

READ

Reading Evaluation – Adult Diagnosis

An Informal Inventory for Assessing
Adult Student Reading Needs and Progress

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READ Manual

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INTRODUCTION

Learning to read can be as easy as breathing to many people. It is, nevertheless, a most complex human accomplishment. The fact that so many learn so easily may blunt our understanding of those for whom this learning seems all but impossible. Many of these people, though not all, will learn to read more proficiently with sympathetic instruction that begins with what they already know.

Students bring many important understandings with them to literacy tutoring. Yet, there has been considerable disagreement among experts about how best to assess such understandings. Thus, tutors should consider these disagreements and interpret results with students' best interests in mind. Despite the controversy, countless literacy teachers and tutors have found that listening to students read is an invaluable source of insight for instructional planning and for noting progress.¹

Based on the experiences of thousands of volunteer literacy tutors, **READ** was developed to help tutors systematically evaluate students' oral reading. Experienced tutors depend on the information that can be gleaned from various portions of **READ**. As a result, this updated version of

READ consists of a recording pad and a test manual that are organized in much the same way as previous editions of the test. In addition, Parts 1 and 2 remain essentially as they were, while Part 3 now consists of four passages at each of the five levels of difficulty:

- Part 1. Sight Words: Graded lists to assess ability to recognize common words immediately, without applying phonics skills.
- Part 2. Word Analysis Skills: Exercises to determine ability to read certain letter clusters.
- Part 3. Reading/Listening Inventory: Varied paragraphs of increasing difficulty to determine oral reading fluency and comprehension.

Assessment should begin as soon as possible after a student is assigned to a tutor. Reassessment may take place any time a tutor and student want to determine progress or to meet program reporting requirements. Alternate forms of some **READ** sections are available so that a tutor may retest with different materials. For instance, there are two forms of

¹ Johnson, M. S., Kress, R. A., & Pikulski, J. J. (1987). *Informal reading inventories*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Part 1 Sight Words. There are four passages at each level in Part 3 Reading/Listening Inventory. The same form of the test is used for all administrations of Part 2 Word Analysis Skills.

To help you use the results of **READ**, you will complete recording sheets for each of the three parts of the test, summarizing these on the summary sheet that is in the recording pad. From this sheet, you can plan instruction with a focus on developing reading fluency and comprehension. You will find a complete program for organizing such instruction in **TUTOR**.²

To assess a student's reading, you will need a space free from distractions. You may sit opposite or beside the student in a way that is comfortable to both. Note taking will be less distracting if you move back a bit from the table or desk to sit

slightly behind the student and make a notation for every student response, correct or incorrect.

You should be sensitive to the fact that many adult students are afraid of testing situations. But do not try to help with undue coaching. Also, do not hesitate to ask students to slow down to facilitate note taking. Finally, students should be assured that all results will be discussed and considered in light of their own insights.

Please read this entire guide before attempting to test. You need not administer all three parts at one time, although this would not take an inordinate amount of time. Part 1 or 2 may be omitted once a student shows proficiency in these areas. Give your student the chance to try all three parts even if he or she appears to be having difficulty as students are full of surprises.

² Cheatham, J., Colvin, R., & Laminack, L. (1993). *TUTOR: A collaborative approach to literacy instruction*. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press.

PART 1 SIGHT WORDS

Instructions Form A Word List

1. Use Form A for the initial assessment and Form B for reassessment.
2. To administer Part 1 Sight Words Form A, you will need the **READ** book, opened to the Form A Word Lists on the page facing this one. You will also need the corresponding sheet from the recording pad and a pencil.
3. Beginning with List 1, ask the student to read each list, one word at a time. Place a check (✓) on the recording pad next to each accurately read word. When the student misreads a word, write the student's exact pronunciation on the line next to that word.
4. Stop testing when the student misreads three words on any one list.
5. Record the number correct for each list on the summary sheet. You may wish to make a list of errors (e.g., mispronounced word/text) on the back of the summary sheet so that you can look for patterns in word recognition.

