Accurate, insightful assessment tools to determine independent and instructional reading levels, and plan responsive instruction.
A MESSAGE FROM LITERACY LEADERS
IRENE FOUNTAS AND GAY SU PINNELL
ABOUT THE NEW BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT SYSTEM,
THIRD EDITION

“In our ongoing work in schools, we observed many teachers administering and scoring the Comprehension Conversations in the Benchmark Assessment System, Second Edition. It became clear that gaining strong behavioral evidence of understanding using talk as evidence was new or unfamiliar to many teachers. Many teachers were not having enough opportunity for continuous professional development in standardized administration and scoring. It was clear we needed to create additional guidance and structures to make the administration and scoring more standardized across teachers. Therefore, we created more detailed assessment guidelines. We also created new Comprehension Conversation rubrics to more clearly define the criteria for each comprehension score. With the clear guidelines and rubrics, we are confident that teachers will achieve consistency. The new guidelines and rubrics will enable teachers to sharpen their observation of students’ reading behaviors and strengthen the connection from assessment to instruction. With refinement comes reflection. Reflect on your assessment analysis and observations, and engage in a discussion with colleagues to plan rich and comprehensive literacy experiences that meet learners where they are and bring them forward with intention and precision.”
Fountas & Pinnell
Benchmark Assessment Systems

Assess with accuracy and expertise, and help students achieve literacy growth throughout the year

The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems 1 and 2 accurately and reliably identify the instructional and independent reading levels of students and document their progress through one-on-one formative and summative assessments. The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems (BAS) provide teachers with precise tools and texts to observe and quantify specific reading behaviors, and then interpret and use that data to plan meaningful, responsive instruction.

The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems’ one-on-one assessments enable teachers to:
- determine students’ instructional and independent reading levels
- recommend a placement level for instruction
- form initial groups for reading instruction
- select texts that will be productive for instruction and independent reading
- plan efficient and effective instruction
- identify students who need intervention and extra help
- assess the outcomes of teaching
- monitor and report student progress across a school year and across grade levels
- inform parent conferences.

“The primary purpose of assessment is to gather data to inform teaching. If assessment does not result in improved teaching, then its value in school diminishes greatly.”

— Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
FROM THE ORIGINATORS OF THE F&P TEXT LEVEL GRADIENT™

Fountas and Pinnell have brought a systematic, critical sensibility to all areas of literacy instruction through publications like *Guided Reading*, *Guiding Readers and Writers*, *Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency*, and *Genre Study*. Their widely adopted F&P Text Level Gradient™ and *The Literacy Continuum* are essential resources for understanding students’ literacy development, and for planning targeted instruction to advance that development.

“Assessment must result in informed teaching. Assessment is not teaching; it is gathering information for teaching.”

– Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

© 2012 Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
Designed for Reliable and Insightful Assessment

Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System assessments are conducted one-on-one. In Part 1 of the assessment, the student reads aloud and talks about the system’s original, precisely leveled fiction and nonfiction books while the teacher observes and notes the reader’s behaviors on carefully constructed Recording Forms. In Part 2, the teacher conducts a revealing Comprehension Conversation. In optional Part 3, the student responds to the text using a Writing About Reading prompt.

Engaging and Informative Benchmark Assessment Books

- The Benchmark Assessment Systems include unique, high-quality books developed under the careful direction of Fountas and Pinnell and written expressly for the purposes of literacy assessment along the F&P Text Level Gradient™.

Complete Tools for a Comprehensive Assessment

- The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems provide teachers with precise tools and texts to comprehensively examine students’ literacy strengths and needs, and provides the critical link between assessment and instruction.

Using Assessment to Inform Instruction

- The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System includes a copy of The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition. This tool helps teachers link the results of assessment to their teaching to ensure students’ growth as learners.

Elevating Teacher Expertise

- The embedded Professional Development Video collection provides models of teachers implementing the assessment, training in coding, scoring, analyzing, and interpreting oral reading records as well as guidelines for and models of the Comprehension Conversation. Additional seminars and webinars are available to further elevate teacher expertise.

Time-saving Digital Resources

- Assessment data can be managed systematically, effectively, and efficiently with time-saving digital resources including the Online Data Management System (ODMS), the Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ Online Resources, and the F&P Calculator/Stopwatch. In addition, the Fountas & Pinnell Reading Record App for iPads® may be purchased through the Apple iTunes® App Store.
System Components

Complete and convenient resources to make assessment conferences efficient

ASSESSMENT GUIDE

The Assessment Guide supports the implementation of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems. Contents include:

- an overview of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System
- a list of components, and suggestions for assessment preparation
- instructions on administering, coding, and scoring
- instructions on analyzing and interpreting results
- directions for documenting growth over time and monitoring progress
- Case Study examples
- directions for using results to group students and inform instruction.

ASSESSMENT FORMS

Finely-crafted assessment forms allow the collection of sensitive and reliable data.

- Recording Forms guide teachers through an assessment protocol that reveals a wealth of information about the reader, including the reader’s accuracy and self-corrections, comprehension, and fluency.
- An innovative Comprehension Conversation is part of the assessment protocol at every level and provides details about a reader’s thinking within, beyond, and about the text.

STUDENT FORMS

- Optional assessments allow teachers to gather diagnostic information to more precisely pinpoint a reader’s needs.
- Optional assessment forms printed on sturdy cardstock which can be reused.
STUDENT FOLDERS
Individual file folders are designed to store student assessment results and are printed with a longitudinal record of reading progress that can be passed from grade to grade, K–8.

THE F&P CALCULATOR/STOPWATCH
With the push of a button you will be able to calculate students’ reading rate, percentage of accuracy, and self-correction ratio.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE
- All assessment and summary forms are easily accessed online through the Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ Online Resources. You can select forms by book level, title, and genre.
- Professional Development Videos can be accessed and viewed as needed.

OR GO PAPERLESS!
Take paperless assessments with the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System Reading Record App for iPad.
See details page 11
System Components

Resources to link assessment to instruction and elevate teacher expertise

THE FOUNTAS & PINNELL LITERACY CONTINUUM, EXPANDED EDITION

This indispensable resource names and categorizes literacy behaviors and understandings, and provides a way to look for specific evidence of learning from prekindergarten through grade eight across eight instructional contexts. The Literacy Continuum is the essential planning tool for interpreting assessment results and planning responsive teaching.

- New, Expanded Edition in full color throughout, with streamlined organization and enhanced navigation

ENGAGING, PRECISELY LEVELED BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT BOOKS

The Benchmark Assessment Systems include high-quality fiction and nonfiction books written, edited, and extensively field-tested to represent their designated level on the F&P Text Level Gradient™.

- 28 Books in BAS 1 for assessing Levels A–N
- 30 books in BAS 2 for assessing Levels L–Z

Animal Instincts

Sebastian is a pet dog. Why does he enjoy chasing cars? He is following his predator instinct. A predator is an animal that hunts for its food. Like a predator, Sebastian runs after anything that moves quickly, like a rabbit—or a car!

Anna went to the doctor.

“Do you need glasses,” said the doctor.

Anna looked at the glasses.
ONLINE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ODMS)

The Fountas & Pinnell Online Data Management System (ODMS) is a web-based, password-protected tool that provides robust support for teachers and administrators to collect, analyze, and report student assessment data. A one-year individual teacher subscription is included with the initial purchase of each Benchmark Assessment System. Each ODMS subscription includes complimentary access for administrators and no limit on the number of students.

The ODMS provides several options for reports on individuals or classes in chart or graph format and are a useful tool to inform:

- data team meetings
- parent-teacher conferences
- student progress over the course of a year and year-to-year
- responsive instruction.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT VIDEOS

All new Professional Development Videos provide a strong foundational understanding of the Benchmark Assessment System as well as training for teachers implementing the system. The videos feature:

- an overview of the components of the system
- step-by-step guidance on administration procedures
- multiple models, at a variety of grade levels, of teachers and students engaged in the assessment
- in-depth discussion, along with opportunities to observe and practice scoring, analyzing, and interpreting an assessment.

ELEVATE EXPERTISE

For additional Heinemann Professional Development Services offers a range of On-site and Online professional learning opportunities to support the implementation of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System.

ON-SITE PD: Energize your classrooms and benefit from professional learning provided live, at your school or district.

ONLINE PD: Connect with Fountas and Pinnell-trained consultants who present quality instruction on the most crucial topics of our time.

See page 55 for details.
**High-quality Books created exclusively for assessment**

### 58 BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT BOOKS

The original Benchmark Assessment books are the centerpiece of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. These books provide the material for the student’s oral and silent reading, from which the teacher can observe many dimensions of reading behavior.

Both Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System 1 and 2 contain a fiction and nonfiction book at each level. Both types of books reflect the specific text characteristics of the designated level on the F&P Text Level Gradient™. To further ensure proper leveling, the books were vetted by a team of experienced classroom teachers, and Heinemann conducted a formal field study of the leveling that involved a broad spectrum of students across the United States.

Two equivalent books at each level are provided so that you can alternate between fiction and nonfiction as you move up the text gradient during an assessment conference. This will give you a picture of how the student is performing in both genres and provide a reliable instructional level. Should you need to retest the student at that level in the future, you can use the other, unused book.

---

#### Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System 1

**LEVELS A–N**

**28 books (14 fiction and 14 nonfiction)**

*Each book, written by the highest quality authors and illustrators, is 16 pages.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Best Friends</td>
<td>At the Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>My Little Dog</td>
<td>Playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Socks</td>
<td>Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The Nice Little House</td>
<td>Our Teacher Mr. Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The Loose Tooth</td>
<td>The Zoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Anna’s New Glasses</td>
<td>From Nest to Bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Bedtime for Nick</td>
<td>Bubbles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>The Sleepover Party</td>
<td>Trucks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Best Cat</td>
<td>All About Koalas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Our New Neighbors</td>
<td>More Than a Pet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Edwin’s Haircut</td>
<td>Surprising Animal Senses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Dog Stories</td>
<td>Giants of the Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>The Thing About Nathan</td>
<td>The Life of a Monarch Butterfly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>The Big Snow</td>
<td>Exploring Caves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8
Bubbles
by Christina Rodriguez

Bubbles are filled with air like balloons. Read to find out about all different kinds of bubbles and how they are made.

