

Teaching – Learning Strategy
Building Fluency using Phrases with Rate, Intonation and Punctuation
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Description of this strategy:

"Fluency is defined as the ability to read text accurately at an appropriate rate and with meaningful phrasing and intonation." (Sweeney, 2004) Studies have shown that "students who lack fluency read choppy, word-by-word manner. This lack of fluency is directly related to poor comprehension." (Nathan and Stanovich, 1991) This strategy uses a text at the student's reading level and stresses reading phrases with intonation, rate and using punctuation. This will aid in the student's ability to become fluent and therefore make meaning of what they are reading.

Who can use this strategy?

Emergent readers and students that struggle with reading fluently could use this strategy to help with reading phrases instead of reading choppy or word-by-word and therefore gaining more meaning from the story. This strategy can be used for teaching proper writing techniques to students so that the reader gains the meaning the writer intended them to gain.

Adaptations that can be made to this strategy:

This lesson is geared toward a reader reading at the third grade level. However, it can be easily adapted for any reading level. The book "Eats, Shoots & Leaves" is enjoyed by all ages and is a great tool to teach punctuation and phrasing. You could use any text, which has dialogue, to incorporate this strategy for primary students. The teacher could ask the questions as a whole group for primary. Also, for the secondary education students, you could adapt this strategy to just about any text or poem that is at their reading level.

Tips for teaching this strategy:

Make sure you are reading something that is on the student's reading level. You may want to use this strategy with small groups so that all of the students are on just about the same level. Then the lesson will provide a better outcome of reading with phrasing, rate and intonation. Finally, make sure that you ask higher level questioning to make sure the students comprehended what they had read.

How to do this strategy:

- 1) Find a text, poem or excerpt of a text that is on the student's reading level.
- 2) Whole group for primary, small group of similar level readers for intermediate and secondary education.
- 3) Read the poem, text or excerpt and discuss. Ask questions about their background knowledge of what was read and make connections to the characters in the text.
- 4) Reread the poem, text or excerpt of a text and **emphasize** the character's voice, the commas, rhyming words. Ask students questions about why one character sounds different from another? What might that tell you about the character's mood or tone of voice?
- 5) Reread the part with the commas, focusing on the pauses. Ask the students what that would have sounded like if you read it all together, without the pauses? Teacher explains that the commas give the poem or text a rhythm and adds to the meaning.