



Fluency Education: Establishing Fluency Through Increasingly Longer and More Complex Utterances

Begin at the level where you are most fluent. For each exercise, over-exaggerate your mouth movements and slow down your talking rate.

Keeping your voice “on” is important at this level. Keep your lips and mouth moving, and drag your voice between words. Your words should sound like one, big connected word. As you become fluent at each level, your speech exercises will get longer and more complex. Practicing at each level will give you confidence for future fluency exercises.

Exercise 1

Look at the tree in the middle of the picture. Repeat each word after me using a slow talking rate.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. tree | 6. red |
| 2. leaf | 7. brown |
| 3. branch | 8. yellow |
| 4. fall | 9. big |
| 5. orange | 10. small |

Use a slow talking rate and exaggerated mouth movements as you describe each leaf I point to. First tell me the color of each leaf. Then tell me the size and color of each leaf.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. orange leaf | 7. yellow leaf |
| 2. big, orange leaf | 8. big, yellow leaf |
| 3. small, orange leaf | 9. small, yellow leaf |
| 4. red leaf | 10. brown leaf |
| 5. big, red leaf | 11. big, brown leaf |
| 6. small, red leaf | 12. small, brown leaf |

Exercise 2

Repeat each sentence after me. Use a slow talking rate and exaggerated mouth movements. Keep your lips and mouth moving, and drag your voice between words.

1. The big, brown leaf is on Susan’s poster board.
2. The dog would like to bite the big, red leaf.
3. Mom is putting the small, red leaf in her centerpiece.
4. The big, yellow leaf is trapped under the windowsill.
5. Dad is blowing the small, yellow leaf in the air.
6. The small, orange leaf is floating on the water.
7. The boy is about to jump on the big, orange leaf.
8. The small, brown leaf is under the boy’s foot.

Exercise 3

I’m going to tell you some short stories about these pictures. Then I’ll ask you to retell each story. Remember to use a slow talking rate and exaggerated mouth movements. Keep your lips and mouth moving, and drag your voice between words. (You may want older students to generate their own stories.)

1. The wind blew a big, brown leaf off the tree. It swirled around the dog’s head. Then it floated into Susan’s yard. Susan picked up the big, brown leaf and put it on her science poster board.
2. The wind blew a small, red leaf off the autumn tree. As Mom closed the window, she trapped the small, red leaf. Mom opened the window; took out the small, red leaf; and placed it in her floral arrangement.
3. A small, yellow leaf fell off the tree. The wind blew it into the swimming pool. Then the wind blew it into Dad’s yard. Dad swept up the small, yellow leaf using his leaf blower.
4. The big, orange leaf fell off the tree. The wind blew it onto the playground. Miles was just about to step on the leaf when the wind blew it away again. It landed in Conner’s yard. Then Conner jumped on the big, orange leaf!

Other Techniques and Suggested Carryover

- **Breath Stream Management** — Draw the student’s attention to the leaf blower. Dad will have to turn the leaf blower on and off just as your student will need good breath support and breath stream management to turn his voice gently on and off.
- **Speaking Rate** — Your student’s talking rate can be visually modeled. Point to the appropriate pictures as the student retells the story. If the student is speaking too quickly, your finger will move rapidly across the page. Slow down your pointing so the student will decrease his talking rate.
- **Self-Monitoring** — Have your student self-monitor as he retells the story. Ask him to point to the story elements at the same speed he’s talking. If he’s using a slower talking rate, his finger will move slowly across the page. If he’s speaking too quickly, his finger will move rapidly across the page.
- **Articulatory Contacts (Hard & Soft)** — Hard articulatory contacts are visually represented by the boy jumping into the pile of leaves and by the mom closing the window on a leaf. Soft articulatory contacts are visually represented by the leaves drifting down from the tree.
- **Oral-Motor Planning** — Students with oral-motor planning difficulty will benefit from the repetition of picture elements, such as color and size.



Fluency Education: Controlling Speaking Rate

People speak at different rates. Some people speak slowly, and some people speak too fast. When you control your speaking to a medium or slow rate, you may be less likely to stutter. Speaking too fast will not make you stutter, but it may make it harder for you to use your strategies (e.g., light contacts). Let's practice controlling your speaking rate.

