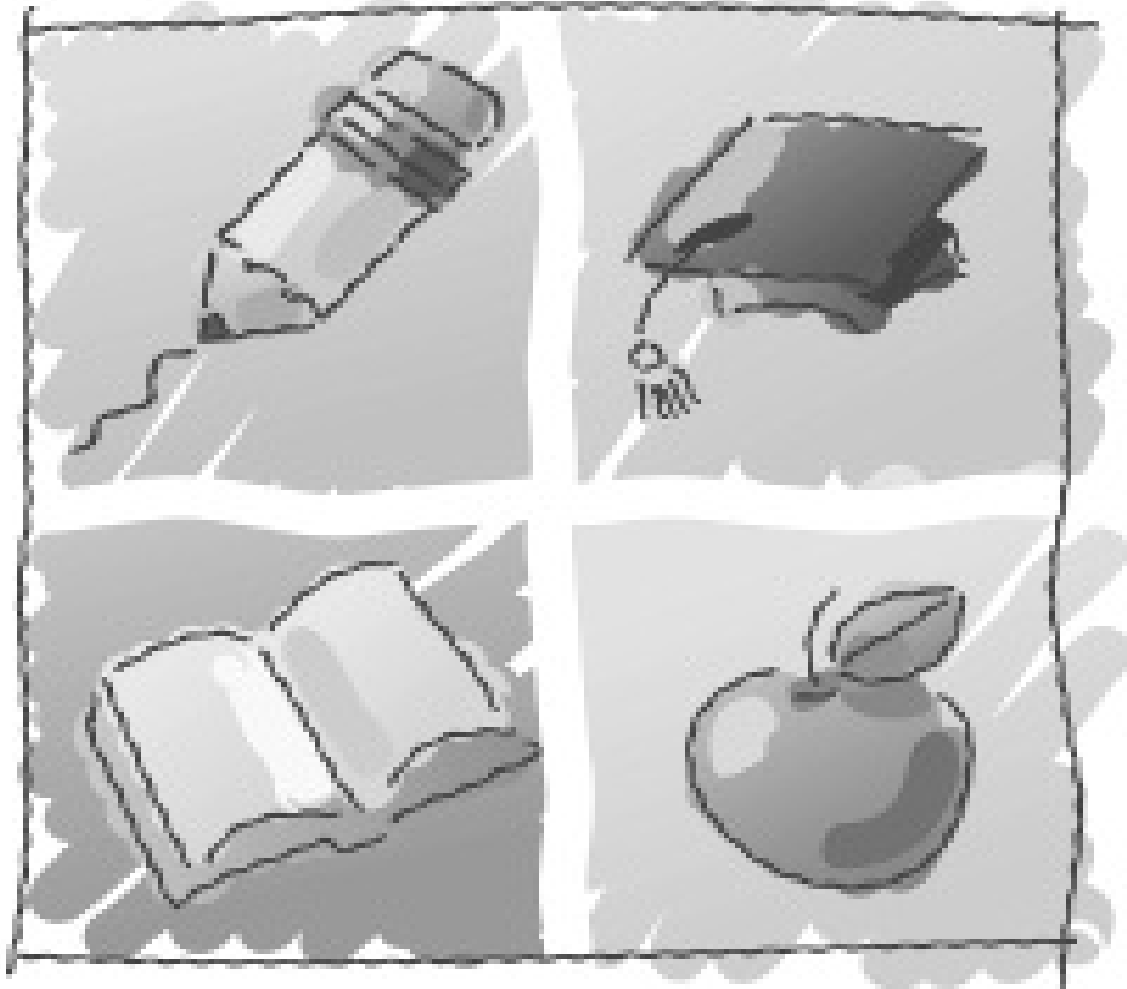


HIP Reading Assessment



DEVELOPED BY
Lori Jamison

WITH
Sandra Falconer Pace
Laurie Gatzke
Dawn Kesslering

HIP Reading Assessment Basics

The HIP Reading Assessment is a collection of graded passages and comprehension questions which are administered to students on an individual basis to gather information on their strengths and weaknesses as readers and to inform reading instruction.

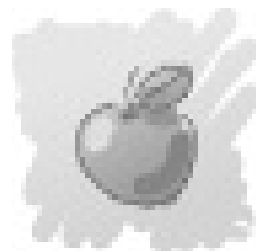
Each passage is approximately 200 words, usually an excerpt from a full-length novel. The initial section of the passage is designated to be read aloud by the student while the teacher keeps a record of word level accuracy and fluency. The remainder of the passage is read silently by the student. Following the reading, there is a comprehension assessment consisting of a retelling of the passage and/or a series of guiding questions that reflect different levels of comprehension.

The information from this assessment is intended to serve a variety of instructional purposes:

- It helps teachers assess how well students cope with **grade level text**, in terms of both word-level **accuracy** and **comprehension**.
- It provides information about the *actual* reading levels of individual students, enabling the teacher to **select reading materials** that are most appropriate for building strategies and increasing reading proficiency.



- It indicates **how well students understand what they read** and what their comprehension strengths and weaknesses might be.
- It enables teachers to **make observations about each student's reading behaviours** and to make inferences about the strategies they are using when they read.
- It supports teachers in **differentiating reading materials and instruction** in all subject areas.



Features of the HIP Reading Assessment

- Reading passages are taken from authentic literary texts and are carefully leveled using both readability formulae and other leveling criteria.
- Comprehension questions are designed to assess different levels and types of comprehension.
- Each assessment combines oral reading accuracy with silent reading comprehension.
- Teacher support materials include reproducible record sheets and student data sheets.
- All materials have been field-tested with thousands of students and their teachers.

Six Simple Steps to Administer the Assessment

1. Read the Introduction Sentence provided at the top of the teacher page to establish a context for the reading.
2. Ask the student to read aloud the text in bold print. As the student reads, record any errors or “miscues” on your teacher record sheet.
3. Then ask the student to reread the entire passage silently.
4. Use the comprehension prompts or invite the student to retell what he or she read. Record the student’s responses.
5. Repeat this process with higher or lower level passages until you have determined the student’s *instructional* reading level.
6. Analyze the data and use it to plan further instruction.

For details on administering the assessment, go to page 8.

Why Use the HIP Reading Assessment

Administering an individual oral reading assessment only takes about ten minutes per student. This one-on-one time enables the teacher to observe each student's reading behaviours and attitudes and provides invaluable data about a student's strengths and weaknesses as a reader. Information from the assessment includes the following:

WORD LEVEL ACCURACY

What percentage of the words in the passage did the student read correctly?

WORD SOLVING STRATEGIES

What kinds of strategies does the reader use to figure out unknown words?

SELF-CORRECTION HABITS

Does the reader correct his or her own errors? Do these errors interfere with the meaning of the passage?

FLUENCY

Does the student read with appropriate speed, phrasing and expression? Did he or she "sound out" many words or are most words read automatically?

COMPREHENSION

Can the reader understand and interpret what is said in the text?

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

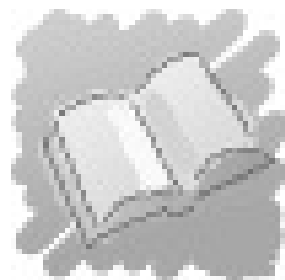
Is the student able to make inferences about the text? Are these predictions and judgments reasonable and supported by the text? Are cues being used to determine the meaning of new vocabulary?

