“Reading Assessment: Primary Case Study”

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**Connections to Literacy Research and Theory**

Children develop the phonemes of speech by hearing the sounds spoken around them on a daily basis. This phonemic awareness jumpstarts the children’s ability to be able to put the sounds they hear to letters that form words (Cooter and Reutzel, 2011). To begin the reading process, teachers then need to intentionally teach the students how to take their phonemic awareness and go towards having phonological awareness. Through phonics instruction, students should begin to analyze words and break the words into smaller chunks, also known as decoding (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). After intentionally teaching students reading strategies to decode and make sense of what they are reading, teachers should build fluency. Teachers should use Rasinski’s (2003) Multidimensional Fluency Scale to assess student’s oral reading fluency based on volume and expression, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. While students are still mastering their fluency skills, teachers should teach comprehension strategies that will help students individually keep track of their understanding. Reutzel and Cooter (2011) explain that the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) defined comprehension as “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning.” There is an intentional process in which teachers need to follow in order to teach reading.

**Background**

Ronnie is a twelve year old boy who lives with his mother. He is a seventh grade student at Nativity Academy in Louisville, Kentucky. He was assessed at the Bellarmine Regional Assessment Clinic at the request of his teachers and his mother. Ronnie’s teachers expressed interest in obtaining assessment information about his current performance in reading and math to support his academic achievement during middle school.

**Assessments**

**The Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE)**

The TOWRE measures an individual’s ability to pronounce printed words accurately and fluently. Administered in just 5 to 10 minutes, the test is an efficient way to assess two skills that are critical to overall reading proficiency—the ability to sound out words quickly and accurately and the ability to recognize familiar words as whole units. It includes two subtests. Sight Word Efficiency assesses the number of printed words that can be accurately identified in 45 seconds. Phonetic Decoding Efficiency measures the number of pronounceable printed non-words that can be accurately decoded in 45 seconds.

**Gray Oral Reading Test, 4th Edition (GORT-4)**

The Gray Oral Reading Tests, Fourth Edition (GORT-4) provides an efficient and objective measure of growth in oral reading and an aid in the diagnosis of oral reading difficulties. Five scores give you information on a student’s oral reading skills in terms of:

- Rate—the amount of time taken by a student to read a story.
- Accuracy—the student's ability to pronounce each word in the story correctly.
• Fluency—the student’s Rate and Accuracy Scores combined.
• Comprehension—the appropriateness of the student’s responses to questions about the content of the story.
• Overall Reading Ability—a combination of a student’s Fluency and Comprehension Scores.

**Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Revised (WRMT-R)**

The WRMT-R provides a comprehensive assessment of reading readiness, basic reading skills and/or reading comprehension. Subtests include Letter Identification, Word identification, Word attack (nonsense words), Word Comprehension (antonyms, synonyms, analogies) and Passage Comprehension. Specific strengths and weaknesses are identified. Determining the root causes of reading deficits can facilitate more efficient and targeted remediation.

**Results and Analysis**

**The Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE)**

The results of the TOWRE suggest that Ronnie is in the 82nd percentile in identifying sight words. Ronnie’s ability to read sight words fluently seems to be motivated by timed restrictions. Ronnie’s phonemic decoding skills reflect that he has an average ability in reading nonsense words using phonics patterns. He fell in the 36th percentile when compared to his age equivalent peers. Overall, Ronnie appears to have an average ability with emergent reading concepts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Descriptive Category</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sight Word Efficiency</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>High Average</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonemic Decoding Efficiency</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Word Efficiency</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>64</td>
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</table>

**Gray Oral Reading Test, 4th Edition (GORT-4)**

The results of the Gray Oral Reading Tests suggest that Ronnie’s fluency scored in the 37th percentile when compared to his age equivalent peers. His accuracy falls within the low
average range meaning that he often reads with miscues. The GORT-4 suggests that his fluency is in the low average range which directly impacts his comprehension. Ronnie’s comprehension score was in the 9th percentile, which is nearly two standard deviations away from the average student. Overall, based off of the GORT-4, Ronnie appears to have a low average ability in reading fluency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Revised (WRMT-R)

Contrary to the results of the TOWRE assessment, the results of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test suggest that Ronnie is in the low average range in his ability to identify sight words. Ronnie’s word identification fluency was in the 19th percentile when compared to his age equivalent peers. He scored in the 15th percentile when asked to find antonyms and synonyms for words given, which is one standard deviation below the mean. Overall, Ronnie’s total reading score falls in the 26th percentile and suggests that he is an average reader.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Grade Equivalent</th>
<th>Age Equivalent</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word ID</td>
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<td>4.7</td>
<td>10-2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Attack</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>11-4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Comp</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>10-0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage Comp</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Skills Cluster</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10-4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comp Cluster</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>10-10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Reading Cluster</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>10-7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Implications for Teaching

