

Preston Hedges Trust

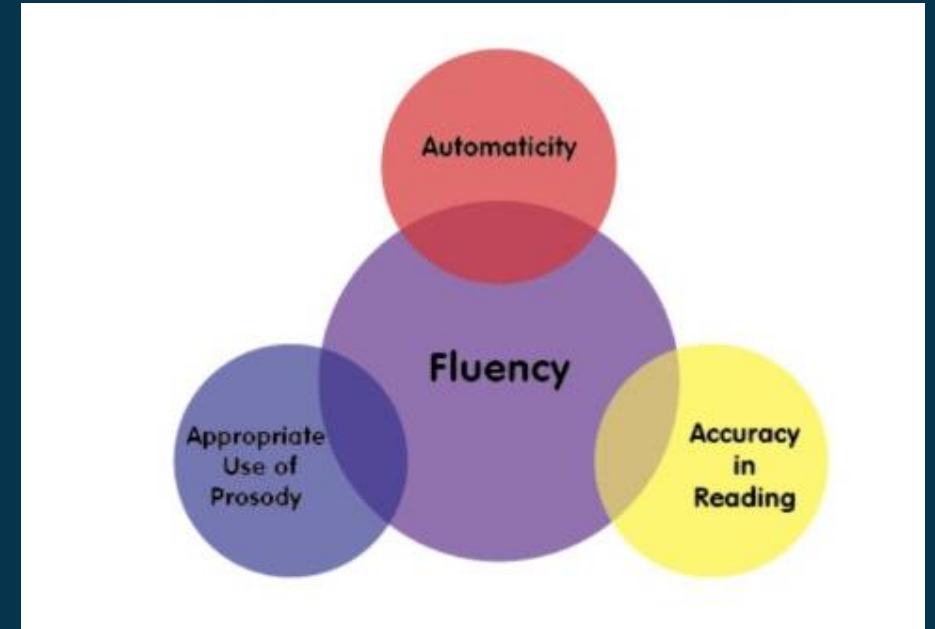
Parklands Primary school

Reading automaticity
and fluency



One of the most significant barriers to fluent reading and good comprehension is lack of 'automaticity' – the ability to quickly and accurately identify letters, letter-sound correspondences and isolated words.

Children who have not developed automaticity in decoding by the beginning of Year 2 are at risk for reading failure (Berninger et al., 2006).

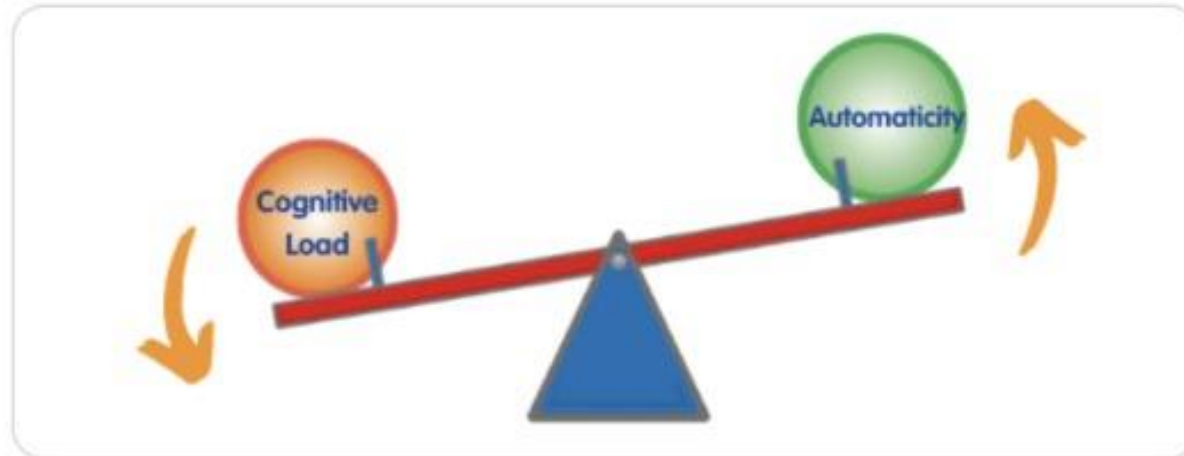


What is Automaticity?

- When we achieve automaticity in a skill, we no longer have to consciously think about each individual step in the process.
- Automatic skilled performance develops with extended practice after a high level of accuracy has been reached.
- Reading, is a complex process: it requires two key separate but inter-related skills – word identification and comprehension.
- In reading, automaticity is the ability to rapidly, effortlessly and accurately recognise or decode words.
- ‘Expert’ readers are able to decode words with minimal attention to the activity of decoding. There are few words they must sound out or closely examine, and they can instead accurately recognise words on sight.

Why is it so important?

- At any given time, we have a finite amount of cognitive energy to give to an activity or process. When we achieve automaticity in lower-level skills (e.g. word recognition), we free up working memory for more complex, higher-level skills (e.g. comprehension). Working memory may become overloaded by lack of automaticity.
- Comprehension may be reduced, not because the reader is unable to understand the text but because too much cognitive energy has had to be put into decoding. Cognitive load is reduced as automaticity increases.



How is automaticity different to fluency?

Automaticity is a prerequisite to fluency. Fluency requires not only automaticity and accuracy in word identification but also prosody (intonation, expression and phrasing) at the text level.

Accuracy is best achieved through daily focused practice with direct corrective feedback.

Develop mastery in decoding

Children should not be considered proficient readers until they can read accurately and with comprehension. By overlearning words, and building their automaticity, their fluency will improve and in turn, so will their comprehension.

A novice reader may be able to decode a passage of text, but if their working memory is devoted completely to decoding, they won't be able to extract meaning from the text or visualise the given scene.

Provide opportunities to overlearn = read, read, read!

Just as a professional pianist doesn't stop practising a piece once it has been played correctly, a reader should not stop practise reading words once they are read correctly.

The average reader needs to see a word 4-14 times before it can be read with automaticity. A struggling learner may need to see it 40 times.

Extensive exposure to print is vital – the more reading a student does, the more often specific words are seen, the more automatically words will be recognised.

A week of reading in KS2

Curriculum

- Monday + Tuesday – reading analysis
- Wednesday + Thursday – reading skills
- Every week – those ch not quite at their age ability will be read with 3 x a week

Reading Culture

- Monday-Thursday - Class read
- Friday – R4P
- Weekly library visit
- £3000 spent this academic year on books this year



How to read with a child

- Remind to blend in head
- Ownership of the child holding the book, taking control
- Child uses their fingers to guide them
- Spend time on title, explaining expectations of knowing certain words will likely repeat on every page, so we wouldn't want sounding out/blending every time they come across it.
- If it they struggle, allow them to try to tackle first. Step in and model how to blend in head and then reread with pace.
- Pick up on pace and fluency, so it's not stilted
- Acknowledge punctuation.