

Best Practices for Improving Scholars' Fluency

Tips to Benefit ALL Scholars:

Modeling Fluent Reading. Model fluent reading every time you read to and with scholars. Make sure that your voice is expressive and that you read at a swift pace.

Repeated Readings. Shared Text and SFA lessons provide scholars with the opportunity to read the same text multiple times over the course of the week, which is greatly beneficial to their fluency. Send a copy of your weekly Shared Text home so that scholars can practice reading to their families. Have them tally how many times they read the text to someone over the course of the week, and celebrate scholars who have read the text the greatest number of times and with great fluency!

Choral Reading. This goes hand in hand with Repeated Readings. Determine specific parts of your Shared Text that you will have scholars read out loud as a group. In K-1, make the most of choral and partner reading during SFA.

Intervention Tips:

Notice Reading Logs. Reading logs give great insight into scholars' reading speed. Once scholars begin reading chapter books, they should be reading approximately a page a minute. Take note of how many pages they read in class and at home and whether that number suggests that they are reading at an appropriate rate. Be on the lookout for red flags – scholars reading far too few (or far too many!) pages than they should be within a given time frame.

Adjustments to Independent/Guided Reading Level: Scholars with fluency issues will benefit from having two levels of books in their book baggies: one on their independent level and one for "fluency practice" that is at a lower level. They can continue to use the book at their independent level to deepen their comprehension, while the easier book can be read and re-read to gain confidence in reading fluently.

Phrased Text Lesson/Scooping: Use your weekly Shared Text or Shared Poem and provide scholars with additional support outside of the Shared Text or Shared Poem block to work on fluency through this 2-day, 10-15 minute structure that will help give scholars the tools to read texts with great expression and in service of meaning. In K-1, scholars may also benefit from “scooping” – teachers can draw curved lines underneath the text to show scholars which words to “scoop” together into phrases as they read.

Performance/Reader’s Theater: Provide scholars with the opportunity to “perform” the texts that they have been reading by reading them out loud to their classmates (or to classmates in a younger grade). Poems, songs, and other texts that are meant to be read aloud are especially effective! In SFA, don’t skip out on Reading Celebrations! Reader’s Theater is also a great way to practice fluency while also building joy and engagement!

Parent Interventions:

Closed-Captioning: When scholars watch television at home, have them turn on the closed-captioning. Watching their favorite cartoons and shows now becomes a great literacy activity!

Timeframes: Send home the Shared Text or Shared Poem with a note to parents about approximately how long it should take to read the text (i.e. “It should take your scholar approximately 4 minutes to read this text out loud.”). Encourage parents to take note of whether their child was able to read the text within the time frame. We don’t want scholars reading so fast that they are losing the meaning, but we do want scholars to read at a rapid pace while still reading expressively.