

**Placement and
Diagnostic Assessment**

Informal Reading Inventory

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

IRI Overview

The **Informal Reading Inventory (IRI)** is an individually-administered diagnostic tool that assesses a student's reading comprehension and reading accuracy. The IRI measures three reading levels: independent, instructional and frustrational. The independent reading level is the level at which a student reads without help from the teacher. To be independent, the student should accurately decode at least 95% of the words and comprehend 90% of the material. The instructional reading level is reached when a student accurately decodes at least 90% of the words and comprehends at least 60% of the material. Below that, a text would be considered to be at a frustrational level: the student decodes 89% or less of the words and can comprehend only 50% of the material.

At each grade level, there are two fiction and two non-fiction reading passages. These passages alternate between oral reading and silent reading as an IRI tests for both oral and silent reading comprehension. To assess the student's comprehension, there are three literal (L) questions, one vocabulary (V) question, and one interpretive (I) question per passage. On the teacher recording sheet, there is a table for each oral reading passage to help identify the student's reading level. This level is based on a combined score of comprehension points and word recognition errors. For each silent reading passage, the total number of comprehension points is used to determine a reading level.

Informal Reading Inventory

The IRI consists of reading passages, teacher recording sheets, and graded word lists for Grades 1–6. The reading passages appear on a reproducible student page. Each passage is ten sentences long and consists of Dolch words in Grades 1–3 and Harris-Jacobson words in Grades 4–6. The reading difficulty of the passages is near the midpoint of each grade level. There is a teacher recording sheet following each student passage that includes the passage, five questions, and a table to determine the appropriate reading level.

How to Use the IRI

Determine reading levels for both oral and silent reading comprehension. Before a student reads a passage, administer the graded word lists to determine the appropriate grade level. These lists span Grades 1–6 and consist of Dolch words, story words, and words that contain appropriate sound-spelling sequences for that level. Teachers should start administering the lists with Grade 1 to obtain a general estimate of the student's independent, instructional, and frustrational reading levels.

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The correct instructional level is the level at which the student makes one error. Students who make two errors should go back to the previous list and start reading at that level.

Use this grade level to start administering the oral and silent reading passages, and as a quick assessment of basic sight word knowledge and phonics and structural analysis skills.

Administering the IRI

The IRI is organized by grade level. To administer the IRI efficiently, you should be familiar with Procedures, directions, passages, and questions.

1. Make a copy of all of the graded word lists.
2. Place the Grade 1 word list in front of the student and say, *“Here are some words I would like you to read aloud. Try to read them all, even if you are not sure what some of the words are. Let’s begin by reading the words on this list.”*
3. If the student is able to easily read these words, this early success may build the student’s confidence. If you feel certain that a third-grade student can read above a third-grade level, then begin with a higher list. On the other hand, if a first-grade student misses two words on the first-grade word list, then stop. You should then read the passage aloud and have the student answer the comprehension questions. This activity turns into a listening comprehension inventory. Use the scoring table for the silent reading comprehension passage to determine a reading level for listening comprehension.
4. Record words pronounced correctly with a (✓) mark on the recording sheet that shows each graded word list (p. 171). Write incorrect responses on the line next to the word.
5. Have the student continue reading higher-level lists until one error is made.
6. After the student misses two words, stop the testing, collect the test sheets, and complete the results in the graded word list section on the sheet.
7. Follow these directions to score the graded word list.
 - The highest level at which the student misses zero words is the student’s independent reading level.
 - The highest level at which the student misses one word is the student’s instructional reading level.
 - The highest level at which the student misses two words is the student’s frustrational reading level.
 - If the student scores independent, instructional, or frustrational at more than one level, assign the score to the highest level.

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8. Select the first passage for the student to read orally. Make a copy of the teacher recording sheet for that passage. Have the student start reading on the instructional level determined by the graded word lists.
9. Begin by saying, *“I have some passages for you to read. Read the first one aloud. If you find a hard word, try to read it as best you can and continue reading. It is important to remember what you read so you can answer questions at the end.”*
10. While the student reads out loud, code the errors or miscues on the scoring sheet. Do not provide any prompting if a student hesitates over a word. If a student hesitates longer than five seconds, simply tell the word to the student.
11. When the student has completed the passage or story, take it away. The student cannot refer to it while answering the questions.
12. Ask the student the comprehension questions as shown on the teacher recording sheet for the passage. Mark correct answers with a point value on the line provided. The point value is in parentheses at the end of each question. A perfect score is 10 points. Interpretive questions are given four points. Vocabulary questions are given three points. Literal questions are given one point. The total number of points that a student earns is the comprehension score. (Instructions for scoring word accuracy and comprehension questions will be provided on page 169.)

At this point, you will have the student shift from oral to silent reading.

13. Give the student the “B” passage next. If the student began with the 1A oral passage, then continue with the 1B silent passage.
14. Say, *“Read this passage to yourself and try to remember what you read so that you can answer questions at the end.”*
15. When the student has finished reading the passage, ask the questions on the teacher recording sheet for the passage. Mark the point values that the student earned on the lines provided, and total the number of points earned at the bottom of the questions.
16. After giving the first oral and silent reading passages, use the Scoring Table to determine whether the student has been able to read them at an independent level. If both the oral and silent passages were at the student’s independent reading level, continue with the next higher oral reading passage. Then follow with the corresponding silent passage until the frustration level is reached. In many cases, a student will reach frustration level on either oral or silent reading but not both. In these instances, continue with either the oral or silent reading passages until the student reaches frustration level on both.

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17. If the student is not reading at the independent level on either or both passages, give an easier oral and silent passage until both oral and silent frustration levels are reached. The goal is that a student should have an independent, instructional and frustrational reading level for both oral and silent reading.

Code for Marking Word Recognition Errors	
Examples	Marking Word Recognition Errors
✓ ✓ ✓ The baby cried	1. Put a check mark over words read correctly.
✓ ✓ My friend <u>went</u>	2. Circle omissions.
✓ <u>eats</u> ✓ ✓ He ate the pie	3. Draw a line above words that are read with substitutions. Write the substitution above the line.
✓ T ✓ Why are you	4. Place a <u>T</u> above a word that you need to tell student.
✓ ✓ eating R dinner	5. Place an <u>R</u> next to a word the student repeats.
✓ ✓ ✓ See/S a kind person. She	6. Place the student's initial response and an <u>S</u> above a word that is self corrected. Note: Do not score as an error.
✓ ✓ an (red) apple	7. Use parentheses () to enclose a word that is inserted.