Exercise 1

- **Part 1** — Listen as I tell you about this picture using slow and easy speech.

This is Maurice. He's 10 years old. His father is an inventor. Today, Maurice is helping his father experiment with some new types of tennis shoes.

Now I'm going to tell you this part of the story again by talking in "super slow motion." I'm going to talk as slowly as a turtle moves. I'll call this "turtle speech." Listen to the way I stretch my words. When I'm finished, use turtle speech to tell me what you remember about the story.

- **Part 2** — Listen as I tell you the rest of the story using turtle speech.

Maurice and his dad are testing three types of shoes in today's experiment. The yellow shoes have jet engines attached to the back. Maurice had difficulty controlling the speed of these shoes. Instead of zooming up the ramp, he crashed and stuck right into it. Look at the ramp; you can see where he crashed.

Use turtle speech to tell me what happened when Maurice wore the yellow, jet-engine shoes.

- **Part 3**

The red shoes have suction cups on the bottom. Maurice's dad thought these sticky shoes would help Maurice climb the ramp and they did! Maurice climbed right up the ramp, but then the shoes stuck to the bear rug. Look at the rug; you can still see a piece of one of the shoes!

Use turtle speech to tell me what happened when Maurice wore the red, sticky shoes.

- **Part 4**

For the final stage of the experiment, Maurice is wearing a fancy pair of remote control tennis shoes. These shoes should work the best because Maurice can slow down or speed up the shoes using the remote control. Now he needs only to learn how to operate the remote control!

Use turtle speech to tell me about the remote control shoes.

- **Part 5**

Maurice's dad explains that the remote control can go fast or slow. If Maurice pushes the lever to the right, the shoes slow down. If he pushes it to the left, the shoes speed up. Maurice's dad says, "Let's practice."

Right – sssssloooow

Right – sssssloooow

Left – fast

Left – fast

Now let's mix it up.

Right – sssssloooow

Right – sssssloooow

Left – fast

Right – sssssloooow

Right – sssssloooow

Exercise 2 – Rate Contrast

Let's work on controlling your speaking rate. Repeat each word exactly as I said it. (Use the phrases in the dialogue section of Part 5.)

Exercise 3 – Varied Rate Control

Listen as I read Dad's side of the story. I'll use a normal speaking rate, but I'll slow down and stretch out the words *slows*, *stops*, *stopping*, and *stopwatch*.

As I stand here holding this **ssstooopwaaatch**, I realize that Maurice is a little nervous. I tell him, "Put on the jet shoes. Then **ssstooop** and shake your arms and hands. This will help you relax. Let me know when you're ready, so I can start the **ssstooopwaaatch**."

The jet shoes don't perform well. They're too fast. Maurice hollers, "**Ssstooop**" just as his shoes crash into the ramp!

We both **ssstooop** and relax.

The sticky shoes help Maurice climb the ramp. He **ssstooops** at the top of the ramp. Then he walks across the rug. The rug **sloooows** him down and then suddenly the entire experiment **ssstooops**. One of the shoes rips apart because it's stuck to the bear rug.

We both **ssstooop** and relax.

I'm positive the remote control shoes will be the answer. If Maurice can control these shoes, he should be able to make it through the entire course. He might even make it through the slippery bubbles. Then there will be no **ssstooopping** us!

Retell or read Dad's story. Use a normal rate of speech, but slow down and stretch out the words *slows*, *stops*, *stopping*, and *stopwatch*.



Fluency Education: Reduction of Word Avoidance Behaviors

Some students use sounds like “uh” and “ah” when they think about saying a difficult word. Other students avoid certain sounds, words, or environments. This set of exercises will help you decrease your fear of difficult words or situations.

You can combat your fear of stuttering by using some of the fluency strategies you’ve practiced. For example, instead of saying “---- basketball” with a block, you can bounce the /b/ to say “b-b-basketball.” Stay relaxed, keep your voice soft, and “bounce” or ease out the word. You may also keep your voice softly “on” and pull out or stretch through difficult words.

