

What is reading fluency?

Reading fluency can be defined as reading with accuracy, automaticity and prosody. When pupils read fluently, their cognitive resources can be redirected from focusing on decoding and onto comprehending a text. For this reason, fluency is sometimes described as a bridge from word recognition to comprehension.



Accuracy



Reading accurately means to decode and read words correctly. It is the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships when reading and saying written words. Pupils' level of accuracy will impact their speed and ease of reading.

Automaticity



The more cognitive space that is taken up with trying to decode words, the less space that is available to comprehend meaning in a text. Therefore, readers must be able to decode words without thinking about the decoding.

Reading with automaticity is reading words on sight automatically and at an appropriate pace. It feels and sounds effortless for pupils.

Prosody



Prosody is reading aloud (and silently in the reader's head) with appropriate use of stress, intonation and expression. It requires both reading accuracy and a level of comprehension.

Understanding words and ideas enables pupils to make decisions about how they might vary their volume, phrasing, smoothness and pace to reflect emotion, emphasis or tone. Reading with prosody sounds interesting and engaging to others.

How can reading fluency be developed?

Guided oral reading



Guided oral reading instruction is when fluent reading of a text is demonstrated by an adult or peer, modelling the 3 Ps (pronunciation, phrasing and prosody). Pupils then read the same text aloud with appropriate feedback.

This may also include assisted reading strategies such as paired reading and use of technology.

Repeated reading



Repeated reading is when pupils re-read a short and meaningful passage a set number of times or until they reach a suitable level of fluency. Strategies such as choral, echo or mumble reading can help to provide oral support for reading for pupils.

[Reader's Theatre](#) is also a widely used teaching strategy that exemplifies how guided oral reading instruction and repeated reading of texts can be used to support pupils to develop reading fluency.