

From Print to Prosody

Fish Cheeks

Amy Tan

I fell in love with the minister's son the winter I turned fourteen. He was not Chinese, but as white as Mary in the manger. For Christmas I prayed for this blond-haired boy, Robert, and a slim new American nose.

When I found out that my parents had invited the minister's family over for Christmas Eve dinner, I cried. What would Robert think of our shabby Chinese Christmas? What would he think of our noisy Chinese relatives who lacked proper American manners? What terrible disappointment would he feel upon seeing not a roasted turkey and sweet potatoes but Chinese food?

On Christmas Eve I saw that my mother had outdone herself in creating a strange menu. She was pulling black veins out of the backs of fleshy prawns. The kitchen was littered with appalling mounds of raw food: A slimy rock cod with bulging eyes that pleaded not to be thrown into a pan of hot oil. Tofu, which looked like stacked wedges of rubbery white sponges. A bowl soaking dried fungus back to life. A plate of squid, their backs crisscrossed with knife markings so they resembled bicycle tires.

And then they arrived—the minister's family and all my relatives in a clamor of doorbells and rumped Christmas packages. Robert grunted hello, and I pretended he was not worthy of existence.

Dinner threw me deeper into despair. My relatives licked the ends of their chopsticks and reached across the table, dipping them into the dozen or so plates of food. Robert and their family waited patiently for platters to be passed to them. My relatives murmured with pleasure when my mother brought out the whole steamed fish. Robert grimaced. Then my father poked his chopsticks just below the fish eye and plucked out the soft meat. "Amy, your favorite," he said, offering me the tender fish cheek. I wanted to disappear.

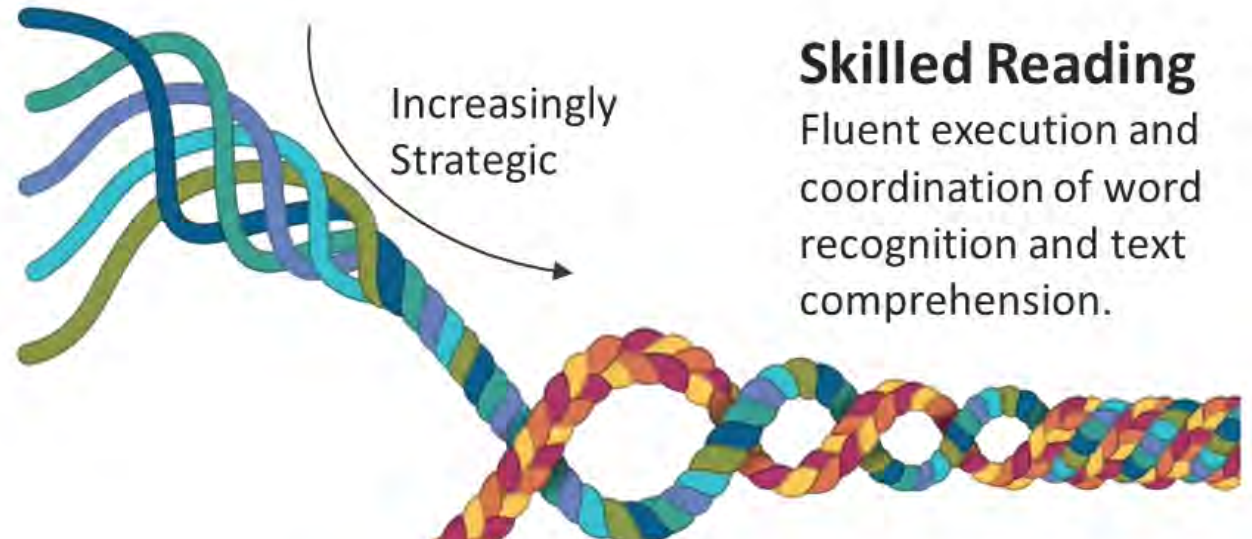
At the end of the meal, my father leaned back and belched loudly, thanking my mother for her fine cooking. "It's a polite Chinese custom to show you are satisfied," explained my father to our astonished guests. Robert was looking at his plate with a reddened face. The minister managed to muster up a quiet burp. I was stunned into silence for the rest of the night.

