improving fluency (Goering & Baker, 2010). Oral reading practices were operationalized to include students reading aloud for the purpose of measuring and improving oral reading fluency.

7. Prosody is defined as the rhythmic intonations of natural speech (Goering & Baker, 2010). Prosody was operationalized to mean the following of punctuation and the replication of natural speech while reading.

8. The *Multidimensional Fluency Scale* is a scoring guide used to rate the reader in expression, volume, smoothness, phrasing, and pace (Zutell & Rasinski, 1991).

9. Rate is defined as the number of correct words read per minute (Pinnell et al., 1995).

10. Readers Theatre is defined as a performance based upon the oral reading of a scripted dialogue (Flynn, 2004).
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Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre on oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students. The intent was to determine if teaching students how to decode automatically and read at the appropriate rate with proper phrasing, expression and volume by repeatedly reading to perform a Readers Theatre improves the ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading. It was designed to determine if the direct instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words followed with practice through repeated oral reading of scripted dialogue improves the oral reading accuracy, rate, and expression of students who read below grade level. This study looked at the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre on oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students. The research question addressed was, “Does fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre improve oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students?”

The research report is organized into five chapters. Chapter I has offered a statement of introduction for this study, which determined the effects of repeated oral reading practice on oral reading fluency in an eighth-grade reading class. Chapter II provides a review of literature concerning repeated oral reading practices such as Readers Theatre on oral reading fluency. Chapter III serves to explain the methodology for the study. The setting, participants, data collection, procedures, instrument, and analysis are shared. Chapter IV reports the results of the study and Chapter V draws conclusions and implications and makes recommendations based on the results of the study.
Chapter II

Review of Literature

This chapter provides a comprehensive, yet not exhaustive, review of literature on oral reading fluency and repeated oral reading practices. The intent of this chapter is to review relevant research and other literature that supports the argument that fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre improves oral reading fluency. Most reading experts (Allington, 1983; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) agree that a proficient level of oral reading fluency is necessary for the development of good readers. A landmark study conducted by LaBerge and Samuels in 1974 found a strong correlation between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension. Ultimately, according to Allington, (1983) and the NICHD, (2000), reading fluency is a critical component of skilled reading.

Some experts (Goering et al., 2010; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) claim the value of oral reading has declined with the increase of printed materials. The 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2008) results estimate that 2.7 million eighth graders could not read at proficient levels. Allington (1983) noted dysfluent oral reading as a characteristic of poor readers, but pointed out that it is seldom treated. Experts (Allington, 1983; NICHD, 2000; Rasinski et al., 2005; Rasinski et al., 2009) argue that oral reading fluency instruction is often overlooked in reading instruction in the classroom. Studies (Garrett & O’Connor, 2010; Morris et al., 2011; Young et al., 2009) indicate that repeated oral reading practices lead to improvement in oral reading fluency. Readers Theatre is described by Keehn, Harmon, and Shoho, 2008 as one instructional approach that incorporates rereading in preparation for a performance that has been shown in studies (Garrett & O’Connor, 2010; Young & Rasinski, 2009) to improve oral reading fluency.
This chapter is organized so that literature on the importance of issues related to oral reading fluency are reviewed first, and then literature detailing the implications of instructional oral reading practices in education is discussed. The importance of oral reading fluency is substantiated and literature pointing to issues related to the development of this skill is synthesized. Reports of oral reading instructional practices used in the classroom to enhance oral reading fluency are reviewed. Finally, literature and research which support using repeated oral reading practices in the form of Readers Theatre to improve oral reading fluency are given.

**Importance of and Issues Related to Oral Reading Fluency**

Experts (Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski et al. 2005; Rasinski et al., 2009; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) claim that oral reading is an important part of skilled reading, and research (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) reveals a correlation between oral reading fluency and comprehension. In 1997, through the efforts of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the Secretary of Education, a national panel of reading experts was appointed to assess the status of research-based knowledge in teaching children to read (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000). One of the most important accomplishments of this panel was the identification of five critical components to reading acquisition among children. These components are phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Pinnell et al. (1995) cite the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress that said that 44% of fourth graders tested were considered to be dysfluent with grade-level stories. The NRP (2000) went on to say that the NAEP study revealed a strong correlation between a child’s ability to read fluently and their ability to derive meaning from what they read. A seminal study performed by LaBerge and Samuels (1974) revealed that when reading fluency was not firmly developed, finite cognitive abilities were consumed in the low level task of decoding individual words rather that the most
important purpose of reading which is comprehending text. More recently, other experts (Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski et al. 2005; Rasinski et al, 2009; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) echoed this idea by saying that comprehension is negatively affected by a reader’s lack of fluency. Therefore, Roundy and Roundy (2009) posit that students who do not achieve reading fluency at a young age are at a considerable disadvantage in all of their academic pursuits henceforth.

**Fluency in Primary and Secondary School**

Because reading fluency is strongly linked to comprehension (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974), explicit fluency instruction should occur at all grade levels (Morris & Gaffney, 2011; Rasinski et al., 2005; Rasinski et al., 2009; Roundy & Roundy, 2009). Reading fluency has traditionally been viewed as a primary grade skill, but it often continues to be a problem in middle school as well as into the secondary school years (Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009; Roundy & Roundy, 2009). In 2010, Goering and Baker stated that students who are not competent readers by the end of fourth grade are not likely to achieve full proficiency as readers. They go on to say that as students’ progress through middle school, junior high, and on into high school, the shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” takes place. Additionally, Goering and Baker state that as the transition from reading aloud to reading silently occurs, those students who do not achieve a level of proficiency by fourth grade fail to become fluent readers and their ability to understand printed information is substantially limited as adults.

**Fluency Instruction**

Many experts (Kostewicz & Kubina, 2010; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Morris & Gaffney, 2011; Roundy & Roundy, 2009) agree that repeated reading is a type of fluency instruction that leads to improved reading fluency. Roundy and Roundy (2009) report that repeated reading is an instructional concept that has been practiced in the United States since the 19th century and in the
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Orient for centuries. They go on to say that repeated reading is effective because by reading the same passage over and over the number of word recognition errors decreases, reading speed increases, and oral reading expression improves. The repeated reading method is based on the 1974 study by LaBerge and Samuels that explains that a high level of automaticity is attained as a result of iterative cycles of readings. Roundy and Roundy (2009) also posit that non-fluent readers may actually benefit the most from the repeated reading method. They add that research has found that the repeated reading of a particular passage can effectively improve students’ overall reading fluency and comprehension.

Age Appropriate Fluency Practices

Many experts (Gaffney & Morris, 2011; Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009) agree that middle school and secondary students require classroom reading activities that are befitting teenagers who may be socially self-conscious. Goering (2010) states that secondary students are acutely self-conscious and their awareness of peers often inhibits their willingness to present, read aloud, or perform before their class. However, Rasinski (2003) states that any effective reading program should include oral reading and those oral reading programs should follow several guiding principles. Rasinski identifies teacher modeling of effective oral reading for students, multiple opportunities for students to practice in a classroom setting, and focus on appropriate phrasing to complete the process.

In 2010 Goering and Baker undertook a study which included 17 high school students enrolled in an intervention reading class in a mid-sized town in the Mid-South. The researchers sought to understand how participation in dramatic oral reading affects both reading fluency and comprehension. The study also included the social dynamics which come into play when struggling readers performed oral readings in front of their peers. During the study the students participated in six different series of dramatic oral reading fluency activities, each ending in a
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performance. The results of the study produced statistically significant results in both fluency and comprehension. In order to gain an understanding of the social implications involved in reading aloud in front of a group of peers several students were interviewed. Most of the respondents said that they enjoyed participating in the oral reading activities and stated that they truly did experience growth as readers. As a result of this study Goering and Baker (2010) state that dramatic oral reading should play a role in secondary classrooms.

Readers Theatre

Studies (Garrett & O’Connor, 2010; Keehn, et al., 2008; Young & Rasinski, 2009) demonstrate that Readers Theatre is an instructional practice that develops fluency and promotes overall reading growth while increasing self confidence in struggling readers. Keehn et al. (2008) describe Readers Theatre as a way to involve students in the oral reading of a text in preparation for a reading performance before an audience. They go on to say that in the case of Readers Theatre, students repeatedly practice reading a script with an authentic reason for rereading. Garrett and O’Connor (2010) say that Readers Theatre is different from traditional theater in that it requires no costumes, props, or actions other than facial expressions or gestures by the performers. Keehn et al. (2008) posit that because the teacher actively coaches and provides direction for expressiveness during rehearsals, Readers Theatre also offers the modeling that is important to fluency development. They recommend that while students practice reading in repertory groups, the teacher actively listens to the oral reading and coaches students in expressiveness and phrasing. This feedback, they say, is important to students’ fluency growth. Young and Rasinski (2009) claim that repeated and assisted practice involved in rehearsal will improve accuracy and automaticity in word recognition.