READING BEHAVIOURS

Is the reader engaged or disinterested, calm or nervous, positive or negative about the reading experience? Are there frequent hesitations during the reading? Are some phrases repeated? Does the student lose his or her place in the text, or use a fingerpointer as support?

READING LEVEL

How well does this reader cope with text at a particular grade level? What levels of texts can be read with ease? What levels can be read with support?



What Are “Graded” Reading Passages?

Each of the passages in the HIP Reading Assessment has a carefully tested grade level from 2 to 9. This grade range was chosen because it represents the usual range of reading abilities for students in grades 3 to 8. For students who read below the grade 2 level, different text forms and reading tasks are needed. On the other hand, students reading beyond the grade 9 level already have the strategies to deal with most reading challenges they will encounter in high school and in everyday life.

The grade level equivalents of each of the HIP Reading Assessment passages have been carefully determined using three methods:

- several technical readability formulae
- leveling criteria such as type size, content suitability and student interest
- teacher and student field-testing

Readability formulas such as the Fry or Flesch-Kincaid count numbers of syllables per word and words in each sentence. They are based on the principle that long words and sentences are associated with more difficult texts. Other readability formulae like the Spache or Dale Chall add vocabulary lists to the criteria for determining readability. All these mathematical formulae suggest grade level readability based on solid research going back to the 1940s.

However, technical formulae are only one part of the overall measurement of readability. Factors such as simplicity of text

structure, familiarity of content and vocabulary, and other text supports also influence the readability of a passage. These “leveling criteria” have also been carefully considered in selecting and grading the passages for the HIP Reading Assessment.

Reading level scores are typically expressed as “year.month,” so 5.4 means fifth grade, fourth month, or December of a student’s grade 5 year. This expression can sometimes give a false impression of precision. There is really very little practical difference between a student’s reading one month and the next, especially after the first year or two of learning to read. Therefore, it is more statistically defensible to speak in terms of beginning grade 5 or mid grade 5 reading than to compare reading scores by month.

The Flesch-Kincaid readability formula and three other formulae were applied to each of the passages in the HIP Reading Assessment to determine a grade level equivalent. Then, other leveling factors were considered, such as:

- vocabulary supports
- sentence complexity
- assumption of background knowledge
- degree of nuance or inference
- presence of literary techniques such as flashback or foreshadowing

By combining leveling criteria with a technical readability formula, the passages

in the HIP Reading Assessment were “leveled” as *early* or *middle* of each grade level from 2 to 9.

For example, a passage that has a technical readability of 5.4 might be considered “early Grade 5” if it has very familiar content, easy narrative structure with plenty of dialogue, and no complex vocabulary. On the other hand, it might be considered “mid Grade 5” if it has some complex structures or unusual vocabulary or requires some unique background knowledge.

All passages were then field-tested by

teachers and students, matched to other graded passages, and revised accordingly. Many of the passages in this assessment were excerpted from novels in the HIP Junior or HIP Senior series; others are from Paul Kropp’s young adult novels. For the purposes of the assessment, some passages were revised to raise their grade level readability. For example, passage 60, “Lost in the Woods,” has been altered to a Grade 6 readability level even though the actual reading level of the novel *Our Plane Is Down* is closer to mid-Grade 3.

The grade level of each passage has been coded on the Teacher Record sheet as:

20 = early Grade 2
25 = mid Grade 2
30 = early Grade 3
35 = mid Grade 3
40 = early Grade 4
45 = mid Grade 4
50 = early Grade 5
55 = mid Grade 5
60 = early Grade 6
65 = mid Grade 6
70 = early Grade 7
75 = mid Grade 7
80 = early Grade 8
85 = mid Grade 8
90 = early Grade 9

Why Are Reading Levels Important?

For grading and reporting purposes, it is important to know how well a student can read and understand a text at his or her grade level. Teaching would be fairly simple if *all* students in your class read competently at grade level. The reality, however, is that many students are reading below their grade levels and just as many are reading beyond their grade levels.

Good reading instruction needs to provide just the right balance of *challenge* and *support* to enable readers to access existing strategies and require them to extend and build on those strategies. That's why the **INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL** for a student is a text in which he or she can read *most* of the words and understand *most* of the passage, but needs to apply some strategy work to word and text-level comprehension. Easy, or **INDEPENDENT LEVEL** text is good for reading practice, but doesn't stretch the student's

skill level. Reading at this level should be fairly fluent. Difficult, or **FRUSTRATION LEVEL**, text is beyond that reader's ability, regardless of his or her strategies. Students should not be expected to tackle frustration level text without extra support before and during the reading.

When we as teachers know the instructional reading levels of our students, we can make the best choices of material that will build their reading strategies and increase their reading proficiency. We can make wise decisions about forming needs-based groups for strategy instruction, and we can select materials to support differentiated instruction across the curriculum.

Administering the HIP Reading Assessment helps teachers use oral reading and comprehension data to determine the Instructional, Independent and Frustration reading levels of students.

INDEPENDENT READING LEVEL	INSTRUCTIONAL READING LEVEL	FRUSTRATION READING LEVEL
96-100% word accuracy Thorough comprehension	90-95% word accuracy General comprehension	Below 90% word accuracy Inadequate comprehension
Excellent fluency and phrasing	Good fluency and mostly correct phrasing	Halting fluency and errors in phrasing that indicate limited comprehension of the text

Independent Reading Level

The independent reading level is the level at which the student can read with excellent comprehension and word recognition. In order to be considered “independent,” the material should be read at near perfect accuracy, with excellent fluency and phrasing. After reading, the student should be able to demonstrate thorough, insightful comprehension and interpretation of the text.

Traditional research identified independent level text as text that is read with at least 95% word accuracy. However, some researchers are now suggesting that independent level text, particularly for readers beyond the primary grades, should allow no more than one or two significant errors per hundred words. (*Significant* errors are those which interfere with the meaning of the passage.)

Most students will be able to identify independent level text as easy for them to read and understand. It is important for students to have many opportunities to read independent level text to build reading fluency and enjoyment.

Instructional Reading Level

The instructional reading level is considered to be the optimal level of difficulty for building reading proficiency. It is the level at which a reader is challenged but not frustrated, providing enough support for the reader to apply reading strategies in order to

comprehend the text. This is the level of text that should be used for reading instruction.

Some researchers suggest that instructional level involves no more than two to five per cent error rate; others allow as high as 10 per cent. When reading instructional level text, the students should be able to provide a general retelling of the text or respond to most comprehension questions.

Students will often identify instructional level texts as “hard but not too hard.” With support and some “reading work,” the students should be able to access these texts without too much difficulty. Teaching supports include pre-reading instruction or scaffolding during reading.

Frustration Reading Level

When a student makes as many as ten errors per hundred words and lacks overall comprehension, the text is considered to be too difficult for that reader to read without real frustration. Often a student will exhibit such behaviours as choppy reading or fidgeting when given frustration level text. Inability to answer adequately most comprehension questions is another indication that the text is too difficult for that reader.

When a student is confronted with too much frustration level text, he or she tends to avoid reading and will often demonstrate inappropriate behaviour. If it is essential for a student to use a frustration level text (such as a content area textbook), read-aloud or pre-reading supports should be provided.

