

## Standard Reading Assessment

-overview

-sample passages, grades 4-9

Including passages from **Reading and Responding** - Jeroski, Brownlie, and Kaser (Nelson Canada Publishers) and

**Assessment and Instruction of ESL Learners** - Brownlie, Feniak, and McCarthy (Portage and Main Publishers) (gr. 9 passage)

-as described in **Student Diversity** - Brownlie, Feniak (Pembroke Publishers)

-a classroom reading assessment tool, useful in monitoring student progress and planning for instruction guided by the **B.C. Performance Standards for Reading**

[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom\\_assessment/perf\\_stands](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/perf_stands)

## OVERVIEW:

1. Students each receive a common passage of text to read - a poem, an informational text, or a narrative. After eliciting background knowledge, they are invited to read the passage, circle any words which they don't know, and begin the response sheet.

2. While the students are reading, the teacher(s) move from student to student listening to them read and recording on the student's sheet how well the student read. The teacher(s) notices:

omissions

repetitions

substitutions

insertions

reversal

dk don't know (gave word)

s/c self-corrects

Before handing the student's text back, the teacher writes a compliment on the text, about the student's oral reading.

3. Once the students have completed their responses, and all have had a chance to read orally, the responses are collected and the teacher(s) score them using the Quick Scale of the Reading Performance Standards - Reading Literature or Reading for Information. Each student has an overview sheet (B.C. Performance Standards) for the year, which tracks their reading development from month to month, with different colours of highlighter pen for each month. The patterns that emerge from this scoring then become the focus of instruction.

4. One effective way to change student performance is to develop criteria for powerful response with the students. To do this, the teacher chooses 4 or 5 responses that demonstrate different kinds of strengths, from a wide range of students.

- The students can work as a whole class, or be grouped in talking partners.
- *I've chosen specific response samples because of something that really worked. I'd like you to read what is written (or drawn) and as a class we will decide what strikes us.* Student samples are displayed on the overhead.
- *What is powerful in this response?*
- As students describe what is powerful, the teacher records this on the chalkboard or the overhead. This is the beginning of the criteria development. It is important to have students share their reasons for each powerful idea.
- After several responses have been analyzed, the students can use the criteria to self-assess and to set a personal reading response goal for the next month.
- The criteria list is 'tidied up' and rewritten with samples (like two column notes) and posted for reference during other response events in the class.

5. The Next Month...

- Students revisit the criteria. The teacher may have chosen a different genre for the assessment. Before the assessment begins, the students review the criteria with the teacher and add or delete items that will better match the different genre or the specific response task.
- The assessment process is repeated. Students are invited to think about criteria prior to reading: *When you show you understand, using your ideas, feelings, and images, what will you keep in mind?*
- Following the process, they are invited to look back at their response and notice which of the criteria they have achieved. *What will you keep in mind for next month?*

## A few hints on administration of the Standard Reading Assessment:

- Inform the students of the topic to be read BEFORE they read. Give them some time to think about what they know already, even exchange ideas with a partner. This will activate their background knowledge, a skill important to effective reading. I would also tell them about the importance of background knowledge and how effective readers activate it before reading to improve their understanding. (The assessment process should mirror, as much as possible, effective teaching and learning.)
- Explain the coding system for recording miscues to intermediate/middle years students, as a class, BEFORE reading. Explain that you will be marking down HOW they read, and that these marks do not all reflect errors. This allows them to focus on their reading, not on what you are marking down.
- Plan on SHORT, practiced, oral reading samples - a paragraph of so is plenty. You do not need a 100 word sample.
- Be sure you give the students a CLEAN copy of the text to read. This allows you to mark on their copy (assessment should have NO secrets from those involved) and allows you to see what, if any, words have been circled by the student.
- I always tell the students that this is NOT an assessment for marks. It is an assessment to inform me of what to teach next.
- Typically I begin the year with information reading rather than narrative.
- The response question for information reading for all students (grade 4 and above) could be "Using your ideas, images and feelings, show me you understand." Write this question on the board, then brainstorm with them for possible ways they could respond. They can, of course, choose to respond in more than one way i.e., cartooning and a web. Alternatively, an open-ended response sheet focusing on connecting with background knowledge, summarizing, inferencing, and reflecting is included.

A more complete description of this assessment process is found in Student Diversity - Brownlie and Feniak, 1998, Pembroke Publishers.

## Response Sheet - Intermediate

1. **Connections** - How does what you read, connect with what you already knew?

2. **Summarizing** - Choose a way to show the main ideas and details in what you read.

3. Inferencing - Read between the lines to find something that you believe to be true, but that isn't actually said. Explain your reasoning.

4. Reflecting - Was this easy or hard? How did you help yourself understand?