Podcasts: Fluency

In Dr. Tim Rasinsky’s podcast “Fluency 101”, he discussed the importance of fluency. He explained that there are two levels to reading; the surface level and the deep level. The surface level includes speech and the deep level involves comprehension. Although fluency is an important skill for students to master, it is only on the surface level of reading. Fluency, however, leads to comprehension. There are three parts to fluency. The first is accuracy. Accuracy is decoding words and understanding their meanings. The second is automaticity. Automaticity is a concept that includes the ability to do something effortlessly. Automaticity is the reader’s ability to automatically decode words and determine what the author is trying to tell you. Finally, fluency includes how words are expressed. Tone and inflection can give multiple meanings to words depending on how they are spoken.

In Dr. Rasinsky’s second podcast, “Practice, practice, practice” he compared practicing reading to musicians practicing for performances. He discussed how J. Samuels discovered that musicians practice until the material is essentially memorized because there are many other things to focus on during a performance, therefore, a musician cannot spend time reading every note. As a result, he began doing repeated readings in his classroom and found that comprehension and meaningful connections were transferred to higher level passages. As Dr. Rasinsky explained, teaching is an art. If you want students to be motivated to do repeated readings, there has to be a motivational force driving their practice. The reason musicians practice is to have a good performance. Athletes practice to perform well in the game. Therefore, readers need to have a performance or reason for practicing their reading. Some of the strategies Dr. Rasinksy suggested include jump rope chants, nursery rhymes, dialogues written by the students, and reciting speeches and poetry. These strategies will motivate students to want to read repeatedly and perform to their highest potential.

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