

Oral Recitation

1. Set Expectations

Say: *Today we are going to learn more about fluency. Fluency and comprehension work together. We've talked about what it means to read fluently. A fluent reader is like a good ice skater—he doesn't stop and start, he skates at a quick pace (but doesn't concentrate only on speed), and he expresses himself while he skates. Fluent readers work the same way! Fluent readers read all the words correctly, at the right speed, in chunks that make sense, and with feeling. But why do we read? We read to understand what the words mean. Today we'll read a story. Then we'll write a class summary to make sure everyone understands it. Afterwards we'll talk about how we can read the story fluently. Then, you'll have a chance to read it several times before reading parts of it aloud.*

2. Motivate and Focus

Say: *Reading is all about meaning. If we don't understand what the words mean, how fast we read makes no difference. Even when we know all the words, we may need to think about what they mean in order to comprehend what we've read. Follow along on page 4 as I read aloud.*

Read page 4 from *Penguins* as quickly as possible, ignoring punctuation and adding inappropriate pauses:

Penguins have/ lived on Earth for millions of years once they could fly.
Today they cannot fly their wings/ are like flippers they/ are good swimmers they are good/ divers.

Say: *Fluent readers read quickly. I read quickly. Fluent readers read all the words correctly. I read all the words correctly. Fluent readers read words in chunks. I read words in chunks. Did I read fluently? No—my reading was NOT fluent. Why not? (The speed was too fast for the text, and the chunks did not follow the punctuation, and did not make sense. It was hard to understand what was read by the way it was read.)*

Explain that fluency will help us read for meaning. Without understanding the text we read, we are not really reading.

Grade Level: Multi-grade (1–2)

Curriculum Area/Theme/Unit: Fluency

Materials

- *Penguins* by Janet Reed
- *The Very Big Potato* retold by Janelle Cherrington
- Story Summary Chart

Grouping

- Whole class
- Pairs
- Small groups

Standard(s)

- Ability to relate fluency and comprehension, using reading, summarizing, prosody skills, multiple readings, and oral reading

Lesson Objectives

Children will:

- summarize a story.
- practice reading fluently.
- read fluently to the class.

Assessment Options*

- Notice which children are having trouble with the story summary.
- As you listen to children read, pay attention to those who are not yet reading fluently. Give them more practice with phonograms and recognizing sight words.

*Assessment is ongoing throughout lesson.

3. Teach/Model

Distribute copies of *The Very Big Potato*. Read pages 2–5 aloud, with special attention to phrasing, the word VERY in all caps on page 4, and dialogue on page 5.

- [page 2] Once there was a farmer. He had a little eye. It was not the kind of eye that looks or sees. It was a funny little eye. It was a potato eye.
- [page 3] As everyone knows, potato eyes grow into new potatoes. So the farmer dug a little tunnel. He planted the eye in the ground. He watered it every day.
- [page 4] It began to grow. It grew fat. It grew tall. It grew very, VERY, big.
- [page 5] One day, the farmer said, “It is time to pull it out.” So he grabbed the potato. He pulled and pulled.

Discuss the first part of the story with the class. Use these questions to guide the discussion:

1. Where does the story take place?
2. What time of year do you think it is? How do you know?
3. What did the farmer do first? What did he do after that?
4. What happens at the end of page 5?
5. How do you think the farmer feels?
6. What do you think will happen next?

Use the answers to the questions to create a short oral class summary. Begin with “One day a farmer plants a potato eye.” Then discuss how understanding what happens will help children read with expression.

Reread the same pages with the class. Have children read aloud with you. Remind them to keep pace with you.

4. Practice with Teacher Direction

Have children work in pairs or groups of three. Make sure that groups are matched so that on-level children can help those who are below level. (See Session 6 for How to Pair Children for Partner Reading.) Distribute copies of the Story Summary Chart. Then have children reread pages 2–5 in their groups, taking turns reading and listening. When they are reading fluently, have them begin their Story Summary Charts. Walk around the

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room and have groups read softly to you. Help them fill in the charts as needed. When groups are fluent with pages 2–5, have them read on to page 10. As they become fluent with these pages, have them read pages 6–10 softly to you. Give feedback and direct them to fill in more of the summary chart. Continue until all groups have completed the book and their charts.

5. Practice Independently

Have children select a favorite page or two from the book to read aloud. Let them practice reading their chosen pages aloud to a partner. Remind children that fluent readers read aloud as if they were speaking to others.

6. Recap/Wrap-up

Review the story summary charts. Have volunteers read their completed summaries aloud. Discuss favorite parts of the story. **Ask:** *How did the story summary charts help you better understand the story?* Then have the class read the book aloud, with each child reading their chosen pages. Have all those who chose page 2 read it aloud, followed by those who chose page 3, and so on. After the oral recitation, compliment children on specific aspects of their fluency. **Say:** *You read that fluently. The speed was just right for this kind of story. You read all the words correctly. You paused at commas, and you stopped after periods. You read words in all capital letters nice and loud. And you read sentences that ended with exclamation points with energy. Good job, class!*