C.I.A.
Collect - Interpret - Apply

Novel Study
Orphan Archetype
Running Records

For the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*

The Secret Garden
The False Prince
Anne of Green Gables
Oliver Twist

Sarah Collinge

**Read
Side by Side**

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Running Records

A running record is an informal assessment that helps teachers determine the students' reading level and gain some insight into their oral reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension (Clay, 2013). Running records are valuable because they offer an opportunity to hear students read, establish rapport, and determine their strengths and weaknesses.

To conduct an assessment, ask a student to read a short passage from the selected trade book. As the student reads, you will

- record errors,
- time the student's reading rate,
- make notes on prosody, and
- assess the student's comprehension.

This will yield immediate data. If the student reads the book excerpt with reasonable accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, you can match the student to the same text during instruction.

The directions that follow will guide you through the process of administering these running record assessments and analyzing the results.

Administering the Running Record Test

To prepare to give a running record test:

1. Copy the running record form and cover sheet for the novel the student will be reading. You also will need a copy of the novel for the student to read from, a timing device, and a pencil. (*Optional:* Use a recording device to capture the running record conference on an audio file.)
2. Make sure the student is comfortable and relaxed.
3. Provide the student with information about the selected title (use the script provided).
4. Tell the student to read from the paperback novel, then turn on the timing device. You will stop timing at a designated point, but the student will continue to read the rest of the passage silently.
5. Note on the running record form miscues or errors the student makes.
6. Record the total time needed to read the designated portion of the passage.
7. Instruct the student to continue reading the selected excerpt silently.
8. When the student has finished reading, continue testing the student's comprehension.
9. Finish scoring the assessment and determine which book the student will be matched to in book club.

Accuracy

Noting a student's miscues or errors as she reads aloud at least 200 words from the selected book will give you a reading accuracy score that can be used to determine whether the student is independent, instructional, or frustrational. A text that a student reads with 98% accuracy is one that she easily could read independently. A text that a student reads with 90–97% accuracy presents more challenge; she can read the text when instructional supports are provided or when the text is of high interest. A text that a student reads with less than 90% accuracy often causes frustration and typically is avoided.

A miscue is any omission, substitution, insertion, or teacher-assisted word. Miscues are subtracted from the total number of words read to get the total number of words read correctly.

You will use the provided Quick-Sheet Guide for Scoring Running Records.

Fluency

To evaluate a student's fluency score, you will use the provided fluency benchmarks based on national fluency norms (Hasbrouk & Tindal, 2017). If a fifth grader reads at a rate of 97 words per minute correct (WCPM) in the fall, that student then scores at the 25th percentile. Such a score suggests that the student is having difficulty with fluency, which may stem from several causes. Fluency is disrupted when students struggle with word recognition, vocabulary, comprehension, or they are just processing the text slowly. As the norms indicate, a student's fluency should increase throughout the school year.

Comprehension

It is not enough to know whether a student is a fluent reader: you also must determine whether the student understands what he reads. The second part of the running record test will assess the student's comprehension of the passage, both the part read orally and the part read silently.

The student will have the opportunity to score a total of fifteen points on the comprehension assessment. The first five questions examine the student's literal understanding of the text—what the text says. The next three questions explore the student's inferential thinking about character feelings and motives, predictions, and the ability to infer a word's meaning from the context. Each question has a point value, and inferential questions are assigned a higher value than literal ones.

The running record provides the questions, suggested answers, and a place to record checkmarks. We have provided more than one correct answer. It is not necessary for a student to note all of the details about a main character to receive full credit for an answer. Note four special rules for scoring comprehension:

1. The student does not score a point for each item checked.
2. If the student shares an inaccurate detail, note the inaccuracy, but it will not hinder the student's total score.
3. The student will have an opportunity to score a total of three points for telling about the plot: one point for an event from the beginning of the excerpt, one point for an event from the middle, and one point for an event from the end of the excerpt.
4. If a student struggles to give an answer, provide wait time, repeat the question, and provide wait time again. If the student still is unable to give an answer, score the student a zero and move on to the next question.

The student has a good understanding of the text if she earns 75% of the possible comprehension points (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). The student's comprehension is weak if she earns 49% or less of the possible points. Between 74% and 50% is considered borderline. The book will be an appropriate fit so long as a peer or the teacher provides extra support.

We provide a cover sheet for recording your student's accuracy, fluency and comprehension scores, as well as guidelines for matching students to text.

