

Reading Inventories

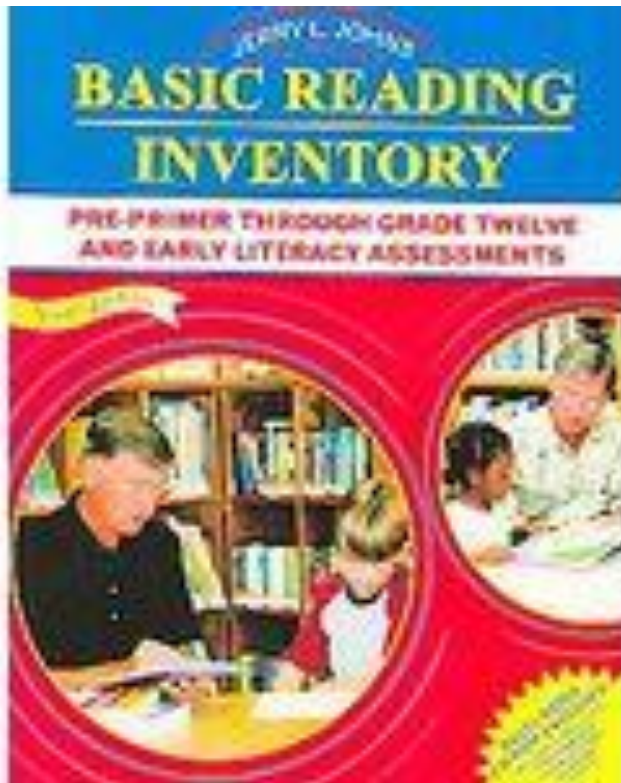


By Lauren A. Eckman, M. Ed.

ELA Teacher/TVI

Georgia Academy for the Blind

Where to Begin



- To refresh your knowledge of how to conduct a reading inventory, I suggest reading Sections 1-5 in Part One of the manual.



Word Lists

- Using Form A, select a starting word list for the student that will be reasonably easy for him/her to read. This will help to build up the student's confidence. Starting too hard may dishearten the student and negatively impact the results.
- I suggest that you start with regular print for students with low vision and Braille for students with blindness.
- Students should use any magnifiers or other devices that they normally use in class when reading.



Word Lists

- As the student reads the words in the lists, put a check mark by the words that they read correctly.
- If they make a mistake, indicate what that mistake is on the blank next to the word on your scoring guide.
- I find that writing exactly what the student said helpful because I can go back later and see if there is a pattern. For instance, the student may consistently mistake an “o” for an “a.” Furthermore, this may reveal some misunderstandings in the Braille code for students who use this medium.
- At the end of each list, direct the student to attempt to reread the words that he/she missed. If the student reads one correctly, it is then added into their total of correct responses.



When to End the Word Lists

- When a student reads 13 or fewer words in a list correctly, the student has reached his/her frustration level. You may now stop and move onto the graded reading passages.



Where to Begin the Graded Reading Passages

- Look at the score sheets from the word lists. Find the student's last Independent level and give the student a passage from one grade level below.
- Use your judgment. If you know that this is still going to be too hard, start lower. If the student is nervous about reading aloud, start lower to let him/her build up confidence.
- If you know that a student is going to be able to read beyond an eighth grade level, choose the LE or LN forms, since they continue through Grade 12. If this is not the case, continue with Form A.



Scoring the Passage

- Ask the student to read the title of the passage. Then, ask the student what he/she thinks the passage will be about or what may happen in the story depending on the form that you are using. Mark their level of background knowledge on the scoring sheet. A low level of background knowledge may affect the student's score; thus, you will want to indicate this in your report.
- Direct the student to read the passage aloud.
- Time the student and mark any errors made.
- Use the scoring box at the bottom of your scoring guide for the passage to determine if the student's performance was Independent, Instructional, or Frustration.



Comprehension Questions

- Ask the student the comprehension questions at the end of each passage. Students can get half credit for partial answers.
- Use the scoring guide at the bottom of your page to determine the student's comprehension level.
- Analyze the types of questions that the student answers incorrectly, as this will help you to formulate reading strategies that will help the student.



When to Stop the Graded Reading Passages

- When the student reaches the Frustration Level on the comprehension questions, you may stop and move onto the next medium.



Large Print

- Repeat the same steps with the student reading large print. Choose Form B for students who will read between the Pre-Primer and 8th Grade levels. Choose Form LN or LE (use a different form from the regular print administration) for students who will read above the 8th Grade level.



Auditory

- For a student with blindness, conduct the second part in an auditory format.
- You do not use the word lists.
- Read the title to the student and ask him/her what he/she thinks will happen in the story or what the passage will be about depending on which form you use.
- Read the passage aloud to the student at a reasonable speed.
- I recommend that you practice reading the passages prior to the administration of the BRI. You do not want your mistakes to inadvertently affect the student's score.
- Ask the student the comprehension questions and score as usual.



Collect Your Data

- First, complete the data sheets provided at the beginning of each form. Make sure that you indicate the medium used on each sheet.
- After I complete the sheets, I like to have everything on one page so that I can easily compare the student's performance in each medium instead of constantly switching between the BRI data sheets.
- Make columns on a sheet of paper and write the students scores for each medium.
- Average the reading speed for the passages in each medium and put each average in the appropriate column.
- Write any observations you made, such as the inches from the student's face and the page, Braille errors, letter reversals, lack of background knowledge, etc.