Flynn (2004) says that Readers Theatre is more interesting to perform and to watch when the dialogue is emphasized by appropriate movements such as hand waving, pointing fingers,
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shrugs, raised fists, scratched heads, snapping fingers, or wiped brows. Flynn (2004) adds that any relevant gestures contribute not only to a more dynamic performance but also to increased retention of the material. Flynn claims that any printed text that is rehearsed, equals repetition, which brings about learning and increased oral reading fluency.

Readers Theatre and Motivation

Research (Garrett & O’Connor, 2010; Goering & Baker, 2010) has shown Readers Theatre to be an instructional strategy that can be used to engage students in a meaningful activity that may increase reading fluency while simultaneously enhancing social development. Goering (2010) claims that secondary students reported having enjoyed Readers Theatre because it provided an opportunity to reread and rehearse in a social setting while practicing reading skills. Similarly, Flynn (2005) promotes the use of Readers Theatre across the curriculum in many content areas for the educational benefits of the process but also adds that along the way Readers Theatre brings about lots of laughter and enthusiasm from both teachers and students alike, which can result in it being an instructional favorite for both teachers and students.

Summary

Oral reading fluency is a skill that is indicative of proficient reading (NICHD, 2000; Rasinski et al., 2005; Rasinski et al., 2009). However, Allington (1983) points to the notion that oral reading fluency is often neglected in instructional reading programs, causing comprehension problems and poor overall reading development. Other experts (Garrett & O’Connor, 2010; Keehn, et al., 2008; Young & Rasinski, 2009) claim repeated oral reading strategies such as Readers Theatre may improve oral reading fluency. It appears that a study examining the impact of Readers Theatre on students during the middle school years is prudent at this time. The next chapter details the methodology of the proposed study.
Chapter III

Methodology

This study investigated the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre on oral reading fluency in an eighth-grade reading intervention classroom. It was intended to determine if teaching students how to decode automatically and read at the appropriate rate with proper phrasing, expression and volume by repeatedly reading to perform a Readers Theatre improves the ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading. The study was designed to determine if the direct instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words followed with practice through repeated oral reading of a scripted dialogue improves the oral reading accuracy, rate, and expression of students who read below grade-level expectations. This chapter describes the setting, the participants, and the confidentiality procedures that were used for this study. How data were collected and the evaluation instrument are also described. The intervention strategy is explained and the methods for analyzing data are detailed.

District Setting

This study took place in a junior high school in Northwest Arkansas. Demographic information for the school district provided in this section is based on published information from the 2011-2012 school year (Arkansas Department of Education, 2011). The school district serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The district in which the school is located has a total number of 8,838 students in 15 schools, which is an increase in the student population from the 2010-2012 school year of 3.53%. There are 819 kindergarten students; 4430 students in K-5; 1992 students in grades 6-8; and 2416 students in grades 9-12. The ethnic breakdown for the school district is as follows: 6,227 white; 761 Hispanic; 28 Native
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; 532 two or more races; 859 Black; 358 Asian; and 73 Native American/native Alaskan (see Figure 1). There are 899 students involved in the district’s gifted and talented program, and 1006 students involved in the district’s special education program.

Figure 1. Racial demographics for the school district in Northwest Arkansas.

School Setting

The junior high school for this study has a total population of 683 students (Arkansas Department of Education, 2011). The student population consists of 12 students of two or more races, 22 Asian students, 34 Black students, 30 Hispanic students, 9 Native American/Native Alaskan students, 1 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander student, and 575 White students (see Figure 2).
Participants

This study was conducted in an eighth-grade reading intervention classroom consisting of 8 students. There are 6 female students and 2 male students in the classroom. The racial demographics for the students in this classroom include 2 Black students and 6 White students (see Figure 3). All 8 students are English language proficient. All 8 students are a part of the special education program and all students read below grade level expectations. Six students are eligible for free or reduced lunch program.
Permission to conduct this study was granted by the University of Arkansas Institutional review board (See Appendix A), as well as the administration of the junior high school where the study was conducted (see Appendix B). Permission to participate in this study was obtained prior to the commencement of the project. A letter (See Appendix C), along with an Informed Consent (See Appendix D), was sent home with each student and a signature from the parent or guardian was required in order for that child’s scores to be reported. The Informed Consent explained the purpose and procedures of the study. It also explained that participation was completely voluntary and that there is no reward or penalty for participating. It explained that the child could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. There was an 89% return rate on the Informed Consent. Confidentiality was maintained and assured by the researcher through the establishment of a code. Each student participant was assigned a number at random to establish the code. All data were recorded anonymously using the code. Only the researcher has access to the code, and all data were kept in a locked fine cabinet in the project classroom. Once this study is defended, the code will be destroyed.
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Data Collection

The purpose of this proposed study was to investigate the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Reader Theatre on oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students. It was designed to examine if the direct instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words followed with practice through repeated oral reading of a scripted dialogue among students improves the oral reading accuracy, rate, and expression of students who read below expected grade level. Oral reading fluency was measured before and after the intervention using the instruments described below. During the eight week intervention period, oral reading fluency was determined each week by listening to students read aloud for one minute and performing a Words Correct per Minute test. Additionally, readings were performed weekly to determine prosody scores, and anecdotal records were maintained.

Evaluation instrument. Students completed a Words Correct per Minute (WCPM) test to determine accuracy and rate of reading. The WCPM requires each student to read an eighth-grade level passage that is timed for one minute. The number of words read correctly is divided by the number of words read to arrive at a percentage of accuracy. The percent of accuracy and number of words read is compared to a table of norms (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006) (see Appendix E) to arrive at the students’ instructional reading level. The test is given to each student individually and requires only one minute to administer.

The Multidimensional Fluency Scale (MDFS) rubric (See Appendix F) measures students’ prosodic reading. Zutell and Rasinski created this scoring tool in 1991. MDFS measures expression, volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. While each student reads, each category of expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness and pace is ranked on a scale of 1-4 with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. A score of 4 in expression means the reader varies volume
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and phrasing which reflects his or her interpretation of the text. A score of 4 in phrasing means that the reader follows punctuation, stresses certain words, and voice varies in tone. A score of 4 in smoothness means that the reader reads words easily and self corrects if necessary with difficult words or sentences. A score of 4 in pace means that the reader maintains a conversational pace throughout the reading and is not too fast or too slow to interfere with the meaning of the text. A student with a total score of 10 or more is said to be making acceptable progress in fluency. Scores below 10 indicate the student needs additional instruction in fluency.

The test is administered individually and requires several minutes to administer.

These tests were administered by the researcher to each individual student as a pretest before fluency instruction was given in the classroom, and each was administered again as a posttest at the conclusion of the project to determine growth.

Baseline data. In order to establish a baseline for students’ oral reading fluency, a WCPM test was used to measure accuracy and rate (Appendix G). The MDFS rubric was used to score prosody. The students’ scores from these tests serve to establish students’ oral reading fluency levels prior to the oral reading instruction given in the classroom. The WCPM was administered on October 3 and 4, 2011. The MDFS was administered October 5 and 6, 2011.

Other data collection methods. Data were collected during the intervention period to monitor and record students’ progress related to oral reading fluency. Data were collected in the form of recording weekly one minute readings for each student to determine oral reading rate progress. The MDFS rubric was used to rate all aspects of oral reading fluency on a weekly basis.

Post data analysis. In order to determine the effectiveness of oral reading fluency instruction on oral reading fluency, a WCPM as well as a measure of all aspects of fluency using the MDFS rubric was conducted on the oral reading of each student using the same method as described
previously. The post-assessment results were examined and compared to the baseline data. A paired-samples \( t \)-test was conducted to determine if a significant difference existed between the pretest and posttest scores. Anecdotal records were coded and analyzed to determine patterns and themes that appeared. Daily and weekly records, along with pretest and posttest assessments, were carefully examined and analyzed to determine changes and trends and then conclusions were drawn.

**Intervention Strategies**

The intervention began the week of October 10, 2011 and continued through the week of November 14, 2011. Students were met in their regular reading classroom for 50 minutes per day four days a week for 6 weeks. Week 1 was used for pre-testing and week 8 was used for post testing. Automaticity, pace, and prosody were the three aspects of fluency that were addressed during the intervention (see Appendix H for a scope and sequence of the intervention). Weeks 2 and 3 following pre-testing, automaticity was addressed. During weeks 4 and 5 the fluency aspect of applying appropriate pace was addressed. During week 6 prosody was addressed as well as automaticity, and pacing through the use of Readers Theatre presentations. Week 8 was used for post testing.

