

Fluency Homework Packet

3rd Nine Weeks



• Things to remember •

- If your packet is misplaced, you can copy a replacement packet from the GSS second grade website.
 - Parent initials are **required** each day to receive credit.
- Students will receive a completion grade at the end of each nine weeks.
 - Every nine weeks students will have a fluency assessment which counts as a reading test grade.

Reading Fluency

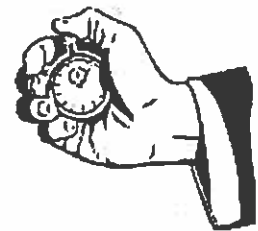
Every reader is expected to read not only all the words on a page correctly, but also to read those words with voice and intonation (personality) and at a comfortable, flowing pace. These skills fall under the category of fluency. The key to fluency is NOT just speed! The key is being able to chunk groups of words together so the reading sounds like speech, use punctuation as a guide, and to use expression. (Being able to also include character attitude and personality is a wonderful sign of comprehension, too!) When a student does these things well, then his/her speed automatically increases!

Although fluent reading is more than just fast reading, the easiest way to assess fluency is through one-minute timed readings. As students progress as readers, the number of words they read correctly per minute (wcpm) should increase even if the difficulty of the text is increasing. EVERY student, regardless of reading ability, benefits from fluency support and practice.

Part of each child's homework is to read aloud a passage every night. They will read the same passage every night for a week and answer three or four questions about the passage. I am asking that an adult or older sibling time the student reading for one minute, help correct any errors, record their work together and model fluent reading for the student.

These are the steps for this nightly assignment:

1. Student reads the entire passage to him/herself.
 2. Student reads aloud the passage to the adult/parent, who is timing them for EXACTLY one minute. During this time the parent is also keeping track of (counting up) any errors the child makes while reading, BUT does NOT try to correct the child at this time.
 3. Adult/parent records on the homework sheet the number of words read in a min. (use the numbers at the end of each line to help you add quickly) and the number of errors.
 4. Adult/parent NOW points out and corrects the errors made to the child.
 5. Adult/parent might consider reading the passage to the child as well.
- This process should be repeated every night Monday-Thursday.



Thank you for your help. If you have any questions, please contact me.

A Life of Fairytales

Long ago a baby boy was born in Denmark. His parents named him Hans Christian. 15

No one could have guessed that he would grow up to be a well-known author. This 32

is the true story of his life. As a little boy, he loved to pretend. He made a toy 51

theater. He liked to make costumes for his puppets. But most of all he loved to 67

read plays and books. When he was eleven, Hans Christian's father died. Hans 80

Christian had to work to make money for his family. He had jobs with a weaver, a 97

tailor, and even worked in a cigarette factory. People were often mean to him and 112

he felt alone and sad. When he was fourteen, Hans Christian worked in a theater. 127

A man there was interested in the shy boy and paid for him to go to school. But 145

life at school was even worse. The other students, and even the teachers, treated 159

him unkindly. Also, learning was very difficult for him. His teachers told him not to 174

write, but Hans Christian didn't listen. As a young man, he wrote several books. 188

He also started writing fairytales. At first people weren't interested in those kinds 201

of stories, but slowly they became more popular. When Hans Christian Andersen 213

died, he was known throughout the world as a talented author. And people still 227

read his fairytales today. His stories like *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, *The Little* 240

Mermaid, and *The Ugly Duckling* are still loved by children around the world. 253

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.
words read in 1 minute				
- number of mistakes				
= total words read correctly				
adult initials				

Parent Tips

To help your child to read with expression, remind him what your voice does at each punctuation mark.

A *comma* means to pause while reading. Use a short easy sentence to illustrate and have the child practice. For example: "Sam, come here."

A *period* means to come to a full stop. When students have trouble with this, have them stop and take a breath at each period. Many students will read through the period until they run out of air, and then stop for a breath. Instead teach them to stop at the period and then continue on.