After everyone had gone, my mother said to me. "You want to be the same as American girls on the outside." She handed me an early gift. It was a miniskirt in beige tweed. "But inside you must always be Chinese. You must be proud you are different. Your only shame is to have shame."

And even though I didn't agree with her then, I knew that she understood how much I had suffered during the evening's dinner. It wasn't until many years later—long after I had gotten over my crush on Robert—that I was able to fully appreciate her lesson and the true purpose behind our particular menu. For Christmas Eve that year, she had chosen all my favorite foods.

Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge



Increasingly Strategic

Skilled Reading
Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition



Increasingly Automatic

Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.

Multidimensional Fluency Scale

	1	2	3	4
EXPRESSION & VOLUME	Reads words as if simply to get them out. Little sense of trying to make text sound like natural language. Tends to read in a quiet voice.	Begins to use voice to make text sound like natural language in some areas of the text but not in others. Focus remains largely on pronouncing the word. Still reads in a quiet voice.	Make text sound like natural language throughout the better part of the passage. Occasionally slips into expressionless reading. Voice volume is generally appropriate throughout the text.	Reads with good expression and enthusiasm throughout the text. Varies expression and volume to match his or her interpretation of the passage.
PHRASING	Reads in a monotone with little sense of boundaries; frequently reads word-by-word.	Frequently reads in two- and three-word phrases, giving the impression of choppy reading; improper stress and intonation fail to mark ends of sentences and clauses.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid-sentence pauses for breath and some choppiness, reasonable stress and intonation.	Generally reads with good phrasing, mostly in clause and sentence units, with adequate attention to expression.
SMOOTHNESS	Makes frequent extended pauses, hesitations, false starts, sound-outs, repetitions and/or multiple attempts.	Experiences several "rough spots" in text where extended pauses or hesitations are more frequent and disruptive.	Occasionally breaks smooth rhythm because of difficulties with specific words and/or structures.	Generally reads smoothly with some breaks, but resolves word and structure difficulties quickly, usually through self-correction.
PACE	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads with an uneven mixture of fast and slow pace.	Consistently reads at conversational pace; appropriate rate throughout reading.

Source: Zutell, J., & Rasinski, T. V. (1991). Training teachers to attend to their students' oral reading fluency. *Theory Into Practice*, 30, 211–217.

Instructional Routine for Fluency

This routine is designed to develop accuracy, automaticity and appropriate prosody.

- Select a text that will support deep fluency instruction, which can be any text type.
 - Be intentional and flexible with the selection.
 - Consider utilizing a multitasking text (one that is used for multiple instructional purposes or structures).
- Include multiple readings of the same text. This could be an entire text or a section (one page, paragraph or stanza).
- Vary lesson length appropriately (typically 5 to 15 minutes).
- Formatively assess student growth utilizing the "Multidimensional Fluency Scale" (Zutell, J., & Rasinski, T.V. 1991) to determine next instructional moves.

Date(s):		
DAY 1	<p>Teacher Read Aloud and Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce the text to students in a brief but engaging way. ● Highlight necessary vocabulary. ● Model skilled, prosodic reading of the book, poem, chapter or passage. ● Include deliberate Teacher Think-Alouds that focus on fluency components that will be included in upcoming instruction. ● Conduct a brief comprehension conversation (can happen outside the fluency lesson). 	
DAY 2	<p>Accuracy and Smoothness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depending on text, decide <i>which section</i> will be used for multiple readings. ● Provide word analysis instruction to remove barriers to accuracy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reinforce previously taught concepts. ○ Introduce upcoming concept. ○ Build morphological awareness. ● Chorally read the selected section of text. 	
DAY 3	<p>Phrasing and Pace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chorally read the selected section of text. ● Provide appropriate phrasing and pace instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Punctuation ○ Phrase boundaries ○ Repetition, rhythm and rhyme ○ Text font and/or layout ● Reread the selected section of text chorally with students taking more ownership of the volume. 	
DAY 4	<p>Expression and Volume</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chorally read the selected section of text. ● Revisit the meaning of the selected section of text. ● Provide appropriate instruction based on awareness of text meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expression driven by word choice (dialogue tags, shades of meaning, figurative language) ○ Voice, tone, volume and mood ● Perform the section of text and celebrate growth. 	