**Week 2 and week 3.** Each lesson during weeks two and three began with a discussion and modeling of accuracy during oral reading. Students were taught how to decode unknown words. The intervention began with the introduction of vowel spots in words and how they indicate syllables (see Appendix I). Students were instructed in how to place their hand under their chin to determine the number of syllables in a word. The next concept introduced to students was the difference between open and closed syllables and their association with long and short vowel sounds.
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Students were then instructed in the definition of a digraph, and students brainstormed word examples beginning with the sounds of sh, wh, ch, and sh. Following this, instruction on prefixes, suffixes, and root words took place. Students practiced identifying prefixes, suffixes, and root words, and segmenting them and finally pronouncing the words (Appendix J). This was followed with a lesson on compound words that also contain prefixes and suffixes. The final lesson on decoding was about attacking multisyllabic words in text. Students read a passage and identified words that they could not pronounce. These words were then recorded on a chart (Appendix K). Students identified the number of syllables in the word, possible prefixes, suffixes, root words, or compound words part. Finally, students turned to a partner and pronounced the words aloud.

Week 4 and week 5. Week four and five instruction focused on reading with appropriate pace to be a fluent reader. Students were instructed on application of appropriate reading pace by first listening to three voice recordings of a text passage. Students practiced evaluating the voice recording with the most appropriate pace and supporting their answers. Students were then given a list of Dolch sight words (Appendix L) and a timer. Students read through the list and counted the number of sight words they could read in one minute. The number was recorded and the task was repeated two more times. Students attempted to read the highest number of high frequency words correctly (L1).

The next lesson moved beyond single high frequency words to the most common phrases in the English language (Appendix M). Students practiced the phrases list and had a partner check them for accuracy before attempting to read the list for one minute timing. Partner groups then timed each other for one minute to see how many phrases they could read accurately in one minute. This was repeated two more times and then students identified the timed reading that indicated the highest number (Appendix M1).
During week five students were given two verses of a familiar song. Students were instructed to pre-read the passage and highlight any unfamiliar words. Through class discussion students annotated their song verses to clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words. Students practiced pronouncing unfamiliar words to their partner (Appendix N). Students then watched and listened to a video presentation of how the songs should be paced. Students then read the passage aloud to their partner while the partner checked for accuracy. This pattern was repeated for several days using songs (Appendix O), and poems (Appendix P).

**Week 6 and week 7.** Oral reading fluency and the class goal of raising WCPM and prosody scores were addressed daily. An expository text in the form of Readers Theatre was introduced (Appendix Q). Students pre-read the script silently and highlighted unfamiliar words. In order to deepen their understanding of the meaning of the script the students were about to read, pictures and names of each animal in the script were shown. Students turned to their neighbor and practiced pronouncing the words while the teacher circulated and helped clarify any unknown words. Students then listened to the teacher read the script aloud. Following this the students volunteered for the parts they wanted to read. The class participated in a whole-group presentation of the script.

Following the initial introduction of Readers Theatre, each class period began with a new script (Appendix R and R 1). After presenting the title of the script the class engaged in a short discussion about what they thought the story would be about. The class was then divided into two small groups and parts were assigned. The teacher and teacher’s aide also participated by assuming a role. Students highlighted their parts, pre-read their lines and clarified with one another about how to pronounce unfamiliar words. The teacher modeled fluent reading by reading through the entire script first. Prior to the students’ participation, attention was called to the punctuation and areas in the script which required the reader to demonstrate strong
expression. This was followed by the small group reading each part. When each small group finished the whole group reconvened and the class participated in a short oral reflection about the story they just read.

**Week 8**

Week 8 was used for post testing by having students read a grade level piece of text, while doing a WCPM test (Appendix S). An additional piece of grade level text was used to measure prosody while scoring using the MDFS rubric.

**Summary**

This chapter describes the participants and the setting in which this research study took place. One group of eighth-grade reading students from a school in Northwest Arkansas participated in a research study to investigate the question, “Does fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre improve oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students?” Students were tested for accuracy and pace using a WCPM test, and the MDFS was used to measure prosody during the first week of the student to establish a baseline of data. This was followed by six weeks of oral reading fluency instruction and culminated in a posttest for WCPM and prosody. The following chapter describes these results.
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Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to provide analysis of data collected for the study designed to address the research question, “Does fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre improve oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students?” Data are presented through narrative text and supported with tables and figures. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre on oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students.

Eight students from a local junior high school participated in the study. Over the course of eight weeks, students participated in daily lessons which involved learning how to decode automatically, and read at the appropriate rate and then read with proper phrasing, expression, and volume. Students read instructional level text passages weekly and a weekly WCPM test was given to assess reading accuracy and rate. In addition to this, students read an instructional level passage and the MDFS scoring tool was used to assess progress in phrasing, expression, and volume.

Pre- and Posttest Scores

Baseline data were established using the WCPM test and the MDFS scoring tool. The pre-assessment scores were obtained during the week of September 26-30, 2011. The WCPM test is designed to measure how many words a student can read correctly in one minute. The MDFS is a scoring tool used to measure expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace when an unpracticed text passage is read orally. The scores were collected before the commencement of the study to establish baseline oral reading fluency skills prior to explicit oral reading fluency instruction.
WCPM. Oral reading fluency measures were obtained using a WCPM test and compared to grade level norms (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006) (see Appendix E) to determine grade level achievement categories. In order to compare students’ scores against an established norm, 133 WCPM was chosen because it represents the number of WCPM that an eighth-grade student would be able to read at the 50 percentile. Of the participants the maximum recorded score was 101 WCPM and the minimum score recorded was 44 WCPM, therefore the range was 57. The mean score was 61.25. The median score was 57.5. There was no mode (See Appendix T for individual student scores). One score was identified as an outlier because it was more than 1.5 times above the interquartile range of the upper quartile of 93.5 and was not included in any of the t-test analyses.

The scores were classified using grade level norms recommended by Hasbrouck and Tindale (2006) (Appendix E). The posttest for WCPM was administered on November 28, 2011. The WCPM results were again compared to grade level norms to determine grade level placement for each student. These results were used to compare against eighth-grade level norms at 133 WCPM. Of the participants the maximum recorded score was 128 WCPM and the minimum score recorded was 68 WCPM. The mean score was 85.5, and the median score was 81. The mode was 83 (See Appendix T for individual student scores). The range was 60. One score was identified as an outlier, because it was more than 1.5 times above the interquartile range of scores and was not included in the t-test analyses. Figure 4 illustrates the grade level equivalent for the WCPM for the pre- and posttests.
**FLUENCY INSTRUCTION AND ORAL READING FLUENCY**

*Figure 4.* Percentage of students in each grade equivalent category following WCPM pre-test and posttest.

**MDFS.** A measure of prosody was obtained using the MDFS scoring tool with 16 being the highest score possible (see Appendix T for individual MDFS scores). Zutell and Rasinski, (1991) recommend students who are below 10 using the MDFS are in need of additional instruction in fluency, and students scoring at 10 or above are making good progress in fluency. Scores from 11-16 were considered advanced in prosodic reading. A score of 10 was considered proficient in prosodic reading and from 0-9 was considered basic. There were 2 scores classified as advanced, 1 score classified as proficient, and 6 scores classified as basic. Figure 5 illustrates the percentage of students who scored in each achievement category.
FLUENCY INSTRUCTION AND ORAL READING FLUENCY

*Figure 5.* Percentage of students in each achievement category for prosody following pre- and posttests.

On the pre-test for prosody the highest score out of a possible 16 was 12 and the lowest was 8. The range was 4. The mean was 10, and the median was 10. There were three modes, 8, 10, and 12.

On the posttest the highest score out of a possible 16 was 14 and the lowest was 7. The range was 7. The mean was 9.1, and the median was 9. There were two modes, 8, and 9. One score was identified as an outlier, because it was more than 1.5 times above the interquartile range of scores and was not included in any of the *t*-test analyses. See Figure 6 for a comparison of pre- and posttest means for prosody.

*Figure 6.* Comparison of pre- and posttest means for prosody.

**During Intervention Scores**

In order to measure oral reading fluency during the current study, weekly individual WCPM scores were recorded using instructional level reading passages for each student. These weekly scores were averaged at the end of each week to get a mean for weekly achievement for that week. It is expected that an eighth-grade student at the 50 percentile be able to read correctly 133 WCPM (see Appendix E). The highest weekly average was Week 5 at 105.5 WCPM, and the lowest average was Week 1 at 85.75 WCPM. Since new strategies were taught each week, each weekly average is independent from the previous weekly average.
FLUENCY INSTRUCTION AND ORAL READING FLUENCY

Weekly averages of WCPM scores increased slightly then dipped before rising slightly by week five and dipping slightly by week six.

**Figure 7.** Weekly class averages for WCPM using instructional level passages.

Weekly averages rose steadily the first few weeks. The class averages peaked at Week 4 and remained fairly steady for the next two weeks. The class means of weekly averages for prosody are shown in Figure 8.

**Figure 8.** Weekly means for prosody using the MDFS.

**Post Intervention**

To determine the effectiveness of explicit oral reading fluency instruction on oral reading fluency, a one minute timed reading of an on grade-level passage was used to assess the accuracy and pacing of eighth-grade students’ oral reading fluency. In addition to this, another on grade
level passage was given to the student and the MDFS was utilized for the purpose of measuring prosody.