LEVELS L–Z
30 books [15 fiction and 15 nonfiction]
Each book, written by the highest quality authors and illustrators, is 4 pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Ernie Learns</td>
<td>Hang On, Baby Monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Saving Up</td>
<td>City Hawks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Vanessa’s Butterfly</td>
<td>Dogs at Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>The New Girl</td>
<td>Snake Myths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Plenty of Pets</td>
<td>Animal Instincts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>A Secret Home</td>
<td>Not Too Cold for a Polar Bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>The Election</td>
<td>Fishing Smarts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Could Be Worse</td>
<td>Amazing Animal Adaptations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>“Get a Horse!”</td>
<td>Why Do Wolves Howl?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Canyon Mystery</td>
<td>Earthquakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>A Call for Change</td>
<td>Tsunamis: Mighty Ocean Waves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>How I Spent My Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Obituary: Coretta Scott King 1927–2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>A Weighty Decision</td>
<td>The Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Saying Goodbye</td>
<td>The International Space Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Surviving the Blitz</td>
<td>The Train at the Top of the World</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collect Accurate and Detailed Data with Ease

*Conducting a Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment conference*

**Part 1, Oral Reading**

During Oral Reading, students read Benchmark Assessment books aloud while the teacher takes a detailed reading record. The reading record captures both big-picture and diagnostic information about a student. After the oral reading portion of the assessment, the teacher will be able to determine the student’s accuracy and fluency. In addition, teachers can go back and analyze self-corrections and errors in order to gain further diagnostic information that can inform teaching and the content of minilessons.

To facilitate a reading record, each book is accompanied by an easy-to-use Recording Form that captures the factors research shows most contribute to reading success: accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

Recording forms can be photocopied from the Assessment Forms books or downloaded from Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ Online Resources.

“The ability to observe, analyze, and interpret reading behavior is foundational to effective teaching.”

– Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

---

**Bedtime for Nick • Level G**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9    | “Good night, Nick,” his mom said.  
“Now it’s time to go to sleep.” |
| 10   | “I can’t go to sleep,” said Nick.  
“I will give you a good night kiss,” said Nick’s mom. |
| 11   | “Okay, Mom,” said Nick.  
“It’s time for bed.” |
| 12   | “Will you turn on the nightlight?”  
asked Nick. |
| 13   | “Okay, Nick,” his mom said.  
Then she turned it on. |
| 14   | “Will you read me a story?”  
Nick asked his mom. |
| 15   | Mom read the story to Nick.  
When the story was over,  
Nick liked the story about the magic fish. |
| 16   | “Good night, Nick,” said Mom.  
“Good night, Wags.”  
“Good night, Mom,”  
said Nick. |
"Wags! You're late," said Nick. Something came in the door. He looked around the room. "Something is missing.

"I can't go to sleep," said Nick. "Good night, Nick," said his mom. "Good night, Wags." "Good night, Mom," said Nick. "Go to sleep now." said Nick's mom. "I will give you a good night kiss," he asked. "Will you open the door?" Light came into the room. Nick's mom opened the door.

Teachers use the Recording Forms to record a student’s:

- accuracy rate
- self-correction ratio (levels A–K) or number of self-corrections (levels L–Z)
- fluency score (levels C–Z)
- oral reading rate (levels J–Z)
- comprehension score
- Writing About Reading score

Analyze the source of information the reader likely used to make any errors or self-corrections through:

M = meaning
S = structure
V = visual information

The Reading Record App records the following student information:

- oral reading rate
- accuracy rate
- self-correction ratio
- fluency score
- comprehension score

Added functionality includes timing the conference, saving the record as a PDF, and syncing to the Online Data Management System.
Part 2, Comprehension Conversation

Following the reading of each Benchmark Assessment book, students and teachers engage in a Comprehension Conversation about the text. This unique approach not only gathers data about what students understand about a text, but it also provides an opportunity for teachers to get to know their students—a valuable use of time, especially at the start of the school year. During the conversation, teachers will prompt the student, but the goal is to have a flow of back-and-forth talk, with the student doing as much of the talking as possible.

**Earthquakes • Level U**

Beginning with the first prompt, have a conversation with the student. Note the key understandings the student expresses. Use the prompts to give you information about the student’s understanding. Score for evidence of all understandings expressed—with or without a prompt. For scoring details, see the rubric in the Assessment Guide. Circle the number in the score column that reflects the level of understanding demonstrated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Understandings</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within the Text</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists measure earthquakes with seismographs and describe the measurements using the Richter scale.</td>
<td>Summarize the important information in the book. Is there anything else you’d like to add to your summary?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Earth’s crust has plates that push against each other. Moving plates cause earthquakes. Below the crust is a soft mantle. The plates push against each other and shift around on top of the mantle. When the plates collide, an earthquake happens. This movement also causes cracks. Earthquakes happen all the time. Not all of the time we can feel them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beyond the Text</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fault is a crack in the Earth’s crust. Earthquakes happen more frequently along faults. People can’t get away from earthquakes before they occur because scientists cannot predict them like they can predict an oncoming hurricane, for example. People don’t have time to evacuate before a quake hits. Scientists need to discover how to predict when an earthquake will take place. This will give people a chance to evacuate the area before the quake takes place. The more we understand about nature, the better prepared we will be to handle natural disasters like earthquakes. Sample response: It means science is important to our safety. If you know more about science, then you understand what’s happening even if it’s bad. (Accept logical responses that connect to this text.)</td>
<td>Talk about faults and why they are important. Why is it so hard to help people avoid the dangers of earthquakes? What do scientists need to discover about earthquakes? Why? Talk about the big ideas or messages of this book. How do these messages mean to you in your own life?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comprehension Scoring Key:
1. Student demonstrates limited proficiency in understanding the text.
2. Student demonstrates some proficiency in understanding the text.
3. Student demonstrates approaching proficiency in understanding the text.
4. Student demonstrates proficiency in understanding the text.
5. Student’s comprehension is not proficient.

Each Recording Form contains the Comprehension Scoring Key to guide teachers in scoring each area of key understandings on a four-point scale.

---

Systems of Strategic Actions diagram ©2015 by Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Each Recording Form lists key understandings and prompts for the kinds of thinking that students engage in as they process text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THINKING WITHIN THE TEXT</th>
<th>THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT</th>
<th>THINKING BEYOND THE TEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the literal meaning by processing words and stated ideas</td>
<td>Understanding author’s craft and articulating opinions about craft</td>
<td>Understanding implied meanings, synthesizing information, making connections, and determining deeper meanings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recording Form  Part Two: Comprehension Conversation (continued)

**Earthquakes • Level U**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About the Text</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This book is nonfiction. It gives information about earthquakes and why they happen. The writer uses headings to divide the book into four sections, each focusing on specific information: measuring earthquakes, the causes of earthquakes, famous earthquakes, and predicting earthquakes. They help to clarify information in the text. For example, one illustration shows how a seismograph measures the earthquake, a diagram shows how rocks shift along a fault, and a chart shows information about famous earthquakes. Sample response: The writer captures your attention right away with descriptive words (tremors shake, buildings sway, highways crumble, bridges collapse) and a photo that help you imagine what an earthquake is like. (Accept logical opinions and note how well students support their ideas with evidence from the text.) Note any additional understandings:</td>
<td>What is the genre of this book? How do you know? How does the writer organize the information in the book? How are the graphics in this book helpful? Talk about an example. What does the writer do to keep you interested? What else? Can you show an example?</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Writing About Reading Scoring Key

- **3** Reflects excellent understanding of the text.
- **2** Reflects partial understanding of the text.
- **1** Reflects very limited understanding of the text.
- **0** Reflects no understanding of the text.

#### Guide to Total Score, Levels L-Z

- **8–9** Proficient
- **6–7** Approaching Proficiency
- **4–5** Limited Proficiency
- **0–3** Not Proficient

**Total Score:** /9

### Part Three: Writing About Reading (optional)

Read the writing/drawing prompt below to the student. You can also cut the prompt on the dotted line and give it to the child. Specify the amount of time for the student to complete the task on a separate sheet of paper. (See the Assessment Guide for more information.)

Summarize in your own words what causes earthquakes and why they can be so dangerous. You can draw a sketch to go with your writing.

---

### Part 3, Writing About Reading

Some students perform better when they have the opportunity to reflect on text through the process of writing. They may reveal greater understanding than they do in the initial conversation. Each Benchmark Assessment System Recording Form includes a prompt for students to write about one of the books they have read. This optional assessment provides additional evidence of a student’s understanding through a concrete sample of their thinking.

"There are so many factors at play in the reading process...The more teachers know, the more effectively they can support really effective processing." — Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
Reading is thinking, and a student’s talk about what they’ve read is evidence of that thinking. Skilled observation of this literacy behavior enables teachers to understand how their students can “think their way” through a text.

The Benchmark Assessment System Comprehension Conversation is a key tool for gaining this behavioral evidence of students’ thinking.

**Keys for Guiding a Standardized Comprehension Conversation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE THE COMPREHENSION CONVERSATION:</th>
<th>DURING THE COMPREHENSION CONVERSATION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Read and know the text well.</td>
<td>• Give wait time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Become familiar with the key understandings and prompts.</td>
<td>• Be spare in your language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Familiarize yourself with the Comprehension Conversation rubrics.</td>
<td>• Only paraphrase a prompt once and avoid doing so in a way that leads or changes the intention of the original prompt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explain the task to students.</td>
<td>• Be careful not to answer the questions yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Avoid repeating what the student says.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Avoid directing the student back to a part of the book unless prompted to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Allow the child to look back in the text if self-initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask students to articulate understandings in their own words if they parrot or read from the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed Rubrics for Consistent Scoring

*Gain strong behavioral evidence of understanding*

Linked closely to the key understandings and prompts, the NEW Scoring Rubrics found in BAS Third Edition guide teachers in determining scores for students’ thinking within the text, beyond the text, and about the text. New comprehension rubrics provide more guidance and a clear vision for scoring the Comprehension Conversation. These detailed rubrics help teachers determine how deeply students comprehend each text they read.

There are two rubrics to reflect the expectations of Levels A–K and L–Z. Use the rubrics in conjunction with the Recording Form for each book to determine a student’s comprehension score.

Observe modeled Comprehension Conversations (and practice scoring them) with the Professional Development Videos available on the Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ Online Resources.
The Literacy Continuum

The bridge between assessment data and the specific teaching that students need

Included in each Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System is The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment, Planning, and Teaching. This book contains eight continua. Each continuum focuses on an area of the language arts curriculum. The continua provide specific descriptions of the texts that students read, listen to, write, and perform. In addition, The Literacy Continuum lists specific behaviors and understandings that are required at each text level for students to demonstrate thinking within, beyond, and about the text. These behaviors and understandings describe what students will be expected to do in order to effectively read and understand the text.

Connecting Assessment to Instruction

The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System provides teachers with ideal opportunities to observe and record students’ mastery of behaviors and abilities to process texts. Through assessment, teachers learn the appropriate levels for students’ independent reading as well as the level that is ideal for instruction. This information allows them to work with students at a level where, with responsive teaching, they can process texts effectively. The instructional level is slightly higher than the student can read independently, so it provides an opportunity to expand reading powers.

The detailed teaching goals found in The Literacy Continuum, linked with assessment data, allows the teacher to:

- recognize the literacy development of each student
- plan differentiated instruction for individuals, small groups, or a whole class
- identify students who need targeted intervention.

