Teaching Adults to Read: Fluency & Reading Comprehension
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The Components of Reading

Print-Based Components

Alphabetics:
  Phonemic Awareness

Word Analysis
  (decoding; word recognition; structural analysis)

Fluency

Meaning-Based Components

Vocabulary

Comprehension

Oral Reading Rate Formula Practice Activity: Frankenstein

“It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might now infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet…”

- 100 wpm; 200 wpm; 250 wpm; 300 wpm


Directions: Assess your oral reading rate by reading the passage on the slide as far as you can in 10 seconds. You can determine your rate by noting how far you are able to read (denoted by the colors).

Oral Reading Rate

Words per minute = (number of words in passage ÷ reading time (in seconds)) × 60
Assessing Oral Reading Rate Activity

Rapid Automatized Naming

a  s  d  p  a  o  s  p  d
d  a  p  d  o  a  p  s  o
o  s  a  s  d  p  o  d  a
s  p  o  d  s  a  s  o  p
a  d  p  a  p  o  a  p  s


Directions: Assemble in pairs. Then, time each other reading the Rapid Automatized Naming sequence shown in the handout.

Rapid Automatized Naming Timed Results

/=<18.9 seconds not a processing problem; 21.3 borderline disabled; 26.3 disabled

Assessing Oral Reading Accuracy Activity

“Caricature”

“A type of drawing of a person that we often see in newspapers is a caricature. A caricature portrays someone so that he or she can be recognized, but looks peculiar or funny. Usually the people who are drawn are famous politicians or public figures.

One of the secrets of caricatures is to take part of the person’s face which is in real life rather striking (a big nose, perhaps) and use that feature as the basis for the drawing. Very few of us have regular faces with everything of standard size, and perhaps if you look in the mirror, you will find something that is specially you.”


Directions: The workshop leader will read “Caricature.” Listen to the first part of the reading and review with the large group the errors it contains.

Then, listen to the second part of the reading and individually note on the handout the errors that you hear.
Scoring Oral Reading Accuracy

- Are words read correctly?
- Does the reader pay attention to the punctuation?

Real Errors
- Mispronunciations—count only first time the error is made
- Substitutions

Not Real Errors
- Self-corrections
- Repetitions

Assessing Oral Reading Prosody Activity

“Jazz”

“We don’t know when or where it started – the fusion of African and European elements that made possible the uniquely American music called jazz. We don’t even know where the strange four-letter word itself really came from – its etymology is as obscure as the origins of the music.

“…We do know that the music with the odd name, bred in the most humble circumstances, has become the first truly global art alongside the other form intrinsic to the twentieth century, the motion picture.

The message of jazz, direct and immediate, speaks to the heart, across cultural, linguistic, and political barriers.”


Directions: The workshop leader will read the text “Jazz.” Listen to the first part of the reading and mark on the handout evidence of the reader’s chunking of phrases, attention to punctuation, and pauses.

Then, do the same with the second part of the reading.

Finally, determine the reader’s prosody score according to the Pause Scale.

3 Smooth reading, with pauses occurring at appropriate points and few (if any) repetitions
2 Fairly steady reading, but with pauses occurring sometimes within phrases and/or some repetitions
1 Uneven/choppy reading, with frequent repetitions and/or lapses in phrasing and/or sounding out of words
0 Labored, word-by-word reading, with continual repetitions, frequent stopping, and/or sounding out of words

Prosody Scale Adapted from the NAEP Oral Reading Study, 2002
Assessing Oral Reading Rate, Accuracy and Prosody Activity

“Work, Life and Productivity”

“The growing specialization of work and the demand for industrial efficiency under the impact of advanced industrial development resulted in the imposition of age-related standards of usefulness and productivity in American society beginning around the turn of the century, but retirement at a specific age was an invention of the twentieth century…..”


Directions: The workshop leader will read the text “Work, Life and Productivity.”

First, listen to the reading and calculate the rate at which she read the text using the following formula:

\[
\text{words per minute} = \frac{\text{number of words in passage} \div \text{reading time (in seconds) \times 60}}{}
\]

Second, count the number of real errors the reader made to determine her reading accuracy. The criterion for mastery on this text is fewer than seven errors.

