

READING ASSESSMENTS

How and Why Should I Assess?

Students' reading should be assessed regularly and with a variety of measures. Assessment, prior to beginning reading instruction, gives you valuable information that will guide your instruction in the area of reading. Phonics inventories, word recognition lists, and leveled reading passages with comprehension questions are good choices to use before beginning reading instruction. A **phonics inventory** will give you an idea of the strengths and weaknesses your students have as they attempt to decode sounds/words that follow predictable phonetic patterns. **Word recognition charts** are also useful in determining students' ability to decode words at various grade levels. Students read down word lists that increase in difficulty. Word lists are scored and the students' *approximate* grade levels are determined. The results from the word recognition list only indicate the approximate grade levels at which your students can decode words. To determine at which grade level students can read and comprehend, you should give them a **leveled reading assessments**. Leveled reading assessments include a short story, that students read either silently or aloud, and comprehension questions at the end.

By combining the results of phonics inventories, word recognition lists, and leveled reading passages, you will have a pretty good idea of where to begin reading instruction for each of your students.

Throughout the year, you can continue to assess students with these measures and use informal measures such as **anecdotal notes** or **running records**. Anecdotal notes are taken while students are reading. You may note strengths and weaknesses in their fluency, decoding skills, reading strategies, and comprehension. Also, while students are reading, you may wish to do a running record on a particular student to record the number of words the student is decoding correctly. This helps you determine if the text is at the right level for the student. Like anecdotal notes, you may wish to note strengths and weaknesses in their fluency, word attack skills, reading strategies, and comprehension (if you choose to ask questions). If a student can read 95% or more of the words correctly, the text is at the student's **independent reading level**. If the student can read 90% - 94% of the words correctly, the text is at the student's **instructional reading level**. When working with students individually or in small groups, the text should be at the instructional reading level. If the student reads less than 90% of the words correctly, the text is at the student's **frustration level**. This would indicate that the text is too difficult for the student to read independently or with the help of you.

By assessing students periodically, you can adjust your reading instruction accordingly and put appropriately leveled books in the hands of your students. Struggling readers should be assessed every 4-6 weeks, while fluent readers should be assessed every 2-3 months.

The following pages include a reproducible phonics inventory, word recognition list, anecdotal notes recording sheet, and running record scoring sheet.

COMPREHENSIVE PHONICS INVENTORY

Teacher Copy

Student's Name _____ Date ___/___/___

Alphabet Names: Say, "Please look at these letters. As I point to each letter, tell me what the *name* of each letter is." Mark each correct response with a check mark above the letter. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the letter. For no response, circle the letter.

Q X Z Y W U K V J H O T N P R G L I D F E S C M A B

b a m c s e f d i l g r p n t o h j v k u w y z x q

Consonant Sounds: Say, "Please look at these letters. As I point to each letter, tell me what *sound* each one makes." Mark each correct response with a check mark above the letter. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the letter. For no response, circle the letter.

b m c s f d l g r p n t h j v k w y z x q

Short Vowel Sounds: Say, "Please look at these letters. As I point to each letter, tell me the *short vowel sound* each letter makes." Mark each correct response for a short vowel with this marking above the vowel: [~]. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the letter. For no response, circle the letter.

e u a i o

Consonant Digraph Sounds: Say, "Tell me what *sound* these letters make together." Mark each correct response with a check mark above the digraph. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the digraph. For no response, circle the digraph.

ch sh th wh ng nk tch ck ph

Consonant Blends: Say, "Tell me what *sound* these letters make together." Mark each correct response with a check mark above the blend. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the blend. For no response, circle the blend.

bl sl fl gl pl cl br cr pr fr dr gr tr

thr sc st sk sn sp sw sm tw str scr spr spl

Directions: Say, "Now, read each of these words aloud to me." Mark each correct response with a check mark above the word. For incorrect responses, write what the student actually says above the word. For no response, circle the word.

Short Vowel Words: mat sip let tub top
tin cut dot men can

Final "e" Words: mine hope take use
lane cute tile cone

Digraphs: book paw tool haul
saw vault look pool

Diphthongs: toy owl pout coin new
few join loud now boy

R – Controlled Vowels: fur cord sir car her
torn tar fern turn girl

Vowel Teams: meat soak rain need say pie
keep paid day hear tie boat

Reversals: no saw tar lap ten dear

Syllables: under open bandit silent rabbit
animal important lovable following rustling

COMPREHENSIVE PHONICS INVENTORY

Student Copy

Q X Z Y W U K V J H O T N P R G L I D F E S C M A B

b a m c s e f d i l g r p n t o h j v k u w y z x q

b m c s f d l g r p n t h j v k w y z x q

e u a i o

ch sh th wh ng nk tch ck ph

bl sl fl gl pl cl br cr pr fr dr gr tr

thr sc st sk sn sp sw sm tw str scr spr spl

mat sip let tub top
tin cut dot men can

mine hope take use
lane cute tile cone

book paw tool haul
saw vault look pool

toy owl pout coin new
few join loud now boy

fur cord sir car her
torn tar fern turn girl

meat soak rain need say pie
keep paid day hear tie boat

no saw tar lap ten dear

under open bandit silent rabbit
animal important lovable following rustling

WORD RECOGNITION CHART

(TEACHER COPY)

Name _____

Date ___/___/___

Directions: From the student copy, have the student start reading down a word list that is 1-2 grade levels below the grade the student is currently in. If the student is in first grade, begin at the preprimer level. Have the student continue to read down each word list until the student is unable to pronounce at least five of the ten words for a given grade level. Place a ✓ next to each word read correctly. The level at which a student pronounces five of the ten words correctly is the student's *approximate* decoding level.

