

Oral Reading Fluency for School-Age Students Who Stutter

ASHA Committee on Reading Fluency for School-Age Children who Stutter:
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Oral reading fluency is typically measured by timed assessments, which may be invalid in children who stutter.

Students who stutter may be placed in a lower reading group even when they read well silently and have good reading comprehension.

Speed-based tasks are challenging for students who stutter. Accommodations may be needed. Stuttering can co-exist with other conditions such as autism and Down syndrome.

What can teachers do for students who stutter?

- Work closely with the speech-language pathologist (SLP) in the school to make assessment accommodations.
- Question the validity of timed tests.
- Use alternative tests, such as silent reading fluency assessments.
- Don't use timed tests to make reading placement decisions. Use other measures, such as silent reading, reading records, observations, reading growth charts, and comprehension checks.
- Advocate for the use of appropriate measures and accommodations to assess oral reading fluency.

These recommendations also may apply to children who have other speech and language disorders such as apraxia of speech, specific language impairment, and language learning disabilities.

ASHA Survey Outcomes

More than 1/3 of students who stutter are required to take oral reading tests without accommodations.

Only 37.9% of students who stutter qualify for accommodations.

We need more collaboration among professionals about oral reading tests.

Oral Reading Fluency Assessments

Three areas of reading ability are assessed on timed tests:

Accuracy

Saying the right word

Automaticity

Saying a word immediately, without delay

Prosody

The way the voice rises and falls when speaking

Measures of oral reading fluency include DIBELS, aimsweb Reading CBM, Developmental Reading Assessment, and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments.

- Used to identify students who need additional instructional support in reading
- Used to monitor progress toward meeting instructional goals