Levels A-K
Running Records Assessments
Teacher Resources and Guidebook

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
Teacher Resources and Guidebook for Levels A-K Reading Level Assessments

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Scoring Guide for Reading Assessments

What factors determine the child's independent reading level?
Three factors should be checked when assessing a reader (Allington, 2001):
1. Accuracy and self-corrections
2. Fluency and Expression*
3. Comprehension

*Note that before Level K, fluency is not a factor in determining independent reading level, though it is something to listen for and instruct into.

How accurate does the child's oral reading need to be?
96%-100% -- Independent Reading Level*
90%-95%   -- Instructional Level (Books for small group work)
Below 90% --Hard

*Note: For Levels A and B, accuracy is not part of the calculation for independent reading level. Instead, reading behaviors appropriate for those levels are considered.

How do I calculate the child's accuracy rate on a passage?
The child's accuracy rate reflects the percentage of words the child read correctly. This can be calculated using the following formula:

(Number of words – miscues) ÷ number of words = percentage of accuracy
Number of words minus errors divided by number of words equals percentage of accuracy

Example: 120 words – 8 miscues = 112 words correct
              112 words correct ÷ 120 words = 93%

To make scoring easier, we have marked off the first 100 words of each passage to make finding a percentage as easy as counting the miscues. You will just need to count the miscues in the first 100 words of the passage and circle the accuracy rate. If you choose to hear the student read on, you will need to calculate the percentage using the formula above. Do not count the miscues that the child self-corrected.

What is the self-correction ratio?
Self-corrections tell us if a child is monitoring errors and re-sampling text to self-correct errors. (Cunningham, 2004) This is one indication of comprehension and monitoring "book language." While we have included a box to record the errors and self-corrections, there is not a designated box for recording the self-correction ratio. To calculate the self-correction ratio, use the directions below.

A good self-correction rate is: 1:1, 1:2, 1:3, 1:4, 1:5. The ratio 1:3 is read as follows:
"The reader corrected one error in every three errors."

Scoring Guide for Reading Assessments (continued)

How do I calculate the child's self correction ratio?
The child's self correction ratio is simply the ratio of total miscues to self-corrected miscues. This can be calculated using the following formula:

Errors + Self-corrections ÷ Self-corrections = Self-Correction Ratio
(Errors plus self-corrections divided by self-corrections equals Self correction Ratio)

Example: 9 errors + 8 self-corrections ÷ 8 self-corrections = 1:2 Self-Correction Ratio
                The ratio is read as follows: "The reader corrected one error in every two errors."

How do I assess the child's fluency and expression?
We have included suggestions for observations and notes regarding fluency alongside the running record. At Levels J and above, we have also included an Oral Reading Fluency Scale, based on the NAEP 2002 Oral Reading Study and Zutell and Rasinski's 1991 publication of a Multidimensional Fluency Scale. The factors incorporated into this rubric include: automaticity (pacing), parsing (reading in chunks), and prosody (reading with inflection). Students must be able to read the text fluently, without long pauses or breaks between words (Rasinski, 2003) See section below on fluency for more detailed information. Note that until Level K, fluency is not required to indicate independence.

How do I assess whether the child could comprehend the passage?
In order to judge comprehension, students are asked to retell the text and then answer several comprehension questions. Students need to give a strong retelling or answer three of the four comprehension questions correctly in order to read independently at that level. *Students may use the text to help them retell and teachers should take note if the student needs this.* If the student's retelling does not answer the comprehension questions, the teacher asks the comprehension questions that were not answered until the student answers at least three of them correctly. Guidelines to assess retelling and examples of acceptable responses are provided on the teacher copies of the assessment forms.

In this assessment we have included four questions for each passage. At levels A-K, there are two literal and two inferential questions. In all cases, the child must answer at least one inferential question, as readers must be able to make inferences in order to understand their texts.

How do I arrive at the final level?
If a student can do the following they can read a text level independently:
- Read a text with 96% accuracy as determined by the running record
- Read with fluency behaviors required at that level as determined by a score of 3 or 4 on the Oral Fluency Scale* (Only considered at levels K and above)
- Read with comprehension as determined by a successful retell and/or acceptable responses to 3 of 4 comprehension questions

Scoring Guide for Reading Assessments (continued)

Assess the child for their highest independent level. Don't stop at the first level at which the child is able to read independently.

