Teaching Fluency Skills Reading Charts Grades 4-6

Designed to meet these objectives:

Language

- Students will read a variety of texts orally with fluency.
- Students will use appropriate pacing and intonation when reading orally.
- Students will improve their reading comprehension.

These colorful charts help boost students' reading fluency with engaging passages specifically written for choral reading, echo reading, and modeled reading. There are 24 charts featuring stories, nonfiction passages, and poems. Each chart includes tips to help students focus on specific fluency skills, such as phrasing, following punctuation cues, and reading with expression. Plus, this guide includes reproducibles of all the charts, so students can follow along or practice on their own. It's perfect for small groups—or the whole class!

About the Charts

The charts are divided into three categories: Modeled Reading, Choral Reading, and Echo Reading. Within each category, there are samples of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. The charts in each category focus on a variety of fluency skills, providing plenty of interactive experiences with each skill. This format also makes it easy for you to target specific fluency skills for students to practice.

The three focus areas are punctuation, expression, and phrasing. Easy-to-understand explanations are provided on the charts so students know exactly what is expected.

- "Punctuation" refers to the way we use punctuation cues to help us read fluently—pausing at commas, changing our tone for questions, and so on.

- "Expression" refers to ways in which we show emotion as we read, changing the volume and tone of our words to reflect the meaning of the words or to indicate when characters are speaking.

- "Phrasing" refers to the way we group words into meaningful chunks within a sentence, making it easier to understand what is being read (or heard). The charts that focus on phrasing have marks to show one way in which the passage can be phrased. Make sure students recognize that there may be other meaningful ways to phrase the sentences. The point is that the phrasing should make the passage easier to understand.

About the Categories

Modeled Reading (Charts 1-8)

In modeled reading, the teacher reads the text aloud, demonstrating good fluency, while students listen. Before you begin, you may want to ask students to listen for particular elements of good fluency, such as the way your voice rises when you read a sentence that ends with a question mark. For whole class lessons, distribute photocopies of the text passage. (A reproducible of each text passage can be found in this guide, beginning on page 4.) Have students follow along as you read the text aloud. Read the text more than once, drawing students' attention to the rate, phrasing, and expression of your words. After modeling the text, have students form pairs or small groups and take turns reading aloud to each other while you circulate through the classroom, observing and providing feedback.

Echo Reading (Charts 9-16)

Echo reading involves students actively in the reading process. In echo reading, the teacher reads the passage aloud, one sentence at a time. Pause after each sentence and encourage students to read the same sentence aloud, mimicking your fluent oral reading as closely as possible. Read the whole passage more than once, pointing out different elements you want students to pay particular attention to. For example, you might say, "I like the way some of you changed your voices to sound like the character who was speaking. Let's read the passage again, and everyone can try that."

Choral Reading (Charts 17-24)

In choral reading, everyone in the group reads the text at the same time. Hearing other students reading the same words at the same time boosts students' confidence and helps them read more fluently.

The first time a group reads a passage chorally, we suggest that you read aloud with them, using a slightly louder voice. This will help to set the rate at which students read the passage. In subsequent choral readings of the same passage, invite different students to act as the "lead voice."

Getting Started

The versatile charts can be used with your whole class, or with small groups. First, decide how you want students to practice fluency: using modeled reading, choral reading, or echo reading. (See the descriptions above.) Choose a chart within that category that has the focus you want children to learn, and, if desired, make photocopies of the corresponding reproducible from this guide. (Note that all of the charts can be used for modeled reading, echo reading, or choral reading. However, the passages in each category are particularly suited to that category.) Display the chart and distribute the reproducibles to your students.

Before you read the passage, review the explanation of the focus at the top of the card and discuss it with your class. Have volunteers point out examples of the punctuation marks, phrasing breaks, dialogue, or other elements to which the focus applies. This will help students pay attention to those elements as they read.

When children are familiar with a chart, place it in your language center for independent practice. Encourage students to find partners and read the chart to each other. Set out copies of the fluency checklist on page 3 of this guide and prompt students to use it to evaluate their fluency skills.

Fluency Checklist

These are the things that fluent readers do.
Did you do these things when you read?

Fluent readers...

☐ **...chunk their words into meaningful phrases.**

Did your reading sound like you were talking?

☐ **...read at a good pace—not too fast and not too slow.**

Was your reading smooth and steady?

☐ **...pay attention to punctuation marks and to words that are written in a special way.**

Did you pause at appropriate times and read dialogue as you think the character would speak?

☐ **...read with expression and make the text sound interesting.**

Did you show feeling and emotion when you read?

☐ **...quickly correct their mistakes.**

Did you recognize and correct your reading mistakes?

☐ **...think about the meaning of the text as they read.**

Did you understand what you read?

☐ **...read poems with rhythm.**

Did you emphasize the rhyming words?