

## Directions for Using the Assessment Summary Chart for Early Readers

**Columns 1 and 2: Name and Instructional Level.** Write the student's name in the first column and record the instructional text level as determined by the running record. This is the level at which the student reads with 90–94% accuracy and with some comprehension. If the student fluently reads the text at 95% accuracy and has a basic understanding of the story, the text is considered to be at an independent level. Give the student a text to read at the next level to determine the instructional level.

Sometimes a student might read a text quite accurately, but have limited comprehension or little fluency. Even though the accuracy rate might be at an independent level, lack of comprehension and fluency indicate that the student needs more instruction on this level. In this case, you would record this text level as the student's instructional level. There are also occasions when the assessment does not indicate an instructional level. For example, text Level E might be an independent level, but the next level is too difficult. If this happens, report the independent level as the instructional level and work on areas of weakness.

**Column 3: Cues Used.** Put an *M* if the student's errors are mostly meaning-related. Put an *S* if the student's errors match the structure of the text. Put a *V* if the student tries to sound out an unknown word or makes substitutions that are visually similar.

**Column 4: Monitors for Meaning (M).** Put a plus (+) if the student consistently stops when meaning breaks down and tries to fix the error. Put a check (✓) if the student sometimes monitors for meaning. Put a minus (–) if the student consistently ignores errors that distort meaning.

**Column 5: Decodes.** Students should learn a variety of decoding strategies during the early levels of reading. Most children develop visual processing skills by first attending to initial letters, then ending letters, and finally the medial letters (Clay, 1991). Put a (+) if the student uses beginning, medial, and final letters when decoding unknown words, including inflectional endings such as *-ed*, *-ing*, and *-s*. Put a check (✓) if the student attends to initial and final letters but tends to ignore medial sounds and some endings. Put a minus (–) if the student uses some letters and sounds but is not consistent in attending to visual information. It is rare for a student reading at Levels D or E to score a plus (+) on decoding.

**Column 6: Fluency.** Readers at this stage are developing a visual memory for sight words, improving their decoding strategies, and learning to group words together visually. As these processes become automatic, the student reads more fluently.

Record the student's fluency rate by using this simple rubric:

- 1: Reading is very slow, mostly word-by-word.
- 2: Reading is choppy, mostly two-word phrases.
- 3: Reading is mostly phrased, but lacks some aspect of fluency, such as intonation, expression, or attention to punctuation.
- 4: Reading is fluent and phrased with appropriate expression and intonation.

**Column 7: Retell.** Record the child's basic understanding of the text, using the descriptions below as a guide.

Put a plus (+) if the child gives a complete and detailed retelling.

*The major plot elements are retold completely, accurately, and in order. All major and minor characters are included. The problem and resolution are clear.*

Put a check (✓) if the child gives a partial retelling.

*The retelling includes the plot and most major characters. Minor characters and setting may be absent. A few events may be missing or out of sequence.*

Put a minus (–) if the child gives a limited retelling.

*Central characters are left out, incorrect identification of the problem and/or solution, and essential plot details are absent or out of sequence.*