

# Scaffolding Fluency Instruction

## Scaffolding steps:

- Move students up a level in text when the lower-ability reader has 2 consecutive days with 95 words correct per minute (WCPM) or better.
- Use progress monitoring data to reconfigure pairs appropriately.
- Implement the routine three to four times per week for 12 to 20 weeks. Then, take a break before returning to Partner Reading three to four times per week.

## Caveats about fluency:

Students who struggle with reading need fluency instruction as one component of their intervention. This component must be combined with instruction in word identification, vocabulary, and comprehension. All of those elements are related, but targeting fluency alone will not cause increases in other reading skills.

Many of the fluency guidelines are based on research with children in grades 1–4. Much less is known about fluency practices for older students. When interpreting fluency scores of adolescents, it may be necessary to make a judgment about when fluency instruction is no longer profitable. The most important outcome for students is that they can understand and learn from text. If students exhibit somewhat below-average fluency but are comprehending grade-level material, it may not be appropriate to spend considerable time on improving their rate of reading.

Similarly, although most descriptions of fluent adolescent readers indicate that they read at least 150 WCPM (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006; Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, & Tindal, 2005), students reading grade-level text at 90–100 WCPM with 90% accuracy may benefit more from time spent on enhancing their background knowledge, vocabulary, and/or comprehension rather than on fluency instruction. Fluency gains are much more difficult beyond this “ceiling.”

REFERENCES: Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006; Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, & Tindal, 2005.