The Benchmark Assessment Systems 1 and 2 Assessment Guides each contain Case Studies that demonstrate how to use assessment data and link it with instruction.
A Common Language for Coherent Instruction

*Educators’ essential resource for thinking together about literacy development*

When everyone in the school uses the same literacy tools/language as they move from observation to instruction, a common conversation occurs. Examining and using *The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum* together, colleagues can discuss common expectations for student achievement and all students can benefit from coherent, efficient, and responsive instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>WAYS TO USE THE FOUNTAS &amp; PINNELL LITERACY CONTINUUM, EXPANDED EDITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Classroom Teacher | Classroom teachers use The Literacy Continuum to:  
• guide instructional planning and interactions  
• assess students’ current reading and writing abilities  
• select texts for various purposes (interactive read aloud, shared reading, book clubs, guided reading, and as mentor texts for writers’ workshop). |
| Interventionist or Special Education Teacher | Interventionist or special education teachers use The Literacy Continuum to:  
• guide instructional planning and interactions:  
• assess the gap that students need to bridge to catch up to grade-level expectations  
• select texts that have the highest potential for accelerated progress  
• assess students’ reading progress  
• assess the effectiveness of teaching. |
| Literacy Coach | Literacy coaches use The Literacy Continuum to support teachers in:  
• assessing students’ current reading and writing abilities  
• identifying goals in reading and writing  
• making decisions about text selection and other instructional decisions  
• assessing the impact of their teaching. |
| Librarian | Librarians use The Literacy Continuum to:  
• select a range of texts on interesting topics  
• recommend read-aloud books to teachers  
• help teachers build text sets for connected learning  
• assist teachers in finding books at appropriate levels for students  
• help students find books (without having them choose by level). |
| Principal and Leadership Team | The leadership team consists of a group brought together by the principal to guide the implementation of a comprehensive design for literacy instruction. The principal and leadership team use The Literacy Continuum to:  
• review the progress of individual students both in classrooms, in intervention, and in special education  
• assess the progress of each cohort of students  
• identify areas of weakness in instruction  
• plan for professional development for teachers. |
Assess, Interpret, and Respond

The Literacy Continuum connects skilled observation to responsive teaching

More in-depth and more intuitive than ever, this is the essential tool to guide your assessment, activate responsive teaching, and support students on their language and literacy journey. The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition enables teachers to construct a common vision for student achievement that effectively and efficiently engages students in robust, authentic, and meaningful literacy learning.

### LEVEL I

**Readers at Level I**

At level I, readers process texts that are mostly short (sixteen pages), as well as a few easy illustrated chapter books (forty to sixty pages) that require them to maintain attention and memory over time. They encounter compound sentences and some other long sentences of more than fifteen words that contain prepositional phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and clauses. Readers can effectively process these complex sentences and, in addition, automatically recognize a large number of words. Readers use word-solving strategies for complex spellings, multisyllabic words, plurals, contractions, possessives, and many words with inflectional endings. They read many texts silently, following the text with their eyes and without pausing. In oral reading, they reflect appropriate rate, word stress, intonation, phrasing, and pausing. Readers process texts with multiple characters and episodes. In fiction texts they can identify the setting, the story problem, and how it is resolved. They can identify character attributes and feelings and detect change (although at this level characters are not fully developed). They learn new content from nonfiction texts and notice when a writer uses underlying structures such as description, temporal sequence, question and answer, and chronological sequence. Readers use accepted language to talk about texts.

#### Selecting Texts

**Characteristics of Texts at Level I**

**GENRE**
- Fiction
- Fantasy
- Traditional literature
- Biographies
- Animal fantasy

**CONTENT**
- Familiar content: family, home and pets, plants, animals, school, cooking, friends, dolls, activities, people, weather, emotions, transportation, weather
- Multilevel of support provided by nonfiction
- More content that goes beyond students’ immediate experience: e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world
- Simple texts that require children to understand context from experience, e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world

**TEXT STRUCTURE**
- Narrative texts with straightforward structure (beginning, series of episodes, and end)
- Narrative texts with multiple episodes, with episodes that may be more inventive and with less repetition of similar episodes
- Some books with very short chapters, each with narrative structure
- Narrative creation: e.g., cumulative tales, familiar stories

**SKILLS AND CONCEPTS**
- Underlying structural patterns: description, temporal sequence, chronological sequence, question and answer (narration)
- Basic vocabulary
- Familiar content: family, home and pets, plants, animals, school, cooking, friends, dolls, activities, people, weather, emotions, transportation, weather
- Multilevel of support provided by nonfiction
- More content that goes beyond students’ immediate experience: e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world
- Simple texts that require children to understand context from experience, e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world

**LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES**
- Basic vocabulary
- Familiar content: family, home and pets, plants, animals, school, cooking, friends, dolls, activities, people, weather, emotions, transportation, weather
- Multilevel of support provided by nonfiction
- More content that goes beyond students’ immediate experience: e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world
- Simple texts that require children to understand context from experience, e.g., different environments and communities, animals in the world

**Design enhancements make navigation faster and easier**

**Strong reinforcement of the Systems of Strategic Actions**

**NEWLY DESIGNED IN FULL COLOR**
- Expanded behaviors and examples across the continua

**SELECTING GOALS**

**Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (cont.)**

- Make text-to-text connections: e.g., sharing across texts, using the text and your prior knowledge to link information across texts
- Make text-to-self connections: e.g., sharing your family, taking care of self getting healthy, coping with your world, relating well with others, problem solving, aligning differences, expressing feelings
- Identify story problems and their solutions
- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text

**THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT**

- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text
- Make connections among texts on the same topic or with similar content
- Access background knowledge to understand description or chronological sequence

**SYNTHESIZING**

- Talk about the main lesson learned about the topic before reading the text and identify new knowledge gained from reading
- Make connections among the text, the visual, the oral, and the written
- Talk about the text, clarifying understanding of events, topic, or content
- Talk about what is learned from the characters, the problem, and the resolution of the problem

**INFERRING**

- Infer meanings or story from content of passages and authors’ meanings from text
- Notice aspects of the setting from the text and pictures and make inferences to help understand the story
- Talk about characters’ feelings based on information from pictures and text, especially dialogues
- Talk about the pictures, inferring interpretation of a problem or of character’s feelings
- Infer other human, e.g., humorous characters, language, and story problems
- Infer some obvious characters from the story and pictures
- Infer ideas about familiar content
- Infer temporal sequencing and cause of events

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- Make connections between personal experiences and a text
- Make connections among books in a series
- Use background knowledge to understand settings
- Make connections between a text and an illustration that supports interpretation, enhances enjoyment, or sets mood
- Use background knowledge of traditional literature to recognize common characters and events in a folk tale

**Selecting Goals**

**Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (cont.)**

- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text
- Make connections among texts on the same topic or with similar content
- Access background knowledge to understand description or chronological sequence

**SYNTHESIZING**

- Talk about the main lesson learned about the topic before reading the text and identify new knowledge gained from reading
- Make connections among the text, the visual, the oral, and the written
- Talk about the text, clarifying understanding of events, topic, or content
- Talk about what is learned from the characters, the problem, and the resolution of the problem

**INFERRING**

- Infer meanings or story from content of passages and authors’ meanings from text
- Notice aspects of the setting from the text and pictures and make inferences to help understand the story
- Talk about characters’ feelings based on information from pictures and text, especially dialogues
- Talk about the pictures, inferring interpretation of a problem or of character’s feelings
- Infer other human, e.g., humorous characters, language, and story problems
- Infer some obvious characters from the story and pictures
- Infer ideas about familiar content
- Infer temporal sequencing and cause of events

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- Make connections between personal experiences and a text
- Make connections among books in a series
- Use background knowledge to understand settings
- Make connections between a text and an illustration that supports interpretation, enhances enjoyment, or sets mood
- Use background knowledge of traditional literature to recognize common characters and events in a folk tale

**NEWLY DESIGNED IN FULL COLOR**
- Expanded behaviors and examples across the continua

**SELECTING GOALS**

**Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (cont.)**

- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text
- Make connections among texts on the same topic or with similar content
- Access background knowledge to understand description or chronological sequence

**SYNTHESIZING**

- Talk about the main lesson learned about the topic before reading the text and identify new knowledge gained from reading
- Make connections among the text, the visual, the oral, and the written
- Talk about the text, clarifying understanding of events, topic, or content
- Talk about what is learned from the characters, the problem, and the resolution of the problem

**INFERRING**

- Infer meanings or story from content of passages and authors’ meanings from text
- Notice aspects of the setting from the text and pictures and make inferences to help understand the story
- Talk about characters’ feelings based on information from pictures and text, especially dialogues
- Talk about the pictures, inferring interpretation of a problem or of character’s feelings
- Infer other human, e.g., humorous characters, language, and story problems
- Infer some obvious characters from the story and pictures
- Infer ideas about familiar content
- Infer temporal sequencing and cause of events

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- Make connections between personal experiences and a text
- Make connections among books in a series
- Use background knowledge to understand settings
- Make connections between a text and an illustration that supports interpretation, enhances enjoyment, or sets mood
- Use background knowledge of traditional literature to recognize common characters and events in a folk tale

**NEWLY DESIGNED IN FULL COLOR**
- Expanded behaviors and examples across the continua

**SELECTING GOALS**

**Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (cont.)**

- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text
- Make connections among texts on the same topic or with similar content
- Access background knowledge to understand description or chronological sequence

**SYNTHESIZING**

- Talk about the main lesson learned about the topic before reading the text and identify new knowledge gained from reading
- Make connections among the text, the visual, the oral, and the written
- Talk about the text, clarifying understanding of events, topic, or content
- Talk about what is learned from the characters, the problem, and the resolution of the problem

**INFERRING**

- Infer meanings or story from content of passages and authors’ meanings from text
- Notice aspects of the setting from the text and pictures and make inferences to help understand the story
- Talk about characters’ feelings based on information from pictures and text, especially dialogues
- Talk about the pictures, inferring interpretation of a problem or of character’s feelings
- Infer other human, e.g., humorous characters, language, and story problems
- Infer some obvious characters from the story and pictures
- Infer ideas about familiar content
- Infer temporal sequencing and cause of events

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- Make connections between personal experiences and a text
- Make connections among books in a series
- Use background knowledge to understand settings
- Make connections between a text and an illustration that supports interpretation, enhances enjoyment, or sets mood
- Use background knowledge of traditional literature to recognize common characters and events in a folk tale

**NEWLY DESIGNED IN FULL COLOR**
- Expanded behaviors and examples across the continua

**SELECTING GOALS**

**Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (cont.)**

- Make connections between background knowledge of familiar content and the content of the text
- Make connections among texts on the same topic or with similar content
- Access background knowledge to understand description or chronological sequence

**SYNTHESIZING**

- Talk about the main lesson learned about the topic before reading the text and identify new knowledge gained from reading
- Make connections among the text, the visual, the oral, and the written
- Talk about the text, clarifying understanding of events, topic, or content
- Talk about what is learned from the characters, the problem, and the resolution of the problem

**INFERRING**

- Infer meanings or story from content of passages and authors’ meanings from text
- Notice aspects of the setting from the text and pictures and make inferences to help understand the story
- Talk about characters’ feelings based on information from pictures and text, especially dialogues
- Talk about the pictures, inferring interpretation of a problem or of character’s feelings
- Infer other human, e.g., humorous characters, language, and story problems
- Infer some obvious characters from the story and pictures
- Infer ideas about familiar content
- Infer temporal sequencing and cause of events

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

- Make connections between personal experiences and a text
- Make connections among books in a series
- Use background knowledge to understand settings
- Make connections between a text and an illustration that supports interpretation, enhances enjoyment, or sets mood
- Use background knowledge of traditional literature to recognize common characters and events in a folk tale
From Observation to Action

Use behavioral evidence to guide your next teaching move

The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum
A Tool for Assessment, Planning, and Teaching

"We view The Literacy Continuum as the roadmap for literacy acquisition in children over time."

– Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell

GRADE 2

Selecting Texts
Characteristics of Texts for Sharing and Performing

Shared and Performance Reading

**GENRE**
- Fiction
- Realistic fiction
- Traditional literature (e.g., fables, tall tale, fairy tale)
- Fantasy
- Hybrid texts

**FORMS**
- Longer poems of various types including free verse, lyrical poetry
- Nursery rhymes, rhymes, and songs from nursery collections
- Rhyme collections
- Readers’ theater scripts
- Audio books
- Digital picture books
- Digital informational texts
- Novels illustrated in context

**TEXT STRUCTURE**
- Simple narratives with straightforward structure (beginning, middle, oral reading, expository)
- Stories with repeating episodes included
- Stories with repeating episodes of parts
- Imaginary characters, events (sequence, events, and settings that mirror in stories)
- Content that reflects beginning understanding of the physical and social world

**THemes and ideas**
- Themes reflecting everyday life (e.g., self, family, relationships, friendship, imagination, goals, honors, discovery)
- Summarize the story including plot events, problem, resolution, and meaning of the text
- Recognize that a text is fiction and tells a story that has a beginning, middle, series of episodes, and end
- Ask questions to deepen understanding of a text
- Notice when a writer is describing a step-by-step procedure
- Identify and discuss interesting, surprising, and important information in a text

**Vocabulary**
- Select words that are in common oral vocabulary for people, the human body, weather, daily activities, simple processes
- Notice periods, quotation marks, commas, exclamation marks, and momentum
- Understand the meaning of present participles and past participles
- Summarize the story including plot events, problem, resolution, and meaning of the text
- Recognize that a text is fiction and tells a story that has a beginning, middle, series of episodes, and end
- Ask questions to deepen understanding of a text
- Notice when a writer is describing a step-by-step procedure
- Identify and discuss interesting, surprising, and important information in a text

**Language and literary features**
- Physical description using make-up words and sound
- Descriptive language uses human feelings (e.g., play, presence)
- Descriptive language uses experiences (e.g., action)
- Poetic language
- Figurative language
- Rhyme and repetition of language patterns, and ending
- First appearance of a new behavior, goal, or understanding is indicated by a red bullet
- Distinction between fiction and nonfiction, and increased organization for enhanced usability
- Color-coding throughout makes clear the Systems of Strategic Actions that identify a reader’s thinking within, beyond, and about the texts they read
“The interpretation and use of benchmark data are more important than the scores themselves.”

– Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
Simran, Grade 2 Student

Background and Assessment Summary

Simran, a second grader, had some reading difficulties starting in first grade. Her grade two, fall Benchmark Assessment scores show evidence that she is able to read level F texts independently and level G texts at an instructional level, placing her approximately three levels below expected performance on the F&P Text Level Gradient™.

Simran read three books for her Benchmark Assessment conference (Figure 1). Her scores on the independent-level reading of the level F nonfiction text, From Nest to Bird, show that she read accurately 95% of the time with a 1:3 self-correction ratio (1 self-correction for every 3 errors). Her fluency score was 0 on the selection and her comprehension score of 5 is in the proficient range. In Simran's instructional-level reading of Bedtime for Nick (Figures 2a–2g), level G fiction, she scored a 94% for accuracy, had a 1:4 self-correction ratio, scored a 1 for fluency, and scored a 4 for comprehension, which is approaching proficiency. Simran reached her hard level with the level H nonfiction text, Trucks. These results place her almost a half-year below expected grade-level performance.

These books were written expressly for assessment and provide the material for Simran’s oral reading from which you can observe many dimensions of reading behavior.

Bedtime for Nick, Level G, Fiction BAS 1 book

From Nest to Bird, Level F, Nonfiction BAS 1 book

Trucks, Level H, Nonfiction BAS 1 book

Review the following case study in conjunction with the sample book Bedtime for Nick.
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY FORM

- Summarizes assessment results and compiles next steps for instruction.

**FIGURE 1. Simran’s Assessment Summary Form**

Simran's Assessment Summary Form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>System 1a 2</th>
<th>Fiction/ Nonfiction</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Independent (blind one)</th>
<th>Instructional (blind one)</th>
<th>Next (blind one)</th>
<th>Self-Correction</th>
<th>Fluency Level Cx</th>
<th>Rate Levels A-Z (optional)</th>
<th>Writing About Reading (optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Bird to Nest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NF</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedtime for Nick</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trucks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NF</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key for Determining Independent/Instructional/Hard Levels:
- Levels A-K
  - Proficient (5-6)
  - Approaching Proficiency (4)
  - Limited Proficiency (3)
  - Not Proficient (0-2)
- Levels L-Z
  - Proficient (8-9)
  - Approaching Proficiency (7)
  - Limited Proficiency (6)
  - Not Proficient (0-5)

Meaning and structure are driving forces for Simran as she reads. The use of visual info is part of her problem solving actions but she often uses visual information. Learning a variety of efficient word solving actions will be helpful to building an effective processing system. Aspects of fluency are very important to bring under control for Simran. Will also improve her comprehension.
**RECORDING FORM**

- **Part One: Oral Reading** is used to observe and code the student’s reading behavior through oral reading.

![Simran's Instructional Level Recording Form](image)

**FIGURE 2a. Simran's Instructional Level Recording Form**
**Recording Form**  **Part One: Oral Reading (continued)**

**Bedtime for Nick • Level G**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Sources of Information Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Will you read me a story?” Nick asked his mom. Mom read the story to Nick. Nick liked the story about the magic fish. When the story was done/over, Nick’s mom turned off the light.</td>
<td>E: M, S, V  SC: M, S, V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“Good night, Nick,” his mom said.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal: 3, 2, 5, 5, 1, 0, 2

FIGURE 2b. Simran’s Instructional Level Recording Form
### Bedtime for Nick • Level G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9    | “Good night, Nick,” his mom said.  
      | “Now it’s time to go to sleep.” |
| 10   | “I can’t go to sleep,” said Nick.  
      | “I will give you a good night kiss,”  
      | his  
      | said Nick’s mom. |
| 11   | “Good night, Nick,” his mom said.  
      | “Go to sleep now.” |
| 12   | “I can’t go to sleep,”  
      | said Nick.  
      | “Will you open the door?”  
      | he asked.  
      | Nick’s mom opened the door.  
      | Light came into the room. |

---

**Sources of Information Used**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>SC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Subtotal**: 5 3 3 1 0 0 1

---

*Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System 1, Third Edition*
**Recording Form Part One: Oral Reading (continued)**

**Bedtime for Nick • Level G**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>SC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Good night, Nick,” his mom said.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“I can’t go to sleep,” said Nick.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>someone</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Something is missing.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He looked around the room.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>MSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>someone</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Something came in the door.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>“Wags! You’re late,” said Nick.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Now we can go to sleep.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“Good night, Nick,” said Mom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Good night, Wags.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Good night, Mom,”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>said Nick.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources of Information Used**

- E: Easy
- MS: Medium
- S: Stressed
- V: Very Stressed

**Subtotal**

**Total**

---

FIGURE 2d. Simran’s Instructional Level Recording Form
### Recording Form  Part One: Oral Reading (continued)

#### Bedtime for Nick • Level G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
<th>Errors 23 or more</th>
<th>21-22</th>
<th>19-20</th>
<th>17-18</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>12-14</th>
<th>10-11</th>
<th>8-9</th>
<th>6-7</th>
<th>4-5</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Below 90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td><strong>94%</strong></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Self-Correction Ratio**

\[ \frac{13 + 5}{\div 5} \]

\[ \frac{(E + SC)}{SC} = 1 : 4 \]

#### Fluency Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fluency Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fluency Scoring Key**

0. Reads primarily word-by-word with occasional but infrequent or inappropriate phrasing; no smooth or expressive interpretation, irregular pausing, and no attention to author’s meaning or punctuation; no stress or inappropriate stress, and slow rate.

1. Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- and four-word groups and some word-by-word reading; almost no smooth, expressive interpretation or pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; almost no stress or inappropriate stress, with slow rate most of the time.

2. Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups; some smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; mostly appropriate stress and rate with some slowdowns.

3. Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrases or word groups; mostly smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; appropriate stress and rate with only a few slowdowns.
**CASE STUDY: BAS 1**

- **Part Two: The Comprehension Conversation** is used to engage the student in an open-ended conversation about the text.
Part Three: Writing About Reading is an optional prompt for responding to the text.

**Optional Assessments**

**Digging deeper**

The extensive information gathered through the standard Benchmark Assessment provides clear direction for instruction, but you may wish to gather additional diagnostic information for some students. Selecting from the series of optional assessments in fluency and phrasing, phonics and word analysis, and vocabulary can help you gather information to plan targeted minilessons. The Where-to-Start Word Test can help you determine where to start testing if little is known about a student’s reading level at the beginning of the year.

**Included in both Systems 1 and 2**

- Over 30 Optional Assessments to identify skills in:
  - Fluency and Phrasing
  - Vocabulary
  - Phonics and Word Analysis
GUIDE FOR OBSERVING AND NOTING READING BEHAVIORS

- Guides the teacher in noticing and recording important behaviors evidenced in reading.

