Early Literacy Profile

AN ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

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The Early Literacy Profile Overview

The Early Literacy Profile is an assessment designed to provide information about students' progress in various aspects of literacy development—reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It is organized around the four purposes of language use outlined in the *Learning Standards for English Language Arts:*

1. Information and understanding
2. Literary response and expression
3. Critical analysis and evaluation
4. Social interaction.

How the Early Literacy Profile Addresses the New York State Standards for English Language Arts

Evidence	Standard			
	1 Information & Understanding	**2** Literary Response & Expression	**3** Critical Analysis & Evaluation	**4** Social Interaction
Reading				
Reading sample	✔	✔	✔	✔
Reading list	✔	✔		
Reading response	✔	✔	✔	✔
Writing				
Story/narrative - first draft		✔		
Story/narrative - second draft		✔		
Reading response	✔	✔	✔	✔
Listening/Speaking	✔	✔	✔	✔

The Early Literacy Profile consists of a number of sections. Sections 1 through 3 consist of a small set of standardized tasks that are to be completed in the context of classroom life, collected at designated times in the year, and evaluated in relation to developmental scales. The dimensions described in the scales are key components of preparation for achievement of the English language arts standards at the elementary level.

Section 4 contains descriptions of and instructions for administering assessment tasks that can be used to take a deeper look at the progress of students who are in early stages of literacy learning. These tasks examine a student's grasp of some important skills that recent research considers critical to the development of fluent readers and writers.

Section 5 contains the forms referred to in the preceding sections.

The Continuum of Literacy Development: Stage/Grade Correlations

The Early Literacy Profile presents reading, writing, listening, and speaking as a continuum of development. It identifies and describes behaviors that children exhibit as they progress through different stages in their literacy learning. It is important to remember, however, when considering these stage/grade correlations, that individual variation is to be expected and supported. Note, too, that the behaviors listed are limited to those that can be observed from the collection of evidence in the Early Literacy Profile. The developmental continuum should be used to enable teachers to assess an individual child's progress in relation to realistic goals and then to adapt instruction to ensure that the child continues to progress.

Grade	Reasonable Expectations for Reading/Writing*
Prekindergarten	**Emergent: Early or Advanced**
Kindergarten	**Advanced Emergent**
First Grade	**Beginning: Early or Advanced**
Second Grade	**Advanced Beginning or Early Independent**
Third Grade	**Independent: Early or Advanced**
Fourth Grade and Above	**Experienced and Very Experienced**

* Based on findings from spring 1998 pilot administration

Uses of the Early Literacy Profile

The Early Literacy Profile can be a useful guide for teachers, students, and their families to the literacy behaviors, skills, and dispositions that comprise the continuum of literacy learning. It can be a tool for teaching and an ongoing measure of student progress, as well as an early indicator of student need for extra support. The profile can also be used by schools and districts to keep track of overall student performance trends so that resources and interventions can be appropriately allocated. Because the Literacy Profile articulates clear standards and includes multiple forms of evidence, it is an instrument that can meet the assessment requirements of federal Title I programs.

For all children, and especially for those who have special needs or disabilities, information from the Early Literacy Profile should be used as **only one of many indicators** of student progress when making decisions about educational futures. The profile can reveal to teachers areas of student progress that require further investigation or additional support, but it should not be used as the sole indicator of a student's need for referral to special services.

The Early Literacy Profile in the Primary Grades

The Early Literacy Profile is recommended for use in the primary grades—kindergarten through grade 3. Sections 1 through 3 should be used with all students. Section 4 may be used with students who are in early stages of literacy learning.

The profile can be most helpful when it is passed on from grade to grade. Information about children's literacy behaviors and skills that is found in the evidence collected and described in the profile scales can help teachers throughout a school keep track of each child's progress, helping to ensure continuity of instruction

across the grades. Each child's movement along the scale continuum (e.g., from Stage 2 at the beginning of first grade to Stage 4 at the end of first grade) can be charted to show his/her progress over the course of the school year. Group scores can be aggregated and charted to show the progress of each class within one school year or over several school years.

Collecting Evidence for the Early Literacy Profile

The Early Literacy Profile can be most useful when its evidence spans the period of a school year—from fall through spring. Evidence should be collected twice—during October and again in May. After the evidence has been collected at each of these times, it should be examined by the child's teacher in relation to the profile scales. The teacher then assigns each student a scale score that best describes the work that has been collected. Looking at student progress in this way affords teachers and schools the opportunity to note students' progress over time. It also helps to ascertain the value that has been added to the child's skills and knowledge as a direct result of the work completed in the classroom each school year.

Using the Early Literacy Profile with Children Whose Native Language is not English

Children who come from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds bring multiple perspectives and skills to the challenge of learning to speak, read, and write English. When presented with differences, it is important that teachers do not equate difference with deficit.

While the Early Literacy Profile is written in English, the format can be used to assess children who speak, read, and write in languages that are based on the alphabetic principle and for which there are instructional materials and resources. Some teachers have used the profile to assess their students in both English and their home language, assigning separate scores for English and for the children's home language. In such situations, the comment section of the Reading Sample form becomes critically important for noting details about progress.

Using the Early Literacy Profile with Children Who Have Special Needs

The Early Literacy Profile is one indicator of how students will perform on the State's mandated fourth-grade English language arts test. It is expected that the vast majority of students who have been identified as having disabilities or special needs will participate in State testing. If the Early Literacy Profile is adopted as a local assessment, it is important to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the testing accommodations or assistive technology devices identified on their Individualized Education Program (IEP). These test accommodations must be provided not only in State testing, but also in all local assessment situations.

Assistive technology devices and test accommodations enable students with disabilities to participate in assessment programs on an equal basis with their nondisabled peers. These accommodations provide an opportunity for students with disabilities to demonstrate their mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being limited or unfairly restricted due to the effects of a disability.

Test accommodations, which often include the use of assistive technology devices, can change:

- the way in which tasks are presented to the students (such as using large print reading passages, administering the profile in a location with minimal distractions, or using auditory amplification devices);
- the student's method of responding to tasks (such as using a scribe to record answers or using a word processor for written portions); or
- the process a student uses to derive responses to tasks (such as simplifying the language in directions).

Reading Evidence

A student's reading proficiencies are assessed by examining three pieces of evidence:

- a **reading sample,** used to analyze oral reading fluency and comprehension
- a **reading list,** used to provide evidence about a student's range and experience as a reader
- a **written reading response,** used to provide additional information about a student's abilities to understand and analyze texts.

This evidence is to be collected in the fall (October) and spring (May) and evaluated holistically at each time, in relation to a reading scale that describes four major stages of literacy development. These stages are subdivided into eight scale points, ranging from "early emergent reader" to "very experienced reader." The scale articulates criteria for progress in the areas of text difficulty, range of strategies, and comprehension abilities. The stages in the reading scale emphasize what students can (rather than cannot) do, suggesting that literacy learning is supported most effectively by building on students' strengths rather than by focusing on their deficits. Deficits should not be ignored, however. Academic intervention services should be provided.

Writing Evidence

A student's ability to use written language to express ideas and to communicate effectively is assessed by examining three forms of evidence:

- a **story/narrative—first draft**
- the **same story/narrative—final draft** (Note: For students in very early stages of writing who are not yet able to edit and revise, another first draft of a different story/narrative can be used.)
- the **reading response** used as evidence of reading proficiency.

This student work is to be collected and evaluated in the fall (October) and again in the spring (May) in relation to a four-stage, eight-point scale that describes a continuum of writing progress from "early emergent" to "very experienced." The scale describes the following qualities of writing: idea development and language use, organization, and conventions.

Listening/Speaking Evidence

Oral language evidence is assessed through a listening/speaking scale that describes four stages of development along a continuum of progress from "emerging" to "experienced" listener/speaker. The listening/speaking scale was designed to help teachers keep track of the development of the student's school-based language in the context of group activities (i.e., class discussions, morning meetings, book talks, circle time, etc.). The scale can be used as a teaching guide that will help to ensure that a student is making progress in learning to communicate—with adults and peers, individually and in groups—for the variety of purposes represented by the standards. Teachers are to observe students at work in the context of the classroom—once in the fall (October) and again in the spring (May)—to determine the stage each student has reached as a listener and as a speaker.

Section 1:
Reading

Reading Scale

Reading Evidence

- **Reading Sample**
  to analyze fluency and comprehension

- **Reading List**
  to provide evidence about students' range and experience as readers

- **Reading Response**
  to provide additional information about students' abilities to understand and analyze texts

Using the Reading Scale

The Reading Scale provides a description of the stages involved in becoming a reader. It outlines behaviors, skills, and strategies that can be observed in students as they progress through literacy learning. The dimensions of reading that are described in the three rows on the scale include:

- Characteristics of text—type of text the student is able to read
- Reading strategies—range of strategies the student uses
- Comprehension skills—depth of understanding that the student demonstrates.

