Improving Reading Fluency (ERIK)

Due to the prevalence of low reading rate in 'ERIK students' two new components are to be included in all ERIK pathways: rapid word recognition and repeated reading.

Techniques for increasing reading rate

The following techniques are most useful with students who have acquired some proficiency in decoding skill but whose level of decoding skill is lower than their oral language abilities. Methods for increasing reading rate have several common features: 1) students listen to text as they follow along with the book, 2) students follow the print using their fingers as guides, and 3) reading materials are used that students would be unable to read independently.

(1) Rapid word recognition chart

A way to improve speed of recognition for words is the use of a rapid word recognition chart (Carreker, 1999). The chart is similar to a rapid automatised naming (RAN) task. It is a matrix that contains five rows of six words (e.g., pat, pet, dog, log), with each row containing the same six words in a different order. After a brief review of the words, students are timed for 1 minute as they read the words in the squares aloud. Students can then count and record the number of words read correctly. This procedure can help students who struggle to memorize word patterns.
Remember: You can only choose 6 of the target words for each session.

To create your own **Rapid Word Recognition Charts** for each ERIK session go to: http://neuhaus.org/consumables/ then halfway down the page you will locate the link to the Rapid Recognition Chart Generator. (It's very easy to use and takes all the hard work out of creating resources.)
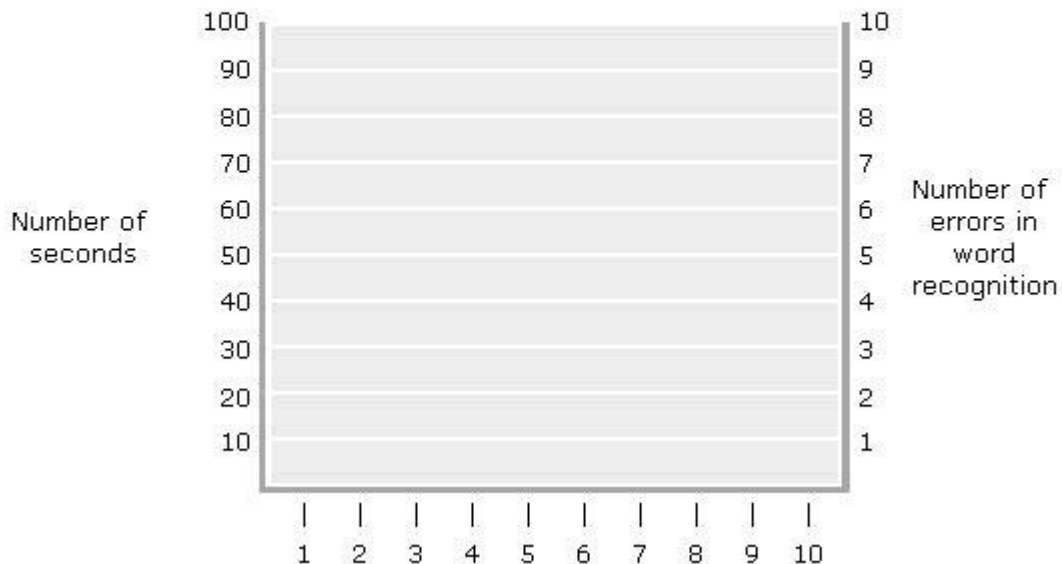
(2) Repeated readings

The repeated readings technique is designed for children who read slowly despite adequate word recognition (Samuels, 1979). For this procedure, the child reads the same passage over and over again. To begin, select the first few pages of an ERIK book (remembering that the passage should be slightly above the student's independent reading level and needs to contain between 50 – 100 words). Have the student read the selection orally while you time the reading and count the number of words that are pronounced incorrectly. Record the reading time and the number of words pronounced incorrectly.
If desired, set a realistic goal for speed and number of errors. The figure below presents a sample recording form to use for repeated readings. You may use two different coloured pencils for recording time and errors, or you may use a circle to indicate points on the line for time and an X or a square to indicate points on the line for errors. Between timings, you may ask the student to look over the selection, reread it, and practice words that caused difficulty in the initial reading. When the student is ready, have him or her reread the same passage. Once again, time the reading, and record the time and number of errors. Have the student repeatedly practice reading the selection as you chart progress after each trial until a predetermined goal is reached or until the student is able to read the passage fluently with few mistakes.

Repeated Readings

Name _____	Spelling self-analysis score _____	Pretest score _____	Postest score _____

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Number of          100                                      10
seconds             90                                       9
                    80                                       8
                    70                                       7
                    60                                       6    Number of
                    50                                       5    errors in
                    40                                       4    word
                    30                                       3    recognition
                    20                                       2
                    10                                       1

                     1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
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What is reading Fluency?

