

Reading Fluency

TRACKING SILENT READING RATE AND ACCURACY

Directions: Use this passage about Afghan musical instruments with the activity on page 104. Follow the directions on that page.

Music is an important part of Afghan culture. *Ustad*, or professional musicians, perform classical instrumental and vocal music, as well as folk music for weddings and festivals. While contemporary Afghan music uses instruments such as violins, guitars, and clarinets, it also uses traditional instruments that date back thousands of years. Many Afghan instruments are also used to play the music of India and other countries of central Asia.

The traditional musical instruments of Afghanistan fall into familiar categories. There are several stringed instruments much like the guitar. The 3,500-year old *dutar* (sometimes spelled *dotar* or *doutar*), traditionally has only two strings, but some Afghan versions have as many as fourteen strings. It is strummed like a guitar or plucked like a banjo. The *rubab*, with three strings, is considered the national instrument of Afghanistan, and is sometimes called the “lion” of musical instruments. It is carved from mulberry wood and its strings are plucked with a plectrum, or pick, made of wood, bone, or ivory. The *ghaychak* (or *ghijak*), a four-stringed instrument played with a bow, is more like a fiddle than a guitar.

The Afghans also have many drums, which are used to accompany singers and musicians. The *zirbaghali* (or *zerbaghali*) is a large drum made of clay and shaped like a goblet. The *tabla* is a pair of hand drums of different sizes and timbres. The *daireh* is often played by women at home.

Other instruments include the *shahnai*, a reed instrument similar to the oboe, and the *badakshani*, or flute. Although Afghan instruments are like western instruments in some ways, slight differences in their shape, design, and size make their sound distinctly Afghan. (275 words)

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To become a better silent reader, move your eyes quickly across the page. Try to read groups of words as phrases. Slow down if you do not understand what the writer is saying.

Directions: Read the passage on page 103 silently. Have your partner time you and record your time on the chart. Your goal is to read at least 237–267 words correctly per minute. Then answer the questions 1–3. Repeat these steps two times. Try to increase your speed and understanding with each reading. Then evaluate your reading using questions 4 and 5.

Reading	1	2	3
Total Reading Time			

Check Your Understanding

- Who or what is an *ustad*?

- What do the *dutar*, *rubab*, and *ghaychak* have in common?

- What is a *zirbaghali* and what is it used for?

Evaluate Your Fluency

- How did repeated reading affect your speed?

- Summarize the effect of repeated readings on your understanding of the passage.