The scale has four major stages, subdivided into eight scale points in eight columns on the scale. Each scale point corresponds to a number:

Major stage:	**Scale points:**
Emergent Reader	**1** = Early Emergent Reader **2** = Advanced Emergent Reader
Beginning Reader	**3** = Early Beginning Reader **4** = Advanced Beginning Reader
Independent Reader	**5** = Early Independent Reader **6** = Advanced Independent Reader
Experienced Reader	**7** = Experienced Reader **8** = Very Experienced Reader

How to Use the Reading Scale

1. Make copies of the scale form (on pages 50 and 51) to use with each student.

2. Review all of the student's work you have collected for the Reading Evidence section of the Early Literacy Profile during the fall (October) and spring (May) observation period. Review the Reading Response only for evidence of the student's ability to understand and analyze text, not as evidence of the student's writing abilities.

3. Examine the evidence to determine the stage the student has attained for each dimension of reading: text characteristics, reading strategies, and comprehension skills (see **1** on the Reading Scale form on the next page). Use the guide below to help you look for evidence of each reading dimension:

Characteristics of text that student reads at instructional level:

Reading Sample - title/author; type of text

Book List - titles of books; genre information; text difficulty

Reading Response - title/author; type of text; how did I read it?; how hard was it?

Reading strategies:

Reading Sample - fluency side

Reading Response - what can you tell about the child's reading abilities from what s/he has written in the response?

Comprehension skills:

Reading Sample - side 2: comprehension

Reading Response - text of letter

Book List - comment section

4. Within each dimension use a highlight pen to mark the descriptors (see **2** on the Reading Scale form below) that best match what you see in the student's work.

5. After assessing the various dimensions, take them all into account to assign one overall scale score (1-8) for the student (see **3** on the Reading Scale form below). To help you make the determination, think about the eight scale points as subdivisions of four major stages. Each stage can be characterized as follows:

Emergent Reader

Reads simple texts

Relies mostly on pictures

Has a beginning awareness of conventions of print

Demonstrates rudimentary understanding of text.

Beginning Reader

Reads "Beginning Reader" texts

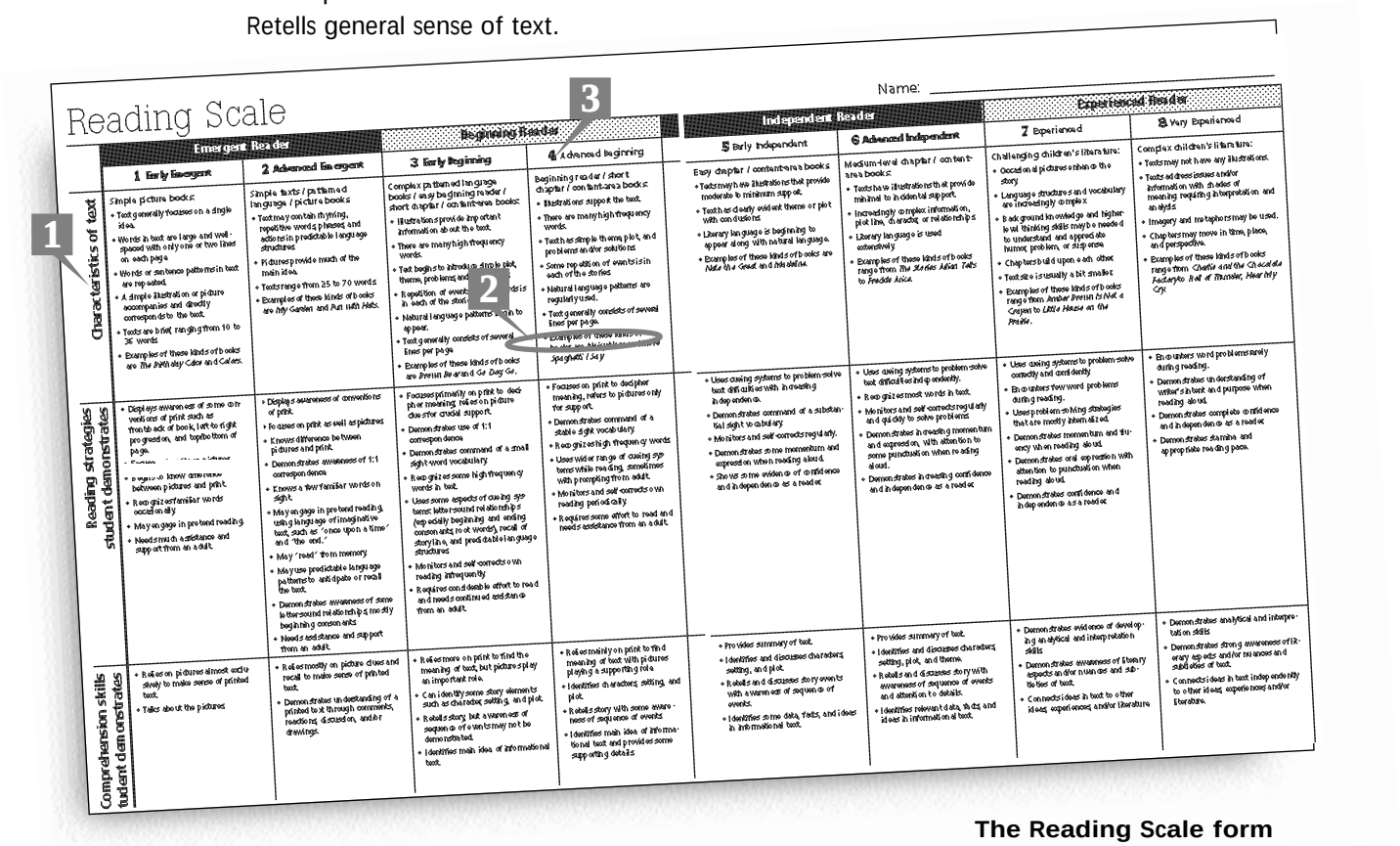
Focuses on print but still frequently looks to illustrations for support

Uses some cueing systems

Has developed a sight vocabulary

Still requires assistance from a fluent reader

Retells general sense of text.



The Reading Scale form

Independent Reader

Reads texts that have increased substance and literary language
Looks minimally to illustrations for support
Is firmly established in the use of cueing systems
Has substantial sight vocabulary
Demonstrates increasing confidence and independence
Reads with fluency and expression
Retells text with awareness of detail and sequence.

Experienced Reader

Reads challenging texts
Uses cueing systems flexibly and confidently
Uses problem-solving strategies successfully
Shows confidence and independence
Maintains momentum, stamina, and nuanced oral expression
Expresses coherent and full understanding of text
Analyzes and interprets text.

Note: Most students will not completely fit the description of only one stage. Assign the score that best describes the student's overall reading abilities.

Hint: Use the same form for the fall and spring observations. Use a different color of highlight pen for each observation to give a clear picture of the student's progress in each dimension.

Using the Reading Sample

This part of the Early Literacy Profile provides evidence of the student's fluency, strategies, and behaviors as a reader (side 1) and information about the student's ability to understand text (side 2). You are asked to observe and document each student in your class while s/he is reading. This observation should take place in the fall (October) and spring (May).

This Reading Sample form was designed to be completed in the course of your daily activities. Each student should be observed individually in the context of the natural life of the classroom. Students can be observed in either an individual conference or in a reading group. Observations completed during reading groups must, however, be done with one student at a time. It is recommended that observations of struggling readers be done in an individual conference.

Complete this form either during or directly following the interview so that your observations, rather than your memory, guide your description of the student's literacy behaviors and skills. During the observation you may want to take notes on another sheet of paper and use these notes later to help you fill out the form.

Top of the Reading Sample Form

Date:
Note the date on which the reading interview was conducted.

Title/Author:
Note the title and author of the text read.

Type of Text:
On the form, circle the Type of Text (for example, 1. Simple picture book) that the student is reading. To ensure that you are getting an accurate picture of the student's ability, take care to use a text that represents the difficulty level at which the student is currently able to read. The text should be equivalent to the student's "instructional level"—(should elicit no more than one miscue for every ten words). It may be chosen by the student or the teacher. For example, the teacher might preselect several books that coincide with the student's interests and reflect his/her instructional level and allow the student to choose from among these. The book or passage used for the Reading Sample should be one that the student has not read before.

The Reading Scale form has a component entitled "Characteristics of Text" for each of the scale points. This component is included as a guide for determining the appropriate types of texts at each scale point. Other sources of information on leveled texts are:

- *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children,* by Fountas and Pinnell
- *Defining Literacy Levels,* by Brenda M. Weaver
- Publishers' series. Matches between Reading Scale text characteristics and descriptors accompanying publishers' series can be made.
- School library media specialists.

Side1: Fluency

Side one of the Reading Sample form (on page 43) asks you to evaluate, on the basis of a specific reading observation with a student, the degree to which the student exhibited the behavior, strategy, or characteristic—(descriptor)—listed and shown by **1** on the Reading Sample form below. Below is further explanation of each characteristic/behavior.

Reading Behaviors and Strategies (Descriptors)

Engaged in "pretend" reading: Student imitated the teacher reading to the class or "talked" the story while turning the pages.

Used book language: In telling the story, student used the language pattern of the text and/or referred to phrases such as "once upon a time" and "the end" that are typically found in texts.

