Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring–Texas–Grade 4

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Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring–Texas–Grade 4

I. Introduction

Fluent reading is an important part of reading well. Fluent reading is made up of three main parts: accurate word reading, the speed at which words are read accurately, and expression, also known as prosody. With Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas – Grade 4 students will practice oral reading of texts and be monitored for progress on a weekly basis. The practice will help improve fluency, especially for English Language Learners. The monitoring will help provide teachers, students, and parents with information that can be used to determine instructional strategies to help improve fluency.

Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas – Grade 4 has thirty passages each at grade 3, 4, and 5. The grade three passages are at or near the middle of grade three in reading difficulty. The grade four passages are at or near the middle of grade four. The grade five passages are at or near the middle of grade five. Once each student’s instructional level has been determined (grade 3, 4, or 5) the teacher will use the first three passages at that grade level to assess the student’s correct words per minute (cwpm), word accuracy, and expression. The teacher takes the median of the three scores (accuracy, cwpm, and expression rubric) to use as initial baseline data for accuracy, cwpm, and expression. The student will read and practice one passage each week throughout the school year. The next twenty-four passages will be used to progress monitor the students. A passage will be read on the first day of a week. It will be practiced throughout the week through fluency strategies such as choral reading, taped reading, partner reading, echo reading, and repeated reading. The teacher or student can graph the fluency scores for the first “cold” reading of the passage for the week. The student will read the passage again at the end of the week. The fluency scores for the “hot” reading will be recorded on the graph as well by either the teacher or student. Accuracy, cwpm, and an expression score using an expression fluency rubric will be recorded on separate graphs. Blank graphs for these results are included.
Included with each passage is a set of four multiple-choice comprehension questions. These questions are based on the reading TAKS objectives. The questions are on a separate sheet from the passage. The teacher can decide to have the student answer the questions after the first reading, any of the readings during the week, or after the last reading of the week. These questions help determine if the students are comprehending the passage. If the students are able to read the passage fluently with the proper accuracy, cwpm, and expression, but struggles with comprehending, the teacher will need to direct instruction to help improve comprehension skills.

The last three passages at each grade level can be used as an assessment at the end of the year to show progress. They also can be used as three more weeks of progress monitoring and just the last passage can be used to show the end-of-the-year progress.

II. Why Is Fluency Important?

The English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills include fluency as a component of its standards. Students are expected to "read grade-level text with fluency and comprehension. Students are expected to read aloud grade-level stories with fluency (rate, accuracy, expression, appropriate phrasing) and comprehension." (Grade 4 ELAR TEKS 110.15.b.1)

Readers need to be able to read fluently out loud. They need to be able to read words accurately, at a smooth rate, and with expression. They must be able to recognize many words automatically. Students also need to be able to have skills necessary to decode and pronounce words as they are reading. Readers that are able to do this are able to direct more of their attention to the meaning of the text. Fluent readers are able to spend most of their time making connections to and with the text and understanding what they are reading. Readers struggling with fluency are less able to do this.
III. What Is Fluency?

Fluency is made up of three main parts: accurate word reading, the speed at which words are read accurately (rate), and expression, also known as prosody.

Accurate Word Reading

Accurate word reading is just that. Readers need to be able to pronounce words correctly. Students that are able to read a passage with between 6 and 10 errors for every 100 words are on their instructional reading level. If the students make 5 or less errors for every 100 words, they are reading at an independent level. To improve fluency, students need to read text within their instructional reading level. The chart below shows what is to be included in oral reading errors when reading a passage out loud.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Reading Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- pronouncing words incorrectly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- omitting words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- substituting words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hesitating for more than 3 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no attempts to read a word after 3 seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading Speed

The speed or rate at which a student reads the words of a passage is another part of fluency. This is often noted as “correct words per minute” or “cwpm”. For example a student with 90 cwpm has read a passage at a speed of 90 correct words every minute. The student may or may not have made errors in pronouncing words, omitting words, or substituting words during the reading. Make note of but do not count as errors: insertions, self-corrections, or repetitions.