Taken from Reading Fluency by N. Mather & Sam Goldstein (2001) http://www.ldonline.org/article/6354/

Reading fluency encompasses the speed or rate of reading, as well as the ability to read with expression. Meyer and Felton defined *fluency* as "'the ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading, such as decoding" (1999, p. 284). Children are successful with decoding when the process used to identify words is fast and nearly effortless or with automaticity. This concept of automaticity refers to a student's ability to recognize words rapidly with little attention required to decode the word. The ability to read words by sight automatically is the key to skilled reading (Ehri, 1998).

Some children have developed accurate word pronunciation skills but read slowly. For these children, decoding is not automatic or fluent, and their limited fluency may affect performance in the following ways: 1) they read less text than peers and have less time to remember, review, or comprehend the text; 2) they use more cognitive energy than peers trying to identify individual words; and 3) they may be less able to retain text in their memories and less likely to integrate those segments with other parts of the text (Mastropieri, Leinart, & Scruggs, 1999).

Students who would benefit from methods to increase reading speed are often described by their teachers as slow, laborious readers who read word-by-word with limited expression. For this reason, some students require more exposures and more practice to recognize individual words easily and automatically. Even into upper primary and secondary school, these students often devote an inordinate amount of energy to word identification.

Research on Repeated Reading

Research on repeated reading suggests that fluency can be improved as long as students are provided with specific instructions and procedures are used to monitor their progress (Mastropieri et al., 1999). An easy way to monitor student performance using this chart is to keep a log of the dated charts. To control for a similar readability level, select the passages to read from the same book. As performance improves, the time to perform the initial reading should decrease.

Repeated reading has also been used as a component of class-wide peer tutoring (Mathes & Fuchs, 1993). In a study of this intervention, pairs of students in one group read continuously over a 10-minute period, whereas pairs of students in the other group read a passage together three times before going on to the next passage. Although both experimental conditions produced higher results than the typical reading instruction, no difference existed between the procedures, suggesting that the main benefit of the intervention is the student reading involvement and the increased time spent in reading (Mastropieri et al., 1999).

In a review of the effectiveness of repeated reading, Meyer and Felton (1999) concluded that the method of repeated readings improves reading speed for a wide variety of readers. They make the following recommendations for helping students to improve fluency:

1. have students engage in multiple readings (three to four times);
2. use instructional level text;
3. use decodable text with struggling readers;
4. provide short, frequent periods of fluency practice; and
5. provide concrete measures of progress. Base the amount of teacher guidance on each individual's characteristics. With students with poor reading skills, modeling and practicing of words between readings improve student performance and reduce frustration.

Previewing is a technique similar to repeated reading, involving pre-exposure to materials before they are formally read (Rose, 1984). For this type of procedure, a student can preview the material silently, or you may read the passage aloud as the student follows along, or the student may first listen to the recorded passage on tape. Rose and Sherry (1984) found that both silent previewing and teacher-directed previewing were more effective than no previewing. Students have found that, by hearing the passage before being asked to read it meant that fewer errors were made and the student was more successful reading the text.

To read more on the importance of fluency go to:
http://www.resourceroom.net/readspell/2002_automaticity.asp

For all references go to: http://www.ldonline.org/article/6354/

Carreker, S. (1999). Teaching reading: Accurate decoding and fluency. In J.R. Birsh (Ed.), *Multisensory teaching of basic language skills.* Baltimore, MD: P.H. Brookes.
Honig, B., Diamond, L., and Gutlohn, L. (2000). *Teaching reading: Sourcebook for kindergarten through eighth grade.* Novato, CA: Arena Press.

Sample

By following the simple instructions on this website, you can create your own personalised Word Recognition Charts.

First, go to the tab labeled "Words" (at the bottom of the screen) and enter your words, letters, etc. in the outlined boxes. This will automatically create 5 charts.

To view and print the charts, click on each of the tabs labeled "Chart (1), Chart (2), Chart (3), Chart (4), and Chart (5)". You will now have a chart ready to print. Each of these charts has the words arranged in a different order. By alternating which chart you use, you can be sure your students are not just memorizing the pattern.

RAPID RECOGNITION CHART

cap	tap	nap	jet	pet	wet
wet	pet	jet	nap	tap	cap
pet	wet	tap	cap	nap	jet
jet	nap	cap	tap	wet	pet
nap	cap	wet	pet	tap	jet

Created with Rapid Word Recognition Chart Creator   www.ReadingTeachersNetwork.org