

February
2023

Newsletter



Flying High
English Hub

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A focus on fluency



From Carl Pattison,
Flying High English Hub Lead

“Reading fluency can be defined as reading with accuracy, automaticity and prosody. When pupils read fluently, their cognitive resources can be redirected from focusing on decoding and onto comprehending a text. For this reason, fluency is sometimes described as a bridge from word recognition to comprehension.”

Supporting pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities-EEF

Early in March, I'm running a free webinar called 'A focus on fluency' so I wanted to set the scene and share a few thoughts about this topic. From the opening paragraph, I've identified the three key components of fluency in different colours. Firstly, I've done this to identify that fluency is more than reading words without sounding them out. I often come across this misconception when people are allocating decodable reading books- "They need to have a decodable reading books with 95% fluency." Well, what does this mean? How can you quantify 95% prosody for example? When people talk about 95% fluency, they are referring to automaticity. They are aware that a child should not have to sound and blend most words as this will lead to frustration. Importantly, due to the amount of words they have to sound and blend, they are unable to build fluent reading, thus are often unable to comprehend what they read.

Let's look at each component and understand what it means for the classroom:

Automaticity

How many times have you seen a child sound and blend the word 'Dad' then turn the page and sound and blend the exact same word again and sometime again... The word is not in their orthographic store yet so the effort required to read the word is greater. They are focusing in recognising the graphemes in the word, saying the corresponding phonemes and then blending them together. With automatic reading, children read words straightaway and demands on their brain are far less. Some children can sound and blend a word once and they read it automatically from then on.



Others might need numerous attempts at sounding and blending it before they recognise it. We can alert them to the fact that it is the same word but we must not be tempted to teach them it as a whole word—"That word is 'dad'." Instead, we should focus efforts on allowing the child to repeatedly read the words. This might be in their phonics lessons or simply on a few word flashcards before reading.

- Are your children being rushed to know the word automatically?
- What repeated practice is in place to enable children to build their orthographic store?

Prosody

Before the text was put on the page/screen, someone did some thinking. For example, how they wanted the story to develop or maybe, the knowledge they wanted to share. A reader's job is to then bring that text back to life so they understand the author's thinking (and sometimes what they didn't think.) To do this, they must use syntax and the context of what they are reading. For example, 'Oh no, we are going to be late for school again' will need to be read a certain way. The reader would pause at the comma and understand that the character is not feeling too good about being late. With prosody, the reader varies the pace, volume and pitch to help bring it back to life.

- What explicit instruction are children given about prosody?
- Are they given time to discuss the text and practise reading it before reading it aloud?

Fluency, or reading with 'flow' is a fascinating subject and I will share more about this at the fluency webinar on 7th March. I hope to see you there.

Fluency Resources

Here are a collection of resources to support fluency.

Recommendation
2 in the Improving
Literacy at Key
Stage 2 guidance
report



EEF blog: Shining a
spotlight in
reading fluency



Reading Rockets article
(American) on
Developing fluent
readers and supporting
those who are behind
their peers





We Recommend...



Flying High English Hub

Open University



READING FOR PLEASURE

Within the ourfp.org website, there is an array of guidance and suggestions for practice. This month, we take a look at resources for 'Independent reading.'

This documents enables schools to build a baseline. It helps them to reflect on what independent reading looks and feels like in their school. Is it something that is done alone in silence or is it a key part of the reading community?

[Independent Reading- Review your practice](#)



This is an example of practice. It shows how a school developed independent reading time so that children have greater choice.

[Reading with LARRY](#)



Education Library Service (ELS)

We have a wonderful partnership with the Education Library Service so wanted to share a few of the resources they provide

World Books Day 2023-Virtual assembly (Notts schools only)



Book Here

Looking to update your library collection? The Best Fiction Lists will certainly help.



Find Here

Author in the spotlight



[Find a range of Sally's books or book her for a visit here](#)

Sally Nicholls

Sally Nicholls is a prize-winning British children's book author. She was born and raised in Stockton-on-Tees, England. On finishing school, Nicholls chose to travel around the world. Her first three novels all have death as the central theme. Interestingly, her father died when she was two and she was brought up by her mother.

Sally has published thirteen books for children and teenagers. She has won many awards, including the Waterstone's Children's Book Prize, the Glen Dimplex New Writer of the Year (children's category and overall winner) and the Independent Booksellers Week Book Award. Her YA novel about the suffrage movement, Things a Bright Girl Can Do was shortlisted for a Carnegie, and An Island of Our Own was shortlisted for the Costa Book of the Year and the Guardian Children's Book Prize. Her books have been translated into over twenty languages, and Ways to Live Forever was made into a feature film.



Bitesize

Where we take a look at resources available to schools and how they might want to use them.



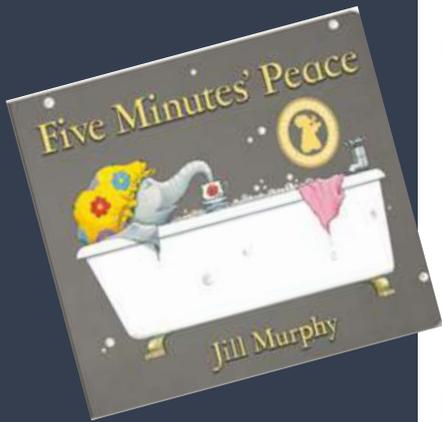
Flying High English Hub



This month, we showcase the wonderful work of the 'Reading Agency' You might be aware that the Reading Agency drive the summer reading challenge, however, are you aware that they do much more than this?

There are a wide range of resources available to schools and parents. We love the 'Storytelling fun with Five Minutes' Peace by Jill Murphy.' This wonderful resource gives excellent tips on how to bring this story to life. Have a look [here](#).

Reading Sparks is a new project to engage children and families with science through reading. You can sign up and read more about the project [here](#).



Voice 21 work with schools to support all children can use their voice for success in school and in life.

Find out more here



Validated SSP Programmes

The DfE have updated the list of validated programmes that we can help to fund. There are now 45 programmes on the list and they can be found [here](#).



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