Fluency and instruction in the elementary grades

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Abstract
Elementary teachers are being challenged to increase student's oral reading fluency. This can be attributed to today's high demands and focus on students fluency scores from required assessments, focusing mostly on correct words per minute. This project examines the history of reading instruction along with the five essential components highlighted by the National Reading Panel (2000), specifically, fluency. This project defines reading fluency and assessments used, as well as describing best practices in supporting and developing reading fluency in the elementary classroom.

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FLUENCY AND INSTRUCTION
IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

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Elementary teachers are being challenged to increase student’s oral reading fluency. This can be attributed to today’s high demands and focus on students’ fluency scores from required assessments, focusing mostly on correct words per minute. This project examines the history of reading instruction along with the five essential components highlighted by the National Reading Panel (2000), specifically, fluency. This project defines reading fluency and assessments used, as well as describing best practices in supporting and developing reading fluency in the elementary classroom.
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Introduction

Literacy is the cornerstone of a student’s academic success. Without the skill of reading, Piluski (2002) argues that children will have limited successes in school and later life. It is suggested that teachers possess theoretical beliefs about learning and teaching, and those such beliefs and theories tend to shape the nature of their instructional practices (Davis & Wilson, 1999; Gebel & Schrier, 2002). Kuzborska (2011) argues that, “beliefs influence teachers’ goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, their roles, their students, and the schools they work in” (p.102). If teachers’ beliefs have such an impact on how they approach their practice, then recognizing the ways in which literacy is theoretically understood and the subsequent influence of that theoretical understanding on instruction becomes important in working with teachers. According to Biddulph (2002), whether teachers realize it or not, all of their work in the classroom has a theoretical basis. Furthermore, she states the importance of identifying and acknowledging the theoretical perspectives that derive such work.

Instructional approaches in literacy education have changed over the last century (Abernathy-Dyer; Ortlieb, & Cheek, 2013). The teacher has the primary role for accelerating literacy growth of elementary school readers (Ainsworth, Ortlieb, Cheek, Pate & Fetters, 2011; Ortleib & Cheek, 2008). It can be argued that having an understanding of theory can translate to a deeper knowledge of instructional methods for creating optimal learning environments for literacy. This is true for both the larger picture of literacy as well as specific areas of literacy focus, such as, oral reading fluency development.
For more than two decades, Adams (1990) has argued that oral reading fluency is a characteristic of a skilled reader and is highly correlated with reading comprehension. Oral reading fluency is the ability to read accurately, quickly, effortlessly, and with appropriate expression and meaning (Rasinski, 2003). The National Reading Panel (2000), defines oral reading fluency as the “ability to read text aloud with accuracy, speed, and proper expression” (p. 3-5), and identified fluency as a key ingredient in successful reading instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Although fluency has been identified as a key element in successful reading programs, it historically has not been a significant part of those programs (Allington, 1983; Raskinski & Zutell, 1996).

Several researchers argue that the most compelling reason to focus instructional efforts on students becoming fluent readers is the strong correlation between fluency and comprehension (Allington, 1983; Johns, 1993; Samuels, 1988; Schreiber, 1980). Hudson, Mercer, and Lane (2000) argue that fluent reading is comprised of three key elements: accurate reading of connected text at a conversational rate with appropriate prosody or expression. Later Hudson, Lane, and Pullen (2005) state, “each aspect of fluency has a clear connection to text comprehension” and that teachers who are observing and assessing oral reading fluency should consider each “critical aspect of fluent reading” (p. 705). Their recommendation is that teachers assess oral reading fluency by observing accuracy, rate, and prosody, and in doing so (including the aspect of prosody), the teacher will have “invaluable information for selecting appropriate texts for instructional purposes” (p.705). Furthermore, they suggest that fluency instructional methods used in the classroom should support the development of all three areas.
With the increase in assessments nationally and in contrast with some researchers arguments in regards to assessment, curriculum based measures (CBMs), a type of timed reading assessment of accuracy, are becoming more prevalent today as a measure of reading achievement (Deeney, 2010). CBMs consist of listening to a student’s oral reading and counting the number of correct words read within one minute (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005). Although Clay (1984, 1993) argues that the use of running records and miscue analysis provides much more detailed information about a student’s oral reading accuracy, the increase in use is largely due to the recommendation made by the National Reading Panel (2000) in regards to teachers assessing fluency on a regular basis (Deeney, 2010). Deeney argues that while the one-minute fluency assessments can be reliable and valid, they can also lead teachers astray on understanding struggling reader’s development and their instructional needs.

Deeno, Mirkin, and Chiang (1982) originally investigated oral reading fluency. Their approach was designed to provide teachers with a systematic way to monitor the effects of instruction over time (Tindal, Nese, Stevens, & Alonzo, 2015). Passages were drawn at random from a set curriculum and long range goals were determined. Although the early applications of ORF were used to monitor progress for students with disabilities, it quickly spread to establishing benchmarks or norms in grades one to eight, beginning in 1983 with the work of Tindal, Germann, and Deno. Over time, results have been reported as words correct per minute (wcpm) which are documented on a weekly basis.

Torgeson (2000) argues that accuracy and rate are the only reliable measures that can be made for reading assessment, which is found in many commercial assessments of reading. Popular assessments, such as the Formative Assessment System for Teachers
(FAST, fastbridge.org) provide fluency assessment through grade level passages used in one-minute reading probes. By using these types of assessments that record rate and accuracy, the teacher is then able to see the number of correct words per minute read and use this data to monitor progress throughout the year. However, Deeney (2010) argues that it is instruction, not assessment, which is the key to improving fluency.

From the early years of reading readiness to the introduction of emergent literacy, the views on reading instruction and best practices have continually evolved (Clay, 1966; Flesch, 1967; Chall, 1967; Gough, 1972; Laberge & Samuels, 1974; Goodman, 1986; Teale & Sulzby, 1986; Tierney, Readance, & Dishner, 1990; Thompson, 1992; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Wilson, 1998). These changes in views often mirror the theoretical discussions in the literature about how literacy works. Geibel and Schrier (2002) would argue that teaching literacy requires a philosophical stance that informs beliefs about practice. This belief system is important because instruction involves making decisions based upon how children learn to read and how best they are to be taught. Understanding the history of reading and the research that supports all views, can help build a strong knowledge base of multiple methods to teach reading (Geibel & Schrier).

Reading is a complex activity involving several component skills. Some research supports the idea that children who do not learn basic early component skills of reading are likely to be at a disadvantage during their formal schooling years and beyond (Moats, 1999). In this view of reading as a series of component skills, the roles of phonemic awareness and phonics are considered an important prerequisite on building word recognition skills and how fluency facilitates comprehension. Other research would
suggest literacy as a complex socio-psycholinguistic activity, rather than a cognitive skill to be learned (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). The research in emergent literacy breaks away from reading readiness, particularly with the idea that children need to be taught a series of prerequisite skills prior to reading. Knowing how to use research-based strategies to support effective literacy instruction is important in order to support the literacy development of children.

The purpose of this project is to examine the history and theories of literacy education in order to provide a broad understanding of the essential components of reading. Also, to explore how theoretical orientations and literacy components are reflected in teaching reading, specifically reading fluency. In this project I will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is fluent reading?
2. What is the relationship between fluency and reading comprehension?
3. How is fluency assessed?
4. What are evidence-based instructional strategies used for developing fluency?
**Methodology**

The methodology of this research project focused on several key areas: the history and theories of literacy, the five big ideas from the National Reading Panel with an emphasis on fluency, the link between fluency and comprehension, fluency assessment, and instructional strategies to support the development of fluency.

My interest in researching fluency grew out of my professional work in public schools. As a previous fourth grade teacher, I had felt the pressure of raising my FAST scores and the frustrations with the students being defined by a single number. The area of fluency really caught my attention during the research process. I had been implementing fluency strategies in my classroom but wanted to dig deeper.

In the first phases of collecting journal articles and data, I focused on researching the different theories that have been highlighted in the research, particularly the most noted debate between whole language and phonics-based instruction. This led me to the National Reading Panel’s report that was published in 2000 with the five big ideas in literacy learning: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

In my research, I used several sources, including, the Data Base A-Z search engine at the university library, and Google scholar for journals in the education field. Within the Data Base A-Z, I focused on education, and used predominantly the following three databases: Education Index Retrospective, ERIC (EBSCO), and PsycINFO. I used several different journal sources, including key national journals that focused on literacy, such as, *Reading Research Quarterly, Reading Research and Instruction, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, and *Theory into Practice*. One of my most usable resources for addressing literacy instruction was *The Reading Teacher*. Aside from journal articles,
I also used several educational books spanning the years that addressed current issues of that time, such as, *Why Johnny can’t read* (Flesch, 1965), *What’s whole in whole language?* (Goodman, 2005), and *Guided reading: Responsive teaching across the grades* (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). In addition to these classics on literacy issues, I also used research handbooks that provided insights into theoretical orientations of reading and current research in the reading and writing (e.g., Singer and Ruddell’s *Theoretical models and processes of reading*). The results of this review process included over 200 articles on reading and literacy research and practices, as well as several books addressing practice and instructional change.

**The Context for My Project Development**

As I moved into the position of Title I Reading and literacy coaching, I began to think more about professional development and guiding teachers. My focus was on helping teachers with student learning, taking the focus off of wcpm by offering engaging strategies for students and teachers. I used my own personal experiences and classroom knowledge along with my research on fluency practice to design a plan for one semester. The strategies chosen from the literature are intended to be used by the participants in the professional development after each of the four sessions. This gives them the remainder of the year to support fluency development on a regular basis using what they learned.

When I began brainstorming ideas, I decided to design the sessions with the book, *Wonder*, by RJ Palacio in mind. I used it as a read aloud in my fourth grade classroom for several years and it was always a student favorite. I wanted to use this book and another book by the same author, written for younger children. I used the books as an underlying, yet recurring theme of the importance of the use of well written children’s books in
instructional practice. Each session will have a connection to the book’s story in some way: connecting to the character, exploring vocabulary by focusing on the title of the book, analyzing a quote by the author, echo reading a poem I wrote myself in response to the book, repeatedly reading a song that was quoted in the story, to lastly, a readers’ thetatre written for the first chapter. I wanted to use a children’s book (as opposed to a basal series text), a book with which I have experience, to model the connections across fluency, the strategies being taught, and real literature in the classroom.

I also used grouping techniques adapted from Gambrell, Morrow, and Pressley (2007) and comprehension strategies (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002) throughout the sessions. My plan was to have the sessions be as informational as possible with ideas ready to implement immediately in each teacher’s own classroom. I also wanted to include the importance of using the expertise of the school librarian and the literacy coach as resources in their teaching.
Literature Review

This literature review provides a summary of three major theoretical orientations toward how reading works, including the text based notion of a bottom-up theory, a more cognitive view through a top-down theory, and an interactive theory of reading that encompasses both text-based and cognitive-based interactions. The literature review will then provide a look at the historical perspectives of literacy from the early years of maturation and reading readiness to the appearance of emergent literacy. Next, it provides an overview of the stages of reading, word recognition, and spelling development along with the five essential components of reading, as determined by the National Reading Panel (2000), including, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Lastly, the review will focus on how fluency is defined and assessed, and the use of instructional research based strategies to support the development of fluency.

The terms theory and model are used interchangeably in some of the literature, but they are not identical. A theory is an explanation for a phenomenon while a model is a way of “depicting a theory’s variables, mechanisms, constructs, and their interrelationships” (Singer & Ruddell, 1985, p.620). Theories and models should be understood in relationship to what they are trying to accomplish and then adjudicated on how adequately they succeed in doing so. Two specific theories and their related approaches of reading have been given a significant amount of attention in reading research: the bottom up theory (part to whole) and the top down theory (whole to part). The bottom up theory is a sequential model that supports direct phonics instruction where reading is mastered across a linear trajectory (Cromwell, 1997). Whereas the top down theory is a concept which includes the use of real literature and writing in the context of
meaningful, functional, and cooperative experiences in order to develop students' motivation and interest in the process of learning (Bergeron, 1990). According to Block (2003), the overall focus in a top-down model is on meaning. Researchers agree that readers use knowledge of language, letter sound correspondence, and background to read. The disagreement lies in how children who are learning to read become proficient and independent (Moustafa & Maldonado, 1999).

**Bottom-Up Approach**

Behaviorists, such as B.F. Skinner, believe individuals respond to stimulus with a response that is either strengthened or weakened by reinforcement. Growing from this interpretation was the approach to teaching reading called the bottom-up approach (parts-to-whole). In the beginning stages this approach gives little emphasis on world knowledge, context, and other higher-order processing strategies (Dechant, 1991).

The bottom-up reading model emphasizes “teaching of skills in a sequential and systematic manner” (Vacca, J.L., Vacca, R.T., Gove, M.K., McKeon, C.A., Burkey, L.C., & Lenhart, L.A., 2006, p. 38). This theory supports the idea that learners build their skills, moving up step by step which starts at the bottom of a hierarchy of skills with comprehension being the last and final step. The interpretation is that reading is driven by text and information extracted from the printed page. Letters and words are dealt with in a relatively complete and systematic fashion. First, the young learners process the simplest units that make up a word, including letter shapes, names, and sounds. Then they can start blending letters in a left to right sequence until words are formed by sounding out. Learning in this approach is a one way process, progress being made one skill at a time. Vacca, et al (2006) argues that children become readers through a series of
combined sub skills where “letter-sound relationships and word identification are emphasized instructionally” (p.38). Then, after correctly decoding text, meaning and understanding will follow. In the bottom up theory, the text is believed to contain the message and only through decoding will the learner understand the author’s message.

In 1972, Philip Gough attempted to pin down the sequence of events that transpire within the first second of reading. He defined reading itself in terms of an ability to decode, noting, “The reader is a decoder; the child must become one” (p. 356). His model consists of a sequentially ordered set of transformations initiated with low level sensory information and ending in higher level encodings. Thus, reading itself was narrowly defined in terms of ability to decode. Readers, according to Gough, begin by translating the parts of written language (letters) into speech sounds. They then piece the sounds together to form individual words and piece the words together to arrive at an understanding of the author’s written message. No higher levels of processing can affect any lower level and there is no provision for interaction within the system.

LaBerge and Samuels (1974) introduced a concept called automatic information processing or automaticity. This model of reading processes describes the stages involved in transforming written patterns into meanings and relates the attention mechanism to processing at each of the stages. The authors hypothesize that the human mind functions much like a computer and that visual input (letters and words) is sequentially entered into the mind of the reader. The term automaticity implies that readers, like computers, have a limited ability to shift attention between the processes of decoding (sounding out words) and comprehending (thinking about the meaning of the author’s message in the text). If readers are too bogged down in decoding the text, they
will not be able to focus on the job of comprehending the author’s message. Therefore, fluent readers are defined as having mastered each of the sub skills at the automatic level (Reutzel & Cooter, 2005).

In his book, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*, Rudolf Flesch (1967) claims children’s trouble with reading came from the look and say method educators were using in the classrooms. According to Flesch, “word guessing instead of reading” and “memorizing or guessing the meaning of whole words is not reading” (p. 122). Flesch continues to argue that this technique encourages children to read by associating words with nearby textbook pictures, by looking at the shape of the print, or by analyzing contexts. His thesis on teaching reading is that children must be taught in sequence with training using systematic phonics. According to Flesch, “phonics is the knowledge of the way spoken English is put on paper and something a child can master completely” (p. 122). In his book he references the “complete recipe for teaching a child to read” (p. 33) in a sequence of five steps in the phonic method.