How to Gather Information about Word Level Accuracy and Fluency

The Teacher Record Sheet for each passage contains a chart with the complete oral reading text. This is used to take note of errors or “miscues” that the student makes during reading. A miscue is any response that differs from what the text actually says.

There are many different systems for marking miscues and you will want to find one you are comfortable with before beginning to administer the assessment. For the purposes of this assessment, teachers are encouraged to note substitutions, omissions, insertions and teacher supports in this way:

SUBSTITUTION Write the substituted word or sounds above the correct word.

OMISSION Draw a circle around the omitted word in the text.

INSERTION Use a caret (^) to write in the word inserted.

TEACHER ASSISTED After an extended pause, the teacher may decide to provide the word and move on. In this case, the assistance should be noted with a “T” (for “told”).

SELF-CORRECTION Note self-corrections with “SC” as well as a notation of the attempts. *Self-corrections are not considered errors when calculating accuracy, but give important information about self-monitoring.*



Reading Behaviours You May Observe

In addition to accuracy and fluency, gestures and behaviours may be clues to a student’s confidence and competence as a reader. Reading behaviours are recorded as anecdotal notes and may include:

- frequent hesitations or pauses (may be marked on the oral reading record)
- reading too quickly or too slowly
- inappropriate stressing or intonation
- over-reliance on sounding out words
- lip movement
- tracking with fingers or losing place
- fidgeting, being distracted
- comments or attitudes expressed during the reading
- ignoring punctuation

CODING MISCUES

Substitutions – Write the substitution above the word in the text.

sparks

When I turned on the computer, ~~smoke~~ came out.

Omissions – Circle or draw a line through the omitted word.

When I turned on the computer, smoke came out.

Insertions – Insert the miscue with a caret.

on

When I turned on the computer[^], smoke came out.

Self-Corrections – Record all attempts, followed by “SC”.

calm, come, com-pu-ter (SC)

When I turned on the ~~computer~~, smoke came out.

Teacher Assisted – Write “T” for “Told”

T

When I turned on the ~~computer~~, smoke came out.

Oral Reading Fluency

The term “fluency” refers to speed, phrasing and expression in reading. Reading fluency has been closely linked to comprehension in reading research. Although fluent reading does not necessarily guarantee comprehension, dysfluent, choppy reading almost always indicates comprehension difficulty.

Most of the reading students do in Grades 3 to 8 is silent reading. It is virtually impossible to measure silent reading fluency, other than counting the time it takes to read a passage of a particular length. Oral reading fluency, however, can be a good indication of

silent reading fluency, which is another reason to take the time for individual oral reading assessments. As a student reads, use the teacher record sheet to make notes on his or her phrasing, expression, automaticity of word recognition and pacing.

Although speed is only one aspect of fluency, it is an indication of how smoothly the student is reading. The chart below provides grade level norms for words read per minute. This data is mid-grade (December), with the highest readers at the 90th percentile and the lowest at the 10th percentile.

Oral Reading Rates by Grade Level

MID GRADE	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
HIGHEST	125	146	166	182	195	192	199
MEDIAN	72	92	112	127	140	136	136
LOWEST	18	36	61	84	82	88	88

Hasbrouck, J. & Tindal, G. (2005). Behavioral Research and Teaching (2005, January). *Oral Reading Fluency: 90 Years of Assessment*. (BRT Technical Report #33). Eugene OR.

Some Aspects of Fluency to Note:

- Does the student read smoothly with appropriate phrasing, or word by word, sounding choppy?
- Is the pace of reading appropriate for grade level, or too fast or slow?
- Does the student read with effective expression or in a monotone?
- Does the student attend to punctuation for pausing and pacing, or read mechanically, regardless of punctuation?
- Does the reading indicate that the student is making sense of the text or simply calling the words?
- Does the student read most words automatically or sound out more words than should be necessary?

How to Use the Teacher Record Sheets

Coded Reading Level
(mid Grade 2)

Introductory Sentence for
the teacher to read to the
student before beginning
to read.

Types of miscues the
student makes when
reading. To be counted
after the reading.

PASSAGE 20: "Lost in the Snow" (First 102 words)

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Text to be read
aloud by the
student.

Use this page to
record miscues.

	SUBSTITUTIONS	INSERTIONS	OMISSIONS	TEACHER TOLD	SELF-CORRECTIONS	SIGNIFICANT MISCUES
Introduction: <i>Rory and Bill are lost in the snow at night. What problems do you think they might have?</i>						
Rory just lay in the snow. This was bad.						
When you get really frozen,						
you start to give up like that.						
You shiver and get dizzy and give up.						
And then you freeze to death.						
So I bent over him and grabbed his sleeves.						
"Get up, you jerk," I shouted at him.						
"I can see the house!"						
That was a lie, but I had to do something.						
"You can?" Rory asked.						
"Yeah, just come with me," I told him.						
So I got Rory moving again - with a lie.						
There was no light up ahead.						
But I knew we had to keep moving.						

Total miscues are all
words read incorrectly.

ANECDOTAL NOTES:

Total Miscues _____
Significant Miscues _____

Significant Miscues are
those which interfere
with the meaning of
the text.

- Independent Level: 0-5 miscues
- Instructional Level: 6-10 miscues
- Frustration Level: 11+ miscues

Space to note
reading behaviours
and other anecdotal
information.

Reading level of this
text for this student.

Assessing Comprehension

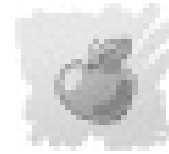
Comprehension data is the most important information the teacher can collect about student reading. After all, what is reading, if not making meaning from print?

The HIP Reading Assessment offers two ways to gather information about how well students comprehend the passages: retelling and comprehension questions. Both can be effective.

RETELLING can have certain advantages over guided questioning in that it indicates what the student thought was relevant about the passage, reveals his or her understanding of the sequence of events, and allows him or her to use vocabulary from the passage. However, retelling tends to focus on literal comprehension of the passage and may not reveal inference or analysis.

If retelling is going to be used to assess comprehension, it is important to teach students how to retell and what is expected of them. The rubric on page 15 is a guide for assessing retelling.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS guide the reader's thinking in specific directions, rather than allowing him or her to relate freely what he or she understood from the passage. The advantage of guiding questions is that they enable the teacher to assess different levels and types of comprehension.



There are four types of comprehension questions in the HIP Reading Assessment:

- **LITERAL** comprehension questions assess whether the reader can understand information directly stated in the text.
- **INFERENCE** comprehension questions require the reader to think beyond what is directly stated in the text to make interpretations or judgments.
- **VOCABULARY** questions provide insights about the reader's ability to use context and other word-solving strategies to access difficult vocabulary.
- **SYNTHESIS** questions may require the reader to predict, analyze or pull together the information in the text to come up with a credible response with direct support from the text. These questions may not have a single correct answer but require elaboration.

Many teachers prefer to use a combination of retelling and comprehension questions, inviting the students to retell first and then prompting or extending the assessment with questions.

