Repeated Reading as a Fluency Intervention with a Struggling Intermediate Reader

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Repeated Reading as a Fluency Intervention with a Struggling Intermediate Reader

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

M.S. Literacy Education

Supervised by

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Abstract

Given the recent trends in education focusing on oral reading fluency, this action research is an attempt to determine strategies teachers can use with struggling intermediate readers. The research focused on a single participant in sixth grade, with identified special needs, in an urban elementary school. Methodology included using repeated readings and analyzing the video recordings to determine accuracy rates and increases in oral reading scores. Data analysis indicates that repeated reading was an effective strategy at increasing words correct per minute, words read per minute, accuracy rates, and oral reading scores while decreasing the amount and type of miscues. This implies that this is an effective strategy teachers can implement within the context of a classroom setting with ease.
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Strategies to Improve Fluency in Struggling Intermediate Readers

As I listen to students read, one thing becomes glaringly apparent; most students are struggling with fluency. My students read word by word or in very short phrases. They do not differentiate dialogue from other text, they do not attend to punctuation, and they do not sound as if they are speaking. Why is this a problem? Research has indicated that if students are not reading fluently, they are spending too much cognitive energy just getting through the text, and their comprehension will suffer. Too much time and energy spent decoding text leaves little time or energy for constructing meaning from the text, which is the ultimate goal of reading today.

Historically speaking, the goal of reading has changed. In the 18th century, when books were not as prevalent as they are today, oral reading was a necessity. Often, one member of a family could read and would read aloud to others for enjoyment and to disseminate information. The primary focus of reading instruction was oral reading, with little focus on reading comprehension. In the early 20th century, the goal of reading instruction changed. As books and other printed materials became more accessible, silent reading began to permeate everyday life. The focus of reading instruction shifted to assessing comprehension through silent reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006). Then, in the second half of the 20th century, oral reading took the form of round robin reading. In this type of reading, all students read the same passage, with the teacher calling on one student at a time to orally read sections of the text. This proved to be anxiety provoking for struggling readers and little evidence exists to support this practice, even today
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention (Rasinski & Mraz, 2008). In fact, according to Eldredge, Reutzel and Hollingworth (as cited in Rasinski & Mraz, 2008) “…round robin reading was inferior to the shared book experience in promoting fluency, word recognition, and vocabulary acquisition” (Rasinski & Mraz 2008 p. 110).

As more and more researchers studied fluency, the first modern theoretical conception of fluency came from Laberge and Samuels’ 1974 study. They argued that surface-level processing of words in reading (e.g. visual perception, sounds, phrasing words together) should ideally be done at an automatic level, a level that required minimal attention or cognitive capacity. In doing so, readers could reserve their finite cognitive resources for the more important task in reading – comprehension. (Rasinski & Mraz 2008 p. 111).

What does this mean for today’s teachers and students? Fluency is one of the five dimensions of reading comprehension,(National Reading Panel, 2000) and dysfluent readers are often placed in the lowest reading groups and viewed through a deficit model. There are many factors that affect a student’s fluency. Teachers must be cognizant of the oral language patterns in the student’s home community and how they can affect fluency (Gee, 2000; Moll & Gonzalez, 2000; Wolfram, 2000). Furthermore, word recognition must occur at the automatic level, phrasing must be accurate and meaningful, punctuation must be attended to, and dialogue must be differentiated for students to be considered fluent readers (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000). In short, students must read orally so that their reading sounds like natural, spoken language.
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This paper is an attempt to determine what strategies teachers can use to most effectively improve the fluency of struggling readers. One student with identified special needs will be studied. She is in the sixth grade at an urban elementary school. Current practices in the school are to place students in either an intensive, strategic, or benchmark group for oral reading fluency based upon their scores on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) oral reading fluency. Students in the intensive group receive biweekly fluency probes, as they have demonstrated that they are orally reading well below their current grade level. Students in the strategic group receive monthly fluency probes as they are reading below grade level. Students in the benchmark group do not receive any additional fluency probes as they are considered to be performing at grade level.

Theoretical Framework

Literacy is often simply defined as the ability to read and write. I would argue that there is much more to the definition of literacy, especially in today's society when students are expected to possess skills that enable them to manipulate and produce digital texts. A more complex definition of literacy is offered by Larson and Marsh (2005) who claim, building on the simple definition of literacy, that there are several models of literacy, including literacy as a social practice, and autonomous model of literacy, and an ideological model of literacy. Common to the models of changing participation and an ideological model are the concepts that literacy is constructed in meaningful social interactions that are dependent on social, cultural, and political contexts (Larson & Marsh 2005). The autonomous model positions literacy “as a dis
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crete set of skills that can be taught in similar ways across varying contexts” (Larson & Marsh 2005 p. 11), without regard for an individual’s personal experiences. This autonomous model is how many of today’s prepackaged literacy curricula are presented; just teach the skills in the correct order and students will acquire literacy.

Gee (2001) offers another definition of literacy when he states “literacy is control of secondary uses of language...literacy is mastered through acquisition, not learning, that is, it requires exposure to models in natural, meaningful, and functional settings” (Gee 2001 p. 542). Lankshear and Knobel (2007) offer yet another definition of literacy that includes the new, technological skills students are expected to possess. They define literacy as “socially recognized ways of generating, communicating, and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of encoded texts within contexts of participation in Discourses” (Lankshear & Knobel 2007 p. 224).

Drawing on these definitions, I would argue that literacy is the ability to create meaning from text, whether printed or digital, and that the construction of meaning occurs in the interactions between the reader and the text as well as in social interactions among students. Students draw on their own personal experiences and the shared experiences of others to help create meaning.

My definition of literacy is based on sociocultural historical theory and the New Literacy Studies. Sociocultural historical theory is defined by Larson and Marsh (2005) as a “theoretical framework (that) challenges traditional definitions of learning as the transmission of knowledge. From this perspective, learning is defined as changing participation in culturally valued activity with more expert others” (Larson & Marsh 2005
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p. 4). Drawing on Larson and Marsh (2005) again, the New Literacy Studies theory is defined as “a theoretical framework that assumes literacy is a critical social practice constructed in everyday interactions across local contexts. New Literacy Studies emphasizes literacy as a more complex social practice than mandated curricula and assessments address” (Larson & Marsh 2005 p. 3). Local contexts, embedded within larger historical, political, and social contexts, determine how literacy is defined at any given moment. In this sense, we can see that literacy is defined by politics and is socially constructed, so what constitutes a literate person will change over time in reaction to different social contexts.

This perspective relates to fluency because a student’s oral reading behaviors are reflective of and influenced by their home community’s language patterns and practices. Therefore, the language patterns a student brings to school may be incongruous to the language patterns of the larger school community. This affects the perception of the student’s ability to read fluently.

If literacy is defined as social interactions that occur in meaningful contexts, then surely students come to school with a set of literacy skills. Then why do many students struggle to fit the mold of literate individuals as defined by schools? The answer lies in how the school views literacy and the skills students are bringing with them. Literacy acquisition begins in the home and continues once a child is enrolled in school. In the home, the child acquires oral language and learns how to speak based on meaningful interactions with close family members. Gee refers to this as the “oral mode” (Gee 2001 p. 541), and claims this mode “is the birthright of every human and comes through
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primary socialization within the family as this is defined within a given culture” (Gee 2001 p. 541). Through these interactions in the home and surrounding community, the child develops what Gee has termed the primary discourse (Gee 2001). Once a child is enrolled in school, they begin to develop secondary discourses. Secondary discourses are developed as the child interacts with others in school, stores, churches, and the larger community. According to Gee, “these secondary discourses all build on, and extend the uses of language we acquired as part of our primary discourse, and they are more or less compatible with the primary discourses of different social groups” (Gee 2001 p. 541). Of course, this statement is based on the assumption that the child is a “main stream child” as Gee also states that “non-mainstream children will always have more conflicts in using and thus mastering dominant secondary discourses” (Gee 2001 p. 541-542). The problem for these “non-mainstream” children is that the primary discourse of school is not congruent with their primary discourse. Schools use the discourse of the dominant culture, primarily white middle class, and therefore students whose primary discourse uses language differently are often seen through a deficit model. This ultimately influences the perception of the student’s oral reading fluency.