**WCPM.** Students were given an eighth-grade level reading passage. Their errors were recorded and the number of words read correctly was compared against a table of norms that represents a fluent reading level for an eighth-grade student. This comparison enables the researcher to classify students’ oral reading fluency against an eighth-grade student at the 50 percentile. The highest possible score for an eighth grade student at the 50 percentile was 133 WCPM, and the lowest possible score was 0 WCPM. The maximum recorded score was 128 WCPM, and the lowest score recorded was 75 WCPM. Figure 7 illustrates individual student pre- and post- intervention scores measured as WCPM.

![Graph](image)

*Figure 9. Individual student pre and post intervention scores for WCPM.*

**MDFS.** Students were given a second eighth-grade level reading passage to read for the purpose of measuring prosody. Students were asked to read for one minute and the MDFS was used to rate students on expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. The highest possible score in a particular category was a 4, and the lowest possible score was a 1. The total number possible utilizing the MDFS was a 16. A student who scored below 10 is classified as
FLUENCY INSTRUCTION AND ORAL READING FLUENCY

basic. A student with a score of 10 is classified as proficient, and a score of above 10 is classified as advanced in prosody.

![Figure 10](image)

*Figure 10.* Student pre- and post scores for prosody using the MDFS.

**Data Analysis**

In order to measure oral reading fluency of participants, a WCPM test was administered prior to intervention and compared against a table of norms for eighth-grade students. These norms suggest that an eighth-grade student at the 50 percentile be reading 133 WCPM. The same WCPM test was administered after the implementation of the intervention. Before explicit oral reading fluency instruction was given, the mean score was 55.57. After the intervention, the mean score was 79.42. These results were analyzed using a paired-samples t-test with an alpha level set at .05. This analysis revealed a significant difference between the pre- and post-intervention WCPM scores, $t(7) = 2.44; t\text{Stat}=9.88; p=0.0006$. The mean increased 23.85 on the post-test (See Appendix U for complete results). The $t$-test results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

**Results Obtained for t-test for Words Correct per Minute**

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<th>Post-test</th>
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<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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In order to measure prosodic reading the MDFS was utilized to measure the participant’s prosodic reading before and after the implementation of the intervention. Before oral reading fluency instruction was used the average score measured by the pre-test was 9.7. After the intervention, the mean score was 8.4. These results were analyzed using a t-test for paired two sample means with an alpha level set at 0.05. The mean decreased but not significantly. This analysis revealed no statistically significant difference between the pre- and post- intervention prosodic reading scores, $t(7)=2.44; \text{tStat}.053; p=0.107$ (See Appendix V for complete results).

The mean decreased 1.29 from the pre-test to the post-test. The t-test results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Results Obtained for t-Test for Prosody*

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<td>Mean</td>
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**Subpopulations**

A WCPM test and the MDFS scoring rubric were also analyzed to determine if there were any relationships in the findings in terms of gender.

**Male and female.** Scores were noted with regards to gender. The posttest results for WCPM for male and female were analyzed using a two-sample t-test assuming unequal variances with an alpha level set at .05, and this analysis revealed that one group did not score significantly higher than the other (see Appendix W for complete results). Females scored higher on the pre-test and posttest than males, but males’ reading accuracy and pace increased slightly more than females after the intervention. The average difference in the pre- and posttest intervention mean scores of
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male students was 24.5 while the average difference in mean scores of female students was 23.6. The number of WCPM increased for males by 0.9 of a point more than the number of WCPM for females. The results of the difference in scores for male and female were analyzed using a two-sample t-test assuming unequal variances with an alpha level set at .05, and this analysis did not reveal a significant difference in growth between male and females results. Figure 11 illustrates the pre- and post-intervention means of male and female students for oral reading fluency scores.

Figure 11. Pre- and post-intervention means by gender in regards to WCPM

The posttests results for prosody (see Figure 12) for male and female were analyzed using a two-sample t-test assuming unequal variances with an alpha level set at .05, and this analysis did not reveal a significant difference in growth between males and females. Males scored higher on the pre-test and posttest than females but the difference was not statistically significantly different. The average difference in the pre- and posttest intervention mean scores of male students was 1.5 while the average difference in mean scores of female students was 1.2. The male students diminished in the prosody score by .3 points difference than the female students. The results of the difference in scores for male and female were analyzed using a two-sample t-test assuming unequal variances with an alpha level set at .05, and this analysis did not reveal a significant difference in growth between male and females.
Figure 12. Pre- and post-intervention means by gender in regards to prosody.

Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records were recorded during the eight-week intervention addressing the research question, “Does explicit oral reading fluency instruction improve oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students?” Anecdotal records were based on observation related to all aspects of oral reading fluency. The records were analyzed and coded according to themes which appeared. These themes are the application of decoding strategies, pacing, and prosody without direct instruction and displaying enthusiasm for reading and reading activities. Throughout the course of the intervention, the students seemed to fail to apply the decoding strategies they were taught when given text to read independently. Often when they came to a word they did not know they still asked for someone else to pronounce the word for them. It seemed that during instruction they could follow the concepts but the consistent application of the strategies was easily lost from day to day.

During week 4 of the intervention, students had difficulty engaging in timed practices of familiar sight words and phrases for more than 15 minutes. A different approach to pacing
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instruction was made to implement the use of familiar text to engage students which resulted in improved success with student involvement.

It was apparent that Student G had a speech impairment which made it difficult to discern a word read correctly or the inability to pronounce a word due to the speech impairment. Students were asked the goal of the lesson daily, which was to improve oral reading fluency. Student H often repeated to the class the goal that the class was working towards.

Students were best engaged during week 7 of the study when a new Readers Theatre script was introduced daily. Students were eager to see what the story was going to be about, what their parts were going to be and to find and practice their lines before the group read the script together. Students seemed to enjoy expressing which script was their favorite. By show of hands the girls most enjoyed Romeo and Juliet, while the boys expressed that their favorite was Thor. Student H expressed that she/he did not like reading in front of the entire class, but felt more comfortable in a small group (see Appendix X for a table of themes with specific examples).

Summary

This chapter has presented an analysis of all data collected for the purpose of measuring the effects of oral reading fluency instruction on oral reading fluency using decoding strategies, pacing, prosody, and Readers Theatre on one group of eighth-grade reading students. The next chapter offers conclusions of the study, and implications that can be drawn from the study, recommendations for further implementation and future research, as well as limitations imposed on the research.
The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of oral reading fluency instruction on oral reading fluency in an eighth-grade classroom. This study was designed to address the research question, “Does fluency instruction incorporating Readers Theatre improve oral reading fluency in one group of eighth-grade reading students?” The results of the present study suggest that oral reading fluency instruction utilizing Readers Theatre improved the accuracy and rate of one group of eighth-grade reading students. The results were obtained by analyzing the weekly performance of a WCPM test and a weekly prosody test using the MDFS, as well as the pretests and posttests which revealed a significant increase in accuracy and speed of oral reading fluency. The pretest and posttest did not reveal a significant difference in prosody scores obtained from the MDFS. The WCPM and the MDFS were administered before and after the intervention of oral reading fluency instruction.

The pretest mean on WCPM was 56 and the posttest mean was 79. The pretest mean on prosody was 10 and the posttest mean was 9.125. A $t$-test conducted on the WCPM test revealed a significant difference between pre- and posttests number of words read correctly per minute. A $t$-test conducted on MDFS scores did not reveal a significant difference between the pre- and posttests. There was a slight .875 decrease on the pre-test means and posttest means.

Daily tasks required participants to engage in oral reading fluency instruction which addressed accuracy, rate, and prosody of instructional level passages. Each week each student read a passage on his or her instructional level and was scored on the number of words read correctly per minute. A different instructional level passage was also read by each student weekly to determine prosodic reading using the MDFS.

Weekly scores were averaged to obtain a weekly mean for WCPM and MDFS. The highest weekly group averages for accuracy occurred on Week 5 at 105 WCPM. This is 28 words below
the eighth-grade level at the 50 percentile. Prosodic reading scores rose slightly during intervention by using instructional level reading passages. The highest average score was recorded during Week 4 at 9.6 out of a possible 16 using the MDFS. However, this slight improvement did not persist to grade level text when reading passages for the pre- and posttests. Males improved .9 points above females on the WCPM test, but the t-test did not prove this to be significant. Also the results of the MDFS pre- and posttest

**Conclusions**

The accuracy aspect of oral reading fluency significantly increased on grade-level text after instruction utilizing Readers Theatre. Prosodic reading of grade-level text, however, did not significantly increase using grade level text. Results of this present study revealed that this group of eighth-grade reading students was able to read more accurately and at a more appropriate pace using grade level text after eight weeks of oral reading fluency instruction. Results of this present study also revealed that this group of eighth-grade reading students did not make significant improvements of prosodic reading by using grade level texts.

The results of a t-test did not support the notion that there was any significant difference between males and females in their improvement on the WCPM posttest. According to the prosody scores of both males and females, it appears that both groups actually lost ground in regards to prosody.