1. What did Hans Christian enjoy doing?

- playing baseball
- imagining stories
- watching movies

2. How was Hans Christian treated at school?

- unkindly
- sweetly
- warmly



A group of children visit the Hans Christian Andersen statue in New York, 1955

3. What does the author want you to understand from this passage?

- If someone says you're not good at something you should stop doing it.
- As a child, Hans Christian liked to play with his puppets and make up stories.
- Hans Christian was true to himself and turned a hard life into a good one.

4. What do you want to be remembered for doing with your life?

Name _____

The Ugly Duckling

adapted from Hans Christian Andersen

He was the last egg to hatch—ugly, large, and just plain different. The other 15
 ducklings had yellow feathers, but his were gray. He ate more than his brothers and 30
 was growing bigger and awkward. He knew how to swim, but that was the only way 46
 he was like the other ducklings. No one would play with him. All the farm animals 62
 laughed at him. They even started calling him Ugly Duckling. “Why are you so 76
 different from the others?” Mother Duck asked. Poor little duckling! He secretly 88
 cried at night. Since nobody wanted him, he ran away. He stopped at a river and 104
 asked the other birds if they had seen any ducklings with gray feathers like his. But 120
 no one had, so he was still alone. He ran as far as he could and came to a pond. 140
 If nobody wanted him, he would hide here forever. He was lonely, but at least there 156
 was plenty of food. One day, he saw beautiful birds overhead. They were white 171
 with long necks, yellow beaks and large wings. “If only I could look like them, just for 188
 a day!” said the duckling. Then the duckling saw himself mirrored in the water. 202
 “Goodness! How I’ve changed! I hardly recognize myself.” The white birds flew by 215
 again. When the duckling saw them, he realized he was just like them! Soon they 230
 were friends. “We’re swans like you!” they said. “Where have you been?” Now he 245
 swam majestically with his fellow swans. One day, he heard some children exclaim, 258
 “Look at that swan! He’s the finest of all!” And he almost burst with happiness. 273

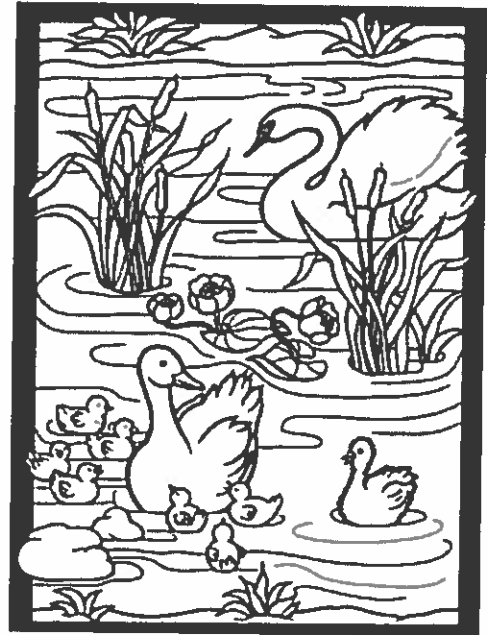
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Parent Tips

Listening to your learner read will tell you a lot about whether or not she is comprehending a particular passage. No matter how bright a learner is, if she is not reading easily and with expression, there is not enough attention being focused on meaning.

1. What's the Ugly Ducklings main problem?

- He can't swim.
- He is too small.
- He is lonely.



2. How does he solve his problem?

- He makes friends with other swans.
- He makes the ducks act nice to him.
- He finds some kids to live with.

3. What can we learn from the Ugly Duckling?

- If people are mean, you should run away.
- No matter what anyone says, you are special.
- Farm animals like to tease other animals.

4. Hans Christian Andersen said that he felt like the Ugly Duckling when he was growing up. How was Hans Christian's life like the Ugly Duckling's?