The chart below shows a range of correct words per minute average students should be able to read within each grade level.
Oral Reading Fluency - Reading Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Beginning of Year cwpm</th>
<th>Middle of Year cwpm</th>
<th>End of Year cwpm</th>
<th>Average Weekly Words per Week Growth*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The average weekly words per week growth is the number of words that a student can be expected to improve each week throughout the school year. There are usually 36 weeks in a school year. Take out the first two and last two weeks of the year and there are 32 weeks. This is the number that was used to divide into the difference between the beginning of the year cwpm and the end of the year cwpm to arrive at the average weekly words per week growth rate. Example: Grade 2: 90 - 50 = 40; 40 divided by 32 = 1.25 words per week growth.

**Expression**

Fluent reading includes reading with expression. Students that read with expression (prosody) pay attention to and follow sentence punctuation. They group words into phrases appropriate to the text. Fluent readers pace their speed or rate appropriate to the text as well. The voice of a fluent reader moves up and down, much like a person talking in a conversation. This is known as intonation. A fluent reader will place emphasis on words that are, again, appropriate to the text.

**IV. Assessing Fluency**

Each of the parts of reading fluency can be instructed, practiced and assessed. Instruction and practice will be addressed later.
Assessing Accuracy

Accuracy can be determined by having a student read a complete passage of at least 100 words. Keep track of the errors that the reader makes. Errors include adding extra words, leaving out words, mispronouncing words, hesitating for more than 3 seconds to say a word, and not attempting a word after 3 seconds. If a student corrects the mistake on his or her own, it is not counted as an error. When the student is finished reading, count the total number of words read in the passage and subtract the number of errors. Then divide this number by the number of words read by the student. For example, if the student read 150 words and had 8 errors, you will subtract 8 from 150 and get 142. Divide 142 by 150 and get .946. Round this to .95 and the student read 95% of the words accurately.

Determining Accuracy

\[
\text{Number of words read by the student (Ex. 150)} \quad \text{Minus} \quad \text{Number of errors (Ex. 8)} \quad \text{Divided by} \quad \text{Total number of words read by the student (Ex. 150)} = \text{Percent Accuracy (\%)} \quad (\text{Ex. 95\%})
\]

For a student to improve fluency, the passages read and practiced should be in the 90% - 94% range. This is the student's instructional range. An accuracy rate of less than 90% is in the student's frustrational level. The reading level is too difficult. The student will not improve fluency by reading text that is too difficult. Also, if the student reads only passages that are in the 95% or higher accuracy range (independent level), the student's fluency will not improve as well as if he or she practiced passages in his or her instructional range.

Reading Levels

- **Independent** - 95% - 100% accuracy
- **Instructional** - 90% - 94% accuracy
- **Frustrational** - 89% accuracy or lower
Assessing Reading Speed (Rate)

Reading speed or rate can be assessed. Have a student read an instructional (90% - 94% accuracy) passage out loud for 1 minute. Keep track of how many words that the student reads and how many errors the student makes. Stop the student after one minute of reading. Subtract the errors from the total number of words read. The answer is the correct words per minute (cwpm) read by the student. For example, a student reads 92 words in one minute and has 8 errors. Subtract 8 from 92 and get 84. The correct words per minute (cwpm) for this student for this passage is 84. Compare this number with the reading rate chart above. Find the student’s grade level and time of the year to see how he or she is doing for an average student in that grade level. For example, if the student is in the fourth grade at the beginning of the year, he or she should be reading about 90 cwpm. This student read 84 cwpm. The student is a little below the average and may benefit from fluency instruction.

Determining Correct Words per Minute (cwpm)

\[
\text{Total words read (Ex. 90)} \quad \text{Minus} \quad \text{Errors (Ex. 6)} = \text{Correct words per minute (cwpm) (Ex. 84 cwpm)}
\]

If a student’s fluency cwpm rate falls below the range listed on the chart, the student may benefit from fluency instruction. The teacher will need to take a closer look at the cause(s) for the low reading rate to help determine the correct instruction that may benefit the student and improve fluency. The student may have poor decoding skills, may need more practice with fluency, or may just read slowly. Once the reason(s) for the slower rate has been determined, instruction can be utilized that focuses on improving any weak areas.