Shortly after Flesch’s book was published, there was widespread concern about the state of education in the United States and many people asked why phonics was not emphasized more in school. The federal government funded a nationwide study on the best ways to teach reading. Chall’s (1967) findings in the scholarly review, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, paralleled the study results of Flesh’s recommendation for the *code-emphasis* approach to the reading over *meaning-emphasis*. Thus, basal reading programs stressing phonics became popular (Teale & Yokoto, 2000). This approach remained dominant until the 1980’s, when the whole language perspective emerged.
Top-Down Approach

The bottom-up perspective was challenged by educators whose system of beliefs came from the whole language orientation. Whole language is a “progressive, child-centered movement that took root in the 1960’s and blossomed in the 1980’s” (Vacca, Vacca, Gove, McKeon, & Burkey, 2006, p. 42). Moustafa argues that the top down model capitalizes on children’s knowledge of language. This suggests that the process of analyzing text is a meaning driven process brought to the print, not derived from print. According to Taylor (1989), in this model, children learn language naturally and developmentally.

Historically, whole language can be traced back to educational movements, such as Jean Piaget’s (1964) support for children being active agents and developing their own conceptualizations in the learning process or Vygotsky’s (1968) belief that learning is a social activity (Goodman, 1989; Gursky, 1991). In contrast with the bottom-up theory, researchers who support this holistic approach believe that along with the reader’s innate ability to use language, they also rely on their background experiences and worldly knowledge to confirm their assumptions about the meaning of text (Farris, Fuhler, & Walther, 2004; Dechant, 1991).

According to Ken and Yetta Goodman (1979), “acquisition of literacy is an extension of natural language learning for all children” (p.4). Instruction that is consistent with the whole language approach will facilitate learning. Supporters argue that children are active participants, seekers of meaning, motivated by the need to comprehend. According to Thompson (1992), children learn best by being immersed in a print and literacy rich environment where they can see purpose for their reading and writing skills.
Tierney, Readance, and Dishner (1990) argue the major principle of whole language is that “language is used best when the learners focus is on use and meaning” (p. 27).

In the mid-1980’s literature based basal readers made their way into elementary schools supporting the perspective that reading and writing are learned best while engaging in rich content. According to Teale and Yokoto (2000), children’s interests and purposes are paramount using real literature, rather than texts designed to reflect phonics patterns and isolated teaching of skills.

**Interactive Theory**

The interactive model of reading attempts to combine insight from the bottom up and top down approaches and recognizes the interactive nature of both processes simultaneously throughout the reading process. According to Dechant (1991), the reader constructs meaning by the selective use of information from all sources of meaning (graphemic, phonemic, morphemic, syntax, semantics) without adherence to any one set order. With the interactive theory, the reader simultaneously uses all levels of processing even though one source of meaning can be primary at a given time.

Rumelhart (1985) states that reading is both a perceptual and a cognitive process. He suggests that this process bridges and blurs the two different reading theories. The interactive theory supports the idea that a skilled reader must be able to make use of sensory, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information to accomplish the task and these various sources of information appear to interact in many complex ways during the process of reading. Birch (2002) argues that reading is viewed as an interactive, meaning making journey that includes both meaning-focused, top-down processes and skill-focused, bottom-up processes.
**Historical Perspective on Beginning Literacy Instruction**

In their review of the literature on literacy development, Teale and Sulzby (1986) note that from the late 1800’s to the 1920’s, the reading and writing research focused on the elementary years. Starting in the 1920’s, educators began to recognize early childhood and kindergarten as preparation periods for reading and writing. The National Committee on Reading published the first explicit reference to the concept of reading readiness in 1925. The introduction of the term *reading readiness* gave rise to research on preparing children for reading. The issue of how children became mentally prepared for reading arose and divided educators (Teale & Sulzby 1986; Teale & Yokoto, 2000). Some believed readiness was the result of maturation (nature) while others proposed that appropriate experiences created or accelerated readiness (nurture).

**Maturation**

The dominant theory until the 1950’s was that reading readiness was a result of biological maturation (Understanding Literacy Development in Young Children, n.d.). This perspective evolved from the developmental theories of G. Stanley Hall and Arnold Gesell (Sippola, 1994; Slegers, 1996). According to these theorists, young children were thought to be not ready to read due to lack of maturity and their solution was to postpone instruction so as not to interfere with their natural development. Gesell related human development to neural ripening (McGill-Franzen, 1992). He believed children’s development was biologically fixed and this timetable could not be influenced by instruction. In the 1930’s, Carelton Washburne claimed the mental age of 6 ½ years as the “optimal time to begin to teach reading” (Slegers, 1996, p.6). Proponents of maturation advocated waiting before giving reading instruction. Elkind (1981) stated,
“the majority of children can learn to read with ease if they are not hurried into it. According to Coltheart (1979), “Time is the answer--not special drills or special practice” (p.4).

Educators who believed in maturation cautioned against starting instruction too early due to the negative effects it could have on children (Mason & Sinha, 1992). As a result, during most of the twentieth century the generally accepted focus in the classroom was on formal, deliberate reading instruction beginning in the first grade (Teale & Yokoto, 2000). From this perspective, mental processes necessary for reading would unfold automatically at a certain period of time in development (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). It was argued that good practice would provide an environment that did not interfere with the predetermined process of development in a child. Children’s mental age was measured on a cognitive or IQ test indicating who was ready for instruction versus who was not. Children were to pass a readiness threshold reaching the requisite stage of development before actual reading instruction would take place.

Reading Readiness

Research and writing by cognitive psychologists, such as Bruner (1960, 1966), provided evidence that early childhood actually was a crucial time in the cognitive development of an individual. The dominant theory of maturation shifted towards readiness as the product of experience (Mason & Sinha, 1992). It was argued that if children had the appropriate experiences, their reading readiness could be accelerated. Teale and Sulzby (1986) identified several factors which contributed to the shift:

- a growing reliance on reading readiness workbooks and tests during the first years of school, which had been used by the maturationists as an intervention tool;
• increased research on young children which was demonstrating that preschoolers knew more than had generally been believed;
• the adequacy of American education was being questioned since the Soviet Union was the first country to travel in space; and
• supporters of social equality argued that “large numbers of minority children had culturally disadvantaged backgrounds and had to wait until they got to school to overcome the disadvantage” (Teale and Sulzby, 1986, p. xii).

Educators who held this readiness view focused on getting children ready to read as soon as possible, rather than sitting back and waiting. Programs were developed for children to participate with activities designed to foster “visual and auditory discrimination skills, adequate speaking and listening skills, recognition of the letters of the alphabet, and the association of some letters with sounds” (Teale & Yokoto, 2000, p.14). However, children were still not taught to read until they completed some type of readiness program.

Starting in the 1970’s, reading readiness attitudes and practices were shifting (Mason & Sinha, 1992). A considerable amount of studies that challenged behavior theorist and the notion of neural ripening began to appear (Allen & Mason, 1989; Clay, 1979a; Mason, 1989; Sampson, 1986; Schieffelin & Gilmore, 1986; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). These studies challenged the concept of reading readiness. Emergent literacy was a revolution in thinking about development that rejected the maturation and readiness views. The shift in perspective about literacy acquisition not included the active, constructive role of the child.

Emergent Literacy

The concept of emergent literacy gradually replaced the notion of reading readiness. According to Teale (1986), this theory redefined the field of literacy in that
reading readiness no longer adequately described what was happening in the
development of literacy in young children. Evolving from the study of reading readiness,
the term *emergent literacy* or the “process of becoming literate” (Teale & Sulzby, 1986,
p.xix), consists of “skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are developmental precursors to
reading and writing” (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998, p. 848).

Coined by Clay (1979a), the term emergent literacy gave validity to children’s
literacy behaviors and broadened the focus of reading. For example, while decoding is a
necessary component of learning to read, it is not the only measure of beginning reading
(Mason & Sinha, 1992). Clay described the interactions and behaviors that young
children display while using books to imitate reading and writing, even though the
children could not read or write in a conventional sense. Clay maintained that as a child
learns to read, it is important for them to develop an understanding about basic print
concepts, such as letters, words, sentences, and directionality (Clay, 1972a). According to
Mason and Allen (1986), the term provided a way to integrate reading and writing. For
example, while decoding is a necessary component of learning to read, it is not the only
measure of beginning reading (Mason & Sinha, 1992).

In emergent literacy learning to read and write begins very early in life for all
children, before the age of six. Reading, writing, and oral language develops
concurrently and interrelatedly, rather than sequentially. Children learn through active
engagement with their world, not by completing workbook pages or academic activities.
Becoming literate at different rates requires taking a “variety of paths to conventional
reading and writing” (Teale & Yokoto, 2000, p.15).
According to Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998), emergent literacy refers to the “idea that the acquisition of literacy is best conceptualized as a developmental continuum, with its origins early in the life of a child, rather than an all-or-none phenomenon that begins when children start school” (p. 848). Historically, the term could be seen as implying a broad theoretical stance about literacy learning based in developmental and constructivist education, an age group of birth to five or six years old, and a focus on informal learning in holistic activities at home or in school (Yaden, Rowe, & MacGillivray, 1999).

In 1986, Teale and Sulzby formally launched the term emergent literacy and argued it was needed in order to define a new perspective on how children become literate. Emergent literacy recognizes that children’s literacy development begins informally in their homes and communities involving real life settings with real life activities, long before they start any formal education in school (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002). Literacy is regarded as a complex socio-psycholinguistic activity rather than simply a cognitive skill to be learned (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). The adoption of this new term signaled a break with the theoretical concept of reading readiness, particularly with the idea that children need to be taught a series of prerequisite skills prior to reading, and that writing should be delayed until children are reading conventionally (Yaden, Rowe & MacGillivray, 1999).

Since the publication of Teale and Sulzby’s (1991) work on emergent literacy and those using it represents a “broad spectrum of ontological, epistemological, and methodological stances” (Yaden, et al., 1999, p. 2). From the moment of birth, or perhaps even sooner, children begin the process of reading their surroundings and learning the intricacies of language. “This is a part of literacy development, which certainly precedes
reading instruction” (Wilson, 1998, p. 1). As Laney (1994) stated, becoming literate “occupies every waking moment throughout childhood” (p. 2). Becoming literate in this viewpoint becomes a dynamic process of growth and change. When formal reading instruction begins too early and is focused on skill and drill, it can actually interfere with emergent literacy (Wilson, 1998).

Reading readiness suggests there is a point in time when a child is ready to begin to learn to read and write, supporting the idea of stages (Chall, 1983). In contrast, emergent literacy suggests the development of literacy is taking place within the child. Marie Clay (1975) states that there is no specific sequence of skills children need to master prior to reading and writing. She claims that children emerge into literacy with all of the abilities needed developing together. For something to emerge it needs to be there at the beginning (the child’s own natural ability). According to Hall (1987), things usually only emerge under the right conditions, which can also be argued as stages in the child’s life. While stages in reading are usually associated with a reading readiness approach to learning, the literature on stages often blurs the lines between reading readiness and emergent literacy.

Conflicting Views on Reading Development

The bottom up approach places emphasis on the belief that knowledge can be described as a series of chunks that are acquired one after another with literacy being a set of rules or stages. Over the years researchers have formed models of reading that support this theory of reading development based upon stages. Chall (1983) describes six stages of development that are consistent with a direct-instruction model. Students proceed through these predictable stages of learning to read. By the time students reach
kindergarten, Chall argues that they should have some print knowledge and a vocabulary of about 6,000 words. Chall suggests that reading is a skill which is built upon through stages and is an ongoing process.

The initial stage in Chall’s model (up to the age of 6 years) is a pre-reading stage characterized by a child’s growth in use of spoken language and knowledge. Increasing vocabulary, syntax, and the beginning understandings of the sound structures of words are apparent. Children learn about alliteration, rhyme, and how to break words apart and put them back together. Most are acquiring some knowledge of print, learning the names of the alphabet letters and how to print/recognize their own names and some letters. During these stages children learn how to hold a book, turn the pages, and will mostly engage in pretend reading (Chall, 1983).

In the next stage, children will develop a sense of the alphabetic principle and sound-spelling relationships. Through grades 2 and 3, students develop their decoding, fluency, and additional meaning making strategies. Stages 1 and 2 constitute a learning to read stage, where word recognition is automatic and passages can be read with ease and expression. According to Kuhn and Stahl (2000), this stage is critical because children who are not fluent spend too much time decoding text and an inadequate amount of effort in comprehending. Chall (1996) believes children may not transition well to the next stage of reading where children are reading to learn.

Chall (1983) points out that the ages or grades are approximate and whether or not development occurs depends on instruction in the classroom and at home, but, each stage is dependent upon adequate development at the prior stages. Each stage is continuous and overlapping and each stage is associated with particular aspects of development that are
of primary importance. Because of the belief in the necessity to have adequate development, assessments are an essential component in determining a student’s level and such data provides a base for instruction. If a child has not yet acquired sufficient information in a certain stage they will likely have difficulty when confronted with concepts in the next stage (Chall, 1983).

In the whole language approach, literacy is no longer viewed as a set of rules but rather using literacy in authentic events (Bruner, 1996). Whole language is based upon constructivist education and often considered a top-down model, strongly associated with the work of Ken Goodman (1967). Goodman’s conceptualization departs from the bottom up perspective on reading acquisition in that it sees the process of learning to read as as behavioural and maturing process. Goodman (1986) stated that reading and writing involve children learning in any social context that enables them to develop literacy before they start formal school instruction in reading and writing.

Whole language proponents argue that language should not be broken down into letters or combinations of letters and be decoded (Stahl & Miller, 1989). Moats (2007 ) argues that language is a complete system of making meaning where words function in relation to each other within context. Froses (1991) defines whole language as child centered, literature-based approach to language teaching that immerses students in real communication situations whenever possible (p2). Language is learned from whole to part.

Researchers who support more of a whole language approach to reading ( Lyons & Pinnell, 2001) argue that every time a child reads they expand their ability to read,
“developing networks of understanding that connect language and orthographic processing” (p30).

**Essential Components of Reading**

The National Reading Panel's (2000) research identified five areas of literacy that are represented in the research literature for literacy practice. The five areas encompass the broad components of reading and are included in most current reading programs, which include phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and oral reading fluency.

**Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic Awareness can be described as the understanding of the sounds that compose words and the ability to manipulate those sounds (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Having these skills enables children to use letter-sound correspondences to read and spell words. According to Griffith and Olson (1992), phonemic awareness necessitates the capacity to attend to a sound in the context of other sounds in the word. Juel, Griffith, and Gough (1986) also found most children who had decoding difficulties in first grade were also deficient in phonemic awareness.

The tasks easiest for children are rhyme and recognizing rhymes. Intermediate tasks may include blending phonemes and segmenting the beginning sounds while the most difficult task being segmenting the phonemes in spoken words and manipulating phonemes to form different words (Adams, 1990). Daly, Chafouleas, and Skinner (2004) provide a hierarchy of phonemic awareness skills involving the manipulation of individual sounds in words. The first skill is alliteration which involves children identifying and saying the first sound in a word. For example, saying /c/ for the word cat.
The next skill is blending. This consists of blending individual sounds to make a whole word, for example, /c-a-t/ to form the word cat. Blending is followed by segmenting the individual sounds heard in a word. For example, /c-a-t/. The final skill in the developmental progression involves deleting, substituting, and reversing individual sounds in words to make new words. For example, this would include replacing the /c/ in cat with a /b/ to make the word bat.