Suppose a student reads a level E text independently, meeting all of the criteria above. Try the level F text and if the accuracy rate is 96%, continue and assess the comprehension and the fluency. If the child's comprehension and fluency is in place, move on to the G. If you try the Level G text and the accuracy rate is 95% or lower, or if the comprehension is not sufficient, they will not read independently at level G. In the end, teachers want to find the highest level that a student can read independently. That is, the reader has an accuracy rate of 96% or higher, comprehension (either a strong retelling or at least three correct comprehension questions), and fluency.

How to Administer Levels A-K Text Assessment

1. ESTIMATE THE CHILD'S READING LEVEL
Estimate the child's independent reading level before beginning the text assessment, so that you do not need to start from the beginning.

Some ways to estimate (you do not need to do all of these):
- Use last year's running records or assessment data and start from there.
- Administer the Spelling Inventory. Use the spelling stage to begin the text assessment at the corresponding reading levels.
- Ask the child to find a book in the classroom library that they feel is "just right" and ask them to read a short passage to you. Count the number of miscues. If it is over five words on a page, the level is most likely too difficult.

2. PREVIEW THE BOOK
What to look for: The Teacher Copy is designed to make recording the child's reading, counting the number of words read, and taking notes easier to do. It is not meant for the child to read from. A number of factors on the Teacher Copy make the text more difficult for the child to read from, and would not give an accurate assessment of the child's reading. The child must read from the actual book as the illustrations are part of the meaning.

The text on the Teacher Copy is marked with a word count and/or the first 100 words for the teacher's convenience. There is also an area to the left for you check off observations and to make notes regarding the child's fluency, expression and any thing else you might notice as the child reads. These sidebars are specific to each level and are cumulative.

Preview the book and comprehension questions on the Teacher Copy before you ask the child to read from the book. There are samples of responses for each comprehension question embedded into the form. You should preview these as well, to be sure you are familiar with a few acceptable responses to each question. Note that these are not exhaustive lists of acceptable responses – they are just meant to give examples, but many more responses would also be acceptable.

Why are there two text sets? How can I use the two text sets?*
- You should start with the texts from Set 1.
- If the child has read the text from Set 1 before, you should use the text from Set 2.
- You should start with the child's current independent level, meaning the child may have used Set 1 the last time they were assessed.
- Remember, it is possible that last year's teacher may have used the text from Set 1 to find the child's level the previous year. It is also possible that the text was read aloud to the student or read at home.
- If you are interrupted in the midst of conducting the assessment, you may use the text from Set 2 to start fresh.
- If you find reason to doubt the results of your assessment from the text in Set 1, you may use the text in Set 2 as back up.
- Only use the text from Set 2 if necessary, so that the next time the child is assessed, there will still be a text at the child's independent level that the child has not seen before.

*Note – for the purpose of MoSL administrations in New York City in 2014-2015, only one set of texts, designated "Set 1/MoSL-eligible Texts" is eligible for use as beginning or end-of-year MoSL administration. Set 2 will be available by October 2014 for use in non-MoSL administrations.

3. INTRODUCE THE TEXT
Read the book introduction exactly as it is written in the Teacher Copy of the assessment. Be sure that the student hears and comprehends the entire book introduction. You may read it more than once if necessary, but do not adapt the words.

Example of a book introduction from Level D, Set 1:

Book Introduction: *Show the cover of the book to the student and say this to the reader before he or she begins reading:*

"***The Dog Walker*** is about a girl named Jill who is a dog walker. One day she went to get three dogs named Bing, Blake and Spot (*have student repeat the dogs' names*). She picks them up to take them for a walk to the park. Something funny happens. Read to find out what happens when Jill takes the dogs for a walk."

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4. RECORD THE CHILD'S MISCUES
Be sure to record a check-mark above each word the child reads correctly.

If the child reads or says something other than what is on the page, it is important to record it just above the word that appears in the text. This is called a miscue. Included in this packet are a set of codes to use for different kinds of miscues (substitutions, repetitions, etc.) As the child reads from the book, the teacher marks any miscues by coding every miscue above the text in the Teacher Copy. You can make additional notes during and after the child's reading along the side.