Exercise 1

I’m going to tell you a short story about the picture. Then I’ll ask you some questions about the story.

Greg is 9 years old, and he’s in the third grade. Greg stutters. There are certain words that really give him a hard time. For example, saying his name is difficult for him.

Today, Greg has a substitute teacher. She has asked the students to say their first and last names as she takes attendance. As Greg waits for his turn, he gets more and more anxious. He grips his pencil so hard, it breaks.

1. How would you tell Greg to handle this situation?

2. What words are hard for you to say?

What words do you avoid saying?

3. What are some environments or situations where you have difficulty talking?

What are some situations you avoid?

Exercise 2

Let’s practice intentional stuttering using Greg’s name. Pretend you’re Greg, waiting in the classroom for your turn to say your name. What areas of your body are tense?

I’m going to stutter on purpose as I say Greg’s name. When I’m done, say his name exactly as I said it. (Say Greg’s name with a block. Then pause to release any tension. Start again and say the name with an easy start.)

1. Greg
G----
Pause and release tension
Greg

2. Johnson
J----
Pause and release tension
Johnson

3. Greg Johnson
G----
Pause and release tension
Greg
J----
Pause and release tension
Johnson

Exercise 3

Now let’s practice intentional stuttering using your name. Pretend you’re waiting in the classroom for your turn to say your name. What areas of your body are tense?

I’m going to stutter on purpose as I say your name. When I’m done, say your name exactly as I said it. (Say the student’s name with a block. Then pause to release any tension. Start again and say the name with an easy start.)

1. student’s first name
(initial sound) ----
Pause and release tension
(entire first name)

2. student’s last name
(initial sound) ----
Pause and release tension
(entire last name)

3. student’s full name
(initial sound of first name) ----
Pause and release tension
(entire first name)
(initial sound of last name) ----
Pause and release tension
(entire last name)



Fluency Education: Transfer and Maintenance

If you're a person who stutters, you'll have good days and bad days. You'll need to work on your speech skills not only in speech therapy, but also at school, home, and other places in your community. This can be scary, but it's important for you to have confidence in yourself and in your speech tools so you can speak in any situation. This is putting all of your hard work together and going outside of the therapy room.

Listen to this short story about the picture.

Mrs. Usdell tells Raymond, "I'm going to give you a few questions to ask your parents. They're very simple. They can be answered by saying *true* or *false*."

Hearing Mrs. Usdell use the words "true" and "false" conjures up a lot of feelings for Raymond. His class is studying facts vs. opinions. He recently took a test where he had to read a statement and then decide if it was true or false. He thought the test was tough. He's thinking his parents will find this test tough too.

After thinking about Mrs. Usdell's assignment some more, Raymond thinks this might be fun!

(Copy the following chart and send it home with the student.)

- Answers for numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 11 will vary.

Note: Answers will vary for number 1, but there are many theories and components to the definition of stuttering. Stuttering consists of speech disruptions and the consequences of those disruptions. Speech disruptions include repetitions, prolongations, and blocks. The consequences of these disruptions include tension, avoidance, and emotional and cognitive reactions.

- Only one answer is applicable for numbers 8 and 9.

Number 8 is true. Some speaking environments are easier than others for the student. Some are more difficult. The student will choose his fluency enhancing strategies based on his environmental needs.

Number 9 is false. The student won't automatically stutter in the same way throughout his life.

Take this chart home. Work with your parents to decide whether to answer "true" or "false" for each statement. When you're finished, bring the chart back to me.

Statement	True	False	Explanation (If Needed)
1. I understand what stuttering is.			
2. My parents accept my stuttering.			
3. With stuttering management, my parents know I can meet my lifelong goals.			
4. My goal is to help my child communicate without shame.			
5. My goal is to help my child communicate without fear.			
6. I understand my child's fluency enhancing techniques.			
7. My child may need different fluency strategies for different situations or environments.			
8. There are a few things my child will not do because of his stuttering.			
9. My child will stutter the same way for his entire life.			
10. I can model my child's fluency techniques.			
11. I can praise my child's effort.			