

Workshop 2

Fluency and Word Study

"We want to make sure that readers are engaged in lots of high-success reading and that we support them by modeling and demonstrating how good readers think while they read. This includes how they pay attention to words, how they think about pronunciation, and how they notice those little things writers do that tickle us."

Richard Allington
Professor of Reading
University of Tennessee

Students in the intermediate grades continue to develop as fluent readers, using specific strategies for reading and understanding new words. How can teachers support their students' development of fluency, vocabulary, and decoding strategies? What instructional practices promote fluency and word study? In this session, literacy expert Richard Allington discusses the importance of fluent reading, vocabulary knowledge, and word analysis skills in effective, interactive, and engaged reading.

Learning Goals

At the end of this session, you will better understand how to:

- provide opportunities to practice fluent reading
- model and demonstrate fluent reading for your students
- plan instruction that allows all students to engage in high-success reading
- select and teach vocabulary to enhance comprehension
- instruct and support students in decoding longer, unfamiliar words

Materials Needed

- the Word Study and Fluency Chart found at the end of this chapter
- the Examine the Literature Response Chart found at the end of this chapter
- articles: "Fluency: Still Waiting After All These Years" and "Direct and Rich Vocabulary Instruction" found on the *Teaching Reading 3-5* Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/teachreading35
- the Teaching Word Parts Chart found at the end of this chapter
- a journal or notebook

Facilitator: You may want to have several copies of charts and articles available for participants without Internet access.

Before You Watch

Session Preparation

To prepare for this workshop session, you will review the key terms, identify the strategies that you already use, and then read two articles on effective practices in fluency and word study.

Facilitator: Have participants complete these activities before arriving for the session.

Key Terms

- Fluency
- Onset-rime patterns
- High-success reading
- Self-monitoring
- Non-interruptive reading instruction

Definitions for these terms can be found in the Glossary in the Appendix.



Notebook

What Do You Do?

To complete this activity, use the Word Study and Fluency Chart found at the end of this chapter.

Fluency (the ability to read accurately, with proper phrasing and intonation, and to understand what you're reading) and word study (the ability to decode words and understanding their meaning) are key concepts in intermediate-grade reading programs. Consider how you teach and provide opportunities for practice in these areas. Complete the Word Study and Fluency Chart to outline how your literacy program advances students' reading fluency and word development. Think about these questions before completing the chart and, if you are taking this workshop for credit, save your chart for your Literacy Practices Portfolio:

1. What texts and materials do you have in your classroom that support students' development of fluent reading?
2. How do you select vocabulary to teach in all areas of your curriculum?
3. How much time do you allocate to word study?
4. What word study routines do you teach and encourage your students to use?
5. How do you differentiate instruction and tasks based on your students' needs?



Assignment

Examine the Literature

To complete this activity, use the Examine the Literature Response Chart found at the end of this chapter.

Read each article listed below, recording your ideas on the chart during and after reading. When you have finished, save your chart to submit as an assignment.

These articles can be found as downloadable PDFs on the *Teaching Reading 3-5* Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/teachreading35.

Before You Watch, cont'd.

Fluency: Still Waiting After All These Years

This article explores what fluency is, the kinds of teaching practices that hinder fluency, and those that increase fluency.

Allington, R. C. "Fluency: Still Waiting After All These Years." In *What Research Has to Say About Fluency Instruction*. Edited by Samuels, S. J. and A. E. Farstrup. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 2006.

Direct and Rich Vocabulary Instruction

This article examines how to choose and effectively teach vocabulary words.

McKeown, M. G., and I. L. Beck. "Direct and Rich Vocabulary Instruction." In *Vocabulary Instruction*, edited by J. F. Baumann and E. J. Kame'enui, 13-27. New York: Guilford Press, 2004.

Analyze the Video

Facilitator: When the workshop session begins, you may want to spend a few minutes discussing the key terms, participants' prior knowledge, and the readings.

Video Summary

In "Fluency and Word Study," Professor Richard Allington discusses three instructional practices that promote reading fluency: giving students opportunities to read texts they can easily read, giving them plenty of time to practice reading, and allowing them to read without being interrupted. Professor Allington also discusses effective word study strategies. The video also features classroom examples that illustrate his comments and address the following questions:

- What instructional practices support fluency?
- What are effective word study strategies?



Notebook

Watch the Video

Watch the video, "Fluency and Word Study," taking notes as you watch. After you watch, jot down your answers to the questions below. If you prefer to watch the video in segments, pause the video when you see the next session heading.

Analyze the Video, cont'd.