Real Errors

- Misprounciations—count only first time the error is made
- Substitutions

- Insertions
- Omissions
- Supplied words

Not Real Errors

- Self-corrections
- Repetitions

- Errors in word endings: –ing, –ed, –s
- Pronunciation errors in proper nouns

Third, mark on the handout evidence of the reader’s chunking of phrases, attention to punctuation, and pauses in order to determine the reader’s prosody score according to the Pause Scale.

3  Smooth reading, with pauses occurring at appropriate points and few (if any) repetitions
2  Fairly steady reading, but with pauses occurring sometimes within phrases and/or some repetitions
1  Uneven/choppy reading, with frequent repetitions and/or lapses in phrasing and/or sounding out of words
0  Labored, word-by-word reading, with continual repetitions, frequent stopping, and/or sounding out of words

Prosody Scale Adapted from the NAEP Oral Reading Study, 200
Echo Reading Practice

The Time Machine

by H.G. Wells (excerpt from Chapter 1)

The Time Traveller (for so it will be convenient to speak of him) was expounding a recondite matter to us. His grey eyes shone and twinkled, and his usually pale face was flushed and animated. The fire burned brightly, and the soft radiance of the incandescent lights in the lilies of silver caught the bubbles that flashed and passed in our glasses. Our chairs, being his patents, embraced and caressed us rather than submitted to be sat upon, and there was that luxurious after-dinner atmosphere when thought roams gracefully free of the trammels of precision. And he put it to us in this way - marking the points with a lean forefinger - as we sat and lazily admired his earnestness over this new paradox (as we thought it:) and his fecundity.

'You must follow me carefully. I shall have to controvert one or two ideas that are almost universally accepted. The geometry, for instance, they taught you at school is founded on a misconception.'

'Is not that rather a large thing to expect us to begin upon?' said Filby, an argumentative person with red hair.

'I do not mean to ask you to accept anything without reasonable ground for it. You will soon admit as much as I need from you. You know of course that a mathematical line, a line of thickness nil, has no real existence. They taught you that? Neither has a mathematical plane. These things are mere abstractions.'

'That is all right,' said the Psychologist.

'Nor, having only length, breadth, and thickness, can a cube have a real existence.'

'There I object,' said Filby. ‘Of course a solid body may exist. All real things - ’

'So most people think. But wait a moment. Can an INSTANTANEOUS cube exist?'

'Don't follow you,' said Filby.

'Can a cube that does not last for any time at all, have a real existence?'

Filby became pensive. ‘Clearly,’ the Time Traveller proceeded, ‘any real body must have extension in FOUR directions: it must have Length, Breadth, Thickness, and - Duration. But through a natural infirmity of the flesh, which I will explain to you in a moment, we incline to overlook this fact. There are really four dimensions, three which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time. There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former three dimensions and the latter, because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives.'
Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try to not do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was a-bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see, yet finding a power of fault with me for doing a thing that had some good in it. And she took snuff, too; of course that was all right, because she done it herself.

Her sister, Miss Watson, a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on, had just come to live with her, and took a set at me now with a spellingbook. She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stood it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. Miss Watson would say, "Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry;" and "Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry--set up straight;" and pretty soon she would say, "Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry--why don't you try to behave?" Then she told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn't say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good.

Now she had got a start, and she went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was to go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever and ever. So I didn't think much of it. But I never said so. I asked her if she reckoned Tom Sawyer would go there, and she said not by a considerable sight. I was glad about that, because I wanted him and me to be together.
Directions for Use of the Fry Readability Graph

1. Randomly select three sample passages and count exactly 100 words beginning with the beginning of a sentence. Don't count numbers. Do count proper nouns.
2. Count the number of sentences in the hundred words.
3. Count the total number of syllables in the 100-word passage. If you don't have a hand counter available, an easy way is to simply put a mark above every syllable over one in each word, then, when you get to the end of the passage, count the number of marks and add 100.
4. Enter graph with average sentence length and number of syllables; plot dot where the two lines intersect. Area where dot is plotted will give you the approximate grade level.


Information about several different readability formulas can be found in the Readability section of the ASRP website at [http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/MC_Text_Comprehension.htm](http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/MC_Text_Comprehension.htm).