India's Ins and Outs

My uncle just got married and we went to the wedding. It meant taking a plane to 17
 the other side of the world. That's because my uncle's wife, Asha, is from India and 35
 she wanted to get married at home. When we finally landed, the air was hot and 50
 steamy. The city had modern buildings and streets with beautiful trees. We loaded 63
 our suitcases in the car. The traffic was crazy! The road didn't just have cars, but 79
 also trucks overloaded with hay and people. There were bicycles and carts with 92
 oxen, too. People swerved all over the road and everyone honked their horns. At 106
 first I was afraid, but then I started to enjoy watching people trying to travel through 122
 all the confusion. We finally reached Asha's city. Her family was very nice. Most 136
 everyone spoke English. We had a big dinner together. The food was different 149
 from what my family eats at home. There was chicken, lamb, vegetables, and bread. 163
 They use lots of spices in Indian food. At first I didn't think I liked the taste, but soon 182
 I thought some things were really good—especially the desserts! On the wedding 195
 day, lots of friends and family came. Back home, a bride wears white at her 210
 wedding. Everyone, including the bride, wears bright colors at an Indian wedding. 222
 There were lots of flowers and food. After the wedding, a band played and 236
 everyone danced. When it was time to fly home, I was sad to leave. I hope I can 254
 come back to India soon. There is so much more I want to see! 268

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Parent Tips

Every teacher and every parent wishes that every child will learn to read and love to read. Paying attention to the skill of fluency can help us all achieve that wonderful goal. Help children read fluently, and they will be more apt to enjoy books and other print media. Fluent readers gain word and world knowledge from texts and websites. Ultimately, a natural byproduct of frequent and fluent reading is improved vocabulary and comprehension.

–Dr. Jan Hasbrouck

1. How does the narrator's attitude toward India change?
 - At first he's nervous, but then he grows to like it.
 - At first he loves it, but then he has a bad time.
 - He wishes he'd never gone to India and wants to go home.

2. What happened first in this story?
 - There was a wedding.
 - They ate dinner.
 - They flew to India.



3. What does an Indian bride wear?
 - Bright colors
 - A white dress
 - A grass skirt
4. Would you like to visit India? Why or why not?

Name _____

The Mighty Mongoose

The mongoose may look like a cute ball of fur, but be careful—this little guy is a	18
snake killer! It's amazing how brave a little mongoose is when it meets a deadly	33
snake. So what is the story behind this cute, wild animal? There are 38 different	48
types of mongoose. They are found in forests, swamps, and grasslands in many	61
places around the world. Mongooses have long bodies, short legs, and bushy tails.	73
Their shaggy fur is gray or brown. Sharp claws help them dig holes and catch food.	90
Mongooses eat small animals like insects, lizards, and frogs. They also enjoy eggs	103
and fruit. In India some mongooses kill snakes—even large cobras. Though a	116
poisonous snakebite could kill the mongoose, it still attacks the snake. How does it	130
do such a brave thing? Well, the mongoose is very fast. When it meets a snake,	146
it lets the snake strike toward it. Then the mongoose quickly darts out of the way.	162
When the snake grows tired, the mongoose springs and grabs the snake by the	176
back of the neck. The mongoose's sharp teeth bite deeply to break the snake's	190
spine. The mongoose wins and the snake becomes dinner. Being both fierce and	203
fast makes this animal a marvelous fighter. No wonder the mongoose has been	216
called a snake's worst enemy!	221

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Parent Tips

1. Have the student read the ENTIRE story to himself & answer the questions.
2. Time the student while he reads aloud for exactly 1 minute. Do not help fix mistakes.
3. If the student is stuck on a word for 2 seconds, say the word & count it as a mistake.
4. Record the number of words read and the number of errors. Subtract: words read – errors = total words read correctly.
5. Now, help fix mistakes.
6. You may read the story out loud as a model for fluent reading.
7. Repeat the steps Monday-Thursday.

1. What do Mongooses eat?

- o They only eat fruit and frogs.
- o They only eat snakes and eggs.
- o They eat many different things.

2. What is the main idea?

- o Mongooses are good fighters.
- o Mongooses dig deep holes.
- o Mongooses have shaggy fur.