Wolfram states that “it is impossible to speak English without speaking some dialect of the language” (Wolfram 2000 p. 226). If dialect is associated with a marginalized group, their language will also be marginalized, yet if a dialect is associated with a higher social class, their language will carry value. Students whose dialect is out of synch with that of the school culture will find themselves struggling to acquire literacy because “teachers sometimes classify students’ speech as “deficient” when it is simply different from the testing norm” (Wolfram 2000 p. 227), and therefore overcorrect a
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student’s pronunciation, which can lead to a decrease in motivation in literacy acquisition. This idea of a self-fulfilling prophecy was confirmed by Wolfram when he wrote “if someone is told enough times that she speaks badly, it’s just a matter of time before she starts believing she is as her speech” (Wolfram 2000 p. 227). Again, students whose primary discourse is out of sync with the discourse of schools are the ones who struggle most to acquire literacy. This does not mean that these struggling learners cannot acquire literacy, but rather, schools must look critically at their curricula and teaching practices to make sure both are culturally responsive. This means teachers must make decisions based on what they know about a student’s cultural background, how language is used in the home community, how literacy is valued in the home community, and find ways to incorporate these cultural values into the curriculum. This is supported by Moll and Gonzalez and their concept of the funds of knowledge available to students. Funds of knowledge are defined as “those historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll & Gonzalez 2001 p. 160). According to Moll and Gonzalez, there are two key implications for teachers who draw on this sociocultural historical theory to inform their teaching. These implications involve viewing working class and language minority households as having worthwhile knowledge and experiences for students to draw on and viewing culture as the “lived practices and knowledge of the students and their families” (Moll & Gonzalez 2001 p. 162). This is a dramatic shift from how culture is often viewed in school, where celebrations and traditions are discussed, but seen as separate pieces from the actual lives of students.
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Research Question

If literacy is defined as making meaning from social interactions across contexts, and is heavily influenced by a student’s primary discourse, what does this mean for fluency instruction? This paper is an attempt to determine which strategies teachers can use to most effectively improve student’s oral reading fluency. In order to maintain cognitive resources for comprehension, students must be able to read fluently. Rasinski and Mraz (2008) define fluency as “the ability to read meaningfully, as well as accurately with appropriate speed” (Rasinski & Mraz 2008 p. 116). There are several strategies that can be used in a workshop model of literacy instruction that are aimed at improving reading fluency. Buddy reading with a more proficient reading partner provides a scaffolded model for students to improve fluency, as well as promoting collaboration among readers. This strategy fits well into the workshop model, as this is an activity that two students could engage in as a center activity, while other students are engaged in literacy activities that address their individual needs. In addition to buddy reading, repeated reading of a text has also been shown to improve reading fluency. In this method, students read a text silently while listening to either the teacher or a tape recorded reading of the text. Within a workshop model, students can read from fluency folders, which contain favorite poems, song lyrics, stories, and other student selected passages. These strategies promote the values of sociocultural historical learning theory in that the activities are designed to meet the needs of individual students,
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention through changing participation, with the collaboration of a more expert other (Larson & Marsh 2001).

**Literature Review**

Fluency has often been the one area of reading instruction that was lacking within the context of classroom reading instruction. Based on the National Reading Panel’s 2002 report, which stated that fluency is an essential part of reading, classroom instruction has seen a shift to include more time spent on fluency instruction, particularly in the primary grades. This shift has led to conflicting views of what constitutes fluent reading.

**Theoretical Views on Fluency**

In the field of fluency research, there are two prevalent theories in terms of how to define fluency. The first theory deals with automaticity, or the automatic decoding of words, which allows the reader to use their cognitive skills for focusing on meaning. This theory is based on the 1974 work of LaBerge and Samuels (1974). In this sense, fluency is defined as “the ability to decode words in text effortlessly or automatically so that readers can reserve their precious and limited cognitive resources for the more important task of comprehending or making sense of the text” (Rasinski & Padak, 2005 p.34).

The second definition of fluency deals with the prosodic reading features of oral reading. This definition states that fluent oral reading is “the ability to phrase written text into appropriate and meaningful chunks, which is reflected in readers’ use of
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expression, pausing, emphasis, and enthusiasm while reading orally” (Rasinski & Padak, 2005 p. 35). This definition of fluency appears to be more subjective to the language patterns of the dominant culture within schools. Cultural and linguistic variations affect pronunciation, word, choice, grammar and cultural understanding (Wolfram 2000). What does this mean for students who are struggling to acquire literacy in school? Linguistic variation, according to Labov and Baker (2003), is merely pronunciation differences that often result in the teacher recording the mispronunciation as a reading error, thereby lowering scores on standardized reading assessments. In reality, the student commits a reading error only if they are not able to comprehend the reading passage. The teacher must decide if the misunderstanding of a word leads to future misunderstandings, or if it is simply a difference in pronunciation. Students who speak African American Vernacular English (AAVE) are often viewed through a deficit model, as their oral speech is incongruous with that of the teacher and larger school climate. For many English Language Learners (ELLs), their primary discourse, spoken within their home community, is greatly different from that of the school curriculum and assessment tools (Mays 2008).

Word choice is also affected by cultural and linguistic variation. As Olson has demonstrated, writing is not simply speech written down (Olson 2006). Olson writes, “in speaking orally, a speaker has a richer range of resources at hand than does a writer: writers must invent or learn lexical and grammatical functions to compensate for such paralinguistic features as facial expression and tone of voice” (Olson 2006 p. 140). This task is especially challenging for ELLs and speakers of AAVE because they must learn to convey meaning in a form that is congruent with their secondary discourse, which
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention implicitly marginalizes their primary discourse. What implications does this have on fluency instruction? Teachers must be aware of the home language patterns of their students and provide instruction that allows students to access the language patterns of the larger community, which is often the secondary discourse of urban students.

In this literature review, I will focus on strategies that are reflective of both theoretical frameworks. Readers' Theatre has a theoretical foundation in the prosodic elements of oral reading as readers are expected to convey meaning through their expressive oral reading. Repeated reading has a theoretical foundation in automaticity theory as readers are asked to read to either a predetermined rate or until they reach a specified number of words read correctly per minute. My research question and methods are more reflective of the automaticity stance as I will be using words correct per minute, words per minute, and accuracy rate as the measure of improvement in oral reading fluency. This is keeping in line with practices already in place at Midland Elementary.

Why is fluency instruction important?

Many recent assessments of reading proficiency in American schools paint a dismal picture. As many as 40% of American students are reading below a basic proficiency level (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003 as cited in Denton, Fletcher, Anthony & Francis, 2006), with problem being more severe in urban schools “in which 60% of African American fourth grade students read below basic levels” (Musti-Rao, Hawkins, & Barkley, 2009 p.12). As stated by Rasinski and Padak, (2005), fluent oral reading reserves cognitive resources for comprehension, which is the ultimate goal of reading. Samuels (as cited in Kuhn et al. 2010), states that “the most important
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characteristic of the fluent reader is the ability to decode and comprehend the text at the same time” (Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, & Meisinger, 2010 p. 239). This is important because many students are simply word callers and by

including text comprehension within the definition of fluent reading, it becomes possible to differentiate two groups of students; word callers, who simply read words, or “bark” at print without attending to meaning, and fluent readers who construct meaning from the text as they read” (Kuhn et. al 2010 p. 239).

Further support for the connection between fluent reading and comprehension has been found in the research of Therrien and Kubina (2007). These researchers assert that “when decoding is too slow, a “bottleneck” is created in short-term memory that impedes the flow of thought and hampers comprehension” (Adams, 2000; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974 as cited in Therrien & Kubina, 2010 p. 179). Furthermore, Therrien and Kubina state that “as students become proficient reading the words, their fluency develops which, by virtue of a shift in the allocation of attention from decoding to comprehension, improves their understanding of the text” (Therrien & Kubina, 2010 p. 179). Students whose primary discourse is out of synch with the larger school culture, are from urban areas, or low socioeconomic backgrounds, are often the same students who are described as having reading difficulties (Musti-Rao et. al 2009). These same students are often disproportionately referred for special education services (Denton et. al 2006). Thus, fluency instruction has an important, if not critical, place in classroom reading instruction if American students are to be viewed as proficient readers.
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**Research Supported Strategies**

Research on fluency instruction has supported repeated reading and Readers’ Theatre as effective strategies for improving the oral reading fluency of students. Repeated reading focuses on the number of words correct a student reads. Just like any other activity one does well, oral reading fluency can be improved through practice, and “practice at the activity seems critical to developing a degree of automaticity or fluency in its execution” (Rasinski & Padak, 2005 p.36). In repeated readings, “students are asked to read short passages several times until they achieve a level of fluent reading.” (Rasinski & Padak 2005 p. 37). Research has also found that practice with repeated reading leads to improvement in oral reading fluency on the practice passage, but also on passages that have never before been encountered (Rasinski & Padak, 2005). Readers’ Theatre combines the benefits of repeated reading with the elements of prosodic oral reading “Because no acting, props, costumes, or scenery are used in Readers’ Theatre, readers must use their voices to carry the meaning” (Young & Rasinski, 2009 p. 5). In preparing for a Readers’ Theatre performance, students are provided with a model of fluent reading, provided corrective feedback on their oral reading, practice rereading the passage until they are able to perform it fluently for an audience, and do not have to memorize the script (Corcoran, 2005). Within the context of a Readers’ Theatre performance, “the focus is on fluently conveying meaning through expression and intonation” (Corcoran, 2005 p. 106). This method has also been found
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to increase student motivation for oral reading (Young & Rasinski, 2009; Corcoran, 2005).