Assessing Expression (Prosody)

Expression or prosody can be assessed through the use of a fluency rubric that scores the students on the elements of expression. These elements include phrasing, word stress, intonation, attention to punctuation,
and pace. Have the student read an instructional level passage and score the reading using the rubric. If the student scores poorly, additional instruction may be necessary.

Rate the reader on each of the elements of expression. Assign a number (1-4) for each element based on the reading of the student of the assessed text. Add up the scores for each element to arrive at an Elements of Expression Rubric Score. Out of a possible total score of 20, scores of 12 or higher indicate that the student is progressing adequately or better with expression. Scores of 11 or lower show that expression in fluent reading may need additional instruction.

**Example of Determining Score on Elements of Expression Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores on Elements of Expression Rubric</th>
<th>Elements of Expression Score of 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Phrasing - 2</td>
<td>- 12 or higher =</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Word Stress - 2</td>
<td>Adequate or better fluency progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intonation - 3</td>
<td>- 11 or less = Inadequate fluency progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Attention to Punctuation - 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pace - 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total the scores
## Elements of Expression Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 – Not Yet</th>
<th>2 – Acceptable</th>
<th>3 – Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phrasing</strong></td>
<td>- Reads mostly word-by-word; choppy reading</td>
<td>- Reads with many two and three word phrases; choppy reading</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of short phrases and choppy reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Stress</strong></td>
<td>- Reads with improper stress appropriate to the text or shows no stress</td>
<td>- Reads with some attention to proper stress appropriate to the text, especially on known phrases</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of proper stress and improper or lack of stress appropriate to the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intonation</strong></td>
<td>- Reads in a monotone; the voice moves very little up and down</td>
<td>- Reads with the voice beginning to move up and down appropriate to the text</td>
<td>- Reads most of the text with the appropriate intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attention to Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>- Fails to stop at ends of sentences or pause at commas</td>
<td>- Some attending to ends of sentences and commas appropriately</td>
<td>- Reads with attention to ends of sentences and commas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pace</strong></td>
<td>- Reads slowly</td>
<td>- Reads moderately slowly</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of slow and fast reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Makes the reading sound like talking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V. Struggling with Fluency

Students struggle with fluency for a variety of reasons. Some students do not decode words well or quickly. They may not have been instructed in the skills necessary for decoding or have not had enough time to practice the decoding skills. These students may need more intense
instruction in learning how letters and sounds can be put together to make words.

Students may also have a limited knowledge of instantly recognized high-frequency words or sight words. High-frequency words are those that are used often in texts. Sight words are used frequently but do not decode easily. These words need to be read quickly so the reader can move on to the rest of the text.

Another area that may contribute to a reader struggling with fluency is vocabulary. Readers encounter many words as they read. The more a reader knows about a word, the easier it is to read and read quickly. A weak vocabulary can cause a student to read with less fluency.

VI. Establishing the Students' Instructional Reading Level

Initially, students need to be assessed to determine their instructional reading level. Students that read text with between 90% and 94% word accuracy and adequate comprehension are reading a text that is on their instructional level. Texts below 90% are considered frustrational level and too difficult. Passages read above 94% are on the students' independent level. Fluency instruction and practice works well using students' instructional level.

To determine if the student has a good understanding or comprehension of the passage, have the student retell the passage. Use the comprehension checklist below to keep track of comprehension. If a student is able to adequately retell the passage and read between 90% and 94% accuracy, then the passage is on the student's instructional level. If accuracy is below 90% and/or the student is not able to retell the passage adequately, the passage is too difficult. Retest on a lower level. The student may have instructional level accuracy but have difficulty comprehending what is read. This student needs instruction on comprehension improving strategies. The teacher needs to decide whether or not to use this level as instructional and provide additional instruction on comprehension strategies or drop the student down to a lower level that may be on an independent accuracy level but instructional for comprehension.
Comprehension Passage Retell *

Fiction

___ Included beginning ___ Elaborated with details
___ Included middle ___ Named problem
___ Included ending ___ Identified setting
___ Named solution ___ In order
___ Named characters ___ Included important vocabulary from the passage

Nonfiction

___ Included beginning ___ Included main points
___ Included middle ___ Elaborated with details
___ Included ending ___ Included important vocabulary from the passage
___ In order

* Adequate comprehension = If the student includes seven or more of the retell components for fiction or five or more of the retell components for nonfiction, then the student has an adequate or better comprehension of the passage.