---

### Resources

**Name:** Simran  
**Date:** September

**Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Early Reading Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Move left to right across a line of print?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Return to the left for a new line?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Match voice to print while reading a line or more of print?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize a few easy high-frequency words?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Searching for and Using Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make meaningful attempts at unknown words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the meaning of the story or text to predict unknown words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to gather more information to solve a word?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread and use the meaning of the sentence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to search for more details—information, characters, plot?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to gather information to clarify confusions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use headings and titles to think about the meaning of a section of text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use information in the pictures to help in understanding a text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of the genre (and its characteristics) to help in understanding a text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of the genre (and its characteristics) to help in finding information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use readers’ tools to help in finding information (glossary, index)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Solving Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize a core of high-frequency words quickly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize words quickly and easily?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use a variety of flexible ways to take words apart?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the meaning of the sentences to solve words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the structure of the sentence to solve words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use some of the visual information to solve words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use known word parts to solve words?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

- Early reading behaviors under control
- P.14 Someone
- Someone: room, door
- N: no evidence of rereading
- P.6 Out off
- Used m ignored
- V: info for h.t.
- Out off
- P.10 His, p12 in, p.15 I we
### Guide for Observing . . . (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Solving Words (cont.)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the reader:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use sound analysis (sounding out)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use analogy to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make attempts that are visually similar?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the sound of the first letter to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work actively to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use known words or parts to solve unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use syllables to problem solve?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use prefixes and suffixes to take words apart?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use inflectional endings to take words apart?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use sentence context to derive the meaning of words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use base words and root words to derive the meaning of words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make connections among words to understand their meaning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C P N</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stated elsewhere</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Self-Monitoring</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the reader:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hesitate at an unknown word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stop at an unknown word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stop at an unknown word and appeal for help?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stop after an error?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Notice mismatches?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Notice when an attempt does not look right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Notice when an attempt does not sound right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Notice when an attempt does not make sense?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to confirm reading?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of some high-frequency words to check on reading?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Check one source of information with another?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Check an attempt that makes sense with language?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Check an attempt that makes sense with the letters (visual information)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use language structure to check on reading?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Request help after making several attempts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P N</strong></td>
<td><strong>p. 4 hair ready</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Self-Correcting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the reader:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread and try again until accurate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stop after an error and make another attempt?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stop after an error and make multiple attempts until accurate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to self-correct?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work actively to solve mismatches?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Self-correct error?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P C</strong></td>
<td><strong>p. 4 hair ready</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Maintaining Fluency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the reader:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read without pausing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read word groups (phrases)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Put words together?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read smoothly?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read the punctuation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make the voice go down at periods?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make the voice go up at question marks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pause briefly at commas, dashes, and hyphens?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read dialogue with intonation or expression?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stress the appropriate words to convey accurate meaning?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Read at a good rate—not too fast and not too slow?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N C</strong></td>
<td><strong>no expression</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Other Behaviors</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C P N</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Figure 3b. Simran's Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors*
ANALYSIS OF PROCESSING STRATEGIES

Using the Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors (Figures 3a–3b) along with Simran’s instructional-level reading of the level G book, *Bedtime for Nick*, Simran’s teacher made the following observations.

**Section 1, Early Reading Behaviors:** Simran had the earliest reading behaviors under control at this time, occasionally inserting or deleting some words in the text. The errors did not prevent her from maintaining the meaning and structure of the story and were easily brought to her attention. She used only her eyes to follow the print, so self-monitoring was important for her.

**Section 2, Searching for and Using Information:** Simran consistently made meaningful attempts at unknown words and used the meaning of the story to predict unknown words (*done*/over, *out*/off, *bed*/sleep, *his*/Nick’s, *room*/door). Syntactically, she omitted the words *good night* on page 10 and inserted the word *please* on page 12. She searched for and used the visual information to read much of the time and often used more than one source of information in her partially correct attempts. She seemed to recognize most of the words quickly and easily, but there was no evidence of rereading in the selection.

**Section 3, Solving Words:** Simran recognized a core of high-frequency words quickly, and many of her attempts were visually similar. Once again, she didn’t self-monitor or use the precise visual information. Building a repertoire of actions to problem-solve unknown words is important for Simran’s continued growth as a reader.

**Sections 4 and 5, Self-Monitoring and Self-Correcting:** Simran often stopped after a mismatch, particularly if the meaning and structure were interrupted or if the visual information did not fit. When there was a closer visual mismatch, and meaning and structural information were not compromised, she let the error go and read on. Her self-correction ratio was 1:4, so she was correcting some of her errors but not enough of them. She needs more support to monitor her reading consistently.

**Section 6, Maintaining Fluency:** Simran needs more specific teaching in this area. While she read without pointing, she often read in a labored, word-by-word way that interfered with her deeper understandings. When reading dialogue, she didn’t change her intonation or expression. Her reading sounded monotonous and flat. There was no evidence of her ability to stress particular words or integrate any of the aspects of fluency to accomplish a smooth, interesting reading.

Simran’s reading shows that as the level and complexity of the text increased, her willingness and/or ability to problem-solve decreased. Simran began to appeal for help at the highest level H nonfiction text, *Trucks*, with its more specialized vocabulary. Simran tried what she knew how to do (which at that level included primarily the use of initial visual information to problem-solve), but when it didn’t solve the problem, she was stuck. Her processing powers broke down and were limited to a narrow range of actions. Learning more about how to solve unknown words in a variety of ways will serve her well.

EVIDENCE OF COMPREHENSION

At the easier levels, Simran maintained a sense of the story despite making some errors. She corrected many errors immediately, and those that were left uncorrected fit meaning, structure, and sometimes visual information. During Comprehension Conversations, Simran was able to provide information from within the text as she spoke about the selections. In the parts of the conversation that required Simran to think beyond and about the text, she demonstrated a somewhat limited ability to talk about the story in extended ways. In a couple of instances she said, “I don’t know,” and with further probes from the teacher, provided responses that she might have been able to give even without a deeper understanding of the story. How to think beyond and about the text is important for her to learn as she moves toward the high-stakes testing situations she will face in school.
IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

Using The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Prompting Guide, Part 1, and When Readers Struggle as resources, her teacher found the following information important to consider when instructing Simran.

From The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum

Looking at the Guided Reading section for Simran’s instructional level G, the teacher found a description of readers who are processing texts successfully at that level. Much of this description fits Simran. But in the areas of word-solving strategies and fluency, Simran’s needs will guide the specific teaching she receives to move her forward.

Specifically, the teacher selected the following goals for Simran:

- Reread the sentence or phrase to problem-solve, self-correct, or confirm.
- Reread to search for and use information from language structure or meaning from multiple sources.
- Read some words with easy spelling patterns with the support of pictures and language (VC, CVC, CVCe, CVV, CVVC, VCe).
- Notice visual features of a word and use them to locate or read the word.
- Sustain momentum through an entire short text.
- Use some phrasing to show recognition of dialogue even when presented in varying structures [e.g., said Mom or Mom said].
- Notice periods, quotation marks, commas, exclamation marks, and question marks, and reflect them with the voice through intonation and pausing.
- Predict the ending of a story based on reading the beginning and middle.
- Make connections between personal experience and a text.
- Infer meaning of story or content from pictures that add meaning to the text.
- Share opinions about a text and give rationales and examples.

From Prompting Guide, Part 1

To help Simran self-monitor her reading more closely (something that should be automatic at this level, especially in terms of insertions and deletions), her teacher can use prompts such as:

- Check to see if what you’re reading looks right.
- That didn’t look right. You need to stop when it doesn’t look right.
- It has to make sense, sound right, and look right.

If that doesn’t work, the teacher can draw her attention to the need to read accurately, an action that is important to her understanding of the text. Simran needs to understand that her responsibility as a reader is to read carefully what the author wrote, not to add in her own ideas and words. The teacher can try other teaching points and prompts, such as these:

- Could it be [repeat her error]? Check to see if that makes sense and looks right.
- You said [repeat her error]. Does that look right?

Once Simran understands the concept, additional prompts to encourage her self-monitoring can include:

- You made a mistake on that page. Can you find it?

Available separately
Five of Simran’s thirteen errors were corrected immediately. Intervening too soon puts the monitoring responsibility on the teacher, not on the child, and that’s not what the teacher is working toward with readers. Specific, direct, and supportive praise will act as reinforcement for Simran’s attempts at self-monitoring. For example:

- You found the tricky part all by yourself.
- You knew how to make it look right all by yourself.

Since Simran is already consistently using word beginnings, it is important for her to learn how to use other kinds of visual information effectively. In the section Solving Words, there are options to show Simran how to use visual information in a variety of ways when she comes to a word she doesn’t know. For example:

- You can look for a part you know.
- You can use your finger to break the word (eventually doing that kind of breaking with your eyes).

The teacher can follow up when she comes to a difficult word with prompts such as:

- Look for a part you know.
- Look for a part that can help you.
- Where can you break the word apart?

After prompting, Simran’s teacher can use specific reinforcing language to help Simran understand that her efforts are on target and worth repeating whenever she gets stuck, such as:

- You looked for a part you know.
- You used your finger to break the word apart.

In the General Problem Solving section, there are several teaching moves that Simran’s teacher can use to support her efforts, such as:

- This will help. (model)
- You can read that again and try something else. (model)

Once there is evidence that Simran can do this more complex word solving, prompts like these will help her:

- Look for something that will help you.
- What can you do to help yourself?
- What do you already know?

General prompts that place more responsibility on Simran include:

- Try that again.

Specific reinforcing language can be used when Simran attempts to do this kind of word-solving independently. It clarifies her role in problem-solving her own reading. For example:

- You worked hard on that.
- You thought about what you knew.
- You worked that out.

Simran consistently read slowly in a monotone voice, often word-by-word. On the fiction selection, her teacher noted that Simran did not change her intonation, even when reading dialogue within quotes. However, she had a sense of most of the other punctuation and usually read it appropriately. Her fluency ratings ranged from 0 to 1 on the three selections. Learning more about all aspects of fluency, which support the reading and help communicate the meaning of the story, will allow Simran to make her reading sound more interesting and will help her to interpret the author’s message more effectively. In the Maintaining Fluency section, specific language is suggested for teaching, prompting, and reinforcing almost all aspects of fluency. Using this language with Simran as she reads will help move her forward as a reader. For example:

- Listen to how I read this quickly.
- Can you read this quickly? [model]
- You read it faster that time.

This section also provides prompts to teach and reinforce phrasing, which is also important for Simran to learn.

- Read it like this. (model phrase units)
- Read this much all together. [Cover part of the print, exposing phrase unit.]
- You need to listen to how your reading sounds.

From When Readers Struggle: Teaching that Works

This professional book has many suggestions for specific teaching, prompting, and reinforcing language to strengthen Simran’s literacy skills and help her meet grade-level expectations.

To help Simran develop a repertoire of actions to problem-solve words and to self-monitor consistently, see Chapter 15, Teaching for Independence in Processing Texts: Solving Words, Self-Monitoring and Self-Correcting Behaviors. There are excellent examples of quick interactions to teach Simran how to take words apart while reading. Examples such as what to do when the teacher gives a told, how to use understandings gained from Simran’s writing, how to
look at word parts in sequence, how to make connections between words, and how to take words apart by syllables will help Simran to consistently self monitor.

To help Simran improve her fluency, including reading smoothly, reading dialogue, and stressing words appropriately, see Chapter 16, Teaching for Fluency in Processing Texts: Six Dimensions. Simran will be motivated to read dialogue in a natural way that sounds like talking. The section entitled, “Teaching Hard for Fluency”, provides teachers with many ways to be persistent in teaching for, prompting for, and reinforcing fluency.

To help Simran think beyond and about the text, see Chapter 17, Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking Before, During, and After Reading. Figures 17–23 provide Simran’s teacher with sample prompts for thinking beyond and about the text. The last section in this chapter, “Questioning for Construction” invokes teachers’ thinking about the importance of engaging their learners in constructive dialogue.

