

# Suggestions for Setting Short-Term Goals

After administering the benchmark (or screening) assessment, you can use the students' scores to set short-term goals. Short-term goals help students see weekly progress.

*At the beginning of the school year, a second grader's fluency score is 42 words correct per minute (wcpm).*

- Calculate the amount of improvement needed to meet benchmark.

*If the end-of-year fluency benchmark is 90 wcpm, the second grader needs a minimum improvement of 48 wcpm to meet benchmark.*

$$90 \text{ wcpm} - 42 \text{ wcpm} = 48 \text{ wcpm}$$

- Determine the number of weeks remaining in the semester and/or school year to help set realistic, attainable goals for your students.

*There are 33 weeks of instruction remaining in the school year.*

- Determine a weekly (or biweekly) goal to help students improve to meet an end-of-the-year benchmark.

*If the second grader needs to improve his fluency score by at least 48 wcpm by the end of the year, he needs to increase his fluency rate approximately 1.5 wcpm each week to meet the benchmark.*

$$48 \text{ wcpm} \div 33 \text{ weeks} = 1.45 \text{ wcpm gain per week}$$

*Findings from a 1993 research study<sup>1</sup> can help teachers establish appropriate goals for weekly fluency improvement:*

Grade	Weekly Word Gain
1	2 - 3 Words
2	1.5 - 2 Words
3	1.0 - 1.5 Words

<sup>1</sup> Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., Hamlett, C. L., Walz, L., & Germann, G. (1993). Formative evaluation of academic progress: How much growth can we expect? *School Psychology Review*, 22(1), 27-48.

- If appropriate, compare students' scores to curriculum-based norms to help determine the intensity and type of instruction needed to help students meet benchmarks.

*After two weeks of fluency instruction, the second grader has gained 7 wcpm. He has surpassed the weekly goal of 1.5 wcpm. His fluency rate is now 49 wcpm. Based on the chart below, this student is in the bottom half of the second grade. Although he is improving his fluency, he continues to need immediate intervention to help him meet the benchmark.*

Curriculum-Based Norms for Reading Fluency <sup>2</sup>				
Grade	Percentile	Fall WCPM	Winter WCPM	Spring WCPM
2	75	82	106	124
	50	53	78	94
	25	23	46	65
3	75	107	123	142
	50	79	93	114
	25	65	70	87
4	75	125	133	143
	50	99	112	118
	25	72	89	92
5	75	126	143	151
	50	105	118	128
	25	77	93	100

- If not already established, set a mid-year benchmark to help monitor students' progress toward the end-of-year benchmark.

*The second grader's mid-year fluency goal would be approximately 64 wcpm.*

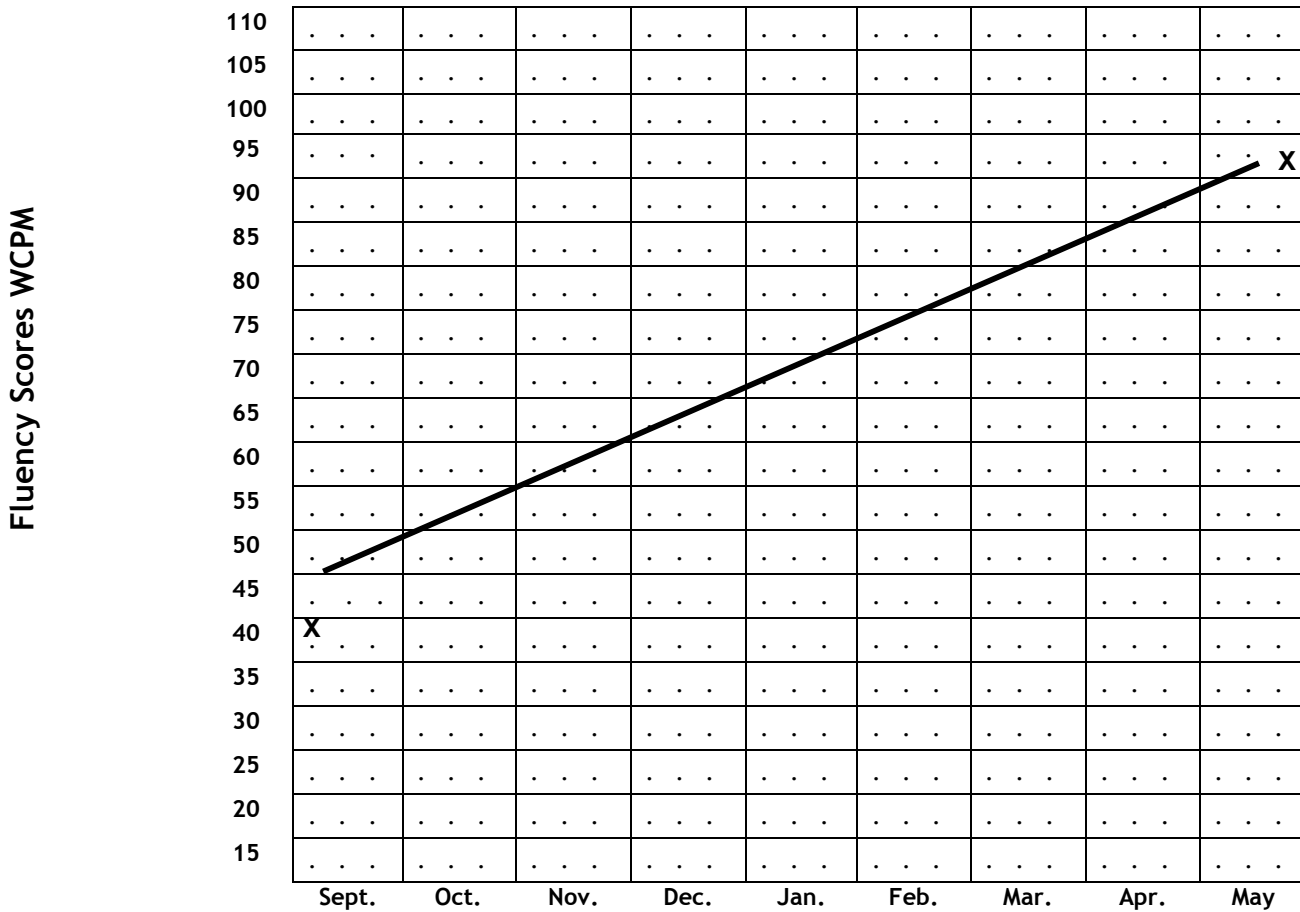
*15 weeks remaining in semester x 1.5 wcpm gain per week = 22.5 wcpm*

