

An Investigation of Repeated Readings and the Effect on Students' Fluency

Meg Taylor

Eastern Illinois University

ELE 5900

Spring 2014

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Abstract

The purpose of this action research study was to examine the effects of repeated readings and explicit instruction on students' oral reading fluency within my second grade classroom. This action research study spanned four weeks and was guided by the following essential question: What are the effects of utilizing repeated readings and explicit instruction within the small group reading setting to increase students' oral reading fluency? Three main sources were used for data collection: Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment as my pre and post-test assessments, Reading A-Z fluency passages for progress monitoring, and a teacher rubric for progress monitoring, to guide instruction, and to track individual student growth. Results demonstrated that utilizing repeated readings and explicit literacy instruction can have a positive effect on students' oral reading fluency. All students showed some degree of improvement in the area of fluency and also demonstrated increased confidence when reading orally. At the conclusion of the study, the students were in a comfortable routine and expressed interest in continuing to utilize the Hear All Assessment recorders and repeated readings during the small group literacy time in order to enhance their oral reading fluency.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Introduction

It is apparent that all students strive for support, encouragement, and guidance from their peers and adults, particularly their teacher. It has been argued that the teacher may be the one pivotal source of academic input and leadership in a young student's life (Marsh, 2012). While a child's academic career encompasses numerous subject areas and stages of development, a strong foundation in effective literacy instruction can set the course for the rest of the child's academic career and future. A student's ability or inability to successfully read and comprehend material spans all content areas and impacts countless situations as an adult. Effective teachers utilize numerous, diverse resources to best meet the needs of all learners. Evaluating and exploring best practices can help to guide instruction and set the stage for a thriving learning experience (Newton & Winches, 2013). With the newly implemented Common Core State Standards Initiative at the forefront of curriculum design and classroom practices (CCSSI, 2010), it is imperative teachers evaluate the standards around which curriculum is based, particularly reading curriculum and instruction (Roskos & Neuman, 2013). The stakes are higher and benchmarks are rising and students must be presented with high quality literacy instruction in order to not only meet the standards but exceed past the set expectations (Roskos & Neuman, 2013).

Teachers must evaluate, examine, and re-examine best literacy practices that will best meet the needs of unique learners in diverse learning situations. The dramatic emphasis on a child's exposure and understanding of literacy concepts spans across content areas; therefore the importance of effective literacy instruction is invaluable. A preponderance of evidence indicates the significance of a child's ability to not simply read, but read fluently (Ardoin, Morena, Binder, & Foster, 2013; Kim, Petscher, Schatschneider, & Foorman, 2010; Schwanenflugel, Hamilton,

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Kuhn, Wisenbaker, & Stahl, 2004). Fluent readers move beyond hesitant, disjointed reading and step into the realm of expressive, animated reading. They display confidence and ownership over the presented material and allow the audience to become actively engaged rather than seemingly uninterested observers (Ibid.). The final result of becoming a fluent reader is based upon a culmination of traits such as displaying expression while reading, correct phrasing and rate, and proper emphasis on particular words or phrases.

Prosodic Reading

Prosodic reading, or reading with expression, is a vital trait of a fluent reader. Prosodic reading can be defined as reading that mimics speech, with appropriate phrasing and intonation, and the reader is able to display an overall expressiveness (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). The authors suggest that “fluency, defined as not only accuracy and automaticity of individual word reading, but also prosodic rendering of text, is needed for children to adequately comprehend” (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004, p. 119). Research has examined the impact of repeated readings, fluency, and prosody (Ardoin et al., 2013). Findings indicate prosody helps to link word decoding speed with reading comprehension. More specifically, “fluent word decoding seemed to free up additional resources that could then be used for prosodic reading, and these two characteristics together were highly correlated with comprehension” (Ardoin et al., 2013, p. 2). If a student can accurately decode and display an efficient ability to read fluently and prosodically, he/she is more apt to fully understand or comprehend what they have read (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004; Ardoin et al., 2013). Research indicates an important relationship between reading fluency and comprehension.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

The Fluency and Reading Comprehension Connection

A student's ability to read with speed, accuracy, and prosody is vital to his/her reading development (Wang, Algozzine, Ma, & Porfeli, 2011). Furthermore, freeing up the child's working memory metaphorical *workbench* by increasing automaticity of words and fluency rates allows for more space on the workbench to be devoted to understanding and comprehension (Therrien, 2004). A student becoming a fluent reader begins with accurate decoding, which leads to proper pronunciation of words, development of vocabulary, and better automaticity with known words (Wang et al., 2011). When planning for explicit literacy instruction, teachers should take into account the correlation between a student's fluency level and reading comprehension. Longitudinal research findings indicated a relationship of growth trajectories of fluency and comprehension, specifically "...if the growth rate in literacy skills reliably predicts later reading comprehension, teachers may need to frequently monitor growth in order to accommodate to students' changing needs" (Kim, Petscher, Schatschneider, & Foorman, 2010, p. 652). Teachers need to closely monitor fluency rates and Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM) and take into account that while the differences between fluent and non-fluent readers might appear to be minimal, the correspondence between fluency rates and comprehension can be significant. While a student's fluency rate may be high, the student's comprehension may be lacking rich understanding (Kim et al., 2010).

With the seemingly important correlation between a student's reading fluency rate and ability to comprehend reading material, there is an ever increasing interest in reading rates and fluency. In addition to progress monitoring students' independent and instructional reading levels throughout the year, it may also be advantageous to monitor oral reading fluency rates due to the correlation between a child's ability to read fluently and fully comprehend. Monitoring

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

students who are struggling with oral reading fluency rates may provide teachers with a predictor as to which students will also struggle with comprehension of the material (Kim et al., 2010; Wise et al., 2010). Students are not only expected to glean meaning from a text but also display an ability to read accurately and prosodically. However, the accurate identification of words and ability to read prosodically is not the only factor or indicator connected with comprehension (Wise et al., 2010). The teacher can intentionally organize instruction through *repeated readings* to positively impact students' fluency.

The Impact of Repeated Readings

Repeated reading is an instructional strategy that can be utilized either in whole group or small group reading instruction with the intended outcome being increased automaticity and word identification. Research suggests that repeated reading is an effective instructional strategy because the students are reading the same passage or text over and over. By having multiple encounters with the same text, a student's word recognition errors diminishes, they read at a faster rate, and they display an improvement in oral reading expression (Roundy & Roundy, 2009). For teachers and students alike, the benefits of repeated readings appear to be extensive, including increased fluency and comprehension ability, and furthermore "the fluency gains made in one session of repeated reading have been found to carry over to future readings" (2009, p. 54). Longitudinal research examining the development of reading fluency and comprehension through repeated readings indicated improvements in pronunciation and intonation (Gorsuch and Taguchi, 2010).

Conclusion

As noted, becoming a fluent reader is a fundamental skill concerning literacy development. Several factors contribute to the success of a reader and the student becoming an

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

independent, fluent, expressive, reader. Through direct, explicit instruction focusing on prosody and expression, and the use of repeated readings, teachers can help to create a learning environment in which all students can become proficient, fluent readers. This action research, beginning with its methodology, is purposefully organized in such a way to examine these understandings in one specific class.

Method

This section details the employed methodology for this action research study. The researcher utilized mixed-methods action research to examine repeated readings and the effect on students' fluency among second grade students in a co-taught classroom. The methods are consistent for the theoretical approach. This research study combined the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was collected based upon pre- and post-test fluency rates and the qualitative data was collected utilizing teacher observations and rubrics.

