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Section VII

Oral Reading

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Rationale

Oral reading provides a window for the listener to understand the integration of skills that the child uses to read. Children who read accurately, quickly, and in phrased units, often do better on assessments of reading, their attitudes toward reading are more positive, and they are more likely to read for pleasure. Fluency plays an important role in becoming a good reader. We also know that the integration of reading skills appropriate to the text level and genre, foster reading rates and accuracy related to comprehension.

One way to assess fluency is to document in written form the child's oral reading. By listening to, documenting in written form, and observing a child read, teachers gather information about the reading behaviors and cueing systems (meaning, structure, and visual) used by the student. In order to establish instructional priorities for each child in the early stages of literacy development, the teacher may use the Oral Reading assessment. This assessment helps teachers understand what individual children know and use when reading aloud. **Teachers' observations are crucial and critical factors informing their decisions about whom and when to assess.**

Definition

Observing and creating a written record for a child reading orally is a way of recording fluency, rate, accuracy, and the use of reading strategies. Fluency and rate are not the same but are related. Fluency reflects the ability of the reader to read smoothly, which includes paying attention to punctuation, grouping words into meaningful chunks, and using intonations that reflect appropriate meaning of text. Rate refers to the speed of oral and/or silent reading as measured in words per minute. Reading strategies include cues such as structure of language, meanings, and visual components.

Assessment Guidelines

Assess each child individually. The assessment area should be quiet and free from major distraction. Sit at a small table where you can sit beside the child and where the child can have the book placed on the table in front of her/him at a comfortable angle and distance. Sometimes many classroom teachers take oral reading records in the classroom during small group time and/or during "drop everything and read" time.

The Comprehension Assessment has been adapted for MLPP from the work of Dr. Dorsey Hammond of Oakland University, Ms. Deanna Birdyshaw of CIERA, Dr. Scott Paris of University of Michigan, and Dr. Elizabeth Sulzby of University of Michigan.

Use classroom observations to determine if a child is ready to have an oral reading record taken. If the child demonstrates an understanding of words, sentences, and story knowledge as well as some word recognition skill, he/she may be ready to read a portion of text needed for an oral reading record. The earliest oral reading may be the reading of pictures as labeling or a created story based on the child's experience and the pictures. Periodically assess all children so that records of each child's growth in reading can be maintained. Taking oral reading records more frequently on children who are not making expected progress will help you make informed decisions about what strategies to emphasize during small group guided reading activities.

Running records should be analyzed for student strengths and instructional needs, in order to provide criteria for planning future lessons and forming purposeful temporary groups for guided reading. Guided reading lessons use the text level corresponding to the group's instructional level. However, sometimes the group may include a range of student levels because the included students need a lesson pertaining to a specific skill or strategy.

Procedures
1. The teacher will select several books that may appeal to the **interests** of the student to be assessed. The books should also be at a **readability level** that matches the student's performance level. Generally, taking a running record at a child's **instructional level** will allow the teacher to obtain the most discriminating information for instruction. Additional oral reading records would be taken to establish the independent level of the student.

2. Sit with the child at a small table where you may hear and record the student's words quickly and accurately.

3. Ask the student to choose a book that he/she would like to read from the teacher's book selection.

4. Observe what book cues the student uses as he/she prepares to read the text; i.e., pictures on front of the book and the title.

5. Ask the student to **give a prediction** regarding what might take place in the book, and record the prediction.

6. Say to the student: **I want to write down everything you do correctly as you read. So, I am going to be writing down a lot of your words. I will try to write quickly, but I want to be accurate. Please read at a comfortable rate so we can both understand the story.**

7. Then turn to the **100 plus word passage** that you have pre-selected for the student to read aloud. Generally, this passage should be at the beginning of the book, or the teacher needs to set the context for what has occurred prior to the events being read about in the passage.

8. The teacher will make a written record of the words the child is reading, using the notation system that has been taught in training.

ORAL RETELLING OF TEXT JUST READ

1. Continue this assessment by asking the student to **retell** the text portion that was just read orally. Say to the student: **Please tell me what you understand happened in the story that you just read to me. Pretend that I did not hear you read the text and that you want me to know what happened.**

2. Using the appropriate retelling rubric (narrative or informational) that is provided, the teacher will record the level that the student's retelling is most like. It is possible that a student will be at different levels on the rubric for different text qualities.