Based on the GORT-4 and the Woodcock assessments, Ronnie ranges from 1 to 3 levels below his grade equivalent peers. Ronnie needs more fluency and comprehension instruction and practice. He needs to have opportunities where he reads a variety of text to help further his
word comprehension skills. Reutzel and Cooter (2011) imply that in an effort to become a proficient reader and to read at grade level, Ronnie will need to increase his ability in reading aloud smoothly and at an appropriate rate while using prosody. Reutzel and Cooter state that “Reading appropriately challenging books with instruction and feedback may help proficient readers make the transition from word-by-word reading to fluent reading” (p. 199). Therefore, Ronnie should choose challenging books to read orally and silently. Ronnie should be given passages related to content to use for repeated readings to obtain proficient automaticity. I would assess Ronnie using Rasinski’s (2003) Multidimensional Fluency Scale assessing his volume and expression, phrasing, smoothness and pace. Reutzel and Cooter define that “the act of monitoring one’s unfolding comprehension of text and taking steps to “fix” defective comprehension is referred to as metacognition” (p.312). Ronnie needs intentional lessons teaching him how to use his metacognition and thinking strategies. He should have ample opportunity to think about his thinking as a reader and learner. One strategy that would be helpful for Ronnie is the Click or Clunk strategy (Reutzel and Cooter, 2011). This strategy will help him monitor his own comprehension and help him realize when he needs to use a fix up strategy to help his understanding. Ronnie needs to focus on becoming a fluent reader using appropriate speed and expression while working to comprehend the text.

Bibliography

Government Printing Office.

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension. Santa Monica, CA: Science and Technology Policy Institute, RAND Education.


Reflection and Connection to Standards

Kentucky Teacher Standards

Standard 1: The Teacher Demonstrates Applied Content Knowledge

The Diagnostic Reading Assessment Case Study allowed me to demonstrate the content knowledge. I am able to take the content knowledge that I now have of assessing students and

Comment [ddp9]: This section is Distinguished. Very good analysis around your development and how what you have learned relates to your teaching and to the school within which you work.

Comment [ddp10]: Very nice job on these.
apply it to my students in class. I feel comfortable and confident recognizing when there is a break down in a students reading process and then being able to decipher which assessments to give so that I will get the information that I need to help them succeed. Through this case study I was able to demonstrate my knowledge of giving and analyzing reading assessments.

**Standard 2: The Teacher Designs and Plans Instruction**

After giving the assessments and analyzing the data, I was able to plan instruction to help my student improve their reading skills. This is still an area of growth for me as I continue to assess students to pin point where they are confused and then be able to recognize where to start instruction for them. I feel comfortable planning reading instruction, however, I am still learning the best way to instruct my struggling learners in small group.

**Standard 5: The Teacher Assesses and Communicates Learning Results**

Being able to complete a reading assessment on a real student that is struggling was extremely beneficial to me. After five years of teaching, I am feeling more confident when speaking with parents and being able to communicate results of assessments and observations. However, this experience was different than being in my classroom. I felt disconnected with assessing a student from another school. I didn’t have rapport with him or his mother so it was difficult for me to prepare for his phone conference. The phone conference turned out to be a great learning experience for me, as I hadn’t had the opportunity to explain and communicate with a parent of a student that wasn’t mine. On the other hand, I did feel prepared to create my student’s written report and data analysis.

**Standard 7: Reflects and Evaluates Teaching and Learning**

After completing the diagnostic assessment, I learned how to assess using standardized instruments which is helpful when looking at a struggling child and trying to figure out next
steps. By giving these assessments I realized and reflected on my own teaching, that these are great tools to learn specific reading processes that students struggle with or even see the holes that could easily be overlooked when trying to understand the struggling reader. These assessments all provide excellent feedback to help me take my students to the next level.

**Standard 8: Collaborates with Colleagues/Parents/Others**

This was a great opportunity for me to be able to collaborate with a colleague as we assessed and analyzed data together. We learned with each other how to assess the student and how to analyze the data to compare to national standards. We worked together to create a phone conference form that would help us decide what was important to explain to the students mother and what information was not. This Case Study assignment helped me feel more comfortable with collaborating with parents, as well as, diagnosticians.

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**Valli Reflection**

**Reflection In and On Action**

The Diagnostic Reading Assessment Case Study has inspired me to make changes in my own classroom. As a first grade teacher, I am told which assessments to do with my students, and I now feel more comfortable analyzing the data collected from the assessments. I am also inspired to reach out and search for other assessments when I feel the need to do so.

**Deliberative Reflection**
In my school, I feel that I am not given the freedom of choice to use assessments that I may personally think would be more beneficial for my data analysis of students. I do believe that my school does what is best for student learning and I do believe in our reading process instruction as we have researched the reading and thinking strategies that work best with students.

**Personalistic Reflection**

As I reflect on my own teaching, I now feel more comfortable searching out other assessments that regular education teachers at my school usually do not get their hands on. I aspire to learn more about other assessments that may have not been introduced to me yet. This course has been interesting to me as I was not aware that I was able to give other assessments than my administration introduces to me and requests that I complete for my students. There are other assessments that would be extremely beneficial to help me track my student’s growth.

**Critical Reflection**

The Diagnostic Reading Assessment Case Study assignment has shown me that there are multiple ways to meet students at their level and decipher where their starting point is. As I reflect on my own teaching, I realize that the assessments that I gave for this assignment are reliable assessments to get a good feel on my students reading ability and to be able to plan and individualize their instruction.