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Example of a Passage with Coded Word Recognition Errors

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ bought

Pam went to the store to buy a cake for the surprise party.

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ T

The cake was for her mom's birthday.

✓ ✓ ✓ T ✓ ✓ likes/S ch/S

Pam got a chocolate cake. Her R mom (really) loves chocolate.

Here is what the teacher heard as the student read the passage. The words in italics are the actual words that the student read.

"Pam went to the store to bought a cake for the surprise party. The cake was for her mom's (after five seconds the teacher produced "birthday"). Pam got a (after five seconds the teacher produced "chocolate") cake. Her... Her mom really likes loves ch... ch... chocolate."

The student made four mistakes that are to be scored as errors:

- (1) *bought* substituted for *buy*
- (2) *birthday* pronounced by the teacher
- (3) *chocolate* pronounced by the teacher
- (4) *really* inserted

The repetition for *her* is not counted as an error.

The self correction for *likes* is not counted as an error.

The self correction for *ch* is not counted as an error.

This passage is at the frustration level for this student.

Procedure for Scoring Oral Reading Passages

1. Count the total number of scorable errors as outlined in the **Code for Marking Word Recognition Errors**. Write the total number of errors in the space indicated on the teacher recording sheet. Insertions, substitutions, words told to the student by the teacher, and omissions are counted as errors at each occurrence. Words that are self-corrected and repeated are not counted as errors.
2. If a student mispronounces a proper name, count it as one error for the entire passage, even if the student mispronounces the same name again.

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3. On the teacher recording sheet, a table follows the set of questions for each oral reading passage. Across the table is a series of numbers to designate the number of word recognition errors. In the column on the left is a series of numbers that show the number of points earned. Locate the number of word recognition errors made by the student in that passage and circle the appropriate number. Then locate the number of points earned on the comprehension questions and draw a circle around that number. Find the point where the two circled numbers intersect. In that space, you will note the following symbols: the (✓) means the student is reading on an independent level; the (*) means the student is reading on an instructional level; and the (–) means the student is reading at a frustrational level.

Scoring Table for Oral Reading				
Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-4	5-7	8+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	–	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	–	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	–	–	–	Frustrational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

In the above table, for example, the student has made eight word recognition errors and earned two comprehension points. The student answered two literal questions correctly. These two figures intersect in an area marked with a dash (–). This means the student is reading on a frustrational level; the box to the right of Frustrational is checked.

Procedure for Scoring Silent Reading Passages

1. Add up the number of points earned from the five comprehension questions.
2. There is a table below the questions that follow each silent reading passage on the teacher recording sheet. Look at the table to see which level the student is reading at, based on the number of points earned. In the following example, the student earned three points. This would place the student in the range indicated by 0–3 in the table. This corresponds to the frustrational level; the box to the right of Frustrational is checked.

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7-10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	Frustrational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Individual Graded Word Lists

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
mother	prize	started
could	noise	lonely
family	understood	thought
there	another	breathe
said	piece	enough
people	trouble	prepare
bake	easier	actually
what	afraid	waist
three	scare	earn
town	always	delighted

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
adapted	approaching	countryside
communicate	crystals	heroism
bracelet	development	consented
announced	territory	mercilessly
choice	astonished	appalling
requires	coarse	veterinarian
objects	moisture	spectacle
bulge	luxuries	emperor
gravity	irregular	ravenous
resulting	resemble	exceptional

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Recording Sheet for Individual Graded Word Lists

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
mother _____	prize _____	started _____
could _____	noise _____	lonely _____
family _____	understood _____	thought _____
there _____	another _____	breathe _____
said _____	piece _____	enough _____
people _____	trouble _____	prepare _____
bake _____	easier _____	actually _____
what _____	afraid _____	waist _____
three _____	scare _____	earn _____
town _____	always _____	delighted _____

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
adapted _____	approaching _____	countryside _____
communicate _____	crystals _____	heroism _____
bracelet _____	development _____	consented _____
announced _____	territory _____	mercilessly _____
choice _____	astonished _____	appalling _____
requires _____	coarse _____	veterinarian _____
objects _____	moisture _____	spectacle _____
bulge _____	luxuries _____	emperor _____
gravity _____	irregular _____	ravenous _____
resulting _____	resemble _____	exceptional _____

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 1

mother

could

family

there

said

people

bake

what

three

town

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 2

prize

noise

understood

another

piece

trouble

easier

afraid

scare

always

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 3

started

lonely

thought

breathe

enough

prepare

actually

waist

earn

delighted

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 4

adapted

communicate

bracelet

announced

choice

requires

objects

bulge

gravity

resulting

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 5

approaching

crystals

development

territory

astonished

coarse

moisture

luxuries

irregular

resemble

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Grade 6

countryside

heroism

consented

mercilessly

appalling

veterinarian

spectacle

emperor

ravenous

exceptional

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

IA Oral

Sam

Ana was so sad.
She was moving out of town.
They could not take her black cat, Sam.
The new house was just too little for pets.
Ana let a good friend take Sam.
Ana liked her new home, but she missed Sam.
One day, Ana went to open the door.
There was Sam!
He had walked for days and days to find Ana.
Ana's mother now said he could stay.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 1A Oral—Fiction

Sam

Ana was so sad. She was moving out of town. They could not take her black cat, Sam. The new house was just too little for pets. Ana let a good friend take Sam.

Ana liked her new home, but she missed Sam. One day, Ana went to open the door. There was Sam! He had walked for days and days to find Ana. Ana's mother now said he could stay.

(71 words) (44 Dolch Words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Where was Ana moving? [Out of town] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ Who was Sam? [Ana's black cat] (1 pt.)

L 3. _____ Why couldn't Sam go to the new house? [The new house was too little for pets.] (1 pt.)

V 4. _____ What did the story mean when it said that Ana “missed” Sam? [Ana wished he was with her.] (3 pts.)

I 5. _____ What did Sam do that would make you think he loved Ana? [He walked for days and days to find her.] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-4	5-7	8+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	—	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	—	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	—	—	—	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

IB Silent

The Bake Sale

Mrs. Park's class wanted to help people in need.
Mrs. Park said, "We have to make money.
How can we do this?"
"I know what we can do," Ron said.
"We can bake cakes and other foods people like.
Then, we can have a bake sale."
That is just what the class did.
All the children helped make the food.
A lot of hungry people came to eat it.
Soon, the class had money for people in need.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 1B Silent—Fiction

The Bake Sale

Mrs. Park's class wanted to help people in need. Mrs. Park said, "We have to make money. How can we do this?"