Research in the area of emergent literacy has recognized phonological and print awareness as two areas that are strong predictors of later formal literacy development (Lonigan, Burgess, & Anthony, 2000; Senechal & LeFevre, 2002). Clay (1991) found a significant amount of six year old children who were having difficulty in learning could not detect the separate sounds in words. According to Ehri and Roberts (2006), most children develop phonemic awareness through their literacy experiences at home and in their kindergarten classroom. Once phonemic awareness is established and some sound-letter relationships are learned, the brain is able to recognize new patterns on its own (Adams, 1990).

In 2000, the National Reading Panel identified phonemic awareness as a key area of literacy instruction and “a skill that should be taught before phonics” (p.6). It is now common to find phonological instruction in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade. The instruction moves from simple to complex as students move up in grades. The panel also examined 52 studies on teaching phonemic awareness. The research concluded, instruction can improve phonemic awareness and was “advantageous to children in early stages of reading” (p.8). Segmenting and blending proved to be the greatest reading advantage to kindergarten and first grade students. “Instruction should be continued until
children can fully segment with ease” (p.10). The phonological awareness skills of segmenting and blending are the most highly correlated with beginning reading acquisition (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Techniques for Building Phonemic Awareness.

According to Vaughn, Wanzek, Woodruff, and Linan-Thompson (2008), direct instruction in phoneme manipulation is considered an essential part of reading instruction in kindergarten, especially for children who are at risk. However, developmental ordering of awareness accomplishments may be less linear and fixed then generally believed (Ukrainetz, Nuspl, Wilkerson, & Beddes, 2010). Young preschoolers can demonstrate phonemic awareness without direct instruction. “Half of three year olds can achieve beginning phoneme isolation and alliteration” (Chaney, 1992 as cited in Ukrainetz, 2011, p.52) and “a third of four year olds can match first phoneme” (Lonigan, Burgess, Anthony, & Barker, 1998 as cited in Ukrainetz, 2011, p. 52).

Phonemic awareness can be developed by exposing children to literature that plays with sounds in language, providing extensive writing experiences, and explicit instruction in sound segmentation and representing the sounds heard in words (Griffith & Olson, 1992. Listening to text that plays with language and writing using invented spelling are indirect ways of enhancing phonemic awareness. Language songs, games, simple, brief and enjoyable activities used to reinforce the concept of sounds in word are recommended.

Phonics

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), phonics “teaches children relationships between letters and sounds to translate printed text into pronunciation” (p.11). Phonics
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includes letter sounds, spelling patterns, and decoding strategies. The NRP examined the impact of systematic instruction by reviewing thirty-eight studies. Their findings concluded, systematic instruction “gave children a faster start in learning to read” (p.12). The instruction improved word recognition and spelling, and also had a positive impact on comprehension. They suggest that the earlier a reader is exposed is an advantage and then the child can build upon this knowledge as they move up in grades. *Marilyn Adams (1990)* emphasizes that “the degree to which children internalize and use their phonics instruction depends on the degree to which they have found it useful for recognizing words in their earliest texts” (p.22). Therefore, immersion in meaningful text from the start is important. Torgeson, Brooks, and Hall (2006) claim there is evidence that systematic teaching of phonics benefits children’s reading accuracy and should be “part of every literacy teachers repertoire” (p.8).

Gunning (1998) suggests, “the key to teaching phonics to poor readers is to use an approach that is systematic and which fits the needs of individual learners” (p.214). Adams (1990) found that as a group, lower achieving readers are “slower learning phonics, rely on smaller units of sound, have difficulty applying phonics, and tend to over rely on phonics” (p.211). Both Adams (1990) and Gunning (1998) would argue that failure to acquire phonics skills is “easily the number one cause of reading problems” (Gunning, 1998, p.211). Juel (1998) found that twenty-two of twenty-four children who remained poor readers all the way through fourth grade had failed to reach the decoding achievement of average second graders. The average student is expected to master the basics of phonics by the end of second grade (Anderson, Hiebert, Wilkinson, 1985).
This idea that students should master phonics has been questioned by several researchers. Goodman (2005) argues that phonics instruction actually hinders language acquisition. Weaver (1996) concluded that children in whole language classrooms develop a greater ability to use phonics knowledge effectively than a class where skills are practiced in isolation with the expectation of mastery. According to Moustafa and Maldonado-Colon (1999), some concerns with the usual phonics generalizations are unreliable. For example, with the silent e rule, there are only 63% of the words in which that combination appears. Children who are taught phonics in context are almost twice as successful in sounding out unfamiliar words as children taught in traditional phonics (Freepon, 1998). Whole language phonics starts with what emergent readers already know and capitalizes on that knowledge. Being aware of the child’s ability to recognize words holistically and using letter sounds of which they already have knowledge, is important when teaching them to recognize a large body of print quickly and easily in a shared reading with a predictable text. Using letter sounds they already know aides in pronouncing unfamiliar words they later encounter. Shared reading is important part of whole to part phonics (Moustafa & Maldonado-Colon, 1999). The idea that phonics is learned through examination of unknown words and patterns suggests a focus more on critical analysis rather than mastery of rules.

**Vocabulary**

Vocabulary development plays a critical role in young children’s learning to read, and as a result, their overall success in school (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Research suggests that providing opportunities for children to talk and use language in meaningful contexts can promote the development of vocabulary
Vocabulary is often referred to as both word recognition and word meaning (National Reading Panel, 2000), however, it involves an array of understandings and experiences. According to the panel review, *when children have extensive knowledge about a particular subject, they will develop an awareness of many words in relation to that subject. They will usually also know many kinds of other related information. The individual words are valuable but a real understanding of them carries an “awareness of much associated knowledge and appreciation”* (National Reading Panel, 2000, p. 23).

Wasik, Iannone-Campbell (2012) argue that vocabulary development is one of the most important skills young children need to acquire to be successful in learning to read and in school. They suggest that in order to develop vocabulary in children, teachers should engage in purposeful and strategic conversations that focus on the explicit development of words. They argue that teachers must help children construct meaning of words by providing multiple activities and experiences. Children can learn many words without formal instruction, whether it is from their home environment, interactions with others, exposure to books, and so forth. However, not all children receive the same level of support from their environment which leads to differences in acquisition of vocabulary. According to Hart and Risley (1995), children from low income families were exposed to half as much spoken language than working class children in the first four years of their life.

The National Reading Panel (2000) examined evidence on the effect of vocabulary instruction on reading achievement and state that vocabulary occupies an important position in learning to read. Explicit instruction of vocabulary in the classroom...
is when teachers give definitions of words, use external clues to find meanings, and analyze word roots and affixes. An example of explicit instruction is the pre-teaching of words before a lesson. An implicit approach to teaching vocabulary involves learning new words through reading while inferring definitions. This is encouraged through wide reading. According to Stahl and Fairbanks (1986), simply memorizing definitions is not the same thing; to own a new word for the long term the learner must see and use the word multiple times in several contexts.

According to Snow, Porche, Tabors, and Harris (2007), there is a strong relationship between vocabulary size and reading comprehension level and the relationship grows stronger as students’ progress through school. They argue that students who know many words can comprehend what they read, they continue to increase their vocabularies and content knowledge through reading.

Comprehension

According to Constance Weaver (2002), most researchers agree that the “ultimate purpose of reading is to arrive at meaning” (p.14), however, as this review has discussed, there are differing views about what is involved in learning to read. Weaver argues that most reading instruction is based on one of three different views. The first view is that learning to read means “learning to pronounce words” (p.15). This perspective assumes that once a learner pronounces a word, the meaning takes care of itself. Weaver goes on to explain the second view as “once the meaning of individual words is determined, the meaning of the whole text will take care of itself” (p.15). In sharp contrast, the third view theorizes that “meaning results not necessarily from the
precise identification of every word in a sentence, but from the constant interplay between the mind of the reader and the language of the text (p.15).

Successful reading requires the development of comprehension skills (Kendeou, Lynch, Van Den Broek, Espin, White, & Kremer, 2005). According to the National Reading Panel, reading comprehension is the “act of understanding and interpreting the information within a text” (p. 28). Reading comprehension is actively constructing meaning by interpreting information through one’s own beliefs and knowledge. This dynamic way of thinking includes using the author’s organizational plan to think about the information presented and inferring what is not explicitly told. When readers connect statements and ideas in the text in order to form a mental representation, the outcome is comprehension (Trabasso & Van den Broek, 1985).

The National Reading Panel investigated 205 studies of reading comprehension strategies both single and complex. It was concluded that there was evidence to support the teaching of seven strategies. These strategies include question asking, monitoring, summarizing, question answering, story mapping, the use of graphic organizers; and cooperative grouping (p. 30). The use of prior knowledge and mental imagery were also successful in the studies. The panel concluded that most learning was obtained when multiple comprehension strategies were used in the classroom.

**Oral Reading Fluency**

When the National Reading Panel named fluency as one of its five components, it soon became a topic brought to the forefront of many conversations. The panel defined oral reading fluency as the “ability to read text aloud with accuracy, speed, and proper expression” (p.18). Allington (1983) had previously described fluency as the most
neglected reading skill. Recognizing the importance of automatic processes and fluency in reading is not new to the field of education. However, according to the panel report, for much of the 20th century, fluency was assumed to be the “immediate result of word recognition proficiency” (2000, p.5) and efforts to develop word recognition left fluency itself largely ignored.

**Historical perspectives**

Historical perspectives on fluency began with the work of the 18th century psychologist, William MacKeen Cattell. According to Wolf and Cohen (2001), Catell found that letters and words were named faster than other symbolic categories, such as colors or pictured objects, and was the first researcher to highlight humans as becoming automatic when they read. During the mid-1800’s there was an emphasis on oral recitation that focused on elocution both as the primary method and goal of reading instruction (Hoffman, 1987). The intention of an oral performance of a text was to provide an interpretive rendition, allowing the listener to understand the writer’s argument and message (Statyer & Allington, 1991). The teacher would orally read, the students would practice the passage, and then read aloud in front of others. The reading was then assessed by the teacher on the quality of oral reading and the recall of what they had read. Later in the 1900’s, the focus went from oral fluency to silent reading comprehension (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). Because fluency had been observable orally, it was no longer viewed as a critical part of reading and the emphasis on fluency became restricted to the primary grades (Statyer & Allington, 1991).

**Automaticity theory**
LaBerge and Samuels (1974) work renewed some of the attention on fluency with their automaticity theory. They constructed a model on what it meant to acquire automaticity in reading. They argued that skilled reading involves the reallocation of attentional capacity from lower level word identification processing to resource-demanding comprehension functions. According to the researchers, humans are single channel processors only able to attend to one thing at a time and alternating attention between two activities can only happen when one is so well learned the other can be performed automatically. When readers who are not automatic attempt to alternate between the two, the reading is laborious and leaves little cognitive capacity for comprehension. Throughout this period, the general definition of fluent reading was a “level of reading competence at which textual material can be effortlessly, smoothly, and automatically understood” (Schreiber, 1980, p.177).

Stages of development

Fluency has been related to theoretical constructs of how reading proceeds through developmental stages. Ehri (1998) states, “being able to read words by sight automatically is the key to skilled reading of text. This allows readers to process words in text quickly, without attention directed to the word itself” (p.11). The focus is on decoding through the stages of fluency development. Readers will progress from non-readers to effortless word recognition. In reference to Chall’s stages of development, Kuhn and Stahl (2000) believe stages one and two are critical because disfluent readers spend too much time decoding text and inadequate amounts in their efforts to comprehend. Chall (1996) argues that a child may not transition well to the next stage of reading and instructional focus, where they are eventually reading to learn.
Automaticity and Accuracy

According to Stanovich (1980), there are several sources of information available to the reader, and when word identification is rapid and fluent, the reader can devote full attention to the message of the text. Accurate word recognition must be completed rapidly for full fluency to be indicated (Nathan & Stanovich, 1991). When a reader is unable to rapidly recognize words and has to take the time to examine the word, they have insignificant cognitive resources for comprehending. Stanovich also references the reciprocal relationship between fluency and the amount of reading in which a reader engages. When engaged in intense amounts, their skills will grow, and in turn contribute to fluency. Kuhn (2004) states that one important reason or the need for fluency instruction is that fluent readers no longer have to decode the majority of the words they encounter, but instead can recognize words accurately and automatically. Other researchers accede that when word identification becomes sufficiently fluent and automatic, the child does not have to concentrate on the basic identification of words and can concentrate fully on the meaning of the text (Chall, 1996; Dowhower, 1987; Ehri, 1995).

Fluency definitions

Definitions of fluency do have some variances. Schreiber (1991) defined fluency as “smooth, expressive production with appropriate phrasing or chunking in accordance with the syntactic structure of the material being read” (p.158). According to Hudson, Mercer, and Lane (2000), fluent reading comprises three key elements. These elements include accurate reading of connected text, at a conversational rate, and with appropriate prosody or expression. Rasinski (2004) specified that reading fluency is the reader’s,
"ability to develop control over surface-level text processing so that he or she can focus on understanding the deeper levels of meaning embedded in the text" (p46). Dowhower (1991) referred to fluent reading as being able to make appropriate use of phrasing, pitch, and emphasis. The author also argued that while rate and accuracy have been addressed as indicators of reading fluency, prosody has been largely uninvestigated.

**Prosody**

"Prosody is a linguistic term used to describe the rhythmic and tonal aspects of speech, the music of oral language" (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005, p. 704). According to Dowhower, prosody is a general linguistic term to describe features of speech. These features include pitch, stress, and duration. When they are present in fluent readers, the term prosodic reading is applied. Prosodic reading is the "ability to read in expressive rhythmic and melodic patterns" (Dowhower, 1991, p.166). According to Kuhn (2004), prosody serves as an indicator of a reader's understanding of the material. Without it, it would be impossible to apply the elements appropriately. She refers to two primary ways in which fluency plays a part in reading development. First, is the development of automatic word recognition and the second deals with prosody.

Daane, Campbell, Grigg, Goodman, & Oranje (2005) found a strong correlation between prosody and reading achievement. Their study revealed prosodic reading as a strong predictor of proficient reading. Kuhn and Stahl (2003) claim that appropriate application of prosodic features and speed in word recognition play a vital role in facilitating comprehension. Miller & Schwanenflugel (2008) reported students who are able to read with adult like prosody in grades one and two, were more likely to demonstrate proficient reading comprehension by the end of their third grade year.
According to Young, Valadez, & Gandara, 2016), prosody is not only an essential element in reading fluency, but it plays an important role in reading proficiency.

Comprehension as a Critical Component of Fluency

While there are a number of definitions of fluency, placing varying degrees of emphasis on its components, there seems to be a growing consensus that accuracy, automaticity, and prosody all make a contribution to the construct (Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, & Meisinger, 2010). A key reason that fluency is a critical component of reading programs is its association with reading outcomes, including comprehension (Penner-Wilger, 2008) and readers who were more fluent scored higher on the NAEP reading assessment.

Pikulski and Chard (2005), proposed that reading fluency be referred to as a “rapid, efficient, accurate word-recognition skills that permit a reader to construct the meaning of a text” (p 510). Samuels (2002) advocates the changing and addition of reading comprehension into the fluency component of the reading process. He states, “to experience good reading comprehension, the reader must be able to identify words quickly and easily” (p 167).

Proficient readers can recognize and read words quickly but also read with a sense of ease and fluidity reflective of their understanding of the text’s meaning (Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Children who read fluently are more likely to comprehend what they read (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005) and children with low degrees of fluency are less likely to understand what they read (Allington, 2001). According to Newkirk (2011), “the fluent reader is demonstrating comprehension, taking cues from the text, and taking
pleasure in finding the right tempo for the text’ (p 1). He states that there is no ideal speed. Speed has to do with the relationship we have with what we are reading.

