



# Measuring Reading Fluency

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Tutor's Guide



## Measuring Reading Fluency - Tutor's Guide

### Introduction

This guide will show you how to use the Units of Sound Reading Check passages to measure reading fluency progress on a regular basis. All Reading Fluency materials are stored in the library in Help.

### When

- Choose a time to suit both you and the student.
- A good guide would be to do it at least as frequently as Reading Check.
- It would fit nicely into a lesson between Reading Checks.

### What you need

- Reading Fluency set text for student – on screen or paper
- Corresponding Reading Fluency tutor set
- Student Record sheet
- Tutor Record Sheet
- Stop-watch/phone for timing

### Which Reading Fluency set

- Use a Reading Fluency set behind the last one the student worked on for Reading Check.
- You can use the same set more than once with a student as more words read in the minute also shows progress.

### The Process

- Tell the student you are going to count how many words they can read in a minute.
- They are more likely to make mistakes if they try to read as fast as they possibly can.
- 'I want you to read like you normally do and don't try to go too fast. I want to see how well you can read not how fast you can do it.'
- If a student can't read a word, give them the word, count it as an error and ask the student to move on.
- Put the text in front of the student and start the timer.
- Mark any errors on the marking sheet and indicate the last word when the minute is up.
- You don't have to stop the student reading after a minute – just that you are going to stop marking them, as there is a benefit in completing the whole passage.
- Thank the student when they have completed the activity.

## Results

- Count the number of words read in the minute – using the cumulative word count provided on the Tutor Sheet.
- Subtract the number of words omitted or read wrongly.
- This gives you your score for the exercise.

## Records

- All record sheets come in two forms – pdf and pp. pdf sheets are for printing and pp for keeping records digitally on your computer.
- Let the student record their score on their own record sheet so that they have a record of their own progress that they can see.
- Tutors can use the Tutor Record Sheet included in the package and/or record the total in the Notes section in Reading Records.

## Progress

- You are measuring a student's progress in the materials they have been taught against an earlier performance.
- The score obtained on the first reading fluency check is your student's baseline. Progress is demonstrated if you repeat the same set at a later date and a higher word count is shown.
- Progress is also shown if the student scores the same word count on a higher-level reading set.
- See the document Why Reading Fluency Shows Reading Progress for further information.

## Reading Fluency Showing Reading Progress

If students don't have good reading fluency, they are unable to access the curriculum, no matter how good those other elements in the curriculum are.

Learning to read requires students to make connections between patterns of letters. In the word cat at the basic level there are three connections c-a-t. As a student's skills progress, they reduce that to two connections c-at and finally to one – cat. In Units of Sound, students learn to build more and more connections as they work through the three stages of the program. In stage three the connections are made between larger chunks, but retain the same principles of structured learning. Units of Sound is for those students who need explicit instruction to efficiently make connections.

Accurate and automatic word recognition is the cornerstone of a successful reader. Fluent readers recognise words quickly when presented in isolation or in connected text. Whilst acquiring these skills, students need sufficient practice in reading the words in multiple contexts. Units of Sound provides both the connections, explicitly taught, and the necessary practice in word lists, sentences and passages to build fluency.

Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension: students slowed down by decoding issues will struggle to comprehend the text at the same time. Students who understand the text they are reading can read more quickly and demonstrate more expression in that reading. If reading fluency (the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression) increases, using increasingly complex texts, it is a measure of progress in reading.

In the USA and Canada, the Acadience Reading materials are used widely in schools to measure fluency in structured reading passages for progress monitoring (<https://acadiencelearning.org>).

The benefit of using a similar technique with the Units of Sound structured passages is that you are measuring progress within the materials being taught, thus demonstrating that using Units of Sound produces progress in reading.