"I know what we can do," Ron said. "We can bake cakes and other foods people like. Then, we can have a bake sale."

That is just what the class did. All the children helped make the food. A lot of hungry people came to eat it. Soon, the class had money for people in need.

(78 Words)

Questions

L 1. ____ Who was it that the class wanted to help? [People in need] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ What did Ron say the class could bake? [Cakes and other foods people like.] (1 pt.)

L 3. ____ What did all the children help to do? [Make the food] (1 pt.)

V 4. ____ The story says, "A lot of hungry people came to eat it." What does *hungry* mean? [Wanting or needing food] (3 pts.)

I 5. ____ Who gave the class the money for the people in need? [The people who paid for food at the bake sale] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

IC Oral

School for Clowns

Did you know that there is a clown school?
Clowns go to school to learn to be funny.
They learn how to move in funny ways.
They find out how to run, fall, and jump.
They must make every move look easy.
In school, clowns plan how they will look.
They put on funny pants and tops.
They get into big shoes.
Clowns also put on funny face paint.
They do all this just to make people smile.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 1C Oral—Nonfiction

School for Clowns

Did you know that there is a clown school? Clowns go to school to learn to be funny. They learn how to move in funny ways. They find out how to run, fall, and jump. They must make every move look easy. In school, clowns plan how they will look. They put on funny pants and tops. They get into big shoes. Clowns also put on funny face paint. They do all this just to make people smile.

(78 words) (57 Dolch words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Why do clowns go to school? [To find out how to be funny] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ To move in funny ways, clowns find out how to run, jump, and what? [How to fall] (1 pt.)

V 3. _____ The passage says, “They must make every move look easy.” What does *easy* mean? [Not hard] (3 pts.)

L 4. _____ Other than funny pants and tops, what do clowns get into? [Big shoes] (1 pt.)

I 5. _____ What is the job of a clown? [To make people smile] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-5	6-9	10+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

ID Silent

Houses

Our house is a place we feel safe.
It is the place we like to be with our family.
We can stay in when the weather is bad.
We feel good inside our houses.
You can see that all houses are not the same.
There are wood houses and stone houses.
There are even snow houses!
Some houses are big and some are little.
Some have just one floor.
Others are two and even three floors high.
What is the house that you live in like?

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage ID Silent—Nonfiction

Houses

Our house is a place we feel safe. It is the place we like to be with our family. We can stay in when the weather is bad. We feel good inside our houses.

You can see that all houses are not the same. There are wood houses and stone houses. There are even snow houses! Some houses are big and some are little. Some have just one floor. Others are two and even three floors high. What is the house that you live in like?

(86 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ Where do we feel safe? [In our houses] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ Who do we like to be with in our houses? [Family] (1 pt.)

L 3. ____ How do we feel inside our houses when the weather is bad outside? [Good] (1 pt.)

I 4. ____ Which kind of house would you see in just cold places? [Snow house] (4 pts.)

V 5. ____ The passage says, “Others are two and even three floors high.” What does *high* mean? [From top to bottom] (3 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

2A Oral

The Race

One day, Tom saw some boys having a race after school. Tom said, "I would like to be a fast runner like those boys."

Tom began to run every day before and after school. Each day, he was able to run faster than the day before. Soon he could run as fast as the other boys. Tom did not win his first few races, but he would not give up.

The next year, there was a race for all the boys at school. Many of the boys ran fast, but Tom ran faster. The other boys ran hard to catch up with him, but not one could do it. Tom won the race and took home the first prize.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 2A Oral—Fiction

The Race

One day, Tom *saw some* boys having *a race after* school. Tom *said*, “*I would like to be a fast runner like those* boys.”

Tom began *to run every day before and after* school. Each day, *he was able to run* faster than *the day before*. Soon *he could run as fast as* the other boys. Tom *did not win his first few races, but he would not give up.*

The next year, *there was a race for all the boys at* school. *Many of the boys ran fast, but Tom ran* faster. *The other boys ran hard to catch up with him, but not one could do it.* Tom won *the race and took home the first prize.*

(119 words) (76 Dolch words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ What did Tom see that made him want to be a fast runner? [Some boys having a race] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ What did Tom do every day before and after school? [He ran.] (1 pt.)

I 3. _____ What did Tom do that would make you think he sticks with something even if things don't go his way? [He did not win the first few races, but he would not give up.] (4 pts.)

V 4. _____ The story says, “The other boys ran hard to catch up with him, but not one could do it.” What does “catch up” mean? [Get closer to, or come up to] (3 pts.)

L 5. _____ Why did Tom take home the first prize? [Because he won the race] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0–6	7–11	12+	
7–10 pts	✓	*	–	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	*	*	–	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	–	–	–	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

2B Silent

Kim and Brownie

Kim had a hard time training her new dog, Brownie. He would not do anything that she told him to do. She could not even get him to come when she called him. Then, one day, Kim saw that Brownie did not move when a loud noise went off.

It was then that she understood that Brownie couldn't hear. Kim found out how to train Brownie by using hand signals. To get Brownie to come, she raised her arm up over her head with her hand facing down.

If she wanted him to sit, she would move her arm down with her hand facing up. Brownie learned fast and was soon doing everything Kim asked of him.

Kim felt very lucky that Brownie was her dog.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 2B Silent—Fiction

Kim and Brownie

Kim had a hard time training her new dog, Brownie. He would not do anything that she told him to do. She could not even get him to come when she called him. Then, one day, Kim saw that Brownie did not move when a loud noise went off.

It was then that she understood that Brownie couldn't hear. Kim found out how to train Brownie by using hand signals. To get Brownie to come, she raised her arm up over her head with her hand facing down.

If she wanted him to sit, she would move her arm down with her hand facing up. Brownie learned fast and was soon doing everything Kim asked of him.

Kim felt very lucky that Brownie was her dog.

(126 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ Who was Brownie? [Kim's new dog] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ What made Kim understand that Brownie couldn't hear? [He did not move when a loud noise went off.] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ The story says, "Kim found out how to train Brownie by using hand signals." What does the word *signals* mean? [Signs] (3 pts.)

L 4. ____ What signal did Kim use to get Brownie to sit? [Moved her arm down with her hand facing up] (1 pt.)

I 5. ____ What did Brownie do that would make you think he was smart? [He learned fast and was soon doing everything Kim asked of him.] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

2C Oral

Bears

Bears are big animals covered with fur. Their legs are short and fat, but they can run very fast. They can also stand up on their back legs and walk like people do.

