

Fluency Phones

(Also known as Phonics Phones and Whisper Phones)

A fluency phone is a simple tube with elbow ends that allows students to better 'hear' themselves when they speak or read quietly. They can be bought commercially or made with PVC pipe and elbow joints.

Why use fluency phones?

The phone compels the student to read quietly as it amplifies the sound of the voice. For this reason, fluency phones can be used by all students in a group or a whole classroom without disturbing others. The phone also enables students who are less confident to read aloud without feeling self-conscious.

Fluency phones can be used for:

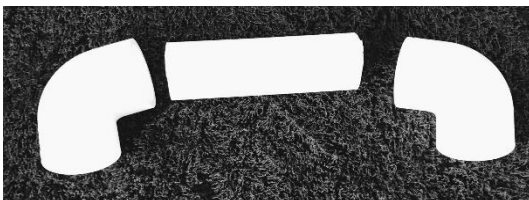
- **Phonics** instructional approach to directly help students develop proficient reader **phonologic** processing pathways.
- **Phonological Awareness** instruction. Phonemic awareness is literally 'sound' awareness. Students can say the sounds directly into the phone to identify, distinguish, segment, blend or manipulate sounds.
- **Phonics** instruction. The phone enhances hearing and intentionally focuses the student on the sound, thereby developing and strengthening the necessary print=sound relationship.
- **Developing Fluency:** Students can use out loud reading practice to develop fluency. Students can read out loud into their phones, monitoring and practising their levels of fluency – appropriate pace, phrasing and intonation. Repeated practice with the same passage helps develop fluency.

Fluency phones can be use in:

- **Guided Reading** – students practise reading their text without disturbing others until it is their turn to read to the teacher.
- **Independent Reading** - Students can use these phones anytime they practice reading independently. The phones are effective for managing out loud reading in classroom student and focusing the student more closely on exactly what they are reading.
- **All learning areas** where fluency is a goal e.g. practising number facts and vocabulary / spelling words. The phones can also be used when students are required to re-read and edit their own writing or when practising lines for Readers Theatre or a performance.

Making the phones

- Purchase a length of PVC pipe (I used 20mm pipe) suitable for the number of phones you wish to make. I cut mine into 9 cm lengths, therefore needed 90 cm of pipe for 10 phones.
- Purchase the corresponding size elbows (2 for each phone)
- Decide whether you wish to paint or decorate the phones. You will need spray paint suitable for PVC plastic or you can use contact or coloured tape if you wish.
- Cut the pipe into 9 cm lengths (the length depends on the size of your students – it need to reach from ear to mouth comfortably).
- Push the elbow joints onto either end of the pipe.
- Decorate as desired.



Keeping the phones clean

- If you have a phone for each student, the phones can be stored in labelled Ziploc bags
- PVC phones can be washed in the dishwasher.
- Anti-bacterial wipes can be used to clean the phones before use.