

ANSWER KEY FOR FLUENCY MODULES

MODULE 1: GETTING STARTED

Based on what you read in this module, answer the following questions individually or in small groups.

1.1 List the three key components included in the authors' definition of reading fluency

1. Accuracy
2. Rate
3. Prosody

1.2 List the three performance standards that the authors intentionally left ambiguous in their definition of reading fluency.

1. Reasonable accuracy
2. Appropriate rate
3. Suitable prosody

1.3 Briefly state why the authors built flexibility into their definition of reading fluency.

The authors built flexibility into their definition to account for the following reason: “While the importance of reading accuracy, rate, and prosody have been well-documented in research, when we consider making recommendations regarding the performance standards for these components, we must combine findings from research with practical, common sense experience. Using this blend of science and practice, we conclude, along with most educators, that the performance standards for these three components of fluency should vary depending upon the demands of the task.”

1.4 Explain why the relative significance of accuracy and rate changes as students move past early first grade reading level.

The relative significance of accuracy and rate changes according to developmental skills and the demands of connected text as follows: “During the early stages of literacy development, decoding accuracy significantly affects student’s comprehension of the simple texts that beginning readers attempt to read. However, once students are efficiently reading connected text with reasonable accuracy and confidence—typically by the middle of first grade—then the rate at which they read connected text, along with accuracy, strongly affects their overall reading skill including comprehension.”

1.5 Describe two analogies the authors used to explain how reading fluency affects students' development as readers and learners. Explain how these analogies relate to your personal experience and understanding of reading fluency. (Hint: There were at least three analogies used in the module.)

1. **Driving a car:** Marilyn Adams (1990) stated that “there are many discrete systems that a driver must learn to engage and implement simultaneously. However...drivers only drive the car whereas readers also need to build their car (develop the mechanical systems for identifying words) and

maintain the car (fuel it with print, repair any problems along the way, and make sure it runs smoothly) before finally being able to drive the car successfully.

2. **Bridge:** “In early reading stages, students develop oral language and phonemic awareness, learn to apply the alphabetic principle to increasingly complex words, and become familiar with more and more sight words. Later reading stages are characterized by increased reading skills and comprehension. If readers do not develop adequate levels of fluency, they can become “stuck” in the middle of the bridge, able to decode words but with insufficient automaticity to adequately facilitate comprehension.”
3. **Door:** Fluency can be compared to “a ‘doorway’ that leads to comprehension and increased motivation. If that “fluency door” is closed, then access to the meaning of print and the joy of reading remains effectively blocked. When the fluency door opens—that is, when a reader has developed sufficient fluency skills to read with appropriate accuracy and at a reasonable rate—then the reader can enter into understanding and motivation.”

REFLECT AND PLAN

Work individually or in small groups to discuss the following planning points. Record notes or decisions in the space provided or on separate sheets of paper.

- 1.6 **Why is it important for grade-level teams to share a common definition of reading fluency? How does the authors’ definition compare with previous ideas you had about reading fluency and how it must be taught?**

A common definition will ensure that teachers on teams work toward similar goals when planning instruction, assessment, and intervention. Answers to second part of question will vary.

- 1.7 **How can teachers avoid the trap of teaching reading fluency as a rate (speed) issue?**

By educating themselves on the various components and mechanics involved in reading fluency, as well as learning how to correctly assess and diagnose students’ reading skills, teachers can avoid the trap of overemphasizing rate.

- 1.8 **How does your school identify and assist non-fluent readers? Are your approaches the same for both younger (K-1) and older (1.5-12) students? According to current thinking about how reading fluency develops, what adjustments or improvements might be necessary to best serve the needs of all your school’s students?**

Answers will vary but should reflect logical application of suggestions from the module.

MODULE 2: GETTING STARTED

Based on what you read in this module, answer the following questions individually or in small groups.

