

Fluency Standards for Oral Reading

(words per minute)

State of Utah Fluency Benchmark Standards

First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade
Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 60 wpm	Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 80 wpm	Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 100 wpm	Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 120-150 wpm	Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 120-150 wpm	Read grade level text at a rate of approximately 120-150 wpm
Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%	Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%	Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%	Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%	Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%	Read grade level text with an accuracy rate of 95-100%

Alpine School District Elementary Fluency Standards

Grade Level Text (Levels)		Intervention	Instructional This is the benchmark WPM for the FALL* benchmark	Independent This is the benchmark WPM for the SPRING* benchmark	Advanced
K	1 - 3				
1	4 – 16	39 or less	40-59	60-70	71+
2	18 – 28	54 or less	55-79	80-95	96+
3	30 – 38	74 or less	75-99	100-119	120+
4	40	94 or less	95-119	120-135	136+
5	50	109 or less	110-129	130-145	146+
6	60	119 or less	120-139	140-155	156+
7	70	129 or less	130-149	150-165	166+
8	80	139 or less	140-159	160-175	176+

*You will notice that the Alpine rubric states Grade Level Text instead of Grade Level. This is an important modification for students who may be starting out behind in their achievement for words per minute. We would expect them to be fluent at each increasing text level and to incrementally increase WPM as the text gets harder, instead of expecting them to achieve a higher level immediately.

NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) Oral Reading Rate

Grade Level	Words Per Minute
1	75
2	100
3	124
4	140
5	150
Higher text	170

Have you ever wondered--Why is fluency important

An analogy for understanding the relationship between excelling as a reader and the connection with fluency might be that fluency is to reading as body temperature is to your good health. It is one measure of whether or not there is something going wrong.

Fluent reading is not necessarily FAST reading. Reading should move along at an appropriate rate of speed reflecting the mood and expression of the text. Fluent reading rates differ for each grade level. The oral reading rates for Alpine School District's reading assessments can be viewed at:

<http://www.alpine.k12.ut.us/depts/curriculumDept/subjects/langArts/BalancedLiteracy/FluencyStandards.pdf>

The standards are, in fact, not fast at all and many skilled readers easily read much faster.

Children that read in a laborious manner, slowing or stopping to figure things out, will have difficulty comprehending text. This difficulty compounds as the student proceeds to higher grades and reads more complex texts. Lack of fluency adds extra stress to completing every school assignment and is not just evident during reading lessons or reading tests. Lack of fluency also contributes to the amount of homework a child has and the time it takes a child to complete homework.

Here are a few things a child can do to improve in fluency:

1) Before Reading: Skim and scan the text then orally predict what the text will be about. That helps your child's brain get ready for a whole group of associated words s/he might need to read in the selection.

2) During Reading: Partner read aloud. Read the words together with both voices on. Your child should point to the text to keep you together. Don't stop for a phonics lesson. Just say the right word and point to the part the child should notice.

3) After Reading: Partner discuss; react to your reading, clarify and summarize the message. Look back in the text to find the part of the text that supports what you are talking about. Stop and talk often.

4) Reading aloud is a valuable and necessary part of helping students become proficient readers. As little as 10 minutes per night for a school year makes a large difference!

5) A few more ideas can be found in the Tier 2 binder on the website at:
<http://www.alpine.k12.ut.us/depts/curriculumDept/subjects/langArts/Tier2/FluencySection.pdf>

Teachers who have focused instruction on fluency have seen much progress in fluency for those students as readers over the past few years. When teachers combine fluency instruction with opportunities for students to read orally for extended periods of time (10-30 minutes daily) students also improve in decoding skills.