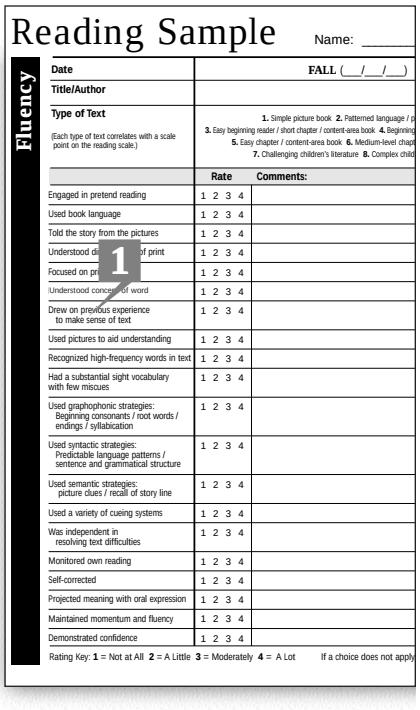
Understood directionality of print: Student demonstrated understanding of left-to-right progression of printed words, front/back of text, and distinction between print and pictures.

Focused on print: Student looked to the printed word to find the meaning of the text.

Understood concept of word: Student indicated understanding of the concept of a word; i.e., when telling or reading the story, the student's reading corresponded to the words in the text. This could be noted by watching the student point to each word as s/he spoke it.

Drew on previous experience to make sense of text: Student used own experiences and understandings to aid in making sense of the text; s/he made connections between prior knowledge or experience and something in the text (for example, remembering that "trolls" are characters in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* enabled the student to recognize that word).

Used pictures to aid understanding:* Student used pictures to support his/her reading—for example, to elaborate on details of the text.



Reading Sample Name: _____

Fluency

Date	FALL (___/___/___)	
Title/Author		
Type of Text (Each type of text correlates with a scale point on the reading scale.)	1. Simple picture book 2. Patterned language / p 3. Easy beginning reader / short chapter / content-area book 4. Beginning 5. Easy chapter / content-area book 6. Medium-level chapt 7. Challenging children's literature 8. Complex child	
	Rate	Comments:
Engaged in pretend reading	1 2 3 4	
Used book language	1 2 3 4	
Told the story from the pictures	1 2 3 4	
Understood d… of print	1 2 3 4	
Focused on pr…	1 2 3 4	
Understood concept of word	1 2 3 4	
Drew on previous experience to make sense of text	1 2 3 4	
Used pictures to aid understanding	1 2 3 4	
Recognized high-frequency words in text	1 2 3 4	
Had a substantial sight vocabulary with few miscues	1 2 3 4	
Used graphophonic strategies: Beginning consonants / root words / endings / syllabication	1 2 3 4	
Used syntactic strategies: Predictable language patterns / sentence and grammatical structure	1 2 3 4	
Used semantic strategies: picture clues / recall of story line	1 2 3 4	
Used a variety of cueing systems	1 2 3 4	
Was independent in resolving text difficulties	1 2 3 4	
Monitored own reading	1 2 3 4	
Self-corrected	1 2 3 4	
Projected meaning with oral expression	1 2 3 4	
Maintained momentum and fluency	1 2 3 4	
Demonstrated confidence	1 2 3 4	

Rating Key: **1** = Not at All **2** = A Little **3** = Moderately **4** = A Lot If a choice does not apply

Recognized high-frequency words in text: Student was able to read words easily that were used repeatedly in the text.

Had a substantial sight vocabulary with few miscues: Student was able to recognize readily many words in the text; few errors or miscues occurred.

Used graphophonic strategies—beginning consonants / root words / endings / syllabication: Student was able to recognize unfamiliar words by using phonetic knowledge (beginning, middle, or ending sounds); identifying root words ("walk" in the word "walking"); identifying word endings ("ing," "ed," or "ly"); or breaking words into smaller units.

Used syntactic strategies—predictable language patterns / sentence and grammatical structure: Student used knowledge of the structure of language to aid in reading (i.e., language and grammar

*Although context and pictures can be used as a tool to monitor and facilitate word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the words.

patterns—such as knowing appropriate placement of parts of speech or tense agreement).

Used semantic strategies—picture clues/recall of story line:* Student used the context of the text—pictures, knowledge of the events of the story—to make sense of it; made logical substitutions (e.g., "castle" for "palace").

Used a variety of cueing systems: Student drew upon a variety of the above described cueing systems as needed while reading.

Was independent in resolving text difficulties: Student relied on own efforts while reading, rarely asking for teacher assistance.

Monitored own reading: Student realized when his/her reading of the text did not make sense.

Self-corrected: Student corrected his/her own miscues (errors).

Projected meaning with oral expression: Student used punctuation, inflection, and/or phrasing to enhance the meaning of the text while reading.

Maintained momentum and fluency: Student kept an appropriate pace and demonstrated stamina while reading.

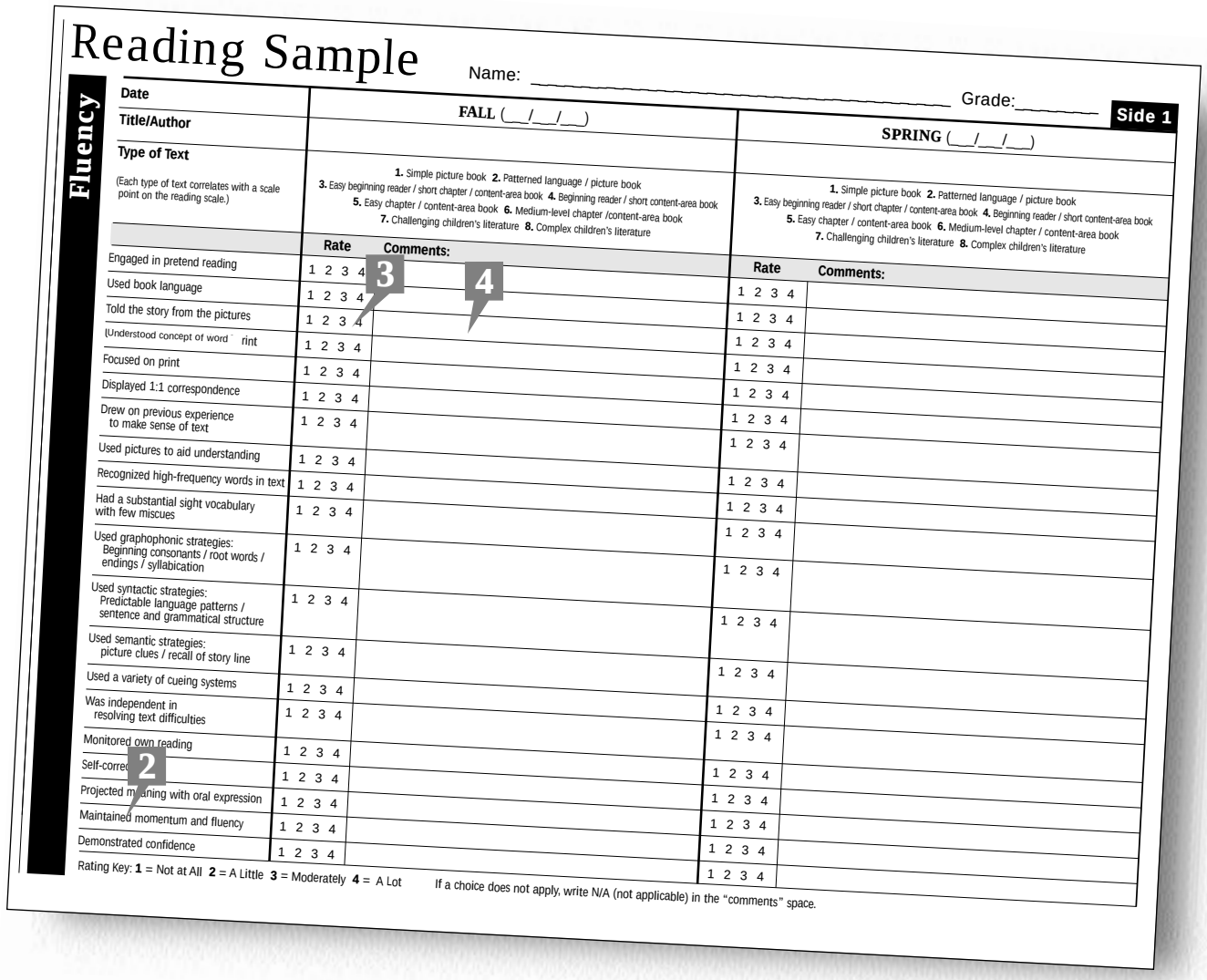
Demonstrated confidence: Student appeared to be confident while reading.

*Although context and pictures can be used as a tool to monitor and facilitate word recognition, children should not be taught to use them to substitute for information provided by the letters in the words.

Rating Key

When filling out side one of the Reading Sample form, use the rating key (see **2** on the Reading Sample form below) at the bottom of the form to indicate the frequency with which the student exhibits each listed behavior, strategy, or characteristic (1—not at all, 2—a little, 3—moderately, 4—a lot). Circle the number that best applies (see **3** on the Reading Sample form below). In the space for comments (see **4** on the Reading Sample form below), try to include direct quotes from the student or additional details to describe what happened during the reading.

