

RISE Arkansas

An informational newsletter exploring the Science of Reading in Arkansas

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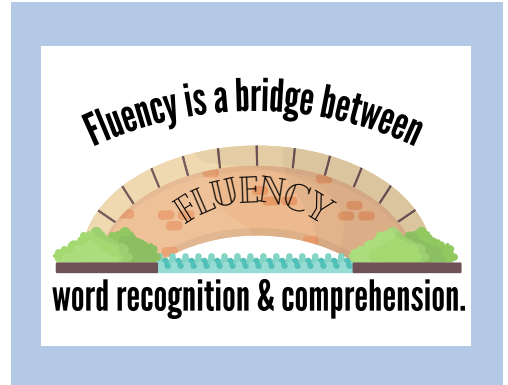


Inside this issue - Fluency

During the month of February, we will take a look at reading fluency. Fluency is defined as the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Fluency is a necessary skill. When students do not have fluency when reading, they expend too much of their mental energy on determining the pronunciation and meaning of words, and the result is often poor comprehension.

David Kilpatrick, the author of *Equipped for Reading Success*, states, "Good readers do not struggle over words - continually guessing or sounding them out. When they see the words, they immediately recognize them. For good readers, word reading is fluent. Fluent means fast and accurate, and includes proper expression. Fluent readers comprehend more of what they read because they can focus their attention on the meaning, not on figuring out the words."

This month, the RISE Newsletter will examine crucial elements of reading fluency, discuss the purpose of fluency, and describe ways parents can help their children become more fluent readers.



Five critical areas that should be in all reading instruction:

Phonological Awareness
Phonics
Comprehension
Vocabulary
Fluency

The Big 5

3 THREE ELEMENTS THAT ARE CRUCIAL FOR READING FLUENCY:

ACCURACY



Words must be identified correctly and the correct meaning must be accessed. Fluent readers do these two things simultaneously and instantaneously.

RATE



Rate refers to the speed with which students read text.

Students should not read too fast or too slow. Students can not gain speed when reading until they have accuracy.

EXPRESSION



Expression is a component of oral reading that includes: pitch, tone, volume, emphasis, rhythm, and a reader's ability to chunk words together in appropriate phases.

When readers read with accuracy, an appropriate rate, and suitable expression, they will have an accurate and deep understanding of the text and increased motivation to read.

"Fluency is not about reading fast."
-Dr. Jan Hasbrouck

In this short video, Dr. Jan Hasbrouck discusses the importance of reading fluency.



Scan here to watch on a mobile device.



THE PURPOSE OF FLUENCY

Reading fluency is necessary for comprehension and motivated reading and it has been described as a bridge between early and later reading phases.

In the early phases of learning to read, students:

- develop oral language
- develop phonemic awareness
- learn to apply the alphabetic principle to increasingly complex words,
- become familiar with more and more high-frequency words,
- build a large number of words that can be recognized instantaneously.

Later reading phases are characterized by,

- increased reading skills,
- and deepening comprehension.

If readers do not develop adequate levels of fluency, they can become stuck in the middle of the bridge, able to decode words but with insufficient automaticity to adequately facilitate comprehension or enjoy the process of reading. These students typically become our reluctant readers, often with dire consequences for themselves, their future families, and society as a whole.

