

WORDS TO READ & SPELL – FOR SPEED AND ACCURACY

We use Words to Read and Spell for several purposes:

to help students who learned to read (whole words) without accurate recognition of all the letters of the alphabet fill in that basic-skill gap

to fully engage young students who are beginning to learn to read in the spelling of words so that they increase their ability to process words accurately and quickly;

To help older students for whom processing speed has remained too slow to get across lines of print efficiently

To develop the use of the alphabetic principle confidence of older students who read by matching printed words

Automaticity/Fluency exercises are appropriate for a large range of students, young and older. The exercises are conducted in the same way whether students have recently learned to read the 600 Most Commonly Used Words (MCUW) or know all of them:

The exercises are appropriate for young students who are developing a secure visual and auditory image of **words they have learned**. It is imperative that the words in the timings are known; more than two errors in timing indicate that the words have not been learned well enough to withstand the pressure of timing. (Easier words, fewer words, or other learning activities should be substituted until a student is able to complete this exercise successfully.)

The exercises are appropriate for older students who are unable to read the MCUW as accurately and fluently as skilled readers. Frequently, students have learned to use a maladaptive strategy of 'revisiting' most unremarkable words to be sure that they have not made mistakes. The Reading and Spelling exercise will give them the ability and confidence to read without checking; students will quickly develop the facility to reach a 'count' of more than 200 productions per column per minute.

The number to the right of each word equals one count for the word read and one count for each letter. Fluency for older students is achieved at an Aim of 200 “counts” per minute. Fluency for young students and students with slow processing is achieved at an Aim of 150 counts per minute. When the aim is reached, the teacher moves on to the next set of words.

Instructions for Timing

Using a timer which calculates rate per minute and a Minute Timer, conduct timings, starting with as few as ten words (one-half column) to establish fluent performance before moving to longer timings. Learning is accomplished in short increments – “sprints”. We use twelve-second timings and mark the rate per minute on a Timings Chart, using an asterisk *.

The 12-second increment can be quickly converted to rate per minute:

$$\text{the count} \times 10 \div 2$$

A longer timing, can be for any number of words, 10, a column, or more than one column. Rate is calculated as a ratio:

$$\frac{\text{the count}}{\# \text{ of seconds}} = \frac{x}{60} .$$

We use a large dot. This longer timing is used by the teacher to determine when a student has “passed” a group of words. The pass is marked by a vertical line.

Three sprints and a Total Time are customary and sufficient.

Introduction: the student takes on the teacher’s role and says, “Ready? Please begin.” The teacher reads each word aloud and then spells each word aloud in the whole column or half of it. The teacher has the student calculate the rate. It is explained that the student will be doing the same type of work.

The student practices before timing. Typically, increments of 12 seconds are used for sprints so that rates can be calculated quickly using the formula: $\times 10$, divided by 2. Three sprints and a Total Time on the whole column are customary.

A teacher may guide a student by placing her finger above the word being read as the student moves down the column. This strategy will help the student to transition to the next word without hesitation and consequently help develop a rhythm which, in turn, will help speed.

Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
100 of 600 words

Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

the	4	be	3	which	6	into	5	made	5
of	7	this	8	their	12	has	9	over	10
and	11	from	13	said	17	more	14	did	14
a	13	I	15	if	20	her	18	down	19
to	16	have	20	do	23	two	22	only	24
in	19	or	23	will	25	like	27	way	28
is	22	by	26	each	30	him	31	find	33
you	26	one	30	about	36	see	35	use	37
that	31	had	34	how	40	time	40	may	41
it	34	not	38	up	43	could	46	water	47
he	37	but	42	out	47	no	49	long	52
for	41	what	47	them	52	make	54	little	58
was	45	all	51	then	55	than	59	very	63
on	48	were	56	she	59	first	65	after	69
are	52	when	61	many	63	been	70	words	75
as	55	we	64	some	68	its	74	called	82
with	60	there	70	so	71	who	78	just	87
his	64	can	74	these	72	now	82	where	93
they	69	an	77	would	78	people	91	most	98
at	72	your	82	other	84	my	94	know	103

Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
100 of 600 words

Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

get	4	another	8	again	6	line	5	few	4
through	12	came	13	off	10	set	9	those	10
back	17	come	18	went	15	own	13	always	17
much	22	work	23	old	19	under	19	show	22
go	25	three	29	number	26	read	24	large	28
good	30	must	34	great	32	last	29	often	34
new	34	because	42	tell	37	never	35	together	43
write	40	does	47	men	41	us	38	asked	40
our	44	part	52	say	45	left	43	house	46
me	47	even	57	small	61	end	47	don't	52
man	51	place	63	every	67	along	53	world	58
too	55	well	68	found	73	while	59	going	64
any	59	such	73	still	79	might	65	want	69
day	63	here	78	between	87	next	70	school	76
same	68	take	83	name	82	sound	76	important	86
right	74	why	87	should	89	below	72	until	92
look	78	help	92	home	94	saw	76	form	97
think	85	put	96	big	98	something	86	food	102
also	90	different	106	give	103	thought	94	keep	107
around	97	away	111	air	107	both	99	children	116