VII. Initial Assessing to Establish Baseline Data

Once the instructional level has been determined the students need to have their fluency assessed. The information gathered from this initial assessment will be used as baseline data. This initial assessment will measure the students' word accuracy, number of words read correctly per minute, and prosody level. The baseline date can be used as the starting point to measure progress. These assessments can also provide information regarding strong and weak areas of students' fluent reading. This information can then be used to help plan instruction to improve weak areas of fluency. Once instruction and practice to improve fluency has begun, regular assessment will need to be conducted to monitor the progress and provide information that can be used to modify instruction, if needed, which leads to successful reading fluency.
Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas provides enough grade level appropriate passages for three grade levels for regular assessments and progress monitoring. For example, Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas – Grade 4 includes 30 passages at the grade 3 level, 30 passages at the grade 4 level, and 30 passages at the grade 5 level. Passages 1 through 3 are to be used for the initial assessment to gather baseline information. Passages 4 – 27 are to be used for practice and progress monitoring assessments. The last three passages can be used as an end-of-the-year assessment to show the progress that has been made throughout the school year. The last three passages can also be used one per week to just end the year. The last passage (number 30) can be used to show progress throughout the school year as well.

Procedure to Determine Initial Fluency Levels

1. Use the first three passages at the appropriate grade level provided with this product (Example: Grade 4 has three grade levels – 3, 4, and 5) to assess each student. Make a copy of the student version of the passages (the passages with just the text) and enough copies of the teacher version of the passages (the sheets that show the number of words from the beginning of the passage to the end of each line all of the way to the end of the passage) to have a record for each student. The teacher will also need at least one copy of the Elements of Expression Rubric. The teacher will refer to this rubric and score each student on each of the elements of expression found on the rubric for each of the passages read at this time. An Elements of Expression Rubric sheet is provided at the end of this introduction section. The teacher may also run off copies of the rubric for each student for each passage and keep a paper record of how the student did on each passage. That is up to the teacher and how the teacher wishes to keep track of results.
Example of a Student Version

Angelina's stomach growled like a snarling puppy under her shirt and jacket. No one around her seemed to notice. The crowd cheered the football game and she joined them. Angelina searched her pocket for some money. A hot dog, soda, and candy bar sounded good. All Angelina felt in the warm pocket was her half of a game ticket. She got that after paying at the gate to get into the game.

Example of a Teacher Version

Angelina's stomach growled like a snarling puppy under her shirt and jacket. No one around her seemed to notice. The crowd cheered the football game and she joined them. Angelina searched her pocket for some money. A hot dog, soda, and candy bar sounded good. All Angelina felt in the warm pocket was her half of a game ticket. She got that after paying at the gate to get into the game.

2. Look over the procedures for making errors in oral reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Reading Errors</th>
<th>Make a Note of But Do Not Count as Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- pronouncing words incorrectly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- omitting words</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hesitating for more than 3 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no attempts to read a word after 3 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- self-corrections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- insertions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- repetitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Have a timer available to time the readings for one minute. Assess each student in the class individually. Give the student a copy of the student version of the first passage and tell him or her to begin reading out loud. Start the timer when the student begins to read out loud. Mark the errors on a teacher version copy of the same passage. You can either just put a line
through the word that is an error or mark as to how it is an error. For mispronunciations and substituting, put the word that the student actually said above the word in the text.

Example: box big
book bag

For omissions, put a dash above the word that the student omitted.

Example: - -
book car

For hesitations and no attempts, put a dash above the word that the student hesitated on or made no attempt and put a >3 to show longer than 3 seconds.