**Readers' Theatre**

Readers’ Theatre has been shown to be an effective strategy in improving the oral reading fluency and prosodic reading of students in the primary grades both in general and special education settings (Corcoran, 2005; Keehn, 2003; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Research has been conducted in urban, suburban, and rural settings in grades two and three. In each case, students’ independent reading levels were assessed prior to the research study, and passages for Readers’ Theatre were selected based on this information (Corcoran, 2005; Keehn, 2003; Young & Rasinski, 2009). Both the Keehn and Young and Rasinski studies assessed the prosodic oral reading of the participants, while the Corcoran study assessed the oral reading fluency of participants as measured by words correct per minute.

Corcoran’s study (2005) was designed to measure “the confidence in reading and overall fluency in number of words read correctly per minute” (Corcoran, 2005 p. 107) in 12 students in a self contained multi-grade special education setting over the course of eight weeks. Fluency scores were assessed prior to the implementation of the Readers’ Theatre program and again at the end of the program. The participants were placed into three groups of four students based on reading ability. The first week of instruction focused on the researcher modeling and leading discussions of fluent and dysfluent reading, as well as script mechanics. The remaining weeks followed the format of reading the script silently to themselves, then aloud with the group on the first day, the
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researcher modeling reading with intonation and inflection for selected parts of the script on the second day, whole group reading, followed by independent practice on the third and fourth day, with corrective feedback provided by the researcher, and finally performing the script for younger students. On the third and fourth day, the researcher implemented echo reading as an instructional strategy. The strategy of echo reading is one in which a “teacher reads fluently and with emotion, inflection, and intonation for the student and the student mimics the way the teacher says the lines in order to get the feel of what fluent reading should sound and feel like” (Corcoran, 2005 p. 108).

Keehn’s study (2003) was designed to “further examine the effectiveness of Readers’ Theatre as an instructional intervention in reading.” (Keehn, 2003 p. 43) as well as... “to examine the benefit, if any, of explicit instruction in addressing fluency in the primary classroom” (Keehn, 2003 p. 43). The research was conducted in a rural school district with four second grade, ethnically diverse, general education classrooms over the course of nine weeks. As in Corcoran’s study, the researcher initially determined the oral reading fluency of each participant, as well as their independent reading levels. Participants’ reading levels and oral reading fluency were assessed again at the conclusion of the study. Students were placed into one of two groups; one group received Readers’ Theatre instruction and daily coaching in strategies to improve oral reading fluency, while the other group only received instruction in Readers’ Theatre. Participants in the first group were provided corrective feedback, or coaching, by the classroom teacher as they orally read their scripts. Teachers for the second group were instructed to only monitor their students and not provide any coaching or feedback. Each group had a five day cycle for the Readers’ Theatre script. Day one for the first
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group included a mini-lesson, introduction of the books the scripts were based on, modeling of fluent reading, and independent or buddy practice of the script. The second and third day featured participants orally reading several roles highlighted in the script, with the teacher providing feedback on the oral reading. Day four focused on the participants reading only their assigned part, again with the teacher providing feedback. Day five was the performance for an audience day. The second group followed the same daily format as group one, with the exception of the teacher not providing mini-lessons or corrective feedback.

Young and Rasinski's study (2009) was designed to “continue the line of authentic classroom-based research on the effect of Readers' Theatre to improve fluency and overall reading achievement among primary grade students” (Young & Rasinski, 2009 p. 5). This study was conducted in a suburban, general education second grade classroom. As in the previous studies, reading levels and prosodic elements were assessed prior to the study and again at the conclusion. In this study, Readers' Theatre was contextualized to be part of the existing balanced literacy program. Unlike the previous two studies, students were allowed to choose the script they would rehearse and perform, with three to six students comprising each Readers' Theatre group. Monday the scripts were introduced through mini-lesson. Students chose the script they desired, read it once independently, and then took the script home. On Tuesday through Thursday, five to ten minutes of time was devoted to Readers' Theatre script rehearsal. Students made their role choices on Tuesday. Wednesday was a time to identify any issues the participants were having with meaning, word recognition, or
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prosodic features. During this time, students were also exposed to the neurological-impress method, in which

a more proficient reader takes the lead in a choral reading. The proficient reader establishes a fluent pace and emphasizes prosodic features. The less proficient reader attempts to read along with the leader. The goal is for the less proficient reader to mimic the features of the more proficient reader. (Young & Rasinski, 2009, p.9-10).

Friday was the day participants performed their scripts for an audience of classmates.

In all three studies, the participants made significant gains in their oral reading fluency and prosodic reading. During Corcoran’s study (2005), data suggests that “special education students did benefit from a readers’ theatre program” (Corcoran, 2005, p.110). As a class, the number of words read correctly per minute increased by 17 words. Individual increases ranged from three words per minute to 41 words per minute. In Keehn’s study (2003), all students also made gains in their rate, accuracy, and prosodic elements. Students in the first group, who received explicit instruction in addition to Readers’ Theatre practice, increased their rate by 10 words correct per minute, their accuracy by 1.6%, their fluidity by 1.2, their phrasing by .7, and their expressiveness by 1.3. Furthermore, their word identification increased from a 2.4 grade level equivalent to a 3.5 grade level equivalent. Students in the second group, who received only Readers’ Theatre practice, increased their rate by 9 words correct per minute, their accuracy by 1%, their fluidity and phrasing by .5, their expressiveness by .9. Their word identification increased from a 3.6 grade level equivalent to a 4.4
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grade level equivalent. Keehn stated that “explicit instruction did not add differentially to student’s oral reading fluency growth” (Keehn, 2003, p. 49) but that “…all children, regardless of reading ability, made growth through the intervention of purposeful readings via Readers Theater” (Keehn, 2003, p. 50). Young and Rasinski’s study (2009) also produced similar results. Scores in word recognition increased by .3%, words correct per minute increased by 64.9 words, and prosody increased from a 2.2 to a 3.0 (maximum score of 4). Participants in this class “…made gains that were greater than in other classrooms where fluency and Readers Theater were less emphasized” (Young & Rasinski, 2009, p. 11). Clearly, Readers’ Theatre provides the repeated reading exposure and prosodic element practice necessary to improve oral reading fluency.

Repeated Reading

Repeated reading is another strategy that has been proven to be an effective strategy for improving the oral reading fluency of struggling readers. This strategy builds on the automaticity theory first proposed by LaBerge and Samuels in 1974. Automaticity theory states that oral reading should be accomplished with little to no cognitive effort expended, thus reserving the cognitive resources for comprehension. This theory is based upon four central properties for oral reading and these “processes are considered automatic when they possess four properties: speed, effortlessness, autonomy, and lack of conscious awareness” (Kuhn et. al, 2010, p 231). Speed, in this sense, is related to accuracy and how long it takes the reader to complete the passage. Many researchers believe that speed emerges concurrently with accuracy, and as
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givers practice, their speed and accuracy improve. The second property, effortlessness, refers to the lack of effort students must expend to decode the text. The greater the number of sight words a student can recognize and the greater the decoding skills of the reader, the more effortless the task of reading fluently becomes. Embedded in the property of effortlessness is reading comprehension. If readers are not expending cognitive resources on decoding, they are using those resources for comprehension, without having to stop to think about the meaning. Meaning is constructed effortlessly as the reader processes the text. The third property, autonomy, refers to the fact that the reader engages in the processes of decoding and comprehending the text without consciously attending to either. Finally, the property of lack of conscious awareness circles back to the concept of effortlessness. Readers are able to identify almost any word they encounter without thinking about it (Kuhn et al., 2010).

Accuracy and speed are the most quantifiable measurements of oral reading, and are therefore most often used to assess students’ reading fluency. This is due in part to the dominance of assessments, such as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and other classroom based fluency programs that privilege speed and accuracy above phrasing, intonation, and expression. The studies discussed here are studies that have held true to this trend and use accuracy and speed, as most often measured in words correct per minute, as the determining factor for a reader being considered fluent or dysfluent.
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In their study, Musti-Rao, Hawkins, and Barkley set out to evaluate the effects of peer mediated repeated reading with struggling, urban, fourth grade students. All students in the study were determined to be reading below grade level based on the school’s diagnostic testing. Students were paired together and took turns practicing reading a passage for ten minutes. Participant performance was measured weekly on unpracticed passages to determine if the gains made on practice passages was transferred to unrehearsed passages. At the conclusion of their study, the researchers found that all students showed growth in their oral reading fluency, as measured in words correct per minute, but failed to transfer these gains to unrehearsed passages. Students, on average, had a mean change of 39.8% in their words correct per minute, and were able to meet the criteria of 118 words per minute on practice passages (Musti-Rao et. al 2009).