5. RETELL

When the child is finished reading the book, the teacher reads the directions from the Retell section of the assessment. The child retells the book.

Some tips for the Retell section:

- The child may look at the text as a reference while retelling if needed. However, the child should not retell verbatim from the text. If this happens, prompt the child to put it in his/her own words.
- As the child talks about the text, record the child's response carefully. Listen for any parts of the response that answer the Comprehension Questions Section of the assessment. Check off the questions that the child answered through retelling/summary and count them as correct in the final score. **You do not need to ask the child any of the Comprehension Questions that he/she already answered while retelling.**
- If the child gives a very brief retelling, you may use prompts such as, "Anything else?" or, "Say more about that," or even, "Tell me all the big things that happened." Make a note of any prompts you give.
- Note whether the child's retelling expressed the main things that happened and gist of the text.
- You are listening for a mostly accurate and logical retelling of the major events in the story. The retell does not have to be well crafted or insightful, but if the retell is mostly inaccurate, or indicates a total lack of cohesion even with prompting (see above), move to a lower level of text as this indicates the student lacks comprehension at this level.

6. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Only if the child's retelling did not already include the answers to the questions, does the teacher ask the child to answer the questions in the Comprehension Questions Section. However, it is likely that you will need to ask the inferential questions, as the retell prompt is mostly to determine literal comprehension.

If the child's retelling or summary included the answers to one or more of the Comprehension Questions, mark the question as answered correctly.

The reader must answer at least three of these questions correctly to determine if this is the child's independent reading level. Try an easier text if the child could not answer at least three of these questions correctly **(including the information from the child's retelling).**

Example of the Comprehension Questions Section:

Comprehension Questions: *If the student's retell did not include answers to the following questions, please ask any/all of the questions that were not addressed. There are many acceptable responses to each question, some of which are listed below. The reader's response is acceptable as long as it demonstrates an accurate understanding of the text. As the reader answers each question, be sure to record the response carefully.*

Question	Sample Acceptable Responses
1. *Literal:* Why did Jill go to the park?	*"To take the dogs for a walk?"* *"Because she is a dog walker."* *"The dogs wanted to play."*
2. *Literal:* What did the dogs do when Jill took them for a walk?	*"They ran."* *"They went fast."* *"They got excited."*
3. *Inferential:* Why did the dogs run?	*"Because they were excited."* *"Because they were happy to go to the park."* *"Because they liked their friends."*
4. *Inferential:* On the last page it says, "Jill had fun, too!" Why did Jill have fun?	*"Watching the dogs play and swim."* *"Being outside with the dogs on such a nice day."* *"Being with all the other kids and dogs in the park."*

7. FINAL "SCORE"

Answer the questions at the end of the assessment. **The text is at the child's independent level only if the answer is yes to all "Final Score" questions.** Take into consideration that the text is only one short example of the kind of text the child will encounter at this level. The teacher may decide to use another text for additional assessment (if not using for the purposes of a beginning or end-of-year NYC MoSL administration). If you find it necessary to do multiple running records with the child, you may consider meeting with the child more than once, even several times, rather than conducting them all in one sitting.

It is important to note that you should find the child's highest independent level. Continue trying more difficult texts until you have found the highest level the child can read independently.

Example of Final Score Questions (Levels A-B):

Final Score

Evaluate the reader's use of Level B reading behaviors by referring to the side panels and the statements below.

Yes	No	The reader matches spoken words to printed words.
Yes	No	The reader moves from left to right when reading.
Yes	No	The reader uses the illustrations as a source of information.
Yes	No	Did the reader demonstrate literal and inferential comprehension through one of the following combinations of retell and responses:

- A clear, accurate retell that incorporates answers to three out of four comprehension questions. (This may be with or without non-leading prompting. See directions for retell for more about non-leading prompting).
- A mostly accurate retell PLUS acceptable responses to three out of four of the comprehension questions (or addressed in the retell). The retell need not be well-crafted or completely comprehensive, but if it indicates mostly inaccurate comprehension, try the next level down.