For more information on assessment, please purchase the book
The Assessment and Intervention Guide for the Read Side by Side Reading Program
by Peter Dewitz and Sarah Collinge.
You will find this book at http://www.shop.readsidebyside.com.

Quick-Sheet Guide for Scoring Running Records—Sample

Running Record Directions—Quick Sheet

Recording miscues:
- Omission: Circle/cross out the words.
- Insertion: Add a caret and write in the student's response above the word.
- Substitution: Draw a line through the word and write the substituted word above.
- Teacher help: Write a T above the word. (Wait 3 seconds before telling the word.)

Also record:
- Repetitions: Draw a line below/above the repeated word(s).
- Self-Correction: Next to the miscue write SC.

The figure below gives you an example of how to record miscues.

LINE OF TEXT WITH NOTES	TYPE	# OF MISCUES
Until I was nearly eleven, until the letter came, life	Omission	1
all ^ was just normal. There were four of us in the	Insertion	1
mom house: my mother, my father, me, and Stella—	Substitution	1
Stella Artois, that is, my one-ear-up and one-ear	Repetition	0
T. down black-and-white sheepdog, who always seemed	Teacher help	1
to know what was about to happen before it did.		0
fort SC But even she could not have foreseen how that letter	Substitution	1
was going to change our lives forever.		0

Special rules:
- A word that is self-corrected still counts as a miscue.
- If a student omits an entire line of text or section of text, count it as only one miscue. Subtract the total number of words skipped from the total word count.
- If a student makes the same error several times and the error does not change the meaning, count it as just one error (this is particularly true for the misreading of names).
- If a student repeats a word or phrase, this repetition does not count as a miscue.
- Omissions of punctuation do not count as a miscue.

Fluency Benchmarks

GRADE		PERCENTILE	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
7	Independent	50th and above	124 ≥	132 ≥	146 ≥
	Instructional	25th–49th	118–123	126–131	140–145
	Frustrational	24th and below	117 ≤	125 ≤	139 ≤
8	Independent	50th and above	129 ≥	142 ≥	146 ≥
	Instructional	25th–49th	123–128	136–141	141–145
	Frustrational	24th and below	122 ≤	135 ≤	140 ≤

Note. Table is used by permission from Hasbrouk and Tindal, 2017.

Guidelines for Matching Students to Text

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS	PLACEMENT
The student reads the text above grade level.	The student is independent or instructional in *all* three categories.	Place the student in the text above grade level.
	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Retest using the text on grade level.
The student reads the text on grade level.	The student is independent in *all* three categories.	Place the student in the text above grade level.
	The student is a combination of independent and instructional, or *all* three categories are instructional.	Place the student in the text on grade level.
	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Retest using the text below grade level.
The student reads the text below grade level.	The student is independent in *all* three categories.	Place the student in the text on grade level.
	The student is a combination of independent and instructional, or *all* three categories are instructional.	Place the student in the text below grade level.
	The student is frustrational in one or more categories.	Place the student in the text below level and add additional instruction and scaffolding.
The student completes the first book club in the low text and shows little or no progress.	The student continues to score frustrational in one or more categories *and* is making little or no progress.	Consider an alternate, lower text of the same genre/topic/theme.

Running Record Cover Sheet

Student Name:_____ Date: _____

Name of Proctor: _____

Title of Book:_____ Level: Below / On / Above

ACCURACY - % OF WORDS READ CORRECTLY		
Independent	**Instructional**	**Frustrational**
98% or more	90 - 97%	89% or less
Accuracy Formula # words - # of miscues = # words read correctly / # of words X 100 = % of Words Read Correctly _____ - _____ = _____ / _____ X 100 = _____% of Words Read Correctly		

FLUENCY - % OF WORDS CORRECT PER MINUTE (WCPM)		
Independent	**Instructional**	**Frustrational**
50th percentile or above	49th - 25th percentile	24th percentile or below
Fluency Formula # of words - number of errors X 60 = _____ / # of seconds = WCPM _____ - _____ X 60 = _____ / _____ = _____WCPM **Grade Level Fluency Norms** (Tindal & Hasbrouck, 2017)		

COMPREHENSION - % OF CORRECT ANSWERS		
Independent	**Instructional**	**Frustrational**
75% correct or above	50 - 74% correct	49% correct or below
Comprehension Formula # of points earned / number of points possible X 100 = % of Correct Answers _____ / _____ = _____% of Correct Answers		

Reads in meaningful phrase groups: ___ Consistently ___ Inconsistently ___ Rarely ___No
Reads with expression: ___ Consistently ___ Inconsistently ___ Rarely ___No
Recommended Placement: Below / On / Above

Materials Needed:

The student will need a copy of the book being read (*Oliver Twist*).