The results of this study reinforce what has been said by fluency experts (Goering & Baker, 2010; Rasinski, et al., 2005; Morris & Gaffney, 2011) that oral reading fluency instruction does improve overall reading proficiency at all grade levels. These results are also similar to those of a study conducted by Garrett and Connor (2010) and Roundy and Roundy (2009) that explains that a high level of automaticity is attained as a result of repeated cycles of reading.
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Limitations

As with any study there were factors over which the researcher had no control that may have affected the results of this study. Some factors may have positively impacted the results, and others may have negatively impacted the oral reading fluency scores. Factors which may have contributed to an increase in oral reading fluency scores might include maturation, and an increase in reading at home as well as in other classes. The oral reading fluency instruction the students received was supplementary to the instruction these students received throughout their school day. In addition to the oral reading fluency instruction the students received, they engaged in a variety of school related experiences that might have contributed to the improvement in oral reading fluency. Normal growth and maturity enable students to better process and comprehend what they are being taught; therefore natural growth may have enhanced their oral reading fluency.

A factor which may have had a negative impact on oral reading fluency scores were student absences. Occasionally students were absent or called to the office or counselor’s office. This would have a negative effect on others in the class as well, because the students were often partnered or grouped in a strategic way.

A final but very important negative factor which may have impacted results was the inexperience of the researcher in carrying out newly learned instructional methods and assessment tools. The rubric used for measuring prosody was somewhat subjective which made it difficult to be consistent each and every time prosody was measured. The MDFS is much more valuable to an experienced researcher. The WCPM test was much more objective and easier to measure. Student G, however, had a speech impediment which made measuring accuracy much more difficult.
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An additional limitation was the lack of availability to instructional materials that were age appropriate for eighth-grade students who were reading at a second and third grade level. Most readily available instructional materials were designed to be used for primary grade students.

Implications

The results of this study indicate that oral reading fluency instruction does increase the accuracy and pacing of students that are reading below grade level. The study also implies that oral reading fluency instruction may not improve prosodic reading in students that are reading below grade level. From the results of the study there does not seem to be any difference in the improvement of oral reading fluency when males are compared to females. Proficiency in oral reading fluency is imperative if students are to be successful during their school years and beyond as they carry out their adult lives. Students who are able to read on grade level at a minimum are able to keep up with their school work and have more opportunities to make decisions regarding college and careers. Results suggest that oral reading fluency instruction contributes to students’ ability to read accurately and at an appropriate pace, which ultimately supports reading comprehension.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the present study, recommendations are made regarding future intervention and research. Recommendations are made for oral reading fluency instruction. It is recommended that not only should oral reading fluency instruction continue to occur in primary grades, but that it should continue to take place well into the secondary years as well. Students who do not achieve a basic level of reading fluency during primary years are being left disabled in terms of their becoming proficient and independent readers, because oral reading fluency instruction rarely occurs beyond fourth grade.
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It is recommended by this researcher that when studying oral reading fluency, that either accuracy or rate be researched, or prosody be researched. The instruction given students to address accuracy and rate are very different for instruction on prosody. Students who are very weak in their ability to decode words place minimal concern on prosodic reading, because so much attention and concentration are required to simply decode words. Prosodic reading also requires a certain level of self confidence in one’s ability to read, that struggling readers simply do not have. To effect change in one’s ability to read with prosody a researchers’ instructional methods must dive deeper and take place longer than what took place in this study.

It is highly recommended that Readers Theatre continue to be an avenue for addressing the oral reading fluency needs of secondary students. Readers Theatre was a strategy for addressing oral reading fluency instruction that clearly resonated with the participants of this study. Each time a new script was introduced nearly every student began to volunteer for parts. All were actively engaged during the reading of each script. This clearly speaks loudly for a group of students who have experienced little success as readers through their school years.

Overall conclusions and implications from this present study suggest that oral reading fluency instruction increases accuracy and rate in struggling readers. Oral reading fluency instruction, however, may not effect change in prosodic reading of struggling readers. These results may be useful to reading specialists and educators who work with reading acquisition in school age students. Although oral reading fluency instruction failed to support the improvement of prosodic reading in one group of eighth-grade reading students it did support the improvement of this group of students’ ability to decode words and read at an improved pace.
References


Arkansas Department of Education, 2011.


FLUENCY INSTRUCTION AND ORAL READING FLUENCY


Appendix A1

RSSP Project Number

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
PROTOCOL FORM

The University Institutional Review Board recommends policies and monitors their implementation, on the use of human beings as subjects for physical, mental, and social experimentation, in and out of class. . . . Protocols for the use of human subjects in research and in class experiments, whether funded internally or externally, must be approved by the (IRB) or in accordance with IRB policies and procedures prior to the implementation of the human subject protocol. . . . Violation of procedures and approved protocols can result in the loss of funding from the sponsoring agency or the University of Arkansas and may be interpreted as scientific misconduct. (See Faculty Handbook.)

Supply the information requested in items 1-14 as appropriate. Type entries in the spaces provided using additional pages as needed. In accordance with college/departmental policy, submit the original and one copy of this completed protocol form and all attached materials to the appropriate Human Subjects Committee. In the absence of an IRB-authorized Human Subjects Committee, submit the original and one copy of this completed protocol form and all attached materials to the IRB, Attn: Compliance Officer, OZAR 118, 575-3845.

1. Title of Project: The Effects of Fluency Instruction Incorporating Reader's Theatre on Oral Reading Fluency in an 8th Grade Reading Classroom

2. (Students must have a faculty member supervise the research. The faculty member must sign this form and all researchers and the faculty advisor should provide a campus phone number.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Campus Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Researcher</td>
<td>Susan Abram</td>
<td>CIED</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sabram@uark.edu">sabram@uark.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>Linda H. Ellers, PhD</td>
<td>CIED</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lellers@uark.edu">lellers@uark.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Researcher(s) status. Check all that apply.

- Faculty
- Staff
- Graduate Student(s)
- Undergraduate Student(s)

4. Project type

- Faculty Research
- Thesis / Dissertation
- Staff Research
- M.A.T. Research
- X Class Project
- Independent Study / Educ. Spec. Project

5. Is the project receiving extramural funding?

- X No
- Yes. Specify the source of funds

6. Brief description of the purpose of proposed research and all procedures involving people. Be specific. Use additional pages if needed. (Do not send thesis or dissertation proposals. Proposals for extramural funding must be submitted in full.)

Purpose of research: The purpose of this proposed study is to investigate the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Reader's Theatre on oral reading fluency of one group of 8th grade reading students. It is designed to examine if the direct instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words followed with practice through repeated oral reading of a scripted dialogue among students improves the oral reading accuracy, rate, and expression of students who read below expected grade level.

Procedures involving people: Participants will read grade level passages so the number of Words Correct Per Minute and accuracy of word pronunciation can be calculated. Expression will be measured using a scoring tool known as the Multidimensional Fluency Scale. This scale is a chart of descriptions that will assess an individual's application of appropriate
expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace when reading on a scale of 1 - 4 with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest.

The intervention consists of participants engaging in instructional activities that will model decoding skills to ensure reading accuracy, appropriate reading rate, and appropriate expression and volume. Following instruction, students will practice each aspect of oral reading fluency to repeatedly read a scripted dialogue among a small group in preparation of an oral reading presentation that will be presented to the whole class. The intervention will occur 40 minutes per day, four days per week for 9 weeks.

7. Estimated number of participants (complete all that apply)

   - Children under 14: 0
   - Children 14-17: 0
   - UA students (18 yrs and older): 0
   - Adult non-students: 0

8. Anticipated dates for contact with participants:
   - First Contact: September 27, 2011
   - Last Contact: May 11, 2012

9. Informed Consent procedures: The following information must be included in any procedure: identification of researcher, institutional affiliation and contact information; identification of Compliance Officer and contact information; purpose of the research, expected duration of the subject’s participation; description of procedures; risks and/or benefits; confidentiality; compliance; informed consent; and the subject's right to withdraw. See Policies and Procedures Governing Research with Human Subjects, section 5.0 Requirements for Consent.

10. Confidentiality of Data: All data collected that can be associated with a subject/respondent must remain confidential. Describe the methods to be used to ensure the confidentiality of data obtained. Confidentiality will be maintained and assured by the researcher through the establishment of a code. Each subject will be assigned a number at random to establish the code. All data will be recorded anonymously using the code. Only the researcher will have access to the code, and all data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the project classroom. Once the proposed study is completed, the code will be destroyed.

11. Risks and/or Benefits: Will participants in the research be exposed to more than minimal risk? Yes X No Minimal risk is defined as risks of harm not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Describe any such risks or discomforts associated with the study and precautions that will be taken to minimize them.

   Benefits: Other than the contribution of new knowledge, describe the benefits of this research. This study has the potential to improve oral reading fluency in one group of 8th grade reading students.

12. Check all of the following that apply to the proposed research. Supply the requested information below or on attached sheets:

   A. Deception of or withholding information from participants. Justify the use of deception or the withholding of information. Describe the debriefing procedure: how and when will the subject be informed of the deception and/or the information withheld?