Video Segment 1: What Instructional Practices Support Fluency?

(approximate times: 00:00-16:00): If you are watching the video in segments, you will find this image at the beginning of the video.

In the first segment, Professor Allington discusses practices that improve fluency: providing students with texts they can easily read, giving students extended time to read, and teaching students to monitor their own comprehension.

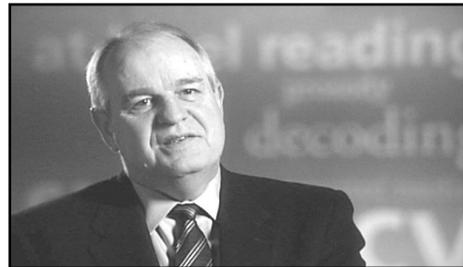


- How can you ensure that your struggling readers have access to texts they can easily read?
- How can you foster a learning environment in which students have many opportunities to practice reading?
- Describe ways in which you can model fluent reading in your classroom throughout the day.

Video Segment 2: What Are Effective Word Study Strategies?

(approximate times: 16:00-end): If you are watching the video in segments, you will find this image approximately 16 minutes into the video.

In the final segment, Professor Allington discusses guidelines for how to choose vocabulary words to teach, and ways of integrating explicit vocabulary instruction into the curriculum.



- Explain the three levels of words and how you can use word levels to decide which words to teach.
- How do you teach your students to “chunk” words as a strategy for decoding unfamiliar words? When do you provide this instruction?
- Based on Professor Allington’s comments and the classroom examples, what are some ways you might foster word study in your classroom?

Extend Your Knowledge

Examine the Topic

Fluent reading, an important goal of literacy instruction, promotes comprehension and personal response to reading. What are the components of fluent reading? How can teachers provide instruction and practice in fluency to ensure effective and interactive comprehension? Read the following statements on the role of fluency in reading instruction. Think about how these statements relate to your own classroom organization and teaching practices, and what questions you have about providing instruction that focuses on fluency to advance comprehension.

Extend Your Knowledge, cont'd.

When we start thinking about how you would organize classroom instruction or intervention instruction to begin to address the problem of kids who are unable to read fluently, the absolutely essential first feature is to make sure that they have books in their hands they can actually read, read accurately, and probably books that they have some background knowledge and experience with. Part of my argument is that one of the reasons we get so many kids who don't seem to be able to read with fluency is that they get so little practice with what we call high-success reading—and that's reading with 98 to 99% accuracy and reading with comprehension. I'd even throw in reading in phrases and with intonation.

Richard Allington

Proficient readers have certain features in common when it comes to word recognition; They not only identify words accurately, they also recognize them quickly. In other words, they have achieved automaticity and no longer need to spend time decoding the vast majority of words they encounter in text. Given that automatic word recognition is prerequisite to becoming a skilled reader, and skilled readers can construct meaning from text, the question becomes, in what ways does this automatic word recognition help lead to reading comprehension? According to several authors, individuals have a limited amount of attention available for reading. This being the case, attention expended on one component of reading is, necessarily, attention that is unavailable for another. When reading, individuals necessarily perform two interdependent tasks: They must both decode the words present in a text and at the same time construct that text's meaning. Given that these two processes occur simultaneously, the greater the amount of attention expended on word identification, the less that remains available for comprehension.

When considering this issue in terms of fluency development, the question that follows becomes, how do learners make the shift from decoding accurately but deliberately, to decoding automatically? According to a number of authors, the most effective way to ensure that this transition occurs is through extensive practice. As with any skill that requires the coordination of a series of smaller steps to create a unified action, practice assists learners in becoming skilled readers. In the case of reading, this practice consists primarily of repeated exposures to connected text. In other words, the key to the development of students' automatic word recognition is the provision of extensive opportunities to read a wide variety of connected text.

Kuhn, Melanie. "Fluency in the Classroom: Strategies for Whole-Class and Group Work." In *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*. New York: Guilford Press, 2003.



Notebook

Consider your students who are not fluent readers. How do you provide instruction and practice to develop their fluency? Write your answers to the following questions:

- How can you model and demonstrate fluent reading throughout the day? What factors of fluent reading do you emphasize during these demonstrations?
- What opportunities do you provide in your daily instruction for reading connected text at "just right" levels?
- What is the range of reading levels in your classroom library? Do these levels match the reading levels of your students?
- How can you match appropriate fluency instruction with the wide range of readers in your class? How can you provide opportunities for fluency development in small groups? Pairs? Independent practice?

Extend Your Knowledge, cont'd.