All programs use word length and sentence length as their measures for what reading level a text is written at. The formulas are easily computed with paper and pencil but can also be calculated using a computer. If you have text on your computer but are not sure of the reading level, most word processing programs offer readability computation, including Microsoft Word.
Think-aloud Strategy

Migration/Movement of Peoples

When did people first migrate to the Western Hemisphere?

From Europe’s discovery of the American “Indian” at the end of the fifteenth century to the present, the questions of who the native American populations are and how they came to the Western Hemisphere have intrigued scholars, clergymen, and laymen.

Early theories (put forth primarily by clergymen and not long after Columbus arrived in the Americas in 1492) posited that the New World’s indigenous people were descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel, or that the Indians’ ancestors were Welshmen, or even that the natives came from the fabled lost continents of Atlantis and Mu.

However, the advancement of anthropology has yielded some answers: . . . it is clear that the continents were settled through migration. Many scholars believe that Asians came to America during two periods: the first, between 50,000 and 40,000 B.C.; and the second, between 26,000 and 8000 B.C. They are believed to have come by way of a great land bridge over the Bering Strait, between Asia and North America. (This causeway was covered by water from about 40,000 to 26,000 B.C. because of a period of melting, which would have prevented passage.)


Activity: Planning A “Think Aloud”

Perform the following activities as directed by the workshop leader.

Materials:

- Prohibition—Excerpt from Access Critical Thinking Skills (2004)).
- Food and Drug Administration: Eating for a Healthy Heart.

Directions: Assemble in pairs. Each partner should use one of the handouts listed above to plan a think-aloud demonstration. Then perform your think aloud for your partner.

Prohibition

The period between 1920 and 1923 is known as the Prohibition era. In 1919, the adoption of the 18th Amendment made the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages illegal. Prohibition, which was a response to the public opinion that alcohol destroyed lives and disrupted families, was a great failure. Bootleggers illegally produced and distributed alcohol. Speakeasies, illegal establishments where people could buy and drink alcohol, sprung up everywhere. Most of this illegal commerce was run by organized crime.

Eating for a Healthy Heart

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a U. S. government agency that makes sure foods are safe, wholesome and honestly labeled.

Eat Healthy to Help Prevent Heart Disease

What kills Americans most?

Heart disease. It's the No. 1 cause of death in this country.

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is to choose foods carefully. For a healthy heart, eat:

- less fat
- less sodium
- fewer calories
- more fiber

Eat less fat

Some fats are more likely to cause heart disease. These fats are usually found in foods from animals, such as meat, milk, cheese, and butter. They also are found in foods with palm and coconut oils.

Eat less sodium.

Eating less sodium can help lower some people's blood pressure. This can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Sodium is something we need in our diets, but most of us eat too much of it. Much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food at the table or that food companies add to their foods. So, avoid adding salt to foods at the table.

Eat fewer calories

When we eat more calories than we need, we gain weight. Being overweight can cause heart disease.

When we eat fewer calories than we need, we lose weight.

Eat more fiber

Eating fiber from fruits, vegetables and grains may help lower your chances of getting heart disease.

Diet Tips for a Healthy Heart

- Eat a diet low in saturated fat, especially animal fats and palm and coconut oils.
- Add foods to your diet that are high in monounsaturated fats, such olive oil, canola oil, and seafood.
- Eat foods containing polyunsaturated fats found in plants and seafood. Safflower oil and corn oil are high in polyunsaturated fats.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- Maintain or improve your weight.
- Eat plenty of grain products, fruits and vegetables.

Comprehension-Strategy Instruction Tips

Adapted from Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults: First Steps for Teachers by Susan McShane. Published by the National Institute for Literacy The Partnership for Reading 2005

- Provide instruction in comprehension strategies for learners at all reading levels.
- Teach learners how and when to use several broadly applicable, research-based strategies.
- Teach strategies one at a time, providing plenty of opportunities for guided practice to ensure learners can use them independently.
- Model the strategies for learners by thinking aloud as you read.
- Consider applying the comprehension strategies to listening comprehension, especially when working with weaker readers: read text aloud or use taped readings.
- Consider readability level and learners' background knowledge when choosing texts for comprehension-strategy instruction.
- Because decoding, fluency and vocabulary are required for comprehension, include instruction/practice in all appropriate components in reading lessons.