Some behaviors or characteristics listed on the form may not apply to particular students. Indicate this in the comment section with N/A (not applicable). For example, a fluent reader will, most likely, not exhibit any of the early indicators of reading. For such a student, more emphasis should be given to the comprehension side of the Reading Sample.



Reading Sample

Name: _____ Grade:_____ Side 1

Fluency

Date	FALL (___/___/___)	SPRING (___/___/___)
Title/Author		
Type of Text (Each type of text correlates with a scale point on the reading scale.)	**1.** Simple picture book **2.** Patterned language / picture book **3.** Easy beginning reader / short chapter / content-area book **4.** Beginning reader / short content-area book **5.** Easy chapter / content-area book **6.** Medium-level chapter /content-area book **7.** Challenging children's literature **8.** Complex children's literature	**1.** Simple picture book **2.** Patterned language / picture book **3.** Easy beginning reader / short chapter / content-area book **4.** Beginning reader / short content-area book **5.** Easy chapter / content-area book **6.** Medium-level chapter / content-area book **7.** Challenging children's literature **8.** Complex children's literature

	Rate	Comments:	Rate	Comments:
Engaged in pretend reading	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used book language	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Told the story from the pictures	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
(Understood concept of word / rint	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Focused on print	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Displayed 1:1 correspondence	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Drew on previous experience to make sense of text	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used pictures to aid understanding	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Recognized high-frequency words in text	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Had a substantial sight vocabulary with few miscues	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used graphophonic strategies: Beginning consonants / root words / endings / syllabication	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used syntactic strategies: Predictable language patterns / sentence and grammatical structure	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used semantic strategies: picture clues / recall of story line	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Used a variety of cueing systems	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Was independent in resolving text difficulties	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Monitored own reading	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Self-corre	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Projected m aning with oral expression	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Maintained momentum and fluency	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Demonstrated confidence	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	

Rating Key: **1** = Not at All **2** = A Little **3** = Moderately **4** = A Lot

If a choice does not apply, write N/A (not applicable) in the "comments" space.

Side 1 of the Reading Sample form

Side 2: Comprehension

This side of the Reading Sample should be completed for all students. As students move toward the independent or experienced stages, the focus of the Reading Sample will move from fluency to comprehension. To get a sense of the student's grasp of the indicators (see **5** on the Reading Sample form on the next page) listed on the form, the teacher should begin by saying, "Tell me what text you have read." Direct the student to refer to details of the text while discussing it.

Comprehension Interview—Suggested Prompts

Below are suggested prompts or questions that will indicate how well the student understood different aspects of the text. Some of these prompts may not be needed because the student will have indicated understanding of one aspect of the text while discussing another. Use the prompts only as appropriate.

Described characters: Tell me about the characters in the story/text.

Identified setting: Tell me about the time and place in which this story happened.

Identified main idea or problem: What is the text/story about?

Explained information about the main ideas or the resolution of the problem: Tell me about the main idea of the text or how the story's problem was solved.

Retold story / summarized text: Tell me about what happened in this story/text.

Sequenced events: What happened first? And then what? And then? How did the story/text end?

Recalled relevant details and/or events: Do you remember...?

Analyzed, interpreted, made inferences: Student goes beyond a simple retelling to analyze meanings—What do you think the author meant when...?

Commented on literary aspects of the text—genre, images: Student identified the genre and/or some of the figurative language, images, symbols, tone—What do you think the author meant by the words...?

Noticed nuances, subtleties of text: Student noticed particular details, subplots, etc.—What do you think the author meant when ... happened?

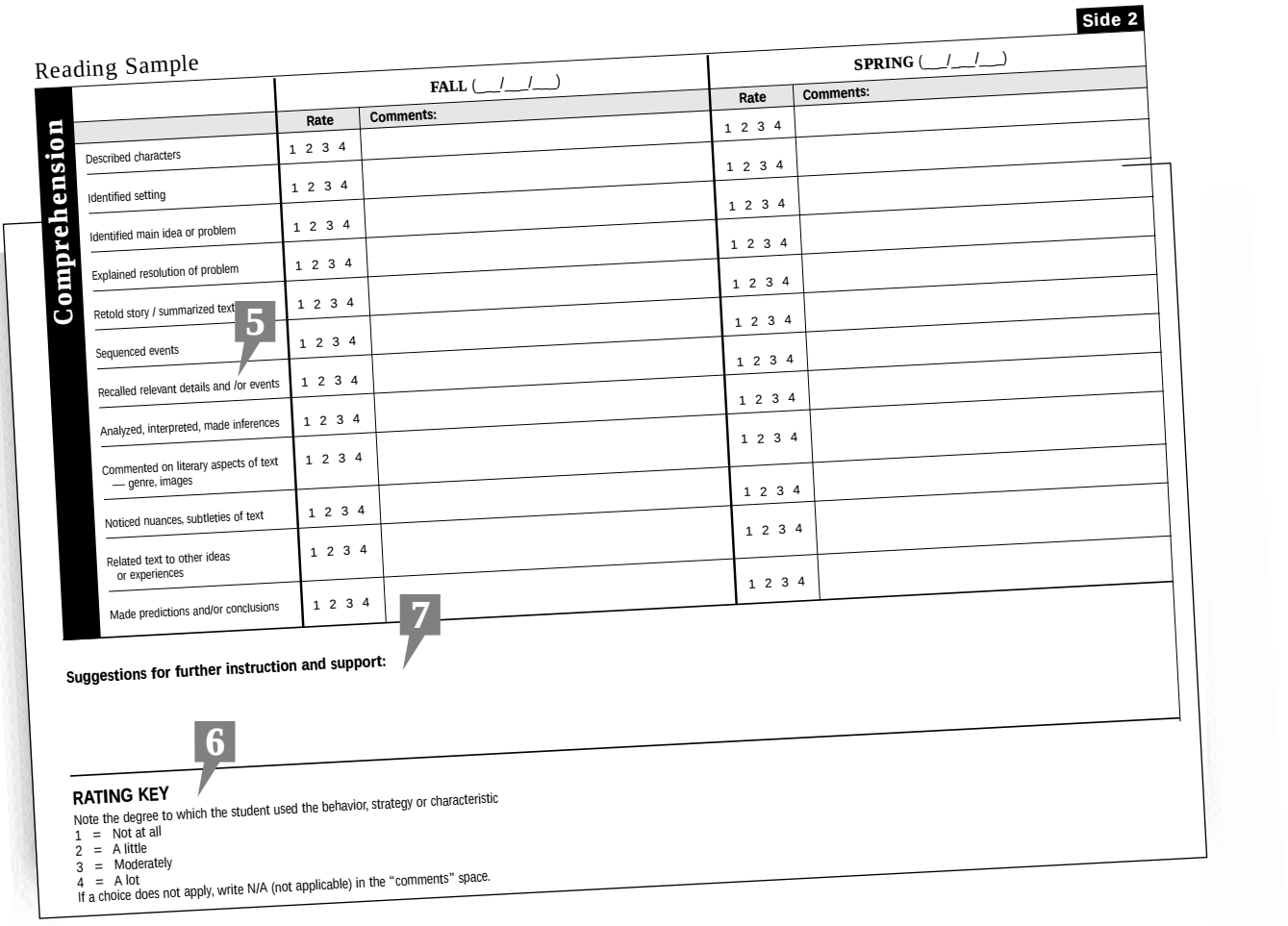
Related text to other ideas or experiences: Did anything like this ever happen to you? Have you read something similar?

Made predictions and/or drew conclusions: What do you think might happen next?

Note: Students who are in early stages of development on the reading continuum are most likely reading texts that do not have sufficient substance to lend themselves to extensive comprehension interviews. For these students, more information about their reading will be revealed in the fluency part of the Reading Sample. Conversely, as students progress to become independent and experienced readers, the fluency part of the Reading Sample will be less informative (since they will be proficient in reading fluency), and the comprehension part will take on greater importance. The focus will shift to the degree to which students understand and can analyze the text.

Rating Key

Refer to the key (see **6** on the Reading Sample form below) on the form to note the degree to which the student elaborated with details in the response.



Reading Sample

Side 2

Comprehension

	FALL (__/__/__)		SPRING (__/__/__)	
	Rate	Comments:	Rate	Comments:
Described characters	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Identified setting	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Identified main idea or problem	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Explained resolution of problem	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Retold story / summarized text	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Sequenced events	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Recalled relevant details and /or events	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Analyzed, interpreted, made inferences	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Commented on literary aspects of text — genre, images	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Noticed nuances, subtleties of text	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Related text to other ideas or experiences	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	
Made predictions and/or conclusions	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	

5

7

Suggestions for further instruction and support:

6

RATING KEY

Note the degree to which the student used the behavior, strategy or characteristic
1 = Not at all
2 = A little
3 = Moderately
4 = A lot
If a choice does not apply, write N/A (not applicable) in the "comments" space.