Sample Completed Comprehension Check

Comprehension Check: "Come Camping with Me"

1. LITERAL: In what ways are the two friends different? (Tom is more adventurous than Noah.)
2. LITERAL: Why doesn't Noah want to go on the trip? (Noah thinks he will get hurt or cold.)
3. VOCABULARY: How can you figure out the meaning of "scowled" in this passage? (It says "with an angry expression on his face.")
4. INFERENTIAL: What does Noah mean when he says, "In your dream?" (It won't happen in real life.)
5. INFERENTIAL: Why do you think Tom asked Noah to come to the meeting? (Tom doesn't want to go by himself; he thinks Noah might be encouraged to go on the trip if he goes to the meeting.)
6. SYNTHESIS (PREDICTIONS): Do you think Tom will be able to persuade Noah to go on the trip? Why or why not? (Yes, because Noah always goes along with Tom in the end/No because Noah has said that this time he really is not going to go along with Tom. "I'm not going and that's final." Accept any answer supported from the text.)

RETELLING NOTES

1. Tom likes to try new things.
2. Noah is scared of getting hurt.
3. "I don't dream. (can you guess?) Maybe it's across the table!"
4. He might dream about it.
5. Maybe Tom will go on the trip. [Why?] I just think so.
6. No, Tom says he's not going and that's final.

COMPREHENSION ANALYSIS

Literal: 2 / 3 Vocabulary: 2 / 1 Inference: 1 / 3 Synthesis: 1 / 1

<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Level	3-6 correct	or	Excellent retelling
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instructional Level	1-4 correct	or	Adequate retelling
<input type="checkbox"/> Frustration Level	0-2 correct	or	Inadequate retelling



"Come Camping with Me" is an excerpt from *Arden* by Paul Krupp. The complete passage is 443 words long. Comprehension questions are based on the entire passage.

Can the comprehension questions be done in writing rather than orally?

One-on-one questioning has a number of advantages in that it enables the teacher to prompt or probe if an answer is incomplete or requires support. Oral questioning is particularly advantageous for struggling readers, who may struggle to put their ideas in writing.

For those teachers who prefer to have their students do some or all of the questions in writing, a reproducible question page is provided for each passage. Additional information for scoring written responses may be found on page 22.

A Rubric for Assessing Retelling

	0-4 MARKS	5-7 MARKS	8-10 MARKS
RELATES MAIN IDEAS AND DETAILS	✓ provides sketchy or inaccurate details from the passage	✓ provides the main ideas and some details from the passage ✓ retelling may be somewhat general and lack specific elaboration	✓ provides all ideas from the text, with appropriate elaboration
USES KEY VOCABULARY FROM THE PASSAGE	✓ does not use key vocabulary from the passage, or uses words incorrectly	✓ Uses some vocabulary from the passage	✓ uses all key vocabulary words from the passage correctly
INTERPRETS IDEAS FROM THE STORY	✓ provides only a literal retelling of the passage, without any interpretation or analysis	✓ offers occasional insights or analysis	✓ consistently provides insights or interpretations of the passage

Total: /30 marks

Step-by-Step: How to Administer the Assessment

1. Prepare the materials

Before beginning the assessment, prepare all the materials. Purchase of this book allows you to photocopy all the needed pages for use in your classroom. Make a copy of each of the grade level passages. (Laminating one copy of each student passage will eliminate the need for future photocopying.) Some students may read through several grade level passages before you find their instructional reading level.

Have several copies of each of the teacher record sheets in a file or three ring binder.

2. Prepare the room

Place a table and two chairs in a spot where neither you nor the reader will be distracted by the other students. Be sure that the other students will not be able to hear the reading and questioning. Some teachers prefer to administer the assessment in another room or in the hallway outside the classroom. Others are able to isolate a corner of their regular classroom.

3. Prepare all the other students

Provide productive independent or small group activities for the rest of the students. If you have not yet established independent work routines in your classroom, it may be



necessary to demonstrate and practice procedures such as:

- what to do if students have a question;
- what to do if student are stuck on something;
- what to do if students have finished their activity.

4. Determine where to begin

By the end of September, you will likely have a sense of the reading abilities of most of your students. Use professional judgment to determine a starting point for the assessment. Start with a passage that you believe will be easy for the student and will build confidence and comfort with the process. Then move on to a passage more likely to be at the student's instructional grade level.

Alternatively, you can use the HIP Three-Minute Reading Check on page 30 in this book. This quick, informal check can guide you in determining a starting point for the assessment.

5. Introduce the assessment

Do your best to **alleviate any anxiety** on the part of the student and reassure him or her that the information from the assessment will be used to help you plan your teaching to help him or her grow as a reader. Encourage the student to try his or her best and use whatever strategies he or she knows to read the words and respond to the questions.

Tell the student that he or she will be asked to read part of a passage out loud to you and part of the passage to himself or herself, silently. Then you will ask him or her some questions about what he or she understood about the passage.

Read the Introduction Sentence (provided on the Teacher’s Record Sheet) to activate prior knowledge and introduce the names of characters to be encountered in the reading.

PASSAGE 20: “Lost in the Snow” (First 102 words)

Grade level of Passage...
This is mid grade 2

Student’s Name:

Date:

	SUBSTITUTIONS	INSERTIONS	OMISSIONS	TEACHER TOLD	SELF-CORRECTIONS	SIGNIFICANT MISCUES
Introduction: <i>Rory and Bill are lost in the snow at night. What problems do you think they might have?</i>						
Rory just lay in the snow. This was bad.						
When you get really frozen,						
you start to give up like that.						

6. Have the Student Read

As the student reads aloud, record miscues using the system described on page 9. It may be helpful to sit slightly behind the student or in some other position that does not distract him or her as you write.

Teacher assists during oral reading are *discouraged*. If the student pauses for an inordinate length of time, a gentle suggestion to “just give it a try” or “take a guess” may be effective. If the student is simply unable to go on, then explain the word and note it as a “T” or teacher assisted. As the student reads, take note of reading behaviours such as finger pointing, lip movement, vocalization or inappropriate reading speed.

If the passage is clearly at the student’s **FRUSTRATION** level, stop the reading and move to an easier passage. Frustration level reading should not be continued.

If the student’s word accuracy is 90% or higher, continue with the comprehension assessment. If it is lower, go to an easier passage.

After the oral reading section is complete, tell the student to silently read the **entire passage** from the beginning to the end.

When the student has read the passage silently, ask the comprehension questions at the end *or* invite the student to retell what was read. Feel free to prompt the student if a response is incomplete or lacking support from the text. For example, “*Can you tell me a little more?*” or “*What does the text say that makes you think that?*” would be appropriate prompts.

Record the student’s answers to the comprehension questions. Suggested answers are provided, but similar or otherwise reasonable responses should be accepted.

Many teachers prefer to combine retelling with questioning. Note questions that are addressed in the retelling with an R, then ask the remaining questions.

Some teachers prefer to ask their students to respond in writing to the comprehension questions. A reproducible student page is included with each assessment for this purpose. Remember that written responses may not accurately reflect comprehension for students who struggle with writing.

Move to a higher or lower level passage and repeat the process until you have determined the student’s **INSTRUCTIONAL** reading level based on a combination of accuracy and comprehension.

How to find time for individual reading assessments

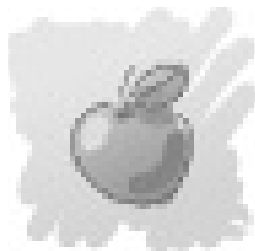
Assessment is an essential aspect of teaching. Assessment informs us about what to teach and whether our students are reaching the goals we have set for them.

Individually assessing the reading all of the students in your class is well worth the instructional time expended. Remember that the other students may still be engaged in worthwhile learning activities, even when you are not standing in front of them.