Is this the student's independent reading level?
- If you did <u>NOT</u> answer "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, try an easier text. Keep moving to easier texts until you find the level at which you are able to answer "yes" to all questions in the **Final Score** box.
- If you answered "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, the student is reading independently at this level. However, it is possible that the student may also read independently at a higher level. Keep moving to higher passages until you can no longer answer "yes" to all questions. The highest level for which you can answer "yes" for all questions is the student's independent reading level.

Example of Final Score Questions (Levels C-J):

Final Score

Yes	No	Was the reader's accuracy rate at least 96%?
Yes	No	Did the reader demonstrate literal and inferential comprehension through one of the following combinations of retell and responses:

- A clear, accurate retell that incorporates answers to three out of four comprehension questions. (This may be with or without non-leading prompting. See directions for retell for more about non-leading prompting).
- A mostly accurate retell PLUS acceptable responses to three out of four of the comprehension questions (or addressed in the retell). The retell need not be well-crafted or completely comprehensive, but if it indicates mostly inaccurate comprehension, try the next level down.

Is this the student's independent reading level?
- If you did <u>NOT</u> answer "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, try an easier text. Keep moving to easier texts until you find the level at which you are able to answer "yes" to all questions in the **Final Score** box.
- If you answered "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, the student is reading independently at this level. However, it is possible that the student may also read independently at a higher level. Keep moving to higher passages until you can no longer answer "yes" to all questions. The highest level for which you can answer "yes" for all questions is the student's independent reading level.

Example of Final Score Questions (Levels K-Z+):

Final Score

Yes	No	Was the reader's accuracy rate at least 96%?
Yes	No	Did the student read with fluency? (a score of 3 or 4 on the Oral Reading Fluency Scale)*
Yes	No	Did the reader demonstrate literal and inferential comprehension through one of the following combinations of retell and responses:

- A clear, accurate retell that incorporates answers to three out of four comprehension questions. (This may be with or without non-leading prompting. See directions for retell for more about non-leading prompting).
- A mostly accurate retell PLUS acceptable responses to three out of four of the comprehension questions (answered or included in the retell). The retell need not be well-crafted or completely comprehensive, but if it indicates mostly inaccurate comprehension, try the next level down.

Is this the student's independent reading level?

- If you did NOT answer "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, try an easier text. Keep moving to easier texts until you find the level at which you are able to answer "yes" to all questions in the **Final Score** box.
- If you answered "yes" to all questions in this Final Score box, the student is reading independently at this level. However, it is possible that the student may also read independently at a higher level. Keep moving to higher passages until you can no longer answer "yes" to all questions. The highest level for which you can answer "yes" for all questions is the student's independent reading level.

*Note: Oral Reading Fluency is not taken into account until Level K for determining reading level, though it should of course be considered and taught at earlier levels.

What Is A Running Record?

Johnston (2000) states that running records of oral reading are basically a vehicle for error analysis. He says the teacher must engage in the imaginative challenge of figuring out the logic of error. For teachers, the most useful aspect of errors is that people do not make them randomly. There is always a reason for them. If you can figure out the reason, then you know where best to use your instructional expertise and how to avoid confusing the student (p. 1).

Many teachers of reading record the child's oral reading using a consistent set of conventions.

Johnston, P. (2000). Running Records: A Self-Tutoring Guide. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

Set of Conventions for Coding Reading Errors	
Behavior	**Convention shown with error**
Substitution	**walked** Today I went to my new school. Scored as an error.
More than one Substitution	**was ⎮ weren't ⎮ want** Today I went to my new school. Scored as ONE error.
Self-correction	**walked⎮SC** Today I went to my new school. Scored as a self-correction.
Repetition	Today I went to my⤴new school. ⎮R NOT scored as an error, but should be noted.
Repetition with self-correction	✓**walked** **SC** Today I went to my new school. Scored as a self-correction.
Omission	**-** Today I went to my new school. Scored as an error.
Insertion	**see** Today I went to ^ my new school. Scored as an error.
Sounding out	**w-e-n-t ⎮ √** Today I went to my new school.	NOT scored as an error, **if** the word is read accurately after sounding out.
Spelling word	**W-E-N-T ⎮ √** Today I went to my new school.	NOT scored as an error, **if** the word is read accurately after spelling the word.
Appeal for word.	**A** Today I went to my new school.	NOT scored as an error, **if** the word is read accurately after the appeal without the student being told.
Told	**w- ⎮ A ⎮ wi- ⎮ T** Today I went to my new school. Scored as an error. ***If a child appeals say, "You try it" before telling them the word.**
Long Pause	**#** Today I went to my new school. NOT scored as an error.