Example: ->3 ->3
book car

Making note of how the student erred may provide the teacher with information regarding areas the student has strengths and weaknesses in reading skills.

4. At the end of one minute, make a mark on the teacher version copy of the last word read by the student out loud at the end of the one minute. Have the student continue reading to the end of the passage. Use the Elements of Expression Rubric to assess the student’s expression on the passage. A form has been included in the Appendix that can be used to record the scores for accuracy, cwpm, and expression score for each of the initial passages. There is a spot to record the median (middle) score for each of these assessments as well. This same form can be used at the end of the year, too.

5. Calculate and record the word accuracy percent for each passage. Use the formula as shown in the “Assessing Accuracy” section of “IV. Assessing Fluency”.

6. Calculate and record the correct words per minute (cwpm) rate using the formula shown in the “Assessing Reading Speed (Rate) section of “IV. Assessing Fluency”.

7. Calculate and record the score from the Elements of Expression Rubric for each of the three readings using the formula and example found in the “Assessing Expression (Prosody)” section of “IV. Assessing Fluency”.

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8. Then calculate the median score for accuracy, cwpm, and expression. Record these scores on the form as well. The teacher may want to refer to the Oral Reading Fluency – Reading Rate sheet to see where the student falls at the beginning-of-the-year for whichever grade he or she is reading on. The teacher may also check to see what reading level (independent, instructional, or frustrational) the student is reading on at this time. Finally, the teacher may want to note how the student is reading with expression by looking at the Elements of Expression median score. If the score is 12 or higher, this shows adequate or better fluency progress with expression. If it is 11 or below, the student is showing inadequate fluency progress with expression.

9. The teacher may want to set fluency goals for each student. The teacher can set these or the teacher can meet with each student and decide the goal together. These goals can be noted and reviewed periodically throughout the school year. Attention to the progress monitoring graphs for accuracy, cwpm, and expression can help show if the goal is realistic, too high, or too low. The goal can be adjusted at any time, if needed.

Instruction to improve reading fluency depends on the students’ area(s) of weakness. If students are weak in decoding words, the students will need instruction and practice in learning how to decode words. If students read slowly, they will need instruction and practice to improve their oral reading rate. If students are weak in prosodic reading, they will need instruction and practice on how to improve reading with expression.

VIII. Teaching to Improve Fluency

Instruction and Practice to Improve Decoding Skills

Fluency can be improved with instruction and practice. The purpose of teaching for fluency is to enable readers to move from decoding and reading words automatically to reading smoothly, automatically, and with prosody in order to enjoy reading and to read to learn.

Students may struggle with fluency because they lack decoding skills to quickly figure out words and read on in the text. This slows their reading and also hinders comprehension. Students need to be taught, given the time
to practice, and internalize decoding skills that enable them to read words that continue to increase in difficulty. Decoding, therefore, become less work and allows the students to read the text ever more fluently.

Instruction should focus on the relationship between letters and sounds and applying this knowledge to reading text. Readers need to be able to make connections between individual letters and groups of letters in words and the sounds that correspond to the letters in the order that they appear in the words. Once the letters and sounds are known, students need to be able to manipulate the sounds to take words apart, move sounds around, and put sounds together to make words. As readers use this knowledge to read words, they become familiar with words and begin to recognize them when they see them in print. Readers will begin to automatically recognize the words. After they see them over and over in print, less effort will be used to decode the words and more attention will be given to the meaning of what is being read. Students should have this modeled for them and given time to practice with guidance.

Readers also need to be able to form sound “chunks”. This allows the reader to recognize patterns of letters and more quickly recognize words. This, in turn, speeds up the automatic reading of words and allows the reader to think about the meaning of the text.

As readers improve their decoding skills, the words that they encounter will grow more challenging. Readers need to be able to decode words with more than one or two syllables. Students will have to be able to divide words into syllables, identify root words as well as prefixes and suffixes.