**CLASSROOM AND INTERVENTION TEACHING**

Simran will benefit from Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), a small-group, intensive intervention, in addition to guided reading lessons in her classroom. Working in a small (3 students: 1 teacher) group and in a structured intervention lesson for thirty minutes daily will offer her more intensive reading instruction and practice than her regular classroom guided reading lessons alone. Working with Simran and two other readers on a similar level, an LLI teacher is able to shape the instruction to solidify group members’ understandings and strengthen the group members’ reading powers.

Working with Simran’s group in level G in guided reading and in the LLI Blue System, the teachers will plan for reading, writing, and word study instruction that build on what the children already know and can do. A working partnership between the intervention teacher and the classroom teacher will support the intervention teaching for the group, both teachers noting and sharing changes in the children’s reading and writing competencies as the intensive teaching proceeds. As the classroom teacher and intervention teacher focus together on behaviors and understandings to notice, teach, and support at level G, Simran will make faster progress. Word study sections of the lesson demonstrate efficient ways to problem-solve words (beyond initial letter searches), and reading and writing experiences will help children think beyond and about texts they read.

---

Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention

*When assessment indicates intervention*

---

Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention is an efficient and systematic approach to small-group intervention that works. Its engaging and age-appropriate texts captivate discouraged readers. Expert and fast-paced lessons empower teachers to deliver the high-impact instruction needed to bring struggling students to grade-level proficiency.
In Focus

Assessing Middle Grade Readers
If you are an upper-grades teacher, the Benchmark Assessment System is the perfect starting point for learning to observe and code the reading behaviors of your students, as well as to interpret and use the data to inform teaching. Analysis training in the Assessment Guide and in the Professional Development Videos, coupled with easy-to-use Recording Forms, will help you observe and talk about your students' effective and ineffective behaviors and how the texts they are reading may be appropriate or inappropriate for supporting new learning. After a few months' experience with the system, you will become much more knowledgeable and aware of your students' reading behaviors and more effective at differentiating instruction.

Using Reading Records with Intermediate and Middle School Students

How upper-grades teachers can expand their understanding of a student's reading process

Targeting Instruction Effectively

Individual assessments such as running records and reading records have been used with beginning readers for many years. These procedures involve close observation of children's reading behaviors, coding them in precise detail, and then analyzing them to provide a window to the literacy processing system. The information gained from these assessments provides a detailed profile of the reader at any given point in time, and the data are highly useful in informing teaching decisions. The decisions that teachers can make based on individual assessments contribute to more powerful teaching, which in turn leads to accelerated progress in reading.

The benefits of individualized reading assessment for beginning readers has generated interest in using the assessment technique with more proficient as well as older readers, particularly since the need for small-group and individual teaching increases with the grades. As children grow older and gain more experience, the range and nature of the differences among readers widens. More proficient readers differ widely in the background knowledge that they bring to reading, as well as in their previous experience in processing texts. They vary in their understanding of reading and in their control of behaviors expert readers use. Some may have developed highly ineffective reading behaviors that get in the way of comprehension, fluency, or word recognition. Therefore, small-group and individualized teaching in the upper elementary and middle grades is essential in order to match teaching to students' instructional needs. To be effective in providing differentiated instruction, teachers must use the information from assessment, such as the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems.

Understandably, it is not prudent to simply take the assessment procedures used with younger children and apply them to older students. It is critical to accommodate the essential differences between primary and intermediate or middle school students when utilizing a benchmark assessment in order to target instruction effectively.

Observing the Reading Process

Assessment of the reading competencies of more proficient readers is even more complex than for beginning readers. Effective reading at this level requires much more than decoding the words; the demands on comprehension increase exponentially as readers move up the text gradient from level A to Z. As more demands are made on the cognitive system, the reader's behaviors must change in response. What has been learned becomes automatic and unconscious, and the system expands to accommodate the new learning.

Below are some differences between beginning and more proficient readers with explanations of what these differences mean for the interpretation of assessment data.

Accuracy. It is important for all readers to process texts with accuracy. Accurate reading indicates self-monitoring and is necessary (although not sufficient) for reading comprehension.

¹The running record was created by M. Clay (1993) as a tool for teachers of children ages five to eight. The process consists of observing a child who is reading aloud from a text and coding the reading behavior on a blank form. The behaviors are later analyzed in detail. The reading record consists of the same coding procedures, using a pre-prepared form with typed text. The running record can be used on any text without taking the time to prepare the form. The reading record is usually used for more formal assessment systems where the text is known.
A beginning reader is learning to use the visual information in print to solve new words. After a word is solved several times, it is usually learned and the reader can give attention to new words. The beginner makes substitutions and then corrects them; at least 90% accuracy is needed for the text to be effectively processed with instructional support at levels A–K. For independent reading, at least 95% accuracy is needed at levels A–K.

For more proficient readers, a high accuracy rate that also indicates self-monitoring is needed. They need to problem-solve new multisyllabic words, and doing so requires the automatic recognition of most of the other words in a text. Thus, it is inappropriate to use the same accuracy-rate criteria for both primary and intermediate or middle school students. Accordingly, the accuracy-rate requirements that determine independent and instructional levels in the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System are higher for levels L to Z than for levels A to K. Independent reading starting at the middle of grade 2 (level L) should be at least 98% accurate. Instructional reading at levels L–Z should be at least 95% accurate.

Self-correction. A beginning reader’s self-corrections are overt; that’s why we can tell so much from looking at reading records. But as the reader’s control of certain literacy behaviors improves, the process changes. The self-correction begins to take place before the reader says the word aloud. Or, the reader may note the error in passing but not bother to self-correct out loud. Overt self-correction of most errors is seen as a strength for younger readers because it shows that they are monitoring their reading. However, too much overt self-correction in more advanced readers is inefficient.

Proficient readers generally self-correct only when it’s needed to read meaningfully. In the highly proficient reader (about level K or L), a great deal of overt self-correction is not expected if the reading is taking place with ease. That is why in the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System we switch at level L from reporting students’ self-correction ratios to simply reporting the number of self-corrections. If we find very high accuracy and also many self-corrections, we notice it and work with the reader to achieve smoother processing. To read more about the important role of self-correction, see Change Over Time in Literacy Learning by Marie Clay (Heinemann 2001).

Comprehension. Beginning readers will have much to say about the books they’ve read, but more proficient readers will be able to think even deeper about the themes and meanings of a text, as well as articulate aspects of author’s craft. This is why there are two separate rubrics for scoring the Comprehension Conversation; one for levels A–K and another for levels L–Z. Being able to think about the text is crucial to comprehension at the upper levels, whereas in levels A–K, thinking beyond the text and about the text are combined.
**Professional Development**

The more teachers know about the expected reading behaviors of students at certain ages, the more effectively they can support students’ effective processing. The Professional Development Videos and Assessment Guide 2 are specifically designed for intermediate and middle school teachers and provide rich opportunities for learning how to use Benchmark Assessment System 2. The videos provide individualized training in coding, scoring, analyzing, and interpreting reading records and using the information to inform teaching. The videos allow teachers to direct their own learning and focus on areas of greatest interest or need. The Assessment Guide provides both case studies and analyzed reading records in order to give teachers many examples of coding, scoring, analyzing, and interpreting reading records. (See the case study that follows.)

In addition, Heinemann Professional Development Services provides workshops tailored to the needs of upper-grade teachers. These sessions are designed to enable intermediate and middle school teachers to observe the reading process with their students.

The result of some students’ benchmark assessments may indicate the need for small group or one-on-one instruction. It can be difficult to fit this into traditional middle-school schedules; however, Heinemann Professional Development Services can help work the needed instructional time into a school’s current classroom routines. One approach to instruction that works particularly well after students have been assessed with Benchmark Assessment Systems is the workshop approach. If teachers are interested in implementing this instructional approach in their classrooms, there are several texts by Fountas and Pinnell that provide resources to help do this, including *Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre and Content Literacy*, (2001), and *Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing about Reading, K–8*, (2006).

Heinemann Professional Development Services also provides workshops designed to enable intermediate and middle school teachers to use Heinemann professional development resources in order to implement a workshop approach to learning.

“Identifying reading difficulties can be a challenge for educators in the upper grades. Teachers need the training and tools to observe, code, and identify where the breakdown in reading is. We believe that assessment is the key factor in reaching the below-level reader at this age and stage. Teachers must be able to discuss effective and ineffective reading behaviors, as well as how text being read by students may or may not be supportive of new learning. This is the critical issue, and one of the reasons that our Benchmark Assessment System 2 is so needed”

— Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
"We know that the need for small-group and individualized teaching increases with the grades, so the need for better assessment becomes even greater. How can teachers develop appropriate instructional groupings without evaluating student reading abilities?"

– Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
Spencer, Grade 5 Student

Background and Assessment Summary

Spencer is a grade 5 student. Figure 4 shows his fall Assessment Summary Form. In his independent reading of the level T fiction text, Get a Horse!, Spencer read with 98% accuracy and 4 self-corrections. His fluency score of 3, his reading rate of 167 words-per-minute (WPM), and his comprehension score of 9 all indicated proficient reading. In his instructional reading of the level U nonfiction text, Earthquakes (Figures 5a–5c), Spencer had a 96% accuracy score with 4 self-corrections. His reading rate of 168 WPM was excellent, but his fluency score dropped down to a 2. His comprehension score of 6 was approaching proficiency. Spencer reached his hard level with the level V fiction text, A Call for Change. His accuracy score was 95% with 2 self-corrections, which was low. His fluency score was 2 and his rate of 146 WPM was in the below average range. His comprehension score of 4 indicated limited proficiency, making this his hard level. These results placed Spencer above grade level for the middle of Grade 5.

These books were written expressly for assessment and provide the material for Spencer’s oral and silent reading from which you can observe many dimensions of reading behavior.

Review the following case study in conjunction with the sample book Earthquakes.

SEE SAMPLE BOOK ONLINE >>

Earthquakes, Level U, Nonfiction BAS 2 book

Get a Horse!, Level T, Fiction BAS 2 book

A Call for Change, Level V, Fiction BAS 2 book
**Summary Form**

**Student:** Spencer  
**Teacher:** Brady  
**School:** Rolling Green  
**Grade:** 5  
**Date:** September

### Assessment Summary Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Span x Y</th>
<th>Fluent/Readable</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>Self-Correction</th>
<th>Fluency Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get a Horse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>F T 98 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td></td>
<td>NF U 96 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Call for Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>F V 95 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comprehension Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels A–K</th>
<th>Proficient (5–6)</th>
<th>Approaching Proficiency (4)</th>
<th>Limited Proficiency (3)</th>
<th>Not Proficient (0–2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95–100%</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90–94%</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 90%</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95–100%</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90–94%</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 90%</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key for Determining Independent/Instructional/Hard Levels**

- **Accuracy Score**
  - Independent: 95–100%
  - Instructional: 90–94%
  - Hard: Below 90%

---

*Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support (See The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition)*

Across the levels, Spencer had difficulty talking about the text issues—how the text was set up, how the author uses language to create meaning, etc. Spencer tends to focus more visual information than [M] and [S]. Helping him to integrate all sources of information in flexible ways will power his processing system.
Part One: Oral Reading is used to observe and code the student’s reading behavior through oral reading.

