



IMPROVING FLUENCY, GRADES 3-8

Course Description

Improving Fluency is an interactive, online, and in-person professional development course designed for all teachers of grades 3–8. The seven sessions in the course focus on defining fluency, assessing oral fluency, direct instruction in building fluency, student practice activities and teaching techniques for small-group and independent fluency-building, and suggestions for implementing fluency instruction into any classroom schedule.

- Sessions 1 and 2 define fluency, and explain its link to comprehension and decoding. Session 3 models how to conduct and score a fluency assessment, helping teachers and students set individual fluency goals.
- Sessions 4, 5, and 6 of the course detail techniques for building fluency. Session 4 focuses on the teacher's role improving direct instruction by modeling fluency and tailoring instruction to each student's needs. Session 5 details small-group and partner fluency-building activities, such as paired reading and Readers Theater. The sixth session in this group describes independent fluency-building activities, such as repeated readings and speed drills.
- The course concludes with Session 7 on implementing fluency instruction and activities into the daily classroom schedule. Topics covered include setting up a fluency corner and matching students to great books for fluency practice.

Lesson plans and classroom resources support all online sessions. The plans and resource support ensure that the course content can be seamlessly integrated into classroom reading programs or subject-specific curriculum. Also available with this course is a boxed kit containing fluency-building materials for students and professional resources for teachers.

Course Objectives

On completing this course, you will be able to:

- **explain** the importance of fluency in reading comprehension, define the three characteristics of fluent reading—speed, accuracy, and prosody—and assess and interpret timed oral fluency tests.
- **provide** direct fluency instruction and feedback by modeling fluent reading, teaching phrase-cue boundaries in text, and using oral recitation lessons.
- **support** students' oral reading with small-group fluency-building techniques including partner reading, paired repeated readings, echo readings, choral readings, and reader's theater.
- **provide** ample independent fluency-building practice through independent repeated readings, speed drills, and audiobooks, and help students self-monitor their progress.
- **incorporate** fluency instruction into your classroom schedules and routines, set-up a fluency corner, and create materials to meet the fluency needs of students at differing levels of reading proficiency.

Course Outline

1. Course Introduction

1.1 Your Course Keynote
Self-Assessment

2. Fluency: A Definition

- 2.1 What is Fluency?
- 2.2 Fluency and Comprehension: The Link
- 2.3 Fluency and Decoding: The Link
- 2.4 The Three Characteristics of Fluent Reading
- 2.5 Why Students Need Fluency Instruction

3. Fluency: Assessing Students

- 3.1 Setting Goals for Fluent Reading
- 3.2 Conducting an Oral Fluency Assessment (OFA)
- 3.3 Scoring an Oral Fluency Assessment
- 3.4 Reading the Norm Chart
- 3.5 Retelling: OFA Follow-Up

4. Fluency-Building: The Teacher's Role

- 4.1 The Importance of Direct Instruction and Feedback
- 4.2 Modeled Fluent Reading
- 4.3 Phrase-Cueing Text
- 4.4 Oral Recitation Lessons
- 4.5 Reading Routines for Fluency

5. Fluency-Building: Partners & Small Groups

- 5.1 The Importance of Providing Reader Support
- 5.2 Partner Reading
- 5.3 Echo Reading
- 5.4 Choral Reading
- 5.5 Readers Theater

6. Fluency-Building: Independent Activities

- 6.1 The Importance of Independent Practice
- 6.2 Independent Repeated Readings
- 6.3 Speed Drills
- 6.4 Using Audiobooks
- 6.5 Keeping Records and Monitoring Progress

7. Fluency: Making It Work In Your Classroom

- 7.1 Setting Up Your Classroom: The Fluency Corner
- 7.2 Fitting Fluency into Classroom Routines
- 7.3 Matching Students to Fluency-Building Text
- 7.4 Meeting Special Fluency Needs
- 7.5 Achieving Fluency Goals and Moving On