Students need to improve their recognition of sight word vocabulary. These are words that readers are to be able to recognize quickly and read correctly out loud. As students are instructed on the strategies necessary to decode unfamiliar words and given time to practice these strategies, they will increase the number of words that they are able to recognize. The words will become part of their sight or automatic word list and fluency will improve.
**Instruction and Practice to Improve Slow Fluency**

Students may struggle with fluency because they read slowly. Modeling and additional practice may help improve fluency. Modeling fluent reading for students will allow them to hear what fluent reading sounds like and how expression plays a role in fluency.

Fluent reading can be modeled in a variety of ways. Teachers can read books aloud to the whole class. This can be done daily. Teachers can also work with small groups of students or individual students. Text that specifically fits the instructional reading level of the student(s) is selected by the teacher. The teacher reads the passage modeling fluent reading. The student(s) follows along silently. The teacher discusses what fluent reading looks and sounds like, pointing out parts of fluency such as attending to punctuation, raising and lowering the voice to fit the passage, stressing words appropriate to the text, changing the pace of the reading, and reading in phrases. The student(s) read the passage out loud as the teacher listens. The teacher provides feedback about the student’s fluency, focusing on both areas of strength and weakness. Doing this on a regular basis draws the student’s attention to the various elements of fluency. The feedback helps make the student(s) aware of proper fluency and informs him or her of their progress on improving fluency.

**IX. Other Practice Strategies to Improve Fluency**

**Repeated Reading**

Repeated reading means reading a passage many times. Students orally read and reread a passage at least four or five times. The passage is on the students’ instructional reading level. If possible, passages are included that are of interest to the students. Repeated reading of the passage helps the students begin to recognize words automatically which increases the speed of the reading and allows the readers to attend more to the meaning of the text.

Repeated oral reading of a passage can be done by the student alone, with a teacher, an aide, or with another student that is fluent with oral reading. The student can practice the text alone, however, working with a
teacher, aide, or fluent student allows the struggling student to receive one-on-one feedback and instruction to improve fluency. The teacher, aide, or fluent student listens as the practicing student reads the passage. The listening person discusses the reading afterwards and provides feedback about areas of good fluent reading and areas that need improvement. Areas to focus on are accuracy, phrasing, word stress appropriate to the text, intonation, attention to punctuation, and pace.

Students can read with the teacher, an aide, or a fluent student in paired repeated reading. The pair will read a passage at the practicing student's instructional reading level. The helper reads the passage out loud while the practicing student listens and follows along silently. Next, the pair reads the passage out loud together. The struggling reader reads the passage out loud while the helper follows along silently. If the reader begins to have difficulty, the helper joins the partner in reading the passage out loud. As the partner is successful, the helper can drop out from reading out loud while continuing to follow along silently. The pair discusses the passage and focuses on what was done well as well as areas that need improvement.

**Echo Reading**

Fluency can be practiced through echo reading. A teacher, aide, or fluent student reader helps with this strategy. The helper reads a sentence out loud from a passage. The practicing reader follows along silently and then repeats the sentence out loud. This continues until the passage is complete. Passages can be read four or five times. The reader can then read the passage out loud on his or her own.

**Choral Reading**

In choral reading, the teacher, an aide, or a fluent student reader and the struggling reader read a passage out loud together. The passage is to be read over and over, at least four or five times during the course of a week. At the end of the week, the student reads the passage out loud also.
Taped Reading

Students practicing fluency can listen to passages pre-recorded on tape or compact disk. The reader reads the text out loud while following along with the printed text and listening to the tape or computer disk. The reader can listen to and read along with the recorded passage over and over. Then the reader can read the passage independently out loud.