Side 2 of the Reading Sample form

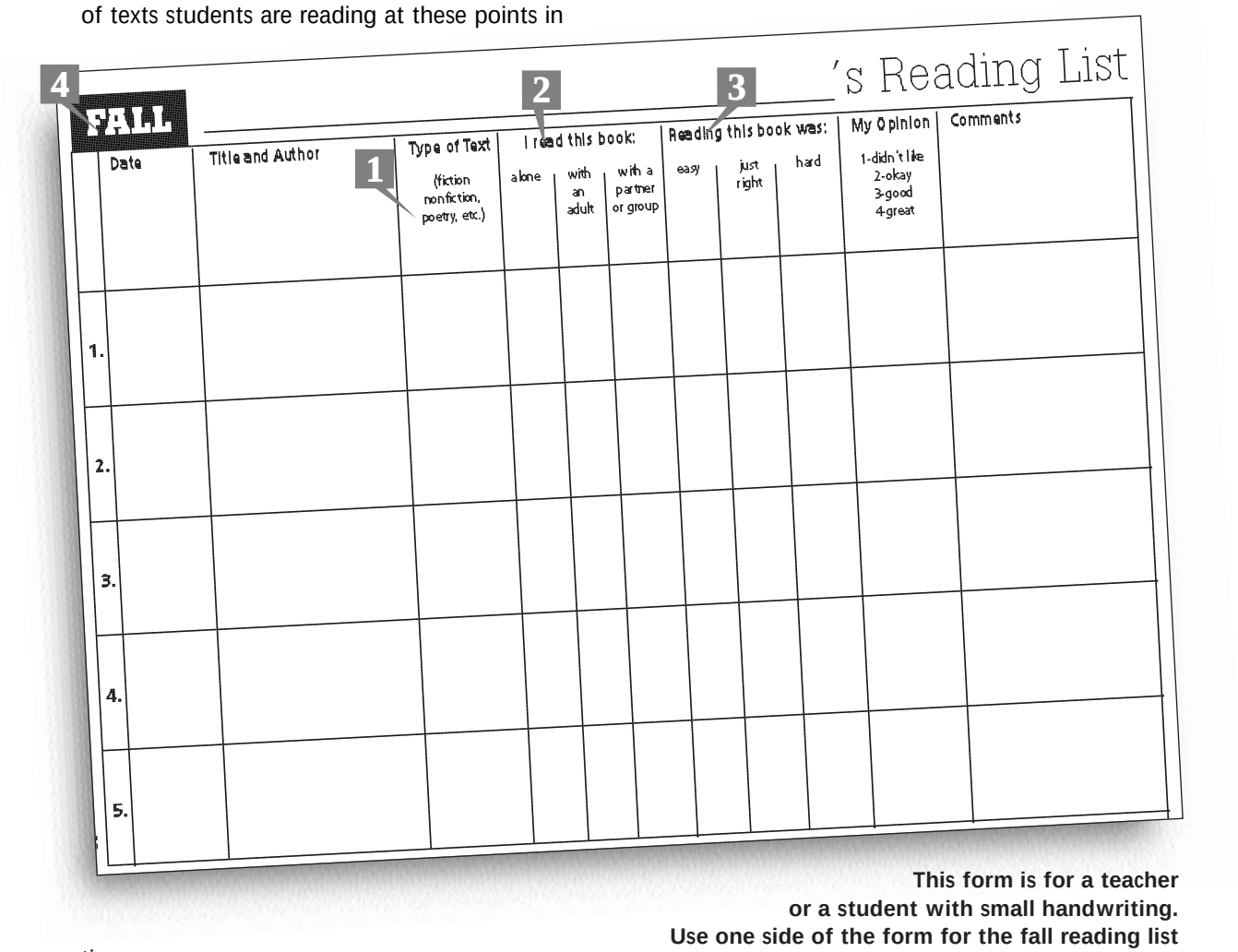
Suggestions for Further Instruction and Support:

Take a moment after completing the Reading Sample form to think about the behaviors, strategies, and skills that you have observed in the student during the Reading Sample interview. What does your observation suggest about the student's development as a reader? Using this information, jot down (see **7** on the Reading Sample form above) some ideas for ways you can further support your student's literacy learning.

Using the Reading Lists

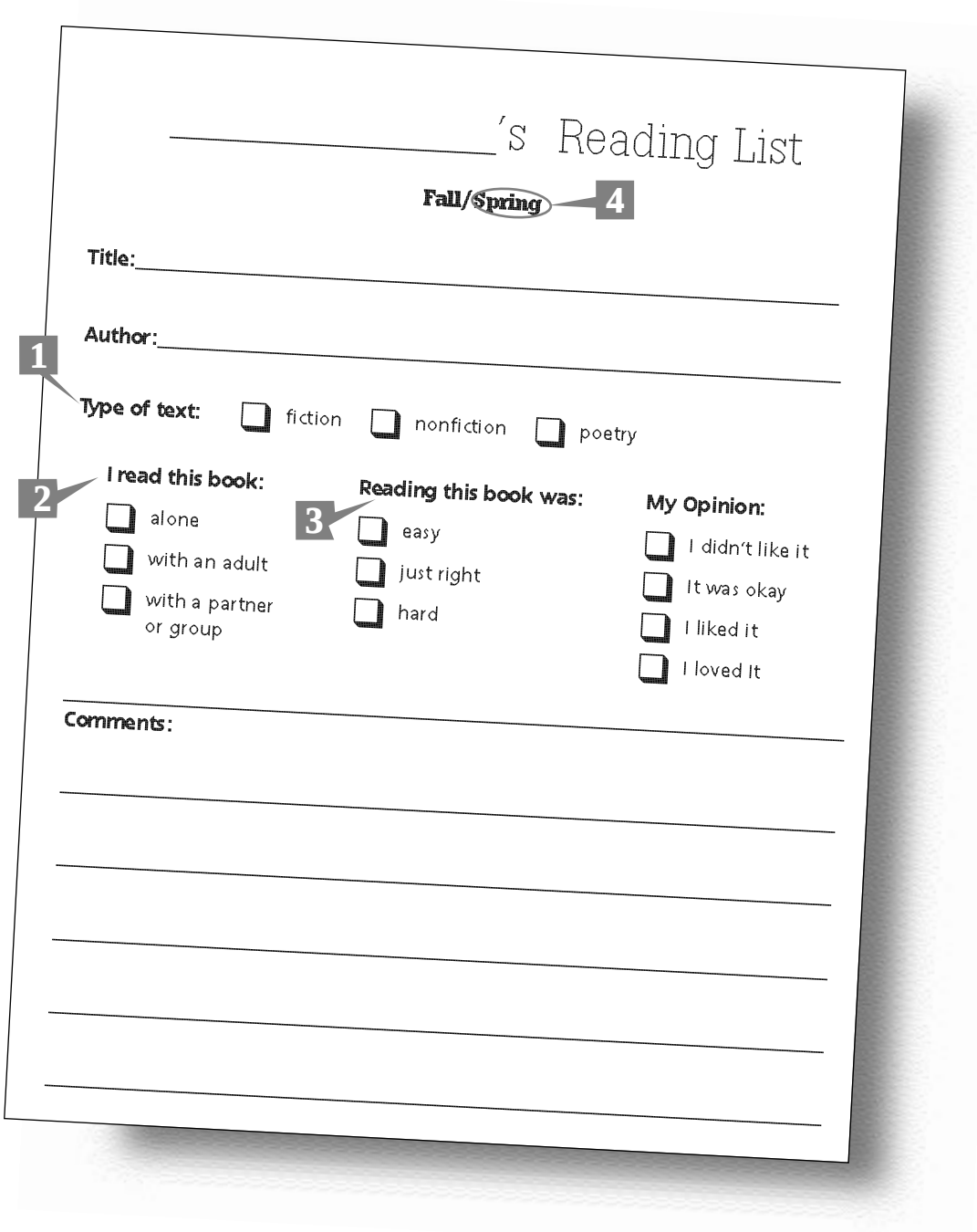
The Reading List provides evidence of the range of texts a student can read. The information on the Reading List also conveys a sense of the types of texts a student reads **1**, the contexts in which a student reads **2**, and the student's perception of how difficult these texts are **3**. This form (on pages 45-46) should be reproduced for each student and filled out by the student independently, if possible. Students at early stages of writing may need assistance in recording some of the information. A Reading List form in a larger print format (on page 47) is provided for younger writers to use.

While it is recommended that students maintain a Reading List throughout the course of the school year, the list completed for this profile should represent a sample of the books read in the fall (during October) and spring (during May) **4**. A weekly entry during these periods will provide a sense of the types of texts students are reading at these points in time.



This form is for a teacher or a student with small handwriting. Use one side of the form for the fall reading list and the other side for the spring list.

Note: Encourage students to read widely in different genres and to tackle challenging texts.



This form asks for the same information as the regular Reading List on the previous page but is in a larger print format for younger readers. Use one form for each book read, and indicate the semester by circling either "fall" or "spring" at the top of the form.

