

Guidelines for Administering Guided Reading Level Assessments

Clark County Schools



Clark County Public Schools
"More Than Just a Grade"

Which Materials Do I Use for Running Records?

There are a variety of resources to use to determine a student's instructional reading level for small group instruction (e.g., DRA, Reading A-Z, Benchmark Assessment). A suggestion is to use Fountas and Pinnell "Benchmark Assessment" for students in Rtl (provides more detailed information) and Reading A-Z passages (less time to administer) for classroom progress monitoring. These resources use running records as a way to "capture" a student's reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension and determine where a reader begins to struggle (instructional reading level). Each school should have a master of Reading A-Z passages.

How Do I Determine a Student's Instructional Reading Level?

Begin by checking each student's cumulative folder for the yellow Literacy Profile Card. For K-4 students, there should a copy of the spring's guided reading level (GRL) assessment attached to the card, as well as the level written on the back. This should be the student's instructional reading level. A suggestion is to begin working with text one level below this level as a review at the beginning of the year and then move to the instructional level. If there is concern about the previous spring assessment, a new GRL assessment can be administered.

For students who are new to the school or are missing the GRL assessment, choose a level to begin administering a running record (fall-literary passage, end of year-informational). Based on other data sources (i.e., MAP, sight word knowledge, fluency measures), determine if a student is performing below, on or above the expected level. If a student is performing below level (very far, far or slightly below), choose a passage/book that is related to these data sources (other grade level reading benchmarks). For example if a 2nd grade student's knowledge of sight words and MAP scores are typical of a beginning 1st grader try the GRL passage at that time of year (i.e., C level). If the additional data sources indicate that the student is at or above level, use the GRL continuum on the grade level benchmarks to determine where to begin assessing.

For each running record, if the assessment material does not provide specific directions, follow the steps below to analyze a student's reading performance based on three characteristics of reading in order to determine highest instructional level:

1. **Reading Accuracy- annotate the text as the student is reading to note words read correctly and errors (see attached Coding and Scoring Errors at-a Glance)**

95-100% Independent Level

90-94% Instructional Level

Less than 90% Frustrational Level

2. **Fluency**- Student's ability to read accurately (% of words read correctly), at an appropriate **rate** (correct words per minute), and with **prosody** (expression).

Record on each passage, information about the student's fluency while reading.

For example:

- Fluency Rubric (attached)
*Choose words from rubric, based on observation of the student, to record on the passage along with the overall fluency level.

3. **Comprehension**- Beginning with guided reading level C, assess student's comprehension of text read.

Excellent- 90-100% answers correct

Good- 80-89% answers correct

Fair- 50%-79% answers correct

Poor- <50% answers correct

After a child reads a leveled passage, score each of the three characteristics of reading described above and compare with the chart below to determine the level of the text for the student. Comprehension is weighted the most of all three factors. If the text is at the independent level, continue to assess the student until you reach his/her frustrational level. The level below the frustrational level becomes his/her instructional level. For example, assessments for a student on levels I, J, K are independent, L and M are instructional and N is frustrational, then level M is the student's highest instructional level. Occasionally a student may score independent for a level and then drop to frustrational on the next level. In this case, the frustrational level is where a teacher would begin instruction (instructional level).

Independent Reading Level-

1. 95% or higher word accuracy
2. Fluency-characteristics found in level 4 of the fluency scale
3. Excellent or good comprehension of text.

Instructional Reading Level-

1. 90-94% word accuracy
2. Fluency-characteristics found in levels 2 or 3 of the fluency scale
3. Fair or good comprehension

Frustrational Reading Level

1. <90% word accuracy
2. Fluency- characteristics found in levels 1 or 2 of the fluency scale
3. Poor or fair comprehension

Scoring And Analyzing A Running Record

The information gathered while conducting a running record is used to determine error, accuracy, and self-correction rates. Directions for calculating these rates are given below. The calculated rates, along with qualitative information and the student's comprehension of the text, are used to determine the student's reading level.

Qualitative Analysis:

The qualitative analysis is based on observations made during the running record. It involves observing how a student uses the meaning (M), structural (S), and visual (V) cues to help her/him read. It also involves paying attention to fluency, intonation, and phrasing. Think back to the prompts offered and how the student responded. These observations help form a picture of the student's reading development.

***Optional Error Analysis**

Meaning (M)--Meaning is part of the cueing system in which the child takes her or his cue to make sense of text by thinking about the story background, information from pictures, or the meaning of a sentence. These cues assist in the reading of a word or phrase.

Structure (S)--Structure refers to the structure of language and is often referred to as syntax. Implicit knowledge of structure helps the reader know if what she or he reads sounds correct.

Visual (V)--Visual information is related to the look of the letters in a word and the word itself. A reader uses visual information when she or he studies the beginning sound, word length, familiar word chunks, and so forth.