Participants and Setting

For this action research project, the sample of participants was selected from the students in my second grade classroom at a rural school in central Illinois with a population of 533 students. The school has 23 classrooms ranging from first to third grade. The demographics of the school include 47% of students reported to be from low-income families, and 23% of students are identified with an academic disability receiving special services through an individualized education plan.

The convenience sample for the study consisted of 25 students, three of whom have individualized education plans (IEPs) and were excluded from the study. The three students that are on an academic IEP work in a small group setting within the regular education classroom

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

with the LBS1 teacher in my classroom. I teach in a co-taught classroom which consists of myself, the regular education teacher, and the LBS1 special education teacher. Therefore, the academic IEP students were exempt from my study because they work closely with the LBS1 teacher in my classroom. Individuals were selected after Rasinski's 3-Minute Reading Assessment (Rasinski & Padak, 2005) was given as a pre-test to the entire class and the students were evaluated on oral reading fluency. Participants consisted of those students who scored in the bottom 30th-40th percentile when examining oral reading fluency based upon the Rasinski assessment. I selected this target range because I suspected that these students would perhaps benefit from direct, explicit instruction and possibly show the most growth. Of the 25 students, eight were selected and were further divided into two separate random groups for small group instruction. The eight participants were selected solely upon pre-test scores. None of the selected students currently had an IEP, however two of the students were currently undergoing preliminary testing to see if they qualified for additional services in the future. All eight of the students selected were White Caucasian and at the time of the study all participants were healthy with no noted impairments. Three girls and five boys participated in the research study. All students that participated in the study were native English speakers. Each student that participated was given a code number to be represented by (Female Student 1 [FS1], Male Student 2 [MS2], FS3, MS4, FS5, MS6, MS7, and MS8).

Data Sources and Research Materials

This study utilized three main instruments to collect and interpret data. Rasinski's 3-Minute Reading Assessments (2005) were used for pre and post fluency assessments (Appendix B). I obtained Fluency Passage Assessments from the Reading A-Z website as progress

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

monitoring tool throughout the scope of the research (Appendix C). I also utilized a rubric for scoring students' oral reading fluency (Appendix D).

3-Minute Reading Assessments

The first instrument used to collect data was Rasinki's 3-Minute Reading Assessments. I utilized this tool as my pre- and post-test and administered two different yet comparable passages. This instrument was used to determine the lowest 30%-40% of the class pertaining to oral reading fluency rates in order to formulate groups for this research study. The post-test was used to determine students oral reading fluency rates as compared to the initial pre-test. The pre-test was administered to the whole class on Friday, January 31st, 2014. The post-test was administered to the whole class on Monday, March 3, 2014 to determine the oral reading fluency growth of the participants as well as the rest of the class.

Fluency Passage Assessments from the Reading A-Z website

These fluency assessments were utilized for continuous progress monitoring. I referred to the Level Correlation Chart (Appendix E) to determine which fluency assessment passage matched the student's current reading level and decided which fluency assessment was most appropriate to administer. Individual student fluency rates were assessed once a week using the Reading A-Z fluency passage assessments. I utilized this particular progress monitoring tool to determine and evaluate if what was being taught in the explicit small group instruction time throughout the week could be applied to a different text. These passages were administered one-on-one to each participant on the following dates: February 7, 2014 and February 24, 2014.

Teacher Rubric

The third and final instrument used to evaluate and assess students' oral reading fluency was a teacher rubric (denoted above as Appendix D). The third source for data collection

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

evaluated participants' strengths and weaknesses concerning the area of fluency. The rubric was used to guide the explicit small group instruction. I utilized instructional techniques to model appropriate reading fluency behaviors such as, phrasing, intonation, expression and volume, smoothness, and pace based upon the needs presented from the results of the individual student rubrics. The rubric evaluated students' oral reading behaviors on a scale from 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest. There were four sections included on the rubric: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. The rubric was modified from Rasinski's Creating Fluent Readers. According to the rubric, scores of 10 or more indicated that the student was making good progress in fluency, and scores below 10 indicated that the student needed additional instruction in fluency. The research materials directly lend themselves to the data collection procedures that aided the researcher in collecting and analyzing data.

Data Collection Procedures

Student Observation Sheets (Appendix G). During several of the small group instructional periods, students were asked to write down their observations and thoughts pertaining to the lesson and describe their improvements or struggles concerning fluency. This was not used as an assessment tool but rather a monitoring device for the teacher to determine how well the students understood the presented material as well as to evaluate individual student's thoughts concerning fluency and the gains they made.

Hear-All Assessment Recorders (Appendix H). The researcher utilized the Hear All Assessment Recorder during explicit reading instruction time so that the students could read into the recorder for the initial or cold read. Students played back their own recording to listen to, evaluate, and discuss their own reading. After the student discussion and the researcher filled out the teacher rubric, the recording was erased from the Hear-All Assessment Recorder. The

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

recorder was also utilized on the final read of the story so that the students could listen to the difference between the initial cold read and the final read of the story after all of the repeated reading practice and guided group instruction.

Rasinski's 3-Minute Reading Assessments. The pre-test utilizing Rasinski's 3-Minute Reading Assessments was administered on Friday, January 31, 2014. Complete data collection began the week of February 3, 2014. Figure 1 (Appendix A) outlines the dates, teaching strategies, mini-lessons, and resources utilized for the duration of this four week action research study pertaining to the effects of repeated readings and explicit instruction on fluency. See Appendix A for a detailed outline of the time-line and procedures utilized for repeated reading small group instruction.

Data Analysis and Results

This section reports findings. All findings are data-based and derived from the employed methodology. Numerical data is displayed in graph or chart format and then further analyzed in the narrative text.

Data Analysis Procedures

This study incorporated three main sources for data collection (triangulation). The sources that were utilized include: Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessments (Appendix B), Reading A-Z fluency passages (Appendix C), and a teacher rubric for scoring (Appendix D). The 3-Minute Assessments were used as a pre and post-test to measure student growth; the Reading A-Z fluency passages were used as a progress monitoring tool; and the teacher rubric for scoring oral reading fluency was used to further guide instruction. The two leveled readers utilized for instruction were at the instructional level of the participants (Appendix F). The 3-Minute Assessments are based upon grade level passages and could have been above the instructional

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

reading level of the participants. The Reading A-Z passages correlated directly with the students independent instructional levels. The leveled readers were utilized to determine if the use of repeated readings would aid the participants in increasing their independent fluency rates. The fluency rate was assessed twice throughout the study utilizing the Reading A-Z passages as well as comparing student fluency rate from the original 3-Minute Assessment pre-test with the final 3-Minute Assessment post-test.

The first tool used for data collection was the Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment. This assessment was administered to the entire class prior to the start of the repeated reading small group reading instruction. This assessment was also given after the completion of the small group reading instruction repeated reading study to determine student growth. This tool was utilized to assess the students' oral reading fluency rates. This assessment was given twice (as a pre and post-test) to determine if the repeated reading small group instruction had an impact on students' oral reading fluency.