Bears are mainly colored black, brown, and white. Black bears, which are around five feet, are not as big as brown or white bears. Black and brown bears climb trees to get away from trouble. Both of these bears eat plants, fruit, and animals.

The white bears are called polar bears, and they live on the ice in very cold places. They are great swimmers, and they swim from one piece of ice to another looking for food. These bears eat just meat, and mostly sea animals.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 2C Oral—Nonfiction

Bears

Bears are big animals covered with fur. Their legs are short and fat, but they can run very fast. They can also stand up on their back legs and walk like people do.

Bears are mainly colored black, brown, and white. Black bears, which are around five feet, are not as big as brown or white bears. Black and brown bears climb trees to get away from trouble. Both of these bears eat plants, fruit, and animals.

The white bears are called polar bears, and they live on the ice in very cold places. They are great swimmers, and they swim from one piece of ice to another looking for food. These bears eat just meat, and mostly sea animals.

(120 words) (74 Dolch words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ What are bears covered with? [Fur] (1 pt.)

I 2. _____ What does the passage say that lets you know polar bears are over five feet tall? [Black bears, which are around five feet, are not as big as brown or white bears.] (4 pts.)

V 3. _____ The passage says, “Black and brown bears climb trees to get away from trouble.” What does the word *trouble* mean? [A bad situation] (3 pts.)

L 4. _____ Where do polar bears live? [On the ice in very cold places] (1 pt.)

L 5. _____ What do polar bears eat? [Meat, mostly sea animals] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-6	7-11	12+	
	7-10 pts	✓	*	—
4-6 pts	*	*	—	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	—	—	—	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

2D Silent

About Fire

When people found out how to make fire, their lives became easier. Fire has been around from the days when people lived in caves. Cave people would use fire to stay warm. They also found that they could see more in the dark with the fires going. And many animals like tigers and lions are afraid of fire, so people used fires at night to scare these animals off.

Soon, people found out how to cook over an open fire. Then they made ovens by stacking rocks up over the fires. In these ovens, they baked bread and other good foods. After people found out how to store food, they did not have to go hunting every day. There was always something to eat.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 2D Silent—Nonfiction

About Fire

When people found out how to make fire, their lives became easier. Fire has been around from the days when people lived in caves. Cave people would use fire to stay warm. They also found that they could see more in the dark with the fires going. And many animals like tigers and lions are afraid of fire, so people used fires at night to scare these animals off.

Soon, people found out how to cook over an open fire. Then they made ovens by stacking rocks up over the fires. In these ovens, they baked bread and other good foods. After people found out how to store food, they did not have to go hunting every day. There was always something to eat.

(124 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ What happened to people's lives when they found out how to make fire? [Their lives became easier.] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ What was one way that cave people used fire? [To stay warm, to see in the dark, or to keep animals away] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ The passage says, "And many animals like tigers and lions are afraid of fire, so people used fires at night to scare these animals off." What does the word *afraid* mean? [Scared] (3 pts.)

L 4. ____ How did people make ovens? [They stacked rocks up over the fires.] (1 pt.)

I 5. ____ After people found out how to cook and store food, what did they eat when they didn't go hunting? [The stored food] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

3A Oral

The Dog Walker

Summer vacation had just started, and Earl was thinking about how to spend his time. Earl liked to read, but he didn't want to spend the whole vacation just reading. He also liked to do things and go places with his friends, but many of them were away for the summer. Then Earl got the idea that it would be wise to try to earn some money.

While playing with his dog, Earl suddenly had a thought. Perhaps people would pay him to walk their dogs. Earl went to the houses of people he knew had dogs, like Mrs. Green. Because she was old and had trouble getting around, she was delighted to hire Earl to walk her big brown dog. In all, Earl was able to find seven people to hire him. By the end of the summer, he was able to buy a new bike.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 3A Oral—Fiction

The Dog Walker

Summer vacation *had just started, and Earl was thinking about how to spend his time. Earl liked to read, but he didn't want to spend the whole vacation just reading. He also liked to do things and go places with his friends, but many of them were away for the summer. Then Earl got the idea that it would be wise to try to earn some money.*

While playing with his dog, Earl suddenly *had a thought. Perhaps people would pay him to walk their dogs. Earl went to the houses of people he knew had dogs, like Mrs. Green. Because she was old and had trouble getting around, she was delighted to hire Earl to walk her big brown dog. In all, Earl was able to find seven people to hire him. By the end of the summer, he was able to buy a new bike.*

(147 words) (91 Dolch Words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Why couldn't Earl spend time with his friends? [Because many were away for the summer] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ What was Earl doing when he thought about walking dogs for money? [Playing with his dog] (1 pt.)

V 3. _____ The story says, “Because she was old and had trouble getting around, she was delighted to hire Earl to walk her big brown dog.” What does the word *delighted* mean? [Very happy] (3 pts.)

L 4. _____ How many people hired Earl? [Seven] (1 pt.)

I 5. _____ Where did Earl get the money to pay for his new bike? [From walking the dogs] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0–8	9–14	15+	
7–10 pts	✓	*	–	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	*	*	–	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	–	–	–	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

3B Silent

Lonely Nina

Nina had never felt as lonely as she did at her new school. She had moved to town over a month ago, and she still had not made any friends. As she sat eating her lunch, she listened to Jen and the other girls from her class talk and laugh. Afraid that they wouldn't like her, she thought it best to keep to herself.

All of a sudden, Nina heard Jen start to choke on some food. When she saw that the girl couldn't breathe, Nina rushed over. She put her arms around Jen's waist from the back and pressed in with her fist. The food came out, and Jen began to take in air.

When she could talk, Jen thanked Nina and asked her to join the other girls. "I would have asked you before," Jen said, "but you always seemed to want to be by yourself."

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 3B Silent—Fiction

Lonely Nina

Nina had never felt as lonely as she did at her new school. She had moved to town over a month ago, and she still had not made any friends. As she sat eating her lunch, she listened to Jen and the other girls from her class talk and laugh. Afraid that they wouldn't like her, she thought it best to keep to herself.

All of a sudden, Nina heard Jen start to choke on some food. When she saw that the girl couldn't breathe, Nina rushed over. She put her arms around Jen's waist from the back and pressed in with her fist. The food came out, and Jen began to take in air.

When she could talk, Jen thanked Nina and asked her to join the other girls. "I would have asked you before," Jen said, "but you always seemed to want to be by yourself."