3. What is a detail that supports the main idea?

- o Mongooses live in forests.
- o Mongooses are very fast.
- o Mongooses enjoy fruit.

4. Would you like a mongoose for a pet? Why or why not?

Name _____

Rikki-Tikki-Tavi adapted from the story by Rudyard Kipling

It was after the big storm that the boy found the mongoose washed from his den. 16

The woman thought he was drowned, but the man said he was just wet and tired. 32

They took the mongoose home and soon Rikki-Tikki-Tavi (for that was his name) 47

was dry and warm. At night he rested snugly in the little boy's bed, but soft voices 64

woke Rikki-tikki. He followed them to the bathroom. Outside Nag and Nagaina, 77

the two cobras who lived in the garden, were making evil plans. They wanted to bite 94

the man, the woman, and the boy. Then they would have a quiet garden all to 110

themselves and their eggs. Rikki-tikki tingled with rage when he heard this! He 124

watched Nag slither into the bathroom and hide himself to wait until morning. Soon 138

he fell asleep. Rikki looked at the giant snake. He knew that if he didn't kill Nag at 155

the first bite the snake would fight back. And if he fought back that would be the 172

end of Rikki! He decided that he must bite Nag's head, bite and never let go! So 189

he jumped. Nag thrashed, shaking Rikki up and down, all around, but he held tight. 204

Nag banged him against the wall, but Rikki refused to let go. A hot wind knocked 220

Rikki to the floor. The fight had woken the big man and he shot Nag. The family 237

was so grateful that they were safe! But Rikki knew better. He knew that Nagaina 252

was still out there and she would be worse than five Nags. But that's another story. 268

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Parent Tips

Students who read and reread passages orally as they receive guidance and/or feedback, become better readers. Repeated oral reading substantially improves word recognition, speed, and accuracy as well as fluency. Repeated oral reading improves the reading ability of all students throughout the elementary school years.

-- Bonnie B. Armbruster & Jean Osborn, *Put Reading First: the Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*, p.24

1. Who found Rikki-Tikki-Tavi?

- the man
- the bird
- the boy

2. Where is the setting of this story?

- a house at night
- morning in a garden
- a street in summer



3. What is the main problem in this story?

- Rikki-Tikki-Tavi is almost drowned.
- People don't like mongooses.
- The snakes want to bite the people.

4. Was Rikki-Tikki-Tavi right to kill Nag? Why or why not?

Rudyard Kipling: A Life of Adventure

His parents were English, but Rudyard Kipling was born in India. And it was his life 16
in India that made him love stories. Some of his favorite times were when his nanny 32
would tell tales and sing songs. Rudyard was a happy, growing boy. He played and 47
painted and explored. Sadly, this happiness ended too soon. When he was five, 60
Rudyard went to England to live with another family. He was miserable! People 73
there bullied and beat him. When he read books, he felt like he was escaping into 89
other worlds. He quickly learned to love reading. At twelve he went to school. 103
After he made friends he enjoyed being there. By now he wore glasses because 117
he was nearly blind without them! When he was 15, Rudyard sailed back to India 132
to work for a newspaper. He spent time writing stories and poems. After several 146
years he left India to see the world. He visited China and Japan before reaching 161
California. From there he traveled to Yellowstone, Salt Lake City, and New York. 174
Finally he sailed back to London. While living there he wrote and wrote and wrote. 189
And fell in love! He and his wife had three children. During his life, he wrote 205
dozens of books, stories, and poems. His time in India influenced many of his 219
famous works like *The Jungle Book* and *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*. Rudyard kept writing until 234
his death in 1936, but his beautiful poems and stories of adventure will live forever. 249

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Parent Tips

Expressive readers change pitch while reading. Their voices go up at the beginning of sentences and down at the end. If a sentence ends with a question mark, their voices go up slightly. This change in pitch signals that the reader understands where different ideas begin and end. Praise your student when you see him demonstrating this skill.

1. Which is an example of cause and effect?

- He liked to write stories and poems.
- He was born in India.
- He made friends, so he liked school.



