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**Professional Development Series for Grades 3-12:  
Step-by-Step Foundational Supports: LIFT (Literacy  
Interventions and Foundational Tools)**

**Session 2: How to Conduct a Fluency Screener**

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September 21, 2022



# Objectives

- Participants will be able to
  - explain the purpose of a fluency screener and how to administer one to struggling readers.
  - determine targeted next steps for students from a fluency screener.



# Agenda

- Review of Last Session
- Purpose of a Fluency Screener
- How to Administer a Fluency Screener
- Intervening on Fluency
- Next steps
- Closure



# Review of LIFT

- [LIFT](#) stands for Literacy Interventions and Foundational Tools.
- LIFT allows teachers to diagnose what gaps may exist for students in foundational areas such as:
  - fluency,
  - code knowledge,
  - phonics, and
  - phonemic and phonological awareness.
- Diagnosing gaps in reading foundations is an important first step in supporting students who are struggling to read or master grade-level content.
- LIFT provides the diagnostic assessment as well as a library of over 70 interventions to use with students once gaps have been identified.



# Review of Initial Data to Determine if LIFT is Needed

- Grade 3: Universal screener
- Grade 4-8: DIBELS or any other universal screening: ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) and Maze (Reading Comprehension Screener) DIBELS materials can be found [here](#).
- Grades 3-12: LEAP data
- Grades 3-12: ELA and/or other subject area grades over 2 or more years

\*\*If students are below benchmark, approaching basic, unsatisfactory, or have failing grades on any of these initial day it may constitute further testing.



# Fluency is...

- The National Reading Panel (2000) defines reading fluency as the ability to read text with the appropriate rate, accuracy, and prosody.
- Reading fluency depends on well-developed word-recognition skills that are acquired through systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic/phonological awareness and phonics. Strong language comprehension skills also support reading fluency.
- There is a strong correlation between reading fluency and reading comprehension, because fluent reading allows students to take the focus off of decoding and deciphering words and allows them to focus on extracting meaning.



# Purpose of a Fluency Screener

- Assessing a student's fluency allows the teacher to see the accuracy and rate a student possesses when reading text. This refers to how many words correct the student is reading and how fast or slow. We want students to read at the appropriate rate of speech, which is fast enough to gather meaning, but not too fast because meaning may be missed then as well.
- When screening, teachers are able to determine if students are missing certain words and detect certain patterns.
- The fluency screener tells teachers if the student is:
  - fluent.
  - not 100% fluent, but not below the 50th percentile and needs more fluency practice.
  - below the 50th percentile for that grade level and gaps exist in the student's code knowledge or word recognition skills.



# Fluency Probe in LIFT

- The first part of the LIFT diagnostic is a fluency screener titled “Quest for the Best” which can be found in the [Complete LIFT Administration Materials](#) and [Complete LIFT Student Recording Packet](#).
- There is also an advanced fluency passage titled “The French Quarter” if more data is needed or if you are screening someone in grades 6-12.
- You will need only one administration materials packet, but you will need a student recording packet for each student you are administering the diagnostic to.
- The fluency probe is the first step in diagnosing what supports students may need who are not performing at benchmark.



# Administering Fluency Probe: Set-Up

- Fluency screeners are most effective when administered one on one and in a setting where you can truly hear what the student is reading.
- Here is what is needed for the administration of the screener:
  - a stopwatch or timer
  - “Quest for the Best” or “French Quarter” (for MS/HS) fluency passage from the administration materials in front of the student while they are reading
  - student recording sheet from the student recording packet with the numbers on the sides
  - 3 minute limit per student
  - calculator to determine words correct per minute and accuracy
- Page 4 of the administration materials has explicit instructions for what to say to the student when you are administering the probe.



# Administering the Fluency Probe: Recording

- Once you and the student each have their appropriate copies of the text and you have read the instructions, the students may begin.
- When the student starts reading the first word, start your timer.
- You will record errors, self corrections and words they miss.
- If they miss a word, do not stop or correct them, simply put a slash through the word, indicating the skipped or missed word.
- If they missed a word and said a different word, you can put a slash through the word and write what they said instead above the word. This may show you patterns of commonly missed words and what they are substituting with.



# Administering the Fluency Probe: Recording Continued

- If they missed or skipped a word and come back to it, you can indicate that with an SC above the crossed out word, standing for self correction.
- If they miss an entire line, cross through that line.
- Once the 3 minutes is over, if the student has not finished reading the passage yet, put a bracket, ], at the end to indicate stopping point.



# Scoring the Fluency Probe

- Start by looking for the last complete line read and write the number down next to that line to indicate words read.
- If there is a partial line read after that, add the number of words read on that line to the total.
- This gives you total words read per minute, WPM. (If a student omits a full line, make sure to subtract the number of words in that line from total before recording WPM.)