X. Progress Monitoring

The first three passages at each grade level in Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas are to be used as the initial fluency assessments to provide the baseline data. The next twenty-four passages at each grade level are to be used to progress monitor students during the course of the school year. The reading level of the passages at each grade level is at the midpoint of that grade level. For example, Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring – Texas – Grade 4 has thirty passages each at grade 3, 4, and 5. The grade three passages are at or near the middle of grade three in reading difficulty. The grade four passages are at or near the middle of grade four. The grade five passages are at or near the middle of grade five. Once each student's instructional level has been determined (grade 3, 4, or 5) the teacher will use the first three passages at that grade level to assess the student's cwpm, accuracy, and expression. The teacher takes the median of the three scores (accuracy, cwpm, and expression rubric) to use as initial baseline data for accuracy, cwpm, and expression. The student will read and practice one passage each week throughout the school year. The next twenty-four passages will be used to progress monitor the students. A passage will be read on the first day of a week. It will be practiced throughout the week through fluency strategies such as choral reading, taped reading, partner reading, echo reading, and repeated reading. The teacher or student can graph the fluency scores for the first “cold” reading of the passage for the week. The student will read the passage again at the end of the week. The fluency scores for the “hot” reading will be recorded on the graph as well by either the teacher or student. Accuracy, cwpm, and an expression score using an expression fluency rubric will be recorded on separate graphs. Blank graphs for these results are included.
The Fluency – Progress Monitoring – Word Accuracy (%) graph has a spot for the median % of the initial assessment with passages 1 - 3, spots for each "cold" and "hot" read % for passages 4 - 30, and a spot for the median % of the last three passages (28 - 30) if the teacher decides to use the last three passages separately and count passage 30 results as the end-of-the-year data or if the teacher wants to use the last three passages together at the end-of-the-year and take the median % of the three passages. The % accuracy starts at 25% and goes by fives up to 90% where it begins to go by ones up to 100%. The 90% - 94% range on the graph is shaded because this is the accuracy range that corresponds to the instructional level of students.

The Fluency – Progress Monitoring – Correct Words per Minute (cwpm) graph has a spot for the median cwpm of the initial assessment with passages 1 - 3, spots for each "cold" and "hot" read cwpm for passages 4 - 30, and a spot for the median cwpm of the last three passages (28 - 30) if the teacher decides to use the last three passages separately and count passage 30 results as the end-of-the-year data or if the teacher wants to use the last three passages together at the end-of-the-year and take the median cwpm of the three passages. The cwpm starts at 20 cwpm and goes by tens up to 240 cwpm. Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring has three different reading levels for each grade. For example, Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress – Texas – Grade 4 has passages for grade 3, 4, and 5. Set A refers to the grade 3 passages. Set B refers to the grade 4 passages. Set C refers to the grade 5 passages. The * next to 110 cwpm on the graph means that the dark gray area shows where an average student reading the grade 5 passages should be reading for cwpm at the beginning-of-the-year. The dark gray area moves up to 130 cwpm at passage 11 to correspond to the middle-of-the-year and the dark gray area moves up to 150 cwpm at passage 21 to correspond to the end-of-the-year cwpm rate for an average student. The ** next to 90 cwpm on the graph refers to where an average student reading the grade 4 passages should be reading at the beginning-of-the-year, middle-of-the-year, and end-of-the-year. The *** next to 70 cwpm on the graph refers to where an average student reading the grade 3 passages should be reading at the beginning-of-the-year, middle-of-the-year, and end-of-the-year.
The Fluency - Progress Monitoring - Elements of Expression Rubric graph has a spot for the median expression score of the initial assessment with passages 1 - 3, spots for each “cold” and “hot” read expression score for passages 4 - 30, and a spot for the median expression score of the last three passages (28 - 30) if the teacher decides to use the last three passages separately and count passage 30 results as the end-of-the-year data or if the teacher wants to use the last three passages together at the end-of-the-year and take the median expression score of the three passages. The gray area on the graph (Score 12 and above) shows where an average student should be to show adequate or better expression in fluent oral reading.

The last three passages at each grade level can be used as an assessment at the end of the year to show progress. They also can be used as three more weeks of progress monitoring and just the last passage can be used to show the end-of-the-year progress. If the last three passages are used as an end-of-the-year assessment, the teacher takes the median of the three scores (accuracy, cwpm, and expression fluency rubric) to show progress made through the year.

A sheet to record all of the students' beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year progress monitoring results is included in the Appendix. It allows the teacher to record and keep track of all of the students in a class in one convenient spot. There is also a sheet included that can be used to record each separate student's initial beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year fluency assessment results.

