



EVIDENCE BASED INTERVENTION NETWORK EBI BRIEF

Repeated Reading¹

Changes in both federal and state laws have worked to increase the accountability of schools. With accountability comes the expectation that methods of instruction and intervention are evidence-based. Repeated reading is a reading intervention that has been highly researched. Repeated reading primarily focuses on increasing reading fluency; however studies have indicated additional benefits.

Theoretical support

Repeated reading utilizes the LaBerge and Samuels model of attention within reading (LaBerge & Samuel, 1974). This model describes that when “attention is required for accurate decoding little remains for the purpose of comprehending what is read” (Sindelar, Monda, & O’Shea, 1990, p. 220). As fluency increases, decoding and word identification become more automatic. With gained automaticity attention is no longer used to decode words. Therefore, increased automaticity and fluency allow students to utilize the newly available attention to comprehend materials read.

Empirical support

Effects of Repeated Readings on Instructional-and Mastery-Level Readers, a study completed by Sindelar, Monda and O’Shea (1990), researched the effects of repeated reading with both learning disabled students and nondisabled students who were also divided into instructional levels (mastery or instructional). Students who read 50 to 100 words per minute were classified at instructional level and mastery level students read 100 or more words per minute, in the screening process. After the classifications were made the experimental procedure was implemented. During this procedure students read two additional passages. One passage was read one time and the other was read three times.

The results of the study included measurements of words read per minute and reading comprehension. Reading comprehension was assessed using a “story-retell procedure” which included the student retelling “as much as they could remember about the story” (Sindelar, Monda, & O’Shea, 1990). The mean words read per minute increased from 87 to 113 for the instructional-level group. These improvements nearly place the students at a mastery level. In the area of comprehension, students increased the retelling of propositions from 12.9 to 21.0.

Therefore, Sindelar, Monda and O’Shea, 1990 concluded that implementing repeated reading increased reading rates (fluency) significantly from one to three readings. The experimental procedure also increased the students’ story recall or comprehension. In addition, because the classification groups did not factor into the results it was concluded that “repeated readings were comparable for LD and nondisabled readers” (Sindelar, Monda, & O’Shea, 1990).

The Effect of Repeated Readings on Rate, Speech Pauses, and Word Recognition Accuracy, a study done by Patricia Herman (1985), stories consist of approximately 100-175 words, with an appropriate difficulty level (not too easy, not too hard) were administered to students. “Students were

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made aware of how practice helps learning” the students then practiced their stories for about ten minutes each day (Herman, 1985, p.557). It typically took students four separate days of practicing their stories to reach a goal of 85 words per minute. The study also measured the speech pauses with a “voice-activated micro-processing computer component to tally the number of speech pauses (Herman, 1985, p. 557)” A pause was noted for lengths of time between 166-2,666 milliseconds.

The rate of words read per minute increased significantly within the practice readings and between the initial reading (Story 1) and the final reading (Story 5). The average words read per minute (WPM) of Story 1 were 47 and the average WPM for Story 5 increased to 69. This suggests that the practice effect carries from one story to another. The number of speech pauses decreased significantly in practiced stories (Herman, 1985).

Finally, in the Homan, Klesius, and Hite (1993) study, sixth grade students reading below-grade-level were administered one of two treatments. One of the treatments was repeated reading, the other was a non-repetitive strategy. Prior to the treatment a pretest was administered to all of the participants. Twenty-minute sessions of repeated reading were implemented three times a week, for seven weeks. After the seven weeks a posttest was administered and on average the students’ posttest scores increased in the areas of rate and comprehension. Also, the average word errors were reduced.

In sum, numerous studies have examined the effects of using repeated reading which have proven its utility in improving the areas of fluency and comprehension (Sindelar, Monda, & O’Shea,1990; Herman, 1985). There is also research that shows using repeated readings decreases speech pauses and reduces word errors (Herman, 1985; Homan, Klesius, & Hite, 1993). Finally, repeated reading has been proven an effective intervention for nondisabled and disabled students of varying instructional levels (Sindelar, Monda, & O’Shea, 1990).



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References

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