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Date(s): June 2022

Text: *Saving the Liberty Bell* by Megan McDonald & Marsha Gray Carrington

DAY
1

Teacher Read Aloud and Model

- Introduce the text to students in a brief but engaging way.
- Highlight necessary vocabulary.
- Model skilled, prosodic reading of the book, poem, chapter or passage.
- Include deliberate Teacher Think-Alouds that focus on fluency components that will be included in upcoming instruction.
- Conduct a brief comprehension conversation (can happen outside the fluency lesson).

- Page 17 (*By the third night...*)
- Read the inside jacket cover before reading the section or provide a brief summary depending on time: *John Jacob Mickley was an 11-year-old boy who found himself in the middle of Philadelphia when the British Army (the Redcoats) invaded during the American Revolution. He tells the story of how the people of Philadelphia fought to save the Liberty Bell.*
- Read the text
- Teacher think alouds:
 - "sound of a thousand hoofbeats"—**that must be very loud**
 - "My heart thumped so"—**he must be frightened, and his heart is beating so fast he can hear it**
 - "closed my eyes, willing myself steady"—**trying to calm himself so that he can think about what to do**

DAY
2

Accuracy and Smoothness

- Depending on text, decide **which section** will be used for multiple readings.
- Provide word analysis instruction to remove barriers to accuracy.
 - Reinforce previously taught concepts.
 - Introduce upcoming concept.
 - Build morphological awareness.

- Prepare resources for brief word analysis (flashcards, highlighter tape, whiteboard, anchor chart, etc.)
- Reinforce previously taught concepts
 - Short u sound in multiple words (must, thumped, drums)
- Build morphological awareness
 - Inflectional ending **ed** (drifted, thumped, turned, leaned)

DAY
3

Phrasing and Pace

- Chorally read the selected section of text.
 - Provide appropriate phrasing and pace instruction:
 - Punctuation
 - Phrase boundaries
 - Repetition, rhythm and rhyme
 - Text font and/or layout
- Reread the selected section of text chorally with students taking more ownership of the volume.

- Punctuation and text layout in the line: "*Redcoats!*"
 - Exclamation point
 - Sentence all by itself, denoting importance
- Phrase boundaries
 - Multiple phrases offset by commas—teach into pausing and inflection—add Total Physical Response (TPR) movement or action for comma

DAY
4

Expression and Volume

- Chorally read the selected section of text.
- Revisit the meaning of the selected section of text.
- Provide appropriate instruction based on awareness of text meaning:
 - Expression driven by word choice (dialogue tags, shades of meaning, figurative language)
 - Voice, tone, volume and mood
- Perform the section of text and celebrate growth.

- Word choice—talk about how each of the following makes the boy feel;
 - "*thousand hoofbeats*"—what would that sound like, have students use feet to make the sound
 - Thumped, crack, popping corn—what do they have in common? Very loud sounds
- Mood and how volume and tone of voice will change with the last sentence: "*I leaned against the Bell and closed my eyes, willing myself steady.*"

My Doggy Ate My Essay

BY DARREN SARDELLI

My doggy ate my essay.
He picked up all my mail.
He cleaned my dirty closet
and dusted with his tail.

He straightened out my posters
and swept my wooden floor.
My parents almost fainted
when he fixed my bedroom door.

I did not try to stop him.
He made my windows shine.
My room looked like a palace,
and my dresser smelled like pine.

He fluffed up every pillow.
He folded all my clothes.
He even cleaned my fish tank
with a toothbrush and a hose.

I thought it was amazing
to see him use a broom.
I'm glad he ate my essay
on "How to Clean My Room."

Poetry Slam Routine

(Adapted from *Tiered Fluency Instruction* by Chase Young and Timothy V. Rasinski, page 31)

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students choose a poem based on interest/poetic preferences.
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students highlight difficult words and seek assistance from peers or adults as needed with word identification. The purpose is accuracy.• Students take the poem home for additional practice.
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students practice reading with expression, paying attention to meaning.
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students pair up and practice reading to one another.• Peer coaching is encouraged.
Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poetry Slam Performance