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Corresponding student page

List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4
the	now	states	give
that	me	without	room
with	many	home	several
by	where	say	face
but	should	school	things
which	Mr.	left	become
she	make	away	felt
been	long	public	ever
no	under	far	seemed
up	last	better	country

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PART 1 SIGHT WORDS

Instructions Form B Word List

1. Use Form B for reassessment and Form A for initial assessment.
2. To administer Part 1 Sight Words Form B, you will need the **READ** book, opened to the Form B Word Lists on the page facing this one. You will also need the corresponding sheet from the recording pad and a pencil.
3. Beginning with List 1, ask the student to read each list, one word at a time. Place a check (✓) on the recording pad next to each accurately read word. When the student misreads a word, write the student's exact pronunciation on the line next to that word.
4. Stop testing when the student misreads three words on any one list.
5. Record the number correct for each list on the summary sheet. You may wish to make a list of errors (e.g., mispronounced word/text) on the back of the summary sheet so that you can look for patterns in word recognition.

Corresponding student page

List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4
of	such	himself	group
is	even	again	president
as	before	small	order
I	your	part	per
from	because	every	looked
one	how	number	large
there	world	something	along
has	get	but	least
if	never	took	family
its	might	set	area

PART 2 WORD ANALYSIS SKILLS

Instructions

To administer Part 2 Word Analysis Skills, you will need the **READ** book, opened to Lists A and B on the page following this one. You will also need the corresponding sheet from the recording pad and a pencil.

When the student makes three or more errors in two consecutive sections of Word Analysis Skills, stop testing in Part 2 and go on to Part 3. Please note that all students should be given the opportunity to try Part 3, regardless of their proficiency on Part 2.

Instructions

Section A: Letter Sound Relationships

1. Show the student the letters in Section A. Say, "To see how well you can blend letters to form words, listen to this word: *Nolo*. By changing the first letter to *S*, the word becomes *Solo*. By changing the first letter to *F* the word becomes what? [Support student saying *Folo*.] Now, let's see if you can make up rhyming words that begin with these letters. [Show the student the letters M through Z on List A.] Remember, the words rhyme with *Nolo* and are not all real words."
2. On the recording sheet, check (✓) the letters the student names correctly and circle the letters to indicate incorrect responses.
3. Unless the student does not appear to know any sounds, test all letters on Section A to determine which letter-sound relationships are known.
4. Transfer the results to the summary sheet, listing letters not known and number correct.

Section B: Letter Names

1. Say, "Tell me the names of these letters." [Indicate the letters m through q on Section B.]
2. On the recording sheet, check (✓) the letters the student names correctly and circle the lower-case letters that the student is unable to name.
3. Also show the upper-case letters in Section A and ask the student to name these letters. On the recording sheet, check (✓) the letters the student names correctly and circle the lower-case letters that the student is unable to name.
4. Transfer the results to the summary sheet, listing letters not known and number correct.

Corresponding student page

Section A

Section B

M	N	m	j
R	G	r	w
D	W	a	b
S	B	f	l
F	J	d	i
K	H	n	k
T	Y	c	z
P	V	v	e
C	Z	t	o
L		p	u
		s	y
		h	x
		g	q

Instructions

Section C: Reversals

1. Say, "Read these words." [Indicate the words *lap* through *on* from Section C.
2. Many students mix up the letter order in the words on this list. Thus, it is important to record the exact pronunciation for each word the student mispronounces on the recording sheet. Place a check (✓) for each correct answer.
3. If the student reads the first five words with ease, move to Section D without completing the list.
4. Stop the reading of this section if none of the first five words is correct. Otherwise, ask the student to read all the words on the list.
5. Transfer results to the summary sheet, listing all misread words and the number correct as indicated. Self corrections should not be counted as errors.

**Section D: CVC, and
Section E: CV(CC)³**

1. Say, "Here are some words you may not have seen before. Let's see if you can read them." [Indicate the words from Section D.]
2. In the appropriate spot on the recording sheet, record the exact pronunciation for each of the commonly formed single syllable words the student reads incorrectly. Place a check (✓) for each correct answer.
3. If the student reads the first five words with ease, move to the next section of the test.
4. Stop the reading and proceed to the next section if none of the first five words is correct. Otherwise, ask the student to complete the list.
5. Repeat these instructions for Section E, and transfer results to the summary sheet. Self corrections should not be counted as errors.

