

Assessment of fluency

You will need a stopwatch for this assessment and a copy of the charts for the sound-letter combinations you want to assess. Present the student with the first chart and ask them to read the words as quickly as they can without skipping any and without making errors. The student should read across the page from left to right. Tell the student that they can start when they are ready and that you will be timing them but that this is not a race. Count the total number of words read and the number read incorrectly in one minute. Record this information on the recording sheet in Part 2. If the student gets a minimum of 50 words per minute, he or she is ready to proceed with fluency training. The information can be transferred to a graph (see Charting student progress above) and becomes baseline. The teacher can continue to assess fluency on the next chart. It is recommended that no more than 3 sound-letter combinations be assessed for fluency at any one time. If the student does not reach 50 words per minute, he or she requires additional instruction and practice to consolidate the sound-letter combination. Fluency can be re-assessed at a later date.

Assisting learners with accurate decoding

Learners who are not ready for fluency training (rate of less than 50 words per minute) may need further practice with blending the sounds into words. This assumes that the student has already learned the sound-letter combinations. The following activities are helpful in promoting accuracy in blending.

Blending onset and rime

Material

- Magnetic letters or whiteboard and pen

Procedure

- Set out a simple word like 'cat' using magnetic letters
- Say the word divided into onset and rime (c at)
- Show the student how to move away the initial consonant (move the 'c' away)
- Say the two parts separately
- Move the c back and say the complete word