

Fast Forward to Fluency

The Fluency Booster Box

A high impact 12-week intervention that helps struggling readers build the fluency, confidence and skills they need to succeed.



Developed by:



Shotton Hall
Research School

NE North East
Combined
Authority



North East
Learning Trust

What Is Fast Forward to Fluency (FFTF)?

Fast Forward to Fluency is a 12-week reading intervention for Year 7 and 8 pupils who need extra support with fluency. Delivered twice a week in small groups, it helps pupils build the key skills that link decoding to comprehension. Staff guide pupils through accessible but ambitious texts, creating a structured, encouraging environment that boosts confidence, fluency and enjoyment.

FFTF uses two key assessments to track progress: **WCPM – Words Correct Per Minute** – the standard measure of reading fluency and **EARS Rubric – Expression, Accuracy, Rhythm & Phrasing, Smoothness**, which adds depth beyond reading speed alone and identifies dysfluent readers – even pupils who appear fluent because they read at a faster pace.

How does FFTF work?

- Pupils receive 40 minutes of structured reading a week using custom anthologies, full of exciting, but challenging texts.
- Staff model effective reading using choral reading, repeated reading and echo reading.
- Training you receive from us ensures that staff are confident in delivering high quality modelling, feedback and praise.

“Our staff felt fully equipped from day one. The clarity of the training and the quality of the materials meant we could run the programme confidently and consistently.”

Vlad the Impaler: The Real Dracula (4.7)



When young Vlad enjoyed death and torture.

Vlad became ruler of Romania and wanted to wander at night.

Vlad builds a tower to watch executions from.

Vlad Dracula just loved to mutilate and murder. His name, 'Dracula', means both 'son of a dragon' and 'son of the devil'. Both fitted him rather well. Even as a boy, Vlad enjoyed watching criminals be hanged. When he grew older, Vlad joined the army. This turned out to be a great move for Vlad: it taught him all about torture – and he just loved it ...

In 1448, Vlad became ruler of Romania. Around this time, he also began to wander at night under the cover of darkness. For his little evening escapades, Vlad would wear a long black cloak that billowed around him. This bizarre behaviour alone frightened his people, but the worst of Vlad was yet to come ...

As ruler, Vlad quickly made his mark in many ways. First, he had a new tower built in his castle with a very special view. This tower, a symbol of his cruelty, looked down into a courtyard where all executions took place. It turned out that Vlad's childhood love of watching executions hadn't faded. As an adult he just upgraded, that's all: he liked to watch people die from the comfort of his own tower.

Vlad became famous for the brutal tactics he used against his

Need-to-Knows

Vlad Dracula was a 15th century, cold-blooded ruler of modern-day Romania. He is said to have murdered up to 80,000 people during his reign. He became known as Vlad the Impaler because he liked to kill people by impaling them.



Word Workout

Word	Meaning	Syllables
reign	To be the ruler or leader of a country or kingdom.	reign
mutilate	To hurt or damage a part of something, often a part of the body, in a violent way.	mut-il-ate
symbol	When a thing is used to stand for something else, like a cross stands for Christianity. Here, the tower stands for Vlad's cruelty.	sym-bol
impale	To push something sharp, like a stick or a pole, all the way through something else, often a part of the body.	imp-ale

Group Reading

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Vlad became famous for the brutal tactics he used against his enemies during his reign. Torture? Tick. Mutilation? Tick. Mass murder? Tick.

The results

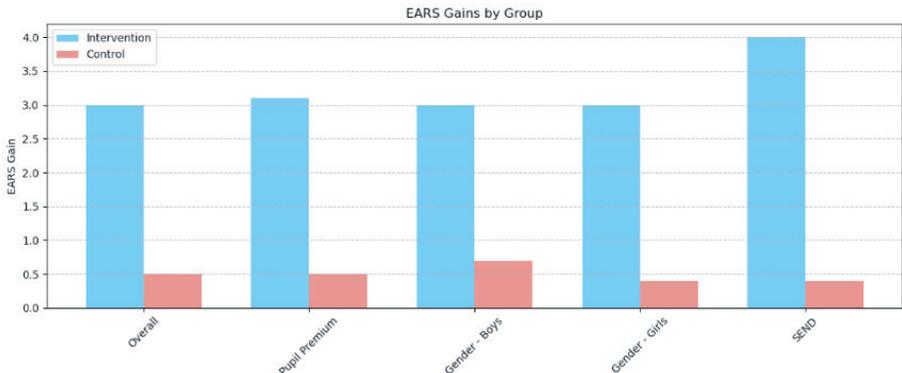
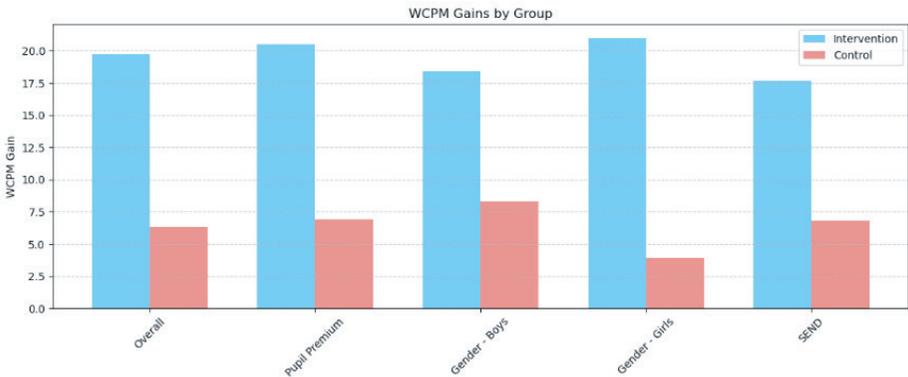
Last year, 410 pupils across 21 schools took part in a randomised controlled trial of our programme. At the end of the trial we saw exceptional progress for the pupils who received FFTF:

- **Pupils receiving FFTF made over three times the progress in reading speed.**
- **Pupils' overall fluency improved sixfold.**
- **SEND pupils doubled their gains in reading speed and made eight times the progress in expression, rhythm and phrasing.**

Headline impact

Pupils starting with the lowest fluency made the biggest gains:

- **For 52–79 WCPM starters: +31.3% improvement with +55% improvement in EARS.**
- **For 80–100 WCPM starters: +25% improvement and +38.9% in EARS.**



What's in the box?

- 20 x student reading anthologies
- 6 x teaching assistant anthologies
- 1 x leaders' intervention manual
- 20 sets of baseline, tri-weekly and end-point fluency assessment booklets
- 6 x assessment mats
- 20 x reading rulers
- Reward package – including certificates, sticker postcards and sticker sets
- Download links to: data and quality assurance templates, and exemplar reading videos

Plus 3.2 days of training, led by reading experts, including: one day for SLT, one day for reading leads and one day for TAs, followed by a later online 2-hour refresher.

“I can tell I'm getting better at reading out loud. I don't get stuck as much now and it feels easier each week.”



About our anthologies

Curiosity-sparking texts include the arts, history, science and geography and cover the spooky, the strange and the surreal! Every text has been rigorously quality-assured by subject experts and is designed to hook struggling readers while strengthening their curriculum knowledge.

Evidence-informed

We have brought together the strongest evidence from reading studies, effective interventions, and cognitive science to create a unique programme that improves reading fluency, strengthens vocabulary, bolsters comprehension and builds wider knowledge. FFTF brings together what we know about fluency, vocabulary acquisition, background knowledge, and high-quality modelling to deliver an approach that is transformative.

Ready to bring Fast Forward to Fluency to your school?

Contact: louise.quinn@nelt.co.uk for more information