- EXCERPT FROM READING FLUENTLY DOES NOT MEAN READING FAST 2018



Automaticity in Word Reading

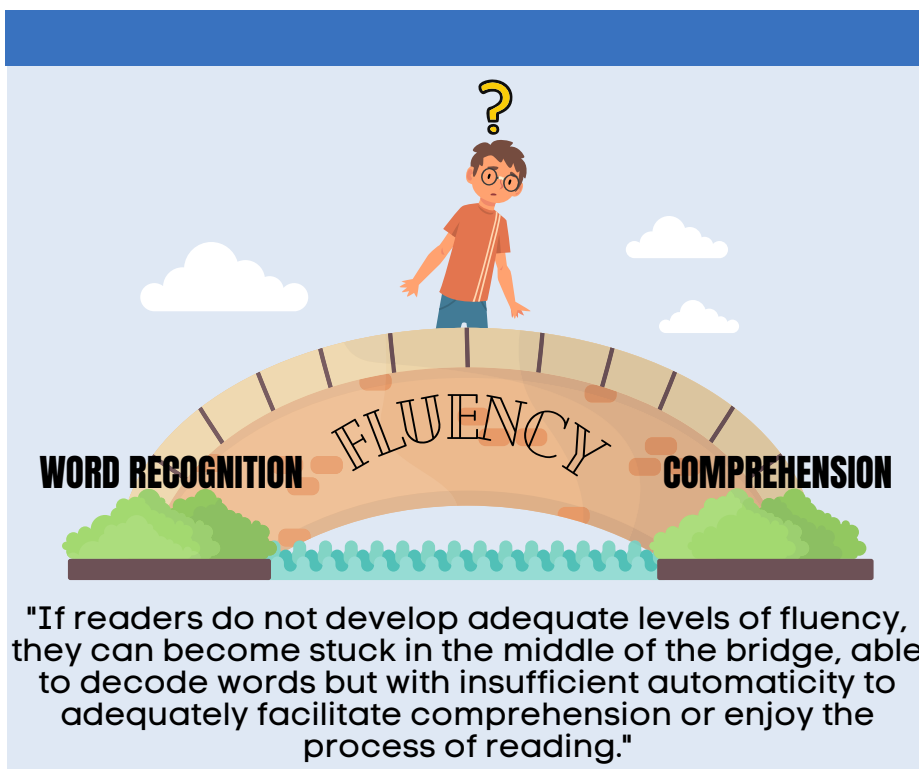
Automaticity is the fast, effortless word recognition that comes with reading practice. The ability to recognize words automatically when reading is crucial in becoming a fluent reader. Our brains have a small amount of working memory and can only handle little amounts of new information at one time.

"When the words in text are identified automatically, readers can employ most of their limited cognitive energy to that all-important task in reading—text comprehension," states Tim Rasinski, a professor of literacy education at Kent State University.

Word recognition can be a big hurdle for struggling readers.

Average readers need to see a word four to 14 times

before it is automatically recognized. Kids with dyslexia may need to see it up to 40 times. Continued reading practice helps word recognition become more automatic, rapid, and effortless.



WHAT IF MY STUDENT IS NOT A FLUENT READER?



When learning almost any new skill, there are underlying subskills that must be mastered first. Think about the game of basketball. A good coach would never start off the season by throwing players straight into a game with an opposing team.

That would be a disaster! Inexperienced players that don't have the foundational skills needed to properly compete must practice first! The first step a coach takes is to evaluate his players' current skills and knowledge of the game. Then, he designs and conducts many practice sessions that include multiple drills that help players grow and strengthen any areas of weakness. Each skill is practiced until it becomes automatic.

The same is true in reading development. If a student's reading is slow, choppy, or incorrect, most likely there are underlying issues that need to be addressed before fluent reading can occur. Children must be proficient in phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and their ability to read words and phrases before they can read longer texts fluently. When these skills are solid, parents should help their children choose books that can be read with a high degree of success. If the book is too hard, children will become frustrated with vocabulary and comprehension and their fluency will be hindered.

With a little assessment, modeling, and practice, parents can successfully coach their children to become more fluent readers!

PRACTICE WHILE PERFORMING



To become fluent readers, students practice reading texts several times. What would motivate older students to read something repeatedly? Performing, of course! Have students "perform" by reading scripts, poetry, or songs created from grade-level books, poems, songs, or stories.

Performing for family members or friends can be a fun and exciting way for older students to become more fluent readers.

Have the entire family get in the act! Perform along with your child using these [Reader's Theater Scripts!](#)



[Flyleaf Publishing](#) is a great resource to find books that are just right for your child. This site has a wide range of decodable books that are free to use and available right now! Once your child can successfully and fluently read each book, let them call or zoom with a family member and show off their reading skills!



4 Ways to "coach" your child in becoming a fluent reader!



Read aloud to your child to model how fluent reading sounds.



Remind your child to pause between sentences and phrases when reading.



Have your child practice matching his voice to yours while reading familiar books.