Another study that used a variation of peer mediated repeated reading was conducted by Goering and Baker in 2010. Their study took place in a high school, with students receiving 24 sessions over 7 months. During the repeated reading, students worked with a partner and took turns reading a passage for a period of 10 to 15 minutes, with the partner providing feedback. All participants were pre-tested using the Gray Oral Reading Test4 (GORT4) by a certified speech-language pathologist. Once the intervention of repeated reading began, the students engaged in a four day cycle, with each cycle focusing on a different genre of text. The first day of the cycle featured the researchers modeling fluent and dysfluent reading to the class and the participants choosing a text to read. The second day focused on the participants working with a partner to repeatedly read their text and give and receive feedback from their peers.
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The partnerships were reorganized several times throughout the day in order for students to increase their comfort level with oral reading and the feedback process. The third day of the cycle featured the students practicing individually, in pairs, and in small groups of four to five students. The fourth and final day of the cycle featured oral reading performances by each of the participants to an audience of peers. Students were post tested with the GORT4 at the conclusion of the study. Data analysis revealed that a statistically significant improvement in oral reading fluency occurred for all students in the study (Goering & Baker, 2010).

As part of a larger research study that was seeking to answer the question of whether or not students with persistent reading difficulties made gains in the areas of decoding, spelling, fluency, and comprehension using an intensive intervention designed to promote oral reading fluency and accurate decoding, Denton et.al used the Read Naturally and Phono-Graphix programs for 16 weeks. Their study was conducted in an urban school district with 32 students in grades one through three. All of the students in grade one were repeating first grade. Intervention occurred during the regular school day with the first eight weeks devoted to the Phono-Graphix program followed by eight weeks of the Read Naturally program. The Phono-Graphix program was used to address the larger question and the area of decoding while the Read Naturally program was used to address the oral reading fluency component of the larger research question. This program is designed for use with students in grades one through eight and has three main components. The first component is reading with a model, either an audiotape, CD, or computer software to support and scaffold fluency and accuracy. The second component is repeated reading of expository passages, and
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The final component is goal setting and progress monitoring. The Read Naturally program includes several steps in which a student reads the passage orally, times him/herself, estimates the number of errors, graphs the words correct per minute for the initial reading, reads the same passage with the support of an audiotape or CD, and continues to practice reading that passage with and without support until reaching a predetermined fluency goal. The participants then answer comprehension questions based on the passage, reads the passage again orally while being timed by the teacher, graphs words correct per minute for the final reading, and completes a brief retelling of the passage. There are three criteria a student must meet to pass the passage: meet his or her fluency goal rate, make no more than three errors, and read with appropriate phrasing. In this study, the teacher timed the student during the initial oral reading and then taught the student any words that were missed during the initial reading. At the conclusion of the study, the data showed that all students made significant gains in the area of fluency, particularly during the Read Naturally phase of the intervention. Denton et. al concluded that “…an intensive 8-week oral reading fluency intervention emphasizing repeated reading can have significant effects on the abilities of student with severe reading impairments to fluently and accurately read words in lists and connected text” (Denton et.al, 2006, p.462).

Repeated Reading Versus Continuous Text

There is debate within the field of fluency research as to whether it is more beneficial for students to engage in repeated reading or reading of continuous text to improve fluency. Researchers O’Connor, White, and Swanson conducted a study in 2007 to
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answer that exact question. They studied students in second and fourth grades who were determined to be struggling readers. Students in second grade read between 12 and 45 words per minute on grade level passages, while fourth grade students read between 20 and 80 words per minute on grade level passages. Participants were placed into one of two groups and either participated in a repeated reading group or a continuous text group. Each intervention was conducted one on one with the researcher and participant. Students in the repeated reading group read aloud to a trained adult listener for 15 minutes three times a week for 14 weeks. Students in the continuous text group read for the same amount of time, but instead of repeating the passage, they read continuous pages of text. Data analysis showed that the participants in the repeated reading group read at a mean rate of 42.17 words correct per minute before the intervention and at a rate of 74.33 words correct per minute after the intervention. This was a significantly higher gain compared to the continuous text reading group (O’Connor et al. 2007). Clearly, this provides solid support for the use of repeated reading.

In looking at factors that influence repeated reading, the issue of contextualized text has arisen. The question most often asked is whether or not gains in oral reading fluency are higher if students read contextualized or acontextualized (randomized text or word lists) text. Therrien and Kubina set out to answer this question in their 2007 study. Their research was conducted in an elementary school in Pennsylvania with students in third, fourth, or fifth grade. The initial pool of students were nominated by their teachers, but then screened using a reading inventory. Students who were reading at least one grade level below their current grade, but with reading levels
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between second and fourth grade, were selected to participate in the study. The participants were then placed into two groups, with the first group reading words out of context and then connected text. The second group read connected text first then words out of context. In each case, the participants read until they reached a rate of 93 correct word per minute or had read the passage six times. When this task was complete, students were provided the correct pronunciation for any words they missed, and then practiced saying the word correctly. Immediately following this feedback, the students were given a transfer passage to read aloud. The entire research study was carried out over the course of three days, with day one focusing on pre-testing, day two and three focused on each group completing each task and completing the transfer passage. Data analysis showed that when students engage in reading of connected text, they read the words faster and with more accuracy compared to reading words out of context. Students who read connected text had a mean words correct per minute of 112.40 versus a mean words correct per minute of 105.66 for students who read words out of context. The data supports repeated reading as an effective strategy to improve oral reading fluency.

Clearly, the research has shown that Readers’ Theatre and repeated reading are effective strategies for improving the oral reading fluency of struggling readers. Elements of repeated reading are embedded in the practice stages of Readers’ Theatre, thus further emphasizing the connection between repeated reading and oral reading fluency. Most of the literature on Readers’ Theatre as a way to increase oral reading fluency has focused on the primary grades while the literature on repeated readings spans the grades from first grade through high school. This has lead me to wonder if I
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention can reproduce the same results of the repeated reading studies with a struggling intermediate reader.

Methods

Context

This action research project was conducted in an urban elementary school in Western New York. The district is located in Monroe County, has 84% of students receiving free or reduced lunch, 18% of students are identified as having special needs, and has the highest poverty rate among the top five districts in New York State. Midland Elementary is one of 40 elementary schools in the district, and is located in a residential neighborhood that borders a suburban area. According to the New York State Report Card, the school houses grades kindergarten through six, with an enrollment of 605 students, and an average class size of 21 students. The average attendance rate for this school is 93%. Of the 605 students enrolled in this school, 498 (82%) are eligible for free lunch and 35 students (6%) are eligible for reduced price lunch. Midland Elementary is a culturally diverse school; 44 students (7%) are Limited English Proficient, 402 students (66%) are African American, 147 students (24%) are Hispanic/Latino, 47 students (8%) are Caucasian, and less than 1% are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Native Hawaiian, or Multiracial. Midland Elementary has a
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strong parent teacher organization, a basketball team, and offers chorus and instrumental music opportunities for students in the upper elementary grades. The school also offers an extended academic day with a variety of tutoring sessions provided by teachers in the school district. Specifically, the research sessions were conducted in a resource room setting at the end of a 60 minute instructional session. There were four students in the room, including the participant, however, the research was only be conducted with one participant. The other three students in the room were engaged in independent center activities while the teacher researcher worked with the participant. Each session lasted approximately 10 minutes, meet three times each week, over a two week period.

Participants

This action research was conducted with one participant. Trina is an African American female, age 12 years, 4 months, currently in the sixth grade. She participates in the general education curriculum for the entire school day, with the exception of the three hours each week that she receives resource room support. Trina is classified with a learning disability and works with a special education teacher in a small group setting. This represents a change in her classification from the 2009-2010 school year when she was classified as a student with a speech/language impairment. She was dismissed from speech and language services at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, as she had made significant growth and testing indicated she no longer qualified for speech and language services. Due to auditory processing delays, Trina requires frequent comprehension checks, is seated near the source of information in the classroom, and
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has tasks broken into smaller segments. She is also allotted additional time to complete tasks. Trina is a very friendly, outgoing student who works very hard in the classroom. She does struggle with attending to academic lessons. Trina learns best in a small group setting with multi-sensory strategies. In her spare time, Trina enjoys playing video games. She has a positive outlook on school, particularly towards reading.

**Researcher Stance**

As a researcher and resource room teacher, I worked with Trina one on one in the setting of the school resource room. I assumed the role of an active participant in the research process as I documented Trina’s oral reading behaviors, provided feedback to her, and interacted with her to provide scaffolding and instruction in fluency as necessary. I have recently transferred to this school and provide special education services to Trina in the resource room setting. As part of our initial meeting, I asked informal interview type questions in order to get to know Trina. I currently hold New York State Teacher Certifications in the areas of childhood and special education, both in grades one through six. I received an Associate’s Degree from Monroe Community College in liberal arts, a Bachelor’s Degree from St. John Fisher College in childhood and special education, and am pursuing a Master’s Degree from St. John Fisher College in Literacy. This action research project was conducted as part of the requirements for obtaining a Master’s Degree.