# Scoring the Fluency Probe Continued

- To determine accuracy, count the number of mistakes or individual words skipped. Subtract the number of errors from the WPM. This will give you the words correct per minute, WCPM. (Self corrections do not count as an error.)
- To get the accuracy rate, you divide the number of words read correct by the number of total words read. ( $WCPM \div WPM = \text{Accuracy Rate}$ )
- There is also a calculator that computes the WCPM and Accuracy rate that can be found on [page 4 of the administration materials](#).



# Accuracy Rate

- The rate of accuracy is even more important than the number of words read. If students are reading words incorrectly, they cannot gather meaning from the text.
- If a student is reading at:
  - **95-100%:** This is their independent reading level, and they can read text at this level on their own.
  - **90-94%:** This is their instructional level and there should be some support in reading this passage, either through whole class reading, partner reading, choral or echo reading, if we want them to gather the appropriate meaning.
  - **89% and below:** This indicates their frustrational level, and it will be difficult for students to extract meaning from a text at this level.



# Norms: Determining if Student are Fluent Readers

- There is a link for a fluency norms chart from Hasbrouck and Tindal (2017) that can be found on [page 2 of the student recording packet](#).
- If a student is reading below the 50th percentile, this indicates that they are a disfluent reader, and they would benefit from further screening. Follow the flow chart and administer the three-part code knowledge inventory.
- If it is determined that the student is above the 50th percentile on the norms but below the 90th percentile, they may benefit from more fluency practice. It is best to pick passages at their instructional level so that you can grow and push them in skills behind word recognition.
- Every student can benefit from more practice reading. Even students who read above the 90th percentile will benefit from reading books that are at their instructional level to build their vocabulary and fluency.



# Important Notes Regarding Fluency Norms Past 6th Grade

- Fluency norms typically stop in 6th grade. This is because at the 90th percentile of 6th grade, students are expected to read at roughly 200 words per minute. This is the rate of speech.
- Although people can read faster than the rate of speech, once students can read at the rate of speech, the focus shifts to complexity of text and comprehension and vocabulary building.
- For this reason, teachers can use the 6th grade norms past 6th grade.



## Next Steps

- For students above the 50th percentile, students would benefit from fluency practice. See next slide for guidance.
- For students below the 50th percentile, students would benefit from further screening. See the next session in this webinar series for more support in administering the three-part code knowledge inventory.





## Further Developing Fluency

- Most of the ELA curricula have fluency passages that can be used for further practice that also relate to the topic(s) covered in that unit of study.
  - [Guidebooks Curriculum Hub](#) has fluency passages available. They can be found by clicking on the grade level, the desired unit, 01 Unit (once in the Google Drive folder), then Fluency Tasks.
- Achieve the Core has a thorough process to follow for more fluency practice, as well as a library of fluency passages sorted by genre. Resources can be found for the following grade bands:
  - [2-3](#)
  - [4-5](#)
  - [6-8](#) (Can definitely be used for high school as well.)
- Additional high school fluency support and passages can be found at the [Ohio Literacy Alliance](#) as well.



# Fluency Practice in Small Groups

- Fluency practice should include:
  - walking students through previewing the text.
  - modeling how the text should be read with the appropriate rate and prosody.
  - where necessary, explaining prosody (i.e. *I paused at this comma because...*).
  - moving through a progression of scaffolds after modeling, such as echo reading and choral reading before asking students to independently read.
  - conducting 3-4 reads of a passage to ensure students are building their sight word recognition.
    - each read-through should have a different purposes. Purposes could include:
      - reading at an appropriate pace and with expression
      - answering questions
      - identifying words they do not know
      - reflecting on what students learned from the text



# Fluency Practice in Small Groups Continued

- providing **frequent corrective feedback** to students as they are reading, helping to pronounce incorrect words.
- moving to timed reading eventually so that students can increase their words read per minute.
- asking “check for understanding” questions as students progress through the readings.
- asking students to track their progress as they read that passage throughout the week.



# Additional Resources

- For additional assistance with fluency consider the following resources:
  - The MS/HS Literacy PD Series: [Session 4: Reading Fluency](#)
  - Your ELA curriculum
  - [Achieve the Core](#)



# Closure

- The National Reading Panel (2000) defines reading fluency as the ability to read text with the appropriate rate, accuracy, and prosody.
- Monitoring and developing a student's fluency sets them up for success in being able to read and comprehend grade level content.
- The fluency screener is the first step in the LIFT kit and in diagnosing students' literacy needs.



# Questions or Comments

If you have any questions or comments you can reach out to [louisianaliteracy@la.gov](mailto:louisianaliteracy@la.gov).