$$42 \text{ wcpm} + 22.5 \text{ wcpm} = 64.5 \text{ wcpm}$$

<sup>2</sup> Hasbrouck, J. E., & Tindal, G. (1992). Curriculum-based oral reading fluency norms for students in grades 2 through 5. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 24(3), 41-44.

- Graph student progress for targeted skills. Indicate baseline scores and benchmarks. Draw a line connecting the points on the graph to show the course a student needs to make to achieve end-of-the-year benchmarks.<sup>3</sup>

*The second grader would need to progress at this slope of improvement to achieve the benchmark of 90 wcpm by the end of the school year. As scores are graphed throughout the year, the teacher and student can see if he is on track based on where the scores fall along the aimline.*



<sup>3</sup> Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement. (2002). *Alabama institute on beginning reading: School wide reading results: Interpreting student performance data and designing instructional interventions*. Retrieved February 11, 2004, from University of Oregon, Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement Web site: [http://idea.uoregon.edu/~ibr/ibr\\_present/2002/al\\_jan\\_02.pdf](http://idea.uoregon.edu/~ibr/ibr_present/2002/al_jan_02.pdf)

### Activity: Setting Short-Term Goals

Use your class data to establish short-term goals for two of your struggling readers. Refer to the example on the previous pages if needed.

1. What is each student’s current fluency score?  
*Student 1:* \_\_\_\_\_ *wcpm*    *Student 2:* \_\_\_\_\_ *wcpm*
2. What is the end-of-year fluency benchmark? \_\_\_\_\_ *wcpm*
3. Calculate the amount of improvement needed to meet this benchmark by subtracting the student’s current fluency score from the benchmark.

	Benchmark	–	Current Fluency Score	=	Needed Improvement
<b>Student 1</b>	<i>wcpm</i>	–	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>
<b>Student 2</b>	<i>wcpm</i>	–	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>

4. To help set realistic, attainable goals for each student, determine the number of weeks remaining in the semester and/or school year: \_\_\_\_\_ *weeks of instruction remaining.*
5. Determine weekly (or biweekly) goals to help a student meet the end-of-year benchmark. Divide the needed improvement in *wcpm* by the number of weeks remaining.

	Needed Improvement	÷	Number of Weeks Remaining	=	Weekly Gain
<b>Student 1</b>	<i>wcpm</i>	÷	<i>weeks</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>
<b>Student 2</b>	<i>wcpm</i>	÷	<i>weeks</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>

6. If appropriate, set a mid-year benchmark to help monitor the student’s progress toward the end-of-year benchmark. First, determine the number of weeks remaining in the semester. Multiply that number by the student’s weekly gain. Then add the *wcpm* to the student’s current fluency score.

	Weeks Until Mid-Year Benchmark	X	Weekly Gain	=	Result	+	Current Fluency Score	=	Mid-Year Fluency Benchmark
<b>Student 1</b>	<i>weeks</i>	X	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>	+	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>
<b>Student 2</b>	<i>weeks</i>	X	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>	+	<i>wcpm</i>	=	<i>wcpm</i>