³ Single syllable words made up of consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant

Corresponding student page

Section C: Reversals

Section D: CVC

Section E: CV(CC)

lap	ban	mud	dock
was	cob	nag	rill
rat	din	lop	jazz
pot	fed	wit	cuff
on	hub	pun	mess
—	—	vat	—
tar	gal	sox	tick
now	jot	rut	yell
pal	kid	yam	toss
top	zen	tug	heck
saw			doll
won			buck
no			rack

Instructions

Sections F & G: Blends

1. Say, "Read these words." [Indicate the words from Section F.]
2. In the appropriate spot on the recording sheet, record the exact pronunciation if the student reads a word incorrectly. Place a check (✓) for each correct answer.
3. If the student reads the first five words with ease, move to the next list.
4. Stop testing with this section if three or more words in the section are misread.
5. Repeat these instructions for Section G.
6. Transfer results to the summary sheet, listing all misread words and the number correct as indicated. Self corrections should not be counted as errors.

Sections H & I: Consonant Digraphs

1. Say, "Read these words." [Indicate the words from Section H.]
2. In the appropriate spot on the recording sheet, record the exact pronunciation if the student reads a word incorrectly. Place a check (✓) for each correct answer.
3. Stop testing with this section if three or more words in the section are misread.
4. Repeat these instructions for Section I.
5. Transfer results to the summary sheet, listing all misread words and the number correct as indicated. Self corrections should not be counted as errors.

Corresponding student page

**Section F:
Initial Blends**

**Section G
Final Blends**

**Section H
Initial Digraphs**

**Section I
Final Digraphs**

stag	plop
prom	frog
sped	blab
scum	slit
flip	drop
—	glen
trap	skim
grid	smut
crab	snug
dreg	twig

bent
pond
back
dust
wilt
—
heft
damp
tank

sham
thus
chum
whip
quit
phone

bash
path
rich
graph

Instructions

Sections J, K, L, & M: Suffixes, Soft C & G, Silent Letters, & Multi-Syllabic Words

1. Say, "See if you can read these words." [Indicate the words from Section J.]
2. In the appropriate spot on the recording sheet, record the exact pronunciation if the student reads a word incorrectly. Place a check (✓) for each correct answer.
3. If the student misreads three or more words on any of these lists, he or she needs instruction in that area.
4. Repeat these instructions for Sections K, L, and M.
5. Transfer results to the summary sheet, listing all misread words and the number correct as indicated. Self corrections should not be counted as errors.

Corresponding student page

Section J: Suffixes

Section K: Soft C & G

Section L: Silent Letters

Section M: Multi-Syllabic Words

walked

calling

tender

darken

visitor

windy

swiftly

vacation

occasion

freshness

restful

anxious

circus

dance

space

celery

city

cycle

huge

village

ginger

edge

calf

limb

knock

castle

hour

wrench

toward

listen

island

information

palpitate

temporary

satisfaction

misinform

interview

PART 3 READING/LISTENING INVENTORY

Instructions

1. In this part of the assessment, you will ask your student to read, listen to, and discuss the meaning of passages of increasing difficulty⁴ (i.e., Levels B through F).
2. The passages included in this section are from the writing of adult literacy students and other informational texts. Varying types of intact texts are represented. There are four passages at each level,⁵ about family, work, self, and community.
3. The tutor should discuss with the student the topics for each passage. Then, invite the student to choose a passage to read at each level. Use remaining passages when the test is given again to avoid rereading. In addition to inviting student choice, having four passages at each level allows for more frequent retesting.
4. You will need the corresponding page in the test book opened to a Level B student passage, the corresponding page in the Recording Pad, and a pencil.
5. Beginning with a Level B passage, read the passage introduction on the recording sheet and then ask your student to read the passage. As your student reads, record every aspect of oral reading that deviates from the printed text. Use the following coding system:
 - a. Omission: It was yellow and red.
 - b. Substitution: It was ^{old} yellow and red.
 - c. Self correction: It was yellow and ^{read} red.
 - d. Insertion: It was ^{almost} yellow and red.
 - e. Pronounced by teacher: It was yellow ^T and red.
(Wait 5 seconds, then supply)
6. Make as many notes as you can about the quality of the student's oral reading. Especially important to note are inappropriate hesitations and word-by-word reading. Although these are not counted as errors, they provide information that will be useful for teaching.
7. Note the number of word recognition errors on the appropriate line of the recording sheet. Count each misreading as an error, even if the error is repeated. Do not count self corrections as errors.

