Guidelines for Taking the Assessment Record

Retelling  Reading Records  Questions

1. **Identify an appropriate starting level** for the student. Use previous records or your best judgment to identify a starting level.

2. **Sit at a table or desk**, in a quiet area where you will not be disturbed. The student should sit or stand beside you with the book.

3. **Record the student’s name, age, and the date** on the reading record sheet. Help the student to feel comfortable. Explain what you are going to do and why.

4. **Introduce the selected text** by reading the title and discussing the cover. The content of the story must not be expanded upon during this introduction. You can say:

   *This story is about ____ and the names of the people in it are ____ ____ and ____.*

   Or you can read the introduction sentence provided above the text copy on the reading record.

For students reading from levels 1–8 say:

*I'd like you to look at the pictures and read the words as much as you can to yourself. Then tell me about the story.*
For students reading from levels 9–30 say:

I'd like you to read the story to yourself, then tell me about it.

If the student asks for assistance while reading the text, say:

First read the story to yourself, then you can tell me about it.

5. When the student has completed reading the text, say:

Tell me what happened in the story (or text).

Turn the reading record sheet over and analyze the student's retelling.

If the student shows an in-depth understanding of the text, do not take a reading record. Instead, repeat the above procedures with the text at the next level.

If the student is unable to retell the story, even with some teacher prompts, repeat the above procedures with the text at the level below.

6. If the above evidence indicates that this is the correct reading level for the student, proceed with the read aloud. Turn the Reading Record sheet back to the copy of the text and say:

Now, I would like you to read the story (or text) to me.

Record what the student says and does on the Reading Record sheet. (Refer to the completed example on page 18.)

7. Ask the student the questions on the Assessment Record. Record each response. Identify the depth of meaning that the student has gained from reading the text.

8. Use the reading level tables to calculate the student's accuracy level and self-correction rate. If the accuracy level is between 90%–95%, and the student has replied to the questions with appropriate understanding, the student's instructional reading level has been identified.

9. If the student reads with greater than 95% accuracy and replies correctly to all of the questions, repeat the above procedures with the text at the next level. If the student reads with less than 90% accuracy, repeat the above procedures with the text at the level below.

10. Repeat steps 5–9 until the student's reading level is identified. Then analyze the student's reading behaviors (refer to pages 13–15) and write the summary on the Assessment Record. Teaching objectives can be set from this information.
The Rigby PM Benchmark Kit Assessment Procedures

There are three key elements of the assessment procedure:

- Retelling
- Reading Records
- Questions

Retelling

Students reading from Benchmarks 1–8 are encouraged to retell the events after studying the illustrations and reading silently to the best of their ability. Students reading from Benchmarks 9–30 are asked to first read the text silently for the purpose of retelling it.

By having students retell what they have just read silently or interpreted from the illustrations, an assessment can be made of how well they have understood the text. The retelling should occur before the student reads the text aloud. The teacher’s role is to identify the students’ levels of understanding as they:

- demonstrate meaning
- recall the main ideas
- structure and organize the retelling
- retell with appropriate vocabulary and intonation

During this task, the teacher remains a neutral observer while recording an analysis of the retelling on the assessment record. Only minimal prompting from the teacher should occur that would lead to further engagement by the student, e.g., Did anything else happen?

Reading records

"Taking running records of children's reading behavior requires time and practice, but the results are well worth the effort. Once learned, the running record is a quick, practical, and highly informative tool. It becomes an integral part of teaching, not only for documenting children's reading behaviors for later analysis and reflection but sharpening the teacher's observational power and understanding of the reading process."

Guided Reading, Irene C. Fountas and Guy Su Pinnell, Heinemann, 1996.

For a detailed description of taking, scoring, and analyzing reading records, see An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement, Marie Clay, Heinemann, 1993.

Taking a reading record

- The student sits or stands beside the teacher.
- The text must be seen clearly by the student and the teacher.
- The teacher does not prompt and remains objective throughout the reading.
- It is suggested that up to 100 running words will provide adequate information for levels 1–10, 150 running words for levels 11-20, and up to 200 running words for levels 21–30.
- Recording should be done on a standardized record sheet. The Rigby PM Benchmark Kit provides an exact pro forma for every text.
Useful conventions for taking Reading Records

• Mark every word read correctly by the student with a check mark.

