

## FLUENCY

From Latin, flu-, meaning *flowing*. We also get *fluid*, *flux* and *influenza* from this base.

Phonological awareness and phonics are teachable elements that require a systematic, diagnostic approach. These two elements contribute strongly to the third pillar of literacy: fluency. We will look at reading fluency first and then discuss fluent writing.

Reading fluency is a measure of three things:

**ACCURACY IN WORD DECODING**  
X  
**AUTOMATIC PROCESSING**  
X  
**PROSODIC READING**

Let's look at each element.

### Accuracy in word decoding

Definition

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Examples

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## Automatic processing

### Definition

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### Examples

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## Prosodic reading

### Definition

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### Examples

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## Correcting mistakes in reading

When practising for fluency, it is a good idea to go through a set piece first for decoding. This is where children get the opportunity to merge their code-knowledge and sight word vocabulary with fluency practice. If a child comes across a word they do not instantly recognise, there are two helpful things you can do:

1. If the word can be sounded out using the patterns they know, encourage them to touch under each letter and sequence the sounds. You might model this for them at first by touching under each letter and saying, "I'm going to help you with this word" and sound it through for them. At the end of sounding it through, say "What word?" and praise them for saying the word. Get them to re-read the sentence that the word appeared in and check for understanding. Gradually fade this until they are independently sounding the words out.
2. If the word contains patterns they haven't been explicitly taught or that they haven't committed to memory, show them the pattern and sound it through for them. Make a note to teach or re-teach that pattern as soon as possible. Get them to re-read the sentence the word appeared in and check for understanding.

## Writing fluency

Fluent writing is often talked about, but a little under-resourced. I have students enter my practice who exhibit absolute refusal to write, such is the school-induced trauma that writing has bestowed on them. The three great contributors to writing aversion, in my experience, are:

- Arbitrary 'pen licences' that favour those with naturally neat handwriting and damn the rest to constant humiliation,
- Random 'spelling lists' to lift those with that type of memory to the top and heaven help anyone who needs explicit instruction,
- The habit of keeping children in to complete written work when they should be having breaks