

# Teacher's Guide – Fluency Only

## General Procedures for Administering the Fluency Sub-test

### General Overview

The goal of this sub-test is to measure a student's oral reading fluency--that is, the ability of a student to effortlessly read a piece of text with a steady and comfortable speed, and with appropriate intonation, phrasing and expressiveness (referred to as prosody). This sub-test will help teachers gauge students' oral reading fluency by measuring their reading rate and prosody as they read a number of leveled passages, with the option of also measuring their comprehension of the passages.

### Passage Selection

Which level passage should I begin with? Begin by looking at the student's scores on the Silent Reading (SR) Comprehension and Word Recognition (WR) sub-tests. If the score on the Silent Reading sub-test is LESS than the Word Recognition sub-test, start with a fluency passage equal to Silent Reading level. If the score on the Silent Reading sub-test is GREATER than the Word Recognition sub-test, start with a fluency passage equal to the Word Recognition level. If the score on the Silent Reading sub-test is equal to the score the Word Recognition sub-test, start with a fluency passage equal to one grade level below this score.

Silent Reading (SR) and Word Recognition (WR) Scores	Start Fluency Passage Level...
SR Level < WR Level	Equal to Silent Reading Level
SR Level > WR Level	Equal to Word Recognition Level
SR Level = WR Level	One grade below SR or WR Level

### Protocol

- 1. Introduce the activity to the student.** "I have some passages for you to read. First you will read the passages out loud to me. Use a clear and natural-sounding voice. I will be making some notes as you read because I cannot remember everything you say. Afterwards I will ask you to tell me what you can remember about the passage just as if you were telling it to someone who had never heard it before. Ready? The first passage is called \_\_\_\_\_."
- 2. Background Knowledge.** Cover the passage so only the title shows. Read the title to the student and ask him or her what s/he thinks the passage will be about. From the information the student provides, make a rough note of the student's level of background knowledge. Use the scale above the passage on the administrator's worksheet.

3. **Oral Reading and Miscue Notation**<sup>1</sup>. Next, invite the student to read the passage out loud as clearly and naturally as possible. Remind the student that it is not important to read quickly. Have him or her read the passage the way he or she thinks the author wanted it to sound. Start timing the student's reading as soon as he or she starts reading the passage. **Ask the student to stop reading the passage after one minute. Record the last word the student read at the end of one minute.**

A description of miscues and how to mark them on the administrator's worksheet is included next. It is based on the work of Clay (1985)<sup>2</sup> and Reutzel and Cooter (1996)<sup>3</sup>. Miscues should be marked on the teacher's worksheet during the oral reading, errors totaled, and a decision made as to whether or not to continue the assessment.

#### **Miscues and Coding for Passages**

- **Mispronunciation**  
Student incorrectly pronounces a word. Mispronunciations typically are non-words. Write the incorrect pronunciation above the word.

Student: "The deg ran away."

Notation: The <sup>dog</sup> ran away.

- **Substitution**  
Student substitutes a real word or words for a word in the text. Draw a line through the word and write what the student said above it.

Student: "The tree was very high"

Notation: The ~~cloud~~<sup>tree</sup> was very high.

- **Self-correction**  
Student corrects a miscue himself. Self-corrections are noted by writing "SC," but should not be counted as errors in the final tally, unless the student never correctly pronounces the word.

Student: "The money...the monkey was funny."

Notation: The ~~money~~<sup>money SC</sup> was funny.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: Flynt, E.S., & Cooter, R.B. (1999). *Reading inventory for the classroom*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. pp. 6-7

<sup>2</sup> Clay, M.M. (1985). *The early detection of reading difficulties (3rd ed.)*. Auckland New Zealand: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Cooter, R.B., & Flynt, E.S. (1996). *Teaching reading in the content areas*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall

- *Insertion*

A word is added that is *not* in the text. An insertion symbol (^) is recorded between the two appropriate words, and the inserted word is written above the insertion symbol.

Student: “He’ll want to have a look in the mirror.”

Notation: He’ll want to <sup>have a</sup> look in the mirror.

- *Teacher assistance*

The student is “stuck” on a word and the teacher pronounces it. Record the incident as “TA” (teacher-assisted). This error is also counted when the student asks for help during silent reading.

Notation: <sup>TA</sup> automobile

- *Repetition*

The student repeats a word or a series of words. A repetition is recorded by underlining the word(s) repeated. This category is recorded as additional observational data. Therefore, in determining the number of errors a student makes on a passage, repetitions are not a part of the final tally.

Student: “The boy wanted to wanted to go to the show.”

Notation: The boy wanted to go to the show.

- *Omission*

If no word (or words) is given, the error is noted by circling the word(s) omitted on the protocol.

Notation: The cloud was <sup>very</sup> high.

4. *From the oral reading score, choose a passage to administer next.*

**Oral Reading Level**

This is the highest-level passage on which the student scored 90-100% accuracy.

**Oral Reading Rate**

This is the WCPM rate on the highest level passage on which the student scored 90-100% accuracy.

## Oral Reading Fluency Level

This is the oral reading fluency level (prosody) corresponding to the highest-level passage where the student scored 90-100%.

The ability of a student to effortlessly read a piece of text with a steady and comfortable speed, and with appropriate intonation, phrasing, and expressiveness is sometimes referred to as prosody. In this fluency sub-test, we refer to prosody as the Oral Reading Fluency Level. The following chart can be used to rate a student's Oral Reading Fluency Level on a particular passage.

Oral Reading Fluency Level*	
Rating	Description
Level 4	Reads primarily in large, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regression, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the passage. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.
Level 3	Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some smaller groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present, but reading generally sounds meaningful.
Level 2	Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage. The reading sounds like the reader does not understand what the text is about.
Level 1	Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur, but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax.

\*Adapted from National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Oral Reading Fluency Scale in Pinell, G.S., Pikulski, J.J., Wixson, K.K., Campbell, J.R., Gough, P.B., & Beatty, A.S. (1995). *Listening to children read aloud*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

Use the following chart to determine which passages to administer after the first passage:

Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)	Oral Reading Level (Prosody)	Accuracy	What to do
Any	Any	95-100%	Administer next level passage
Any	Any	90-94%	Administer next level passage
Any	Any	0-89%	Administer next LOWER level passage
Any	1 or 2	90-94%	Administer next LOWER level passage

**When to stop administering passages:**

If a student initially scores between 90-100%, continue administering higher passages until he/she reaches “frustration” level (i.e., scores 89% or below on a passage). If a student initially scores between 0-89% on the first passage, continue administering lower-level passages until the student scores between 90-100% on one of the passages.