It is not necessary to assess all your students on the same day. Meeting five students a day for a week or three students a day for two weeks is much more manageable. The other students may be engaged in independent reading time, buddy reading or other classroom assignments.

In some classrooms, individual reading assessments might take the place of guided reading for a week. The other students continue their independent learning routines or centers while you pull one student at a time rather than working with groups.

In some schools, teachers collaborate with colleagues, parent volunteers or administrators to come up with creative ways to arrange for assessment time. However, the assessment should always be done by the classroom teacher rather than a non-professional.



Analyzing and Interpreting the Results

1. Count the Miscues.

Note the types of miscues on the chart. Substitutions, omissions, insertions and teacher assists are counted as miscues. Self-corrections are *not* counted as miscues. (They should be noted on the chart, however, as they provide valuable information about strategic reading. Self-correction is a good sign of self-monitoring.)

Note that dialect mispronunciation is never an error.

1. **SUBSTITUTIONS, OMISSIONS, AND INSERTIONS** are counted as miscues.
2. **NAMES** count as a miscue only once.
3. **WORDS OTHER THAN NAMES** count as a miscue each time they are read incorrectly.
4. **TEACHER-ASSISTED** words are counted as miscues.
5. **SELF-CORRECTIONS** do not count as miscues.

2. Record the number of significant miscues.

Significant miscues are those which interfere with meaning. For example, reading “he went *into* the park” instead of “he went *to* the park” or even “He rode his *horse*” instead of “He rode his *pony*” would not be considered significant miscues. The reader is still making sense of text. However, they are indications of the cueing strategies the reader is using, and should still be noted.

3. Determine comprehension level.

Note the number of questions answered correctly or the quality of retelling to determine reading comprehension level.



	INDEPENDENT	INSTRUCTIONAL	FRUSTRATION
COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS	5-6 correct out of 6	3-4 correct out of 6	Fewer than 3 correct
RETELLING	Student notes key events, details and facts in appropriate sequence, uses vocabulary from the passage and offers some interpretation.	Student notes most key events in mostly appropriate sequence and indicates overall theme or message of the passage.	Student misses key events or details and does not provide the gist of the passage.

Using the HIP Reading Assessment for Report Card Grades

The HIP Reading Assessment is first and foremost a diagnostic tool. It is intended to provide information about student reading strengths and weaknesses in order to guide instruction.

It is possible, however, to obtain a grade from the HIP Reading Assessment.

Generally speaking, report card grades reflect the student's reading proficiency with texts at his or her current grade level (unless the report card specifies an adaptation or special program for that student). Therefore, a mid grade 4 level text (i.e., "45 on the HIP

Reading Assessment) would be appropriate to use as *one* classroom assessment for the mid-term report card in Grade 4. Conduct the assessment in the same way as usual, but use only the grade level text for that grade level and time of year.

Translating HIP Reading Assessment data into marks may be done in several ways, depending on your learning objectives for your students. It is up to your professional judgment to determine the scoring that works for you. One suggested scoring guide is offered below.

Accuracy and Fluency: (40% of mark)

9-10 MARKS	6-8 MARKS	3-5 MARKS	1-2 MARKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made few, if any miscues • self-corrected <i>all</i> significant miscues • read with appropriate speed and phrasing • used expression and punctuation effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made fewer than 10 miscues • self-corrected most significant miscues • read with few hesitations and repetitions • reads in phrases of several words • may have read everything in much the same tone, with little expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made 10 or more miscues • self-corrected some miscues • read with some hesitations and repetitions • read in inappropriate or short phrases • may have read too quickly or too slowly • monotonous vocal tone and expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made more than 10 miscues • did not self-correct • read with many hesitations, pauses, repetitions • demonstrated evident discomfort with the reading • reading was choppy and dysfluent

Comprehension: (60% of mark)

Literal comprehension questions: *1 mark each*

Vocabulary question: *1 mark each*

Inferential comprehension questions: *2 marks each (reasonable answer with support)*

Synthesis: *3 marks (extended response, supported from text)*

Total: 10 marks

Report card grades should be based on a compilation of several different assessments and should reflect the students' progress toward their learning goals.

The HIP Reading Assessment should never be used to make high-stakes decisions about students, but can provide preliminary diagnostic information leading to more extensive testing where necessary.

Kyle: Assessing a Typical Student

Kyle is a student in my Grade 5 class. During the first weeks of school, I was able to observe Kyle in different reading situations and take note of his reading habits. During independent reading time, Kyle generally chose non-fiction books with a lot of pictures and exchanged them far too frequently for him to be reading all of the text. During partner reading, he struggled with a popular novel that many of the other students were reading with ease. Kyle was clearly reading below grade five level.

Kyle told me that he didn't like reading; he liked sports. I suggested he might want to find some books on sports and he replied, "There aren't any good books on sports." (I suspected that meant he hadn't found any books on sports *that he could read*.) My challenge was to find books for instruction and independent reading that Kyle both wanted to read and was able to read.

I decided to begin the assessment with a Level 35 (mid Grade 3) passage that I felt Kyle would be able to read confidently. His reaction was, "This is easy" – an expression of bravado not uncommon with struggling readers. He was right. At this level, Kyle read virtually every word accurately (and self-corrected the few miscues he did make). But his reading sounded choppy and mechanical; I noted that fluency was an area to target with Kyle. His self-corrections were one indication that Kyle understood the text at this level and I asked him for a quick retelling to confirm his comprehension.

I then moved on to the Level 40 (Grade 4) passage. (See samples on pages 12 and 14.) This time, Kyle experienced more difficulty with individual words. Although some of his miscues were not significant (*gave* for *give*, omission of *a*), words like *conversation*, *scowled* and *expression* were not corrected. Not only did Kyle misread *scowled* as *scold*, he was unable to find context clues to the meaning of the word. He made seven miscues, four of which were significant (affecting meaning). In addition, Kyle's reading was choppy, with little attention to phrasing or expression.

I had Kyle read the whole passage to himself before asking him the comprehension questions. He read the passage quite quickly – more quickly than I would have expected given the lack of fluency in his oral reading.

Kyle's responses to the comprehension questions were brief, but reflected a basic understanding of the passage. However, even when prompted, he offered little extension, analysis or support from the text. For example, when responding to the question, "Why do you think Tom asked Noah to come to the meeting?" Kyle responded with an acceptable answer: "Maybe Tom will go on the trip too." When prompted to explain, he said, "I just think so."

Because Kyle's accuracy *and* comprehension are at instructional level with this text, I ended the assessment at this level. The whole process took about 10 minutes.

Analysis

Strictly in terms of word-level accuracy, Kyle is borderline between independent and instructional at the grade-4 level. I had some concerns, however, that 3 out of his 6 miscues were significant; that is, he did not self-correct even when the reading didn't make sense. In the comprehension assessment, Kyle answered 4 out of 6 questions correctly, and did not elaborate or provide support when prompted, which puts him at instructional level for early grade-4 level text, about a year below his chronological grade level.

Kyle's responses suggest that he could mostly comprehend the text at the literal level and could make low level inferences, but struggled to offer explanations or support for this thinking. His difficulty with vocabulary such as *expression*, *scowl* and *in your dreams* makes me wonder if some of his problems might be based on lack of background knowledge.

Although decoding does not appear to be an issue for Kyle, self-monitoring is. He needs to learn to think about whether his reading is making sense, and to pause and fix when problems occur.