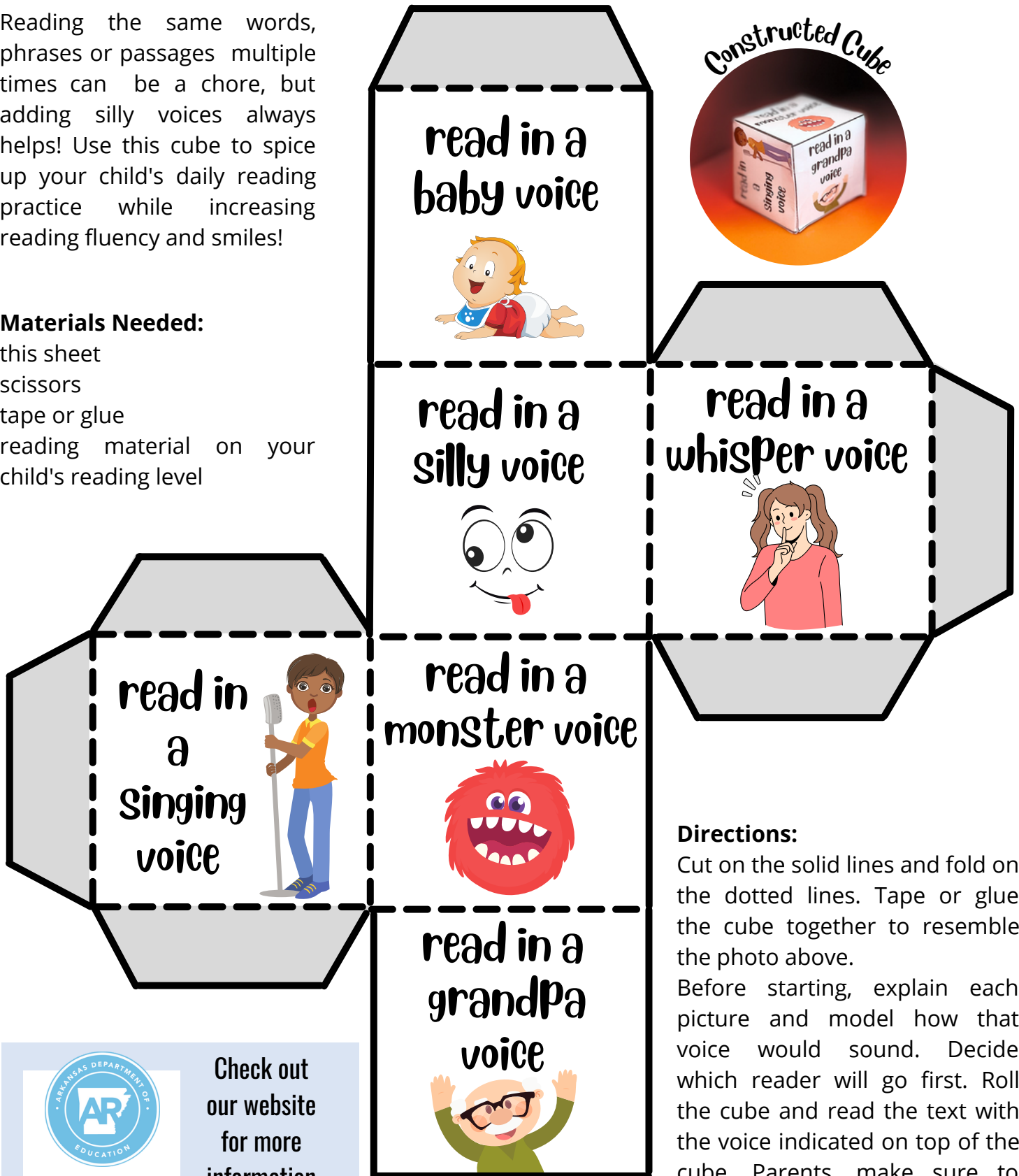
Encourage your child to reread their favorite books many times!

February Family Fluency Fun!

Reading the same words, phrases or passages multiple times can be a chore, but adding silly voices always helps! Use this cube to spice up your child's daily reading practice while increasing reading fluency and smiles!

Materials Needed:

this sheet
scissors
tape or glue
reading material on your child's reading level



Directions:

Cut on the solid lines and fold on the dotted lines. Tape or glue the cube together to resemble the photo above.

Before starting, explain each picture and model how that voice would sound. Decide which reader will go first. Roll the cube and read the text with the voice indicated on top of the cube. Parents, make sure to play along so students can hear fluent reading and see how much fun it is to read!



Check out our website for more information about RISE Arkansas!

