

## Allington Research Data

### If Readers Don't Read with Volume, Stamina and Fluency, They Won't Progress

Reading is a skill that requires practice. Just as a child learns to swim by swimming, and to play the piano by playing, children need to read in order to get better as readers. There is a tremendous volume of research that shows a very strong correlation between the amount of time spent reading and a child's progress as a reader. Gentry's research suggests that in order to maintain grade-level progress, a child needs to be actually reading (not talking about reading or working on reading related sheets or listening to the teacher read) for two hours a day...and children who need to regain lost ground need even more time for reading.

The challenge, of course, for those of us who work with children is that reading is somewhat invisible. One can count the pages of writing that a child has done, but it is less easy to keep track of a child's time-spent-reading. The solution to this is obvious. It is critically important that children keep detailed reading logs in which they record the number of pages read in a particular text, and it is important that teachers study these logs. Then, too, we need to know what to look for when studying the logs, and therefore it is helpful to keep in mind guidelines for assessing the volume of reading a child is doing. This becomes fairly easy because if a child is reading a book at a certain level, one can predict the normal reading rate for this child. A child who is reading *Stone Fox* (level P) will usually read 100 wpm, a child who reads *Hatchet* (level R) will usually read 200 wpm.

Here's an excerpt from Dick Allington's research, which shows how long it should take a child who reads at one reading rate or the other to read books of different levels. **(See Allington research attachment, *How Long Should it take a Child to Read a Book According to their Reading Level?*)**

These calculations can produce a rough guide to the progress that we can expect a child to make through books. For example, if a child is reading *Stone Fox* at the rate of 100 wpm, this book will require four hours. If all the reading the child does in a day (remember, there must be two hours of reading each day for the child to simply maintain grade level) is in *Stone Fox*, then the child will finish this book in two days, and read three of these books in a week. Granted, it is likely that a child will be reading content area texts some of the day so it may be more realistic to suggest that *Stone Fox* requires three days and the child reads two of these books in a week. But either way, something is drastically wrong if a child lingers over *Stone Fox* for an entire week! The point is that teachers need to keep a vigilant eye on children's progress through books, and reading logs can help us do this. **(See Harris and Sipay research attachment, *General Range of Adequate Reading Rates By Grade Level*)**