Mom said,  
"Go to bed, Sam."

• Record all attempts and errors by showing the student’s responses above the text.

Child:  is  |  see  
Text:  said  

• If the student self-correction an error, record it as a self-correction, not an error.

Child:  is  |  SC  
Text:  said  

• If a word is left out or there is no response, record it as a dash and call it an error.

Child:  —  
Text:  went  

• If a word is inserted, record it and call it an error.

Child:  
Text:  Go to bed, Sam  

• If the student is told a word by the teacher, record it with a T and call it an error.

Child:  is  
Text:  said  |  T  

• If the student appeals for a word, say “You try it.” If unable to continue, record A for appeal, tell the student the word and call it an error.

Child:  is  |  see  |  A  
Text:  said  |  T  

• Repetition is not counted as an error, but is shown by an R above the word that is repeated, as well as the number of repetitions, if more than one.

R  
✓  or  ✓  

• Record R for repeats plus an arrow if the student goes back over several words or even back to the beginning of the page.

Go to bed, Sam  

• If the student appears confused, help by saying “Try that again.” This is counted as one error only before that piece of text is reread.

Child:  Get the dog  
Text:  Go to bed, Sam  |  TTA
Identifying a student's reading level

The information on a Reading Record identifies the cues and strategies that a student uses while processing print. Reading levels can be identified when accuracy and self-correction rates are calculated. When a student successfully searches for extra information to correct an incorrect response, this is recorded as a self-correction.

- Put a 1 in the first two columns of the Reading Record sheet beside every error and self-correction. Count the number of errors and self-corrections and record these at the bottom of the first two columns.
- The accuracy rate is calculated by dividing the number of words read by the number of errors. Use the table below to transfer the error rate to a percentage accuracy score.

Reading level table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error rate</th>
<th>Percentage accuracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 : 100</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 50</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 35</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 25</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 20</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 17</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 14</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 12.5</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 11.75</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 10</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 9</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 8</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 7</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 6</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 : 5</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The self-correction rate is calculated by adding both errors and the number of self-corrections together and then dividing by the number of self-corrections, e.g., errors 6, self-corrections 3

\[
\frac{6 + 3}{3} = \frac{9}{3} = \text{a S.C. rate of } 1 : 3
\]

- In the next two columns, write MSV beside every error and self-correction. The letters are an abbreviation for the cues that students use:
  
  M for meaning
  
  S for the structure of the sentence
  
  V for sources of visual information
• Analyze each error. Circle the cueing system(s) the student used while reading:
  M  if the student was trying to use meaning         \(\text{MSV}\)
  S  if the student was trying to use language structure \(\text{MSV}\)
  V  if the student was trying to use visual cues      \(\text{MSV}\)

• To analyze a student's self-correction behaviors, first circle in the Errors column, the
cueing systems that the student used when he or she made the incorrect response.
Then circle the cues the student used to change the incorrect response to a correct
one in the Self-correction column.

• Count the number of times each type of cue was used, and record the total at the
bottom of the last two columns. This information will give insight into the
dominant cues being used by the student.

Analyzed information from the Reading Record is summarized and
recommendations for teaching objectives are set. Objectives will relate to the
student's reading behaviors, e.g.:

• Are concepts about print firmly established?
• Does the student search for meaning?
• Does the student confirm structure so that the reading makes sense?
• Does the student use letters and letter-sound relationships to confirm visual
  information?
• Is there evidence of self-monitoring?
• Is the student self-correcting?
• Is there evidence of fluency and phrasing in the student's oral reading?

Questions
By responding to questions, students will demonstrate the depth of meaning that they
have gained from reading the text. Besides recalling and exploring details from the text,
students are invited to bring their own background knowledge and experiences to the
foreground as they respond to the questions.

• The students are asked the prepared questions after they have completed the reading
  record.
• There are 3 questions for levels 1–10, 4 questions for levels 11–20, and 5 questions
  for levels 21–30.
• The questions will include:
  Literal comprehension questions which require students to recall or locate the
  information in the text.
  Inferential comprehension questions which challenge students to link meaning with
  other sources of information either in or beyond the text.
  Some questions in levels 24–30 will challenge students to explain generalizations or
  points of view.