2.1 List three skills necessary for accurate and fluent word reading to occur.

1. Phoneme awareness
2. Automatic recognition of high-frequency words
3. Phonics, decoding, and orthographic fluency (may be listed individually)

2.2 List two comparisons between ORF assessments and thermometers.

Answers may include:

1. Both have established reliability and validity
2. Both may be used quickly and efficiently to obtain a benchmark score
3. Neither can be used to diagnose the cause of the illness/reading problem.

2.3 Explain why understanding the comparison between ORF assessments and thermometers helps teachers apply ORF measures accurately.

Understanding that ORF assessments only provide a quick, initial assessment of academic “wellness” (similar to a thermometer’s assessment of overall physical health) helps teachers understand what information ORFs can and cannot provide. ORFs may serve to identify students who might need additional help with learning to read, but diagnostic assessments are needed to better identify students’ skill strengths and needs.

2.4 Explain how diagnostic assessments differ from CBM-R/ORF assessments and identify the question that diagnostic assessments answer.

Diagnostic assessments provide a deeper look inside the mechanics at work in a student’s skill set and what skills are well established and which may need additional instruction and practice. Diagnostic assessments answer the question: What are this student’s skill strengths and needs?

2.5 List three types of diagnostic assessments that may be used to guide teachers as they plan targeted instruction and intervention.

Answers may include:

1. Informal reading inventories (IRIs)
2. Decoding assessments
3. High-frequency word lists
4. Phoneme segmentation and blending assessments
5. Listening comprehension assessments

Note: See Appendix 2.1 Reading Skills Assessment Options for a more sample list of assessment options.

REFLECT AND PLAN

Work individually or in small groups to consider the following planning points. Record notes or decisions in the space provided or on separate paper as needed.

- 2.6 Consider the informal assessment tips provided in this module. What will you use to begin the process of determining students' adequacy of the fluency skills? Draw out a sequential plan or flowchart outlining the steps you will take in your classroom. (Hint: Refer to the Reading Assessment Flowchart in Appendix 2.1 as needed.)

Answers will vary but should reflect logical application of suggestions from the module.

- 2.7 Consider how collaboration with other teachers can help you analyze your data and plan for deeper assessment and instruction. How will you make collaboration happen? What will your collaboration look like?

Answers will vary but should reflect logical application of suggestions from the module.

- 2.8 Consider the issue of listening comprehension. How can teachers informally assess students' listening comprehension using assessments described in this module? Based on school policy (if applicable), what will you do if you observe that a student is struggling with listening comprehension (in addition to apparent problems with reading)?

As described in the module, teachers can read grade-level reading passages to students and use the corresponding comprehension questions to dialogue with the student and informally assess listening comprehension. Answers to second part of question will vary according to individual school policy.

MODULE 3: GETTING STARTED

Based on what you read in this module, answer the following questions individually or in small groups.

- 3.1 Explain why the activities listed in this module should be used only after students receive explicit instruction.

Explicit instruction, along with carefully guided practice and immediate corrective feedback, ensures correct understanding and application of new skills. Students should never be asked to engage in activities for which they have not been sufficiently prepared. The activity is the practice part after teachers have taught the skill!

- 3.2 List two components of explicit instruction.

1. *Scaffolded* presentation of skills
2. *Modeling* (teachers show, tell, and demonstrate skills)

- 3.3 Explain why students receiving additional instruction or intervention (such as Tier 2 or Tier 3 services) require closer progress monitoring. What additional type of assessment was recommended to meet this need?**

Students receiving additional instruction or intervention (such as Tier 2 or Tier 3 services) require closer monitoring to ensure that targeted instruction or intervention is meeting students' needs and to ensure that adequate progress is being achieved. The greater a student's needs, the more important it is for teachers to do everything they can to help that student succeed. CBM-R assessments were recommended to provide additional progress monitoring.

- 3.4 What is the purpose of frequent “fluency talks” with both older and younger students?**

Frequent fluency talks with both older and younger students clarify that the purpose of reading practice (especially repeated reading) is not merely to increase students' reading speed (rate) but also to strengthen accuracy and comprehension. Additionally, for older students, fluency talks provide a reason and buy in for the repeated readings task. Repeated readings might seem redundant and unnecessary without explanation of why they are being asked to read something more than one time.