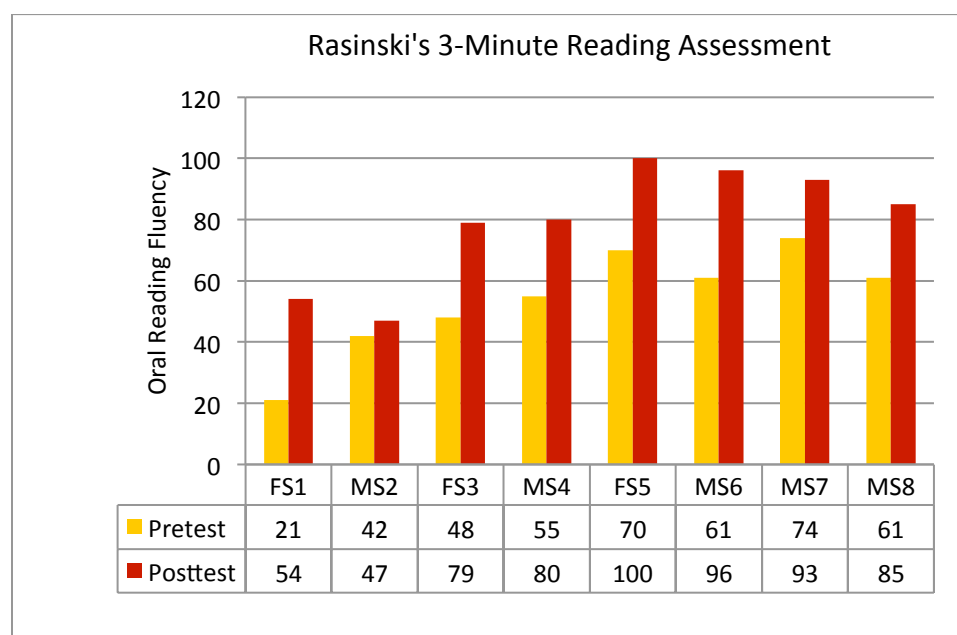


Figure 2. Participant's Pre-test and Post-test scores from the Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Paired Samples Test

		Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pre-Post	.000

Figure 3. Paired Samples T-Test

Analysis of the data collected through the Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment is as follows:

When analyzed through a t-test, the data was found to have significance at .000. Participants were given a pretest on January 31, 2014. After scoring the entire class' pretest the participants were selected and the repeated reading small group intervention began on February 3, 2014. Based upon the results of the pretest, participants were selected if they scored in the bottom 30%-40% based upon oral reading fluency according to the Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment. By analyzing the data depicted in the graph, on the pretest oral reading fluency scores ranged from 21 WCPM to 61 WCPM. After four weeks of direct, explicit small group instruction utilizing repeated readings and the Hear All Assessment Recorders, participants' scores ranged from 54 WCPM to 85 WCPM on the posttest. After collecting and reviewing the data pertaining to the Rasinski's 3-Minute Reading Assessment, all students displayed growth in the area of oral reading fluency. While some students showed a larger span or increase in WCPM, all students showed some sort of growth even if it was minimal. In the instance of MS2 who showed the least amount of growth when considering WCPM on the pre and post-test, that particular student excelled in other areas of improvement, such as displaying confidence while reading aloud and exhibiting good inflection while reading. Each student displayed certain strengths throughout this study, while also displaying certain weaknesses that we addressed.

Three of the eight students (FS1, MS2, and FS3) received additional reading services (pull out guided reading group) outside of the classroom in addition to the ninety minute literacy

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

block in the classroom. MS2 displayed the least amount of growth among the group with an increase of five WCPM. MS2 also had the lowest independent reading level among the group with a level fifteen. MS7 and MS8 had the next two lowest gains with a growth of 19 WCPM and 24 WCPM respectively. FS1, FS3, MS4, and FS5 displayed representative examples with a growth ranging from 25-33 WCPM. The student who displayed the most growth was MS6 with an increase of 35 WCPM. Contrastingly to MS2 who had the lowest independent reading level of 15 and the smallest amount of growth concerning WCPM, MS6 had one of the highest independent reading levels with a level 21 and he showed the highest amount of growth with WCPM.

The general trend displayed from this particular data set reveals that all students showed an increase in words correct per minute. The variance in growth did waver from student to student with the overall average increase in WCPM among the eight students being 25 WCPM. The student who displayed the least amount of growth from the pre to post-test was MS2 with an increase of 5 WCPM and the student who displayed the largest increase was MS6 with an increase of 35 WCPM. While the range appears to be great between the lowest and highest achieving student based upon the results from the pre and post-test, each student displayed growth in different areas. For example, although MS2 displayed a small increase in WCPM, he showed a significant improvement pertaining to inflection while reading aloud. Likewise, while MS6 showed a large increase in WCPM, he struggled with maintaining proper inflection in his voice while reading aloud. When taking into account overall growth and achievement during this study, it is imperative to take into account all facets of data collection, ranging from pre and post-test results, progress monitoring tools, and the teacher rubrics.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

I also utilized fluency reading passages from the Reading A-Z website to progress monitor the students' progress for the duration of the study. Two separate yet comparable reading level passages were administered during the study. Both fluency passages were Level L passages, which directly correlated to the student's individual reading level (range of 15-23) at the time of the study. This particular progress monitoring tool was yet another outlet to measure and assess student growth and was also used to further guide small group reading instruction based upon individual student weaknesses and strengths. This progress monitoring tool was also used to evaluate if what was being taught during the repeated reading lessons could be carried over into new, unfamiliar material.