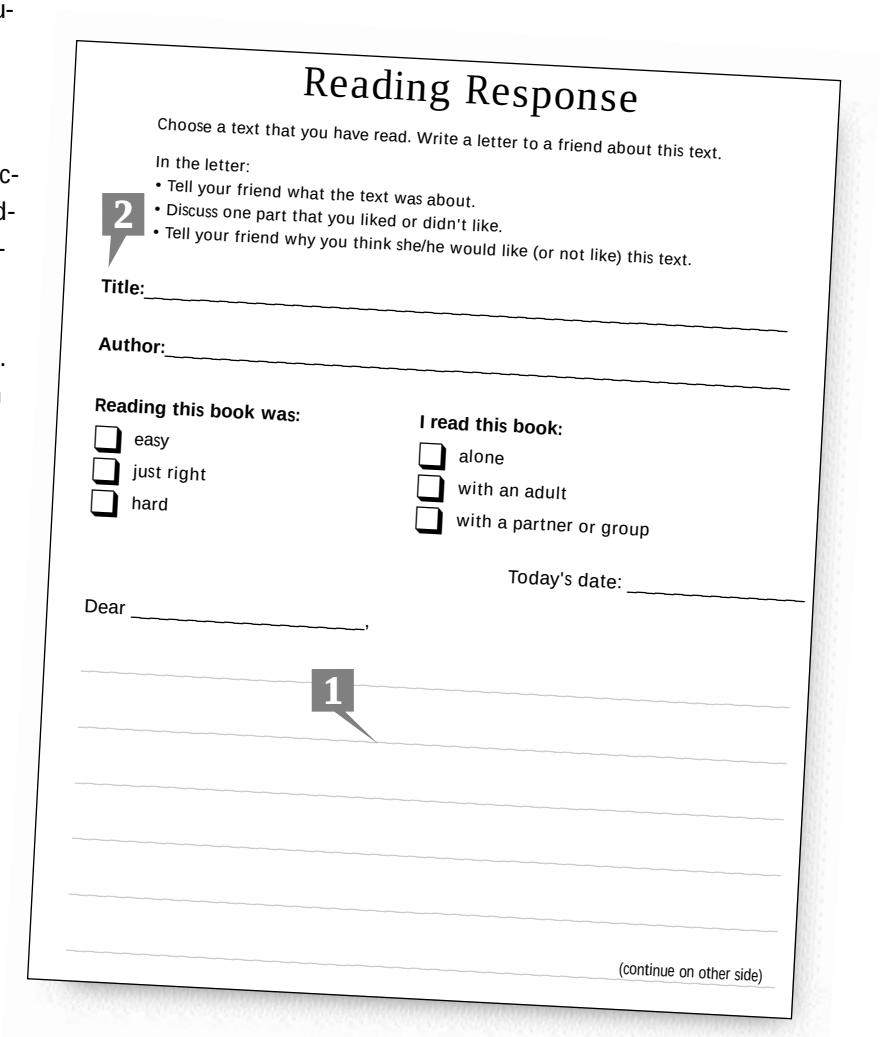
Using the Reading Response

The Reading Response provides evidence of a student's ability to comprehend a text. Only one Reading Response is required to complete this section of the profile. The student should read a text and compose a response. The student may write or draw the response 1 as appropriate to his/her stage of development. Reproduce the form for each student in your class.

The Reading Response should be completed by the student independently in one sitting. While the student should be encouraged to review the response after it is finished for minor content changes and editing, the response should be a first draft. The back of the form can be used if more space is required.

The form allows for a range of responses, depending on the student's developmental level. For example, the top of the form 2 can be completed by either the student or the teacher. The teacher may read the instructions to a student who is in the early stages of reading and who requires assistance. The important guideline to follow is that the student should complete the response independently, even if this means that s/he only makes marks on the paper or draws pictures. A developing writer, who cannot respond in legible writing to the instructions on the form, should also complete the response independently; his/her response may be in pictures or letters randomly strung together. (Note that the lightness of lines on the form will not interfere with any pictures.) Then, after asking the student to give verbal responses to the instructions, the teacher should "take dictation" (write down what the student has said).

The Reading Response will be used in both the Reading Evidence and Writing Evidence sections of the profile. In the Reading Evidence section, the Reading Response will be examined for evidence of the student's understanding of the text read. In the Writing Evidence section of the profile, the Reading Response will be examined for evidence of the student's progress on the continuum of writing development.


Reading Response

Choose a text that you have read. Write a letter to a friend about this text.

In the letter:
- Tell your friend what the text was about.
- Discuss one part that you liked or didn't like.
- Tell your friend why you think she/he would like (or not like) this text.

2

Title: _____

Author: _____

Reading this book was:
- ☐ easy
- ☐ just right
- ☐ hard

I read this book:
- ☐ alone
- ☐ with an adult
- ☐ with a partner or group

Today's date: _____

Dear _____,

1

(continue on other side)

The Reading Response form

Frequently Asked Questions About Reading Evidence

...About the Reading Sample

How should the text for the Reading Sample be chosen?
The student should be encouraged to select the text (since interest plays a powerful role in affecting student performance), but the teacher should exercise professional judgment as to the suitability of the difficulty level of the text. The text should be at the student's instructional level (i.e., should elicit no more than one miscue for every ten words), and should be a text that the student has not read before.

Should I discuss the chosen text with the student before taking the Reading Sample?
Thumbing through to look at the pictures and noting title and author are acceptable before taking the Reading Sample.

What happens if the student "gets stuck" on a word. Should I help the student?
First encourage the student to use letter-sound, picture, or context clues to identify the word. If the student is unsuccessful, tell the student to skip the word and continue reading. If not, tell the student the word and note on the form that the word was supplied.

How much text does the student need to read for the Reading Sample?
Readers in early stages of development should read the entire text. Readers who are using long and more challenging texts should read a few paragraphs (enough for the teacher to get a sense of fluency).

How do I get a fluency sample of an unfamiliar text and also conduct an interview to assess comprehension with students who are reading chapter books?
Do the Reading Sample with the student when s/he is more than halfway through the book chosen for the Reading Sample. Have the student read the next unfamiliar part, and interview the student about what has been read. In the comment section on the comprehension side, note which questions the student was unable to answer because s/he had not completed the text.

How can I manage my classroom so that I can take a Reading Sample from all of my students?
Many teachers have found that an independent reading time or a time for guided reading in a small group is most conducive to collecting samples. Some schools have used nonclassroom personnel (reading teachers, aides, and/or paraprofessionals) to assist in the classroom while the teacher works with students one-on-one to collect the Reading Sample evidence.

Do I have to use the Reading Sample form?
It is important to use the Reading Sample form to record the evidence collecting during the Reading Sample interview. Also,the form increases awareness of what to look for as the student reads.

...About the Reading List

What kinds of texts should be recorded on the Reading List?

Any text that the student has read should be recorded.

Should the texts on the Reading List include those that the student has read at home as well as in school?

What is most important is that someone has verified that the student has read the text with understanding.

How can completion of the Reading List be managed with very young children who read lots of short texts and may have difficulty recording the information?

Choose one text per week to record. Teach the children as a group to fill out the form, and provide a special time each week to do this during the month the profile is administered. Young children learn a lot about reading and writing through such an activity.

...About the Reading Response

How many Reading Response forms are required?

Only one Reading Response form is required for each administration of the profile.

Section 2:
Writing

Writing Scale

Writing Evidence

- **Story/Narrative—First Draft**

- **Same Story/Narrative—Second Draft**
  or
  Another First Draft of a Different Story/Narrative
  for students in early stages of writing development

- **Reading Response**
  student's written response completed for the Reading section of the Early Literacy Profile

Using the Writing Scale

The Writing Scale describes the stages involved in becoming a writer. It outlines behaviors, skills, and strategies that can be observed in students' work as they progress in their writing development. The qualities of writing that are described in the three rows on the scale include:

- Development, meaning, and language use
- Organization
- Conventions.

The scale has four major stages, subdivided into eight scale points in columns on the scale. Each scale point corresponds to a number:

Major stage:	**Scale points:**
Emergent Writer	**1** = Early Emergent Writer **2** = Advanced Emergent Writer
Beginning Writer	**3** = Early Beginning Writer **4** = Advanced Beginning Writer
Independent Writer	**5** = Early Independent Writer **6** = Advanced Independent Writer
Experienced Writer	**7** = Experienced Writer **8** = Very Experienced Writer

How to Use the Writing Scale

1. Make copies of the Writing Scale form (on pages 52-53) to use with each student.

2. Review all of the student's work you have collected for the Writing Evidence section of the Early Literacy Profile during the fall (October) or spring (May) observation period. Review the Reading Response for evidence of the student's abilities to convey ideas through writing.

3. Examine the evidence to determine the stage the student has attained for each quality of writing: development, meaning, and language use; organization; conventions (see **1** on the Writing Scale form on the next page). Use the guide below to help you look for evidence of each writing quality:

Development, meaning, and language use:
Story/Narrative - first and second drafts
Reading Response - text of letter

Organization:
Story/Narrative - second draft
Reading Response - text of letter

Conventions:
Story/Narrative - second draft
Reading Response - text of letter

4. Within each quality use a highlight pen to mark the descriptors (see **2** on the Writing Scale form on the next page) that best match what you see in the student's work.

5. After assessing the various qualities, take them all into account to assign one overall scale score (see **3** on the Writing Scale form below) for the student. To help you make the determination, think about the eight scale points as subdivisions of four major stages. Each can be characterized as follows:

Emergent Writer

Writing has a random quality to it.