**Methods**

During this research study, I implemented a variety of methods to determine if repeated reading is an effective instructional practice to increase the oral reading
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fluency rates of struggling intermediate readers. First, I used a researcher created interview (Appendix A) to determine Trina’s reading preferences and attitude toward oral reading and her fluency practice at school. Secondly, I conducted running reading records while listening to her read. All passages were taken from the John’s (2008) Basic Reading Inventory (Appendices B-G). The first round of running reading records were passages at her instructional level, which is below her current grade level. I listened to her read a passage then provided immediate feedback on any words missed. I then had her practice reading that same passage for five minutes and provided additional feedback as needed. At the conclusion of the repeated reading, I again conducted a running reading record and compared the results. Each additional session followed the same format for the first week. The second, third, and fourth passages were fifth grade level passages, while the final two were sixth grade level passages. Each initial and concluding reading was either video or audio recorded. Recording the sessions allowed me to review her oral reading and ensure that all miscues had been recorded on the Running Reading Record form. In addition, this allowed me to listen more closely to her phrasing, prosody, and intonation. With this information, I was able to accurately assess her fluency using both words correct per minute, words per minute, accuracy rate, and an oral reading fluency rubric. Immediately following each session, I recorded anecdotal observations regarding Trina’s oral reading fluency and attitude toward the fluency passages.

Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability of Research
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Because this is a qualitative research study, I followed Guba’s (as cited in Mills, 2011) criteria for validity of qualitative research. The criteria encompass four parameters: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The first parameter, credibility, “refers to the researcher’s ability to take into account the complexities that present themselves in a study and to deal with patterns that are not easily explained” (Mills, 2011 p. 104). To accomplish this, I engaged in what Guba terms “prolonged participation at the study site” (as cited in Mills, 2011 p. 104). This research was conducted in my own classroom, with one of my current students. This allowed me to avoid any distortions to the study that may have occurred if I were a researcher in another classroom. The participant and I had already developed a positive relationship; therefore, I had already established trust with this participant. Secondly, credibility was maintained through observations of typical and atypical characteristics displayed by the participant. Thirdly, I engaged in peer debriefing with two critical colleagues. The role of these critical colleagues was to listen and ask the types of questions that helped me be truly reflective towards my data and analysis. Finally, I maintained credibility by comparing a variety of data sources and collecting artifacts in the form of running reading records, audio and video recordings, observation notes, and interview questions. I also obtained data on the participant’s reading level and oral reading behaviors from the general education classroom teacher.

The second parameter of qualitative research, transferability, “refers to qualitative researchers’ beliefs that everything they study is context bound and that the goal of their work is not to develop “truth” statements that can be generalized to larger groups of people” (Mills, 2011 p. 104). To accomplish this, I collected and reported descriptive
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data that will allow others to compare this context to the context of research they may be conducting, thereby making my research meaningful to other action researchers. Furthermore, the size of my research study prevents generalization.

Dependability, the third parameter of qualitative research, “refers to the stability of the data” (Mills, 2011 p. 104). I used multiple measures, such as running reading records, interviews, audio and video recordings, and anecdotal records to maintain the dependability of my research data. The final parameter, confirmability, is, as Mills states, “…the neutrality or objectivity of the data that has been collected” (Mills, 2011 p. 105). To ensure confirmability, I used multiple data sources to triangulate and compare the data. This allowed me to determine themes that emerged across the data.

Consent

To guarantee that all persons associated with this action research project had been fully informed of their rights and the risks associated with the research, I obtained informed consent from the participant, her parent, and classroom teacher prior to beginning any actual research. I obtained a signed assent form from the participant herself following a detailed discussion of what the research question was, how data would be collected, and how information would be disseminated to others. I answered the few questions she had and assured her that all identifying information would be removed to ensure her anonymity. I then gave her a parental permission slip to take home and return. Trina returned the signed parental permission slip the morning following our conversation and her assent. I attempted to contact the parent to further discuss the research process, but was unable to make contact. I provided Trina’s
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general education classroom teacher with a consent form that allowed us to share data and information, which was signed and returned. In addition, the school principal was verbally informed of the action research project.

Data Collection

During this research study, several methods of data collection were used. First, I determined the participant’s instructional reading level and oral reading behaviors by discussing the participant with her classroom teacher. I was specifically interested in her DRA level and her oral reading rate as determined by the last DIBELS oral reading fluency probe that was completed. Secondly, I audio or video recorded the initial reading of each passage and compared that to the audio or video recording of the final reading of each passage. To further support data collection, I recorded anecdotal notes regarding the classroom environment, student behaviors, and attitude toward participation in the fluency passages each day. I also interviewed the participant to determine her attitude toward reading in general, genres of books she enjoys, her feelings toward oral reading and activities she enjoys outside of school. Lastly, I retained the artifacts of the running reading records to provide additional data.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed several ways. First, I reviewed the chart I created to compare the initial reading of each passage to the second reading of each passage to determine if there was an increase in words per minute read. After each reading, I calculated how many words Trina read per minute (oral reading rate) by dividing 6,000 by the number of seconds it took her to read the entire passage. For example, if she
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read a passage in 55 seconds, I divided 6,000 by 55 and obtained a quotient of 109. The quotient is how many words per minute she read. I charted the increase in words per minute between the two readings. Secondly, I calculated the words correct per minute using an online words correct per minute calculator. I also calculated her accuracy rate by subtracting the number of miscues she made from 100 (the number of words in each passage). This was also included in the chart with words correct per minute. Then, I listened to each recording of Trina’s readings and compared the audio data to the running reading records I conducted while she was reading. This allowed me to see if I had missed any miscues during the actual reading. I determined if the miscues were substitutions, insertions, omissions, reversals, or repetitions. I also determined if the miscue was a significant miscue, meaning the miscue resulted in a change in meaning from the printed text. I was also able to focus more attention on her phrasing and expression. I scored her phrasing and expression using a rubric that had been adapted from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The initial reading was compared to the second reading to see if her phrasing and expression improved after the second read. The rubric allowed me to be more objective in listening to her read.

Findings and Discussion

After reviewing all of the data, I was able to determine several themes across the data. These themes are: increase in words per minute, increase in words correct per minute, increase in accuracy, decrease in oral reading miscues, including significant miscues, and oral reading scores.
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**Words Per Minute**

After reviewing multiple data sources, I discovered that Trina improved in her words per minute on each passage. The first passage she read was a fourth grade passage. I chose this grade level because her classroom teacher informed me that she was reading at a level comparable to the end of fourth grade or beginning of fifth grade. She initially read 109 words per minute and on the second reading, she improved to 143 words per minute. I chose to use fifth grade passages for the next two reading passages as I felt the fourth grade passage was too easy for her. She also indicated in our post reading discussion that she felt that passage was very easy. The following chart illustrates the number of words per minute Trina read on each passage as well as the increase in number of words per minute.

**Words Per Minute**
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The mean on the initial readings was 77.5 words per minute, while on the second reading the mean increased to 124.3 words per minute. This is an increase of 46.8 words per minute.

The following table compares the words per minute recommendations for students in the sixth grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Rasinski</th>
<th>Manzo</th>
<th>DIBELS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>112-145</td>
<td>0-100 at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>101-121 some risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>122+ low risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are differing opinions on how many words per minute a student in the sixth grade should be reading: Rasinski recommends 180 words per minute, Manzo recommends 112-145 words per minute, and the DIBELS assessment used in the Midland school recommends that students read 122 words per minute or above to be considered “low risk” of reading difficulties. Based on this information, Trina is considered to be at risk for reading difficulties on the initial reading, using the DIBELS benchmark assessment recommendations. She would also be considered to be at risk on the Rasinski and Manzo recommendations as well. However, after receiving corrective feedback, and reading the passages silently, she scored significantly higher on the second oral reading. On the passage *The Mystery*, she would still be considered at some risk using the DIBELS and Rasinski recommendations, but not the Manzo
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recommendations. This passage was at a fifth grade level and is Trina’s instructional reading level, according to her classroom teacher. Furthermore, she would be considered at some risk on the passages *Keep Your Distance* and *Stranger at Willowbrook* using any of the words per minute recommendations. These two passages were the first sixth grade level passages she had read.

**Words Correct per Minute and Accuracy Rate**

Trina also improved in her words correct per minute (WCPM) and accuracy rate on each reading. Accuracy rate is important in determining a student’s independent, instructional, and frustrational levels. Students should read with greater than 96% accuracy for the text to be considered an independent level. Texts read with accuracy rates between 90% and 95% should be used for instructional purposes. Any text read with an accuracy rate less than 90% is considered too difficult for the student. The following charts illustrate the gains made by Trina when comparing the initial reading with the second reading of each passage.
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**Words Correct Per Minute**

As illustrated by the charts, Trina made significant gains in both her words correct per minute and accuracy rate. Her largest gain in words correct per minute was on the passage entitled *The Strange Gift*, a fifth grade passage. She increased her words
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correct per minute by 63 words, however, her accuracy rate on this passage only increased by one percent. I expected to see a higher increase in accuracy as words correct per minute increased. Trina’s smallest gain in words correct per minute was on the sixth grade passage, *Stranger at Willowbrook*. She increased her words correct per minute by 37 words, but interestingly, her accuracy improved by three percent on this passage. The data shows a surprising increase across all passages, especially considering the last four passages would be considered above her current reading level by the school guidelines. This clearly illustrates that when Trina is provided corrective feedback and the opportunity to read a passage multiple times, her oral reading accuracy rate and words correct per minute increase on grade level passages.

