

SpeedRead: how to smile, have fun and learn at the same time

Explicit teaching of the units using the Sounds~Write lessons is a pre-requisite to the **SpeedRead** activity.

SpeedRead is intended to be used as a warm up activity at the beginning of lessons. It can also be used at any other point during the lesson. I sometimes use it when I change from a task my student is finding a bit of a challenge. **SpeedRead** is a fun activity in which students are encouraged to read accurately and fluently at their personal best. Stickers work well as a reward! The record sheet can be completed by the teacher/tutor to monitor the student's progress and for the student to see their progress. Some students like to graph their progress - a good use of laptops or iPads.

The instruction in the box is, 'Can you read 20 words correctly in 30 seconds?' Research has shown that a fluency rate of 20 words correct in 30 seconds is more likely to result in the skill being maintained. Some students need more practice to get there. If, after three or four attempts, there is no indication that performance is improving you may want to decrease the number of words to be read or increase the amount of time given.

Although all the words included in the units are real words, we have introduced some words which pupils may not know the meanings of. In this case, simply ask the pupil to read the word and return to discuss its meaning at the end. For example, in Unit 11 <qu>, we have included the word 'quint', which is: a tax of one fifth; an organ stop giving tones a fifth higher than normal higher; a group of five persons. Also in Unit 11 is the word 'quitch', a type of grass. Some pupils might like to know the meaning of these words and might enjoy being stretched. If pupils are unsure of the meaning of words, you can talk about meaning or use the opportunity to do some dictionary work (built in homework activity!).

A useful follow-up to this activity is to ask the pupil to spell some or all of these words. Thus, in one session, you might ask the pupil to read the words and, in the next, to write them, saying the sounds as they do and reading the word. A homework activity could be to use the words in a sentence or choose a word to write a short story about.

For students who lack confidence and require more practice than most to achieve mastery you may find it helpful to create your own sheet, combining words from one unit and the previous unit as a stepping stone. This can help increase the confidence of the student. A blank template is included for the teacher/tutor to build the activity around the individual student's needs.

Instructions are included on the record sheet.