**Recording Form**

- **Earthquakes • Level U • Nonfiction**

**Student:** Spencer  
**Teacher:** Brady  
**Grade:** 5  
**Date:** September  
**School:** Rolling Green

**Summary of Scores:**
- Accuracy: 94%
- Comprehension: 6
- Self-correction: 4
- Writing About: 2
- Fluency: 2
- Reading: 2

**Sources of Information Used**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>SC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | What takes place during an earthquake? Huge tremors shake the ground; buildings sway back and forth; highways crumble; and bridges collapse. While it’s true that major earthquakes do cause all this damage and more, you may be surprised to learn that not all earthquakes are so destructive. Scientists say several thousand earthquakes may be happening across the planet every day. However, the majority of them are so slight that we don’t even realize they’re happening! Measuring Earthquakes Size: movement  
Seismologists, scientists who study earthquakes, measure how strong an earthquake is by using a device called a seismograph. |

**Subtotal:** 2 3 2 5 3 2 1

FIGURE 5a. Spencer’s Instructional Level Recording Form
Earthquakes • Level U

1. A seismograph is attached to the ground; when the ground vibrates, the seismograph shakes.

2. Scientists describe the seismograph's measurements with numbers. Since the 1930s, they have used a system called the Richter scale. If an earthquake measures below 3.0 on the Richter, people usually can't feel it. Earthquakes over 5.0 on the scale can cause damage, while a measurement of 7.0 is evidence of a major earthquake.

What Causes Earthquakes?

How and why do all these earthquakes occur?

Earth has many different layers. Its outermost layer is called the crust and is made up of huge sections called tectonic plates. Below the crust is another layer, called the mantle, which is made up of mostly solid rock. When tectonic plates push against each other, a huge amount of pressure builds up.
### Recording Form  Part One: Oral Reading (continued)

#### Earthquakes • Level U

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>13 or more</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>8-10</th>
<th>6-7</th>
<th>4-5</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Below</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Self-Corrections

4

#### Fluency Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fluency Score</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Fluency Scoring Key

- Reads primarily word-by-word with occasional but infrequent or inappropriate phrasing; no smooth or expressive interpretation, irregular phrasing, and no attention to author’s meaning or punctuation; no stress or inappropriate stress, and slow rate.
- Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three- and four-word groups and some word-by-word reading; almost no smooth, expressive interpretation or pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; almost no stress or inappropriate stress, with slow rate most of the time.
- Reads primarily in three- or four-word phrase groups; some smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; mostly appropriate stress and rate with some slowdowns.
- Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrases or word groups; mostly smooth, expressive interpretation and pausing guided by author’s meaning and punctuation; appropriate stress and rate with only a few slowdowns.

#### Reading Rate

- **End Time:** min. sec.
- **Start Time:** min. sec.
- **Total Time:** 1 min. 20 sec.
- **Total Seconds:** 80

(RW × 60) + Total Seconds = Words Per Minute (WPM)

13,440 + 80 = 165 WPM

---

FIGURE 5c. Spencer’s Instructional Level Recording Form
**RECORDING FORM**

- **Part Two:** The Comprehension Conversation is used to engage the student in an open-ended conversation about the text.

---

### Earthquakes - Level U

Beginning with the first prompt, have a conversation with the student. Note the key understandings the student expresses. Use the prompts to give you information about the student's understanding. Score for evidence of all understandings expressed—with or without a prompt. For scoring details, see the rubric in the Assessment Guide. Circle the number in the score column that reflects the level of understanding demonstrated.

#### Key Understandings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientists measure earthquakes with seismographs and describe the measurements using the Richter scale.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Earth's crust has plates that push against each other. Moving plates cause earthquakes. Below the crust is a soft mantle. The plates push against each other and shift around on top of the mantle. When the plates collide, an earthquake happens. This movement also causes cracks. Earthquakes happen all the time all over the world and most of the time we can't feel them.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note any additional understandings: Earthquakes happen a lot and people don’t know it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beyond the Text</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fault is a crack in the Earth’s crust. Earthquakes happen more frequently along faults.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People can’t get away from earthquakes before they occur because scientists cannot predict them like they can predict an oncoming hurricane, for example. People don’t have time to evacuate before a quake hits.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists need to discover how to predict when an earthquake will take place. This will give people a chance to evacuate the area before the quake takes place.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more we understand about nature, the better prepared we will be to handle natural disasters like earthquakes. Sample response: It means science is important to our safety. If you know more about science, then you understand what’s happening even if it’s bad. (Accept logical responses that connect to this text.) Note any additional understandings: Earthquakes are very destructive, described diagram + drawing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comprehension Scoring Key**

1. Student demonstrates limited proficiency in understanding the text.
2. Student is approaching proficiency in understanding the text.
3. Student demonstrates proficiency in understanding the text.

---

**FIGURE 5d. Spencer’s Instructional Level Recording Form**
FIGURE 5e. Spencer’s Instructional Level Recording Form

- Part Three: Writing About Reading is an optional prompt for responding to the text.
GUIDE FOR OBSERVING AND NOTING READING BEHAVIORS

- Guides the teacher in noticing and recording important behaviors evidenced in reading.

---

**FIGURE 6a. Spencer’s Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Date: September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Early Reading Behaviors</strong></td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td>Early behaviors are under control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Move left to right across a line of print?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Return to the left for a new line?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Match voice to print while reading a line or more of print?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize a few easy high-frequency words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Searching for and Using Information</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make meaningful attempts at unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the meaning of the story or text to predict unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to gather more information to solve a word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread and use the meaning of the sentence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to search for more details—information, characters, plot?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to gather information to clarify confusions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use headings and titles to think about the meaning of a section of text?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use information in the pictures to help in understanding a text?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of the genre (and its characteristics) to help in understanding a text?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of the genre (and its characteristics) to help in finding information?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use readers’ tools to help in finding information (glossary, index)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of oral language to solve unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to see if a word “sounds right” in a sentence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread to correct using language structure?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the visual information to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the sound of the first letter(s) to attempt or solve a word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use some, most, or all of the visual information to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use sound analysis to solve a word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make attempts that are visually similar?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use knowledge of a high-frequency word to problem solve?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Search for more visual information within a word to solve it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use analogy to solve unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use syllables to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use prefixes and suffixes to take apart and recognize words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use inflectional endings to problem solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognize words quickly and easily?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reread and use the sound of the first letter to solve a word?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Problem solve unknown words quickly and efficiently?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work actively to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use multiple sources of information together in attempts at words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use all sources of information flexibly to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use all sources of information in an orchestrated way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**RESOURCES**


---

FIGURE 6a. Spencer’s Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors
### Guide for Observing ... (cont.)

**3. Solving Words (cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solving Words</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use sound analysis (sounding out)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use analogy to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make attempts that are visually similar?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use the sound of the first letter to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work actively to solve words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use known words or parts to solve unknown words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use syllables to problem solve?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use prefixes and suffixes to take words apart?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use inflectional endings to take words apart?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use sentence context to derive the meaning of words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use base words and root words to derive the meaning of words?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make connections among words to understand their meaning?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4. Self-Monitoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Monitoring</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hesitate at an unknown word?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stop at an unknown word?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stop at an unknown word and appeal for help?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stop after an error?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notice mismatches?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notice when an attempt does not look right?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notice when an attempt does not sound right?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notice when an attempt does not make sense?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reread to confirm reading?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use knowledge of some high-frequency words to check on reading?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check one source of information with another?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check an attempt that makes sense with language?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check an attempt that makes sense with the letters (visual information)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use language structure to check on reading?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Request help after making several attempts?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5. Self-Correcting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Correcting</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reread and try again until accurate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stop after an error and make another attempt?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stop after an error and make multiple attempts until accurate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reread to self-correct?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work actively to solve mismatches?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-correct errors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6. Maintaining Fluency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintaining Fluency</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the reader:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read without pointing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read word groups (phrases)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Put words together?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read smoothly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read the punctuation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make the voice go down at periods?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make the voice go up at question marks?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pause briefly at commas, dashes, and hyphens?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read dialogue with intonation or expression?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stress the appropriate words to convey accurate meaning?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Read at a good rate—not too fast and not too slow?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7. Other Behaviors**

---

*FIGURE 6b. Spencer's Guide for Observing and Noting Reading Behaviors*
ANALYSIS OF PROCESSING STRATEGIES

Using the Guide for Observing and Noting Behaviors (Figures 6a–6b), along with Spencer’s instructional-level reading of Earthquakes, level U (Figures 5a–5c), his teacher noticed the following:

Section 1, Early Reading Behaviors: It was evident that Spencer had the early reading behaviors under control.

Section 2, Searching for and Using Information: For the most part, Spencer was searching for and using all sources of information. However, at times he made visually similar attempts and neglected meaning and structure, particularly on content specific words (seismograph/seismograph’s, Richer/Richter, temus/tremors).

Section 3, Word Solving: Spencer recognized and used a large core of high-frequency words in his reading. He used syllables, word parts, and letter sounds at the beginning, middle, and end of words. At times he neglected the visual details in the middle of words (stiffing/stifling, Richer/Richter, outmost/outermost, fierce/ferocious, except/exist) or at the ends of words (shakes/shake, measuring/measurement).

Section 4, Self-Monitoring: Spencer showed evidence of self-monitoring errors. However, he was not always consistent in monitoring for meaning or structure when making errors, relying solely on visual information (temus/tremors, untie/unite, Texas/tectonic).

Section 5, Self-Correcting: Spencer had a good self-correction score at his independent and instructional levels. At times he left errors that were visually similar and that did not make sense or sound right (temus/tremors, untie/unite, Texas/tectonic). At the hard level, the number of Spencer’s self-corrections was low, which may have affected his comprehension score.

Section 6, Maintaining Fluency: Spencer had a proficient fluency score of 3 at his independent level, but at his instructional and hard levels his fluency score was 2. He read mostly in smooth phrase groups but was not always consistent with expressive interpretation and pausing guided by the author’s meaning. He also did not always use appropriate stress. Spencer’s quick attempts at words, while not always working to self-correct them when they didn’t make sense, may have affected his fluency.

Overall, Spencer used all sources of information (meaning, structure, visual) flexibly to read with high accuracy. At times, he did not notice the visual details in the middle or end of words and neglected to use meaning or structure to self-monitor and self-correct. He read at a good rate, primarily in larger phrase groups, but he was not always consistent in using expressive interpretation and pausing guided by the author’s meaning.