PREPRIMER	PRIMER	1 st GRADE	2 nd GRADE	3 rd GRADE	4 th GRADE
no you my have who see that go can a	make two went came thank new us day fun about	it's friend maybe read way black which try made sleep	neighbor circus voice mountain eight wrote straight blew squirrel choose	stomach machine museum ceiling although thieves invisible daughter cheerful grateful	century cinnamon character anchored responsibility imaginary sausage expression admiration pronunciation
5 th GRADE	6 th GRADE	7 th GRADE	8 th GRADE	9 th GRADE	10 th GRADE
brilliance triumphant affectionate literature democracy nuisance ridiculous superintendent legislature characteristic	gorgeous diphtheria colonel meteor genuine maneuver sensation treacherous sensation cylinder	originality ordinance braille heredity hydraulic heirloom universal disintegrate universal legitimate	archeology evaluate liquefy abolitionist pessimistic protocol lubricant filament indoctrinate predatory	preconception judicial instantaneous imaginative protozoa contemporary depreciate anonymous subversive nonpartisan	tyrannize ingenuity deterioration contemptuous therapeutic reconciliation desirability domesticated dehydration psychological

WORD RECOGNITION CHART

(STUDENT COPY)

no
you
my
have
who
see
that
go
can
a

make
two
went
came
thank
new
us
day
fun
about

it's
friend
maybe
read
way
black
which
try
made
sleep

neighbor
circus
voice
mountain
eight
wrote
straight
blew
squirrel
choose

stomach
machine
museum
ceiling
although
thieves
invisible
daughter
cheerful
grateful

century
cinnamon
character
anchored
responsibility
imaginary
sausage
expression
admiration
pronunciation

brilliance
triumphant
affectionate
literature
democracy
nuisance
ridiculous
superintendent
legislature
characteristic

gorgeous
diphtheria
colonel
meteor
genuine
maneuver
sensation
treacherous
sensation
cylinder

originality
ordinance
braille
heredity
hydraulic
heirloom
universal
disintegrate
universal
legitimate

archeology
evaluate
liquefy
abolitionist
pessimistic
protocol
lubricant
filament
indoctrinate
predatory

preconception
judicial
instantaneous
imaginative
protozoa
contemporary
depreciate
anonymous
subversive
nonpartisan

tyrannize
ingenuity
deterioration
contemptuous
therapeutic
reconciliation
desirability
domesticated
dehydration
psychological

ANECDOTAL NOTES

Student Name _____ Date ____/____/____

Book Title _____ Level _____

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Fluency:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

Decoding:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

Comprehension:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

ANECDOTAL NOTES

Student Name _____ Date ____/____/____

Book Title _____ Level _____

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Fluency:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

Decoding:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

Comprehension:

- Poor
- Fair
- Good

RUNNING RECORDS

Running Records, developed by Marie Clay as part of the Reading Recovery program, are quick, informal assessments that teachers can do “on the run”. Running records help teachers understand the strategies and skills that students use as they read. Information gathered from a running record can also help teachers when putting together guided reading groups. Guided reading groups should be at the students’ instructional reading level (students are able to read 90% – 94% of the words correctly).

To do a Running Record, make a photo copy of a passage that is 100-150 words in length and you believe is at the student’s instructional level. Have the student read aloud to you as you check off the words that are read correctly. If the student makes an error, write exactly what the student said above the word. See the symbols to use in the table below. Count up the number of words read correctly, fill out a copy of the Running Record Score Sheet, and staple it to the passage.

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>Counts as Error?</i>
√	Place a check above words read correctly.	No
-	A dash is place above omitted words.	Yes
SC	If a student “self-corrects” a word that was previously read incorrectly, place “SC” above the word that was corrected.	No
T	Place a “T” above a word that you tell a student.	Yes
^	If a student inserts a word, use this symbol and write the word inserted above the symbol.	Yes

SC

√ √ √ *tim* *there* √ √

Once upon a time, three little pigs

√ √ √ *not* √ √ √ √ √ √ √

decided it was ^ time to go out on their own.

T - √ √ √ √ √ √

Each one said goodbye to their mother and

√ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ *frist* √

set off to start their new life. The first little

√ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √

pig built his house out of straw. The second

√ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ √

little pig built his house out of sticks. And the

√ √ √ √ √ √ √ √ *off* √

third little pig built his house out of bricks.

RUNNING RECORD SCORE SHEET

Student Name _____ Date ___/___/___

Number of Words
Read Correctly

$$\frac{\quad}{\quad} \times 100 = \quad\%$$

Number of Words
In Passage

Comments:

Reading Level:

- 0 – 89% Frustration
- 90 – 94% Instructional
- 96 – 100% Independent

RUNNING RECORD SCORE SHEET

Student Name _____ Date ___/___/___

Number of Words
Read Correctly

$$\frac{\quad}{\quad} \times 100 = \quad\%$$

Number of Words
In Passage

Comments:

Reading Level:

- 0 – 89% Frustration
- 90 – 94% Instructional
- 96 – 100% Independent