Goodman (1986) suggests that being a fluent reader has more to do with construction of meaning than it has to do with attending to the words on the page. Topping (2006) describes strategic fluency as an increased level of ability where the reader moves beyond surface fluency to attend to meaning while reading. A strategic reader is utilizing metacognition and fluency aids in monitoring for comprehension. Steker, Roser, and Martinez (1998) found evidence that fluency is both a contributor and a product of comprehension. They promote viewing fluency and comprehension as having a reciprocal and causal relationship.

While traditional definitions have focused on rate, accuracy, and oral expression, without an appreciation of the interplay between fluency and comprehension, instruction may fall short of helping students read better (Geurin & Murphy, 2015). According to Rasinski and Young (2014), reading for speed is not effective. When that is the focus, meaning and comprehension become secondary. It is imperative that teachers implement research-based reading fluency strategies to support struggling readers (Allington, 2001; Rasinski, 2012). Because of the reciprocal nature of fluency and comprehension, progress is often assessed using some form of fluency measure.

Assessment of Oral Reading Fluency

Curriculum based measurements are standardized fluency based assessments that quantify student performance during a specified, brief period of time. The most well known and researched type of curriculum based measurements to assess is passage reading fluency, sometimes referred to as CBM of Reading (Biancarosa & Cummings,
Curriculum based measurements began in the mid-1970s with research headed by Stan Deno at the University of Minnesota (Deno, 1985). The curriculum based assessment was used for measuring progress in core academic areas of reading, math, written expression, and spelling (Patton, Reschly & Appleton, 2014). They were initially designed for frequent administration and student growth monitoring in order to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs for students in special education (Cummings, Stoolmiller, Baker, Fien, & Kame’enui, 2015). Teachers were able to use repeated measurement data to evaluate and improve their instruction (Deno, 2003). The use of CBM moved from monitoring progress, to its use in screening, to normative decision making, and finally benchmarking. Following the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), the focus has been on large-scale testing and accountability, Curriculum based measurements have become increasingly important as a form of standardized measurement.

Curriculum based measurements of oral reading fluency (CBM-R) or probes, are one of the most widely used and researched assessments on fluency (Graney & Shinn, 2005). They are commonly created as measures of students’ abilities to read with speed and accuracy and have emerged as a common tool for assessing developing literacy skills (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1997). CBM’s are composed to be correlated with key behaviors that are demonstrative of overall performance in reading (Shinn, 1998). According to Guerin and Murphy (2015), many U.S. schools assess oral reading fluency by referencing the number of words a student reads correctly in one minute. Oral reading fluency reflects the ability to translate written word into spoken language, and the coordination of bottom-up and top down processes in an effortless manner (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins, 2001).
Designed to be efficient and taking little time away from instructional classroom time, CBM’s are administered individually while the student reads aloud passages appropriate for their grade level. Scores are based upon how many words were read correctly in one minute (WCPM). The score is used to monitor students’ progress and identify those who may need more intense instruction. According to Fuchs, et al (2001), the assessment has been proven to be an efficient, reliable, and valid indicator of reading proficiency when used as a screening measure. According to Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006), “WCPM has been shown, in both theoretical and empirical research, to serve as an accurate and powerful indicator of overall reading competence, especially in its strong correlation with comprehension”(p.636). Research supports CBM’s as a valid method of measurement in the area of reading. According to Reschly, Busch, Betts, Deno, and Long (2009) has high correlations with measures of reading achievement, including reading comprehension, decoding, word identification, and vocabulary.

However, some researchers warn of the limitations this data provides to inform instruction (Deeney, 2010; Guerin and Murphy, 2015; Murray, Munger, & Clonan, 2011; Cramer & Rosenfield, 2008; Pressley, Hilden, & Shankland, 2005; Samuels, 2007; Ardoin, Christ, Morena, Cormier, & Klingbeil, 2013; Thornblad & Christ, 2014; Clay, 1991; Vellutino & Scanlon, 2002; Johnston, 2016). Monitoring accuracy and rate does not provide rich information and may lead to inappropriate instructional decisions for students (Deeney, 2010). As a result of the data, many interventions may only focus on increasing reading rate. According to Guerin and Murphy (2015), narrowing the instruction overshadows the “complexity of reading and reduces it to those aspects which can be readily scored for convenience” (p.552). Scores can alert educators that a student’s
fluency may not be developing as expected but it is not useful in determining the source of underlying reading problems (Murray, Munger, & Clonan, 2011). Measuring speed and automaticity and accuracy is an “incomplete appraisal of reading ability” (Guerin & Murphy, 2015, p.552) and gives no indication of whether the student is comprehending.

Clay (1993a) noted the use of reading observations can provide teachers a window into the work being done by the child as they work through the reading process. She argues that learning the work the child does and which cueing system they are using can be observed in a running record. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) defined running records as a tool used to code and score the text being read in order to analyze a child’s reading development and behaviors. A running record can teachers with strong knowledge and understanding of the reading process and further help identify the students who may need additional instruction. Instruction in reading fluency depends on the area in which students require the most help.

Fountas and Pinnell (2001) noted that retell is a key piece to analyzing a reader’s miscues. Teacher can use retelling after a student reads to collect evidence about their comprehension. The retelling process involves a teacher listening to the student read a text aloud and then asking them to tell the teacher what they have read. The teacher can encourage the child to expand their thinking and provide more information. The teacher records the retelling and analyzes to observe if the reader included details, sequence, and whether the story made sense.

Only using curriculum based measurements does not inform teachers whether the materials used for instruction are appropriate, whether the child is building upon a meaning-directed system, or provide documentation of the strategies the student in using
while reading (Cramer & Rosenfield, 2008; Pressley, Hilden, & Shankland, 2005; Samuels, 2007). Evaluating the reading growth of a student is time consuming when using a CBM. Calculating expected growth of a student takes a period of six weeks to four months. The variance is based upon the number of probes given a week. Reliably deciding that instruction needs to change will take time and there is no information to direct that instruction (Ardoin, Christ, Morena, Cormier, & Klingbeil, 2013; Thomblad & Christ, 2014).

CBM’s in reading can mis-direct instruction. When a child goes back to self correct from a CBM perspective; this reduces reading speed, making it a negative indicator of development (Johnston, 2016). By contrast, when a teacher is focused on self-regulation rather than speed, the miscue and its correction become significant in indicating what processes of self correction the student is using (Clay, 1991; Vellutino & Scanlon, 2002). In fact, Johnston (2016), argues that counting the number of words read per minute on a standardized text is not curriculum based and requires students to frequently read from text that is on a frustration level for them. This frustration becomes apparent within the prosodic rhythm that is missing or misguided during oral reading.

Measuring Prosody

The ability to read text effortlessly, quickly, accurately, and with expression plays an essential role in becoming a competent reader (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006). Geurin and Murphy (2015) suggest that prosody should also be assessed as part of a comprehensive approach to fluency assessment. Appropriate phrasing, intonation, and stress may provide information about how a reader is comprehending what is being read. In fact, Kuhn and Stahl (2003) concluded that prosody provides a link between fluent
oral reading and comprehension. Zutell and Rasinski (1991) suggest that the use of a rating can help a teacher pinpoint the specific elements of fluency that may be impacting a reader’s comprehension (phrasing, smoothness, pace, and expression) and in turn help to inform instructional decisions to meet the needs of the learner. They designed a rating scale with four levels. The descriptors primarily focus on pacing of reading, phrasing, and prosodic features. Level one is described as monotonic reading with little phrasing, while level four is reading in clause and sentence units using appropriate matching prosody. Teachers assign students reading to a specific point on the scale. With training, teachers can learn to apply the scale ratings accurately and consistently.

While screening measures are not meant to provide a full profile of a student’s overall reading skill level, they can help teachers quickly identify students who may need extra assistance. According to Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006), “a common practice has been to compare fluency scores with established norms or benchmarks” (p. 637). Fluency norms are recommended reading rates used to determine whether a student’s rate is near grade level. Using fluency norms to set appropriate goals for student improvement and to measure progress towards those goals, is one way to make timely and informed decisions about a student’s instructional needs (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006).

Fluency is only one of the essential skills involved in reading, however, raising a fluency score cannot be the main goal of instruction. Fluency is not a reading program itself, but “part of a comprehensive reading program that emphasizes both research-based practices and reading for meaning (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005, p. 708). This implies that fluency should be woven into all aspects of reading instruction. While fluency is not the only instructional component in literacy, teacher knowledge of effective fluency
instruction practices would benefit students both in their meaning making of text and in their performance on fluency assessments.

**Instructional Strategies to Support Fluency**

Fluent readers consistently have a large bank of words automatically recognized from memory (sight words), effective strategies for analyzing unknown words, and an understanding that the purpose of reading is comprehension. This allows students to read with expression (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005). According to The National Reading Panel (2000), fluency instruction is appropriate for grade two through high school and has equal effects for good and struggling readers. Caldwell and Leslie argue that fluency instruction is developed through supportive activities that provide guidance and feedback and should always be linked to meaning.

When the instruction is focused on developing fluency, students must talk about what they read by commenting on a selection, analyzing the character, connecting to their own lives, and word meaning. Reading instruction in general moves from the teacher providing modeling, to providing guidance while they read, to supporting independent application. At each phase, feedback is provided by the teacher even as their role shifts from an instructor, to a guide, to a monitor (Frey & Fisher, 2017). Teachers can use a variety of effective strategies for developing fluency which can be grouped into two major focus areas: (a) strategies for modeling and providing feedback (read alouds, assisted reading, echo reading, paired/partner reading and repeated reading; and (b) strategies for performance reading instruction (poetry, readerstheatre, and choral reading).
"The major predictor of success in reading and in academic study is children’s experience in being read to" (Weaver, 2002, p.232-233). According to Five & Egawa (1998) reading aloud should occur daily in the classroom with a teacher demonstrating what oral reading should sound like. Reading aloud also "fosters knowledge and love of story, introduces new genres (nonfiction, poetry, biography), contributes to literature appreciation, and helps build classroom community" (p.2). Reading aloud to students is considered good practice between both sides of the phonics versus whole language debate. Read aloud can be defined as an activity that “provides a context through which adults and children share a joint topic focus, which affords an opportunity for children to participate in increasingly sophisticated conversations that move beyond a perceptual focus to encompass conceptually oriented discussions” (Pentimonti & Justice, 2010, p. 242). Read alouds serve many instructional purposes.

An interactive read aloud is time for the teacher to read a book aloud and discuss it with the students. Fountas and Pinnell (2017) argue that interactive read alouds promote the joy of reading, expand vocabulary, engage students interests, and offer opportunities to think, talk, and write about texts. Wadsworth (2008) suggests that listening to a read aloud can motivate and encourage reluctant readers, develop comprehension, and act as an important model by the teacher of fluent reading. 

Strategies for Modeling and Providing Feedback

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The
environment in which read alouds take place should be risk-free, which removes the pressure of academic failure. This gives students the freedom to make connections, wonder, and question.

According to Harvey and Gourdis (2005), everything we read and learn is colored by our background knowledge. The read aloud gives teachers an opportunity to scaffold learning for those students who lack the background knowledge for deeper understanding of topics, before moving them into more complex subject matter. Read alouds and the follow up conversations can guide students in clarifying their thinking (Dorn & Soffos, 2005), and stimulate curiosity (Harvey, 1998).

Children should be given a number of opportunities to demonstrate their understanding under the guidance of a teacher (Allington, 2001). Reading is a transactional process. The transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1978) maintains the reader must transact with the text to make meaning. As Rosenblatt (1982) stated “reading is a transaction, a two-way process, involving a reader and a text at a particular time under particular circumstances” (p. 268). Interactive read alouds are one way to engage students in experiencing this transaction.

Read alouds enable children to hear rich language of texts they may not be able to read on their own. This exposes them to vocabulary, grammar, and information on how stories and written language work. Students can hear text that is typically beyond their
own ability to decode and new vocabulary words are added to their vocabulary knowledge (Smolkin & Donovan 2001). “Listening to an adult read aloud cultivates the essential enchanting engagement with books, stories, rhymes, and songs that every child has to experience before the formal teaching of reading can begin” (Fox, 2013, p 4).

Components of a Read Aloud

With the limited time in the classroom and the pressure of high stakes accountability, “it is essential that instructional time be spent wisely” (Land & Wright, 2007, p.669). “Teachers must maximize the effectiveness of their read aloud activities” (Lane and Wright, 2007, p.669). It is important to not just read the whole book while the students sit passively (Heath, 1982). Caldwell and Leslie (2005) suggest that teachers read to their students for fifteen minutes a day. They also recommend finding a stopping point while the students are still engaged to encourage motivation for the next read aloud. While teachers should encourage students to comment and engage during the read aloud, it should not be required. According to Lane and Wright (2007) “Read-aloud activities should be integrated throughout the curriculum. Teachers should match read-aloud texts to curriculum goals and consider how the book fits into the unit being studied” (p 670).

For an interactive read aloud, the teacher selects a text to be read to the whole class. The teacher reads the selection of choice to themselves first to get a feel for the story. Careful decisions are made prior to the read aloud with the teacher identifying
places to stop and encourage the students to respond to the whole group or to a partner (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). Pausing during the reading of the text allows the teacher to model fluency and also gives students opportunities to ask questions and make predictions (Fisher, Flood, Lap, & Fray, 2004). Texts are selected carefully, representing a variety of genres and formats. “The lessons are carefully planned to expand student thinking” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017, p. 38).

Fisher, Flood, Lap, and Fray (2004), studied the read aloud practices of “expert” (p. 9) teachers who students demonstrated consistent reading achievement. With the data collected, they identified seven components of an effective interactive read aloud:

1. The teacher chooses a text that is appropriate to students’ interests and matches their developmental, social, and emotional levels.

2. The teacher previews and practices the selection.

3. The teacher establishes a clear purpose for the read aloud.

4. The teacher models fluent oral reading during the read aloud.

5. The teacher reads with animation and expression.

6. The teacher stops periodically and thoughtfully questions students in order to focus on specifics of the text.

7. The teacher helps students make connections to their independent reading and writing.
Importance of Text Choice

According to McClure and Fullerton (2017), “selecting a text that will support and extend readers’ current reading abilities is pivotal for facilitating effective and engaging interactive read-alouds” (p 53). The use of different texts, such as, poetry, song lyrics, and readerstheatre leads to improvements in measures of fluency but also reading comprehension and overall reading achievement (Crosby, Rasinski, Padak, & Yildirim, 2014; Vasinda & McLeod, 2011; Young, Mohr, & Rasinski, 2015).

In their book, Teaching for Comprehension and Fluency, Fountas and Pinnell (2006), offer guidelines for selecting books for interactive read alouds. These guidelines include:

- Look for texts that your students will love (funny, exciting, connected to their experiences), are interested in, and are able to extend their thinking.
- Select texts that provide good foundations for mini-lessons in reading and writing.
- Consider the curriculum demands of your district; for example, link texts with social studies, science, or the core literature program.
- Select texts that are of high quality and represent a variety of cultures.
- Choose texts that will help students understand how other people respond to life’s challenges and expand knowledge and empathy. This may include book topics on significant issues in their age group (peer pressure, friendship, racism).
- Evaluate the text beforehand to be sure the concept can be understood.
- Choose texts from different genres (fiction, non-fiction, articles, poems).
- Select texts that will be appealing to both girls and boys.
- Select texts that build on one another in various ways (sequels, themes, authors, illustrators, topics, settings, structure).
- For younger learners especially, select texts that encourage the enjoyment of language—rhythm, rhyme, repetition.
Other Strategies to Support Fluency Development

Assisted reading can be accomplished with teacher support or technology support. When the teacher provides the support, he/she reads together orally with the student. According to Caldwell and Leslie (2005), “Assisted reading provides the struggling reader with a model of fluency. As the teacher sets the pace, students hear how reading should sound” (p.81). This strategy is non-threatening and a good choice when introducing students to a new selection. Fountas and Pinnell (2017), suggest the teacher reads the selection aloud and then has the student read the same text in unison. When the teacher notices the student is reading fluently, they can let their voice drop off. The teacher sets the pace in assisted reading and may also intersperse discussion about the text. “Talking about the selection keeps the students engaged and provides important modeling of reading as making meaning, not just saying words” (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005, p 82).