Interactive Activity

Word Tiers

Go to the *Teaching Reading 3-5* Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/teachreading35

When you come across words that may be unfamiliar to students, how do you decide which words to focus on? This activity is designed to help you identify the three tiers of vocabulary words, based on the article by Beck and McKeown that you read earlier in this session. You will read an excerpt, identify words that present new vocabulary for your students, and then categorize words by tier in order to focus your teaching.



Notebook

When you have finished the Interactive Activity, jot down your answers to the following questions:

- How did you decide which words to explicitly teach (Tier 2) and which words to mention or clarify (Tier 3)?
- What instructional strategies will you use to teach Tier 2 words?
- What instructional strategies will you use to teach Tier 3 words?
- What instructional strategies will you use to provide students additional review and practice on Tier 2 words so that they become part of their working vocabulary?
- What questions do you have about selecting appropriate vocabulary to teach?

Tips for New Teachers



Tip

Promoting Fluency

Students in the primary grades have learned a core of sight words as well as strategies to decode unknown words. This word knowledge may help them to read accurately, but they may not read fluently—that is, quickly and with appropriate expression. This can have a negative effect on comprehension. Here are some ways to promote fluency and enhance comprehension.

- Develop a classroom library that includes a wide range of reading levels for independent reading.
- Provide time each day for students to read at their independent level—98 to 100% accuracy in word recognition and adequate comprehension.
- Model fluent oral reading during daily read-aloud.
- Provide reasons for students to reread text (ask students to reread text to support their answers for a discussion).

Extend Your Knowledge, cont'd.

- Have students create and participate in Reader's Theater.
- Encourage students to choose character parts and read dialogue with a partner.
- Have students prepare and read to younger students ("reading buddies").

Based on the following articles: Johnston, P. "Assessment Conversations." *The Reading Teacher* 57, no. 1 (2003): 90-92. and Johnston, P. "Literacy Assessment and the Future." *The Reading Teacher* 58, no. 7 (2005): 684-686.

Put It Into Practice

Choose Activities

In this section, you will apply what you have learned to your own teaching. The following activities are designed to assist you in developing activities to teach word analysis and vocabulary. Choose one or both of the activities from the list below.

Activity 1: Teaching Word Parts

In this activity, you will select words that contain a similar word pattern and plan a lesson to teach these words.

Activity 2: Developing Vocabulary

In this activity, you will choose 8 to 10 vocabulary words from a selection students are going to read and then develop two activities to help students understand and use these words appropriately.



1. Teaching Word Parts

To complete this activity, use the Teaching Word Parts Chart found at the end of this chapter.

One of the most effective decoding strategies for students in grades 3-5 is to chunk words into parts. These word parts are meaningful and/or are easily pronounced. They consist of compound words, onsets and rimes, prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional endings. In this activity, you will select words that contain a similar word pattern and plan a lesson to teach these words. When you have finished, save your written work to submit as an assignment.

Before you begin, review the kinds of word parts:

- **Compound words**—two words that combine to form a new word; must have the meaning and pronunciation of both words (e.g., baseball)
- **Onsets**—all consonants that precede the vowel in a syllable or word (e.g., str in street)
- **Rimes**—the vowel and all consonants after it in a syllable or word until the next vowel
- **Prefixes**—any syllable attached to the beginning of a word that changes the meaning of that word

Put It Into Practice, cont'd.

- **Suffixes**—any syllable with meaning attached to the end of a word that changes the meaning of that word
- **Inflectional endings**—a special set of suffixes that change the number, case, or gender when added to nouns or tense when added to verbs

In this activity, you will select words from a text you are using and categorize them based on their similar word patterns. You will then develop a lesson plan for teaching those words for a given pattern unclear that appears frequently in the text.

1. First, review a text or portion of text you plan to teach.
2. Select those words that your students may have difficulty reading or understanding.
3. Categorize the words based on their similar word parts, using the Teaching Word Parts Chart (an example is given for each component of word structure).
4. Next, decide which category contains the most words and plan a lesson to teach those words and word parts before or after students read the text.
5. Develop a lesson plan that addresses the following information:
 - a. Modeling and Demonstration:
 - How will you help students to chunk each word?
 - How will you demonstrate the chunking process used to read these words?
 - How will you explain the importance of this strategy to your students?
 - What chart(s) might you construct with your students to support their understanding?
 - b. Guided Practice:
 - What instructional strategy or prompt will you use to help students think about other words with a similar pattern?
 - What words do you expect to elicit from students?
 - What tasks will you assign to students to use in groups?
 - How will students practice reading these words rapidly in isolation and in phrases?
 - How will you support struggling readers?
 - c. Independent Practice:
 - How will students demonstrate knowledge and use of the strategy in independent reading?
 - What ongoing opportunities will you provide students to practice the strategy?
 - d. Assessment:
 - How will you document students' understanding and use of the strategy?

