

Decoding and Fluency

Decoding requires phoneme awareness - understanding the sounds of a language that underpin all words within that language.

Decoding is to read a series of letters as a word by using your knowledge of letters and related sounds in a single language.

Fluency is the ability to read without faltering and recognise words as a whole and requires speed and automaticity. Automaticity is when words are recognised instantly and do not need decoding.

Featured on curriculum

Reception and KS1.

When to be concerned

If a learner has not mastered decoding by year 4, they would be considered as requiring intervention.

Similarly, reading comprehension is difficult without fluency.

What to do

Practice improving fluency by high success, low risk single word reading exercises. Repeat phonic sounds if learners are in KS1 and KS2.

Apply principles of phoneme awareness in KS3 and KS4 to encourage multisensory problem solving. Explore prefixes, suffixes, syllables, segmenting and words within words.

How to assess

There are several freely available phonics checks and the best way is to hear a learner read them out loud.