2. After New York, Rudyard sailed to _____.

- Japan
- London
- India

3. What does the author want to explain with this passage?

- Rudyard Kipling led an exciting life that led to exciting stories.
- Rudyard Kipling was born in India, but moved to England.
- Rudyard Kipling wore glasses and liked to read books.

4. What types of stories do you like to write?

Name _____

Life in the Leaves

It has a large, round head with large, round ears. Its plump body is covered with 16
 gray fur. Its legs are short; its feet are long. It has a big, black nose. At first 34
 you might mistake it for a teddy bear, but koalas aren't bears at all. They belong 50
 to a special group of animals called marsupials. That means they carry their babies 64
 in pouches. A koala baby, or *joey*, is born blind, earless, and hairless. It lives in its 81
 mother's pouch for five or six months. After that it rides on its mother's back until 97
 it is full grown. The word *koala* comes from a word meaning *no drink*. Although 112
 they do drink sometimes, koalas usually get all the water they need from leaves. 126
 They only eat leaves from Eucalyptus trees and can chomp through nearly two 139
 pounds of leaves each night! Eucalyptus trees are important for koalas. Not only 152
 do they provide tasty meals, but they also give koalas a home. Koalas often remain 167
 in the same tree for days just eating and sleeping. Koalas are slow and inactive. In 183
 fact, koalas sleep up to 22 hours a day! Koalas were once hunted for their soft, 199
 thick fur. Now it is against the law to kill koalas, but they are still disappearing. The 216
 major reason for this is the loss of their forests, or *bushland*, to make way for 232
 houses. Today there are less than 100,000 koalas left in Australia. 243

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Parent Tips

The number of words read correctly per minute is an important indicator of a student's progress in all aspects of reading—decoding (figuring out unknown words), fluency, and comprehension. Twenty years of research...[have] shown strong correlations between standardized achievement test scores and the number of words read correctly per minute (wcpm).

-- Wiley Blevins, *Building Fluency: Lessons for Strategies for Reading Success*, p.10

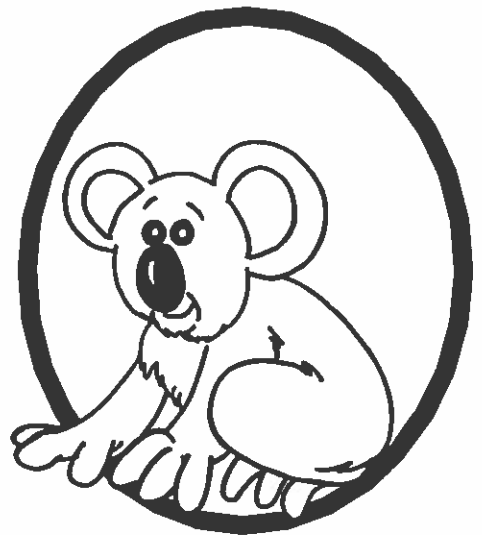
Ending of 2nd grade goal: 90 wcpm

1. Which word describes newborn joeys?

- hairier
- hairless
- hairable

2. What is the main idea of this passage?

- Koala babies live in pouches.
- Koalas can sleep for a long time.
- Koalas are interesting animals.



3. Why would an author write this passage?

- To get you to do something.
- To teach you about koalas.
- To tell you an exciting story.