The teacher will need a timer (stopwatch setting), scoring sheet, and pencil.

Before Administering

Make sure your student is comfortable and relaxed.

ORAL READING—PROSODY

Tell the student:

You will be reading a section from the chapter book Oliver Twist. *Part of the book you will read aloud to me and part of the book you will read silently. When you have finished reading, you will tell me about what you have read. Do you have any questions?*

This is a story in which the main character, Oliver Twist, is an orphan. Chapter two opens with Oliver going to live at a workhouse. The woman who runs the workhouse takes some of the money meant for the children's food and keeps it for herself.

You will begin reading chapter two starting on page 5.

Turn on the timing device. Record oral reading miscues.

2

The parish authorities resolved that Oliver should be (8)

'farmed', or, in other words, that he should be dispatch- (17)

ed to a branch-workhouse some three miles off, where twenty (28)

or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws rolled (38)

about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too (48)

much food or too much clothing, under the parental super- (57)

intendence of an elderly female who received the culprits (66)

at and for the consideration of sevenpence-halfpenny per (75)

small head per week. Sevenpence-halfpenny's worth per (83)

week is a good round diet for a child; a great deal may be (97)

got for sevenpence-halfpenny – quite enough to overload (105)

its stomach, and make it uncomfortable. The elderly female (114)

was a woman of wisdom and experience; she knew what (124)

was good for children, and she had a very accurate percep- (134)

tion of what was good for herself. So, she appropriated the (145)

greater part of the weekly stipend to her own use, and (156)

consigned the rising parochial generation to even a shorter (165)

allowance than was originally provided for them. (172)

Unfortunately, at the very moment when a child had (181)

---

contrived to exist upon the smallest possible portion of the (191)

weakest possible food, it did perversely happen in eight and (201)

a half cases out of ten, either that it sickened from want and (214)

cold, or fell into the fire from neglect, or got half smoth- (225)

ered by accident; in any of which cases, the miserable (235)

little being was usually summoned into another world, and (244)

there gathered to the fathers it had never known in this. (255)

Time: _____

SILENT READING—COMPREHENSION

Tell the student:

Now you are going to read to the middle of page 8, stopping after ". . . and Mr. Bumble smiled."
When you are finished, raise your hand and I will ask you to tell me about what you read. Do you have any questions?

After the student has finished reading, tell the student:

Now I am going to ask you some questions about what you've read. Pretend that I don't know anything about the story.

Characters:

1. *Who is the main character in the story?* _____/**1**
    Please tell me a little bit about the main character. _____/**1**

    _____ Oliver Twist

    _____ An orphan

    _____ 9-years old

    _____ Pale and thin

    _____ Hungry

2. *Who are the other characters in the story?* (2+ characters = 2 pts.) _____/**2**

    _____ Mrs. Mann (elderly female, superintendent of the workhouse)

    _____ Mr. Bumble (the beadle, a police officer)

    _____ Parish orphans (children, juvenile offenders)

Setting:

3. *Where does the story take place?* _____/**1**

    _____ A workhouse

    _____ A farm (in the country)

Plot:

4. *What is happening in the story?* (events from the beginning/middle/end) _____/**3**

Beginning

    _____ Oliver Twist is sent to a workhouse.

    _____ The overseer, Mrs. Mann, takes part of each child's stipend for herself.

    _____ The children are starved, sick, and cold.

Middle

_____ It is Oliver's ninth birthday.

_____ Oliver is locked away in the coal cellar as a punishment for being hungry.

_____ Mrs. Mann is startled when Mr. Bumble, the beadle, comes to the gate.

End

_____ Mrs. Mann has Oliver removed from the coal cellar and washed up.

_____ Mr. Bumble is mad that Mrs. Mann kept him waiting.

_____ Mrs. Mann invites Mr. Bumble into the parlour.

5. *What is the problem in the book?* _____/**1**

_____ Oliver and the other orphans are mistreated, malnourished, and neglected.

Inferential Questions:

6. *How does Mrs. Mann get away with treating the orphans so poorly? How do you know?* _____/**2**

7. *Why do you think Mr. Bumble has come to the workhouse? Why do you think that?* _____/**2**

8. *What do you think the word "diminutive" means? Why do you think that?* _____/**2**
    "Oliver Twist's ninth birthday found him a pale thin child, somewhat diminutive in stature, and decidedly small in circumference" (p. 6).