**Miscue Analysis**

In analyzing Trina’s miscues, several important conclusions can be made. First, the number and type of miscues decreased with the second reading. Secondly, the number of significant miscues also decreased on the second reading. A significant miscue is one that results in a change in intended meaning from the text. Examples of significant miscues include substituting nouns for verbs, omissions of entire words or lines of text, and reversals of words in the sentence. The following chart illustrates the total miscues made on each reading.
On the first passage, *The Detectives*, she made four miscues on the initial reading. These miscues included three substitutions, one omission, and one self-correction. Her substitutions were not deemed to be mean changing as she substituted a noun for noun and an adverb for an adverb. Her miscue on the adverb is related to her reading to the end of the word; she read the word *earlier* as *early*. This miscue makes sense within the context of the sentence and the overall passage; therefore, it is assumed that she was still able to make meaning despite the miscue. Her one omission was when she did not recognize the word *various* at an automatic level, nor was she able to decode the word, so she skipped it. On the second reading of this passage, she made no miscues.
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During the first reading of the passage entitled *The Mystery*, she made 12 miscues. These miscues included eight substitutions, four omissions, one repetition, and two self corrections. It should be noted that self corrections and repetitions do not count as miscues in this analysis. Repetitions and self corrections are indications that Trina is monitoring her own oral reading and is working through the text to make meaning; therefore she should not have these behaviors count against her. Her substitutions included reading the words *hooded* as *hooked*, *whizzed* as *wized*, *talented* as *talent*, *skateboarder* as *skateboard*, *slide* as *side*, *library* as *libary*, and *hooded* as *hook*. She omitted the words *figure*, *Nita*, *curb*, and *ease* as she was unable to recognize them automatically nor was she unable to apply decoding strategies to successfully decode the words. As in the previous passage, she failed to attend to the word ending in one instance and read the word *Rose’s* as *Rose*. Trina did effectively use the strategy of repeating sections where she recognized something was “not right” and reread a two word section in order to monitor her own oral reading. She self corrected two of her substitutions; she was able to recognize the miscues made on the words *whizzed* and *talented*.

On the second reading of this passage, she only made three miscues, all of which were substitutions. She also had one repetition and one self-correction. In this reading, she read the words *slide* as *slid*, *library* as *libary*, and *noticed* as *notice*. Again, these miscues appear to be related to attending to the entire word as two of the miscues involved the ending of the word. Her miscue on the word *library* may be attributed to a dialectical difference, and does not appear to affect the intended meaning of the passage. In all three miscues, she substituted verbs for verbs and a noun for a noun,
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therefore these miscues are not judged to be significant miscues as they maintain the syntactical structure of the sentence. Trina’s one self correction was when she read the word *had* as *saw*. She immediately recognized that this was not the word printed on the page and corrected her mistake. Her knowledge of semantics appears to have supported her recognition and correction of the miscue. Although she initially substituted a verb for a verb, her substitution did not make sense in the context of the sentence; in fact, she recognized the miscue as she read the word following the miscue word.

On the third passage, a fifth grade passage entitled *The Strange Gift*, Trina made three miscues on the initial reading. Her miscues included two substitutions and one omission. She substituted the word *sit* for *sat* and *quickly* for *quietly*. She was able to self correct the miscue on the word *sat*. In both cases, she maintained the syntactic structure by substituting a verb for a verb and an adverb for an adverb. Trina recognized that *sit* was the wrong tense of the verb and immediately self corrected that miscue. The substitution of *quickly* for *quietly* maintained the syntactic structure and therefore did not appear to affect her comprehension of the sentence. She omitted the word *gesture* as she was unable to either recognize the word or successfully apply decoding strategies. She did make several attempts at decoding the word; she was able to produce the initial consonant sound but nothing beyond that. She also had two repetitions while reading this passage. She was monitoring her own reading, so these miscues are not counted against her in the total miscue count.
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On the second reading of this passage, she made two miscues, neither of which were miscues on the initial reading. She read the word *timidly* as *tennedly*, and *classroom* as *classrooms*. The first miscue is difficult to analyze as she was able to correctly read the word on the initial reading. She was also able to correctly produce the initial and final sounds in the word; she appears to have misread the middle of the word and not recognized it. The second miscue involved adding a possessive –s to the word *classroom*, however this did not deviate from the meaning and maintained the syntactic structure of the sentence.

On the initial reading of *Keep Your Distance*, a sixth grade passage, Trina made 12 miscues, which included 11 substitutions and one omission. She also had two repetitions and two self-corrections. The first substitution she made was reading the word *considered* as *can*. She paused before attempting this word and applied the decoding strategy of using her letter sound knowledge to produce the initial consonant sound and the consonant following the first vowel. She failed to correctly produce the vowel sound between the two consonants. After reading the word as can several times, she appears to have given up and moved on. Her second miscue was on the word *Anderson*; she initially read the word as *on* and then as *Andres*. Trina’s attempts at the word appear to be related to her use of decoding strategies, such as looking for little words she knows, but in the incorrect order. She initially said the end of the word (“on”) and then said an approximation of the beginning of the word (“Andres”). Her third through fifth miscues were made in one line of text. She read *that* as *they*, *riled* as *royaled*, and *colossal* as *co*. In each case, she was attending to the initial consonants and was able to correctly produce those sounds. Only the miscue on the word *riled*
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maintained the syntactical structure of the sentence. I would speculate that she is unfamiliar with the words *riled* and *colossal* and this lack of familiarity was a partial obstacle in her ability to decode those words. Trina’s sixth miscue on this passage was on the word *faded*; she read it as *fidel* after producing the initial consonant sound several times. This substitution fails to maintain the syntactic structure of the sentence and she did not seem to recognize that her substitution did not make sense within the context of the sentence. Her seventh through ninth miscues occurred in one line of text that also included a repetition. She initially read the word *inferior* as *in, of as he, and his as was*. She was able to self correct her miscue on the word *inferior* immediately and the other two miscues as she reread that section. This repetition indicates that she was monitoring her own oral reading and self correcting her miscues when she was able to in order to make meaning. The final two substitutions were also in the same line of text; she read *Bob* as *Bobby*, and *brick* as *bilk*. Bob is a noun for noun substitution and therefore maintains the syntactic structure of the sentence. Bilk is a verb for a noun substitution and therefore violates the syntactical structure of the sentence, as well as the intended meaning. Trina did however attend to the initial and final consonants in this miscue. Her one omission was the word *from*; she completely omitted the word without any apparent recognition that she did not read that word. Trina also made two repetitions during the reading of this passage. These repetitions were in areas where she also made additional miscues and self corrections, so it is assumed that these repetitions helped her correct her miscues and were not counted against her in the final miscue count.
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On the second read of this passage, Trina made only three miscues, which is a significant decrease compared to her initial read. Miscues on the second reading included three substitutions, only one of which was a miscue that was not on the initial reading. She also had one repetition on the second read. The first substitution was the word called for call; this is a verb for verb substitution and maintains the syntactical structure of the sentence. The second and third miscues were on words that she failed to decode on the initial reading, however they are not the same miscue. She read riled as rattled on the second read and faded as fadled. The miscue on the word riled is a verb for verb substitution and indicates that she was attending to the syntactical structure of the sentence; however fadled is a nonsense word and indicates that she did not recognize the miscue at all. Trina had one repetition in the second reading of this passage which occurred after reading the word colossal, which is a word she miscued on the initial read. Her second repetition occurred at the end of the passage after she read the word brick, a word she miscued on the initial reading of this passage. This indicates that she is attending to the words and attempting to make meaning and recognized that these were areas where she struggled in her initial reading.

While reading Stranger at Willowbrook, another sixth grade passage, Trina made five miscues on the initial reading. All of these miscues were substitutions. She substituted the words how is for how’s, respondedly for responded, first for last, Nichols for Nichols, and talk for taking. The first miscue is merely her reading the contracted word as the two whole words and maintains the syntactic integrity of the text. The second miscue represents the addition of an additional inflected ending to the word responded, but she was able to self correct this miscue immediately. This indicates that
she was attending to the semantic structure of the sentence. Substituting *first* for *last* represents an adjective for an adjective substitution and maintains the syntactic structure of the text. In addition, the substitution makes sense in the context of the sentence and is assumed to not have a negative impact on her ability to gain meaning from the passage. Her miscue on the name Nichols can be attributed to her lack of familiarity with the name and a minor mispronunciation as she pronounced the /ch/ as you would at the end of the word *lunch*. This indicates that she is using her phonics skills as she correctly pronounced the digraph. The last miscue represents a verb for verb substitution and she was able to self correct the miscue after reading the next word. This indicates that she was able to recognize that the miscue deviated from the intended meaning, and she applied a strategy to enable herself to make meaning.

On the second reading of this passage, Trina made two miscues, both of which were substitutions. The first miscue was reading the name *Nichols* as *Knuckles*, but she immediately self corrected this miscue. Again, this miscue can be attributed to a lack of familiarity with this word. The second miscue was reading *block* as *brick*, which she read correctly the first time through. This is a noun for noun substitution which maintains the syntactic structure, and the substituted word makes sense in the sentence. In addition, she was attending to the initial consonant as well as the final digraph, which she read correctly.