When technology is used to support fluent reading, it is called tape-or computer assisted reading. When peer support is provided, it is usually called partner or buddy reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2011). In this model, partners read orally together, however, there are variations on the uses of partner reading in the classroom. In some versions students read orally to each other, using alternating pages. In another, partners repeatedly read the same selection to each other several times (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005).

Paired reading. Paired reading was originally developed for use with parents reading with children (Topping 1987, 1989). Topping suggests the sessions be 15-30 minutes in length, depending on lesson structure. When teachers use paired reading, a more capable reader will be joined with a struggling reader. This can be a volunteer, an
aide, a tutor, an older student, or a peer in the classroom. The partners read in tandem. If a word is mispronounced, the stronger reader will say the word correctly and ask the student to repeat it. The reading then continues, and if the student wants to begin reading independently, he or she will signal this to the tutor (Leslie & Caldwell, 2005; Tierney & Readence, 2005).

_Echo reading._ Originally developed by Heckelman (1969), _echo reading is also known as the impress method._ Heckelman believed that the reading methods of that time were suppressing students by allowing them to make too many mistakes. When they were allowed to make a lot of mistakes they become deeply imprinted (Tierney & Readence, 2005). _Echo reading was believed to be a new learning strategy that could suppress the older methods of learning._

"Echo reading is a form of assisted reading in which the teacher models fluent oral reading of very short segments of text and then asks students to imitate or echo" (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005, p. 82). Echo reading allows students to practice small chunks of text so they can become fluent without the pressure of reading an entire passage. You can use this technique throughout an entire selection or just for certain parts. This strategy _can be conducted with individuals, small groups, or the entire class._ The teacher reads aloud the first line of the text, modeling fluent reading, and prompts students to read the same line. Teachers can also ask students questions about their reading before they have them echo (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). The teacher and the students continue reading in echo fashion for the entire passage. The amount of text read can be gradually increased, as well as the reading speed, to push students to identify words more quickly. It is important to have the student track the words being read with a finger or other pointing
prop. The student is reading the words in the text and not just copy the adult reader (Griffin & Appel, 2009).

Repeated reading. Nichols, Rupley, and Rasinski (2009), stated that “Repeated reading is the most recognized approach for developing fluency” (p.5). According to Morra and Tracey (2006), the use of this strategy improves understanding of phrasing while also increasing comprehension when given multiple exposures. Opportunities to frequently practice with the same text can enhance reading performance. Gorsuch and Taguchi (2010), state that “the ultimate goal of repeated reading is to lead learners into becoming independent readers, with the ability to achieve sustained silent reading, to comprehend a variety of texts of personal choice, and to effectively choose and use reading strategies according to the text being read” (p.28). Fountas and Pinnell (2001) maintain that, “the ultimate goal of the literacy program is to enable students to learn how satisfying reading and writing are and to establish lifelong reading and writing habits” (p.10).

The strategies previously mentioned can involve a form of repeated reading as students reread the same text or parts of it. However, repeated reading is more of a systematic instructional method for developing strength in automaticity and prosodic reading (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). The term repeated reading usually refers to a more structured format in which the student orally rereads a short selection until a certain level of accuracy, speed, or expression is attained, with the teacher providing guidance and feedback after each reading (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005). This usually involves keeping some type of chart that shows visible progress over time. As observed by Rasinski (2003), “Practicing short passages three to five times can help students develop greater
automaticity and expression in their reading, especially if that practice is given with formative feedback” (p.17). “Repeated reading consists of rereading a short but meaningful passage several times until an acceptable level of fluency is reached” (Samuels, 1997, p. 377). “Passages within students’ instructional level (read with 85%-95% word accuracy) that can be read by students in one to two minutes are preferable” (Therrien & Kubina, 2006, p. 158). Repeatedly reading the same passage builds fluency and enhances comprehension. The student is reading interesting material in context, and with each reading, the decoding barrier to comprehension is eventually overcome. Less attention is required for decoding.

The report from the National Reading Panel emphasized the importance of repeated oral reading practice for fluency instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Initially intended as a supplement in developmental reading programs (Samuels, 1997), it is now the most “universally used remedial reading technique to help poor readers” (p.381). Rereading is a strategy that can be modeled. It also provides students with the ability to be individual thinkers and learners when problem solving (Bradley, 2016). Fluent reading is promoted by frequent opportunities to practice with a familiar text. This activity increases exposure to words and is an effective means of increasing reading performance (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002).

According to Dahl (1974), when children are laboriously decoding words while reading, they are failing to comprehend. Therefore, in addition to being accurate, “speed is essential” (p.6). In the typical classroom students are reading different passages from their reading text each day and this prevents them from mastering the contents of the page, with mastery going beyond accurate reading. In Dahl’s study, thirty-two struggling
second grade readers were selected as subjects. One of the experimental factors consisted of repeated reading training. Passages were selected from a wide range of materials. The students reading rate and number of word recognition errors were recorded. One hundred words per minute was the criteria for moving on. The students appeared to produce significant improvement in reading for both speed and reading comprehension.

According to Dahl, repeated reading can be an “effective training method and students would profit from additional opportunities for practicing the same material” (p.19).

According to Dowhower (1989), the outcome of repeated reading is an increase in rate and accuracy and helps further understanding of phrasing of text. This may lead to increasing comprehension of texts as a result of multiple exposures. Dowhower indicated that passages should be short, ranging from 50-300 words. The students should have 85% accuracy rate on the initial reading with the optimal number of repetitions being between 3-5. Hawkins, Hale, & Long (2011), found that repeated readings, when used in intervention groups, promote strong fluency for struggling readers. This strategy helps students develop strong fluency skills with a better ability to make meaning of the content.

*Performance Reading Instruction Strategies*

Strategies that are considered performance in nature are those that contain an element of rehearsal that results in a polished performance of the text. In these strategies, the reader (or readers) engage with the text with the purpose of performing to an intended audience.

*Poetry and repeated reading.* While the value of the repeated readings has been well established, the mode of implementing it remains an issue (Rasinski, 2010, 2012).
"Repeated reading and performance of poetry are effective ways to improve reading fluency" (Faver, 2008, p.351). Stanley (2004) stated, "Reading and performing poetry provides numerous opportunities for children to practice phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension" (p.56). According to Rasinski, Rupley, Paige, & Nichols (2016), many fluency programs involve rote, oral repetitions of text in order to increase speed. The authors found that struggling readers lost interest in this approach and therefore, motivation was lost. Texts do exist for performance (and by extension, rehearsal) – these include speeches, songs, scripts, and poetry (Rasinski, 2010).

Performing for an audience can be more appealing and engaging. Students must have a visual representation of the text as they read and reread. When they have memorized the text at hand, the teacher can then begin to pull words and word features from the text to be studied in isolation (Rasinski et. al, 2016).

The common core standards require students to read complex text more closely. The foundational skills which are determined to be prerequisites to the standards in the core start in kindergarten supporting three areas, including phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading fluency (Rasinski, 2014). Students who perform low in reading comprehension testing have difficulties in one or more of these competencies (Valencia & Buly, 2004). According to Rasinski (2014), "Children’s poetry includes several features that make it ideally suited for teaching phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading fluency" (p. 31).

In younger children building stamina in reading is important. Poetry for children can be typically four to six lines. Children can read the text quickly and repetitively. With
this practice and support from a teacher, the poem can eventually be read fluently. This leads not only to accurate reading, but the ability to use prosody.

Poems are easier to remember and can build sight word recognition. Children are able to read them instantly and effortlessly. The characteristics of poetry also contribute themselves to phonemic awareness by playing with the sounds of language through rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and assonance (Rasinski, 2014). Poetry provides many opportunities for authentic oral practice.

Wilfong (2008) described a reading program that she called, “The Poetry Academy” (p.4). The teacher selects a poem with each student’s reading level in mind. A volunteer then works with the student. The poem is read aloud, read chorally, and then independently. This gradually releases the responsibility to the student. Next, the volunteer and the student engage in conversation about meaning. The poem is then repeatedly read to others at home and then back with the volunteer.

Readers theatre and repeated reading. Research suggests that readers theatre, in particular, is an effective means of enhancing students’ reading fluency and is a motivational reading activity (Martinez, Roser, & Strecker, 1998). Readers theatre is an educational activity that requires students to perform a text. It requires no props, no memorization, and no costumes. Rehearsing sets the purpose for repeated reading with a goal of entertaining with expressive oral reading (Vadasy & Sander, 2008). Because the students are not expected to memorize or completely act out the reading, the focus is on fluently conveying meaning through expression and intonation (Worthy & Prater, 2002). Readers theatre integrates reading while providing motivation to read and allows students
to improve oral reading skills, interpretative skills, and comprehension (Tierney & Readence, 2000).

In a recent study, which focused on struggling learners at an Urban Equity Plus School, it was noted by the researchers that during the six week study using selected readers theatre scripts, following a repeated reading model, that the students on an average increased their words correct per minute by 37.3 (Caldwell, Nichols, & Mraz, 2006). The largest gain on the posttest measure was an increase of 69 WCPM while the smallest increase was 21 WCPM (Words read correctly per minute).

"By selecting readers theatre as a vehicle for repeated readings, students are able to construct meaning from text while sustaining their motivation to do so" (Mraz, Nichols, Caldwell, Biesley, Sargent, & Rupley, 2013, p. 7). Millin & Rinehart (1999) found that when readers theatre is used as part of literacy instruction, students motivation to read increases. In their study, the accuracy, rate, and comprehension of 28 second grade participants increased as a result of readers theatre. The major focus of a readers theatre is on the text itself. There is an experience of shared reading between the reader and the audience. The reader interprets the text through fluent and expressive reading and the audience uses their imagination to complete the meaning making. This joint act combining "text, interpretation and performance makes readers theatre a valuable tool for literacy development" (Moran, 2006, p.318).

Readers theatre participants practice their lines and this practice requires repeated reading. Rereading will increase rate, accuracy, and comprehension. Using this strategy provides an authentic reason for struggling and reluctant readers to repeatedly read the same material (Worthy & Prater, 2002; Tyler & Chard, 2000). When the opportunity for
authentic engagement is present, the motivation to practice and prepare is heightened (Teale, Zolt, Yokota, Glasswell, & Gambrell, 2007). Increases in rate, accuracy, and comprehension carry over to new and unpracticed texts (Tyler & Chard, 2002).

“Speaking fluency and reading fluency become natural partners when students are involved in learning to tell a story to an audience” (Campbell & Hlusek, 2015, p.158). Using voice to help convey meaning to a listener provides practice in speaking and listening skills, which are required for reading fluency (Rasinski, 2012). Prescott (2003) reported that readerstheatre provides a genuine reason to reread text and practice fluency. According to Clark, Morrison, and Wilcox (2009), readerstheatre is an effective tool for fluency instruction and practice. “Readers’theatre is easily integrated into any reading program; is adaptable for all levels of readers; allows for individual partner, and group work; and gives students the opportunity for reading success” (p.383).

**Choral reading.** Choral reading involves a group of students reading in unison, each having a copy of the text (Gillet & Temple, 1986) while the teacher models “accurate pronunciation, appropriate reading rate, and prosody (Paige, 2008, p.435). When implementing this strategy the teacher is part of the process; however, “the goal is for students to function independently” (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005, p. 85) while corrective feedback is provided through explanation and modeling (Paige, 2008). Choral reading is a scaffolding technique in which a struggling or reluctant reader experiences reading but still has the support of the teacher (Coombs & Edwards, 2014).

There are many text options for teachers including trade books, short stories, poetry, historical speeches, patterned, and predictable books (Paige, 2008; Caldwell & Leslie, 2005; Tierney & Readence, 2005). One purpose of choral reading is to provide
students time to practice reading with expression, which is necessary for meaning (Tierney & Readence, 2005). Choral reading can also help build confidence in readers who may be reluctant as well as build a community among the small groups of readers (Kulich, 2009).

Conclusion

Reading is a strategic process. Fluent readers use a variety of strategies to understand text (Juel & Minden-Cupp, 2000) and teachers should provide young students with instruction and practice in using those strategies. According to Reutzel and Cooter (2011) educators must understand how children’s fluency develops, have the ability to assess, be able to determine which aspects of fluency require instruction and practice, and know proven ways to “provide fluency instruction and practice so that all children develop fluent reading behaviors” (p.197).
The Project

The purpose of this project was to design and present an inservice to educators in an elementary school setting about reading fluency. In this inservice, the facilitator will provide elementary school educators with the definition and importance of reading fluency, the role of fluency assessments, and research based instructional strategies to support fluency in the classroom setting.

Target Audience

The target audience for this research project is kindergarten through fifth grade educators. The audience was selected based on the researcher's at this level as a first grade classroom teacher, a fourth grade classroom teacher, a Reading Title I teacher, and a Literacy Coach. With the recent emphasis on fluency due to the implementation of the Formative Assessment for Teachers (FAST) and its focus on CBM-R scores, the goal is to provide guidance on the implementation of research based fluency instruction in the classrooms, with educators differentiating education for all students to increase fluency.

Organization of Project

Four professional development sessions were developed, providing information and resources on fluency, assessments, text selection, and the best practice methods of reading aloud and repeated reading to support fluency learning. In addition, the participants will engage in ongoing implementation and reflection on the strategies presented. See the Table for an overview of the sessions, timeline, and objectives.

Elementary educators will be given the opportunity to collaborate with their team members on developing lesson plans for read alouds, repeated readings using poetry, and readers theatre performances with their classrooms. The PowerPoints and exercises
provided will emphasize, teach, and reinforce the importance of supporting fluency development both directly and indirectly in the classroom.

Good teaching and high quality reading instruction are necessary in student reading success (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Taylor & Pearson, 2002). One way to support accomplished teaching is by engaging teachers in effective professional development, or PD (Kinnucan-Welsch, Rosemary, & Grogan, 2006). Well designed and implemented PD is an essential component of a comprehensive system of teaching and learning that not only supports the teachers, but the development, knowledge, and skills they need to thrive as readers.
### Fluency Professional Development Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1:</strong> Reading Fluency: What is fluency? How do you assess fluency? What are instructional strategies to support fluency?</td>
<td>PD will take place during the first week of September.</td>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> educators will understand what reading fluency is, how to assess it, and how to implement a read aloud in the classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2:</strong> Repeated Reading: Using Leveled Passages</td>
<td>PD will take place during the first week of October.</td>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> educators will learn the repeated reading strategy and how to implement repeated reading using leveled passages in the classroom.</td>
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<td><strong>Session 3:</strong> Repeated Reading: Using Poetry through Choral Reading, Echo Reading, and Paired Reading</td>
<td>PD will take place the first week of November.</td>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> educators will learn about using poetry as a way to implement repeated reading, as well as additional strategies to support fluency development.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 4:</strong> Repeated Reading: Using Reader’s Theatre</td>
<td>PD will take place the first week of December.</td>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong> educators will learn about using a readerstheatre as a way to implement repeated reading and support fluency in the classroom.</td>
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The professional development designed for this project will focus on fluency. The thinking behind the lessons will follow the six principles of high quality professional as developed by Kinnucan-Welsch, et al. (2006). After reviewing related research the authors recommended the following design principles:

**Design Principle 1.** PD should be connected to students learning goals, aligning with what students need to know and are able to do.