EVIDENCE OF COMPREHENSION

At Spencer’s instructional level U, the comprehension conversation revealed a level of understanding that was approaching proficiency for within and beyond the text (Figure 5d). He demonstrated excellent understanding of the destructiveness of earthquakes and their unpredictability. For the key understandings in about the text (Figure 5e), however, Spencer showed very limited understanding of the author’s use of language to demonstrate the impact of earthquakes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

Using The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Prompting Guide, Part I, Genre Study: Teaching with Fiction and Nonfiction Books, and Teaching for Comprehending and Fluency: Thinking, Talking, and Writing About Reading, K-8, as resources, the following information is important to consider when instructing Spencer.

From: The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum

The Guided Reading section for Spencer’s instructional level U contains a description of readers who process texts successfully at that level. Some of this description currently fits Spencer, but he needs some explicit teaching in the areas of: self-monitoring errors for meaning, structure, and visual details; use of expressive interpretation and pausing guided by the author’s meaning; and
use of appropriate stress. He also needs to learn more about analyzing texts to understand the author’s techniques and use of language.

Specifically, the following goals were identified for Spencer’s instructional program:

- Use text resources to search for information: (e.g., acknowledgments, author’s note, pronunciation guide, glossary, references, index)
- Use a wide range of strategies for solving multisyllable words: e.g., using syllables, recognizing spelling patterns within words, using complex letter-sound relationships, noticing base words and affixes, using the context of the text, or using text resources
- Self-monitor reading using multiple sources of information: i.e., background knowledge, syntax, word meaning, word structure, awareness of text structure, meaning of the whole text
- Use content knowledge of the topic of a text to self-monitor and self-correct
- Understand and acquire a large number of content-specific words that require the use of strategic actions (i.e., conceptual understanding of content, definitions within the body of a text, a glossary, or other text resources)
- Read orally in a way that demonstrates all dimensions of fluency (pausing, phrasing, intonation, word stress)
- Use the voice to reflect disciplinary content in different ways: e.g., historical account vs. scientific argument
- Understand how illustrations and text work together to enhance meaning and communicate the mood of the text
- Notice the writer’s use of language and state how it specifically adds to the meaning, quality, and mood of a text

**From Prompting Guide, Part 1**

The following are some options for teaching Spencer how to self-monitor whether his attempts using visually similar words make sense or sound right:

- That didn’t make sense.
- You need to stop when it doesn’t make sense.
- You need to stop when it doesn’t make sense.
- You said ______________ Does that sound right?
- Check the middle part.
- Check the end part.
- Try that again and think what would make sense.
- Try that again and think what would sound right.

After prompting, the teacher can use reinforcing language like this to support Spencer’s understanding:

- You thought about what would make sense and look right.
- You thought about what would sound right and look right.
- You checked the middle (end) of the word.
- You made it all fit together.

For teaching, prompting, and reinforcing language for maintaining fluency, his teacher can try this language:

- Listen to how I make my voice sound __________ (scared, excited, happy etc.).
- Listen to me read this. Can you hear how I sound like the characters who are talking?
- Listen to me read this. Notice how I make my voice show what the writer means here.
- In this part, __________ is very excited. How would __________ say that?
Spencer needs help strengthening his ability to think beyond and about the text. Specifically, he needs to work on thinking analytically and critically about the text. To help achieve this goal, his teacher can use specific language to foster conversations about the text from page 402 [for fiction], pages 419–421 [for biography], and pages 430–432 [for nonfiction]. Figure 25–1 provides examples of how to demonstrate thinking analytically and critically, and then how to probe for evidence.

“"As children grow older their differences in reading widens. Individualized teaching is essential. Those with weaker reading skills can quickly fall further behind their more proficient peers."”

— Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
teaching students who need to broaden and deepen their thinking about texts.

- Chapter 14, “Thinking and Talking about Genre: Interactive Read-Aloud and Literature Discussion”
- Chapter 15, “Learning about Fiction Texts through Minilessons and Group Share,”
- Chapter 16, “Learning about Nonfiction Texts through Minilessons and Group Share”
- Chapter 17, “Developing Understandings about Genre through Reading Conferences and Independent Reading”
- Chapter 18, “Writing about Reading in a Reader’s Notebook”
- Chapter 19, “Using Guided Reading to Develop Understandings about Genre,” and Chapter 20, “The Reading/Writing Connection”

CLASSROOM AND SMALL-GROUP TEACHING

Spencer is a fifth grader whose instructional reading level is U, above grade level for the beginning of grade 5. He will benefit from many opportunities to read independent-level texts in a variety of genres and from participation in book discussions or literature circle groups. He will also benefit from interactive read-aloud by seeing his teacher model how to analyze texts for author’s craft, noticing how the author uses language to make the text interesting or exciting. He needs small-group, guided reading instruction at level U with some instruction on self-monitoring and fluency [expressive interpretation and pausing guided by the author’s meaning and use of appropriate stress]. In discussing and revisiting text after reading, he will benefit from a focus on the author’s craft and the techniques and characteristics of genre.

The LLI Red, Gold, Purple, and Teal Systems feature original, age-appropriate books created to engage readers in grades 3 and up.
Professional Development is invaluable; you are increasing the knowledge and skill of the teachers in your district. It’s the best investment your district can make.

— Irene C. Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell
ON-SITE SEMINARS
Delivered by Fountas and Pinnell-trained Consultants

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS
Available for both system 1 (grades K–2) and system 2 (grades 3–8), on-site seminars introduce participants to the thinking behind the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, provide training on how to administer and analyze the assessment, and help participants understand instructional and grouping implications. Through demonstration, guided practice, and discussion, teachers learn how to:

- administer, code, and score a Benchmark Assessment reading conference
- determine independent, instructional, and placement levels for readers using the F&P Text Level Gradient™
- analyze a child’s reading performance—including reading comprehension, reading rate, and word analysis—to assess the reader’s current processing system
- administer a variety of other literacy assessments, such as word analysis, print concepts, and reading overview.

ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT
This seminar will provide an overview of the Benchmark Assessment System, including research, the importance of taking and analyzing reading records, and how to link assessment to instruction. It will suggest ways to facilitate implementation, and will provide specific checklists of things to look for in effective administration of the Benchmark Assessment System, and evidence of its application to classroom instruction.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNTAS & PINNELL LITERACY CONTINUUM
Fountas and Pinnell provide a link from assessment to instruction via classroom practices such as guided reading and read-aloud through The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum: A Tool for Assessment, Planning, and Teaching, included with every Benchmark Assessment System.

Drawing from this important resource, the seminar provides an introduction to The Literacy Continuum and how it can be used to set goals for learning in planning lessons for individuals, small groups, and the whole class. Discover how The Literacy Continuum can be used as a bridge in connecting your assessment data and your instruction, as well as how it can serve as a guide for evaluating student progress over time, helping you identify the specific areas in which students need help.

ONLINE PD Delivered by Fountas and Pinnell-trained consultants
Heinemann delivers a dynamic schedule of Online PD offerings via webinars led by hand-selected Fountas and Pinnell-trained consultants. Our webinars are live and interactive, and our participants receive high quality author-developed PD without incurring travel or substitute costs. Webinars are recorded and archived for convenient on-demand access by all participants.

- Each webinar series consists of a total of five clock hours of streaming webcast including live discussion with the presenter, video demonstrations, and comprehensive presentation materials.
- In response to the high demand for these live webinar series supporting implementation of Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ products, a hand-selected menu of previously recorded live webinars are now available for purchase on our website. Please visit heinemann.com/PD/LiveWebinars for more information.

For more information:
- To discuss your on-site support needs, call 800.541.2086, ext. 1402.
- For the latest webinar schedule visit: heinemann.com/pd/livewebinars or call 800.541.2086, ext 1151.

Did you know?
- Grant money for your professional development purchase may be available to your district through Title I, Title II, Title III, Title V, and Title VI.

CALL US TO LEARN MORE!
Fountas & Pinnell Assessment

*The Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems* are accurate and reliable tools to identify the instructional and independent reading levels of all students and document student progress through one-on-one formative and summative assessments.

Fountas & Pinnell Classroom Resources

*Fountas & Pinnell Classroom Resources* maximize student learning with systematic lessons, student books and materials, and powerful tools that guide teachers’ language and actions and support them in expert decision making for high-impact literacy instruction.

Fountas & Pinnell Intervention

*Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention* is a short-term, supplementary intervention proven to bring struggling readers to grade-level competency with engaging leveled books and fast-paced, systematically designed lessons.

Fountas & Pinnell Professional Books

*Fountas & Pinnell Professional Books* empower teachers with highly effective instructional procedures and the latest in literacy thinking to elevate their expertise and help build a community of skillful informed educators.

Fountas & Pinnell Professional Development

*Fountas & Pinnell Professional Development* offers options and opportunities to further develop the teaching craft and foster a climate of collegiality and community through School-Based Seminars, Multi-Day Institutes, and Live Webinars.

Join the Fountas & Pinnell Literacy™ Community and be part of the conversation.

Irene C. Fountas

is a professor at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has been a classroom teacher, language arts specialist, and consultant in school districts across the nation and abroad. She is Lesley University’s first recipient of the Marie M. Clay Endowed Chair in Reading Recovery, and the recipient of the Greater Boston Council and the International Reading Association’s Celebrate Literacy Award. Currently, she directs field-based literacy research projects and the Literacy Collaborative at Lesley University.

Gay Su Pinnell

is Professor Emeritus in the School of Teaching and Learning at The Ohio State University. She has extensive experience in classroom teaching and field-based research, and in developing comprehensive approaches to literacy education. She received the International Reading Association’s Albert J. Harris Award for research in reading difficulties, the Ohio Governor’s Award, and the Charles A. Dana Foundation Award for her contributions to the field of literacy education. She is a member of the Reading Hall of Fame.
Fountas & Pinnell
Benchmark Assessment System 1
Grades K–2, Levels A–N
978-0-32-07769-7

- 28 Books [14 Fiction and 14 Nonfiction]
- Assessment Guide 1*
- Assessment Forms
- Access to Fountas & Pinnell Online Resources
- Optional Assessment Student Forms Book
- One-year subscription to the Online Data Management System (ODMS)
- Professional Development Video
- The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition*
- 30 Student Folders*
- F&P Calculator/Stopwatch*

*Components available for purchase outside the system.

Fountas & Pinnell
Benchmark Assessment System 2
Grades 3–8, Levels L–Z
978-0-32-07770-3

- 30 Books [15 Fiction and 15 Nonfiction]
- Assessment Guide 2*
- Assessment Forms
- Access to Fountas & Pinnell Online Resources
- Optional Assessment Student Forms Book
- One-year subscription to the Online Data Management System (ODMS)
- Professional Development Video
- The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition*
- 30 Student Folders*
- F&P Calculator/Stopwatch*

*Components available for purchase outside the system.

COMPLETE RESOURCES TO ASSESS, INTERPRET, AND PLAN RESPONSIVE TEACHING

For current pricing and order information:
Phone 800.225.5800 • Fax 877.231.6980 • fountasandpinnell.com