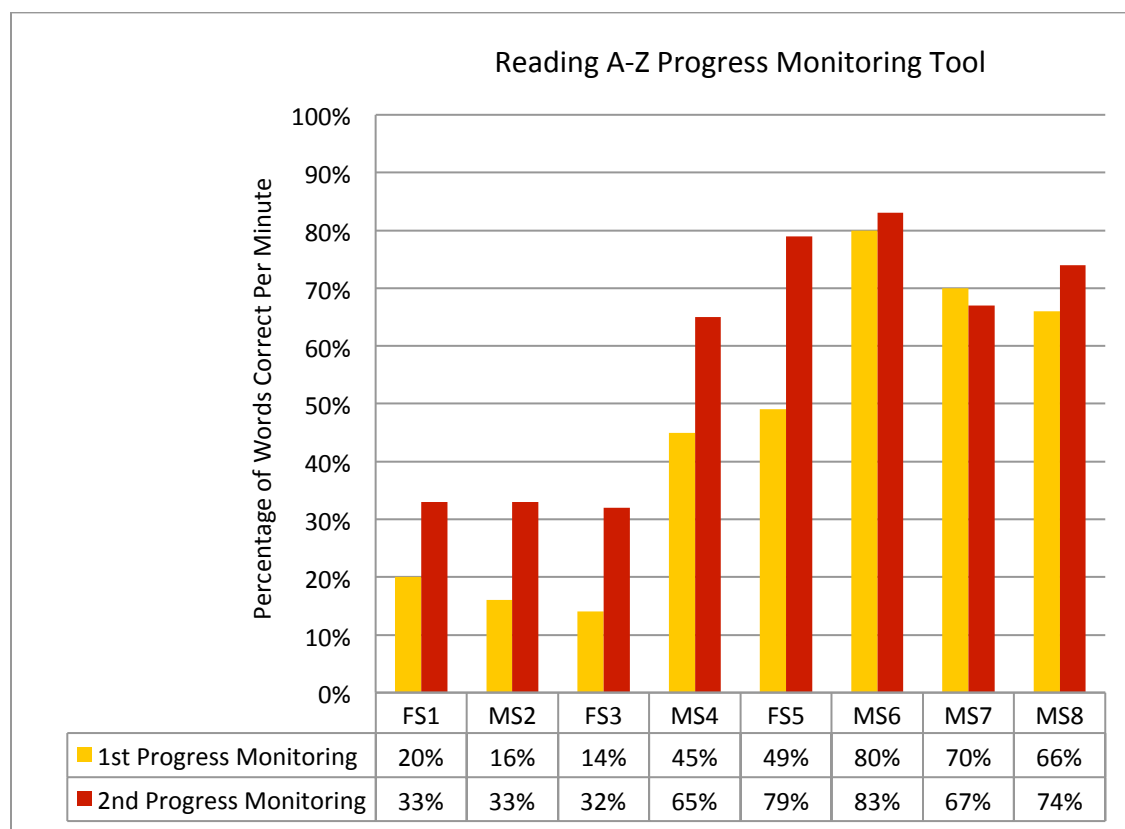


Figure 4. Participants' fluency scores from the Reading A-Z progress monitoring passages

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Paired Samples Test

		Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 2	AZ1-AZ2	.009

Figure 5. Paired Samples T-Test

In analyzing this data through a t-test, the data demonstrated a .009 level of significance, which shows a strong statistical significance between the two sets resulting in a positive influence on the results. In order to further analyze the data for this particular progress monitoring tool, the researcher took into account student percentages of WCPM due to the fact that each student had a different number of WCPM on each passage and each passage had a different number of total words. The first passage had 112 total words and the second passage had 99 total words. Therefore in order to easily compare growth among the students, percentages were used to show similarities and difference among student growth. FS5 showed the greatest percentage gain (49%-79%) yet MS2 and FS3 demonstrated the most personal gain by more than doubling output (16%-33%; 14%-32% respectively). FS1, MS4, MS6, and MS8 showed representative gains. Not every student increased, as MS7 decreased (70%-67%) but the difference was not significant.

Every student increased his/her percentage of WCPM with the exception of MS7 who decreased from a seventy percent to a sixty-seven percent. The range for this data set ranges from a three percent decrease for the least improved student (MS7) to an increase of thirty percent for the most improved student (FS5). The growth for this particular data set does not appear to have as much of a substantial impact as the other data sets. I would attribute the minimal increase and at times decrease (MS7) to the fact that these passages were unfamiliar

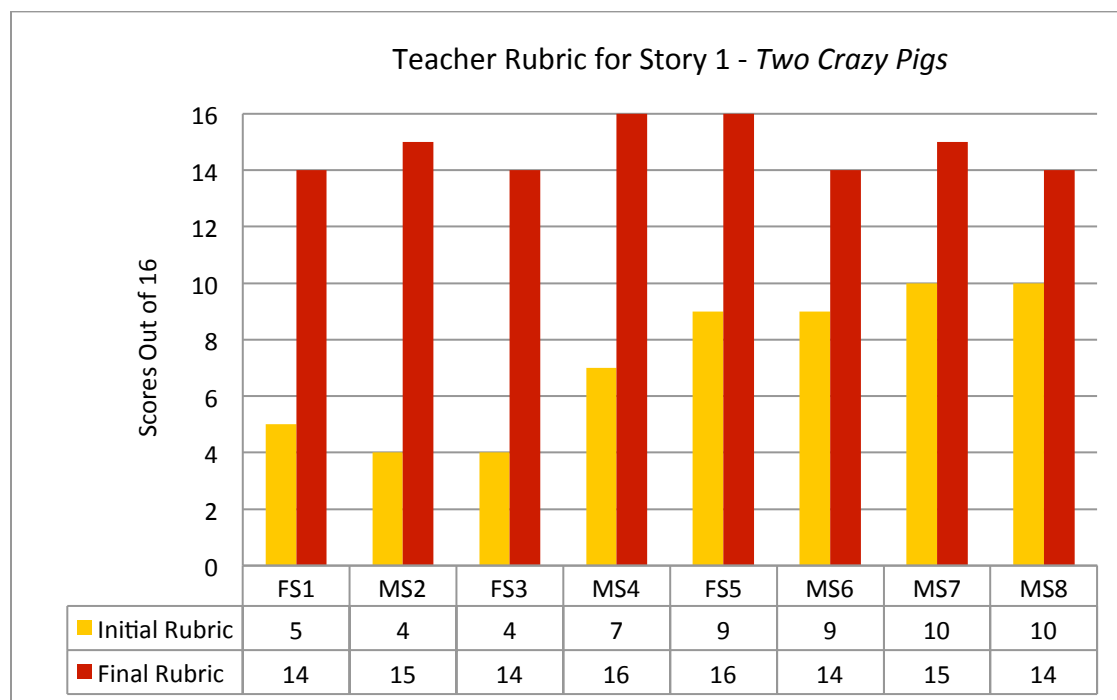
LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

passages that were used to determine if what was taught and utilized during the repeated reading small group lessons could be transferred over onto new, unfamiliar passages.

The next two graphs that were evaluated were representative of the results of the teacher rubrics that were utilized on the initial cold read of the stories and yet again on the final read of the stories. Two separate texts were used for the duration of this study: *Two Crazy Pigs* by Karen Berman Nagel (1992) and *The Difficult Day* by Joy Cowley (1988). A total of four teacher rubrics for each student were filled out. One rubric was used for the initial unfamiliar read of the story and again for the final read of the story (for two stories equaling a total of four rubrics per student). The teacher rubric assessed individual student progress pertaining to fluency. When the students read the story initially, the teacher rubric was filled out and the information gathered from the rubric was used to further guide small group instruction. The information from the rubric was analyzed to determine specific instructional techniques to employ during the small group reading lesson. The information presented also gave the teacher insight into each student's specific strengths and areas of weaknesses. The final rubric which was filled out on the final read of the story was analyzed to determine student growth from the lessons.

The first story that was used during this research study was entitled *Two Crazy Pigs* by Karen Berman Nagel (1992). This was an unfamiliar text to the students and was at a developmentally/age appropriate reading level for all group members. The researcher chose a fictional text that incorporated several examples of text that lends easily to read alouds with proper phrasing and expression.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY



*Figure 6. Participants' rubric scores for story 1- *Two Crazy Pigs**

As is evident in the graph, all participants increased their rubric scores from the initial rubric to the final rubric score. If a student was absent on the initial day of reading the story, the reading was conducted the first day he/she returned back to school. While two members had an initial rubric score of ten which according the rubric indicated that the student was making good progress in fluency, there were still specific areas for improvement. For example, while MS7 scored an overall score of ten, he obtained a score of two in both the categories of expression and volume and pace. Therefore, while he was strong in certain areas (phrasing and smoothness) he had certain areas of improvement to focus on for the duration of the lessons. Two students, MS4 and FS5 obtained a final rubric score of 16 which is the maximum score possible. All students showed a significant amount of growth from the initial read to the final read. The students also displayed a keen interest in listening to their individual Hear All Assessment recording of their initial cold read and comparing it to the rehearsed, fluent version of the final read. It was

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

gratifying and pleasing to see and hear the students discussing their improvements and accomplishments towards becoming a more fluent reader.

Similarly, all students displayed some type of improvement concerning fluency while working with the second story, *The Difficult Day* by Joy Cowley (1988). This was also a fictional text that lent itself well to lessons concerning proper phrasing, smoothness, pace, and volume and expression.