**Design Principle 2.** PD must involve active learning for teachers. It is important to have the knowledge base come alive and be real for teachers so they can apply the knowledge base to their practice in the classroom.

**Design Principle 3.** PD should be embedded in the context of the school and the classrooms. Teachers, literacy coaches, mentors, staff in the building should be involved in designing and implementing the PD.

**Design Principle 4.** PD should be continuous and ongoing to give teachers an adequate amount of time to engage in meaningful activities in their classroom.

**Design Principle 5.** PD should encourage ongoing inquiry and focused on teacher learning, student learning, and what makes good instruction. Teachers should be encouraged to become more reflective in their instruction.

**Design Principle 6.** PD should be integrated with a comprehensive change process with support from the school and the district. Coherence is important in all aspects of the system.

**Implementation**

The four sessions in this design will each have a specific focus centered around fluency. The sessions will start with data and research to support what defines fluency,
how to assess fluency, and why it is important. The sessions will have instructional strategies presented, such as, read alouds, repeated reading, and performance based focuses, including poetry and reader’s theatre. Each session will have an assignment and extensive collaboration with other educators.

**Session 1 - What is Fluency?**

First week in September

**Materials:** *We’re All Wonders*, by R.J. Palacio, small quote cards, vanilla, strawberry partners sheet, PowerPoint, sample read alouds packet, read aloud assignment sheet,

What is Fluency? Powerpoint, interactive read aloud planning sheets

**Procedure**

The first session will begin the lesson with the participants given question prompts to direct their attention to the whiteboard at the front of the room (on the board the word *wonder* is written). The participants will be asked for their ideas on what they think the word *wonder* means (record their thoughts on the whiteboard). The presenter then states that the teachers are going to hear the word *wonder* today in the read aloud and to be thinking about what it is the word means to them.

Creating partnerships

The presenter will then hand out the vanilla, strawberry, twist partner sheet (see Appendix A) and give directions. The staff will find a partner who is not on their grade level team. They will find a vanilla partner, a strawberry partner, and a twist partner. These partners will meet throughout the session to share ideas and reflect.

The presenter will check to see that everyone has a partner and begin by asking them to pair of up with their vanilla partner and hand out the small quote sheets (see
Appendix B) to each participant and direct their attention to the quote. (“Look with kindness and you will always find wonder” by RJ Palacio). Ask partners to discuss what they think the quote means. Does the quote change their idea on what the word wonder might mean? Afterwards, the participants will come back to a whole group to share to their thinking in regards to the meaning of the quote and any changes or thoughts on what the word might mean.

Next, the presenter will show the book cover, reading the title and author aloud, asking for predictions on what the story may be about. Some pre-reading guiding questions are: How would you describe the character on the cover of this story? What do you notice? Then the presenter will give the staff a specific focus. “As I am reading today I would like you to pay special attention to the character in the story by listening to his words and watching the pictures. We will see if we can make some connections to our own lives”.

The story is read aloud to the participants, modeling fluent, expressive reading, and stopping after reading page 11. The participants will then find their strawberry partners and be given time to have a discussion. Guiding questions: reflect on how the character is feeling at this point in the story when others are laughing, staring, pointing, and saying things behind his back. Finally, can they relate to this character themselves or have had any similar experiences.

After the discussion, continue reading, stopping on page 13, (And then we…. ) Ask the participants to make predictions on what is going to happen next. After discussion, finish reading the remainder of the story and ask the participants to find their twist partner to discuss the remainder of the story. How did the character handle the
bullying? We know he didn’t really blast off into space, what do you think they author was trying to tell her readers? Has your definition of wonder changed? How do you think the author is using the word wonder in the story? Bring the staff together to share and discuss with the closing question: what was the overall theme of the story (what was the author’s message)?

Next, display the definitions of the word wonder (see Appendix C) either by handing out the definition sheet or displaying on chart paper. Read the different definitions and then ask for examples on which definition they think could relate or connect to the way the author used the word in the read aloud.

**Wrap-up**

Lastly, inform that participants that this lesson was an example of a read aloud, using different strategies to focus on vocabulary, making connections, and overall theme while modeling fluent, expressive, accurate reading. Ask the participants to brainstorm reasons it would be beneficial to learning by using a read aloud in their classroom.

Begin the PowerPoint presentation titled, *Reading Fluency* (see Appendix D). There are speaker notes for most of the slides. There are also additional handouts including:

- A read aloud assignment sheet (see Appendix E)
- A read aloud by grade levels sheet (see Appendix F)
- A read aloud planning framework (see Appendix G)
Session 2- Repeated Reading – Using Leveled Passages

First week in October

Sharing of Session 1 Application: Implementing a read aloud

Materials: a deck of playing cards, colored popsicle sticks

Creating Partnerships

Session two of professional development will begin by the participants collaborating with each other using three rounds of small groups. The purpose of the sharing will be to talk to others about their read aloud lessons and share their reflections. The presenter will be facilitating the different small group shares by circulating the room. For round one, participants will be grouped according to matching playing cards. For round two, teachers will be grouped using colored popsicle sticks. For round three, teachers will meet with their own grade level teams (slide two of Appendix J). Each group should have 10 minutes to share. The participants will come back to whole group to share (slide three of Appendixes J).

Using Leveled Passages to Support Fluency

Materials: leveled passages, timers, multiple sets of markers (3 different colors), fluency growth chart, powerpoint(Read Aloud Share/Repeated Reading).m

Procedure

First ask for a volunteer to help model the strategy for the whole group. The observers will be encouraged to take notes during the sample lesson and be given a copy of the passage to better follow along (see Appendix H). The volunteer participant will cold read the passage provided. The presenter will time the participant for one minute and stop to clarify errors when/if they are made either while during the read or after the read.
The presenter will give feedback on the reading and share their score for correct words per minute, by charting on a fluency graph (see Appendix I). This procedure will continue for two more times. Each reading the presenter will offer feedback and the participant will chart their score. The goal is to read more accurately at a faster pace.

Then, ask those who were observing the lesson for feedback. What did they notice? What are the concerns? Advantages? What should teachers be careful of when providing this instruction in the classroom? Are there limitations or concerns?

After whole group sharing, present the session two PowerPoint slide number four, titled, *Repeated Reading* (see Appendix J). Proceed through the powerpoint presentation until you reach the *Let's Practice* slide (number 10).

The participants will now have the opportunity to practice repeated reading. They will partner with their grade level or with the grade level above or right below. Each participant will have a chance to play the teacher role and the student role. Participants will be asked to come to the front of the room to gather their materials and then find a place in the room to work. For the purpose of this lesson, the teachers will be given passages that relate to the literacy curriculum used at that particular school. If in event, *this were a real classroom*, the teachers would want students to be working on their instructional level. The teachers will need to pick up one timer, three different colored markers, two fluency growth charts (see appendixes i), and two different passages. The groups will have 20-30 minutes to complete. The presenter will bring them back to whole group for a short share/reflection on the activity.

The next assignment will be to set up a time to meet with the literacy coach in the building. The literacy coach will help identify three students in the classrooms to practice
repeated reading with and assist in finding leveled passages that are on the instructional level of those students. One objective of this assignment is to encourage connections with the literacy coach as a helpful and knowledgeable resource in the building. Repeated reading will be implemented with three students minimum before the next session and participants should bring in the leveled passages used, the fluency growth charts, and a short reflection for each experience.

There is an additional handout available for teachers to pick up on the way out. It is from www.hdc.isuhsc.edu/tiers/Resources.php and titled, Academic Skills Improvement: Reading Fluency (see appendixes. This handout has the procedure they learned to implement repeated reading, along with a coaching card, and a data growth chart.

**Session Three – Repeating Reading Using Poetry**

**First week in November**

**Materials:** You Were Born a Wonder poem, poetry handout 1, poetry handout 2, choral reading handout, echo reading handout, assisted reading handout, INSERT strategy sheet, journal article, session 3 assignment sheet

**Procedure**

Begin the lesson by handing out the poem titled, You Were Born a Wonder (see Appendix L). Before reading ask the participants to reflect so far as to what fluent reading is (from session one). Then the presenter will ask the participants to listen only, follow along with their eyes, and track print with their fingers, as the poem is read aloud. The presenter will then read the poem, modeling fluent reading with expression. After the reading ask for teacher feedback (how did it sound?, did you notice my voice? What did
you notice about when I said the word, wonder(in reference to the exclamation point)? .

The presenter will then read the poem using no expression (robot reading) or fluent reading characteristics. After this reading, ask for feedback again. Lastly, the participants will compare and contrast the two different readings using a venn diagram written on the whiteboard. Before moving on, play a video for the teachers titled, “Don’t Read Like a Robot” -Blazer Fresh, Go Noodle.

(www.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjtPMiumixA&t=ls) This video is also a resource for the participants to use in the classroom.

Next, the presenter and the participants will read the poem together, with the presenter modeling fluent reading behaviors. The poem read in unison. This is modeling choral reading. For the second read, the presenter will ask the participants to echo his/her voice after each line of the poem. The presenter will model fluent reading behaviors. Lastly, the participants will engage in partner reading. Each one will be asked to find a partner and take turns reading the poem to each other, offering feedback when finished.

The group will come back and reflect on that experience. Did the poem get easier with each reading? Were they able to become more fluent and use proper expression? Did they feel using models was beneficial? Would the students in their classroom think this activity is fun and engaging?

The focus of session three will be using repeated reading in poetry and learning other fluency strategies for classroom use, such as, choral reading, echo reading, and paired reading. (all of which they experienced in the opening lesson).

The presenter will divide the participants into five separate groups. Each group will be provided with a portion of a literature review written by the presenter. The topics
will cover repeated reading using poetry, choral reading, echo reading, and paired reading, all of which are strategies to support fluency development. Each group will have time to read and review the material. They can choose their own procedure. Groups can share the read, read silently, or however they choose to collaborate. They will be asked to find the most important information to share with the rest of the groups and become experts in their area. Each group will be given 20-30 minutes to plan a lesson for the whole group.

- Repeated Reading and Poetry Part 1 (see appendixes m)
- Repeated Reading and Poetry Part 2 (see appendixes n)
- Choral Reading (see appendixes o)
- Echo Reading (see appendixes p)
- Assisted Reading/Paired Reading (see appendixes q)

After the allotted time, the presenter will bring all groups back together for sharing/teaching/learning time. When all groups have shared their “expertise” in each area, there will be time for any questions or comments.

Next, the presenter will share a list of resources for poetry. The school librarian, if available, will be invited to share resources that are available in the school library. The presenter will bring in materials from their previous classroom instruction, including using poetry in read to self and read to someone and putting together poetry binders for each child in the classroom. Participants will share any experiences or resources they have used in their own classroom.

Presenter will end by sharing web resources by displaying from the laptop to the screen in the front of the room. These websites are:
1. https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems

Next, watch two different examples of Poetry Cafe’s on Youtube. These include:

1. Denver Public Schools
These Kinders Take Their Coffee with Poetry-Stedman Elementary School
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOU_oxMcm0E

2. 2011 Poetry Cafe
Third Grade Poetry
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0C1hoTq_YyM

Lastly, distribute the assignment sheet (see Appendixes R) and explain what the task is for the next session. The assignment will be two part, (1) participants will choose a poem to implement in their classroom before the next session and reflect (2) participants will use the Insert Strategy (see appendixes s) while reading a journal article from the Reading Teacher titled, Implementing Readers Theatre as an Approach to Classroom Fluency Instruction,(see appendixes t) in order to prepare for the next session. The rationale behind the journal article is two-fold. One is to preview information about reader’s theatre but to also expose the staff to reading professional journal articles with classroom action research.

End the session by choral reading the poem, “You Were Born a Wonder” (see appendixes I).
Session Four - Reader’s theatre in the Classroom

First week of December

Materials: song lyrics for Wonder by Natalie Merchant, link to the song on youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zpYFAzhAZY), Reader’s theatre Script for Scene I of the book, Wonder by RJ Palcio, found at, (http://www.ccakids.com/assets/cca-wonder-readers-theater.pdf), four Auggie pictures to put under chairs, chrome books (staff can bring) also lap top cart from the school library

Procedure

Before the session begins, the presenter will tape a picture of Auggie (see Appendix U), the main character of the book Wonder, underneath four chairs. The presenter will use this later on in the lesson to assign parts to a reader’s theatre. Participants will pick up a copy of the song lyrics for Wonder (see appendixes v) as they enter the room. When everyone is seated, the presenter will start the session by reading the song lyrics aloud, asking teachers to follow along. After each section the presenter will ask for ideas on what the lyrics mean, asking what the author of the song talking about. The presenter will share that the differences in opinions of the staff will be based on the differences in backgrounds and experiences and the same goes for the students in the classrooms.

After the read aloud, the participants will echo read the song. The song is labeled with M (men) and W (women) and A(all). The presenter will read aloud, modeling fluency, and have the assigned groups echo. After the entire song is read, listen to the song on youtube and encourage participate to sing along if they would like. This
introduction gives a brief review of the read aloud and echo reading strategy learned in previous sessions.

Next, the participants get out their poetry lessons and reflections. They will be pairing up with whomever they choose for this activity. Each group will have ten minutes to share with the presenter giving a signal to switch. They will then find someone different to share with. After sharing, the presenter will bring the teachers back to whole group for a share.

The participants will then get the assigned journal article out. This will be a whole group sharing out of notes they took during the read (see Appendix W, slide 1). As the presenter is facilitating the share, he/she will aim to find examples from each of the four insert strategy categories. The presenter will then share the main points from the article and other research on the powerpoint (see Appendix W, slide 2-5)

The remainder of the professional development will be a teacher work session (see Appendix W, slide 6). Laptops will be available for use. The goal of the work session is to research different resources to find a reader’s theatre script to use in the classroom before the end of the year. There are sources found in the article as well. Each participant will be required to schedule a check in with the school literacy coach before the performance and to also to ask any follow up questions about fluency. The presenter will hand out session four assignment sheet (see appendixes x) and be a support for the remainder of the time. Conclusion

This professional development project was developed based upon the question: What is reading fluency and how might elementary teachers support the development of fluency in the classroom? The professional development workshops address these
questions by providing resources, learning experiences, and ready-to-use strategies

Elementary participants can use in the classroom. Elementary educators can explore the
use of fluency strategies by engaging themselves in learning, reflecting on their practices,
and collaborating with other professionals. By participating in workshops where guidance
and support are present, participants will have the materials and resources needed to start
their journey of teaching fluency, along with expanding their thinking about what
effective instruction can look like through the use of different strategies.

This professional development program is simply a tentative guide as a facilitator
of learning is continuously responsive to the learners’ needs, in the same way educators
are expected to differentiate their instruction for their students. It can be difficult to plan
sessions knowing that the participants who will engage in this professional development
are the most significant variables in how the materials will be used and explored. The
facilitator must take into account educators’ backgrounds and knowledge, comfort level
with teaching literacy, and the desire of the educators’ to implement their new learning
into their practice.

One main challenge the facilitator may face is gaining trust and buy-in from
educators. Elementary educators are under tremendous amounts of pressure to develop
lessons that align with the high demands of the Common Core standards as well as the
pressure of assessment scores, such as the scores from the FAST. Taking risks and
deviating from the educators “norm” can be uncomfortable. However, this professional
development’s intent is to enhance the core content, give educators more options, and
help students become more effective learners by educators responding to their specific
needs.
Overall, the development of this project has helped me as a teacher-researcher, teacher, and literacy coach as I support elementary educators in the future. Creating materials that elementary schools can use to empower their staff to use theory in their teaching, offer new ideas, and continued support along the way, encourages growth as professionals and leaders.
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Appendix A

*Vanilla, Strawberry, Twist Partner Sheet*
Vanilla, Strawberry, Twist Partners

- Find someone to be your vanilla partner and sign each other's paper _________________.