   B. Medical clearance necessary prior to participation. Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions to be taken.

   C. Samples (blood, tissue, etc.) from participants. Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions to be taken.

   D. Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to participants. Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions to be taken.
E. Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects. Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions to be taken.

F. Research involving children. How will informed consent from parents or legally authorized representatives as well as from subjects be obtained?

Through signatures on the attached informed consent form.

G. Research involving pregnant women or fetuses. How will informed consent be obtained from both parents of the fetus?

H. Research involving participants in institutions (cognitive impairments, prisoners, etc.). Specify agencies or institutions involved. Attach letters of approval. Letters must be on letterhead with original signature; electronic transmission is acceptable.

I. Research approved by an IRB at another institution. Specify agencies or institutions involved. Attach letters of approval. Letters must be on letterhead with original signature; electronic transmission is acceptable.

J. Research that must be approved by another institution or agency. Specify agencies or institutions involved. Attach letters of approval. Letters must be on letterhead with original signature; electronic transmission is acceptable.

See attached letter from Woodland Jr. High School

13. Checklist for Attachments

The following are attached:

☐ Consent form (if applicable) or

☐ Letter to participants, written instructions, and/or script of oral protocols indicating clearly the information in item #9.

☐ Letter(s) of approval from cooperating institution(s) and/or other IRB approvals (if applicable)

☐ Data collection instruments

14. Signatures

I/we agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects/respondents are protected. I/we will report any adverse reactions to the committee. Additions to or changes in research procedures after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review. I/we agree to request renewal of approval for any project when subject/respondent contact continues more than one year.

Principal Researcher: Susan Abraham
Date: 9-13-2011

Faculty Advisor: [Signature]
Date: [Signature]
PROTOCOL APPROVAL FORM

(To be returned to IRB Program Manager with copy of completed protocol form and attachments)

Human Subjects Committee Use Only (In absence of IRB-authorized Human Subjects Committee, send protocol to IRB.)

Recommended Review Status

9 Human Subjects Committee can approve as exempt because this research fits in the following category of research as described in section 9.02 of the IRB policies and procedures (Cite reasons for exempt status):

Printed Name and Signature of the HSC Chair: ___________________________ Date: ___________________

*******************************************************************************************************************************************

**

9 Expedited Review by a designated member of the IRB because this research fits in the following category of research as described in section 9.03 of the IRB policies and procedures (Cite reasons for expedited status):

Printed Name and Signature of the HSC Chair: ___________________________ Date: ___________________

*******************************************************************************************************************************************

***

9 Requires Full Review by the IRB because this research fits in the following category of research as described in section 9.04 of the IRB policies and procedures (Cite reasons for full status):

Printed Name and Signature of the HSC Chair: ___________________________ Date: ___________________

IRB/RSSP Use Only

Project Number: ___________________ Received RSSP: ___________________

Sent to: ___________________________ Date: ___________________

Final Status

9 Approved as Exempt under section 9.02 of the IRB Policies and Procedures (Cite reasons for exemption.):

9 Approved as Expedited under Section 9.03 of the IRB Policies and Procedures because (Cite reasons for expedited status.)

Printed Name and Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________

IRB (for the Committee)
9. Approved by Full review under Section 9.04 of the IRB as meeting requirements of the IRB Policies and Procedures.

Printed Name and Signature: ____________________________ Date

IRB Chairperson
MEMORANDUM

TO: Susan Abram  
    Linda Ellers

FROM: Ro Windwalker  
       IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 11-09-113

Protocol Title: The Effects of Fluency Instruction Incorporating Reader’s Theatre on Oral Reading Fluency in an 8th Grade Reading Classroom

Review Type: ☑ EXEMPT  ☐ EXPEDITED  ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 09/23/2011  Expiration Date: 09/22/2012

September 23, 2011

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 11 participants. If you wish to make any modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval prior to implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.
September 9, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am aware that Susan Abram is conducting a study entitled “The Effects of Fluency Instruction Incorporating Readers’ Theatre on Oral Reading Fluency in an 8th Grade Reading Classroom” at my school, Woodland Junior High School in Fayetteville. The study has been approved by Dr. Linda Ellers, the University Professor, and Susan Abram has my permission to conduct this study pending approval of the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board committee.

Respectfully,

Anita Lawson
Principal
Dear Parent/Guardian

I am currently working on a Master’s of Education degree at the University of Arkansas. As part of the program, I am conducting a research project. As an instructional facilitator (teaching specialist) at Woodland Junior High, I will be conducting my student project to determine if direct instruction of oral reading instruction followed by repeated reading through the use of Reader’s Theatre (reading from a scripted dialogue) among class members will improve reading fluency (speed, smoothness, and expression).

Your child will be participating in several activities and lessons over the next nine weeks to supplement his/her reading instruction. The goal of the study is to improve the students’ ability to read quickly, accurately, and with expression.

While each student will participate in the reading improvement activities, I can only include your child’s work in my research findings with your signed consent. Participation is voluntary, and there are no negative consequences if you choose to not allow your child to participate. By signing and returning the attached form, you grant permission for me to use your child’s work in the results of this research project. Please note that confidentiality will be maintained and that your child’s name will not be used in reporting results. All results will be reported anonymously.

The attached informed consent form contains a more detailed description of this project. Please take time to read it over, read it with your child, and discuss it carefully. Feel free to call me at the school (479-445-9464) regarding any questions you may have.

I am very excited about the activities and lessons I have planned for the next nine weeks, and I look forward to getting to work with you and your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Susan Abram
Instructional Facilitator
Woodland Junior High
Informed Consent

Title: The Effects of Readers’ Theatre on Oral Reading Fluency in an 8th Grade Reading Classroom.

Researcher:
Susan Abram, B.S.E., M.Ed. Graduate Student
Dr. Linda Eilers, Faculty Advisor
University of Arkansas
College of Education and Health Professions
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
216 Peabody Hall
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(479)445-9464
sahram@uark.edu

Compliance Contact Person:
Ro Windwalker, Compliance Coordinator
Research & Sponsored Programs
Research Compliance
University of Arkansas
ADMN 210
Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201
(479)575-2208
irb@uark.edu

Description: The present study is an action research project designed to investigate the effects of fluency instruction incorporating Readers’ Theatre on oral reading fluency of one group of 8th grade reading students. It is designed to examine if the direct instruction of pronunciation, appropriate reading pace, and correct phrasing and emphasis of words followed with practice through repeated oral reading of a scripted dialogue among students improve the oral reading accuracy, rate, and expression of students who read below expected grade level.

Participants will read grade level passages so the number of Words Correct Per Minute and accuracy of word pronunciation can be calculated. Expression will be measured using a scoring tool known as the Multidimensional Fluency Scale. This scale is a chart of descriptions that will assess an individual’s application of appropriate expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace when reading on a scale of 1-4 with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest.

Risks and Benefits: There are no risks, other than those associated with regular classroom instruction, anticipated with this project. The potential benefits include improving reading fluency.

Voluntary Participation: Your child will participate in all classroom activities during this research project. However, the decision to allow your child’s grades and scores to be used in recording and analyzing data for this project is completely voluntary.

Confidentiality: Your child’s scores and grades will remain confidential throughout the project. To ensure confidentiality, a code will be established by randomly assigning a number to each participant. All scores and grades for data analysis will be recorded using this code. The code as well as all data collected during the study will be stored in a secure place and will only be accessible to the researcher. Neither your child nor his/her scores or grades will be personally identified. The code will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

Right to Withdraw: If you choose to allow your child’s scores to be used now, but at any time and for any reason change your mind, you may withdraw your consent. In that case, your child’s scores and grades would not be recorded in the project data. There would be no negative consequences for this decision.

Informed Consent:

I, ____________________________, have read the description of this study. I understand the purpose of this project, the procedures that are to be used, the potential risks and benefits, how confidentiality will be established and maintained, as well as the option to withdraw. I have read and discussed this project with my child _____________________________. (Please print your child’s name.)

My signature below indicates that my child and I freely agree for his/her scores and grades to be recorded and analyzed as a participant in this project.

Parent/Guardian

Child/Participant

Date
## 2006 Hasbrouck & Tindal Oral Reading Fluency Data

Jan Hasbrouck and Gerald Tindal have completed an extensive study of oral reading fluency. The results of their study were published in a technical report entitled, "Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Measurement," which is available on the University of Oregon's website, bfr.uoregon.edu/tech_reports.htm, and in The Reading Teacher in 2006 (Hasbrouck, J. & Tindal, G. A. (2006). Oral reading fluency norms: A valuable assessment tool for reading teachers, The Reading Teacher: 59(7), 636-644.).

