



Fluency Classroom Activity

Timed Word Lists

Overview

Fluent readers recognize words quickly and accurately, which frees up cognitive space for comprehension. This activity supports fluency development by giving students repeated, timed opportunities to read both real and nonsense words. Real-word lists promote automaticity with high-frequency and decodable vocabulary, while nonsense word lists reinforce phonics skills by requiring students to apply decoding strategies to unfamiliar letter patterns.

Focus: High-frequency and decodable words

Grade Range: K–2

Goal: Build automaticity and accuracy with word recognition through short, timed practice.

Materials Needed

- Stopwatch or timer
- Printed student word list pages (can be laminated for multiple uses)
- Printed teacher word-tracking pages

Instructions

1. **Select a List:** Choose a real or nonsense word list that matches your students' decoding level.
2. **Explain the Task:** Tell students they will read as many words as they can in 30 seconds. They should do their best to sound out unfamiliar words.
3. **Time and Track:** Use a timer to count 30 seconds as students read aloud. Mark any skipped or incorrect words.
4. **Repeat and Reflect:** Have students try the list again after feedback. Encourage them to beat their own score and focus on accuracy as well as speed.

Tips for Differentiation

- Sets 1 and 3 use simpler real words for emerging readers (CVC or high-frequency words).
- Sets 2 and 4 offer nonsense words to promote decoding. Great for phonics checks.
- Sets 5 and 6 blend high-frequency and more complex decodable words.
- Set 7 includes more advanced nonsense words for strong decoders.
- Create your lists using text from student-level text or spelling words.
- Use whisper phones, one-on-one support, or segment practice sets for students who need extra support.
- Have students graph progress over time or challenge themselves to beat their best score.

Wrap-Up Questions

- What helped you read more words the second time?
- Did any words surprise you?
- How does this help you when reading books?

Additional Fluency Resources

Select high-frequency and decodable word lists to practice fluency.

- [University of Florida Literacy Institute: Decoding and Encoding](#)
- [University of Florida Literacy Institute: Irregular and High Frequency Words](#)
- [Nonsense Word Practice for Parents \(Video\)](#)
- [Word List Generator](#)

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 1				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
cat	him	and	bed	sun
the	tip	fun	had	not
is	red	ran	big	in
at	dad	on	top	sit

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 1				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
cat	him	and	bed	sun
the	tip	fun	had	not
is	red	ran	big	in
at	dad	on	top	sit

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 2 (nonsense words)				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
lat	mip	zub	nef	gok
tam	hin	rup	wot	ceg
baf	vut	nib	sog	lem
tup	jag	ket	dun	rif

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 2 (nonsense words)				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
lat	mip	zub	nef	gok
tam	hin	rup	wot	ceg
baf	vut	nib	sog	lem
tup	jag	ket	dun	rif

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 3  Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
can	hop	mud	yes	bat
up	dog	pig	it	get
box	leg	dot	win	man
net	fit	lip	rub	pan

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 3  Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
can	hop	mud	yes	bat
up	dog	pig	it	get
box	leg	dot	win	man
net	fit	lip	rub	pan

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

 Set 4 (nonsense words) Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
steb	drint	glop	frub	snemp
brust	clant	spid	trand	sken
plim	grust	twib	splot	zemp
dran	scut	trisk	slan	snad

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

 Set 4 (nonsense words) Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
steb	drint	glop	frub	snemp
brust	clant	spid	trand	sken
plim	grust	twib	splot	zemp
dran	scut	trisk	slan	snad

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 5				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
then	when	ship	much	duck
chin	with	this	shop	buzz
lamp	hand	hill	best	went
from	jump	fast	cold	must

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 5				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
then	when	ship	much	duck
chin	with	this	shop	buzz
lamp	hand	hill	best	went
from	jump	fast	cold	must

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 6  Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
bring	clock	grin	black	swim
sled	plant	drink	crab	block
small	stick	truck	stand	prize
glad	brush	spend	clap	drip

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 6  Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
bring	clock	grin	black	swim
sled	plant	drink	crab	block
small	stick	truck	stand	prize
glad	brush	spend	clap	drip

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 7 (nonsense words)				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
blon	smarp	twog	frin	clab
snelt	grinb	thusp	drab	splen
brant	trud	sklim	prust	glint
snarp	throg	scen	drulp	crisp

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Set 7 (nonsense words)				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				
blon	smarp	twog	frin	clab
snelt	grinb	thusp	drab	splen
brant	trud	sklim	prust	glint
snarp	throg	scen	drulp	crisp

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Create Your Own Set				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy



Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Create Your Own Set				
 Timed Tracker: 30 seconds per round				

Round 1:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Round 2:

_____ words read

_____ errors

Discover
Literacy

Student Name: _____
Set of Words Read: _____



Fluency Progress Tracker						
Use this chart to track how many words you read correctly in 30 seconds. Try to beat your score each time you practice!						
20						
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						
Date						

Set 1

cat

him

and

bed

sun

the

tip

fun

had

not

is

red

ran

big

in

at

dad

on

top

sit

Set 2 (nonsense words)

lat

mip

zub

nef

gok

tam

hin

rup

wot

ceg

baf

vut

nib

sog

lem

tup

jag

ket

dun

rif

Set 3

can

hop

mud

yes

bat

up

dog

pig

it

get

box

leg

dot

win

man

net

fit

lip

rub

pan

Set 4 (nonsense words)

steb

drint

glop

frub

snemp

brust

clant

spid

trand

sken

plim

grust

twib

splot

zemp

dran

scut

trisk

slan

snad

Set 5

then

when

ship

much

duck

chin

with

this

shop

buzz

lamp

hand

hill

best

went

from

jump

fast

cold

must

Set 6

bring

clock

grin

black

swim

sled

plant

drink

crab

block

small

stick

truck

stand

prize

glad

brush

spend

clap

drip

Set 7 (nonsense words)

blon

smarp

twog

frin

clab

snelt

grinb

thusp

drab

splen

brant

trud

sklim

prust

glint

snarp

throg

scen

drulp

crisp

Create Your Own Set