Writing relies predominantly on pictures/symbols.

Beginning Writer

Topic/theme is evident in the writing.

Writing has mostly conventional words.

Independent Writer

Writing has a distinct theme.

Details support ideas.

A sense of order is clearly evident.

Conventions—spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.—are generally in place.

Writer's "voice" may appear.

Experienced Writer

Writing has a distinct and elaborated theme.

Details are used in a sophisticated manner.

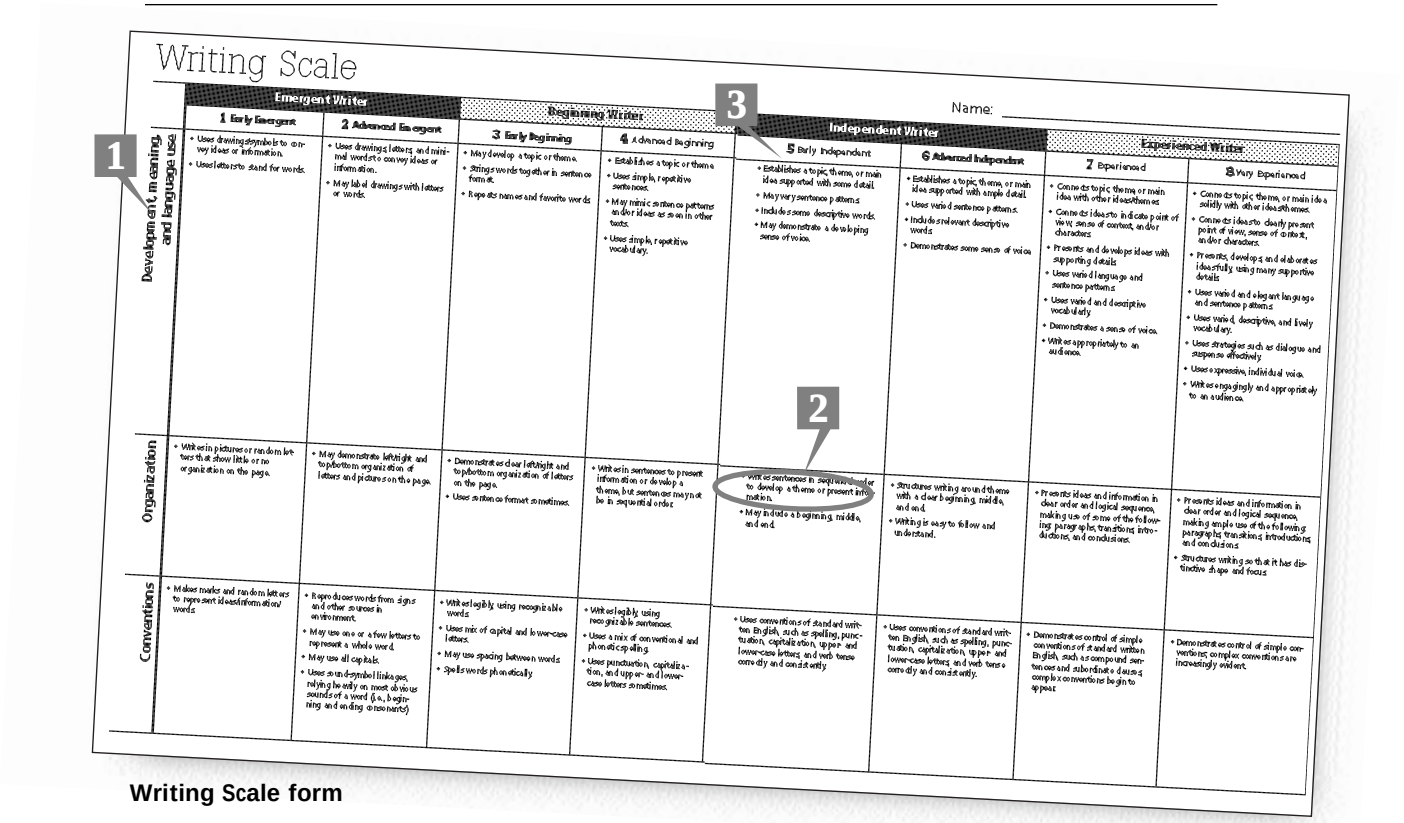
Writing has coherence.

Simple conventions are under control; more sophisticated ones are evident.

Writer's voice is strong.

Note: Most students will not completely fit the description of only one stage. Assign the score that best describes the student's overall writing abilities.

Hint: Use the same form for the fall and spring observations. Use a different color of highlight pen for each observation to give a clear picture of the student's progress in each quality.



Writing Scale form

Guidelines for Writing a Story or Narrative

The story or narrative component of the Writing Evidence for the Early Literacy Profile asks students to write a story or narrative—they may make something up or write about an event in their lives. A first draft and a revision should be completed (as appropriate; see explanation below). Guidelines—both for writing the story/narrative as well as for revising and editing it—are provided. Teachers should present these to students as a model (or goal to work toward) of what to incorporate in their writing. It is expected that exposure to the guidelines, and to texts that model how the guidelines are incorporated, will have preceded the use of this assessment component.

Students in early stages of writing development (those who rely primarily on pictures and random letters or words to convey their meaning) may not be ready or able to use all of these guidelines or to engage in the revising/editing process. For these students, it will be more appropriate to collect a first draft of a different story/narrative (rather than a revision of the first) to include in the Writing Evidence section of the literacy profile.

First Draft

The first draft of the story/narrative should be completed by students individually. The following guidelines should be presented as reminders of the criteria for a story or narrative:

- Set a context for your story, create a point of view, and/or develop suspense.
- Build the plot around situations, conflicts, or problems.
- Construct a sequence of events that fit together and make sense to the reader.
- Use strategies—such as dialogue, description, or suspense—to keep the reader's interest.
- Show what the characters think and how they feel.
- Use details and lively language to describe what is happening.
- Leave out details that don't fit with the rest of the story.

Second/Final Draft

The purpose of including a final draft of the story/narrative in the Writing Evidence section of the Early Literacy Profile is to provide students with the opportunity to complete a draft, get feedback from others, think about their work, and revisit their work before handing it in.

Revision

After completing the first draft, students should review their work with either a teacher or other student(s). The questions provided below should be discussed for the purpose of helping the student examine the content of the writing. For the purposes of this profile, this cooperative exchange should take place once.

- What details, examples, and/or explanations can you add to improve your writing?
- How can you rearrange words, sentences, or parts of your writing to make the meaning clearer?

- What words can you change to make your writing livelier and more descriptive?
- Are there sentences you can change or rearrange so that your writing contains more sentence variety?

After discussing these revision questions, students should proceed **independently** to make any changes in the text that they think will improve the quality of their writing.

Editing

After the content revision, students should proceed independently to edit their work and make changes in paragraphs, punctuation, grammar, spelling, etc. Age appropriate resources may be used as references. Students should be reminded to:

- Edit for mistakes.
- Use paragraphs to organize writing.
- Add correct punctuation and capital letters.
- Use correct grammar.
- Correct any misspellings.

Section 3:
Listening/Speaking

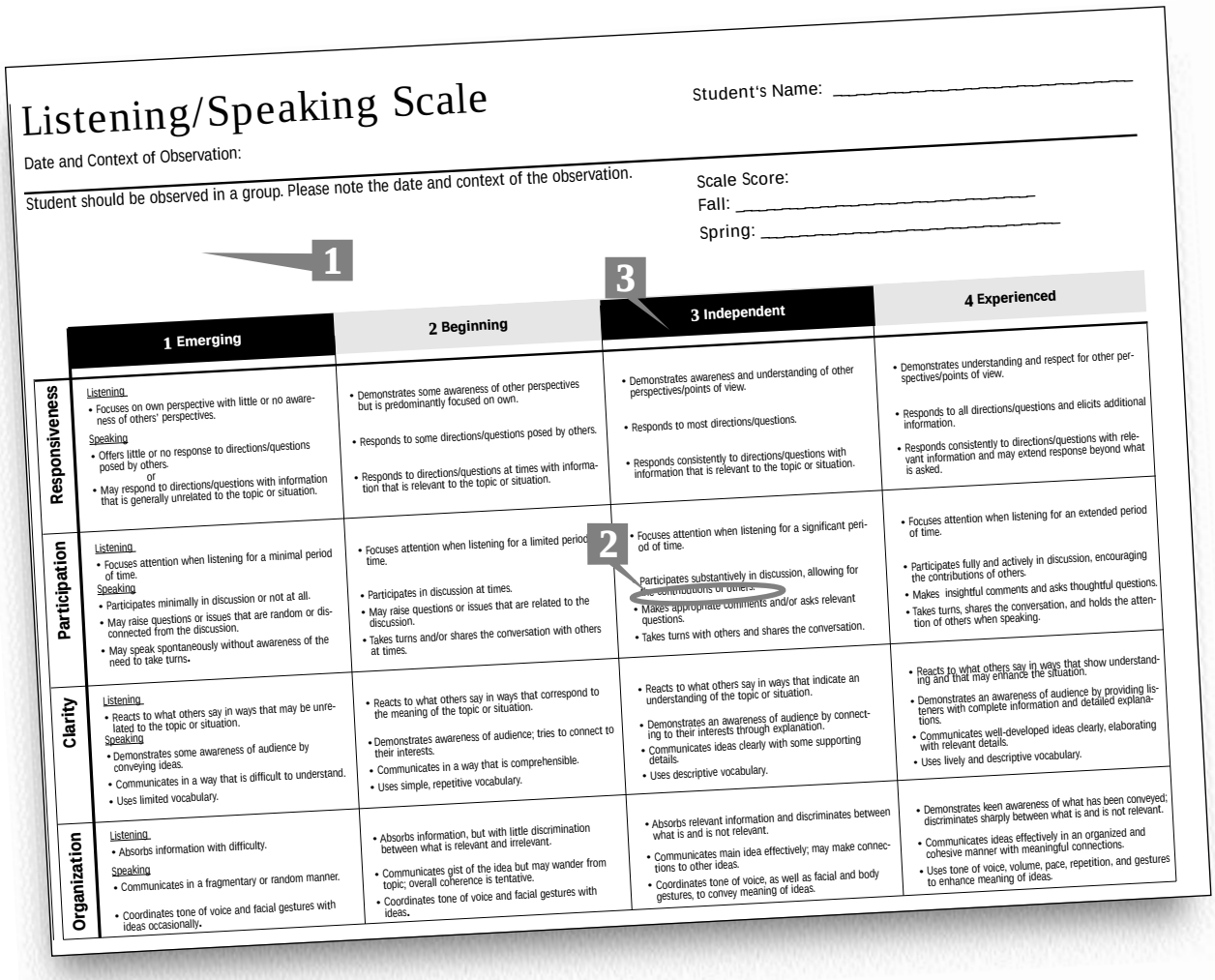
- **Listening/Speaking Scale**
  to observe students at work in the context of the classroom