*When the same word is read incorrectly multiple times, each incorrect reading counts as an error, unless the word is a proper noun read in the exact same way.
 Example:
         want   **want**   Scored as two errors
      Today I went to my new school. I went to see my new class.	

Searching for and Using the Sources of Information in Text

Clay (1991, 1993) and Goodman (1970) made us aware that children are provided with multiple sources of information when they read text. Effective reading instruction balances the teaching of letter-sound correspondences and patterns with the teaching of how good readers engage in the reading process. As children encounter new books each day, they need to practice using all available sources of information in an integrated, reciprocal manner: the meaning (semantic), language structure (syntactic), and visual (graphophonic) cue systems. If a child neglects to use or over uses one source of information, the teacher needs to address the integration of the neglected cue system(s) during guided reading instruction. Each of the sources of information, or cueing system, is discussed further below.

<u>What are Meaning Cues?</u>

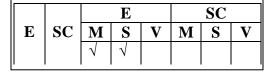Meaning cues can come from a variety of sources in the text:
• the illustration,
• the story--plot, characterization, theme, setting, flow of story, the mood in that part of the story, etc.
• the reader's background experience dealing with the subject of the text. The latter source of information is not located in text, but the reader combines background information with that given in the text to make meaning.

Therefore, book introductions must focus on aspects of the story that may not be in the reader's background of experience.

If children are using meaning, their substitution is clarified by the meaning cues available in the story and/or those which are part of their background of experience.

(The following example comes from the Bebop book, *What Do You See at the Pond?,* page 3.)

Text:　　　I　　　see　　　a　　　plant.

　　　　　　　√　　　√　　　√　　　<u>flower</u>
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　plant

E	SC	E			SC		
		M	S	V	M	S	V
		√	√				

Analysis:
• In the picture, a boy is looking into the water at a lily pad that is blooming.
• But, the substitution of flower is not visually similar to plant. They have no letters/sound relationships in common.
• It is an acceptable English language structure substitution to say "flower" for "plant." Therefore, this substitution also includes attention to structure cues. The use of meaning and structure cues in making substitutions often overlap. It is uncommon to find a miscue that is structural alone.

The teacher would place a check mark in the M and S, leaving the V column blank.

What are structure (syntactic) cues?

(Oral language vs. book language)

Structure cues are determined by the word order or "syntax" of the words in a sentence. From about the age of five, all children have an understanding of the syntax of their native language. Therefore, the child using structure cues would ask, "Does it make sense to say it that way? or "Would it sound right to say it that way?"

One must remember, however, that the language structures used in text often differ from the language children hear at home or when talking to their friends. This is why it is important to rehearse unusual book language structures in text with children during a book introduction.

We should also change our prompts from "Does it sound right?" to "Does it sound that way in a book?" Many students think it sounds just fine to say, "Yesterday, I go outside." But, in a book past tense would be used, "Yesterday, I went outside." We must accept the student's cultural, home language and teach a different register—book language.

Children should evaluate their predictions of the text in the story *up to and including the substitution or predicted word in question.* (Notice to determine if a student is using the structure source of information, the miscue is analyzed up to the error. It is not evaluated in the context of the entire sentence. We ask ourselves: "Could the student make an acceptable language production by adding words after the miscue?" OR "Does his/her word allow an acceptable language construction to be created?") If a predicted word does not make sense in the order of the printed words in the sentence up to that point, the student should monitor the discrepancy, and go back to make a self correction.

(The following example comes from the Bebop book, *Mom Is a Painter,* page 4.)

Text:　　　She　paints　　a　　yellow　sun.