Instructional Plan:

- ✓ Help Kyle find books for independent reading that match his interests (sports) and are at his independent reading level (mid-Grade 3 or below). Some recommendations might be: *Pump* or *Shooting the Rapids* from the HIP Jr. series or *Tag Team* or *Foul Shot* from the HIP Sr. Series.
- ✓ Start Kyle with the group reading early grade-4 instructional level texts.
- ✓ Work on self-monitoring of comprehension (using sticky notes), making connections to background knowledge and revisiting the text to support comprehension. Monitor his progress. Kyle may be ready to move on to a higher level fairly quickly, as his general comprehension and word analysis at this level are okay.
- ✓ Spend some time on word-solving multi-syllabic words by using syllables or “chunking.”
- ✓ Support Kyle in fluency-building activities, such as Readers' Theater. (Look for appropriate level scripts in the *HIP Readers' Theater* book.)
- ✓ Do more work on metacognition with the whole class. Use read-alouds and shared reading to model and practise supporting and extending thinking about texts. Teach students to “think aloud” about their reading strategies.

Using Assessment to Guide Instruction

The real purpose of a reading assessment is to use the results to inform classroom instruction. Information about the strengths and needs of our students should guide us in selecting appropriate materials, determining what needs to be taught, and selecting activities for before, during and after reading.

Other resources are available to provide more thorough details on best practices in reading instruction; this chart provides a brief overview of some of the ways we can use assessment data to plan the “next steps” for particular individuals or groups of students.

The student’s instructional reading level is a full grade or more below his actual grade level.

It is essential to provide students with texts at their instructional reading level. When texts are too easy, readers do not stretch; when texts are too difficult, readers cannot apply their strategies.

Students reading one or two grades below grade level need to have many opportunities to enjoy books they *can* read. Small group guided reading and individual reading workshop structures help these students build reading strategies with increasingly sophisticated texts.

The HIP Reading Assessment provides an indicator of each student’s instructional reading level. High Interest Publishing (www.hip-books.com) is one of many publishers that provide grade level readability of its materials.

The student doesn’t correct miscues that interfere with meaning.

Through explicit instruction and modeling, help the student develop a repertoire of self-monitoring strategies, such as:

- think about whether your reading makes sense
 - if it doesn’t make sense, go back and try it again
 - omit the word and read on to see if there are clues further on
 - try another word that makes sense in the passage
 - put a sticky note on the word and ask for help
-

The student reads very slowly and hesitantly.

Dysfluency is often a symptom of other reading issues. This assessment can help you determine which other skills and strategies may need development.

To build fluency, we recommend:

- ensuring that the student is reading texts at his or her independent reading level
- helping students increase automatic word recognition and build a repertoire of decoding strategies, rather than relying just on “sounding out”
- repeated reading of texts, with one-on-one coaching to improve fluency
- teacher or tutor modeling of oral reading
- shared, paired and choral reading opportunities
- performance reading, such as readers’ theater plays with plenty of time to practise and rehearse

The student relies too heavily on “sounding out” words.

Phonics is only one way to approach unfamiliar words and over-reliance on “sounding out” may lead to dysfluent reading. Offer explicit instruction and modeling in other word-solving strategies, such as:

- analyzing words for meaningful chunks
- thinking through word meanings from prefixes, roots and endings
- understanding words from context
- looking for pictures or graphic clues
- automatic recognition of whole words

The student makes inaccurate substitutions for individual words.

Analyze the types of miscues the reader is making. Is the student guessing words that make sense but bear no resemblance to the words in the text? Is the student using visual cues to guess words that don’t make sense? Remind students to use phonics, context *and* syntax to word-solve. Teach them to ask three questions when a word they read does not seem correct:

- Does it make sense?
 - Does it sound right?
 - Does it look right?
-

The student reads accurately but shows little comprehension of the passage.	This form of “word calling” shows that basic word recognition skills are in place, but comprehension skills need work. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have students read small chunks of text and practise retelling.• Provide graphic organizers which require students to record their thinking as they read.• Teach students to use sticky notes to record “wonderings” as they read.• Teach students to pause and “think aloud” as they read.
The student can respond to literal comprehension questions but has trouble with inferential comprehension.	Inferring involves combining what we read with what we know in our background knowledge to come up with a new idea. Model and demonstrate the thinking processes of inference. Use read-alouds and shared reading to provide practice with inference. Picture books can be engaging read-aloud texts for strategy building at all ages. Provide stopping points in the text for students to explain their inferences. Model think-alouds by teacher and more able peers. Do character analysis activities to practise inference.
The student has trouble summarizing or generalizing his or her ideas.	During shared reading, model how to identify main ideas and retell key points in the text. During guided reading, ask students to find the main idea in a selection, then find supporting details. This can be done effectively with highlighting tape or sticky notes.
The student lacks adequate background knowledge to make sense of texts.	Background knowledge and vocabulary are necessary prerequisites to understanding a particular text. Pre-reading activities may be necessary to prepare students for reading, especially non-fiction texts.
The student does not support answers with information from the text.	Teach students to skim (for overall impression) and scan (for specific details). Provide practice in going back into the text to look for specific information. Require students to provide support for their responses in discussions.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if a student has difficulty with the level 20 passage?

Students in grades 3 and up who are reading below grade 2 level have unique reading needs. You may want to confirm this diagnosis at another time with another passage at grade 2 readability. Talk to a specialist or consultant about individual standardized tests that are more appropriate for students reading at this level.

What if a student has no problem with the level 90 passage?

Wonderful. A student in elementary school who can already read at the grade 9 level should be very well equipped for most reading tasks he will encounter in high school and in everyday life. Nonetheless, even competent readers sometimes lack strategies to handle inference or non-fiction text forms. This is not a time to stop reading instruction! Ensure that these students have access to appropriately challenging texts for instruction and independent reading, so they continue to grow as readers and thinkers.

How do I know which passage to start with?

After a few weeks of school, you'll probably have formed a pretty good judgment on how well each student reads. We have found that starting slightly below that level will be a good beginning point for the majority of students. The HIP Three-Minute Reading Check found on page 30 can also provide a starting point.

What if a student struggles with a grade 3 passage, but reads a grade 4 passage with ease?

There may be a variety of reasons for erratic results. Perhaps the student was sick or upset on the day of the assessment. Perhaps the grade 4 passage was particularly engaging, or that student lacked the background knowledge to access the grade 3 passage. Use a readability formula to find another passage at the same grade level and retest.

Is an early September assessment valid?

Many students suffer a "summer reading loss," sometimes as much as half a grade level between June and September. This is especially true for students who come from home situations where age-appropriate books are not available in the summer or where recreational reading is not encouraged. For this reason, an end of September assessment will always be somewhat more accurate. As well, waiting till the end of September provides you with time to observe the students' reading habits, which will help you make better judgments about where to start the assessment.

How can I prevent students from watching me record their oral reading errors?

Some students are distracted by the teacher's note-taking during reading. A simple way to avoid this is to sit beside and slightly behind the student, so he is not able to see you recording miscues or making anecdotal notes.

Do oral reading assessments always match standardized test results?

Oral reading assessments generally serve different purposes than standardized tests. Oral reading assessments are intended to provide information to guide instruction. They offer an indication of reading accuracy and comprehension at different levels of difficulty. Sometimes an oral reading assessment can provide more useful data than a standardized test, because the teacher is able to prompt and observe the student during reading. On the other hand, standardized tests have been carefully normed and the data is more statistically reliable than the results of an informal reading inventory such as the HIP Reading Assessment.

