



# Fluency Instruction

Reading Recovery®  
Council of North America

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The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000a; 2000b; 2001) identified five essential components of reading instruction. One of those components was fluency instruction. Attention is given to this component in every Reading Recovery lesson.

## Fluency Instruction from *Put Reading First*

**Definition:** Fluency is defined as “the ability to read a text accurately and quickly. [Fluent readers] group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read.” (p. 22)

- “Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.” Researchers have found a close relationship between fluency and reading comprehension. (pp. 22–23)
- “To read with expression, readers must be able to divide the text into meaningful chunks. These chunks include phrases and clauses. Readers must know to pause appropriately” when reading orally. (p. 23)
- “Fluency is not a stage of development at which readers can read all words quickly and easily. Fluency changes, depending on what readers are reading, their familiarity with the words, and the amount of practice with reading text.” (p. 23)
- “It is important to provide students with instruction and practice in fluency as they read connected text.” (p. 23)
- “Repeated and monitored oral reading improves reading fluency and overall reading achievement.” (p. 24)

## Fluency Instruction in Reading Recovery Lessons

“Fluent reading will be encouraged if the teacher

- attends to the role of oral language.
- questions so that thinking and meaning must be used.
- increases opportunities to get fast access to the visual information in print.
- arranges for plenty of practice in orchestrating complex processing on easy or instructional text levels.”

(Clay, 2005, p. 154)

## *Examples of Instructional Procedures*

Reading Recovery emphasizes the importance of phrased and fluent reading. In Reading Recovery, teachers help children develop phrased and fluent reading by

- appealing to the child's oral language experience by encouraging fast reading of familiar texts and encouraging intonation.
- encouraging, in early lessons, fast recognition in reading and fast construction of print in writing, working toward fast responding with new learning as quickly as possible.
- demonstrating phrasing on texts in a variety of ways.
- selecting texts that will facilitate familiar reading.
- providing opportunities for multiple readings of familiar texts.
- encouraging flexibility in varying speed of oral reading to match difficulty of the text.
- using a variety of specific procedures, as needed, to promote fluent and phrased reading. (see Clay, 2005)

## *References*

- Clay, M. M. (2005). *Literacy lessons designed for individuals part two: Teaching procedures*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000a). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office
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- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH, DHHS (2001). *Put reading first: Helping your child learn to read*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.