Reader　　　√　__makes__　√　　√　　√
Response:　　　　　paints

		E			SC		
E	**SC**	**M**	**S**	**V**	**M**	**S**	**V**
		√	√				

Analysis:
- "She makes…" This substitution is a good English language construction. Since analysis takes place <u>up to</u> and <u>including the error</u>, it does sound right to say, "She makes…" I could add on words to show that the substitution fits in the context/syntax of the sentence, "She makes a sun face on a plate."
- The substitution matches the part of speech in the book sentence…a verb "makes" for the verb "paints." But, the substitution does not match the visual (graphophonic) information in "paints."
- In this case, it even has meaning to say, "She makes…"because Mom is making a decorated dish. Again, meaning and structure cues overlap so much it is uncommon to find a substitution that is due to structure only.

The teacher would check the M and S columns on the running record form, leaving the V column blank.

What are visual (graphophonic) cues?

Visual cues are one source of information the reader uses in the printed material on the page that allows him/her to interpret the author's story. Visual cues include letter/sound relationships that are included in the phonics instruction we provide in classrooms. But, visual cues also include the spaces between words, the letters (upper and lower case forms), size of the print, punctuation marks, and the way the print is placed on the page. These aspects of printed text have no letter/sound relationship, but knowing how to attend to them is critical to becoming an effective reader.

Visual cues *are not* cues the reader attends to by looking at the picture. Although you use vision to look at an illustration, the information contained in illustrations is meaning cues.

Some reading specialists call visual cues graphophonic cues, referring only to letter/sound relationships. The definition above attempts to show that the concept of visual cues is more inclusive than graphophonic cues alone. One who truly understands what is meant by the visual source of information adds spacing, size of print, punctuation marks, formatting of text on page (and other concepts of print) to letter/sound relationships when s/he observes students to determine their use of visual information in text.

To determine if a reader was attending to visual cues, the teacher would analyze a substitution to determine if it looks like the printed text.

(The following example comes from the Bebop book, Ruby's Whistle, page 13.)

TEXT: Ruby   puts   her   lips   in   an   O   shape and   blows.

Reader's Response: √   √   √   √   √ √ √ <u>circle</u> √   √

Analysis: shape

- In making the substitution of "circle" for "shape," the student appears to be using the first letter of the word, substituting the /s/ sound for the soft sound of /c/ = /s/.
- The substitution makes use of meaning cues from the story or picture (i.e. A circle is round like an "o," and the illustrations is of Ruby's lips in a circle.
- The substitution is the right kind of word, so the student is using structure.

E	SC	E			SC		
		M	S	V	M	S	V
		√	√	√			

This student is using M, S, and V. The teacher would put checks in all three columns on the running record form. She would, however, note that the student used only the first sound /s/ in the word. (Notice that the student used the soft sound of /c/ to predict the word "circle," but did not monitor and notice that there wasn't a letter "c" at the beginning of the word "shape." This student ignored the "sh" digraph that begins the word "shape.")

If the student would have read: "Ruby puts her lips together in an O shop and blows." Shop/shape is a pure visual miscue. It doesn't make sense to say Ruby puts her lips together in an O shop… And, up to the point of error one could not make up an acceptable sentence that makes sense and sounds like it would in a book.

E	SC	E			SC		
		M	S	V	M	S	V
				√			

This teacher would leave the M and S columns blank, checking only the V column. The teacher would also note that this student needs practice attending to and using the internal parts of words.

How Do I Analyze a Self-Correction Using MSV?

Self-corrections are a reading behavior to CELEBRATE! They show us that our teaching has been successful; they show us the student is becoming independent; and, self-corrections document that the student is beginning to self-monitor his/her reading. Remember, a self-correction is always first an error! The student notices the error, cross-checks with sources of information, and self-corrects the error.

First, we must consider what source/s of information the student was using when s/he made the error. The sources of information used are check marked in the error column just as was demonstrated earlier with errors.