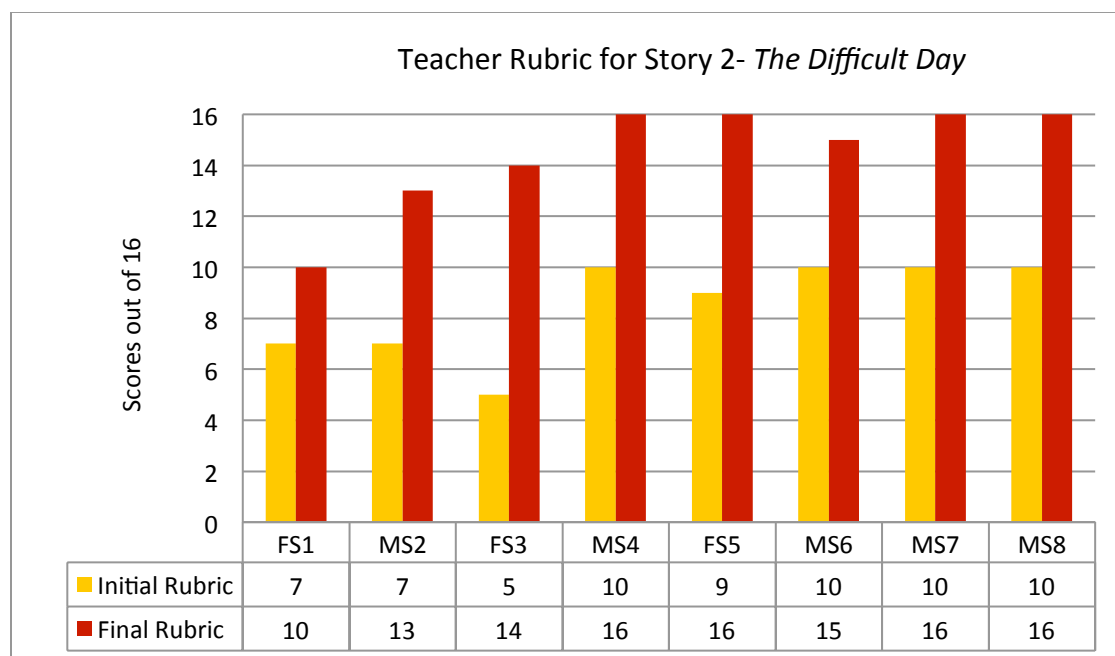


Figure 7. Participants' rubric scores for story 2- *The Difficult Day*

With the second story, four students (MS4, MS6, MS7, and MS8) had an initial overall rubric score of ten which was an improvement from story one with only two students (MS7 and MS8) obtaining an initial score of ten. Likewise, four students (MS4, FS5, MS7, and MS8) had a final rubric score of sixteen on the second story and only two students (MS4 and FS5) had a final rubric score of sixteen on the first story. Not only did all students show growth from the initial to final read, but there was carry-over of skills for several students from the first story to the second story. While there may appear to be less of an increase in improvement as opposed to

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

what is displayed in the previous story one graph, more of the students began at a higher rubric level with the initial read on story two than they did on story one.

Findings and Implications

This section details the specific findings of the research study and further discusses implications of the study that can impact future teaching settings. While the specific data collected may be limited to this particular research study, overall generalizations and observations can be transferred into similar small group reading lessons. Observations and findings can be used to further meet the needs of diverse learners within the classroom setting.

Findings

Prior to evaluating and critically analyzing the data from this research study, it was predicted that exposure with repeated reading would aid students in increasing overall fluency. However, the extent of the improvement was unknown. After compiling and analyzing the data and reflecting upon the instructional procedures engaged during this research study, the findings suggest that repeated readings and explicit small group reading instruction may be an effective teaching strategy to assist students in gaining and building reading fluency techniques. After using the Rasinski's 3-Minute Assessment as a baseline tool, the researcher formed groups based upon those students with the greatest need for explicit, direct small group instruction. Over the course of the study, the Reading A-Z fluency passages were used as progress monitoring tools as well as the teacher rubrics. The progress monitoring tools as well as teacher observations were used to plan and guide further instruction. The initial and final rubrics as well as the fluency post-test were used to determine the extent of growth for each student concerning the area of fluency. Four main areas of fluency were focused on throughout the study: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. Every student showed growth in at least one of the

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

areas and displayed an increased level of confidence concerning oral reading within the small group setting. The students were able to articulate their own personal thoughts and opinions concerning their areas of weaknesses and progress on their observation sheets. The students expressed a high level of interest in utilizing the Hear All Assessment recorders to compare their initial read with the final read. All of these findings can be further evaluated and adapted to meet the needs of future learners.

Implications

Engaging students with the Hear All Assessment recorders and utilizing the repeated reading strategy was deemed an effective teaching tool throughout this research study. These methods were economical, practical, and easy to utilize within the small group reading setting. In this particular study, the Hear All Assessment recorders assisted the students with not only discussing what fluent readers should sound like, but also provided them with the opportunity to hear themselves become fluent readers and make observations and comments. The students gained a tremendous amount of confidence by listening to their initial read which demonstrated room for improvement, and compared it with the final read, which sounded much more rehearsed, smooth, and fluent. The students were able to take ownership over the lessons by not having to compete with each other, but rather compete with themselves to improve and make the final read sound fluent.

Explicit instruction was also utilized to guide discussion and point out specific areas of improvement for the students to work on. Instruction was based upon teacher observation as well as the data collected from the rubrics and the Hear All Assessment recorders. The students were afforded the opportunity to take ownership by providing feedback and input as to what specific areas they wanted to work on and improve after listening to their own recordings.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Similarly, by utilizing repeated readings, students were able to increase oral reading fluency, gain confidence with a familiar text, and pay attention to textual details as well as better comprehend what they had read. The combined methods of utilizing the Hear All Assessment recorders and repeated readings were a practical, meaningful method of instruction that proved to be an effective means for increasing student confidence and oral reading fluency.

Limitations

It is critical to address and examine weaknesses that occurred within the structured action research project. Despite careful planning and scrutinizing over the overall organization and implementation of the research, limitations beyond the researcher's control were inevitable. One limitation for this particular research project was the limited data pool due to the fact that the research was conducted within a single classroom with a relatively homogeneous student population regarding age and demographics. Furthermore, the findings within this specific research project are not reproducible due to the fact that using the exact same grouping and sampling of students with the same content would be redundant. Limited/inconsistent intervention time was also another limitation. The researcher was only able to meet with the subjects for three and a half weeks which included one snow day and one national holiday where the students were not present in school. There may very well have been other limitations or variables that could have hampered the research; however the researcher did everything possible to create an authentic educational intervention within the parameters that were given. The researcher also tried to control as many variables and generate as many valuable findings as possible. As is the case when working with human subjects, there were a myriad of factors and limitations to take into consideration. As teacher-researcher, the highest priority is facilitating students' learning and accurately examining the learning environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Reflections and Action Plan

This section details the researcher's reflections concerning the action research study.

This section also suggests future methods to implement based upon the results from the study.

The researcher analyzed the findings and formulated a future action plan to implement to further meet the needs of all students.

Reflections

One of the greatest joys as a teacher is to find a practical, cost-effective teaching strategy that engages students and allows them to be successful and thrive within the classroom setting.