Put It Into Practice, cont'd.



Assignment

2. Developing Vocabulary

In this activity, you will choose 8 to 10 vocabulary words from a selection students are going to read and develop two activities to help students understand and appropriately use these words. When you have finished, save your written work to submit as an assignment.

Effective vocabulary instruction includes multiple and varied exposures to words. Literacy research suggests that teachers choose 10 words each week and provide daily, varied activities for students to practice using those words. Two possible activities involve sentence completion tasks. One is a cloze activity in which students are asked to fill in the missing word with one of the week's vocabulary words. In the second, students complete a sentence with a phrase that incorporates the vocabulary word and demonstrates understanding of its meaning.

1. Based on what your students will be reading in the following week, choose 10 vocabulary words you need to teach (Tier 2).
2. Prepare two activities to help students fully understand the definition and use of the chosen words.
 - Fill-in-the-blank activity: For each of the 10 words, compose a sentence in which the targeted word is omitted. For example, if one of the words you were going to teach is *scrutinized*, the sentence could be: *My calligraphy teacher was such a perfectionist that he _____ [scrutinized] every stroke I made.*
 - Sentence completion activity: For each of the 10 words, compose a sentence that needs to be completed. For example, if *scrutinize* is the targeted word, the sentence might be: *I wasn't sure whether I was eating chocolate chips or ants, so I _____ [scrutinized].* After students have composed sentences either with a partner or by themselves, promote discussion among the class and choose the best sentence(s) so that students more fully understand the uses of the words.
3. Remember, the goal of these activities is to promote discussion and to foster rich understanding of the vocabulary words.
4. Develop activities that address the following information:
 - a. Modeling and Demonstration:
 - How will you explain the importance of vocabulary instruction to your students?
 - How will you first introduce and define the words?
 - How will you provide or develop definitions that are "student friendly"?
 - How will you introduce the fill-in-the-blank and sentence completion activities?
 - b. Guided Practice:
 - How will students work in groups to complete these activities?
 - How will you help generate discussion around each of the activities?
 - How will you support your struggling learners as they complete these activities?
 - c. Independent Practice:
 - How will students demonstrate understanding of the targeted words in their independent reading?
 - d. Assessment:
 - How will you document students' understanding and ability to use the vocabulary taught?

Reflect on Your Learning



Assignment

What Did You Learn?

Consider what you have learned about fluency and word study from Professor Allington's comments, the classroom examples, and the readings and activities in this session. Write a summary of what you have learned. Use the questions below to guide your thinking. When you have finished, save your written work to submit as an assignment. If you are taking this workshop for credit, include it in your Literacy Practices Portfolio.

- Which aspects of the video relate to what you currently do to promote fluency and word study?
- How will you use the ideas in this session to improve your students' reading fluency and word knowledge across the curriculum?
- What changes will you need to make in your instruction and the texts you use to enhance your students' reading fluency and word knowledge?
- What will you consider when selecting vocabulary to teach before reading?
- How will you differentiate instruction in your vocabulary program to maximize learning for all students?



Assignment

Create a Literacy Practices Portfolio

If you are taking this workshop for credit, continue constructing your portfolio of instructional practices. Your portfolio for this workshop will include the following items:

- current practices in place in your classroom
- changes you would like to make
- a description of one change you have implemented
- evidence of student learning

1. Current practices

Include your chart from What Do You Do? Then, think about your present literacy instruction. Write the answers to the following questions.

Fluency

- How do you assess your students' fluency?
- How do you help students develop greater fluency?

Word Analysis

- What kind of word analysis instruction do you provide?
- In what classroom context(s) do you provide this?

Reflect on Your Learning, cont'd.

Vocabulary

- How do you determine your students' vocabulary strengths and needs?
- How do you decide which vocabulary words to teach?
- Describe your instructional cycle. How many vocabulary words do you teach and how many days/activities do you provide to ensure deep learning? Describe the activities you provide for students each cycle.
- How do you provide practice in correct usage of vocabulary previously taught?
- How do you assess long-term use of the words taught?

2. Changes you would like to make

Include your written response from What Did You Learn?