- 3.5 List three factors to consider when choosing appropriate text complexity. (Hint: There were at least five factors addressed in the module.) According to the authors, what is the “ultimate” factor to consider when selecting appropriate reading passages?**

Answers may include:

1. Ensuring that text is neither too hard nor too easy to support skill development.
2. Ensuring that sufficient instructional scaffolding and teacher support is provided.
3. Other factors include: text difficulty, instructional purpose, and subject matter.

Ultimate factor? According to the authors, the ultimate factor to consider when selecting appropriate reading passages is the purpose for reading.

REFLECT AND PLAN

Work individually or in small groups to consider the following planning points. Record notes or decisions in the space provided or on separate paper as needed.

- 3.6 List the steps of the Outcomes-Based Model as follows. Then consider how well your school has implemented each step. Write two suggestions to help your school to strengthen the steps that are weakest.**

1. Identify students who may be at risk.
2. Determine which skills to teach.
3. Plan and implement instruction.
4. Monitor progress.
5. Make changes and modifications as necessary.

Suggestions will vary.

- 3.7 **List four suggestions that teachers may consider when students are not making adequate progress (Step Five).**

Answers may include:

1. Increase engagement.
2. Increase the use of multi-sensory approaches.
3. Ensure high levels of accurate practice and repetition.
4. Read words many times.
5. Assess material appropriateness and quality.
6. Pre-teach and reteach instructional methods.

- 3.8 **Are these suggestions already being implemented in your classroom or school? How can you (or teachers at your school) improve the way student progress is monitored and instruction adjusted to meet students' needs?**

Answers will vary.

MODULE 4: GETTING STARTED

Based on what you read in this module, answer the following question individually or in small groups.

- 4.1 **List two reasons why it is important to integrate component skills in reading lessons.**

1. Integration better mimics the actual way skills interact to produce fluent reading.
2. Integrating multiple skills creates more efficient and effective practice.

- 4.2 **List two skills that are addressed when phoneme awareness activities are combined with print letters.**

1. Phoneme awareness
2. Decoding

- 4.3 **Describe two extensions or variations of the phoneme/morpheme activity described in the module.**

Answers may include:

1. **Phonogram fluency:** Group words by rime, ask students to read the rime and then the words with the onset added.
2. **Phonogram and morpheme fluency:** Teach the prefix units re- and sus-. Provide additional words with the same prefixes (e.g., re-move, sus-pend, etc.) for additional practice.
3. **Ask students to “buddy talk”** with a partner by using the words in sentences to predict what a story will be about.
4. **In partners, students give each other a spelling test.** Students then correct their partner's spelling and read the words to each other.

4.4 List two ideas for extending fluency instruction with other content areas.

Answers may include:

1. **Post vocabulary words** and read and reread them throughout the week. Play oral language games with the words
2. **Pair students to read** and reread passages from a variety of content area reading materials. Ask students to write questions based on the reading material for another student to answer.
3. **Read passages to students** as they follow along, orally (choral reading) or silently (cloze reading: reading the words when the teacher pauses). Ask students to then reread the passages independently or with a partner and be ready to complete comprehension tasks.
4. **Ask students to pre-read** the bold text headings and picture notes aloud and consider the content before they read, discussing their ideas with the class or a partner.
5. **Establish reading partners with students from other grade levels** for “Buddy Reading.” Younger students may enjoy re-reading to older students and older students may enjoy re-reading to younger students.

4.5 Describe one idea or insight you gained from the scenarios included in the modules of Ms. Jennifer Smith and Mr. Brice Roberts. How can you apply that idea or insight in your teaching?

Answers will vary.

REFLECT AND PLAN

Work individually or in small groups, with administrators and/or teachers who teach similar grade levels and content, to consider the following planning points (see Module 4 for planning points). Record notes or decisions in the space provided or on separate paper as needed.

Answers to all sections will vary based on personal experience, preferences, and teaching/school assignment.