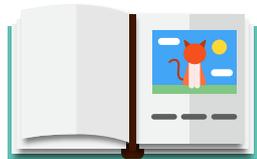


Reading fluency can be defined as reading with **accuracy** (reading words correctly), **automaticity** (reading words at an appropriate speed without great effort) and **prosody** (appropriate stress and intonation). However, there are many misconceptions about what reading fluency is and is not...



Myth 1: 'Accurate decoding automatically leads to good comprehension'

- Word reading fluency is important, but is not sufficient to guarantee comprehension.
- Some pupils become skilled at word recognition but then struggle to comprehend what they read.
- Fluency practice helps to bridge this transition to better comprehension.



Myth 2: 'A fluent reader is a fast reader'

- Fluency is sometimes confused with how quickly a pupil can read a piece of text. In fact, faster reading does not lead to better reading.
- The aim of fluency practice should be to support pupils to read at a pace which allows comprehension to flourish (whether reading aloud or silently).



Myth 3: 'Silent independent reading improves fluency'

- Silent reading in itself does not lead to improved reading fluency. However, the connection between oral reading and silent reading is clear: fluent oral reading leads to fluent silent reading.
- Teachers modelling oral reading is an important part of fluency practice, so that pupils have the opportunity to 'hear' what fluent reading sounds like.
- Assisted reading strategies, such as paired reading or the use of technology, can be helpful in supporting independent reading.



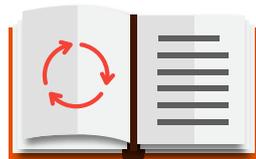
Myth 4: 'Teacher modelling of oral reading alone improves fluency'

- Reading aloud to pupils is an opportunity to model expert reading but is not sufficient on its own to improve fluency.
- Scaffolding pupils' reading through a gradual release of responsibility from teacher modelling to independent reading is an important process when developing fluency and independence.



Myth 5 'Reading a text once is enough'

- Pupils face many challenges when reading an unfamiliar text such as navigating new vocabulary, grappling with text structure or a lack of background knowledge to draw upon as they read. Therefore, reading a text once is rarely enough for good comprehension.
- Repeated reading allows pupils to rehearse and refine their reading of complex texts with improved fluency and comprehension, and these benefits can then be applied to the reading of future new texts.



Myth 6: 'Fluency practice is best suited to fiction texts'

- From exploration of character in a drama text to understanding photosynthesis in a scientific text, developing fluency will support comprehension of all types of texts.
- However, picking the right text is crucial. It should be motivating, challenging and diverse.
- Texts should offer opportunity to deepen subject knowledge and encounter aspirational tier 2 vocabulary and longer sentence structures.



Myth 7: 'Fluency practice is not appropriate for older pupils'

- Reading fluency is not linked to age and therefore fluency practice shouldn't be either.
- We can all struggle to read a text fluently if it's pitched at a level that's too difficult for us. Equally, we can all be very fluent when reading a text which is too easy.
- Some older pupils will require fluency instruction to support them to access and comprehend texts appropriate for their curriculum.



Myth 8: 'Practices such as 'round robin reading' improve fluency'

- 'Round robin reading' or 'popcorn reading' are strategies that are often used with good intention. However, selecting pupils at random to read aloud, without time to practise, can lead to unnecessary embarrassment, stress and cognitive load for pupils. Likewise, listening along to slow, dysfluent reading can put other pupils' comprehension at risk.
- Assisted reading or repeated reading are better alternatives when seeking to include more pupils in reading practice.