On page 6 in the Bebop book I'm Heading to the Rodeo a student reads as follows:

combing │ br- │ SC
I'm brushing   my hair until it flies away.

combing │ br- │ SC
√   brushing   √   √   √   √   √   √

E	SC	E			SC		
		M	**S**	**V**	**M**	**S**	**V**
		√	√				√

When the student read "combing" for brushing, she was using meaning, probably from the illustration. She did choose a verb for a verb, so she was using structure. There is no visual match between combing and brushing, so V is not checked in the error column.
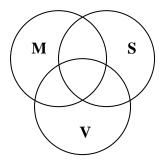
Then the student crossed-checked with graphophonic/visual information, noticing the "c" in combing did not match the "br" in brushing. She says, "br" then self-corrects, changing the word that describes fixing her hair from combing to brushing. (Notice that only the V is checked in the self-correction MSV column. The student was already attending to M and S. What she added to make the self-correction was V, so it is checked.) Yes, brushing does demonstrate the use of M, S, and V, but we are looking for patterns of the sources of information used by the reader. Initially she used M and S, ignoring V. But, by cross-checking V she was able to SC.
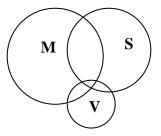
Consider the child's use of M, S, and V in light of the reading process—this requires using just enough of each source of information to accurately interpret the author's message.

After coding each miscue with an M, S, or V, the teacher begins trying to figure out why the student used the sources of information s/he did. One must go back to his/her understanding of the reading process to interpret this information. We know that we want students to use just enough of each source of information M, S, and V to interpret the author's message. If we count the numbers of M, S, and V, in each column, we'll get a global picture of what the student is using in reading. For example, if the check marks in the error column communicate that Jenna used 17 M's , 15 S's and 5 V's (remember this is a total of the number of checks in each column of the error MSV section of the Running Record form that tells what the student was using when s/he made an error), then Jenna is focusing too much attention to meaning and structure while ignoring graphophonic/visual sources of information. Our teaching will focus on getting her to attend to graphophonic/visual sources of information while maintaining her strength in searching for and using meaning and structure.

Remember, an effective reader's MSV processing looks like the circles below.

When making errors, Jenna used 17M, 15S, 5V, so her M, S, V processing looks like the circles below:

The global picture you get of Jenna's use of the reading process is that she over emphasizes meaning and structure when making predictions about what she is reading.

Make teaching decisions based upon the reader's needs as determined by the analysis as described above.

The illustration above shows quite dramatically that Jenna is over using Meaning and Structure, predicting what the text might say, paying little attention to the visual/graphophonic features of the text. We would celebrate the fact that Jenna is substituting words that make sense and sound like they would in a book, but we will need to teach her to cross check with graphophonic/visual information to get the author's total message.

Some would challenge that the majority of her miscues make sense, so why not just accept them? It appears, however, that Jenna is a "lazy looker" if she makes 17 miscues that make sense but do not match graphophonically. If this is the scenario at level R – Z and the reader demonstrates adequate comprehension, I would say just accept it. Many adult/proficient readers substitute words when reading.

But if this is the scenario at levels H – L, I would be concerned and would teach for cross-checking with visual. ("It sounds right, but does it look right? Do the words have the right letters to match what you read?")

As a student reading H-L moves into more difficult text, more and more words that are difficult to decode are going to appear in one sentence. Often, in more difficult text, the reader will encounter so many unknown words he/she will be unable to glean enough meaning and syntax to assist in making good predictions.

Jenna must be taught some strategies for integrating meaning, structure and VISUAL/graphophonics.

Johnston, P. (2000). Running Records: A Self-Tutoring Guide. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

Instruction focused on teaching self-monitoring, cross-checking, and self-correcting using integration of all sources of information

Clay (1993) states that independent readers possess a self-extending system characterized by the following:
- The reader has early strategies (directional movement, one-to-one matching, locating known and unknown words) secure and habituated, freeing him to attend to other things.
- The reader monitors his own reading and writing.
- The reader searches for cues in word sequences, in meaning, in letter sequences.
- The reader discovers new things for himself.
- The reader cross-checks one source of cues with another.
- The reader repeats as if to confirm his reading or writing so far.
- The reader self-corrects taking the initiative for making cues match, or getting words right.
- . The reader solves new words by these means (p. 43).

In order to assure that this self-extending system develops, teachers must "teach for" problem-solving strategies based upon the integration of all sources of information. They must also teach in a way that they facilitate independence in children to monitor and cross check the sources of information described above alone.