4. What is something new you learned about koalas?

Name _____

Why Koala Has No Tail

adapted from an Australian myth

Back when the world was new, Koala and Kangaroo were best friends. They enjoyed 14
 hunting with their boomerangs. And they were both proud of their fine, long tails. 28
 Then came a time with no water. The ground cracked and trees died. None of the 44
 animals could drink. Kangaroo remembered when his mother had dug a hole in a 58
 dry riverbed. The hole filled with water and they were saved. This story excited 72
 Koala. He begged Kangaroo to take him to the riverbed. The two friends crossed 86
 rocks and burning sand before finding the spot. Both animals were very tired. Since 100
 Kangaroo knew the most about finding water Koala told him to dig first. Koala 114
 promised to take a turn when Kangaroo became tired. Under the blazing sun 127
 Kangaroo toiled. When he could dig no more, he asked his friend for help. Koala 142
 said he felt too sick to dig. He looked so weak laying there with his tail covering his 160
 head. Kangaroo felt sorry for his friend. So Kangaroo kept digging. At last, a tiny 175
 bit of water trickled into the hole. Kangaroo asked poor Koala if he was too sick to 192
 walk, but Koala dashed to the hole and knocked Kangaroo out of the way. As he 208
 greedily slurped the water in the hole, all that could be seen of Koala was his long, 225
 bushy tail. Kangaroo had been tricked! Angrily he threw his boomerang high into 238
 the sky. As it sailed back to earth, it cut off Koala's tail. Koala was so ashamed of 256
 losing his tail that he climbed into a Eucalyptus tree and has lived there ever since. 272

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Parent Tips

In their book, *Classrooms That Work*, Patricia Cunningham and Richard Allington stress the importance of repeated readings as a way to help students recognize high-frequency words more easily, thereby strengthening their ease of reading. Having students practice reading by rereading short passages aloud is one of the best ways to promote fluent reading.

1. How do Kangaroo's feelings toward Koala change in this story?

- Kangaroo is angry with Koala for beating him in a race.
- At the beginning they're friends, but by the end they aren't.
- They start out as enemies, but become friends at the end.

2. A myth is a story that tries to explain the way the world is. What does this myth explain?

- Why boomerangs are dangerous.
- Why kangaroos don't like koalas.
- Why koalas are tailless.



3. What clues in the story tell you Koala really wasn't too tired to dig?

- Because he could run fast as soon as there was water.
- Because he asked Kangaroo to find water for them.
- Koala was proud of his tail and was ashamed when he lost it.

4. How is this passage different than the one you read last week about koalas?

Koala Climbing Club

When Korizella Koala decided she loved to climb trees, the other girls said they loved climbing trees, too! So they spent their recesses climbing up and down the trees on the playground. One day Korizella had an idea: they should start a climbing club! “And,” said Korizella, “To be in our club, you have to touch that bird’s nest.” From down on the ground the nest was a little dot at the top of the tallest tree. The nest rule didn’t sound fair to Kami Koala, but when she looked at the other girls they were all smiling. Kami didn’t want to make Korizella mad, so she smiled too. One by one the girls tried out to be in the club. Korizella went first and she zoomed up and down like it was no big deal. When Kami’s turn came she was really frightened to be that high. But she didn’t want Korizella to think she was a baby, so she kept going till she touched the nest. Then it was Klippa’s turn. When she was half way up, she froze. She was too scared to go on. Slowly she climbed back down. “Too bad you can’t be in our club now,” said Korizella. Klippa’s eyes filled with tears and she walked away. Kami wanted to stand up for Klippa, but she knew that Korizella would be mean to her if she did. The other girls didn’t look happy either, but no one said anything. They just watched Klippa walk away.

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Parent Tips

It is important that students recognize that reading fluently sounds like speaking... Although speed is important, it is equally important not to turn fluency into an exercise in which your students' goal is to read with ever increasing speed.

-- Melanie R. Kuhn and Paula J. Schwanenflugel, *Fluency in the Classroom*, p. 31

1. What does Kami think about Korizella?
 - Kami loves everything Korizella tells her to do.
 - Kami doesn't agree with Korizella, but she's afraid to say anything.
 - Kami wants Korizella to make more rules about the club.
2. What clues in the story tell you that Klippa felt sad at the end?
 - Klippa took a turn climbing the tree.
 - Klippa watched Kami take a turn.
 - Klippa's eyes were filled with tears.
3. What is an example of cause and effect?
 - Kami was afraid when she was climbing the tree.
 - Korizella likes climbing trees at recess.
 - Because Klippa didn't touch the nest, she's out of the club.
4. What do you think Kami should do now?