Using the Listening/Speaking Scale

Make copies of this form (on page 54) to use with each student. Observe each student in the fall (October) and spring (May) in the context of classroom activities such as class discussions, morning meetings, book talks, or circle time. Note the date and context of this observation **1** in the space provided.

For each listening/speaking quality (responsiveness, participation, clarity, organization), choose the stage that best describes what you observe about the student and shade the description box of that stage **2** on the scale with a highlight pen. After assessing the various qualities and taking them all into account, assign one overall scale score **3** for the student.

Hint: Use the same form for the fall and spring observations to provide a clear picture of the student's progress in each quality.



Listening/Speaking Scale

Student's Name: _____

Date and Context of Observation:

Student should be observed in a group. Please note the date and context of the observation.

Scale Score:
Fall: _____
Spring: _____

1 3 2

	1 Emerging	2 Beginning	3 Independent	4 Experienced
Responsiveness	Listening • Focuses on own perspective with little or no awareness of others' perspectives. Speaking • Offers little or no response to directions/questions posed by others. or • May respond to directions/questions with information that is generally unrelated to the topic or situation.	• Demonstrates some awareness of other perspectives but is predominantly focused on own. • Responds to some directions/questions posed by others. • Responds to directions/questions at times with information that is relevant to the topic or situation.	• Demonstrates awareness and understanding of other perspectives/points of view. • Responds to most directions/questions. • Responds consistently to directions/questions with information that is relevant to the topic or situation.	• Demonstrates understanding and respect for other perspectives/points of view. • Responds to all directions/questions and elicits additional information. • Responds consistently to directions/questions with relevant information and may extend response beyond what is asked.
Participation	Listening • Focuses attention when listening for a minimal period of time. Speaking • Participates minimally in discussion or not at all. • May raise questions or issues that are random or disconnected from the discussion. • May speak spontaneously without awareness of the need to take turns.	• Focuses attention when listening for a limited period of time. • Participates in discussion at times. • May raise questions or issues that are related to the discussion. • Takes turns and/or shares the conversation with others at times.	• Focuses attention when listening for a significant period of time. • Participates substantively in discussion, allowing for the contributions of others. • Makes appropriate comments and/or asks relevant questions. • Takes turns with others and shares the conversation.	• Focuses attention when listening for an extended period of time. • Participates fully and actively in discussion, encouraging the contributions of others. • Makes insightful comments and asks thoughtful questions. • Takes turns, shares the conversation, and holds the attention of others when speaking.
Clarity	Listening • Reacts to what others say in ways that may be unrelated to the topic or situation. Speaking • Demonstrates some awareness of audience by conveying ideas. • Communicates in a way that is difficult to understand. • Uses limited vocabulary.	• Reacts to what others say in ways that correspond to the meaning of the topic or situation. • Demonstrates awareness of audience; tries to connect to their interests. • Communicates in a way that is comprehensible. • Uses simple, repetitive vocabulary.	• Reacts to what others say in ways that indicate an understanding of the topic or situation. • Demonstrates an awareness of audience by connecting to their interests through explanation. • Communicates ideas clearly with some supporting details. • Uses descriptive vocabulary.	• Reacts to what others say in ways that show understanding and that may enhance the situation. • Demonstrates an awareness of audience by providing listeners with complete information and detailed explanations. • Communicates well-developed ideas clearly, elaborating with relevant details. • Uses lively and descriptive vocabulary.
Organization	Listening • Absorbs information with difficulty. Speaking • Communicates in a fragmentary or random manner. • Coordinates tone of voice and facial gestures with ideas occasionally.	• Absorbs information, but with little discrimination between what is relevant and irrelevant. • Communicates gist of the idea but may wander from topic; overall coherence is tentative. • Coordinates tone of voice and facial gestures with ideas.	• Absorbs relevant information and discriminates between what is and is not relevant. • Communicates main idea effectively; may make connections to other ideas. • Coordinates tone of voice, as well as facial and body gestures, to convey meaning of ideas.	• Demonstrates keen awareness of what has been conveyed; discriminates sharply between what is and is not relevant. • Communicates ideas effectively in an organized and cohesive manner with meaningful connections. • Uses tone of voice, volume, pace, repetition, and gestures to enhance meaning of ideas.

Section 4:

Assessment Tools

for Children in Emergent and Beginning Stages

This section of the Early Literacy Profile includes tools to assess:

- **Phonological Awareness***
- **Alphabet Knowledge***
- **Letter-Sound Knowledge***
- **High Frequency Word Identification**

*Materials in Section 4 and associated forms in Section 5 adapted with permission from Invernizzi, Meier, Swank, Juel (1998). Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). © 1998 by the Rector and Board of Visitors, University of Virginia, 2472 Old Ivy Road, Charlottesville, VA 22903-2495. (http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/curry/centers/pals)

Using The Tools

Recently released research reports indicate that literacy learning is strengthened when children who are at early stages of development learn to name letters of the alphabet, discriminate between sounds in a spoken word (phonemic awareness), learn letter-sound correspondences (phonics), and identify high-frequency words. In light of these reports, the following additional tools are provided in this section of the Early Literacy Profile for children who are in the emergent and beginning stages of literacy development. These tasks are provided to help teachers take a deeper look at student progress in these essential elements of early literacy. It is recommended that the tasks be administered twice during the course of the school year—in the fall and in the spring. Teachers can use the information provided by these tasks to inform their instructional practices. See resources cited in *English Language Arts Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* for teaching and curriculum suggestions. For classroom activities related to the reading skills assessed in this section, see the PALS web site (http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/curry/centers/pals/home.html).

Note: The material that appears on pages 30-39 and pages 55-62 in the print version of the *Early Literacy Profile* is excluded from the electronic version due to copyright restrictions. Copies of the print version of the Profile can be purchased through the Publications Sales Desk (see the Publications Catalog on the Department's website (http://www.nysed.gov/ciai/ciaiindex.html). The complete set of PALS material can be ordered through the University of Virginia bookstore (804-924-1066).

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High Frequency Word Identification

What is it?

High frequency word identification is the ability to recognize a core group of words commonly found in print. This ability to read isolated words is different from the text-reading behavior which is assessed in the Reading Sample section of the profile.

Why is it important?

Automatic and accurate recognition of frequently-used words is a skill that fluent readers possess.

Instructional Implications

Teachers can support the development of students' word recognition ability by reading continually with and to students, by charting class discussions, by creating "word walls" (lists of words arranged alphabetically or in other groupings and mounted on the classroom wall), and by encouraging students to use word cards with a high frequency word printed on each to make sentences and stories.

Procedure

—Materials

List of 100 Most Frequent Words in Books for Beginning Readers and pencil or pen.

—Instructions

- Tell the student that you are going to ask him or her to read some words to you. Begin with the first 25 words on the list. Starting with the first word and continuing in order, point to a word and ask the student to identify it. Circle the words that are correctly identified, and record miscues. Miscues can provide valuable information about a student's letter-sound knowledge. If the student has five miscues in a row say, "Can you find any words you can read in this row?" Work through the remaining words on the list, in groups of 25 at a time. Depending on age and ability, you may want to use a smaller segment of the list and assess the student over a number of sessions.

—Benchmark

Students should aim to recognize a group of core words, such as those found on the 100 Most Frequent list of Words in Books for Beginning Readers, by the end of first grade.