To do this teachers cannot locate errors for the child, whisper helpful hints in the readers ear, or point to sources of information in words, pictures, or the story for the child.
- Take the opportunity to celebrate the tentativeness of a child noticing something is not quite right even if they do not self-correct an error in one to one matching or using letter/sound cues with the meaning and structure of the story.
- Always praise attempts at self-correction, noticing that the child did demonstrate self-monitoring behavior.

Readers must notice mismatches in sources of information by self-monitoring what they read, and, in turn, cross-check all sources of information to facilitate getting the author's message.

Some things the teacher would say to make this happen are as follows:
- "How do you know you were right/"
- "Can it be _____?"
- "Can you find the tricky part?"
- "Take a closer look at _____."
- "What did you notice?"
- "Why did you stop reading?"
- "How else could you be sure that was _____?"
- "It sounds right to say _____, but let's look again at that word what do you notice?
- "How did you know that was _____?

Reading Fluency: Pace, Parsing, and Prosody

FLUENT READERS:

- Focus their attention on making connections among ideas in the text and their background knowledge
- Recognize words and comprehend at the same time
- Divide words into meaningful chunks so that they are able to read with expression.
- Score higher on comprehension assessments

NON-FLUENT READERS:

- Focus their attention primarily on decoding individual sounds or words
- Spend their energies trying to "figure out" the words not the meaning
- Read in a slow, deliberate, and labored manner often pausing at inappropriate places
- Score lower on comprehension assessments
- Fluency and automaticity are often interchanged, however they are not the same thing.

Fluency means reading with accuracy, pacing (automaticity), and expression (prosody). *"The fluent reader sounds good, is easy to listen to, and reads with enough expression to help the listener understand and enjoy the material."* (Clark, Read All About It, p. 282)

Automaticity is the fast, effortless recognition of words that comes with a great deal of reading practice. *"As a result of extended practice, an important change takes place: students learn to decode the printed words using significantly less attention. Because they require so little attention for word recognition, they have enough left over for comprehension."* (Samuels, Schermer, Reinking, Read All About It, p. 269)

Parsing: To parse text means to break it up into smaller parts, or breaking up ordinary text. Parsing involves reading phrases and/or clauses by dividing the text into chunks. Reading phrase units rather than conventional text does seem to result in improved fluency (Kuhn and Stahl, 2000).

Prosody is the ability to read in a manner that sounds like normal speech. Voice intonation and expression needs to mirror normal speech. In addition, prosody is the ability to read a text orally using appropriate pitch, stress, and juncture, and to project the natural intonation and phrasing of the spoken word upon the written text. Prosodic cues are the structure of the text and language, which help students identify the appropriate pitch, stress, and juncture to be assigned to a given text.

Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
Teacher Resources and Guidebook for Levels A-K Reading Level Assessments

Moving Students to a New Independent Reading Level

When a child achieves above 96% accuracy with adequate fluency and comprehension on this assessment, this is one indicator that students are able to read independently at this level. It is recommended, however, that scaffolds be put in place to support the student in strengthening the behaviors and comprehension work required at this level. It is also possible that students who are approaching independence at a higher level may be introduced to some of the comprehension work required for that level through conferring and small group work, even before they have "tested" into that level. Guided reading is not the only or even the wisest option for transitioning students once they have reached higher levels (i.e. R, S, T). Strategy lessons can be used, but we also want to set children up to become independent in approaching more difficult text.

Several suggestions are listed below to help with transitioning students into a new reading level.

1. Read books at the new level with a partner already at that level.

2. Teachers should consider the expectations they have for children in the new level (e.g. initially, back off from expecting higher level comprehension than the student was able to achieve at the previous level).

3. Confer with the student about how they are handling the new level. This can provide information for teaching during the conference, or designing strategy lessons for the student and others like him or her.

4. Use "transitional baggies" which include a few unread books from the previous level with books from the new level.

5. Since a higher load of unknown vocabulary words is possible at the new level, make sure that extra instruction is provided in how to determine the meaning of an unknown word from the mood or the flow of the story as well as using the context of the sentence in which the word appears.

6. Provide a scaffolding book introduction that introduces children to the characters, important vocabulary and gist of the story when the child is new to the level.