

METHODS FOR MEASURING THE CHILD'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ANNUAL GOALS

Curriculum Based Assessment

The CBA provides a structured way to see how well a child performs on the materials the teacher is assigning the class. The assumption is that if we want to know whether children are progressing in reading and writing, then we should observe (or count) their behavior as they read and write in school, and we should collect this data as often as feasible so that we quickly know whether a child is making progress or falling behind.

Witt, J. C., Elliot, S. N., Daly III, E. J., Gresham, F. M., & Kramer, J. J. (1998). *Assessment of at-risk and special needs children*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Examples might include: Probes using brief reading passages, short spelling lists, samples of math items from the curriculum, etc.

Portfolios

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas of the curriculum. The collection must include the following:

- Student participation in selecting contents.
- Criteria for selection.
- Criteria for judging merits.
- Evidence of a student's self-reflection.

It should represent a collection of students' best work or best efforts, student-selected samples of work experiences related to outcomes being assessed, and documents according growth and development toward mastering identified outcomes.

Paulson, F.L. Paulson, P.R. and Meyer, CA. (1991, February). "What Makes a Portfolio a Portfolio?" *Educational Leadership*, pp. 60-63.

Why Use a Portfolio?

In this new era of performance assessment related to the monitoring of students' mastery of a core curriculum, portfolios can enhance the assessment process by revealing a range of skills and understandings on students' parts; support instructional goals; reflect change and growth over a period of time; encourage student, teacher, and parent reflection; and provide for continuity in education from one year to the next. Instructors can use them for a variety of specific purposes, including:

- Encouraging self-directed learning.
- Enlarging the view of what is learned.
- Fostering learning about learning.
- Demonstrating progress toward identified outcomes.
- Creating an intersection for instruction and assessment.
- Providing a way for students to value themselves as learners.
- Offering opportunities for peer-supported growth.

Observations/Anecdotal records

An observation is an informal visual assessment of student learning. It has a beginning and ending time. They are often filled out on a specific form/checklist/data collection form.

Anecdotal records are the **written observations** – word for word, action for action – of exactly what a child is doing and saying. It is like a transcript on an event, series of events or even throughout the day. These are similar to an observation but have more description.

An **observer should have a sense of purpose** and a question or two that she is looking to answer in the observations. When observing, **make sure to take notes as best you can during the session**. The more time that passes, the more data you will not recollect. Add your own impressions and questions, but be careful about drawing conclusions about motivation. You cannot observe why someone does something, you can only observe what they do. Remember: **descriptions are factual, accurate, and thorough**. Notes avoid judging the participants (e.g. “student X was bored”) and instead relies on what can be seen and known (e.g. “student X had her eyes closed and head on desk throughout class”).

Short-Cycle Assessments

Short-cycle assessments are tests given several times over the course of the school year with the intention of preparing students for the high-stakes test. Almost all states give a test designed to assess students on what they have learned based on the content standards that state has deemed necessary. These tests can take many different formats including written responses, multiple-choice, or a demonstration of learning.

A short-cycle assessment is one type of formative assessment that is designed to mimic the state test, while at the same time providing important information to ensure every student’s success in learning the academic content standards.

The Benefits of Short-Cycle Assessments

- Short-cycle assessments will help you find out exactly where each of your students fall with regards to the Content Standards in your state, and therefore better prepare them for the high-stakes test.
- Short-cycle assessments will give you information ahead of time, instead of waiting until the results of the high-stakes tests come out.
- Short-cycle assessments can show a year’s growth by comparing last year’s assessment scores with this year’s assessment scores.
- Short-cycle assessments require an enduring understanding of the material that has been taught.
- Short-cycle assessments show teaching strengths and areas for improvement.
- Short-cycle assessments are what is best for kids—bottom line.

Performance Assessments

Performance assessment, also known as alternative or authentic assessment, is a form of testing that requires students to perform a task rather than select an answer from a ready-made list. You need to structure the way of scoring the assessment before hand.