3. One change you have implemented

a. Make a change

Choose one instructional change that you described in What Did You Learn? to implement now. What is your thinking behind making this change? Describe in detail how it will be implemented (e.g., providing practice in fluency, providing multiple exposures and activities to ensure deep learning of new vocabulary, providing instruction in word analysis, etc.). What are the expected outcomes for student learning with this change? Design a lesson plan and implement this change.

b. Reflect on the change

Write a brief reflection about how this change enabled you to better meet the needs of all your students. What changes will you make next time to ensure that all students are learning? (If you are taking this workshop during the summer, describe the learning goals and expected outcomes of this change.)

4. Evidence of student learning

Include evidence demonstrating student learning as a result of the change. Select one student and describe his/her performance in fluency, word analysis, or vocabulary. What did you do to scaffold instruction for this student? Include two to three performance samples and documentation of the support provided for each. How will you continue to scaffold this student's fluency or word study? Listed below are possible pieces of evidence:

- a tape recording of oral reading before and after practice
- timed running records of oral reading
- an analysis of running record (evidence of strategies to chunk words into meaningful parts)
- anecdotal records of targeted vocabulary used in an oral discussion
- student performance samples using targeted vocabulary words

Assignments

If you are taking this workshop for graduate credit, submit the following assignments for Workshop 2: Fluency and Word Study:

1. Examine the Literature

Read two articles on fluency and word study and complete the Examine the Literature Response Chart.

2. Teaching Word Parts

Select words that contain a similar word pattern and plan a lesson to teach these words, using the Teaching Word Parts Chart.

3. Developing Vocabulary

Choose 8 to 10 vocabulary words from a selection students are going to read and then develop two activities to help students understand and use these words appropriately.

4. What Did You Learn?

Write a summary of the ideas and strategies you explored in this session.

5. Create a Literacy Practices Portfolio

If you are taking this workshop for credit, you will continue constructing your portfolio of instructional practices.

Related Resources

Print Resources

Allington, R. L. *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*. New York: Longman, 2001.

Beck, I. L., M. G. McKeown, and L. Kucan. *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. New York: Guilford Press, 2002.

Blachowicz, C. L. Z., and P. J. Fisher. "Best Practices in Vocabulary Instruction: What Effective Teachers Do." In *Best Practices in Literacy Instruction*, edited by L. M. Morrow, L. B. Gambrell, and M. Pressley, 87-110. New York: Guilford Press, 2003.

Bloodgood, J. W., and L. C. Pacifici. "Bringing Word Study to Intermediate Classrooms." *The Reading Teacher* 58, no. 3 (Nov. 2004): 250-263.

Hudson, R. F., H. B. Lane, and P. C. Pullen. "Reading Fluency Assessment and Instruction: What, Why, and How?" *The Reading Teacher* 58, no. 8 (May 2005): 702-714.

Kuhn, M. "Helping Students Become Accurate, Expressive Readers: Fluency Instruction for Small Groups." *The Reading Teacher* 58, no. 4 (Dec. 2004/Jan. 2005): 338-344.

Scott, J. A. "Scaffolding Vocabulary Learning." In *Teaching All the Children*, edited by D. Lapp, C. C. Block, E. J. Cooper, J. Flood, N. Roser, and J. V. Tinajero, 275-293. New York: Guilford Press, 2004.

Worthy, J. and K. Broadus. "Fluency Beyond the Primary Grades: From Group Performance to Silent, Independent Reading." *The Reading Teacher* 55, no. 4 (Dec. 2002): 334-343.

Web Resources

Readers' Theater Page

www.aaronshp.com/rt/

This site provides ideas and scripts for readers' theater to practice and to help students develop reading fluency.

Literacy Connections

www.literacyconnections.com/WordStudy.html

This site provides a comprehensive list of research-based strategies and teacher resources for word identification and decoding instruction.

Scholastic Instructor

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/reading/bestpractices/fluency.htm>

The Scholastic site provides instructional resources that promote reading fluency.

Teaching Reading 3-5

Fluency and Word Study > Before You Watch

Word Study and Fluency Chart

Reading Element	Instruction	Opportunities for Practice	Texts/ materials
Fluency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Read-aloud • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reader's Theater • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays, scripts • *
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • *
Decoding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • *

Teaching Reading 3-5

Fluency and Word Study > Before You Watch

Examine the Literature Response Chart

Title	Big Ideas	Notes and Questions
1.		
2.		

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Teaching Reading 3-5

Fluency and Word Study > Put It Into Practice

Teaching Word Parts

Compound Words	Prefixes	Suffixes	Inflectional Endings	Onsets/rimes
flashback	tricycle	decoration	staggering	plight