3. **If an emergent reader is unable to gain meaning from a story because of multiple errors, she/he may need to have an intermediate assessment that allows a demonstration of the student's story comprehension after hearing the teacher read a story. If the teacher believes that further comprehension information may be needed, he/she may also use the oral/drawing retelling of a teacher read story.**

Recording Student Progress

The teacher will record the book name, book level, accuracy rate, self-correction rate, and rubric scores. See the Oral Reading **Fluency Rubric** and Oral Reading **Retelling Rubric** for criteria. Locate the level that is the "best fit" for the child's reading performance, and record that score on the student record under Oral Reading. Teachers need to specify the student's **instructional reading level** (the student is able to read a selected passage with 90 percent to 94 percent accuracy) in order to plan appropriate instruction using appropriate materials. It is also helpful for teachers to record the student's independent reading level (the student is able to read a selected passage with 95 percent to 100 percent accuracy) for each student in the observation/comments section of the individual literacy progress profile. This will help teachers provide students with appropriate books that can be read independently.

Analysis

The analysis of an oral reading record begins by identifying which cueing system the child uses most often. If the child is making substitutions in text that are based totally on one cueing system, then additional instructions to develop awareness and use of other cueing systems would be the next step. A good reader will use visual, meaning, and structure cues flexibly and strategically when trying to determine an unknown word during reading.

Consideration should be given to the accuracy and self-correction rates of the child as she/he reads. If a child makes multiple errors and shows little effort to self-correct, the teacher may wonder if the child has a view of reading as word calling, rather than making meaning or as a process of communicating ideas. Another possible scenario is the child who stops to work on every word for accuracy, using only visual cues to determine the word, rather than flexibly using meaning and structure cues.

A third way to analyze the approximations that the child made while reading is to categorize the types of words that created difficulty for the child. Are the words names or technical terms that are connected to the content and may reflect a lack of background knowledge about the text?

Oral Reading Record

Student _____ Age _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Text Difficulty	Text Familiarity
☐ Easy Text (95-100% Correct)	☐ Not Previously Read
☐ Instructional Text (90-94% Correct)	☐ Read Previously
☐ Hard Text (Below 90% Correct)	

Text Title:_____ Text Level:_____

☐ — ☐ = ☐ ÷ ☐   x 100   =   ☐ %

Total Words Errors   Total Words   Accuracy Rate

Example Scoring: 98 words read minus 6 errors equals 92. Then divide 92 by 98, and multiply by 100, and you will find the 93% **accuracy rate**. Do not round off the number.

$$\frac{\text{Total Errors} + \text{Total Self -Corrections}}{\text{Total Self-Corrections}} = \begin{array}{c}\text{Rate of} \\ \text{Self-Corrections}\end{array} \quad \boxed{\text{:}}$$

Competencies:
(Check Observed behavior)
- ☐ Self-monitors
- ☐ 1 to 1 Matching
- ☐ Directionality

At an unknown word, the child attempts to use:
(Check Observed behavior)
- ☐ Meaning or picture cues
- ☐ Sentence structure
- ☐ Visual letter/Sound Identification

Self Corrects by attempting to use:
(Check Observed behavior)
- ☐ Meaning or picture cues
- ☐ Sentence structure
- ☐ Visual letter/Sound Identification

Fluency:
(Check one)
- ☐ Fluent, phrased reading (4)
- ☐ Mixed word-by-word and phrased reading (3)
- ☐ Mostly word-by-word reading (2)
- ☐ All word-by-word reading (1)
- ☐ Appropriate expression/intonation

Retelling:
(Write score from rubric in the box. For additional information, see individual student rubric sheet)

Narrative	**Informational**
☐ Plot's main idea	☐ Central purpose
☐ Story/element	☐ Restatement/elements
☐ Story stucture	☐ Thought development
☐ Linguistic spillover	☐ Linguistic spillover

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Oral Reading Fluency Rubric

4 **Fluent, phrased reading**

Reads **primarily** in larger meaningful phrases; fluent, phrased reading with a few word-by-word slow downs for problem-solving; expressive interpretation is evident at places throughout the reading; attention to punctuation and syntax; rereading for problem-solving may be present but reading is generally fluent.

3 **Mixed word-by-word and phrased reading**

A **mixture** of word-by-word reading and fluent, phrased reading (expressive interpretation); there is evidence of attention to punctuation and syntax; reading for problem-solving may be present.

2 **Mostly word-by-word reading**

Mostly word-by-word reading but with some two-word phrasing and even a couple of three- or four-word phrases (expressive interpretation); evidence of awareness of syntax and punctuation, although not consistently so; rereading for problem-solving may be present.

1 **All word-by-word reading**

Very little fluency; **all** word-by-word reading with some long pauses between words; almost no recognition of syntax or phrasing (expressive interpretation); very little evidence of awareness of punctuation; perhaps a couple of two-word phrases but generally disfluent; some word groupings awkward.

Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G. S. (1996). *Guided Reading: Good First Grade Reading for All Children.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Student _____ Age _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Running Record Worksheet

Page	Title:	Level:	E	SC	MSV	SC MSV

Information used