Words to Read and Spell (See/Say)
 Fluency: 250 - 200/min
 Personal Aim: _____/min

Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
100 of 600 words

Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

feet	5	need	5	paper	6	example	8	didn't	7
land	10	far	9	hard	11	heard	14	car	11
side	15	hand	14	near	16	several	22	morning	19
without	23	height	19	sentence	25	change	29	I'm	23
boy	27	year	24	better	32	answer	36	body	28
once	32	mother	31	best	37	room	41	upon	33
animal	39	light	37	across	44	sea	45	family	40
life	44	country	45	during	51	against	52	later	46
enough	51	father	52	today	57	top	56	turn	51
took	56	let	56	however	85	turned	63	move	56
four	61	night	62	sure	90	learn	69	face	61
head	66	picture	70	knew	95	point	75	door	66
above	72	being	76	it's	100	city	80	cut	70
kind	77	study	82	try	104	play	85	done	75
began	83	second	89	hold	109	toward	92	group	81
almost	90	soon	94	young	115	five	97	true	86
live	95	story	100	sun	119	himself	105	half	91
page	100	since	106	thing	125	usually	113	red	95
got	104	white	112	whole	131	money	119	fish	100
earth	110	ever	117	hear	136	seen	124	plants	107

Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
100 of 600 words

Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

living	7	inside	7	wind	5	special	9	strong	7
black	13	ago	11	behind	12	ran	13	voice	13
eat	17	sad	15	cannot	19	full	18	probably	22
short	23	early	21	letter	26	town	23	area	27
United States	25	I'll	26	among	32	complete	32	horse	33
run	29	learned	34	able	37	oh	35	matter	40
book	34	brought	42	dog	41	person	42	stand	46
gave	39	close	48	shown	47	hot	46	box	50
order	45	nothing	56	mean	52	anything	55	start	56
open	50	though	63	English	60	hold	60	that's	63
ground	57	idea	68	rest	65	state	66	class	69
cold	62	before	74	perhaps	73	least	72	piece	76
really	69	lived	80	certain	81	stood	78	surface	84
table	75	because	88	six	85	hundred	86	river	90
remember	84	add	92	feel	90	ten	90	common	97
tree	89	become	99	fire	95	fast	95	stop	102
course	96	grow	104	ready	101	felt	100	am	105
front	102	draw	109	green	107	kept	105	talk	110
American	111	yet	113	yes	111	notice	112	whether	118
space	117	less	118	built	117	can't	118	fine	123

Words to Read and Spell (See/Say)
 Fluency: 250 - 200/min
 Personal Aim: _____/min

Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
100 of 600 words

Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

sat	4	center	7	alone	6	energy	7	color	6
possible	13	field	13	bottom	13	week	12	war	10
heart	19	stay	18	check	19	explain	20	fly	14
deal	24	itself	25	reading	27	lost	25	yourself	23
simple	31	boat	30	fall	32	spring	32	seem	28
snow	36	question	39	poor	37	travel	39	thus	33
rain	41	wide	44	map	41	wrote	45	square	40
suddenly	51	least	50	friends	49	farm	50	moment	46
easy	56	tiny	55	language	58	circle	57	teacher	52
leaves	63	hour	60	job	62	whose	63	happy	58
lay	67	happened	69	music	68	correct	71	bright	65
size	72	foot	74	buy	72	bed	75	sent	70
wild	77	care	79	window	79	measure	82	present	78
weather	85	low	83	mark	84	straight	91	plan	83
miss	90	else	88	heat	89	base	96	rather	90
pattern	98	gold	93	grew	94	mountain	105	length	97
sky	102	build	99	listen	101	caught	112	speed	103
walked	109	glass	105	ask	105	hair	117	machine	111
main	114	rock	110	single	112	bird	122	information	122
someone	122	tall	115	clear	118	wood	127	except	129

Words to Read and Spell (See/Say)
 Fluency: 250 - 200/min
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Fluency - Most Commonly Used Words
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Essential Word-Knowledge Skills

figure	7	child	6	oil	4	already	8	leave	6
you're	14	strange	14	modern	11	warm	13	everything	17
free	19	wish	19	fun	15	gone	18	game	22
fell	24	soil	24	catch	21	finally	25	system	29
suppose	32	human	30	business	30	summer	32	bring	35
natural	40	trip	35	reach	36	understand	43	watch	41
ocean	46	woman	41	lot	40	moon	48	shell	46
government	57	eye	45	won't	46	animals	56	dry	50
baby	62	milk	50	case	51	mind	61	within	57
grass	58	choose	57	speak	57	outside	69	floor	63
plane	64	north	63	round	63	power	75	ice	67
couldn't	73	seven	69	dark	68	problem	83	ship	72
street	80	famous	76	past	73	longer	90	themselves	83
reason	87	late	81	ball	78	winter	97	begin	89
difference	98	pay	85	girl	83	deep	102	fact	94
maybe	104	sleep	91	road	88	heavy	108	third	100
history	112	iron	96	blue	93	carefully	118	quite	106
mouth	118	trouble	104	instead	101	follow	125	carry	112
middle	125	store	109	either	108	beautiful	135	distance	121
step	130	beside	116	held	113	everyone	142	although	130