On the final sixth grade passage, entitled *Museum Visit*, Trina made six miscues on the initial reading, all of which were substitutions, and two of those were self corrected. She also had three repetitions, which indicate that she is self monitoring and applying
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strategies that allow her to make meaning from the text. The first substitution was reading the word *visited* as *visit*, which indicates a lack of attending to the entire word. She recognized immediately that this did not sound right within the context of the sentence and reread the sentence and self corrected her miscue. The second miscue was reading the word *exhibit* as *ezibit*, which could be attributed to a dialectical difference or unfamiliarity with the word. When encountering the same word two more times in the passage, she made the same miscue. This one word represents three of her total miscues. The third miscue was reading the word *from* as *were*. This is a preposition for verb substitution, which violates the syntactical structure of the text. She immediately recognized this and reread the sentence to self correct the miscue. The final miscue was reading the word *transmitted* for *transmit*. This is a verb for verb substitution and maintains the syntactical structure of the sentence. In addition, the substitution makes sense and did not appear to have a negative impact on her ability to make meaning. The only additional repetition was when she was decoding the word *definitely*; she made several attempts at decoding the word and repeated it once she was able to decode it.

On the second reading of this passage, Trina only made two miscues, one of which was the word *exhibit* read as *ezibit*. This is the same miscue she made on the initial reading of this passage. She only made the miscue one time, on the first encounter with the word, during the second read as opposed to three times during the initial read. The second miscue was also a substitution; she substituted the word *display* for *displayed*. This again represents an omission of the past tense –ed ending and is a verb for verb substitution, so the syntactical integrity of the sentence was maintained.
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

In analyzing Trina’s significant miscues, it is apparent that the frequency of significant miscues decreased in the second reading of each passage. On the passage *The Detectives*, she made one significant miscue on the initial reading and none on the second reading. The significant miscue in this passage was the omission of the word *various*. On the passage *The Mystery*, she made two significant miscues on the initial read. These were the omission of the name *Nita* and reading the word *hooded* as *hook*. These miscues violated the author’s intended meaning, thereby negatively impacting Trina’s ability to make meaning from the sentence. She made no significant miscues on the second reading of this passage. While reading the passage *The Strange Gift*, she made one significant miscue on each reading. The first significant miscue was the omission of the word *gesture*. By omitting this word, she violated the author’s intended meaning and was unable to gain meaning from the sentence. The second significant miscue was reading the word *timidly* as *tendedly*. This is a substitution of a nonsense word for a verb, which again violated the intended meaning and impacted Trina’s ability to make meaning. On the passage *Keep Your Distance*, Trina made eight significant miscues during the initial reading and only one during the second reading. The first significant miscue was the substitution of the word *can* for *considered*. The second was substituting *on* and *Andres* for *Anderson*. The third, fourth, and fifth miscues all occurred in one line of text and were all substitutions as well (see previous analysis). The sixth miscue was the omission of the word *from*, while the seventh miscue was the substitution of the word *fidel* for *faded*. The final miscue on the initial read was the substitution of the word *bilk* for *brick*. All of these substitutions violated the syntactical structure of the sentence and the author’s intended meaning. The one miscue on the
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

second reading was a substitution of the word *fadled* for *faded*, which represents as nonsense word substitution for a verb with an inflected ending. Again, this violates the syntactical structure of the sentence and the intended meaning. While reading *Stranger at Willowbrook* and *Museum Visit*, Trina had no significant miscues on the initial or second reading of either passage.

**Oral Reading Scores**

The final theme to emerge from the data analysis was oral reading scores. Each video and audio taped reading was reviewed and scored against a rubric adapted from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This rubric measures the number of words read in each phrase group as well as the expressive interpretation of the reader (Appendix F). Each reading is scored on a point scale ranging from one to four points. The following chart illustrates Trina’s scores on each reading.
Trina scored a three on the initial reading of *The Detectives* due to word by word reading at rough spots, her inability to successfully decode one word, and her lack of differentiation of dialogue. Overall, she read in three to four word phrases that seemed appropriate for the text. She also scored a three for the second reading of *The Detectives*. While her phrasing included longer, more meaningful phrases, she still did not differentiate dialogue and she read in a relatively monotone voice. It is this lack of expressive reading that held her score to a three on the second reading.

On the passage *The Mystery*, Trina scored a two for the initial reading. She read in three to four word phrases when reading familiar words, but she encountered several rough spots where she read word by word. There were also several spots where she
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

was unable to decode the words and they were provided by the teacher. In addition, her word groupings were often awkward, perhaps signaling a comprehension problem, and this affected the overall flow and rhythm of her oral reading. Trina’s smoothness, rhythm, and overall flow improved greatly by the second reading of this passage. She scored a three on the second reading because her phrasing included mostly three and four word groupings. Smaller word groupings were evident at rough spots where she seemed to lack confidence. Again, Trina read with a rather monotone voice and failed to convey any meaning through her expressive interpretation.

On the passage *The Strange Gift*, Trina scored a two on the initial reading. This is due in part to her inability to decode one word and her word groupings. Her phrasing was awkward; she had large pauses mid sentence that were not attributed to miscues or attempts at decoding. It appeared as if she was not attending to the punctuation and stopping at the end of each line as opposed to stopping at the end of each sentence. Her oral reading on the second reading of this passage improved slightly. She scored a three, however she continued to read in a rather monotone voice with little expressive interpretation. She did read in longer, more meaningful phrases the second time through.

On the passage entitled *Keep Your Distance*, Trina again scored a two for the initial reading. She encountered two words she was unable to decode and these words were provided by the teacher. She read word by word for much of the passage, particularly the middle section where most of her miscues occurred. When the words were familiar to her, she was able to read in three and four word phrase groups. In addition, she had
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several long pauses when she encountered words she needed to decode. On the second reading of this passage, she scored a three. She was able to read with longer, more meaningful phrases for most of the passage. She did pause when she was attempting to decode words and this disrupted the overall flow of her reading. Again, there was little to no expressive interpretation in her oral reading.

On the first and second reading of *Stranger at Willowbrook*, Trina scored a three. She read with pauses at words she was unsure of during the initial reading, but was able to read in longer, more meaningful phrases on the second read. She seemed to lack any confidence during the initial reading. In both readings, she read with a monotone expression and did not differentiate dialogue.

On the final passage, *Museum Visit*, Trina scored a two on her initial read. She struggled throughout much of the passage. She read in three and four word phrases but paused often. Her word groupings, although three to four words in length, seemed awkward and unnatural. It appeared as if she was trying to read each sentence independently of the larger context of the entire passage. By comparison, she scored a three on the second reading of this passage. She was much smoother overall with less pausing. She still read with a monotone voice and little expressive interpretation.

**Implications and Conclusion**

This research provides clear implications for teachers working with struggling intermediate readers. While fluency is one aspect of reading that many students master in the primary grades, there are also countless students in the intermediate grades who struggle with oral reading fluency. This struggle can be compounded by the social
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aspect of reading aloud in the classroom, although this was not part of this action research.

The data clearly show that repeated reading is an effective strategy for improving both reading rate, as measured by words per minute, words correct per minute, and accuracy scores, as well as oral reading fluency scores, which measure prosody and expressive intonation. The increase in Trina’s oral reading rate was the observable outcome of her increase in automaticity. This further substantiates the work of the researchers Denton et.al (2006), Musti-Rao et.al (2009), Goering and Baker (2010), and Kuhn et.al (2010). Each of these researchers studied repeated reading and the effects on automaticity as measured by words correct per minute or accuracy rate. As students become more automatic in their word recognition and word attack skills, their words correct per minute and accuracy scores also improve. This reserves cognitive resources for comprehension and meaning making, which is the ultimate goal of reading. This further supports the claims made by Rasinski and Padak (2005) when they claimed that repeated practice with passages not only improved the accuracy rate on the practice passage, but also on passages that had previously not been encountered. This is illustrated by Trina’s performance on the last two sixth grade passages, *Stranger at Willowbrook* and *Museum Visit*. She made no significant miscues on either of these passages on the initial reading. This indicates that she was able to construct meaning as she read.

The data on Trina’s oral reading scores also indicates that she is increasing her ability to make meaning in her reading. Again, the increase in scores is the observable
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

outcome of Trina’s cognitive processes as she works through the text. The increase in scores is reflective of her reading becoming smoother as she constructs meaning “on the fly” while reading the text passages aloud. This data supports the research conducted by Keehn (2003), Corcoran (2005), and Young and Rasinski (2009), who all found Reader’s Theatre to be an effective intervention for improving the prosodic elements of oral reading. While this research study did not use Reader’s Theatre as an intervention, there were elements of Reader’s Theatre in the study. For example, Trina read several passages which included dialogue, and her expressive interpretation of the dialogue could be used to convey meaning to the listener. In addition, she was provided corrective feedback on her initial oral reading of a passage and allowed time to practice (through repeated reading) before the final reading.