- Find someone to be your strawberry partner and sign each other's paper _________________.

- Find someone to be your twist partner and sign each other's paper _________________.

APPENDIX B

Quote by RJ Palacio
“Look with kindness and you will always find wonder”. By RJ Palacio

APPENDIX C

Definition sheet for "wonder"
Definition of the word *wonder*

**Noun**
1. a feeling of surprise mingled with admiration, caused by something beautiful, unexpected, unfamiliar, or inexplicable.
   "he had stood in front of it, observing the intricacy of the ironwork with the wonder of a child"
   
   *synonyms*  
   awe, admiration, wonderment, fascination

**Verb**
1. desire or be curious to know something.
   "how many times have I written that, I wonder?"
   
   *synonyms*  
   ponder, think about, meditate on, reflect on, muse on, puzzle over, speculate about, conjecture; be curious about
   "I wondered what was on her mind."

   2. feel admiration and amazement; marvel.
   "people stood by and *wondered at* such bravery"
   
   *synonyms* marvel, be amazed, be astonished, stand in awe, be *dumbfounded*, be flabbergasted

   "people wondered at such bravery"

(https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wonder)
APPENDIX D

*PowerPoint for Session One: Reading Fluency*
"What is fluency?"
"How do you assess fluency?"
"Instructional strategies to support fluency"

**WHAT IS FLUENCY?**

**Turn and Talk:** What does fluency mean to you? How would you define fluent reading?

The National Reading Panel (2000) has defined fluency as, "the ability to read with accuracy, speed, and proper expression."

Rasinski (2004), "ability to develop control over surface-level text processing so that he or she can focus on understanding the deeper levels of meaning embedded in the text."
FLUENT READERS CAN...

- Recognize words automatically.
- Read aloud effortlessly and with expression.
- Focus less on decoding and more on comprehension.

According to the definition of fluency, there are 3 important dimensions that build a bridge to comprehension.

DYSFLUENT READERS:

✓ words are read correctly
✓ Automatic word recognition
✓ Skills to attack unknown words

✓ make frequent mistakes
✓ Have poor word recognition skills
✓ Omit words, substitute words, and struggle with unfamiliar words
RATE (SPEED): READING AT AN APPROPRIATE RATE OF SPEED FOR AGE AND GRADE LEVEL
TYPICALLY MEASURED IN WORDS PER MINUTE

PROSODY (EXPRESSION)

Dowhower (1991) argued that while accuracy and rate have been addressed as main indicators of reading fluency, prosody has been largely uninvestigated.

Prosody, the defining feature of expressive reading, comprises all of the variables of timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that speakers use to help convey aspects of meaning and to make their speech lively. One of the challenges of oral reading is adding back the prosodic cues that are largely absent from written language.

Turn and Talk: When you measure your students’ oral reading fluency, is prosody involved?
Curriculum based measurements of oral reading fluency (CBM-R) or probes, are one of the most widely used and researched assessments on fluency. (Graney & Shim, 2005)

FLUENCY ASSESSMENTS CBM-R

- Initially designed for use in intervention programs for students in special education.
- Following NCLB Act (2001), the focus was placed on large-scale testing and accountability.
- Commonly created as measures of students' abilities to read with speed and accuracy and have emerged as a common tool for assessing developing literacy skills (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1997).
- Standardized; quantify student performance during a specified, brief period of time.
HOW TO ADMINISTER A CBM-R

*Given individually. Teacher listens while the student reads aloud passages appropriate for their grade level.
*Score is based upon how many words were read correctly per minute. (WCPM)
*Scores are used to monitor students’ progress and identify those who may need more intense instruction.

Turn and Talk

What are your experiences with CBM-R's (both past and present)
Discuss limitations this data provides to inform your instruction. How do you use this data to plan instructional strategies?
What other assessments have used

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT FLUENCY

Looking Ahead: repeated reading using text, poetry, and readers theater, assisted paired/echo reading.
TODAY'S STRATEGY: READ ALOUDS
READ ALOUDS

Reading aloud should occur daily in the classroom, with a teacher demonstrating what oral reading should sound like (Fife & Egawa, 1998).

Wadsworth (2008) suggests that when students listen to read alouds, it can be motivating and encouraging to reluctant readers, help to develop comprehension, and act as an important model.

“The major predictor of success in reading and in academic study is children’s experience in being read to” (Weaver, 2002, p.232-233).

Interactive read alouds promote the joy of reading, expand vocabulary, engage students interests, and offer opportunities to think, talk, and write about texts. (Fountas and Pinnell, 2017).

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF READ ALOUDS

Exposure to rich language of texts that students may not be able to read on their own.

Vocabulary, grammar, and information on how stories and written language work.

Maximize the Effectiveness of Read Aloud Activities

• 15 minutes per day
• Find good stopping points to think aloud, ask questions, and make predictions
• Have a discussion about the book. Comments are not required from students but encouraged
• Model fluency using accuracy, speed, and expression.
• Integrate throughout the curriculum (match to goals and consider how the book fits into the unit being studied)
GUIDELINES FOR TEXT SELECTION

* Look for texts your students will love! (funny, exciting, connected to their own experiences)

* Select texts that students are interested in and will be able to extend their thinking.

* Select high quality literature that represents a variety of cultures.

* Think about choosing texts that will help students understand how other people respond to life's challenges and expand knowledge and empathy.

* Select texts that build on one another in various ways (sequels, themes, authors, topics, structure)

WHERE CAN I FIND A GOOD READ ALOUD TEXT?

Your local and school libraries, AEA, family and friends!

Online recommendations: teacher blogs, author's websites, google search engine:

http://www.readloudamerica.org/booklist.htm
https://www.goodreads.com/list.tag.read-aloud
http://www.release-on-reading.com/index.htm

Others? All of your colleagues can be a great resource!
I HAVE MY TEXT, NOW WHAT?

1. Read the book before you read it aloud to your students.

2. Use post it notes to mark the pages with questions or things to show students.

3. Think about what the read aloud will be focused on, choose the vocabulary, focus on mood, point of view, cause and effect, etc.

4. Begin to design your lesson using before, during, and after strategies.

BEFORE

- Identify title, author, illustrator, and purpose for reading
- Take a sneak peek (picture walk)
- Activate background knowledge and schema
- Make predictions
DURING

- Question and response
- Discussion and sharing
- Make connections
- Emphasize vocabulary
- Respond to take
- Make it interactive (turn and talk, act it out, thumbs up/down, stop and jot)

AFTER

- Retelling/summarizing/story elements
- Discuss characters traits
- Inferences
- Check predictions
- Discuss vocabulary and place words on word wall
- Discuss theme
- Respond on a graphic organizer or chart paper
READ ALOUD VIDEO

Balanced Literacy: Interactive Read-Aloud
Mr. Duck Means Business
ErinWeber Teaching
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBsdN7grr7E

TURN AND TALK

APPLICATION

Using your resources and also thinking about standards and curriculum, choose two read aloud texts that you can implement in your classroom and develop a lesson for one of them.

- Assignment sheet
- Read Alouds by grade level sheet

- Extra (if you want) There is a video on YouTube that you may find helpful.
  - Rebecca Bellingham TEDxYouth@Beacon Street
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBuT2wYtpM
APPENDIX E

Session One: Read Aloud Assignment
Session One: What is Fluency?
Read Aloud Assignment

Your assignment for next time is to set out to find two read aloud texts for the students in your classroom. While you can always think beyond books by using essays, speeches, newspaper articles, and so forth, this particular assignment involves choosing one picture book and one chapter book. Step one is to brainstorm how you could implement these two texts into your classroom instruction. Think about your current classroom, the students, and what you are teaching. You may pick a text that you know students would not pick up on their own or you want to expose them to new genres. You may want to choose a text based upon upcoming standards or a forthcoming unit of study. Using the template provided (see Appendix G), or one that you like better, choose one book and develop a lesson using the template provided (or one that you find more suitable). Implement the lesson with students and then take a few minutes to reflect on the lesson using the questions provided.

Reflection:
How did you feel about the lesson? What worked well? What didn't? What would you do differently next time? **Next Session:** First Week in October. Bring the book, lesson developed, and lesson reflection to share.
APPENDIX F

Sample Read Alouds for Kindergarten-Fifth Grade
Sample Read Alouds for Grades K-5

Kindergarten:
*My Father's Dragon* by Ruth Stiles Gannett
Elmer Elevator learns of a captive dragon on Wild Island. The dragon has been forced by the jungle residents to serve as their shuttle across a wide river. Anyone who rescues the dragon from its might be entitled to a free ride. Elmer stows away aboard a ship to the island, where he meets hungry tigers, an irate gorilla, cranky crocodiles, and other moody creatures.

*How Do Dinosaurs Go To School?* By: Jane Yolen
A dinosaur might not do so well as student in a school. This book is a fun way to talk about behavior and expectations at school.

First Grade
*Gooseberry Park* by Cynthia Rylant
Stumpy, a squirrel, gives birth to triplets shortly before her nest in *Gooseberry Park* is destroyed by an ice storm. Thanks to the her animal friends, Stumpy's babies are rescued. The problem? Having left the newborns under the care of her animal friends, Stumpy has wandered off for help and cannot be found. They nurture the baby squirrels and devise a scheme to reunite Stumpy with her brood.

*Stellaluna* by Janell Canon
A lost baby fruit bat was accidentally dropped by her mother, and falls into a nest of bird fledglings, where she is graciously accepted as one of the family — as long as she acts like a bird and doesn't confuse her adoptive siblings. The little bat does her best, but she can't help wanting to fly at night or hang upside down to sleep.

Second Grade
*Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen
A young girl and her father take a nighttime winter walk near the farm where they live to look for owls. As they go, hidden in ink-blue shadows, a fox, a raccoon, a field mouse and a deer watch them pass. The tension builds as the father imitates the great horned owl's call once without answer.

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane By Kate DiCamillo
Once there lived a china rabbit named Edward Tulane. The rabbit was owned by a girl named Abilene, who adored him completely. And then, one day, he was lost.

Third Grade

The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

Inspired by the true story of a captive gorilla known as Ivan, this story is told from the point-of-view of Ivan himself. Having spent 27 years behind the glass walls in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he might change his mind.

The Invisible Boy by Patrice Barton

Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him a new kid comes to class. When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine.

Fourth Grade

Wonder by R.J. Palacio

August "Auggie" Pullman is a 10-year-old living in Manhattan. He has a rare medical facial deformity. Due to numerous surgeries, Auggie had been homeschooled by his mother, but his parents decide to enroll him in Beecher Prep, a private school, for the start of middle school in the fall.
The Sweetest Fig by Chris Van Allsburg

Monsieur Bibot, the cold-hearted dentist, was given two ordinary-looking figs as payment for extracting a tooth from an old woman’s mouth. Monsieur Bibot refused to believe such nonsense and proceeded to eat one of the figs for a bedtime snack. The next morning Monsieur Bibot realized it indeed had the power to make his dreams come true.

Fifth Grade

I Am the Ice Worm by Maryann Easley

Fourteen-year-old Allison Atwood is traveling to visit her mother in Alaska when her plane crashes near the Arctic Circle. The pilot is killed and Allison is alone in a wilderness of ice and snow. Thankfully she’s rescued and her life changes.

Pink and Say By Patricia Polacco

Sheldon was wounded in a fierce battle and left for dead in a pasture somewhere in Georgia when Pinkus found him. Pinkus’ skin was the color of polished mahogany, and he was flying Union colors like the wounded boy, and he picked him up out of the field and brought him to where the black soldier’s mother, Moe Moe Bay, lived. The two boys were putting her in danger, two Union soldiers in Confederate territory! They had to get back to their outfits but were scared. The boys were faced with a hard decision, and then the Confederate troops rode in.
APPENDIX G

Read Aloud Planning Sheets
Planning an Interactive Read Aloud

1. Pick your book
2. Read the book several times
3. Determine a couple of focus skills
4. Choose Vocabulary Words
5. Plan before, during, and after reading activities

POSSIBLE FOCUS SKILLS

- Common COre Focus
  - Ask/answer questions about key details
  - Retelling
  - Describing (characters, setting, major events)
- Specific reading strategies
  - Connections
  - Predicting
  - Visualizing
  - Inferring
- Using illustrations to describe
- Compare and COntrast

VOCABULARY

1. Think about common, important, and functional words
2. Teach before reading
3. Explain the meaning using context clues, pictures
4. Interact with the words
5. Model

(Adapted from (www.ourelementarylives.com))
INTERACTIVE READ ALoud PLANNER

Book: ______________________________

Focus Skills:
• ________________________________
• ________________________________
• ________________________________

Vocabulary Words:
• __________________ pg.____
• __________________ pg.____
• __________________ pg.____
• __________________ pg.____
• __________________ pg.____

Activities
Before Reading
• __________________________________
• __________________________________
• __________________________________

During Reading
• __________________________________
• __________________________________
• __________________________________
After Reading

- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________

(adapted from www.elementarylives.com)
APPENDIX H

*Example Passage for Repeated Reading*
Mrs. Rachel Lynde lived just where the Avonlea main road dipped down into a little hollow, fringed with alders and ladies’ eardrops and traversed by a brook that had its source away back in the woods of the old Cuthbert place; it was reputed to be an intricate, headlong brook in its earlier course through those woods, with dark secrets of pool and cascade; but by the time it reached Lynde’s Hollow it was a quiet, well-conducted little stream, for not even a brook could run past Mrs. Rachel Lynde’s door without due regard for decency and decorum; it probably was conscious that Mrs. Rachel was sitting at her window, keeping a sharp eye on everything that passed, from brooks and children up, and that if she noticed anything odd or out of place she would never rest until she had ferreted out the whys and wherefores thereof.

There are plenty of people in Avonlea and out of it, who can attend closely to their neighbor’s business by dint of neglecting their own; but Mrs. Rachel Lynde was one of those capable creatures who can manage their own concerns and those of other folks into the bargain. She was a notable housewife; her work was always done and well done; she “ran” the Sewing Circle, helped run the Sunday-school, and was the strongest prop of the Church Aid Society and Foreign Missions Auxiliary. Yet with all this Mrs. Rachel found abundant time to sit for hours at her kitchen window, knitting “cotton warp” quilts—she had knitted sixteen of them, as Avonlea housekeepers were wont to tell in awed voices—and keeping a sharp eye on the main road that crossed the hollow and wound up the steep red hill beyond. Since Avonlea occupied a little triangular peninsula jutting out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence with water on two sides of it, anybody who went out of it or into it had to pass over that hill road and so run the unseen gauntlet of Mrs. Rachel’s all-seeing eye.

(Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery)
(http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/45?msg=welcome_stranger#link2HCH0001)
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APPENDIX I

Reading Fluency Graph
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APPENDIX J

Session Two: Repeated Reading PowerPoint
READ ALOUD SHARE

Group Sharing

You will meet with three different groups of teachers today to share your book choice, lesson, and reflection.

Round 1: When you came in today you were handed a playing card. Find the people in the room who match and begin sharing! You will have 10 minutes.

Round 2: Using your colored popsicle stick, find your matches and start sharing! You will have 10 minutes.

Round 3: Share with your grade level team. You will have 10 minutes.
Whole Group Share

Any aha moments? Anything stand out that you would like to share with the whole group? Can be about your own lesson or one that someone shared.