- **Open-ended or extended response exercises** are questions or other prompts that require students to explore a topic orally or in writing. Students might be asked to describe their observations from a science experiment, or present arguments an historic character would make concerning a particular proposition. For example, what would Abraham Lincoln argue about the causes of the Civil War?
- **Extended tasks** are assignments that require sustained attention in a single work area and are carried out over several hours or longer. Such tasks could include drafting, reviewing, and revising a poem; conducting and explaining the results of a science experiment on photosynthesis; or even painting a car in auto shop.
- **Portfolios** are selected collections of a variety of performance-based work. A portfolio might include a student's "best pieces" and the student's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of several pieces. The portfolio may also contain some "works in progress" that illustrate the improvements the student has made over time.

Checklists

A checklist developed by Hudson, Lane and Pullen (2005, p. 707) provides a more detailed assessment of a student's prosody:

- ✓ Student placed vocal emphasis on appropriate words.
- ✓ Student's voice tone rose and fell at appropriate points in the text.
- ✓ Student's inflection reflected the punctuation in the text (e.g., voice tone rose near the end of a question).
- ✓ In narrative text with dialogue, student used appropriate vocal tone to represent characters' mental states, such as excitement, sadness, fear, or confidence.
- ✓ Student used punctuation to pause appropriately at phrase boundaries.
- ✓ Student used prepositional phrases to pause appropriately at phrase boundaries.
- ✓ Student used subject-verb divisions to pause appropriately at phrase boundaries.
- ✓ Student used conjunctions to pause appropriately at phrase boundaries.

Running Records

A running record allows you to assess a student's reading performance as she/he reads from a benchmark book. Benchmark books are books selected for running record assessment purposes. A running record form, with text from the book printed on the form, accompanies each of the benchmark books. Only the first 100 -150 words of the longer benchmark books are used for the upper level running records.

*see example provided

Work Samples

A variety of student work completed may be chose from that would best show the level of skill a student can display.

Inventories

Inventories such as *The Basic Reading Inventory (Johns- BRI)*, *The Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI)*, *The Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)*, *the Stieglitz Informal Reading Inventory (SIRI)*, *the Ekwall/Shanker Reading Inventory*, and *the Burns-Roe Reading Inventory* are individually administered tools designed to determine a student's approximate independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels and abilities. They are composed of a series of graded word lists and graded passages to help teachers gain insight into students' reading behaviors and determine a student's oral, silent and listening levels.

Rubrics

A rubric is an authentic assessment tool used to measure students' work. It is a scoring guide that seeks to evaluate a student's performance based on the sum of a full range of criteria rather than a single numerical score. A rubric is a working guide for students and teachers, usually handed out before the assignment begins in order to get students to think about the criteria on which their work will be judged. Rubrics can be analytic or holistic, and they can be created for any content area.

Rubrics offer several **advantages**.

- Rubrics improve student performance by clearly showing the student how their work will be evaluated and what is expected.
- Rubrics help students become better judges of the quality of their own work.
- Rubrics allow assessment to be more objective and consistent.
- Rubrics force the teacher to clarify his/her criteria in specific terms.
- Rubrics reduce the amount of time teachers spend evaluating student work.
- Rubrics promote student awareness about the criteria to use in assessing peer performance.
- Rubrics provide useful feedback to the teacher regarding the effectiveness of the instruction.
- Rubrics provide students with more informative feedback about their strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- Rubrics accommodate heterogeneous classes by offering a range of quality levels.
- Rubrics are easy to use and easy to explain.

Fluency Rubric:

National Assessment of Educational Progress Fluency Scale

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| Fluent | Level 4 | Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the story. Preservation of the author's syntax is consistent. some or most of the story is read with expressive interpretation. |
| Fluent | Level 3 | Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups. Some small groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Little or no expressive interpretation is present. |
| Non-Fluent | Level 2 | Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger |

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| | | context of sentence or passage |
| Non-Fluent | Level 1 | Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax. |

This document/product/software was supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, (Award #Q27A090111A, CFDA 84.027A, awarded to the Ohio Department of Education). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, and no official endorsement by the Department should be inferred.