Total Comprehension: _____/15

The Assessment and Intervention Guide for the
Read Side by Side Reading Program
### Peter Dewitz & Sarah Collinge, 2020

As a companion to the read-aloud and book club guides, this book inspires teachers as they build assessments into their daily instruction. Formative assessments take the lead, empowering teachers to make instructional decisions, place students accurately in texts appropriate to their level and interest, and provide explicit feedback to move learners forward.

This guide outlines reliable, valid, and useful assessment tools, including:
- surveys of reading motivation and interest;
- observational notes;
- conference forms and scripts;
- standardized assessments;
- running records for each book club title (available online);
- checklists;
- rubrics;
- record-keeping forms; and
- a six-lesson unit preparing students for state testing.

The goal of reading instruction is not only to help students gain comprehension skill, but to ignite their interest and motivation to read. This book complements and is essential to the *Read Side by Side Reading Program*. The intervention strategies give teachers the tools to ensure that all students can succeed with the program, even those who struggle with reading, raising student achievement and increasing students' confidence and competence as readers.

To purchase, please visit
www.shop.readsidebyside.com
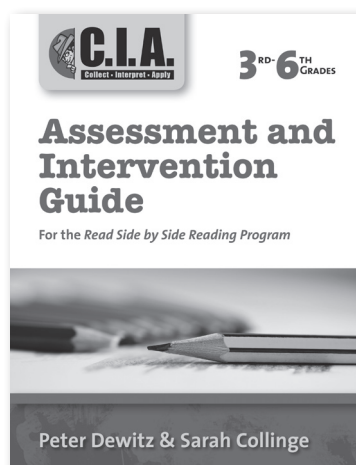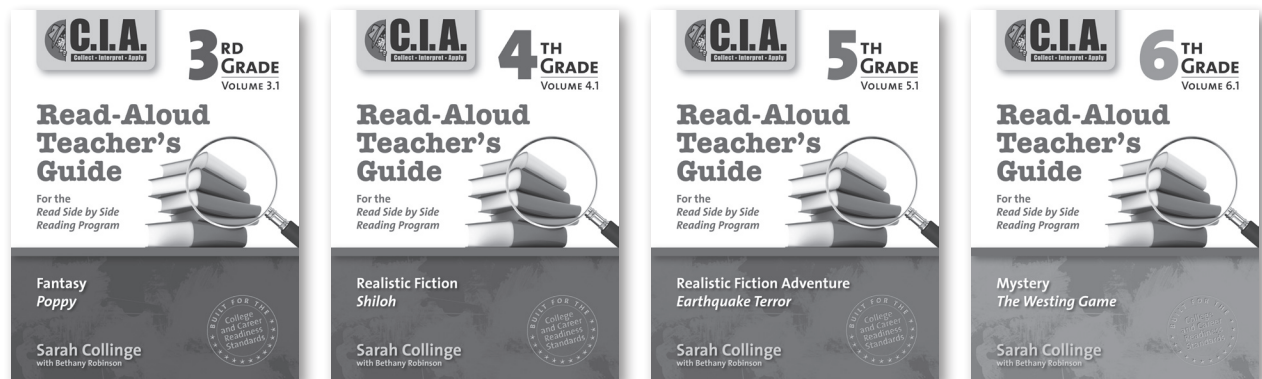
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The *Read Side by Side Reading Program* for grades 3–6 provides a highly motivating curriculum design, tailored specifically to the needs of intermediate students. A 2018 evidence study proves the impact of the program on reading interest and comprehension success. The curriculum is written by classroom teachers to bring a high-quality and easy-to-implement curriculum package. The pride of the program is the use of award-winning trade books to better prepare students for middle-school reading.

To learn more about the program or purchase the program for your classroom, school, or district, please visit:

www.readsidebyside.com

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Contact the Author

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Sarah provides workshops, seminars, and consulting to schools throughout the United States. She frequently presents at national and state reading conferences. To book an appointment with Sarah, email **info@readsidebyside.com** or visit **www.readsidebyside.com**.

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