Repeated Reading in the Classroom

- The term repeated reading usually refers to a more structured format in which the student orally rereads a short selection until a certain level of accuracy, speed, or expression is attained, with the teacher providing guidance and feedback after each reading (Leslie & Caldwell, 2005).

- This usually involves keeping some type of chart that shows visible progress over time.
WHY USE REPEATED READING

- The report from the National Reading Panel emphasized the importance of repeated oral reading practice for fluency instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).
- Initially intended as a supplement in developmental reading programs, According to Samuels (1997) it is now the most “universally used remedial reading to help poor readers” (p. 381).

SUPPORTED BY RESEARCH

- As observed by Rasinski (2003) “Practicing short passages three to five times can help students develop greater automaticity and expression in their reading, especially if that practice is given with formative feedback” (p. 17).
- Hawkins, Hale, & Long (2011), found that repeated readings, when used in intervention groups, promote strong fluency for struggling readers. This strategy helps students develop strong fluency skills with a better ability to make meaning of the content.
More on What the Research Says...

- Nichols, Rupley, and Rasinski (2009), stated that “Repeated reading is the most recognized approach for developing fluency” (p.5).
- According to Morra and Tracey (2006), the use of this strategy improves understanding of phrasing while also increasing comprehension when given multiple exposures. Opportunities to frequently practice with the same text can enhance reading performance.

What Do the Students Read?

- Repeated reading consists of rereading a short but meaningful passage several times until an acceptable level of fluency is reached (Samuels, 1997)
- Therrien & Kubina (2006) suggest using passages within students’ instructional level (read with 85%-95% word accuracy) that can be read by students in one to two minutes
- Passages should be short, ranging from 50-300 words. The students should have 85% accuracy rate on the initial reading with the optimal number of repetitions being between 3-5. (Dowhower, 1989)
WHAT REPEATED READING LOOKS LIKE IN ACTION

Video 34: Repeated Reading
Institute of Education Sciences
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8q2mvF_6K6M

LET'S PRACTICE

You will partner with a teacher from your grade level or the grade above. You and your partner will receive two reading passages at your grade level. You will both be given the opportunity to be the teacher and the student.

You will need: 2 different grade level passages (2 copies of each), one timer, three different colored markers, and 2 fluency charts.
What do I do for next time?

The literacy coach will be contacting you to set up a 15 minute meeting. At this time he/she will help you choose leveled passages to practice this strategy in the classroom and help identify three struggling readers to work with.

You will practice implementing repeated reading with three separate students minimum before our next session. Bring back the leveled passage used, the student's growth fluency chart, and a short reflection on the lesson.
APPENDIX K

Session Two Assignment Sheet
Session Two Assignment Sheet

What do I do for next time?

The literacy coach will be contacting you to set up a 15 minute meeting. At this time he/she will help you choose leveled passages to practice this strategy in the classroom and help identify three struggling readers to work with.

You will practice implementing repeated reading with three separate students minimum before our next session. Bring back the leveled passage used, the student’s growth fluency chart, and a short reflection on the lesson.
APPENDIX L

Poem: You Were Born a Wonder
You Were Born a Wonder

When it seems like you are all alone,
with no one to call a friend,
And life has gotten really tough,
With no willing hands to lend.
Remember you are as strong as thunder.
You, my friend, were born a wonder!

When all the rain comes pouring down,
And it seems the sun won’t shine,
You want to quit and run away,
you can no longer pretend you are fine.
Remember you are as strong as thunder.
You, my friend, were born a wonder!

A wonder of hope,
A wonder of love,
A wonder who was
sent from up above.

(By Stacey Bakken)
APPENDIX M

Poetry Part I (Bakken, 2017)
While the value of the repeated readings has been well established, the mode of implementing it remains an issue (Rasinski, 2010, 2012). “Repeated reading and performance of poetry are effective ways to improve reading fluency” (Faver, 2008, p.351). Stanley (2004) stated, “Reading and performing poetry provides numerous opportunities for children to practice phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension” (p.56). According to Rasinski, Rupley, Paige, & Nichols (2016), many fluency programs involve rote, oral repetitions of text in order to increase speed. The authors found that struggling readers lost interest in this approach and therefore, motivation was lost. Texts do exist for performance (and by extension, rehearsal) – these include speeches, songs, scripts, and poetry (Rasinski, 2010). Performing for an audience can be more appealing and engaging. Students must have a visual representation of the text as they read and reread. When they have memorized the text at hand, the teacher can then begin to pull words and word features from the text to be studied in isolation (Rasinski et. al, 2016).

The common core standards require students to read complex text more closely. The foundational skills which are determined to be prerequisites to the standards in the core start in kindergarten supporting three areas, including phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading fluency (Rasinski, 2014). Students who perform low in reading comprehension testing have difficulties in one or more of these competencies (Valencia & Buly, 2004). According to Rasinski (2014), “Children’s poetry includes several features that make it ideally suited for teaching phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading fluency” (p. 31).
APPENDIX N

Poetry Part II (Bakken, 2017)
In younger children building stamina in reading is important. Poetry for children can be typically four to six lines. Children can read the text quickly and repetitively. With this practice and support from a teacher, the poem can eventually be read fluently. This leads not only to accurate reading, but the ability to use prosody.

Poems are easier to remember and can build sight word recognition. Children are able to read them instantly and effortlessly. The characteristics of poetry also contribute themselves to phonemic awareness by playing with the sounds of language through rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and assonance (Rasinski, 2014). Poetry provides many opportunities for authentic oral practice.

Wilfong (2008) described a reading program that she called, “The Poetry Academy” (p.4). The teacher selects a poem with each student’s reading level in mind. A volunteer then works with the student. The poem is read aloud, read chorally, and then independently. This gradually releases the responsibility to the student. Next, the volunteer and the student engage in conversation about meaning. The poem is then repeatedly read to others at home and then back with the volunteer.
APPENDIX O

*Choral Reading* (Bakken, 2017)
Choral reading involves a group of students reading in unison, each having a copy of the text (Gillet & Temple, 2000) while the teacher models “accurate pronunciation, appropriate reading rate, and prosody (Paige, 2008, p.435). When implementing this strategy the teacher is part of the process; however, “the goal is for students to function independently” (Leslie & Caldwell, 2005, p. 85) while corrective feedback is provided through explanation and modeling (Paige, 2008). Choral reading is a scaffolding technique in which a struggling or reluctant reader experiences reading but still has the support of the teacher (Coombs & Edwards, 2014).

There are many text options for teachers including trade books, short stories, poetry, historical speeches, patterned, and predictable books (Paige, 2008; Leslie & Caldwell, 2005; Tierney & Readence, 2005). One purpose of choral reading is to provide students time to practice reading with expression, which is necessary for meaning (Tierney & Readence, 2005). Choral reading can also help build confidence in readers who may be reluctant as well as build a community among the small groups of readers (Kulich, 2009).
APPENDIX P

*Echo Reading* (Bakken, 2017)
Originally developed by Heckelman (1969), echo reading is also known as the *impress method*. Heckelman believed that the reading methods of that time were suppressing students by allowing them to make too many mistakes. When they were allowed to make a lot of mistakes they become deeply imprinted (Tierney & Readence, 2005). Echo reading was believed to be a new learning strategy that could suppress the older methods of learning.

“Echo reading is a form of assisted reading in which the teacher models fluent oral reading of very short segments of text and then asks students to imitate or echo” (Leslie & Caldwell, 2005, p. 82). Echo reading allows students to practice small chunks of text so they can become fluent without the pressure of reading an entire passage. You can use this technique throughout an entire selection or just for certain parts. This strategy can be conducted with individuals, small groups, or the entire class. The teacher reads aloud the first line of the text, modeling fluent reading, and prompts students to read the same line. Teachers can also ask students questions about their reading before they have them echo (Fountas & Pinnell, 2017). The teacher and the students continue reading in echo fashion for the entire passage. The amount of text read can be gradually increased, as well as the reading speed, to push students to identify words more quickly. It is important to have the student track the words being read with a finger or other pointing prop. The student is reading the words in the text and not just copy the adult reader (Griffin & Appel, 2009).
APPENDIX Q

Assisted Reading and Paired Reading (Bakken, 2017)
Assisted reading can be accomplished with teacher support or technology support. When the teacher provides the support, he/she reads together orally with the student. According to Caldwell and Leslie (2005), “Assisted reading provides the struggling reader with a model of fluency. As the teacher sets the pace, students hear how reading should sound” (p.81). This strategy is non-threatening and a good choice when introducing students to a new selection. Fountas and Pinnell (2017) suggest the teacher reads the selection aloud and then has the student read the same text in unison. When the teacher notices the student is reading fluently, they can let their voice drop off. The teacher sets the pace in assisted reading and may also intersperse discussion about the text. “Talking about the selection keeps the students engaged and provides important modeling of reading as making meaning, not just saying words” (Caldwell and Leslie, 2005, p 82).

When technology is used to support fluent reading, it is called tape-or computer assisted reading. When peer support is provided, it is usually called partner or buddy reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2011). In this model, partners read orally together, however, there are variations on the uses of partner reading in the classroom. In some versions students read orally to each other, using alternating pages. In another, partners repeatedly read the same selection to each other several times (Caldwell & Leslie, 2005).

Paired reading was originally developed for use with parents reading with children (Topping 1987, 1989). Topping suggests the sessions be 15-30 minutes in length, depending on lesson structure. When teachers use paired reading, a more capable reader will be joined with a struggling reader. This can be a volunteer, an aide, a tutor, an older student, or a peer in the classroom. The partners read in tandem. If a word is mispronounced, the stronger reader will say the word correctly and ask the student to repeat it. The reading then continues, and if the student wants to begin reading independently, he or she will signal this to the tutor (Leslie & Caldwell, 2005; Tierney & Readence, 2005).
APPENDIX R

Session Three Application Sheet
Session 3 Application Sheet

• Choose a poem to use in the classroom. Bring the poem and a short reflection on (a) why you chose the poem, (b) how you implemented the poem, (c) how did the lesson go?, (d) will you use poetry in the classroom again?

• Using the INSERT strategy sheet, read the Young and Rasinski journal article. You can write directly on the article. Bring the article and your notes to the next session.
APPENDIX S

*INSERT Strategy Sheet*
INSERT

INSERT is a strategy that will help you monitor your thinking as you read. Use the following symbols to code the text.

+ : Confirms what you already knew—“I knew that!”

- : Contradicts what you thought—“I thought differently.”

? : Confuses you—“I don’t understand this.”

! : Something new—“I didn’t know that!”
APPENDIX T

*Journal Article on Readers Theatre*

This journal article is on a classroom action research study on the effects of Readers Theatre to improve fluency and overall reading achievement in elementary grade students. The authors, one which is a second grade teacher, guide readers through the process and implementation on using Readers Theatre as an integral part of reading curriculum. The first author chose to use Reader’s Theatre as an authentic approach to assisted and repeated reading as a consequence of attending a professional development session presented by the second author.

The participants of this professional development will use the INSERT strategy while reading this article in preparation for Session Three. This guided comprehension strategy will help participants monitor their reading and better understand the text. By using the coding technique, a set of symbols written directly on the text, participants will interact and make connections with the text during reading.
APPENDIX U

Picture of August Pullman
APPENDIX V

Lyrics for “Wonder” By Natalie Merchant
"Wonder" by Natalie Merchant

Doctors have come from distant cities  (W)
Just to see me
Stand over my bed
Disbelieving what they're seeing

They say I must be one of the wonders  (M)
Of god's own creation
And as far as they can see they can offer
No explanation

Newspapers ask intimate questions  (W)
Want confessions
They reach into my head
To steal the glory of my story

They say I must be one of the wonders (M)
Of god's own creation
And as far as they can see they can offer
No explanation

O, I believe  (A)
Fate smiled and destiny
Laughed as she came to my cradle
Know this child will be able
Laughed as my body she lifted
Know this child will be gifted
With love, with patience and with faith
She'll make her way

People see me  (W)
I'm a challenge to your balance
I'm over your heads
How I confound you and astound you
To know I must be one of the wonders
Of god's own creation
And as far as you can see you can offer me
No explanation
O, I believe (A)
Fate smiled and destiny
Laughed as she came to my cradle
Know this child will be able
Laughed as she came to my mother
Know this child will not suffer
Laughed as my body she lifted
Know this child will be gifted
With love, with patience and with faith
She'll make her way

(Lyrics retrieved from azlyrics.com)
APPENDIX W

Session Four PowerPoint: Readers' theatre
REPEATED READING
ARTICLE SHARING

Share your experience in reading the article assignment from the last session.

Talk about the insert strategy, using coding to monitor your thinking.

What were some "take aways" from the article?

READER'S THEATER

Supporting fluency in the classroom
Research on Readers Theater

- Vadasy & Sander (2008), state that readers theater is an educational activity which students perform a text without the requirements of props, memorization, and costumes. Rehearsing sets the purpose for repeated reading with a goal of entertaining with expressive oral reading.

- Research suggests that readers theater, in particular, is an effective means of enhancing students' reading fluency and is a motivational reading activity (Martinez, Roser, & Strecker, 1998).

More Research Support

- Readers theater participants practice their lines and this practice requires repeated reading. Rereading will increase rate, accuracy, and comprehension.

- Using this strategy provides an authentic reason for struggling and reluctant readers to repeatedly read the same material (Worthy & Prater, 2002; Tyler & Chard, 2000).

- When the opportunity for authentic engagement is present, the motivation to practice and prepare is heightened (Teale, Zolt, Yokota, Glasswell, & Gambrell, 2007).

- Increases in rate, accuracy, and comprehension carry over to new and unpracticed texts (Tyler & Chard, 2002).
WHY SHOULD I USE READER’S THEATER?

Readers’ theater is easily integrated into any reading program; is adaptable for all levels of readers; allows for individual partner, and group work; and gives students the opportunity for reading success.

WORK SESSION

- The remainder of the session will be dedicated time for you to work on researching reader’s theater scripts that you might use in your classroom. Think about upcoming themes or units and the students in your class.
- You have several resources listed in the journal article to get a good start.
- You will be required to find a reader’s theater and implement in your classroom before the end of May. See the assignment sheet for more details.
APPENDIX X

Session Four Application Sheet
Session 4 Application

Think about what readers'theatre script you would like to implement into your classroom and an approximate date. Schedule an check in appointment with the school literacy coach for assistance in choosing or if you have chosen your script. At the appointment you will have the opportunity to receive assistance in implementing the readers’theatre and also be able to ask any follow up questions you have about fluency instruction. You will have until the end of May to perform your readers’theatre! Have Fun!
APPENDIX Y

Evaluation Feedback Form
PRESENTATION EVALUATION

Facilitator/s: ____________________________ Date: __________

PD: __________________________

(1) Poor Fair (2) Good (3) Very Good (4) Excellent (5)

THE PRESENTER:
The presenter delivered the material in a clear and structured manner. 1 2 3 4 5
The presenter was knowledgeable about the topic and any related issues. 1 2 3 4 5
The presenter maintained my interest during the entire presentation. 1 2 3 4 5
The presenter answered questions effectively. 1 2 3 4 5
The presenter was enthusiastic about the topic. 1 2 3 4 5
The presenter was well organized and prepared. 1 2 3 4 5

THE PRESENTATION:
The presentation was concise and informative. 1 2 3 4 5
The presentation contained practical examples and useful techniques that applied to current work. 1 2 3 4 5
The visual aids were effective. 1 2 3 4 5
Overall, I would rate this presentation/instruction as: 1 2 3 4 5
Would you recommend this presentation to others? NO YES

Additional Comments

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________