Accuracy Rate

Accuracy rate is expressed as a percentage. You can calculate the accuracy rate using the following formula: $(\text{Total words read} - \text{Total errors}) / \text{Total words read} \times 100 = \text{Accuracy rate}$

Example:

$$(99 - 8) / 99 \times 100 = \text{Accuracy rate}$$

$$91/99 \times 100 = \text{Accuracy rate}$$

$$.919 \times 100 = 91.9\%, \text{ or } 92\% \text{ rounded to the nearest whole number}$$

***Optional Rates**

Error Rate

Error rate is expressed as a ratio and is calculated by using the following formula:

$$\text{Total words} / \text{Total errors} = \text{Error rate}$$

$$\text{Example: } 99 / 8 = 12.38, \text{ or } 12 \text{ rounded to nearest whole number}$$

The ratio is expressed as 1:12. This means that for each error made, the student read approximately 12 words correctly.

Self-Correction Rate

Self-correction rate is expressed as a ratio and is calculated by using the following formula:

$$(\text{Number of errors} + \text{Number of self corrections}) / \text{Number of self corrections} = \text{Self-correction rate}$$

Example:

$(8 + 3) / 3 =$ Self-correction rate

$11 / 3 = 3.666$, or 4 rounded to the nearest whole number

The self-correction rate is expressed as 1:4. This means that the student corrects approximately 1 out of every 4 errors. If a student is self-correcting at a rate of 1:4 or less, this indicates that she/he is self-monitoring her/his reading.

How Often Do I Progress Monitor A Student's Reading Level?

Progress monitoring of a student's reading level will vary depending on a few factors. Here is one example of a schedule.

Developmental Level	Reading Level	Schedule
Early Emergent readers	Levels aa-C	every 2 to 4 weeks
Emergent readers	Levels D-J	every 4 to 6 weeks
Early fluent readers	Levels K-P	every 6 to 8 weeks
Fluent readers	Levels Q-Z	every 8 to 10 weeks

***Students who are reading below the expected benchmark reading level should be assessed at least every 2-4 weeks.**

Progress monitoring of student's reading can be formal (i.e., Reading A-Z, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, DRA) or informal (Interactive Reading Notebook, running record notes-example on ELA Wiki).

Students Reading A Grade Level Above the Benchmark

For students who are reading a grade level above the GRL benchmark, progress monitoring will not occur as often. Teachers can monitor each student's reading comprehension of leveled text through the use of comprehension questions, graphic organizers and/or reading responses, which may be collected in a reading journal or notebook. Checks for reading fluency, including accuracy, can be done informally through running record notes (see ELA Wiki). This comprehension and fluency information can be used to guide the teacher's decision to move to the next level of text. In addition, the Reading A-Z passages could be used as a formal measure of assessment. It is suggested that students only be tested up to the end of the next grade level. This enables the teacher to engage students in reading a wide variety of genres at each guided reading level and application of the reading standards.

Students Reading At the Grade Level Benchmark

For students who are reading at the grade level benchmark, progress monitoring will occur as data is collected to determine when each student is ready to move to the next level. This data can include a student's comprehension responses to the leveled text and informal notes about a student's reading accuracy, rate and expression when reading orally (informal running

records). An analysis of this data should be used to inform the teacher's small group instruction to assist students in practicing specific reading skills (e.g., sight words, phrasing).

Reading A-Z Running Records can be used to verify each student's movement through the levels of text. For example, if a student is reading M level text and data indicates that the student can now comprehend and accurately read that level of text, then administer the M level Reading A-Z passage (a different passage than previously administered). If the student's scores now fall in the independent range, then the student is ready to move to the next level of text. At times, a student may need to be administered more than one level of a running record if the data supports that he/she is making strong progress as a reader.

Students Reading Below the Grade Level Benchmark

For students reading below the benchmark, progress monitoring will occur more often (at least once a month). Data should be collected by the teacher in terms of each student's comprehension (Reading Journal) and reading of leveled text (informal running record). An analysis of this data should be used to inform the teacher's small group instruction to assist students in practicing specific reading skills (e.g., sight words, phrasing).

Reading A-Z Running Records can be used to verify each student's movement through the levels of text. For example, if a student is reading I level text and data indicates that the student can now comprehend and accurately read that level of text, then administer the I level Reading A-Z passage (a different passage than previously administered). If the student's scores now fall in the independent range, then the student is ready to move to the next level of text. At times, a student may need to be administered more than one level of a running record if the data supports that he/she is making strong progress as a reader.

For students who are receiving RtI services for reading, the classroom teacher and the interventionist will both be collecting data in terms of each student's guided reading level using different assessment tools (which will be shared during RtI meetings).

End of School Year GRL Assessments

All students should be administered one final guided reading assessment at the end of the school year (coordinate with RtI interventionist). Based on each student's current instructional reading level, the student should be given the informational reading passage to determine if this level is still the instructional level. If the student scores at the independent range, then the teacher should continue assessing until an instructional level is reached. For students reading above grade level, only continue assessing until the end of the next grade level and mark as independent. This information should be recorded on the yellow Literacy Profile card and the guided reading assessment attached.

NAME _____

FLUENCY RUBRIC

	1	2	3	4
Expression and Volume	Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.	Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.	Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation.	Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.
Smoothness	Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.	Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many "rough spots."	Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.	Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/or sentence structures.
Pace	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads fast and slow throughout reading.	Reads at a conversational pace throughout the reading.

Scores of 10 or more indicate that the student is making good progress in fluency.

Score _____

Scores below 10 indicate that the student needs additional instruction in fluency.

Rubric modified from Tim Raschke - [Creating Fluent Readers](#)