Which is better, asking the comprehension questions or retelling?

There are advantages to both. Retelling tells us what the student thought was important in the text, what vocabulary has been retained, and how the events are recalled sequentially. However, effective questioning can sometimes yield more information about strategies and higher level thinking. The questions in this assessment have been created to assess students' literal and inferential comprehension, vocabulary strategies and their ability to synthesize the information in order to answer an open-ended prompt. Many teachers like to use a combination of retelling and questioning.

Is it okay to let students refer back to the passage when answering the questions?

We believe that looking back at the text for details or support is an important reading strategy. However, re-reading sometimes interferes with retelling.

Can the questions be answered in writing?

We have provided a student page with the comprehension questions for each level of the assessment. However, if a student's writing ability is below his or her reading ability, then the written responses might not provide accurate information on the student's comprehension. Our goal in this assessment is to measure reading ability, not the capacity to answer comprehension questions in writing.

How often should the HIP Reading Assessment be administered?

We recommend administering the HIP Reading Assessment at each reporting period. This will provide information on how well the student has progressed over the school year. It will also allow you to refocus on the strategies a child may need as the year proceeds.

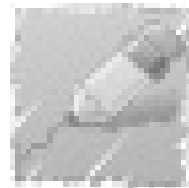
How long should I wait before providing a word for a student during the oral reading section?

Approximately five seconds is a good guideline. Give the student every chance to solve the word on his own. You might suggest to "give it a try" or "make a guess," but resist the temptation to teach during the oral reading. The key is to avoid interrupting the flow of the reading too much.

Is it reasonable to prompt a student to give more complete answers?

Absolutely. Many students pride themselves on giving taciturn or flippant answers. By prompting, you encourage them to respond more thoroughly and provide support from the text.

HIP Three-Minute Reading Check



The HIP Three-Minute Reading Check gives a rough approximation of a child's reading level by using a set of graded sentences as a warm-up and a selection of brief text passages to give a firmer indication of actual independent reading level. It does not replace a full-scale assessment such as the graded passages in this book, but it can be administered very quickly. The Three-Minute Reading Check can also be used to determine where to begin the full-scale assessment passages in this book.

There are two pages to be used by the student and two pages with reading levels and commentary for use by the teacher.

The first section of this instrument is a warm-up for students and a rough placement indicator for teachers. By listening to a student read these six sentences aloud, a teacher can hear how he or she attacks difficult words and get a sense of his or her frustration level. By placing the words in context — both in the sentences and as part of a themed group — we feel students have a more realistic assessment activity than they would by tackling a list of random words at various grade levels.

The second section involves passage reading. The passages begin at a grade-2 level and rise in difficulty by half grade increments to a grade-7 level. These levels are marked on the teacher version of the reading check.

Some notes on administration:

- For good readers, there is no sense in beginning with the first passage. Use the information from section one to determine an appropriate starting point.
- For very weak readers, those who struggle with the first reading passage, we suggest finding an alternate assessment.
- In our experience, reluctant readers have difficulty reading aloud and simultaneously comprehending the text they have just read. (This is true, to a lesser extent, for competent adult readers, as well.) While you may be tempted to ask a comprehension question after a passage, the answer you receive will tell you very little. It's better to use the full-scale assessment to determine comprehension skills.
- Fewer than three miscues or hesitations in a particular passage indicates that a book at that level might be a good starting point for the full HIP Reading Assessment
- Students will often point out their own level if asked, "What passage did you feel most comfortable reading?"

HIP Three-Minute Reading Check

Name: _____

These sentences are all about cars and trucks. Please read each sentence out loud.

1. Our new truck is on the street.
2. My dad's old car gave him a lot of trouble.
3. When dad went to get a new car, he visited many dealers.
4. At last, my dad had to choose between a fully equipped truck and an enormous SUV.
5. While the choice may seem quite simple, my father thought long and hard before he made his decision.
6. Certainly the SUV offered many advantages, but the final comparison made his ultimate decision remarkably easy.

Now read out loud these passages from actual novels.

7. Sara loved the summer. She loved the warm summer air. She loved the chance to skip rope with her friends. She loved waking up and *not* going to school.
8. In the dark tunnel, both boys looked at each other. Scott was shaking from the cold, or from fear, or both. Rico was shaking too, and breathing hard.
"You know what I think?" Rico said at last.
"What?"
"I think we better get out of here, like fast."
9. In front of us was a white shape, the shape of a man – but not a *living* man. We could almost see through the shape, which was like a tower of dust or a plume of smoke. But the shape was neither dust nor smoke. It had a head, arms, legs and a body. It was real, but not something from this world.

10. A flash of lightning seemed to hit right in front of us.
 “That was a little too close for comfort,” the pilot said as the thunder boomed. There was a lot of white noise in our headsets. Each time there was a flash of lightning, it got a little worse.
 Then there was another bright flash followed quickly by a very loud clap of thunder. It was so close I was surprised that our plane wasn’t hit.

11. The elevator doors opened to the underground garage. The big greaser still had my arm twisted behind me. Maybe I could pull free, but what then? If I ran for it, the gang would just chase me down, or the thug would shoot me.
 “Over there,” the Candyman said, pointing to the far wall.
 The greaser pushed me forward before I was ready to move. I stumbled and started to fall, but he held my arm tight.

12. “This is a stupid way to die,” Connor said to Sam.
 But there was nothing Sam could do to stop Connor’s grumbling. Nor could he help much with the fear that lay beneath his words.
 Connor wasn’t used to the harsh land or the freezing cold of the Arctic winds. He was used to roaring out on his snowmobile, taking what he wanted, then racing back to the warmth of his house. Now, what little warmth they had wouldn’t last long in the coming storm.

13. “You guys are ...” I looked at all of them, and then shouted more swear words than I ever knew were in me.
 I don’t know how long my swearing would have continued, but Nick came over and stopped it with a sucker punch right to my gut. The pain shot through me, sizzling and white. When Nick landed his second punch, to my face, I fell to the floor.

14. The old lady set the burlap sack down on the ground and untied the drawstring. The cloth fell down and revealed the most amazing thing –a transparent skull. It was almost the size of a person’s head, shaped like a real skull, but perfectly clear. It had carved indentations for eyes and an opening where a nose would have been. But the scariest part was the teeth, which were smiling in a really gruesome way.

HIP Three-Minute Reading Check

This test is a quick and easy assessment tool to be used when you need a fast way to match a reader with appropriate reading material. It will give a fairly accurate grade level result when administered orally. It is not a substitute for a full-scale achievement test or a full oral reading assessment. Duration: 2-5 minutes, depending on the reader.

