

How to Assess Elementary Reading

It is important that a teacher include three aspects of evaluation to form a legitimate reading grade: comprehension from discussion based on silent reading, comprehension based on written work, and oral reading.

Evaluation of the **oral reading** may be done using a variety of forms. The lower the grade level the more specific the form should be. Upper level reading may have just one category---oral reading.

Written comprehension grades come from the reading worktext pages that you select to evaluate or from pages that you may write. These grades may be recorded in your grade book or on a designated form.

Evaluation of **comprehension from discussion** requires the most diligent effort. Sample pages may provide ideas to help you get started. These pages are set up so that a teacher can put the names for one entire reading group on the same form. We recommend using a number system for recording responses. It could be a three-, five-, or ten-point system. If you use a five-point system, it converts easily to percentage grades. For example:

- 5 = a complete, well-stated answer based on the initial question
- 4 = a good answer needing a little clarification
- 3 = an answer that required a little help or scaffolding (asking another question to lead up to it)
- 2 = an answer that required more than one help
- 1 = an inaccurate answer even with help

It is *not* recommended that you record every answer given by every child. You want to maintain a smoothly flowing conversation during the story discussion. However, it is good to record answers from a few students during each reading group. The grid will show whether you are balancing your evaluations. Literal and appreciative questions are easy to identify and balance. The interpretive and critical are not as easily delineated. Toward the end of completing the assessment form, you may choose to mark the interpretive and critical categories interchangeably in order to complete the grid. You will want to complete two or more pages per marking period and average the totals together.

After you have compiled the totals for the three components, it is necessary to average them together. Samples of three different percentages for compiling the total reading grade are provided. We recommend using the even percentages for grades 1 and 2. The silent and written comprehension will begin to outweigh the oral reading as the students go through elementary school. These forms reflect our philosophy for teaching and evaluating reading. Students coming through the BJU Press program usually do very well in middle school and high school with understanding literature.

I trust that this information will be helpful to you. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact dbuckley@bju.edu or call 1.800.845.5731, ext. 4334 or 4315. Similar resources are also available on our website: www.bjupress.com/resources. Select: *Reading and Booklists* located under Textbook Resources.