(148 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ How did Nina feel at the beginning of the story? [Lonely] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ Why did Nina keep to herself? [Because she was afraid the other children wouldn't like her] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ The story says, "When she saw that the girl couldn't breathe, Nina rushed over." What does the word *breathe* mean? [Take in air] (3 pts.)

L 4. ____ What did Jen do as soon as she could talk? [Jen thanked Nina and asked her to join the other girls.] (1 pt.)

I 5. ____ Why didn't Nina make friends? [Because she kept to herself and did not try to talk to the other children] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

3C Oral

A Biography

In 1892 a 13-year-old boy beat 25 men to win his first bike race. The boy was Marshall Taylor, and he would become one of the best racers of all time.

Just four years after winning his first race, Taylor became the first black man in the United States to race for money. By the time he was 20 years old, he was setting many records for speed. Sadly, he was not allowed to enter some races because of the color of his skin.

In the years that followed, Taylor raced all over the world. He won almost every race he entered. Millions of people came to see him, and he made friends everywhere he went. Taylor would stop racing in 1924 at the age of 32. But before he did, he broke every speed record there was to earn the title of the fastest bike racer in the world.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 3C Oral—Nonfiction

A Biography

In 1892 a 13-year-old boy beat 25 men to win his first bike race. The boy was Marshall Taylor, and he would become one of the best racers of all time.

Just four years after winning his first race, Taylor became the first black man in the United States to race for money. By the time he was 20 years old, he was setting many records for speed. Sadly, he was not allowed to enter some races because of the color of his skin.

In the years that followed, Taylor raced all over the world. He won almost every race he entered. Millions of people came to see him, and he made friends everywhere he went. Taylor would stop racing in 1924 at the age of 32. But before he did, he broke every speed record there was to earn the title of the fastest bike racer in the world.

(152 words) (86 Dolch words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ How old was Taylor when he won his first bike race? [13] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ What was Taylor the first black man to do? [Race for money] (1 pt.)

V 3. _____ What is skin? [Outer covering of the human body] (3 pts.)

I 4. _____ What happened that would make you think Taylor was popular?
[Millions of people came to see him, and he made friends everywhere he went.] (4 pts.)

L 5. _____ In what year did Taylor stop racing? [1924] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0–8	9–15	16+	
7–10 pts	✓	*	–	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	*	*	–	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	–	–	–	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

3D Silent

Sleep

People of all ages need to sleep, but some need more sleep than others do. As people grow older, they need less sleep. Babies sleep about 15 hours a day, while adults need about 8 hours of sleep every night.

Sleep is very important because it will give the body and mind time to rest and prepare for the next day. During the early stages of sleep, the heart does not beat as fast and the brain slows down. If a person dreams while asleep, the heart begins beating faster and the brain goes back into action. At this stage of sleep, your eyes move back and forth very fast under your closed lids.

When people don't get enough sleep, they may be hard to get along with. They also may have trouble thinking and doing things. After five days with no sleep, people will start to see things that are not actually there.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 3D Silent—Nonfiction

Sleep

People of all ages need to sleep, but some need more sleep than others do. As people grow older, they need less sleep. Babies sleep about 15 hours a day, while adults need about 8 hours of sleep every night.

Sleep is very important because it will give the body and mind time to rest and prepare for the next day. During the early stages of sleep, the heart does not beat as fast and the brain slows down. If a person dreams while asleep, the heart begins beating faster and the brain goes back into action. At this stage of sleep, your eyes move back and forth very fast under your closed lids.

When people don't get enough sleep, they may be hard to get along with. They also may have trouble thinking and doing things. After five days with no sleep, people will start to see things that are not actually there.

(154 words)

Questions

I 1. ____ From the passage, you can tell that children sleep somewhere between 8 hours and how many hours? [15] (4 pts.)

L 2. ____ Why is sleep important? [Because it will give the body and mind time to rest and prepare for the next day] (1 pt.)

L 3. ____ What happens to your eyes when you dream? [They move back and forth very fast under your closed lids.] (1 pt.)

L 4. ____ What is one thing that may happen to people when they don't get enough sleep? [They may be hard to get along with, they may have trouble thinking, or they may have trouble doing things.] (1 pt.)

V 5. ____ The reading passage says, "After five days with no sleep, people will start to see things that are not actually there." What does the word *actually* mean? [Really] (3 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

4A Oral

A Feel for Music

Having a real feel for music, Cora loved to play the piano for friends and family. The problem was that she made mistakes because she never found enough time to sit down and practice.

One day, Mrs. Ruiz, the music teacher, announced that there was going to be a concert, and she wanted Cora to play a piece of music of her choice. Very excited, Cora decided to play “My Favorite Things.”

Mrs. Ruiz called all of the children to her house to play their pieces a few days before the concert. To Cora’s horror, Matt had decided to play “My Favorite Things” too. Matt played the piece perfectly, but he did not put any feeling into his music. However, all Cora could think was that he would play without any mistakes, while she would make mistakes and look silly.

The next day, Cora told Mrs. Ruiz that she did not want to be in the concert. The teacher said sadly, “You are a very good player because you feel the music, but this means little unless you believe in your talent and give it the time it requires.”

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 4A Oral—Fiction

A Feel for Music

Having a real feel for music, Cora loved to play the piano for friends and family. The problem was that she made mistakes because she never found enough time to sit down and practice.

One day, Mrs. Ruiz, the music teacher, announced that there was going to be a concert, and she wanted Cora to play a piece of music of her choice. Very excited, Cora decided to play “My Favorite Things.”

Mrs. Ruiz called all of the children to her house to play their pieces a few days before the concert. To Cora’s horror, Matt had decided to play “My Favorite Things” too. Matt played the piece perfectly, but he did not put any feeling into his music. However, all Cora could think was that he would play without any mistakes, while she would make mistakes and look silly.

The next day, Cora told Mrs. Ruiz that she did not want to be in the concert. The teacher said sadly, “You are a very good player because you feel the music, but this means little unless you believe in your talent and give it the time it requires.”

(189 words) (108 Dolch Words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Why did Cora make mistakes when she played? [Because she didn’t practice enough] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ What song did Cora choose to play at the concert? [“My Favorite Things”] (1 pt.)

L 3. _____ Where did the children go a few days before the concert to play their pieces? [To Mrs. Ruiz’s house] (1 pt.)

V 4. _____ What does the word *horror* mean in this story? [Shock or disappointment] (3 pts.)

