



NSW Centre for Effective Reading

Middle Years



Fluency – Partner Reading

Introduction

Many Middle Years students with reading difficulties do not read fluently, even though they can decode many words accurately. Students who read slowly and accurately but with difficulty with comprehension, need to have opportunities to practise fluent reading orally with feedback from a more proficient reader, either a teacher or a peer.

Purpose

The goal of fluency instruction is to train students to read effortlessly. Students who read effortlessly are free to focus on comprehending text because they do not have to work out the words.

Teaching Steps for ‘Partner Reading’

Grouping : Class or group

Genre: Text that is motivating and engages the readers but is at the instructional level of the less fluent partner. It may be valuable to use content area texts.

1. Teacher Preparation:

- Pair students - One way to assign partners is to make a list of all students in the class, with the highest-level reader at the top and the lowest-level reader at the bottom. Next, divide the list in half. The highest-level reader will be partnered with the top student on the bottom half of the list. The next student on the top half will be partnered with the next student on the bottom half and so on.

For some older readers, rotating pairs frequently has been shown to be an effective way to keep students motivated (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Kazdan, 1999).

There is more than one way to assign partners. Knowing your students’ personalities and reading levels is the key to having a productive partner reading time. It is fine to rotate partners when needed. (Denton, C., Bryan, D., Wexler, J., Reed, D. Vaughn, S., 2007, p.225)

- Select appropriate texts.

2. State the purpose and Explain the Benefits:

Teacher:

Today we are going to learn how to do partner reading. This means you will work together to read a text and help each other understand and recall the information read. You will be paired so one partner can help the other improve their fluency. However, reading and discussing the text will help both partners understand and recall the information.

(This is similar to 'Say Something Paired Reading' – readers stop at the end of each paragraph and say something about what they have read e.g. ask a question, retell what happened, summarise, make a connection.)

3. Model and Teach

- You can model the procedure with a student or another adult, or you can show a DVD of two students working together. It is essential that students see the procedure in action and are allowed to practice the steps before they are expected to work together independently.
 - Partner 1, usually the higher-level reader, reads first paragraph. Partner follows along.
 - Partner 2, usually the lower-level reader, reads the same paragraph.
 - Students briefly discuss what they just read by retelling what happened or by identifying the main idea of the paragraph. They can identify the main idea by asking each other: 'Who or what was the paragraph mainly about?' and 'What was the most important thing about the 'who' or the 'what?'" or ask a question, make a connection or retell.
 - Repeat the above steps until passage is complete.
- Demonstrate correction procedures:
 - If a student reads a word incorrectly, skips a word, or does not know a word, his/her partner will point to the word and say, 'What is this word?'
 - If the student reads the word correctly, the partner says, 'Yes, that word is _____. What word? Please reread the sentence.'
 - If the student does not know the word, the partner says, 'That word is _____. What word? Please reread the sentence.'
 - The student repeats the word and is asked to reread the sentence.
- Students will also need several opportunities to practise the correction procedure. (Denton, C., Bryan, D., Wexler, J., Reed, D. Vaughn, S., 2007, p.227)
- Provide additional modelled practice as required.

4. Memorise the process

Use prompt cards to assist with memorising the process and the correction procedures. (see Appendix)

5. Guided Practice

- Set up students with partners and supply appropriate text.
- Review how partner reading works, supplying pairs with prompt cards for process and correction procedures.
- Circulate around the room and be available to assist with any difficulties as they arise.
- Provide additional guided practice as required.

6. Independent Practice

Once students are familiar with the process of partner reading, it can be used in various content area teaching as a way to involve all students in text reading and comprehension of text. This would include introduction to topic specific vocabulary and choosing texts related to the topic but at levels appropriate to the students' instructional levels.

References

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Denton, C., Bryan, D., Wexler, J., Reed, D. Vaughn, S. (2007), *Effective instruction for middle school students with reading difficulties: The reading teacher's sourcebook*. University of Texas Systems/Texas Education

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Torgesen, J. K., Houston, D. D., Rissman, L. M., Decker, S. M., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J. Francis, D. J., Rivera, M. O., Lesaux, N., (2007), *Academic literacy instruction for adolescents: A guidance document from the Center on Instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

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Appendix

Prompt card for 'Partner Reading'

Prompt card for correction procedure.

Graph for recording reading rate.

Partner Reading

1. Partner 1, read first paragraph and partner 2 follows along.
2. Partner 2, reads the same paragraph.
3. Discuss paragraph - say something:
 - Retell
 - Ask a question
 - Give the main idea (who' did 'what'?)
 - Make a connection
4. Repeat steps 1–3 until passage is complete.



Prompt card for correction procedures

Correction Procedures

1. Incorrect word, skips a word, doesn't know a word, partner points to the word and says,

'What is this word?'

2. If the student then reads the word correctly, the partner says,

'Yes, that word is _____. What word?'

Please reread the sentence.'

3. If the student does not know the word, the partner says,

'That word is _____. What word?'

Please reread the sentence.'

Record of Reading Rate

Name: _____

Write title of text along each column

How many words can I read in 1 minute?	130														
	128														
	126														
	124														
	122														
	120														
	118														
	116														
	114														
	112														
	110														
	108														
	106														
	104														
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	48														
	46														
	44														
	42														
	40														
	38														
	36														
	34														
	32														
	30														
	Date														
	Errors														