1. Our new truck is on the street. (Grade 1.5)
2. My dad's old car gave him a lot of trouble. (Grade 2.5)
3. When dad went to get a new car, he visited many dealers. (Grade 3.5)
4. At last, my dad had to choose between a fully equipped truck and an enormous SUV. (Grade 4.5)
5. While the choice may seem quite simple, my father thought long and hard before he made his decision. (Grade 5.5)
6. Certainly the SUV offered many advantages, but the final comparison made his ultimate decision remarkably easy. (Grade 7+)

*This **warm-up activity** will give you some sense where to begin and end the passage reading that follows. The **approximate** grade level of each sentence is given, but this is only a rough indicator. **Listen** for decoding strategies on difficult words. Does the student **sound out**, ask for help, **guess** or **give up**? Does he or she look for **word clues** in the sentence? Does he or she use a **finger pointer**?*

-
7. Sara loved the summer. She loved the warm summer air. She loved the chance to skip rope with her friends. She loved waking up and **not** going to school. (Grade 2.2 – adapted from *What a Story!*)
 8. In the dark tunnel, both boys looked at each other. Scott was shaking from the cold, or from fear, or both. Rico was shaking too, and breathing hard.
 “You know what I think?” Rico said at last.
 “What?”
 “I think we better get out of here, like fast.” (Grade 2.8, from *Three Feet Under*)
 9. In front of us was a white shape, the shape of a man –but not a **living** man. We could almost see through the shape, which was like a tower of dust or a plume of smoke. But the shape was neither dust nor smoke. It had a head, arms, legs and a body. It was real, but not something from this world. (Grade 3.2 from *Ghost House*)

*These selections are all from Paul Kropp novels. If a student can read a passage with reasonable fluency he will be comfortable with reading a book at that level. This is his or her “**independent**” reading level.*

*When a student is making **five** miscues, or beginning to lose the meaning of the passage, then that passage is at the “**instructional**” level. A book at this level can be handled with some teacher or tutor assistance.*

These selections are all from HIP novels. The readability of these books varies from grade 2.0 to grade 4.0, but we find that interest in the topic is often more important than a precise match of reading level.

Often you can ask a student which section felt most comfortable to read. The student usually knows his own "independent" level.

Selections 13 and 14 are from *The Countess and Me*, a typical YA novel in terms of reading difficulty. Sections of this book range from grade 3 to grade 12 in readability, though these two are at a grade 5-7 level. While interest may sustain a reluctant reader in such a book, he'll need help with some difficult vocabulary and concepts.

10. A flash of lightning seemed to hit right in front of us. "That was a little too close for comfort," the pilot said as the thunder boomed. There was a lot of white noise in our headsets. Each time there was a flash of lightning, it got a little worse.

Then there was another bright flash followed quickly by a very loud clap of thunder. It was so close that I was surprised that the plane wasn't hit. (Grade 3.8 from *Our Plane is Down*)

11. The elevator doors opened to the underground garage. The big greaser still had my arm twisted behind me. Maybe I could pull free, but what then? If I ran for it, the gang would just chase me down, or the thug would shoot me.

"Over there," the Candyman said, pointing to the far wall.

The greaser pushed me forward before I was ready to move. I stumbled and started to fall, but he held my arm tight. (Grade 4.2 from *Student Narc*)

12. "This is a stupid way to die," Connor said to Sam.

But there was nothing Sam could do to stop Connor's grumbling. Nor could he help much with the fear that lay beneath his words.

Connor wasn't used to the harsh land or the freezing cold of the Arctic winds. He was used to roaring out on his snowmobile, taking what he wanted, then racing back to the warmth of his house. Now, what little warmth they had wouldn't last long in the coming storm. (Grade 4.8, adapted to add reading difficulty, from *Caught in the Blizzard*)

13. You guys are ..." I looked at all of them, and then shouted more swear words than I ever knew were in me.

I don't know how long my swearing would have continued, but Nick came over and stopped it with a sucker punch right to my gut. The pain shot through me, sizzling and white. When Nick landed his second punch, to my face, I fell to the floor. (Grade 5.5 from *The Countess and Me*)

14. The old lady set the burlap sack down on the ground and untied the drawstring. The cloth fell down and revealed the most amazing thing—a transparent skull. It was almost the size of a person's head, shaped like a real skull, but perfectly clear. It had carved indentations for eyes and an opening where a nose would have been. But the scariest part was the teeth, which were smiling in a really gruesome way. (Grade 6.5 from *The Countess and Me*)

Graded Reading Assessment Passages



Lost in the Snow

Rory just lay in the snow. This was bad. When you get really frozen, you start to give up like that. You shiver and get dizzy and give up. And then you freeze to death.

So I bent over him and grabbed his sleeves. “Get up, you jerk,” I shouted at him. “I can see the house!” That was a lie, but I had to do something.

“You can?” Rory asked.

“Yeah, just come with me,” I told him.

So I got Rory moving again – with a lie. There was no light up ahead. But I knew we had to keep moving. If we just lay down, we’d be dead.

“We’re almost there,” I said, lying some more.

Rory didn’t speak. We just kept moving forward – towards nothing. The snow swirled in the wind. The dark night made the world all black with white flecks. There was nothing – nothing at all.

Until I saw a dark shape.

PASSAGE 20: “Lost in the Snow” (First 102 words)

Student’s Name:

Date:

	SUBSTITUTIONS	INSERTIONS	OMISSIONS	TEACHER TOLD	SELF-CORRECTIONS	SIGNIFICANT MISCUES
Introduction: <i>Rory and Bill are lost in the snow at night. What problems do you think they might have?</i>						
Rory just lay in the snow. This was bad.						
When you get really frozen,						
you start to give up like that.						
You shiver and get dizzy and give up.						
And then you freeze to death.						
So I bent over him and grabbed his sleeves.						
“Get up, you jerk,” I shouted at him.						
“I can see the house!”						
That was a lie, but I had to do something.						
“You can?” Rory asked.						
“Yeah, just come with me,” I told him.						
So I got Rory moving again – with a lie.						
There was no light up ahead.						
But I knew we had to keep moving.						

ANECDOTAL NOTES:

Total Miscues _____
Significant Miscues _____

- Independent Level: 0–5 miscues
- Instructional Level: 6–10 miscues
- Frustration Level: 11+ miscues

Comprehension Check: “Lost in the Snow”

1. **LITERAL:** What lie did Bill tell Rory? (*that he could see the house, that they’re almost there*)
2. **LITERAL:** Why was Bill worried about Rory? (*he was lying down in the snow*)
3. **VOCABULARY:** What were the white *flecks*? (*snow flakes*)
4. **INFERENTIAL:** Where do you think Rory and Bill are going? (*to try to find shelter, to find help, to find a house*)
5. **INFERENTIAL:** Why did Bill tell Rory a lie? (*so he would keep on going, so he wouldn’t give up*)
6. **SYNTHESIS:** What do you think the dark shape might be? Why do you think so? (*accept any logical response – a house, a person.*)

RETELLING NOTES

COMPREHENSION ANALYSIS:

Literal: ____/2 Vocabulary ____/1 Inference ____/2 Synthesis ____/1

____ Independent Level 5-6 correct or Excellent retelling

____ Instructional Level 3-4 correct or Adequate retelling

____ Frustration Level 0-2 correct or Inadequate retelling



“Lost in the Snow” is an excerpt from *The Crash* by Paul Kropp. The complete passage is 157 words long. Comprehension questions are based on the entire passage.

Questions on “Lost in the Snow”

_____ name

Answer each of these questions on the passage “Lost in the Snow.” Give as complete an answer as you can. Offer proof from the passage when the question asks for it.

What lie did Bill tell Rory?

Why was Bill worried about Rory?

What were the white *flecks*?

Where do you think Rory and Bill are going?

Why did Bill tell Rory a lie?

What do you think the dark shape might be? Why do you think so?