I 5. _____ Why did Cora decide not to be in the concert? [Because she was afraid of looking foolish if Matt played the song better than she did] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-11	12-18	19+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

4B Silent

The Bracelet

Mrs. Dell was delighted when her children gave her a very special present for her birthday. It was a beautiful gold bracelet with five charms, one charm from each of her five children. The clasp on the bracelet was a bit loose, but she planned to have that fixed just as soon as she could get around to it.

Not willing to take the bracelet off, Mrs. Dell wore it always, whether she was at work or doing the household chores. One night before she went to bed, she noticed that the bracelet was not on her wrist. Frantic, she looked for it everywhere, but she just couldn't find it. Feeling miserable, she told the children that she had lost their special gift.

Fifteen years later, all of Mrs. Dell's children were grown and out of the house, so she decided to sell it. The movers had just removed the last piece of furniture, the big sofa, when Mrs. Dell noticed something shiny on the floor. There was her lost bracelet, just like a special gift all over again.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 4B Silent—Fiction

The Bracelet

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Fifteen years later, all of Mrs. Dell's children were grown and out of the house, so she decided to sell it. The movers had just removed the last piece of furniture, the big sofa, when Mrs. Dell noticed something shiny on the floor. There was her lost bracelet, just like a special gift all over again.

(179 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ For what occasion did Mrs. Dell's children give her the bracelet?
[Her birthday] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ When did Mrs. Dell notice that the bracelet was missing? [One night before she went to bed] (1 pt.)

I 3. ____ What probably caused the bracelet to fall off of Mrs. Dell's wrist?
[The loose clasp] (4 pts.)

V 4. ____ What does the word *frantic* mean in this story? [Very excited with worry or fear] (3 pts.)

L 5. ____ Where did Mrs. Dell eventually find her bracelet? [On the floor under where the big sofa had been] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

4C Oral

Gravity

The force that draws objects toward one another is called gravity. It is the Earth's gravity that keeps the moon moving around it and holds the ocean waters against it.

Tides are the rise and fall of large bodies of water. They are caused by the gravity of the moon and the sun, which serves to pull on the waters of the Earth. Even though the moon is much smaller than the sun, it has a stronger pull because it is much closer to the Earth than the sun is.

When the moon is directly overhead, its gravity causes the waters of the Earth to move toward it. As the water follows the moon, the oceans puff out in its direction, resulting in a high tide. When this happens, water rises and can come up onto the land for a short distance. A second bulge occurs on the opposite side of our planet because the Earth is also being pulled toward the moon and away from the water on that side. As the moon moves farther away, the water drawn to it will fall back in a low tide.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 4C Oral—Nonfiction

Gravity

The force that draws objects toward one another is called gravity. It is the Earth's gravity that keeps the moon moving around it and holds the ocean waters against it.

Tides are the rise and fall of large bodies of water. They are caused by the gravity of the moon and the sun, which serves to pull on the waters of the Earth. Even though the moon is much smaller than the sun, it has a stronger pull because it is much closer to the Earth than the sun is.

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(189 words) (102 Dolch words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ What keeps the moon moving around the Earth and holds the ocean waters against the Earth? [Gravity] (1 pt.)

L 2. _____ Why does the moon have a greater pull on the Earth's water than the sun does? [Because the moon is much closer to Earth] (1 pt.)

L 3. _____ What causes a high tide? [Ocean waters puff out toward the moon when it is directly overhead.] (1 pt.)

V 4. _____ What is a *bulge*? [A part that swells out] (3 pts.)

I 5. _____ Why does the moon affect tides more than the sun does? [Because the moon is closer to Earth and has a stronger pull.] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-11	12-18	19+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

4D Silent

A Biography of Sequoya

Born around 1765, Sequoya was a member of the Cherokee tribe. He was always fascinated by the white people's ability to communicate with one another by making marks on paper, which he would call "talking leaves." In 1809, he decided that the Cherokee should have a written language of their own. In spite of constant teasing by friends and family, Sequoya gave 12 years of his life to creating an alphabet for his people.

Sequoya found out that the Cherokee language was made up of a particular group of sounds. His alphabet gave a symbol for each of these sounds, resulting in 85 letters in all.

In 1821, Sequoya showed the leading men of the Cherokee Nation how his new alphabet worked. These wise men at once recognized the great worth of the alphabet and quickly adopted it for their people. In just a matter of months, thousands of Cherokee were able to read and write their own language for the first time. Because of Sequoya's vision, the Cherokee could now keep a written record of their great history to be handed down to generations to come.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 4D Silent—Nonfiction

A Biography of Sequoya

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In 1821, Sequoya showed the leading men of the Cherokee Nation how his new alphabet worked. These wise men at once recognized the great worth of the alphabet and quickly adopted it for their people. In just a matter of months, thousands of Cherokee were able to read and write their own language for the first time. Because of Sequoya's vision, the Cherokee could now keep a written record of their great history to be handed down to generations to come.

(187 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ What were "talking leaves"? [What Sequoya called the marks on paper used by white people to communicate with one another] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ What did Sequoya spend 12 years of his life doing? [Creating an alphabet for his people] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ What does the word *adopted* mean in this passage? [Accepted] (3 pts.)

I 4. ____ How do you know that Sequoya's alphabet was easy to use? [In just a matter of months, thousands of Cherokee were able to read and write their own language for the first time.] (4 pts.)

L 5. ____ What did Sequoya's alphabet allow the Cherokee to do? [Keep a written record of their history to be handed down to generations to come] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

5A Oral

The Wolf and the Dog

A scrawny wolf was almost dead with hunger when he happened to meet a house dog who was passing by. “Cousin,” said the dog, “your irregular life will soon be the ruin of you. Why don’t you work steadily as I do, and get your food regularly given to you?”

“I would have no objection,” said the wolf, “if I could only get a place.”

“I will arrange that for you if you come with me to my master and share my work,” said the dog.

So the wolf and dog went towards the town together. On the way there, the wolf noticed that the hair on a certain part of the dog’s neck was very much worn away, so he asked him how that had come about.

“Oh,” said the dog, “that is only the place where the collar is put on at night to keep me chained up. It does irritate the neck a bit, but you’ll soon get used to it.”

“Goodbye to you,” said the wolf, “for it is better to be free and starve than be a fat slave.”

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 5A Oral—Fiction

The Wolf and the Dog

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“Oh,” said the dog, “that is only the place where the collar is put on at night to keep me chained up. It does irritate the neck a bit, but you’ll soon get used to it.”

“Goodbye to you,” said the wolf, “for it is better to be free and starve than be a fat slave.”

(184 Words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Why was the wolf almost dead? [Lack of food] (1 pt.)