As a lower elementary teacher, building the foundations which set the stage for future developments is an integral role of the teacher. Effective literacy instruction is a fundamental aspect of teaching due to the fact that literacy spans across all disciplines, not just reading and writing.

I focused on repeated readings in an effort to increase fluency because I noticed a need in this particular area of literacy within my own classroom. I had several students who were at or above level in reading and were able to comprehend the reading material but when they read orally it sounded slow and labored. I wanted the students to not only move towards being fluent, prosodic readers but also be able to hear what a fluent reader sounded like. As the teacher, I not only modeled fluent reading but also provided the students with the opportunity to hear themselves become fluent readers through the use of the Hear All Assessment Recorders. Throughout the course of the study the students provided numerous comical and anecdotal remarks concerning their progress and their transformation towards becoming a more fluent reader. It was extremely rewarding to see the students not only progress but be aware of the gains they were making and display confidence in their newly honed abilities. To witness the

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

amount of growth displayed by the students in such a short time frame only further sparks my interest as the teacher to further pursue this specific teaching strategy and track the progress made by all students.

This action research study allowed me as an educator to not only implement a specific teaching strategy, but also critically evaluate its effectiveness and usefulness. By taking the time to reflect and evaluate what I had implemented, I was able to observe what aspects seemed to be most valuable, but what areas I would adapt or modify for the future.

Action Plan

The results of this action research study demonstrated that explicit reading instruction in conjunction with repeated readings is an effective strategy for improving students' oral reading fluency. Utilizing the Hear All Assessment recorders, encouraging student observation and discussion, modeling, and revisiting familiar texts all were valuable approaches to increasing oral reading fluency. As the educator, I now plan to evaluate what aspects of this study were most valuable and what goals were attainable and provided the students with the most growth and ownership in their own learning process. I plan to continue utilizing the Hear All Assessment recorders, revisiting familiar texts, promote discussion based upon advancements and setbacks, and encourage students to carry with them the skills they learned in the small group reading lesson as they venture out to different and diverse learning situations. I plan on continuing this method for literacy instruction for the remainder of the school year. The students are familiar with the routine and look forward to the small group setting. I foresee utilizing repeated readings in order to increase student fluency, enhance student confidence levels, and promote lifelong readers not only with my current group of students but with future classes as well.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

References

- Ardoyn, S.P., Morena, L.S., Binder, K.S., & Foster, T.E. (2013). Examining the impact of feedback and repeated readings on oral reading fluency: Let's not forget prosody. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 28(4), 391-404. doi:10.1037/spq0000027
- Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010). *Common Core state standards for English/language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC: Department of Education.
- Gorsuch, G., & Taguchi, E. (2010). Developing reading fluency and comprehension using repeated reading: Evidence from longitudinal student reports. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(1), 27-59. Retrieved from <http://proxy1.library.eiu.edu:2065/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=47901734&site=ehost-live>
- Kim, Y., Petscher, Y., Schatschneider, C., & Foorman, B. (2010). Does growth rate in oral reading fluency matter in predicting reading comprehension achievement?. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(3), 652-667. doi:10.1037/a0019643
- Marsh, H. (2012). Relationships for learning: Using pupil voice to define teacher-pupil relationships that enhance pupil engagement. *Management in Education (Sage Publications, Ltd.)*, 26(3), 161-163. doi:10.1177/0892020612445702
- Newton, J., & Winches, B. (2013). How did they maximize learning for all of those students?. *Reading Improvement*, 50(2), 71-74. Retrieved from <http://proxy1.library.edu:2065/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=88399944&site=ehost-live>

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Rasinski, T., & Padak, N. (2005). 3-Minute reading assessments. New York, New York: Scholastic Inc.

Roskos, K., & Neuman, S. (2013). Common core, commonplaces, and community in teaching reading. *The Reading Teacher*, 66(6), 469-473. doi:10.1002/TRTR.1150

Roundy, A.R., & Roundy, P.T. (2009). The effect of repeated reading on student fluency: Does practice always make perfect?. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(1), 54-59.

Retrieved from

<http://proxy1.library.eiu.edu:2065/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=41564419&site=ehost-live>

Schwanenflugel, P.J., Hamilton, A., Kuhn, M.R., Wisenbaker, J.M., & Stahl, S.A. (2004).

Becoming a fluent reader: Reading skill and prosodic features in the oral reading of young readers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(1), 119-129. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.96.1.119

Therrien, W. J. (2004). Fluency and Comprehension Gains as a Result of Repeated Reading.

Remedial & Special Education, 25(4), 252-261. Retrieved from

<http://proxy1.library.eiu.edu:2065/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=51868936&site=ehost-live>

Wang, C., Algozzine, B., Ma, W., & Porfeli, E. (2011). Oral reading rates of second-grade

students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 103(2), 442-454. doi:10.1037/a0023029

Wise, J. C., Sevcik, R. A., Morris, R. D., Lovett, M. W., Wolf, M., Kuhn, M., &

Schwanenflugel, P. (2010). The relationship between different measures of oral reading

fluency and reading comprehension in second-grade students who evidence different oral

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

reading fluency difficulties. *Language, Speech & Hearing Services In Schools*, 41(3), 340-348. doi:10.1044/0161-1461(2009/08-0093)

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix A

Figure 1. Time-line and procedures utilized for repeated reading small group instruction.

Week	Activities/Resources	Data Collected
January 31, 2014	• Pre-test was administered and scored • Participants were selected	• Scores from the 3-Minute Assessment to determine participants
Week 1		
February 3	• First book was introduced <u>Two Crazy Pigs</u> • Students read into the Hear-All Assessment Recorder	• Teacher rubric was filled out on participants to further guide small group instruction • Hear-All Assessment recording
February 4	• Students listen to their individual recording and make observations • Discuss observations • Students re-read story	• Hear-All Assessment recording • Student observation sheet
February 5	*snow day	*snow day
February 6	• Teacher modeled what a fluent reader sounds like • Students discussed observations • Students re-read story	• Student observation sheet
February 7	• Students partner read the story for another re-read • Progress monitoring	• Reading A-Z passage 1 "Jumping In" • Teacher rubric filled out on participants to guide instruction (based upon Reading A-Z passage) • Student observation sheet
Week 2		
February 10	• Students re-read the story with a partner • Group discussion about improvements as readers	

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix A

	to an audience	
February 11	• Students re-read the story into whisper phones (small pvc pipes that allow them to listen to themselves read) • Students ate Mudpies as a snack and discussed connections with the main character who made Mudpies	
February 12	• Students practiced once re-reading the story individually before they completed the final read into the Hear All Assessment Recorder • Teacher monitored reading and filled out the fluency rubric	• Hear All Assessment Recording • Teacher rubric to assess the final read of the story
February 13	• Students listened to the first cold read on the recorder and then listened to the final read of the story • Discussion was built upon observations and findings	• Student observation sheet was filled out; students described their observations comparing/contrasting their first read with their final read of the story
February 14	• Class Valentine’s Day Party	
Week 3		
February 17	• Presidents’ Day No School	
February 18	• Second book was introduced <u>The Difficult Day</u> • Students read into the Hear-All Assessment Recorder	• Teacher rubric was filled out on participants to further guide small group instruction • Hear-All Assessment recording
February 19	• Students listen to their individual recording and make observations • Discuss observations, discuss improvements	• Hear-All Assessment recording • Student observation sheet

