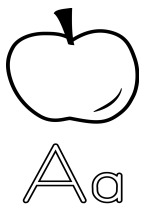




Provide Opportunities for Success

According to [Chall's Stages of Reading Development](#), reading skills are learned in a hierarchy. Based on this popular idea, if a student has not mastered a prerequisite stage, it will be increasingly difficult to demonstrate mastery of subsequent stages. Therefore, it is essential that reading instruction and intervention begin at the student's current skill level in order to provide opportunities for students to become successful readers. To provide appropriate instruction and/or intervention, educators must know where to begin. A variety of structured programs exist to provide quantifiable and standardized measures of reading abilities (DIBLES, Gray Oral Reading Test, Diagnostic Assessment of Reading). However, when these programs are unavailable, educators can provide informal assessments in each area of reading to garner the necessary information. Possible suggestions of informal assessments are outlined below.

Sound-Symbol Correspondence (Phonics)



In order to evaluate students' ability to recognize letters and their corresponding sounds, educators can simply ask them to list and/or identify each of the 26 letters. From there, students should then be able to identify the corresponding sounds. Educators should have a print out of the letters and the sound variations so that they can mark accuracy and errors to inform future instruction.

Sight Words and Phonetic Word Patterns (Decoding)

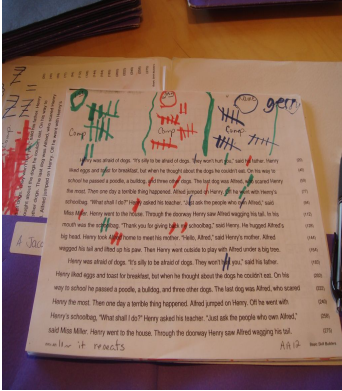
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| account | Educators may also consider evaluating which sight words and specific patterns students are able to recognize automatically. |
| bounty | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Dolch/Fry sight word lists contain leveled word lists of common sight words. In order to properly record accuracy and errors, the educator should mark their copy of the list while students read from their own. |
| couch | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beyond sight words, educators can provide pattern-based word lists to evaluate students' recognition of potential learned patterns. The soft and hard sounds of c and g are examples of suggested patterns. This type of assessment would be most appropriate for students in grades 3 and above. |
| county | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educators could also consider utilizing graded word lists, such as the San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability. Any combination of these lists should provide educators with insight into an appropriate level for each student and a collection of words and patterns that should be reviewed. |

Landmark Teaching Strategies



Landmark Teaching Principle™ #1

Fluency



As an informal fluency measure, educators can use leveled passages that can be photocopied from fluency programs, printed off the internet, or photocopied from a class book. The passages must be leveled so that the educator can compare the student's reading related to that grade level. The passages must also have a word count (educators may have to do this themselves) so as to yield necessary data about words correct per minute. Students should be asked to read a passage while the educator times the reading and keeps track of all errors. Words correct per minute can be calculated by subtracting the number of errors from the total number of words in the passage, dividing that number by the total time in seconds, and then multiplying by 60. In order for educators to determine students' strengths and areas for improvement, they should reference both the [Hasbrouck & Tindal Compiled Oral Reading Fluency Norms](#) and the [Multidimensional Fluency Scale](#).

Comprehension



It is important that students can make sense of the material that they read. Also, it is also vital that the students know to read in order to make meaning. Therefore, when gathering fluency data, educators should also be observing comprehension. After reading the fluency passage, students should be asked a range of explicit and implicit questions about that passage. Using [Bloom's Taxonomy Question Starters](#) can help the educator to determine how well the student can understand what they read and what comprehension skills they need to continue to develop.

Vocabulary

Learning parts of speech provides the foundation for vocabulary skill building. Providing students with a [pre-assessment on all eight of the parts of speech](#) can allow educators to determine if that foundation is in place. Knowledge of affixes is another cornerstone of developing a student's lexicon, and educators can explore ways to determine if students know the [most commonly used affixes](#).

HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS?

When educators meet the students at their individual levels rather than where research says they should be, then those educators are providing their students with opportunities to be successful within their instruction and demonstration. Therefore, it is important that educators understand their students' current reading skill levels so that instruction can be tailored to address necessary areas for development. This structure will help students grow their reading skills and find success within the curriculum.