Sample One-Page Comparison Chart for Print

	Regular Print Word Lists	Large Print Word Lists	Regular Print Passages	Large Print Passages	Observations
Independent					
Independent/ Instructional					
Instructional					
Instructional/ Frustration					
Frustration					
Average Words Per Minutes					
Types of Errors					



Sample One-Page Comparison Form for Braille

	Braille	Auditory	Observations
Independent			
Independent/ Instructional			
Instructional			
Instructional/ Frustration			
Frustration			
Average Words Per Minute			
Types of Errors			



The Report

- Remember, there are two reasons for conducting a reading inventor—to determine which medium will allow the student to have the highest level of success and independence when reading as a part of the LMA, and to identify areas of needs and formulate strategies for remediation so that the student can increase his/her reading level.
- I wrote one report for the first student, and I use it as a “template” for the rest. I use Find/Replace to change the students’ names, and I just make changes as necessary.
- I find that the report helps in IEP meeting, as many parents have difficulty with the BRI data sheets, and my charts do not provide enough detail for the IEP team members.
- Furthermore, the report provides more opportunities to explain a student’s areas of strength and areas of need, as well as a chance to suggest possible intervention strategies.



Writing the Report

- Tell when you conducted the assessment and any magnifiers, corrective lenses, etc. that the student used.
- Include the student's performance on the reading lists, the average words per minute, and their performance on each of the graded passages.
- Do this for each medium that you assessed.
- The final part of the report should include an analysis of the performance and your recommendations for the most appropriate reading medium for the student.
- It is rather formulaic and less-than-elegant writing, but that makes the reports fast and easy to produce.



Example of a Report for a Student with Low Vision

I evaluated Student X on January 22 and 23, 2007, using the *Basic Reading Inventory* by Jerry Johns. He first read the graded word lists and graded reading passages in regular print with corrective lenses using Form A. He sat approximately 4 inches from the page. His last independent grade level on the word lists was Grade 10, and he did not have a frustration level.

After the word lists, he read the passages in Form LN. For the eighth grade passage, Student X read at the Independent/Instructional level and answered the comprehension questions at the Independent/Instructional level. He read at an Independent/Instructional level in reading and scored in the Instructional/Frustration level on the comprehension questions on the ninth grade passage. For the tenth grade passage, Student X read at an Independent/Instructional level and answered the questions at an Independent level. He scored at an Independent/Instructional level for the eleventh grade reading passage and an Instructional level on the comprehension questions.



Continued

Finally, his reading level for the twelfth grade passage was Independent/Instructional level, and he scored in the Frustration level for the comprehension questions. His average reading speed for the reading passages was 119.6 words per minute.

Next, Student X read Form B using large print and corrective lenses. His last Independent level on the graded word lists was Grade 10, and he did not reach a frustration level. His reading level for the eighth grade reading passage was Independent, as was his comprehension level. On the ninth grade passage, his reading level was Independent/Instructional, and his comprehension level was Independent. Both his reading and comprehension levels for tenth grade were Independent/Instructional. On the eleventh grade passage, his reading score was Independent/Instructional, and his comprehension score was Independent. Finally, Student X did not make any reading miscues on the twelfth grade passage for a perfect reading score, and he only missed half of a comprehension question for an Independent level score. Student X's average reading rate was 126 words per minute.



Continued

Overall, Student X's performance on the graded word lists was comparable in both regular and large print. However, his reading rate was seven words per minute faster using the large print, and his comprehension scores were consistently higher when he read passages in large print with corrective lenses. The difference in his comprehension using large print and regular print is exemplified by his performance on the twelfth grade passages. He was in the Frustration level when using regular print, but he scored in the Independent level using large print. Thus, the difference that large print makes in his comprehension indicates that he would benefit from using large print materials so that he can achieve higher levels of academic success in his classes.



Example of a Report for a Student with Blindness

Student Y's Reading Inventory Results:

I evaluated Student Y on January 31, 2007, using the *Basic Reading Inventory* by Jerry Johns. He first read the graded word lists and graded reading passages in Braille using Form A. His last independent grade level on the word lists was Grade 3, and his Frustration level was Grade 7.

Student Y read the passages on Form B using Braille. For the third grade passage, Student Y read and answered the comprehension questions at the Independent level. He scored in the Independent/Instructional level in reading and scored in the Instructional level on the comprehension questions on the fourth grade passage. For the fifth grade passage, Student Y read in the Independent/Instructional range and answered the comprehension questions in the Instructional/Frustration range. He scored at an Instructional/Frustration level for the sixth grade reading passage and a Frustration level on the comprehension questions. On several of the passages, Student Y demonstrated a low level of background knowledge, which may have adversely affected his ability to comprehend the passage. His average reading speed for the reading passages was 36 words per minute.



Continued

A few hours later, I read the passages from Form B to Student Y, and he answered the comprehension questions. His comprehension level for the first grade reading passage was Independent, and his comprehension level for the second grade passage was Instructional/Frustration. On the third grade passage his comprehension level was Frustration. On several of the passages, Student Y demonstrated a low level of background knowledge, which may have adversely affected his ability to comprehend the passage.

Overall, Student Y's performance using Braille was higher than when listening to the passages. He was able to comprehend material through the fifth grade using Braille, but only through the third grade passage when the passages were read to him. He is a very determined reader, and he has a good foundation in phonics that allows him to sound-out most unfamiliar words that he encounters. Student Y may benefit from increased reading of high-interest materials outside of class to improve his reading fluency and speed. Furthermore, Student Y's teachers should check his background level before providing him with texts and fill in any knowledge gaps that may affect his understanding of the texts.



Questions

- If you have any questions please email me at leckman@doe.k12.ga.us



References

Johns, J.L. (2005). *Basic reading inventory: pre-primer through grade twelve and early literacy assessments*. (9th ed.).
Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.