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix A

	and areas to focus on	
February 20	• Students re-read story • Students re-read the story twice with a partner • Area of focus today is on bold words, italicized words, and intonation	
February 21	• Students re-read the story individually and again with a partner • Area of focus today is on ending punctuation and phrasing	
February 24	• Students partner read the story for another re-read • Progress monitoring	• Reading A-Z passage 2 “Sam and Catcher” • Teacher rubric filled out on participants to guide instruction (based upon Reading A-Z passage)
February 25	• Students re-read the story individually with the teacher • Students re-read the story again with a partner • Instruction is focused on data collected from the previous day’s progress monitoring tool (Reading A-Z passage)	
February 26	• Further instruction based upon progress monitoring tool rubric • Students re-read the story as a group, pausing to make comments, praise, and recommendations to fellow group members to improve fluency	
February 27	• Students practiced once re-reading the story individually before they completed the final read into the Hear All Assessment Recorder • Teacher monitored	• Hear All Assessment Recording • Teacher rubric to assess the final read of the story

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix A

	reading and filled out the fluency rubric	
February 28	- Students listened to the first cold read on the recorder and then listened to the final read of the story - Discussion was built upon observations and findings	Student observation sheet was filled out; students described their observations comparing/contrasting their first read with their final read of the story
March 3	Post-test was administered and scored	Scores from the 3-Minute Assessment were evaluated to determine student growth

Appendix B

STUDENT PASSAGE

FORM B

GRADE 2

Do you like apples? I think apples are great. They are a fun fruit to eat. Apples come in many colors. They can be red or green. They can be yellow or pink. Most apples are sweet. Some are not. I like the sweet ones best.

Apples make a crunchy sound when you bite them. Apples are juicy. The juice runs out of my mouth when I take a bite. It goes down my chin and makes me sticky.

You can eat apples whole, or you can eat them in slices. Apples can be in pies. I like to eat apples in all sorts of things.

I like to pick apples, too. Apples grow on trees. They are like presents on a branch. They are just waiting to be opened. Eating apples is fun to do. They are good for you, too.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix B

TEACHER PAGE

FORM B

Name of student _____ Date of testing _____

Grade 2: Form B

Do you like apples? I think apples 7
are great. They are a fun fruit to eat. 16
Apples come in many colors. They can 23
be red or green. They can be yellow or 32
pink. Most apples are sweet. Some are 39
not. I like the sweet ones best. 46

Apples make a crunchy sound 51
when you bite them. Apples are juicy. 58
The juice runs out of my mouth when I 67
take a bite. It goes down my chin and 76
makes me sticky. 79

You can eat apples whole, or you 86
can eat them in slices. Apples can be 94
in pies. I like to eat apples in all sorts of 105
things. 106

I like to pick apples, too. Apples 113
grow on trees. They are like presents 120
on a branch. They are just waiting to 128
be opened. Eating apples is fun to do. 136
They are good for you, too. 142

Word Count – 142

Scoring

Word recognition accuracy:

Words correct = _____ = _____ %
Total words read orally

Fluency-Automaticity: _____ wcpm

Multidimensional Fluency Scale

Expression and Volume: _____

Phrasing and Intonation: _____

Smoothness: _____

Pace: _____

Total Score: _____

Comprehension: _____

Comments and Observations:

GRADE 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix C

Reading a-Z Fluency Passage

Level L

Name _____

 Jumping In
 Word Count: 112

Amanda took a gulp of air and stepped up to the edge	12
of the dock. Her father stood beneath her in the water.	23
"I won't drop you, I promise," Dad said.	31
Amanda pinched her nose with her fingers, and Dad	40
held up his arms.	44
But Amanda shook her head. "No," she said, and she	54
turned and walked back toward the shore.	61
Dad waited. Just as Amanda was about to step off the	72
dock and into the grass, she turned around. She shut her	83
eyes tightly, plugged her nose, and held her breath.	92
Suddenly, without looking, she ran off the end of the	102
dock. She landed in the water, right in Dad's arms.	112

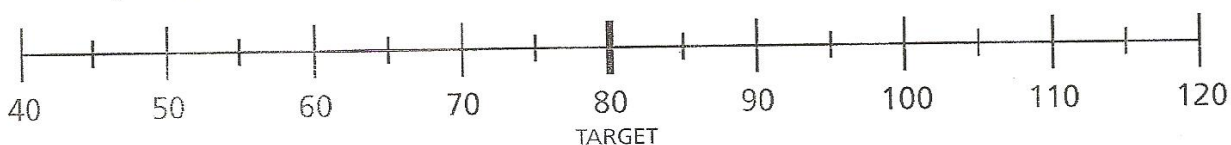
 Number of Errors:

1	2	3	4	5	6

Accuracy (%):

--

Reading Rate (Words Per Minute):



LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix D

NAME _____

FLUENCY RUBRIC

	1	2	3	4
Expression and Volume	Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.	Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.	Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation.	Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.
Smoothness	Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.	Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many "rough spots."	Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.	Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/or sentence structures.
Pace	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads fast and slow throughout reading.	Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading.

Scores of 10 or more indicate that the student is making good progress in fluency.

Score _____

Scores below 10 indicate that the student needs additional instruction in fluency.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF FLUENCY

Appendix E

Reading Level Correlation Chart

Grade Level	Reading Recovery	Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading	DRA	Basal Equivalent	Lexile Levels	
Kindergarten	A,B	A	A	Readiness	NA	
	1		1			
	2	B	2	PrePrimer 1		
	3	C	3			
4	4		PrePrimer 2			
5	D	6				
6						
Grade 1	7	E	8	PrePrimer 3		
	8					
	9	F	10	Primer		
	10					
	11	G	12			
	12					
	13	H	14	Grade 1		
	14					
	15	I	16			
	16					
	Grade 2	18	J K (19)	20	Grade 2	450 - 790
		20	L, M (21)	28		
	Grade 3	22	N	30	Grade 3	
			34			
	24	O (23), P (24)	38			
Grade 4	26	Q (25), R (26), S (27)	40	Grade 4	955 -1155	
Grade 5	28	T (28), U (29), V (29)	44	Grade 5		
Grade 6	30	W, Z, Y		Grade 6	955 -1155	
Grade 7	32	Z		Grade 7		
Grade 8	34	Z		Grade 8		

Grade Level Equivalent when stated on the bag was left for reference.

