

Florida Center for Reading Research

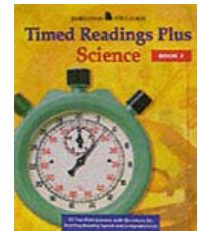
Timed Readings

What is Timed Readings?

Jamestown's *Timed Reading* series is a set of supplemental practice materials that are intended to improve reading speed and promote reading comprehension for students in grades 6 through 12. Teachers may implement these materials at their discretion one-on-one, whole class, or with small groups to build reading fluency through timed reading practice.

Passages of uniform length (400 words) are designed for systematic classroom practice in six different sets of materials that include *Timed Readings*, *Timed Readings Plus*, *Timed Readings in Literature*, *Timed Readings Plus in Science*, *Timed Readings Plus in Social Studies*, and *Timed Readings Plus in Math*. Each set contains 10 books on reading levels 4 through 13 (with the exception of *Timed Readings in Math* which has 5 books in levels 4-8).

A Teacher Guide is not provided, but written directions for students comprise the first few pages of each book. Students are introduced to the materials with the directive that more fluent readers are better readers and that practice improving reading fluency will improve reading. Four steps to faster reading are provided. To complete a practice, students are instructed to preview the selection for 30 seconds at the prompting of an instructor, and then begin reading at the instructor's signal. Students record their reading time at the end of the selection and then answer ten questions which are divided into five fact and five thought questions in multiple choice format. After correcting their work using the answer key provided, students record their scores and enter both comprehension score and reading time on a graph. An additional practice activity suggests that instructors may wish to conduct pacing drills periodically. Students are encouraged to regulate their reading speed to match the pace set by their instructor or the reading cassette tapes that accompany each reader.



No assessment is included to assist in matching student to text and progress monitoring is limited to students filling in their own scores on a progress graph.

How is Timed Readings aligned with Current Reading Research?

Timed Readings is not an instructional reading program, but a set of supplemental practice materials for timed reading practice and comprehension building. This set of materials provides nominal support for two of the five critical components defined by the report of the National Reading Panel as critical to reading instruction: fluency and comprehension. The important relationship between fluency and reading comprehension has been well established in the research (Report of the National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Students who are able to read smoothly, effortlessly and with proper expression are more likely to understand what they are reading. Repeated timed readings have been found to be one effective means of increasing students' ability to read with fluency and are the focus of the *Timed Readings* program. Of concern is the lack of direction for the teacher in choosing materials appropriate for the student's independent reading level. Of further concern is the limited scope of the materials. No provision is made for instructional

procedures found to improve reading fluency such as repeated reading, reading aloud to an adult, corrective feedback on word errors, and reading to a performance criterion (Therrien, 2004).

One aspect of comprehension instruction, question answering, is minimally supported via the multiple choice questions at the end of each passage, but no instruction is provided in comprehension strategies. These materials should not be used as a stand alone program for improving fluency and comprehension in older readers, because they do not provide sufficient guidance for systematic and explicit instruction in these reading components.

No professional development is offered specifically for *Timed Readings*.

Research Support for Timed Readings

No empirical research has been conducted to document the effectiveness of *Timed Readings* as materials that can be used to support instruction in reading fluency. However, use of these materials is consistent with research suggesting that students who struggle with reading fluency, profit from repeated reading practice.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths of *Timed Readings*:

- *Timed Readings* provide an extensive collection of easily timed, leveled reading selections.

Weaknesses of *Timed Readings*:

- There are no instructional materials provided for teachers.

Which Florida districts have schools that implement Timed Readings?

Brevard	321-631-1911	Lee	239-337-8301
Broward	754-321-2600	Marion	352-671-7702
Collier	239-377-0212	Okaloosa	850-833-3109
Columbia	386-755-8003	Orange	407-317-3202
Dade	305-995-1430	Pasco	813-794-2651
Duval	904-390-2115	Pinellas	727-588-6011
Gilchrist	352-463-3200	Sarasota	941-927-9000
Hillsborough	813-272-4050	Seminole	407-320-0006
Lake	352-253-6510		

For More Information

http://www.glencoe.com/gln/jamestown/reading_rate/index.php
http://www.glencoe.com/gln/jamestown/reading_rate/index2.php
http://www.glencoe.com/gln/jamestown/reading_rate/index3.php

References

National Reading Panel (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Washington, D.C.



Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Therrien, W. J., (2004). *Fluency and comprehension gains as a result of repeated readings*. Remedial and Special Education, 25-4.

Lead Reviewer: Lila Rissman, M.S.
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Important Note: FCRR Reports are prepared in response to requests from Florida school districts for review of specific reading programs. The reports are intended to be a source of information about programs that will help teachers, principals, and district personnel in their choice of materials that can be used by skilled teachers to provide effective instruction. Whether or not a program has been reviewed does **not** constitute endorsement or lack of endorsement by the FCRR.

For more information about FCRR go to: www.fcrr.org