I 2. _____ What did the dog do that would make you think he liked the wolf?
[He offered to arrange for the wolf to work for his master.] (4 pts.)

L 3. _____ Why was the hair on the dog’s neck worn away? [He had to wear a collar at night.] (1 pt.)

V 4. _____ What does the word *irritate* mean in this story? [Make sore] (3 pts.)

L 5. _____ Why does the wolf say goodbye to the dog? [Because he’d rather starve than be chained up] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-10	11-18	19+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

5B Silent

Tracy's Find

Life in Tracy's household became very challenging after her father lost his job. Now the entire family had to watch what they spent, and simple pleasures like buying new clothes or eating out were luxuries that Tracy rarely enjoyed.

With winter fast approaching and Tracy in desperate need of boots, she and her mother visited the used clothing store. Embarrassed and miserable, Tracy searched through the boots until she spied a pair in her size that weren't too worn. When she picked one up to try it on, she noticed something stuffed inside. She was stunned when she stuck in her hand and pulled out a little over \$1,000 in cash.

Thrilled, she raced over to her mother and said excitedly, "Mom, I found all this money in these boots! The person who gave the boots away won't miss it, so we can keep it, can't we?"

Tracy's mother didn't respond, but the sad and disappointed expression on her face spoke volumes. Ashamed of herself, Tracy knew what her mother expected of her, and she did not hesitate to do it.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 5B Silent—Fiction

Tracy's Find

Life in Tracy's household became very challenging after her father lost his job. Now the entire family had to watch what they spent, and simple pleasures like buying new clothes or eating out were luxuries that Tracy rarely enjoyed.

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Tracy's mother didn't respond, but the sad and disappointed expression on her face spoke volumes. Ashamed of herself, Tracy knew what her mother expected of her, and she did not hesitate to do it.

(181 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ Why did life in Tracy's household become challenging? [Because her father lost his job] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ Why was Tracy in the used clothing store? [She needed boots for winter.] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ What does the word *stunned* mean in this story? [Amazed] (3 pts.)

L 4. ____ What did Tracy want to do with the money she found? [Keep it] (1 pt.)

I 5. ____ What did Tracy's mother expect her to do? [Return the money] (5 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

5C Oral

Clouds

Throughout history, people have found clouds to be both interesting and beautiful. Clouds begin to form when warm, damp air is pushed up by cool, dry air. As the warm air rises, it begins to expand and cool. The cooling air is no longer able to hold all of the moisture in gas form that it was able to hold when it was warm. Eventually, tiny drops of water or ice crystals begin to form on bits of dust, taking the shape of a cloud. After the drops or ice crystals form, they can collide with each other and grow by joining together to such a large size that they fall to the ground as rain or snow.

There are four basic families of clouds, with each forming at a different distance above the earth. High clouds form above 20,000 feet, middle clouds appear between 6,500 feet and 20,000 feet, and low clouds appear below 6,500 feet. Finally, there are clouds that are moving upward while their bases are near the ground. These clouds with vertical development range from 1,600 feet to over 20,000 feet.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 5C Oral—Nonfiction

Clouds

Throughout history, people have found clouds to be both interesting and beautiful. Clouds begin to form when warm, damp air is pushed up by cool, dry air. As the warm air rises, it begins to expand and cool. The cooling air is no longer able to hold all of the moisture in gas form that it was able to hold when it was warm. Eventually, tiny drops of water or ice crystals begin to form on bits of dust, taking the shape of a cloud. After the drops or ice crystals form, they can collide with each other and grow by joining together to such a large size that they fall to the ground as rain or snow.

There are four basic families of clouds, with each forming at a different distance above the earth. High clouds form above 20,000 feet, middle clouds appear between 6,500 feet and 20,000 feet, and low clouds appear below 6,500 feet. Finally, there are clouds that are moving upward while their bases are near the ground. These clouds with vertical development range from 1,600 feet to over 20,000 feet.

(185 words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ What happens to the warm air as it rises? [It begins to expand and cool.]
(1 pt.)

V 2. _____ What does the word *moisture* mean in this reading passage? [Wetness]
(3 pts.)

L 3. _____ What makes the shape of a cloud? [Tiny drops of water or ice crystals forming on bits of dust] (1 pt.)

L 4. _____ At what distance above earth do middle clouds appear? [Between 6,500 feet and 20,000 feet] (1 pt.)

I 5. _____ Which family of clouds would produce the tallest clouds? [Clouds with vertical development] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-10	11-18	19+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

5D Silent

Deserts

Most people think of a desert as a wide, empty stretch of coarse sand and low dunes. Although some parts of large deserts do resemble this description, there are other regions that do not fit this picture.

To be a desert, a territory must have less than ten inches of rain a year. These dry areas are widely scattered over the Earth, covering one-fifth of its land surface. The Sahara is the world's largest desert, stretching 3,200 miles across northern Africa and covering an area almost as large as the United States. The Sahara is the driest and hottest of all the world's deserts, creating one of the harshest environments on Earth.

You might be astonished to learn that only one-fifth of the entire area of the Sahara is covered with sand. If you travel through the Sahara, you'll see snow-capped mountains, such as the Tibesti, which are higher than 10,000 feet. There are also lakes such as Lake Chad, which is the size of the state of New Jersey. Also native to the Sahara are canyons, stony plains, and fifty oases, which are desert areas containing water.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 5D Silent—Nonfiction

Deserts

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(191 words)

Questions

V 1. ____ What does the word *resemble* mean in this reading passage? [Look like] (3 pts.)

L 2. ____ To be a desert, what must a territory have? [Less than ten inches of rain a year] (1 pt.)

L 3. ____ Where is the Sahara located? [Northern Africa] (1 pt.)

I 4. ____ What in the passage would make you think that relatively few people live in the Sahara? [It is the driest and hottest of all the world's deserts, creating one of the harshest environments on Earth.] (4 pts.)

L 5. ____ How much of the entire area of the Sahara is covered with sand? [One-fifth] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

6A Oral

Androcles and the Lion

A slave named Androcles once escaped from his master and fled to the forest. As he wandered about there, he came upon a lion moaning and groaning in acute pain. At first he turned to flee, but then he saw that the lion's paw was all swollen and bleeding due to the presence of a huge thorn. Androcles pulled out the thorn and bound up the paw, after which the lion licked the man's hand in appreciation and the two became fast friends.

