

EDCI 727-Deconstructing Guided Reading- FLUENCY

Fluency is an often neglected component in any literacy program. It is also an often neglected component of teacher pre-service education and professional development. Because I always found it the weakest element of my own reading lessons, I chose to research the topic and strengthen the fluency instruction in my daily tutorials with struggling first graders.

Key Points

- Contribution of LaBerge and Samuels (their automaticity theory states that there is only so much attention available in the reading process, and when a reader can decode fluently, there is more attention available for comprehension)
- Richard Allington in 1983 stated that fluency was the most neglected areas of reading curriculum. This began to increase attention to fluency instruction.
- Timothy Rasinski began in 1989 attempted to define and describe instructional activities for improving fluency. He continues to be an integral part of fluency research and a respected authority.
- National Reading Panel report (2000) brought the importance of fluency instruction to the forefront and required that it be included as one of the key components in literacy instruction
- Techniques for increasing fluency include repeated readings, Readers Theater, modeling and feedback, specific prompts, programs such as Read Naturally, self recording, reading to audiotaped text (Chomsky), Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
- Importance of prosody (rhythmic features of speech): juncture (pauses between words, phrases and sentences), pitch (raising and lowering of voice intonation) and stress (giving prominence to words or phrases)
- Fluency assessment measures include timed readings including goal setting, single word training (words in isolation), DIBELS, (rapid letter naming test), assessment of oral reading fluency (ORF)

Some Key References

Martinez, M., Roser, N., & Strecker, S. (1998). 'I never thought I could be a star': A Readers Theatre ticket to fluency. *The Reading Teacher*, 52(4), 326.

This article outlines in detail a procedure for a Readers Theater lesson for increasing reading fluency. A model for 30 minute daily lessons is illustrated with a daily schedule included. It addresses all aspects such as book selection and mini-lessons to include, as well as lists of books at all levels.

Peebles, J. (2007). Incorporating movement with fluency instruction: A motivation for struggling readers. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(6), 578-581.

I include this article because it is one of many I read giving very different and interesting ways to incorporate fluency instruction in the classroom. This method, which the author calls Rhythm Walks, uses movement to demonstrate to students the phrasing necessary to achieve fluent reading.

Pikulski, J. J., & Chard, D. J. (2005). Fluency: Bridge between decoding and reading comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 58, 510-519.

In this article, fluency is discussed in the context of Ehri's stages of reading development. A 9-step program is described including all components necessary for fluency instruction. The use of independent reading is stressed and the importance of silent reading emphasized.

Rasinski, T. V. (2000). Speed does matter in reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 54(2), 146-151.

No discussion of fluency would be complete without including the work of Timothy Rasinski. His research is invaluable in fluency instruction and his articles and books include not only the rationale and importance of direct fluency instruction but also many techniques and strategies for building fluency and therefore improving reading comprehension.

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