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 scoring 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 35, 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*
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<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>165</td>
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<td>109</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*WCPM = Words Correct Per Minute

[www.readnaturally.com](http://www.readnaturally.com)
NAME ____________________________

**FLUENCY RUBRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression and Volume</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.</td>
<td>Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.</td>
<td>Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.</td>
<td>Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrasing</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.</td>
<td>Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.</td>
<td>Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some smoothness. The reader has difficulty with specific words and sentence structures.</td>
<td>Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and sentence structures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smoothness</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.</td>
<td>Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many &quot;rough spots.&quot;</td>
<td>Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.</td>
<td>Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pace</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reads slowly and laboriously.</td>
<td>Reads moderately slowly.</td>
<td>Reads fast and slow throughout reading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores of 10 or more indicate that the student is making good progress in fluency. Score _____________

Scores below 10 indicate that the student needs additional instruction in fluency.

Rubric modified from: Tom Rasinski – Creating Fluent Readers
“The Medicine Bag”
by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneeze

My grandfather, Chief Stars, and I always bragged about our Salish grandpa, Joe Iron Shell. Our friends, who had always lived in the city and only knew about Indians from movies and TV, were impressed by our stories. Maybe we exaggerated and made Grandpa and the reservation sound glamorous, but when we’d return home to Lakota country after our yearly summer visit to Grandpa, we always had some exciting tales to tell.

We always had some authentic Salish articles to show our listeners. One year Chief Stars had made new moccasins that Grandpa had made. On another visit he gave me a small, round, flat, redbead drum which was decorated with a picture of a warrior riding a horse. He taught me a Salish chant to sing while I beat the drum with a leather-covered stick that had a feather on the end. Man, that really made an impression.

We never showed our friends Grandpa’s pictures. Not that we were ashamed of him, but because we knew that the glamorous tales we told didn’t go with the truth.

[The Reader’s Choice, page 78. DPR: 54]

Teacher’s comments:

SCORING GUIDE
Total words read: 59
Minus total errors: 13
Correct words per minute (CWPM): 116
# Appendix H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of Study</th>
<th>Aspect of Fluency</th>
<th>Dates Taught</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Pre-test given</td>
<td>October 3-6, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>October 10-13, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>October 17-20, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>October 24-25, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Pacing</td>
<td>October 31-November 3, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Pacing</td>
<td>November 7-8, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Prosody/Readers Theatre</td>
<td>November 9-15, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Posttesting</td>
<td>November 28, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internship Lesson Plan Format

Title/Subject: Reading
Grade Level: 8

COMMON CORE STANDARDS: Grade 5: 3, A; 4, B and C

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS: Students will distinguish between open and closed syllables. What is it that you want your students to KNOW, UNDERSTAND and BE ABLE TO DO as a result of the lesson?

The students will KNOW: TLW know that words may be made up of open and closed syllables.

The students will UNDERSTAND: TLW understand that if a syllable ends with a consonant it usually has a short vowel sound.

The students will BE ABLE TO: TLW be able to divide words into syllables and classify them as open or closed and if the vowel is short or long.

MATERIALS: Word building kit, flip chart

PROCEDURES:

*Review of relevancy of new learning to prior & future learning:
Play a recording of a person reading that does not read fluently. Ask students why fluency is important to reading. Discuss with students how fluency plays a role in our understanding what we read.

*Schema Activation:
TTW ask students how they will apply reading skills as an adult? TTW list these on the board.

*Direct Instruction (ME): TTW say the word tennis. Ask students to say how many parts they hear. Write the word on the board and have students identify how many vowel spots they see. Where do they think the syllable boundary is located.

*Guided Practice (WE): TTW explain to students that we can look at the last letter in a syllable to determine the vowel sound. A syllable that ends in a consonant is called a closed syllable and usually has a short vowel sound. Return to the word “tennis” and draw a line between the two n’s. Both syllables are closed so they will have a short vowel sound. Point to the vowel in the first syllable, asking what is the vowel sound. Have students respond and support their answer with how they know.

*Independent Practice (THEY): Students will complete a word list by separating each word into syllables and marking the vowels with a long or short vowel sound.

Differentiation: Students are placed into groups according to pretest results.

*Closure:

EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING:
Were the learning goals obtained? How do you know? What assessment strategy was used to determine if the student learning goals were mastered? Did you find that the lesson was too easy or too difficult for some students?
The learning goals were obtained. Students were able to separate words into syllables and mark the vowels with long or short marks.
EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING:
At the end of the lesson students answered five fill in the blank questions. Students seemed to understand the information about syllables but had trouble with direct recall of certain terms such as: accuracy, speed, expression.

REFLECTIVE THOUGHT:
Introspection! What worked? What didn’t? What would you do differently next time? Also discuss what you learned from your assessment data. This section can only be completed after the lesson is taught.

Students participated well in the conversation about fluency and why it is important to become a fluent reader. Using the colored letter tiles to identify vowels in a word seemed to be helpful to them.

The assessment data told me that the students definitely need a word bank. Open blanks are very difficult for them, because they do not have quick recall of information. All students grasped information well enough to enter into a discussion. I still need to address the three aspects of fluency and remind them why it is important to reading.
Lesson 1 Review

1. Reading fluency is made up of ____________ speed. 
   ____________
   ____________
   ____________

2. Words are made up of units called ____________.

3. Each of these units has only one ____________.

4. You can find the number of syllables by finding the number of ____________.

5. Knowing about syllables is useful because ____________ word.
Appendix J

Fill in the blanks below with the correct term.

- **Root word**
- **Prefix**
- **Suffix**

1. A **Root word** is the main part of a word after removing beginning and ending parts.
2. A **Suffix** is an ending at the end of a word.
3. A **Prefix** comes at the beginning of a word, but is not a word by itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>How many syllables does this word have?</th>
<th>What is the prefix on this word?</th>
<th>What is the root word?</th>
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</thead>
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<td>disown</td>
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<tr>
<td>disorder</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>dis</td>
<td>order</td>
</tr>
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<td>reenter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>re</td>
<td>enter</td>
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</table>

4. Can you come up with an example of a word that is not listed above that has a prefix or suffix?

*fighting*
### Prefixes and Suffixes Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Write unknown word</th>
<th>If the word has a prefix, write it here.</th>
<th>If the word has a suffix, write it here.</th>
<th>What is the root word?</th>
<th>How many syllables does the word have?</th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>ing</td>
<td>reminiscing</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turn to a partner and try to pronounce each word on your list.
# Appendix L

## Full Dolch Word List - 220 Words and 83 Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primer</th>
<th>Primer</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Nouns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>all</td>
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<td>always</td>
<td>about</td>
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<td>and</td>
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<td>away</td>
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<td>an</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>bring</td>
<td>hen</td>
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<td>at</td>
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<td>been</td>
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<td>or</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>saw</td>
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<tr>
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<td>of</td>
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<td>much</td>
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<td>old</td>
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<td>right</td>
<td>never</td>
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<td>only</td>
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<td>which</td>
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<td>will</td>
<td>with</td>
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<td>wish</td>
<td>wish</td>
<td>hill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.dolch-words.com
Name: Student F  
Date: 10-26-11  
Period: 6

Practicing Reading Speed

1. Words in the English language that occur most often are called __________ words.

2. Look over the list of phrases and short sentences and get ready to read them quickly and accurately while a partner times you for one minute. Count the number of phrases that you read and record below. Try it two more times.

   39  
   54  
   46

1st time  
2nd time  
3rd time

Circle your highest phrase number above.
### Phrases and Short Sentences for Repeated Reading Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third 100 Words</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Near the car</td>
<td>Stay a while.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few good men</td>
<td>My own father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the country</td>
<td>You might be right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It seemed too good.</td>
<td>Read every story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below the water</td>
<td>Next time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s hard to open.</td>
<td>Will it last?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it up</td>
<td>For example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the beginning</td>
<td>Light the fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The light in your eyes</td>
<td>A group of friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We got together</td>
<td>Under the earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We saw the food.</td>
<td>Both children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s my life.</td>
<td>The big city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We started the fire.</td>
<td>Read the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run for miles.</td>
<td>A good thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do it often.</td>
<td>Is it really true?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s time to eat.</td>
<td>Until the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A second later</td>
<td>Near the sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to my father.</td>
<td>Read your book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing your song.</td>
<td>The long list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family</td>
<td>I miss you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A very important person</td>
<td>Above the clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch the game.</td>
<td>I took the car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So far so good.</td>
<td>Without a care</td>
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<tr>
<td>I like being on the team.</td>
<td>My feet hurt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dark night</td>
<td>Next to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few children</td>
<td>It began to grow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch the river.</td>
<td>A group of Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He started to cry.</td>
<td>Too soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I leave it to me.</td>
<td>An important idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first day of school</td>
<td>Almost enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between the lines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t open the door.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Add it up.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Along the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plants and flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Something good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plant the trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Those other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In my head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We left it here.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Close the door.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always be kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It never happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once upon a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We walked four miles.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Let me carry it.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stop the music.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The young face</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State your case.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I cut myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On my side</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The peaceful Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The young girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The tall mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A good idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A long life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White clouds</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I hear the sea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I hear the waves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost four miles</td>
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1. Why is it important to recognize and pronounce sight words quickly? Don’t want to mess up at all.