Shortly afterwards both Androcles and the lion were captured, and the slave was sentenced to be thrown to the lion after the latter had not been fed for several days. The emperor and all his court came to see the spectacle, and Androcles was led out into the middle of the arena. Soon the ravenous lion was let loose and rushed roaring toward his victim. But as soon as he approached Androcles, he recognized his friend and licked his hand. The emperor, astounded at this, summoned Androcles to him. After hearing the slave's exceptional story, the emperor freed him and released the lion to his native forest.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 6A Oral—Fiction

Androcles and the Lion

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(190 words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

L 1. _____ Why was Androcles in the forest? [He fled there after escaping from his master.] (1 pt.)

I 2. _____ What in the story supports the idea that Androcles is both brave and considerate? [He tends to the wounded lion despite the danger.] (4 pts.)

L 3. _____ What was Androcles's sentence after he was captured? [He was to be thrown to the lion after it had not been fed for several days.] (1 pt.)

L 4. _____ Why didn't the lion attack Androcles? [Because he recognized the friend who had helped him in the forest] (1 pt.)

V 5. _____ What does the word *exceptional* mean in this story? [Extraordinary] (3 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-11	12-19	20+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

6B Silent

Morgan's Escape

After making her escape, Morgan glanced nervously around as she slowly moved into the deserted street. Hearing someone approaching from behind, she crouched behind some trash cans and peeked out to see the figure of a man. As he called her name, she recognized the familiar voice of Ben, someone she had once foolishly trusted. He had lost her trust by taking her to that appalling place where a woman in a white coat had placed her on a cold table. Luckily, she had managed to escape and make a run for her life.

As Ben stepped closer to the spot where Morgan was hiding, she crouched down lower, hoping that he would not detect her. Frozen with fear, she reacted too late when Ben grabbed her.

Indignant and humiliated, Morgan struggled to be free, but Ben held her resolutely and said, “You shouldn’t have run out of the veterinarian’s office, you silly cat. Now let’s go home so we can both get something to eat.” At the mention of food, Morgan decided to forgive Ben and go quietly home with him.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 6B Silent—Fiction

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(182 words)

Questions

L 1. ____ Where did Morgan hide when she heard someone approaching?
[Behind some trash cans] (1 pt.)

L 2. ____ Who was looking for Morgan? [Ben] (1 pt.)

V 3. ____ What does the word *appalling* mean in this story? [Awful] (3 pts.)

I 4. ____ Who was the woman in the white coat? [The veterinarian] (4 pts.)

L 5. ____ Why did Morgan decide to go quietly home with Ben? [He mentioned food.] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading	
Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

6C Oral

Comets

People have long been both awed and alarmed by comets flashing across the sky. To people of the past who didn't understand the movement of heavenly bodies, the ominous sight of a comet was often linked to terrible events such as wars or plagues. The earliest known record of a comet sighting was made in China around 1059 B.C. Since then, these regular visitors have been observed by astronomers like Edmond Halley, who first proved that comets return as they orbit the sun.

Comets, sometimes called “dirty snowballs,” are lumps of dust and rock held together by ice. They orbit the sun in an oval path that brings them very close to it and swings them deep into space. As a dark, cold comet approaches the sun, it goes through a spectacular change. Usually, heated ice turns to water first and then evaporates to form a gas. However, when a comet gets close to the sun, the intense heat changes the surface ice directly into gases, which begin to glow. Fountains of dust and gas squirt out for millions of miles, forming a long tail that glows from reflected sunlight.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 6C Oral—Nonfiction

Comets

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(190 words) Number of Word Recognition Errors _____

Questions

V 1. _____ What does the word *ominous* mean in this reading passage? [Threatening or alarming] (3 pts.)

L 2. _____ Who first proved that comets return as they orbit the sun? [Edmond Halley] (1 pt.)

L 3. _____ What are comets made of? [Lumps of dust and rock held together by ice] (1 pt.)

L 4. _____ What does the intense heat of the sun do to the comet? [Changes the surface ice directly into gases, which begin to glow] (1 pt.)

I 5. _____ How does the comet change as it moves away from the sun in its orbit? [It grows cold once more and the ice refreezes.] (4 pts.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Oral Reading

Total Points Earned	# of Word Recognition Errors			Reading Level
	0-11	12-19	20+	
7-10 pts	✓	*	-	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4-6 pts	*	*	-	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0-3 pts	-	-	-	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

6D Silent

Sybil's Ride

Everyone has heard of Paul Revere's ride to warn a sleeping countryside that the British were coming. About two years later, there was another essential ride—this time made by a girl named Sybil Ludington.

The eldest child of Colonel Henry Ludington, Sybil was with her family in New York on the night of April 26, 1777, when a messenger knocked on the door. He related that the British were burning the town of Danbury, Connecticut, only 25 miles away. With his men scattered over a wide area, Colonel Ludington had to alert them and organize his troops to fend off the British raid. Not being able to do both, he consented to let Sybil ride to summon the men.

It was raining hard that night, but Sybil rode her horse over 40 miles on dark, unmarked roads to notify the men to gather at her home. When, soaked and exhausted, she returned home, most of the soldiers were ready to march. The men whom she gathered arrived in time to drive the British back to their ships in Long Island Sound. After the battle, General George Washington congratulated Sybil for her heroism.

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Passage 6D Silent—Nonfiction

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(193 words)

Questions

V 1. ___ What does the word *essential* mean in this reading passage? [Very important] (3 pts.)

L 2. ___ What did the messenger tell Sybil and her family? [The British were burning the town of Danbury, Connecticut.] (1 pt.)

L 3. ___ What did Colonel Ludington consent to let Sybil do? [Ride to summon the men] (1 pt.)

I 4. ___ How do you know that Sybil was a skillful horsewoman? [Because she successfully rode over 40 miles in the rain and dark over unmarked roads] (4 pts.)

L 5. ___ What did the men whom Sybil gathered succeed in doing? [Driving the British back to their ships in Long Island Sound] (1 pt.)

Total # of points earned _____

Scoring Table for Silent Reading

Total Points Earned	Reading Level
7–10 pts	Independent <input type="checkbox"/>
4–6 pts	Instructional <input type="checkbox"/>
0–3 pts	Frustrational <input type="checkbox"/>

Informal Reading Inventory Grades 1–6

Informal Reading Inventory Record

Graded Word Lists

	Grade Level	Date Administered
Independent		
Instructional		
Frustrational		

Oral Reading Passage

	Grade Level	Date Administered
Independent		
Instructional		
Frustrational		

Silent Reading Passage

	Grade Level	Date Administered
Independent		
Instructional		
Frustrational		

Comments: