

“Folding-In” Technique for Improving Reading Fluency

1. Identify known and unknown sight words via pre-test or observation.
2. Create flashcards with known and unknown words printed on them.
3. Gather a set of 10 flashcards composed of 7 known words (if possible) and 3 unknown words.
4. The “teacher” (adult or peer) presents the first unknown word to the student with the correct pronunciation. The student writes the unknown word on a piece of paper, repeats the word **3** times aloud, and then turns the paper over.
5. The “teacher” then presents a known word, the first unknown word practiced, the first known word again, and another known word (2 known/ 1 unknown; 3 correct responses for each 4 possible). Repeat this sequence until all 7 known words are “folded-in” with the unknown word (2nd known, 1st unknown, 2nd known, 3rd known; 3rd known, 1st unknown, 3rd known, 4th known; etc.)
6. Shuffle the first 8 cards, present the 2nd unknown word with correction, and fold the 2nd unknown word into the set. Repeat with the 3rd unknown word.
7. Once all the words are folded in, the entire set of 10 cards is presented three times in a row but shuffled after each series to avoid memorization of the sequence.
8. If the student hesitates for longer than 3 seconds or responds incorrectly, the teacher provides the correct response and asks the student to write the word three times. The word is then presented again.
9. After all three trials, a “test” is given covering all 10 words. Place a mark on the reverse side of the previously unknown word cards if the student reads them correctly. When an unknown word has three correct tally marks on it, that word now becomes a known word and can be used in a folding-in procedure with a new unknown word.
10. The procedure is repeated on a different day using replacement unknown words for any (or all) of the first three unknown words that are now known.
 - from Shapiro, E. (1996). *Academic Skills Problems: Direct Assessment and Intervention* (2nd Ed.). New York: Guilford Publications.

A second procedure attributed to Coulter, W., and Coulter, E. (1991) in the Shapiro book mentioned above is called the “Drill Sandwich Technique” and is a bit easier to manage but has less practice opportunity for the student. This procedure starts with the same 10 word cards; 7 known and 3 unknown. The three unknown cards are placed in the 3rd, 6th, and 8th position in the stack. The entire stack of 10 is presented five times per practice session with re-shuffling of the known words between each round. If the student gives an incorrect response, the teacher should provide the correct pronunciation and have the student repeat the word two to three times (and a writing component may be added if desired).