2. Practice reading the second list of common phrases and sentences in the English language. Read them all the way through, while your partner checks for accuracy. Don’t read too fast that you make mistakes!

3. Now read the list for one minute and count the number of phrases you read correctly. Any mistakes should be subtracted from the total. Repeat two more times.

1st time 28
2nd time 37
3rd time 38

4. Does reading fast make us a good reader? Explain. No because we don’t want to read fast or to slow.
America the Beautiful

Words by Katharine Lee Bates,
Melody by Samuel Ward

O beautiful for spacious skies
For amber waves of grain
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern, impasioned stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
Across the wilderness
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw
Confirm thy soul in self-control
Thy liberty in law

1. Read the words of the song silently to yourself. Highlight any unknown words and all punctuation marks that you come to.

2. Write three sentences below in a paragraph that summarize what this song is about. Start by writing the title first.

3. After you write your paragraph, read aloud the words to a partner while I come around and listen to you.
Ballad of the Green Beret

by Staff Sergeant Barry Sadler and Robin Moore, copyright 1966

Fighting soldiers from the sky
Fearless men who jump and die
Men who mean just what they say
The brave men of the Green Beret

Silver wings upon their chest
These are men, America’s best
One hundred men will test today
But only three win the Green Beret

Trained to live off nature’s land
Trained in combat, hand-to-hand
Men who fight by night and day
Courage peaks from the Green Berets

Silver wings upon their chest
These are men, America’s best
One hundred men will test today
But only three win the Green Beret

Back at home a young wife waits
Her Green Beret has met his fate
He has died for those oppressed
Leaving her his last request

Put silver wings on my son’s chest
Make him one of America’s best
He’ll be a man they’ll test one day
Have him win the Green Beret.

1. Read the words of the song silently to yourself. Highlight any words that you don’t know how to say or don’t understand what they mean.

2. Write three sentences below in a paragraph that summarize what this song is about. Start by writing the title first.

3. After you write your paragraph, read aloud the words to a partner while I come around and listen to you.
By Shel Silverstein

"I cannot go to school today."
Said little Peggy Ann McKay.
"I have the measles and the mumps,
A gash, a rash and purple bumps.
My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,
I'm going blind in my right eye.
My tonsils are as big as rocks,
I've counted sixteen chicken pox.
And there's one more—that's seventeen,
And don't you think my face looks green?
My leg is cut, my eyes are blue----
It might be instamatic flu.
I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,
I'm sure that my left leg is broke----
My hip hurts when I move my chin,
My belly bottom's caving in.
My back is (wrenched), my ankle's sprained,
My 'pendix pains each time it rains.
My nose is cold, my toes are numb,
I have a (silver) in my thumb.
My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,
I hardly whisper when I speak.
My tongue is filling up my mouth,
I think my hair is falling out.
My elbow's bent, my spine ain't straight,
My temperature is one-o-eight.
My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,
There is a hole inside my ear.
I have a hangnail, and my heart is—what?
What's that? What's that you say?
You say today is ...Saturday?
G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

1. Read the poem above all the way through and highlight any unknown words and any punctuation marks that you come to.
2. Write three sentences on the back that summarizes what this poem is about. Start by writing the title first.
3. After you write your paragraph, read aloud the poem to a partner while I come around and listen to you.
#1128. Whales Reader's Theatre based on Gail Gibbon's book, Whales

Whales By Gail Gibbons

Reader 1: Whales live in oceans. They are not fish. They are air-breathing, warm-blooded mammals.
Reader 2: Some are small, and others are huge! The world's largest animals are whales.
Reader 3: The first ancestors of whales lived more than 50 million years ago.
Reader 4: Their fur was replaced by blubber to keep them warm. Blubber is a layer of fat between the skin and muscles.
Reader 5: Inside their flippers are bones arranged like those of a hand.
Reader 6: Whales' tails are called flukes. They don't look like fish tails. Whales push themselves through the water by moving their flukes up and down. They use their flippers for balance and turning.
Reader 7: Whales can't stay under water like fish. Beneath the surface they must hold their breath.
Reader 8: Before diving, whales breathe fresh air into their lungs through one or two nostrils on top of their heads. They are called blowholes.

Reader 1: When the whales surface, they blow out their wet, warm breath, making a spout.
Reader 2: When whales can't see well in dark and murky waters, they make clicking sounds. The sound waves travel and bounce off objects. Then they come back to whale's ears. This is called sonar or echolocation.
Reader 3: Some whales make other sounds, too. They resemble squeals, groans, chirps, and whistles like birds. Scientists believe that whales make these sounds to communicate with each other.
Reader 4: Some whales travel to cold waters to feed and live in the summer. Often they travel in groups, called pods. In the winter they go back to the warmer waters. This traveling is called migration.
Reader 5: In the warm waters, the females have babies. They can only have one baby at a time. A male is called a bull and a female is called a cow. A baby is called a calf.
Reader 6: There are two main kinds of whales. One group has teeth. They are called toothed whales. Most toothed whale males are larger than the females.
Reader 7: A Pilot Whale is about 20 feet long.
Reader 8: The Narwhal has two teeth. In the males, one of the teeth grows into a tusk.

Reader 1: A Beluga also called a White Whale, lives near the North Pole. It is about 18 feet long.
Reader 2: A Sperm Whale can stay under water for a very long time. It can be 65 feet long. It can dive down more than a half mile.
Reader 3: Toothed whales have only one blowhole.
Reader 4: The teeth are only for catching their food. They gulp down their food without
Cherubim: When you read, watch for commas and periods. They will tell you when to pause. Practice pausing with this sentence from the play: "What you seek, it is real. It is a bridge."
THOR

Thor is a fearsome fighter. But he will find out that true power is about more than strength.

Scene 1

N1: In Asgard, a planet far away, King Odin rules. Asgard’s enemies the Frost Giants recently attacked Asgard. Now Odin’s son Thor wants to invade their land in return. But Odin-forbids it.
N2: Thor invades anyway. Thor’s friends Lady Sif and the Warriors Three join him, along with his brother, Loki.

Thor: Yah!
N1: He smashes the giants with his powerful hammer.

Sif: Hi-yah!
N2: Sif fights with her double-sided sword.

Loki: Yahhh!

N1: Loki stabs a Frost Giant with his knife.
N2: The friends have almost beaten the giants. But they get trapped on a cliff. Odin appears.

Thor: Father, we’ll finish them together!

Odin: Silence!
N1: Odin helps them escape back to Asgard. But he is very angry at Thor.

Odin: You’ve forgotten everything I taught you about a warrior’s patience.
N2: Odin sends Thor to Earth to teach him a lesson.

Odin: I cast you out!
N1: Odin throws Thor’s hammer to Earth as well. He curses the hammer so that only a person who is truly deserving of the hammer will be able to lift it.

Scene 2

N2: Jane is a scientist in New Mexico. She is studying the possibility of a bridge between Earth and other planets. Jane and her partner, Selvig, watch a huge tornado of light hit the desert.
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
by Maya Angelou

There was a little path beside the rocky road, and Mrs. Flowers walked in front swinging her arms and picking her way over the stones. She said, without turning her head, to me, 'I hear you're doing very good school work, Marguerite, but that it's all written. The teachers report that they have trouble getting you to talk in class.' We passed the triangular farm on our left and the path widened to allow us to walk together. I hung back in the separate unasked and unanswerable questions. "Come and walk along with me, Marguerite," I couldn't have refused even if I wanted to. She pronounced my name so nicely. Or more correctly, she spoke each word with such clarity that I was certain a foreigner who didn't understand English could have understood her. "Now no one is going to make you talk—possibly no one can. But bear in mind, language is man's way of communicating with his fellow man and it is language alone which separates him from the lower animals." That was a totally new idea to me, and I would need time to think about it.

[The Reader's Choice, page 203. DRP: 56]

SCORING GUIDE

Total words read 10
Minus total errors 18
Correct words per minute (CWPM) 25
Appendix T

Individual Pre- and Posttest Scores for WCPM

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>91</td>
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Individual Pre- and Posttest Scores for Prosody

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t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

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<th>Variable 2</th>
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## t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

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t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

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## Anecdotal Observations

| Decoding Strategies                      | • Students were eager to participate in decoding tasks and were concerned that they would be successful.  
|                                         | • Students had a very difficult time applying the skills they were learning about.  
|                                         | • Clearly short term memory was a problem for these students.  |
| Pacing                                  | • Difficult to engage students for 50 minutes with speed related techniques. Did not seem to be meaningful to them.  |
| Prosody without direct instruction      | • Students had a hard time applying prosodic reading because they were too encumbered by decoding problems.  |
| Enthusiasm for reading and reading activities | • All students seemed to want to improve their reading skills.  
|                                         | • All students seemed to really enjoy the Readers Theatre scripts.  
|                                         | • Student H was particularly self-conscious about reading aloud during the whole group.  |