Classroom teachers can use this information to assist struggling intermediate readers in their classrooms as well. Overall, each session took only ten minutes to complete, so repeated reading could be part of a reading conference, morning work time, or a guided reading group. Furthermore, Reader’s Theatre could be implemented as a monthly activity or used within the context of content area instruction.

Limitations

There are several obvious limitations to this study. The main limitations are the number of participants and the relatively short duration of the research study. While repeated reading proved to be a beneficial intervention for improving one student’s oral reading fluency, it is unclear if this could be generalized to an entire class or school population. Secondly, the duration of the study was relatively short; the entire data
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collection period was only six sessions spread out over two weeks. Should this research study be replicated, I would like to have more participants as well as conduct the research over a longer period of time. Furthermore, I would also like to implement Reader’s Theatre as part of the study for comparison purposes.

**Questions for Consideration**

After conducting this research, I am left with several unanswered questions. The first is what impact did repeated reading have on the participant’s comprehension of the passage? I did not measure her comprehension during this study and I find that I am very curious to see if her comprehension would have improved on the second reading compared to the first. The second question I am left with is whether or not repeated reading would be an effective strategy to use with expository texts. All of the passages in this study were narrative fiction so it would be interesting to replicate the study with expository texts and compare results. Another question is whether or not this study could be replicated with students who have more severe learning needs and language delays. I also wonder how the results would compare if I had implemented Reader’s Theatre in addition to the repeated reading. Finally, I am wondering if a student’s motivation and attitude would impact their success in increasing their oral reading using repeated reading. Trina had a positive attitude toward reading in general, and was very eager to participate in this study.

**Conclusion**

This action research project was conducted in an attempt to determine what strategies teachers could implement in the classroom to effectively improve the oral
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

reading fluency of struggling intermediate readers. The National Reading Panel has identified fluency as one of the five dimensions of reading (National Reading Panel 2000), and quite often, intermediate readers who struggle with fluency are placed in the lowest reading groups and viewed through a deficit model. This research was situated within the context of a sociocultural historical and New Literacy Studies theoretical framework. This framework positions literacy as an ever-changing social construct in which meaning from text is gained through social interactions. This perspective relates to fluency because a student’s oral reading behaviors are reflective of and influenced by their home communities language patterns and practices. Therefore, the language patterns a student brings to school may be incongruous to the language patterns of the larger school community. This affects the perception of the student’s ability to read fluently.

There is a large body of research to support repeated reading and Reader’s Theatre as effective methods for improving the oral reading fluency of students. Researchers such as Rasinski and Padak (2005), Must-Rao et al (2009), Kuhn et al (2010), and Goering and Baker (2010), have all found that using Reader’s Theatre was an effective method to improve the prosody and phrasing elements of oral reading. Furthermore, researchers such as Keehn (2003), Corcoran (2005), and Young and Rasinski (2009) also found that repeated reading was an effective method to improve the overall automaticity and accuracy of oral reading.

Within this study, the results from the aforementioned studies conducted on repeated reading were replicated with similar success rates. Trina was able to increase her
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

words per minute, words correct per minute, accuracy rate, and scores on the oral reading fluency rubric. In addition, the number and type of significant miscues Trina made decreased after receiving corrective feedback and practicing the passages. This data implies that she was able to increase her automaticity and her mean making while reading orally.
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Appendix A

Reading Survey

1. Do you like to read? Why or why not? ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

2. What non-fiction topics do you like to read about? __________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

3. Who are your favorite fiction authors? Why do you like their writing?____
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

4. What fiction topics do you like to read about? ______________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

5. How do you feel about reading out loud in school? ____________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

6. What do you think is hard about reading? __________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

7. What do you think is easy about reading? ____________________________
8. What are your goals for yourself as a reader? What would you like to improve?

9. Tell me about one positive reading experience you have had either in school or out of school.

10. What do you like to do in your free time?
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix B

Student Booklet copy is on page 36.

B 5414 (Grade 4) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low _______ High

The Detectives

It had been raining. Kate and her brother 8
Michael were looking for something 13
entertaining to do. Aunt Sue came into the 21
living room and announced, “I can’t find my 29
purse.” 30

The children looked for the missing 36
purse in various parts of the house. Michael 44
looked in the den where his aunt wrote 52
checks, but no purse. Kate searched the 59
bedroom carefully because the purse was 65
last seen there. It wasn’t there, but Kate 73
recalled that her aunt had been shopping 80
earlier that day. She ran outside. Just as she 89
arrived, Michael was opening the trunk and 96
Kate saw the purse.

TOTAL

MISCUES

Substitution Insertion Omission Reversal Repetition Self-Correction of Unacceptable Misuse Meaning Change (Significant Miscues)

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TOTAL

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Word Recognition Scoring Guide

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Oral Reading Rate Norm Group Percentile

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</table>
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix C

Student Booklet copy is on page 17.

A 8595 (Grade 5) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low ——— High

The Mystery

| Everyone turned to stare as a black hooded figure whizzed by on a skateboard. | 7 |
| It was a mystery because no one knew who the talented person was, Ken saw the skateboarder slide down the library railing and disappear into the alley, Nita followed the person from school and watched as a curb was jumped and a three hundred sixty degree turn was completed with ease. One day Ken noticed a skateboard and a black hooded jacket next to Rose’s house. He also saw a library book called Skateboarding Tips in her desk at school. Ken had solved the challenging mystery. | |

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**TOTAL**

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Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix D

Student Booklet copy is on page 37.

B 8595 (Grade 5) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low ——— High

The Strange Gift

Cheryl sat quietly, staring at the tiny black and green slip of paper in her hand. She was remembering how moved she had been when Marlene first gave it to her. Cheryl knew her best friend was poor. Marlene couldn’t afford even a small gift for Cheryl’s twelfth birthday. She was surprised when Marlene pulled her aside and timidly handed her a pretty, gift-wrapped box with a bow on it. Inside there was a ticket. Cheryl was touched by her friend’s gesture. She never imagined that the slip of paper would be the winning ticket for their classroom drawing.

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Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix E

Student Booklet copy is on page 18.

A 6867 (Grade 6) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low ——— High

Keep Your Distance

| Elwood was considered a tough guy at Anderson School. Everybody called him Sky. They didn’t dare call him by his full name because that riled him. He was colossal in size. From far away Elwood looked like Mr. Wilson, a teacher, but the moment you saw Elwood’s shoes and faded, torn jeans, you knew it could only be Elwood. He felt inferior because of his clothing, so he tried to make up for it by shocking people with his rude behavior and toughness. Elwood didn’t have many friends, except for Bob who lived in the same old brick apartment building. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 10 | 16 | 23 |
| 30 | 36 | 43 | 48 |
| 55 | 61 | 67 | 75 |
| 80 | 84 | 90 | 98 |
| 100 |

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Word Recognition Scoring Guide

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Oral Reading Rate Norm Group Percentile

WPM

3005°
Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix F

Student Booklet copy is on page 38.

B 6867 (Grade 6) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low  High

Stranger at Willowbrook

- Phil entered Willowbrook School 4
- for the first time. The five-minute bell 12
- rang. As he hurried to math class, an 20
- unfamiliar voice asked, “How’s it 25
- going, Phil?” Startled, Phil responded 30
- with a quick wave and continued on to 38
- room 203. During lunch, Phil saw the 45
- stranger in the cafeteria, but he 51
- pretended not to notice. During the last 58
- period, Mr. Nichols was taking 63
- attendance when Phil heard a familiar 69
- name called, “Zack Wilson,” thought 74
- Phil, “I remember when we used to 81
- build block houses in kindergarten.” 86
- Phil turned to find Zack and realized 93
- that the stranger was a forgotten friend. 100

TOTAL

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Total Misues | Significant Misues

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Repeated Reading as a fluency intervention

Appendix G

Student Booklet copy is on page 58.

C 6867 (Grade 6) Activating Background: Read the title to yourself; then tell me what you think will happen.

Background: Low | High

Museum Visit

On our field trip we visited the new museum. We saw different exhibits about science and the world around us. The telephone exhibit was definitely the most interesting. Phones from the early days were made of wood and metal. People had to ring the operator to make a call. The exhibit displayed many other types of phones. Some had televisions so that you could see the person you were talking to. There were also wireless phones for people and cars that transmit calls through tower signals. We saw movies that showed us how telephones help us in our everyday lives.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Insertion</th>
<th>Omission</th>
<th>Reversal</th>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>Self-Correction</th>
<th>Unacceptable Mis</th>
<th>Meaning Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Miscues</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL

Word Recognition Scoring Guide

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total Miscues</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Significant Miscues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-8</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 +</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>5 +</td>
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</table>

Oral Reading Rate

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<th>WPM</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>75</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>10</th>
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</thead>
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### Appendix H

#### Rubric for Oral Reading Fluency
adapted from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Scale for Assessing Oral Reading Fluency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Scale</th>
<th>Description of Oral Reading Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reads primarily in large, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. Some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>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 the larger context of the sentence or passage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>