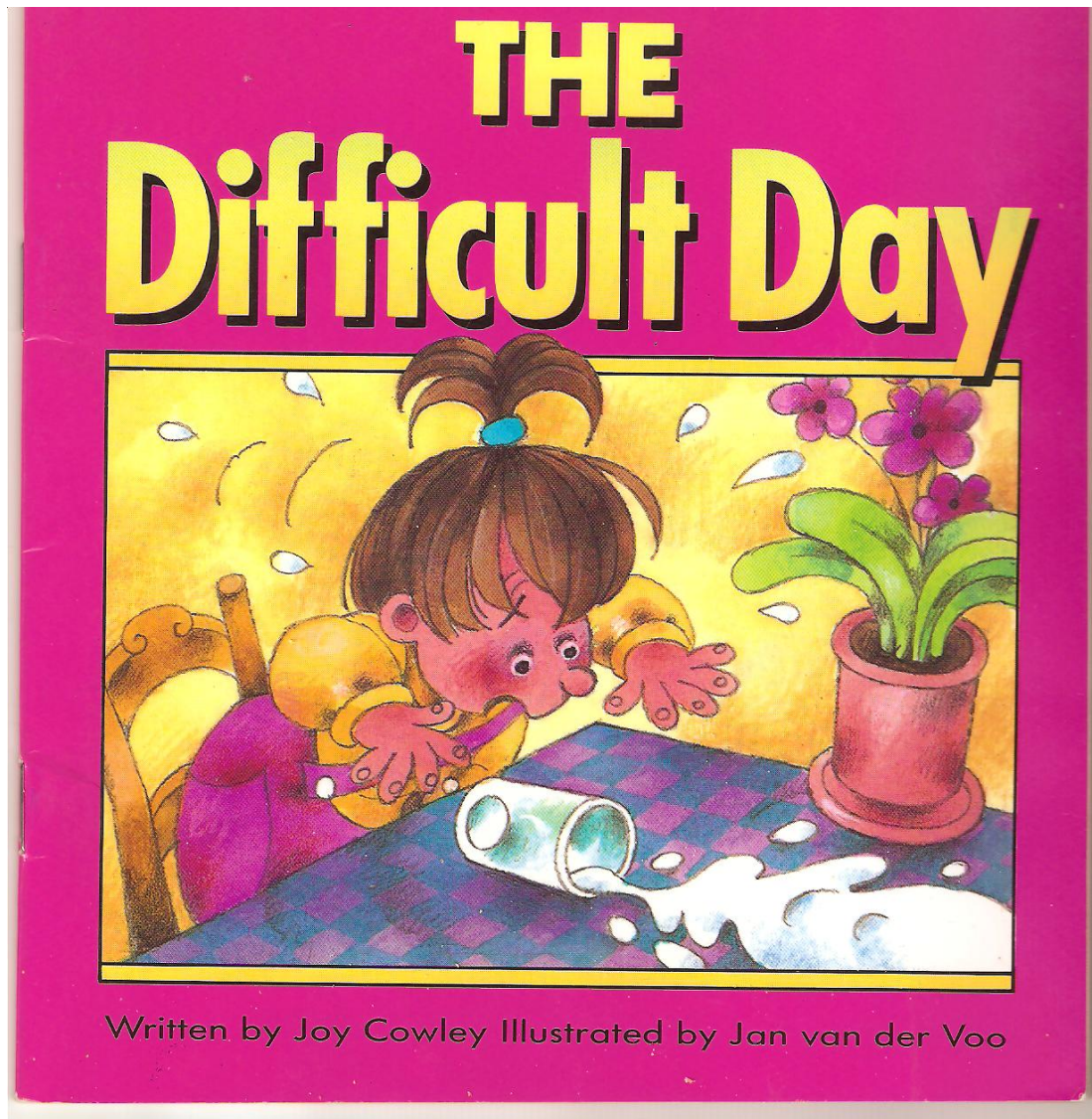
If a lesson was included in the bag, the bag was placed on the top shelf (if possible) for ease in locating.

Should a label come off or bag become torn, feel free to make new ones.

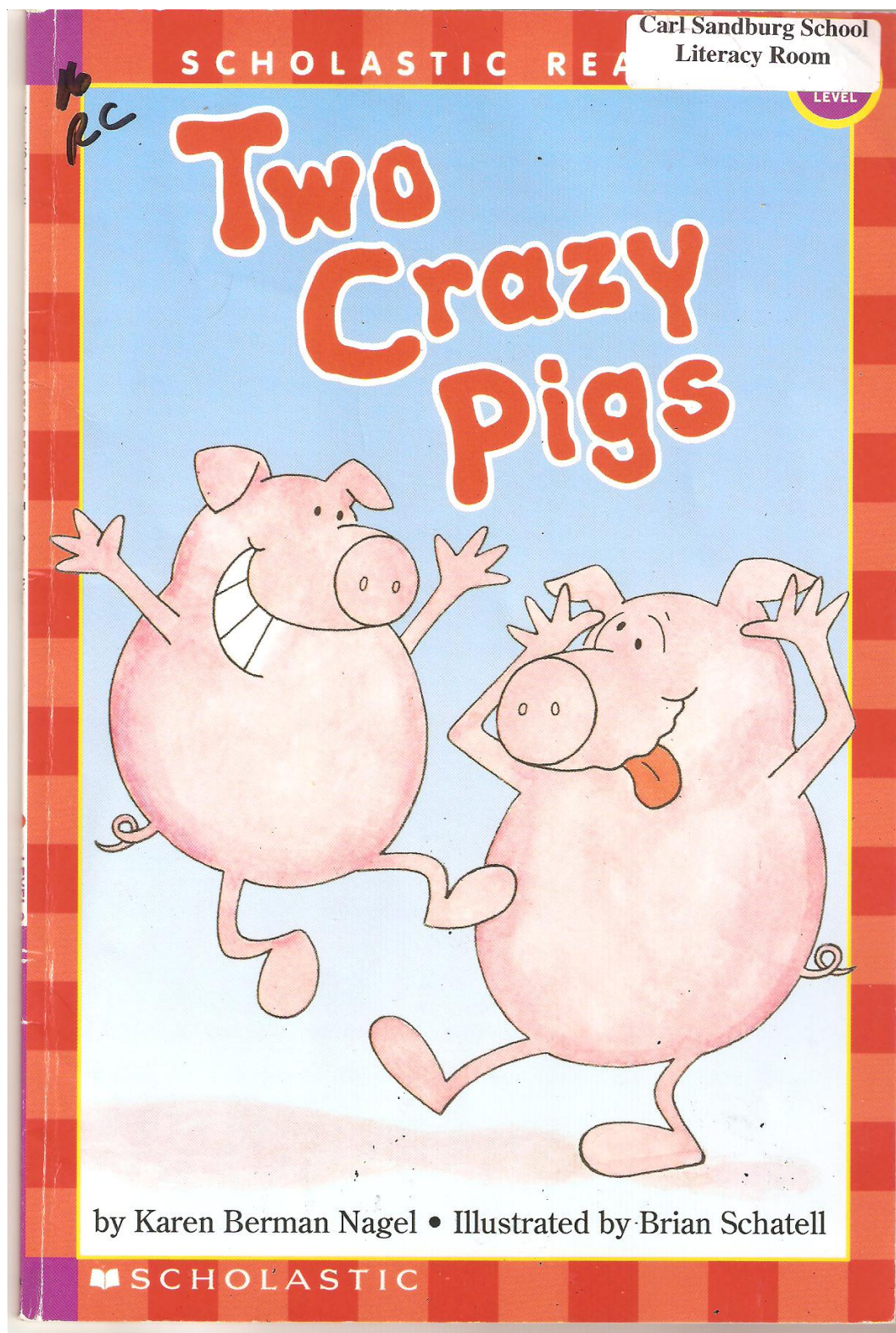
If you create a lesson plan, make a copy (perhaps laminate) and place it in the bag.

PLEASE, face all the books forward in the bag and return all materials to the correct tub.

Appendix F



Appendix F



Appendix G

observations. 2-6-14 (F)

Fluent readers do not sound choppy or like a robot. Fluent readers make the story come alive when Mrs. T. reads. it does not sound like a robot it sounds like she made the story come to life. When a word is in italics, we change our voice.

Appendix H