XI. Fluency Goals

Teachers may want to help students set fluency goals. The goal for accuracy should be to read at least 90% of the words correctly. The correct words per minute goal should be based on the beginning-of-the-year cwpm score taken from the median of the first three passages. Students in grade 3, 4, or 5 should expect to improve 1.25 words a week. Using this formula, a student in grade three starting at 45 cwpm can expect to improve about 40 words (1.25 x 32 weeks = 40 words) to 85 cwpm by the end of the school year. (Thirty-two weeks is used because a school year is about 36 weeks long. The first two and last two weeks are usually not appropriate for
instruction and practice for fluency. Other weeks during the school year have interruptions that allow for about 24 to 27 weeks of good, solid instruction to take place.

The teacher and students can review their goal periodically throughout the year and make adjustments up or down as needed.

**XII. Conclusion**

Fluent reading is important. Students that read on their instructional level, at the rate appropriate to their grade level, and with adequate or better expression are well on their way to use reading as a lifelong skill that will enable them to learn about and enjoy the world around them. Fluent reading can be instructed and practiced. It can be monitored for progress. Students can learn to have confidence in how they read and continue to improve their oral reading skills. *Oral Reading Fluency: Practice and Progress Monitoring* can help students become more fluent readers.
**XIII. Quick Reference Guide**

1. **Assess for students’ instructional level.**
   - Refer to Section VI. Establishing the Students’ Instructional Reading Level.

2. **Conduct an initial assessment on each student for fluency to gather baseline data.**
   - Refer to Section VII. Initial Assessing to Establish Baseline Data.

3. **Instruct students and have them practice for fluency.**
   - Refer to Instruction and Practice to Improve Decoding Skills and Instruction and Practice to Improve Slow Fluency in Section VIII. Teaching to Improve Fluency, and IX. Other Practice Strategies to Improve Fluency.

4. **Progress monitor each student throughout the school year.**
   - Refer to Section X. Progress Monitoring.

5. **Conduct an end-of-the-year assessment to show improvement.**
   - Refer to Section X. Progress Monitoring.
XIV. Appendix
**Elements of Expression Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 - Not Yet</th>
<th>2 - Acceptable</th>
<th>3 - Very Good</th>
<th>4 - Proficient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phrasing</strong></td>
<td>- Reads mostly word-by-word; choppy reading</td>
<td>- Reads with many two and three word phrases; choppy reading</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of short phrases and choppy reading</td>
<td>- Reads in meaningful phrases throughout the text</td>
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<td><strong>Word Stress</strong></td>
<td>- Reads with improper stress appropriate to the text or shows no stress</td>
<td>- Reads with some attention to proper stress appropriate to the text, especially on known phrases</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of proper stress and improper or lack of stress appropriate to the text</td>
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<td><strong>Intonation</strong></td>
<td>- Reads in a monotone; the voice moves very little up and down</td>
<td>- Reads with the voice beginning to move up and down appropriate to the text</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of monotone and moving the voice up and down appropriate to the text</td>
<td>- Reads most of the text with the appropriate intonation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attention to Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>- Fails to stop at ends of sentences or pause at commas</td>
<td>- Some attending to ends of sentences and commas appropriately</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of run-on sentences and attending ends of sentences and commas</td>
<td>- Reads with attention to ends of sentences and commas</td>
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<td><strong>Pace</strong></td>
<td>- Reads slowly</td>
<td>- Reads moderately slowly</td>
<td>- Reads with a mixture of slow and fast reading</td>
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Comprehension Passage Retell *

Fiction

___ Included beginning  ___ Elaborated with details
___ Included middle  ___ Named problem
___ Included ending  ___ Identified setting
___ Named solution  ___ In order
___ Named characters  ___ Included important vocabulary from the passage

Nonfiction

___ Included beginning  ___ Included main points
___ Included middle  ___ Elaborated with details
___ Included ending  ___ Included important vocabulary from the passage
___ In order

* Adequate comprehension = If the student includes seven or more of the retell components for fiction or five or more of the retell components for nonfiction, then the student has an adequate or better comprehension of the passage.
### Record of Fluency Assessment

Name ____________________________ Grade ______
Date ____________________ Set: A B C

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