

Rapid Automatic Naming



Rapid Automatic Naming (RAN) is the ability to quickly name a series of familiar visual stimuli, such as objects, colours, letters, or numbers. Students with RAN deficits struggle to retrieve and verbalize these familiar items fluently, which can impact their academic performance.

Why do we screen for RAN?

Early identification of reading difficulties	RAN screens can be used as an early screening tool to identify children who may be at risk for developing reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.
Intervention planning	The results of RAN screen can inform the development of targeted interventions to address specific areas of difficulty, such as phonological awareness, visual processing, or automaticity in word recognition.
Language development	RAN is linked to the speed and efficiency of accessing and retrieving words from the mental lexicon. Students with RAN deficits may have difficulties with vocabulary development and oral language production.
Reading fluency	Research has consistently shown that RAN is a strong predictor of reading fluency. Individuals who struggle with RAN often have difficulty with the automatic recognition and naming of words, which can impede their reading fluency and comprehension.

STRATEGY CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Explicit Phonics Instruction	● Provide systematic, direct instruction in phonics and decoding skills to help students build a strong foundation for word recognition. ● Focus on teaching letter-sound correspondences, blending, and segmentation to improve word reading fluency.
Repeated Reading Practice	● Encourage students to engage in repeated readings of the same text to improve fluency and automaticity in word recognition. ● Use techniques like paired reading, echo reading, or reader’s theatre to provide structured practice opportunities.
Multisensory Approaches	● Incorporate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements into reading instruction to engage multiple senses and strengthen memory associations. ● Use manipulatives, gestures, or movement to reinforce letter-sound connections and word recognition.
Themes / Centres	● Remember, the key is to keep the activities fast-paced and engaging to maintain students’ attention and practice. ● Picture Naming: Display a set of pictures (e.g., common objects, animals, colours) and have students quickly name each one. ● Letter/Number Naming: Provide a grid or list of letters or numbers and have students name them as quickly as possible. ● Rhyming Words: Give students a word and have them quickly name words that rhyme with it. ● Category Naming: Name a category (e.g., fruits, vehicles) and have students quickly list as many items in that category as they can. ● Alternating Naming: Show students two sets of items (e.g., colours and shapes) and have them quickly name the items, alternating between the two sets. ● Timed Naming: Set a timer and challenge students to name as many items from a set (e.g., colours, letters, numbers) as they can before the time runs out. ● Matching Pairs: Provide a set of picture or word cards and have students quickly match the pairs. ● These activities can help primary students develop their RAN skills, which are important for fluent reading and language development.

Winter Theme Centres	● Winter Picture Naming: Display a set of pictures featuring common winter items (e.g., snowflakes, mittens, snowmen, hot cocoa) and quickly name each one. ● Winter Rhyming Words: Provide a winter-themed word (e.g., snow, ice, sled) and quickly name other words that rhyme. ● Winter Category Naming: Name a winter category (e.g., winter clothing, winter sports, winter weather) and quickly list as many items in that category. ● Alternating Winter Naming: Show students two sets of winter-themed items (e.g., winter accessories and winter animals) and have them quickly name the items, alternating between the two sets. ● Timed Winter Naming: Set a timer and challenge students to name as many winter-related items (e.g., snowflakes, icicles, scarves) as they can before the time runs out. ● Matching Winter Pairs: Provide a set of picture or word cards featuring winter-themed items and quickly match the pairs. ● These activities can help primary students develop their RAN skills while also reinforcing their knowledge of winter-themed vocabulary and concepts
Book Focus RAN Centre	● Character Naming: Create a set of cards or a poster with the main characters from the book. Quickly name the characters as they work through the centre. ● Setting Naming: Provide pictures or words representing the different settings featured in the book. Challenge students to rapidly name each setting. ● Vocabulary Naming: Select key vocabulary words from the book and create a grid or list for students to quickly name. ● Rhyming Words: Choose a word from the book and quickly generate other words that rhyme. ● Category Naming: Identify categories related to the book (e.g., animals, transportation, emotions) and rapidly list items in each category. ● Timed Naming: Set a timer and quickly name as many items (characters, settings, vocabulary words) from the book as they can before time runs out. ● Matching Pairs: Create matching cards with characters, settings, or vocabulary from the book. Students can quickly match the pairs.

SKILL AREA	IMPACT OF RAN DEFICITS	EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTIONS
FLUENT READING	● RAN deficits are closely linked to difficulties with developing fluent and automatic word recognition. Students may read slowly and laboriously, which can impede their reading comprehension.	● Repeated reading of the same text to build automaticity and fluency ● Explicit instruction in phonics and decoding skills
VOCABULARY RETRIEVAL	● Retrieving and accessing words from their mental lexicon can be challenging for students with RAN deficits, affecting their vocabulary development and use.	● Explicit vocabulary instruction with multiple exposures and opportunities for practice ● Semantic mapping and categorization activities ● Associating new words with visual or kinesthetic cues
SPELLING	● The ability to quickly retrieve and name letter names and sounds is important for accurate and automatic spelling, which can be an area of difficulty for students with RAN deficits.	● Multisensory, structured literacy instruction (e.g., Orton-Gillingham approach) ● Use of mnemonic devices and word patterns to support spelling
MATH FACT RETRIEVAL	● Quickly retrieving basic math facts, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts, is often problematic for students with RAN deficits, leading to slower and more effortful math problem-solving.	● Timed practice of math facts through flashcards, games, and computer-based activities ● Use of visual aids (e.g., number lines, multiplication charts) to support understanding ● Access to calculators and math reference sheets to minimize the need for rapid fact retrieval
ORAL LANGUAGE PRODUCTION	● The rapid naming of objects, colours, letters, and numbers is related to the speed and fluency of oral language production, which can be impaired in students with RAN deficits.	● Structured opportunities for oral language practice, such as storytelling, role-playing, and discussions ● Explicit instruction in speech and language skills, including articulation, vocabulary and fluency (SLP)