⁴ Klare, George (1985). Readability. In P. D. Pearson (Ed.), *The handbook of reading research* (Vol. 1). New York: Longman. Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid, Coleman-Liau, and Fry formulas were used for READ passage selection, with averages used to determine passage level. Level B passages were calculated to be at approximately first grade readability, C at second grade, D at third grade, E at fourth grade, and F at fifth grade. Other assessment materials must be used for students who can read materials that exceed these levels of readability.

⁵ Hartman, A. (1997). Equipped for the future: A collaborative journey through system reform. *National Institute for Literacy NIFL News*, 4(2), 1-19.

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8. Take the passage away from the student and ask him or her to tell you about what was read. When the student correctly tells about a concept covered by a particular comprehension question, place a check next to the appropriate item on the recording sheet, noting that the information was provided via retelling. The questions listed represent important information that is evident or implied by the passages, and they follow the passage's order. Ask those questions that the student does not address in retelling, checking those items that are answered correctly and recording responses for others.
9. Note the number of comprehension question errors on the appropriate line on the recording sheet. If the number of errors in either Word Recognition or Reading Comprehension is above the number allowable on the scoring guide, stop this portion of your assessment. If the number in both the Word Recognition and Reading Comprehension is at or below the limit allowed, ask your student to read a passage at the next level of difficulty. Read one passage at each level until the student exceeds either scoring criteria.
10. The highest level where the error criteria are not exceeded is called the student's instructional level, calculated according to the percentages of errors per items attempted, as explained in the Using Results section of this manual. For example, a student reading the Level B story is allowed three errors in Word Recognition and one error in Reading Comprehension, as indicated by the scoring guide. If the student makes four errors in Word Recognition and one error in Reading Comprehension, the Word Recognition Instructional Level is A and the Reading Comprehension Instructional Level is B. If your student cannot read any Level B passage, record his or her Instructional Level as Level A for both word recognition and reading comprehension.
11. A tutor may wish to ask a student to read an additional passage at a particular level to follow a hunch that something about a passage itself unduly affected the student's reading. Another may wish to ask a student with variable abilities to read higher level passages even though scoring criteria have been exceeded because the tutor suspects that the student can handle such reading. Tutors may follow such hunches to obtain information for instruction. However, follow the criteria listed in 11, above, to determine reported instructional levels.
12. After the Reading Comprehension Instructional Level has been determined, assess the student's Listening Comprehension. Read to the student from the paragraphs at the next level of difficulty above those which have been read, and mark the space on the recording pad to indicate that you have done so. Ask the student to tell you about the passage that he or she heard and then ask questions and mark as done for Reading Comprehension above. The highest level where the error criterion for comprehension is not exceeded marks the Listening Comprehension level. This should be recorded on the recording pad.
13. Transfer instructional levels to the summary sheet. It can also be helpful to make a list of misread words on the back of the summary sheet (e.g., error/text) so that error patterns can be discerned more easily.

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Student Pages

Part 3: Level B

B-1

Art once worked for Gerber's Baby Food.
He worked there for twenty years.
Then the factory moved away.
Art was out of work.
Art liked working at Gerber's.
It was a big job.
He had to check the bottles.
He also helped train people.

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B-2

Darlene comes from a big family.
She has one sister.
Her sister's name is Susie.
Darlene also has three brothers.
She has a 15-year-old niece, too.
Darlene is the oldest in her family.
She is 38 years old.

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B-3

Sandra has two kids, a boy and a girl.
She wants both kids to do well in school.
She likes to read to them.
Sometimes her daughter reads to her.
Sandra also likes to play with her children.
Making both of them laugh makes her happy.

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B-4

I was smart in some things in school.
I was good in art.
I was good at speaking.
But there were too many kids in my school.
There were sixty kids in every class.
How are you going to teach sixty kids in half an hour?
No wonder I had trouble reading and doing math.
There were many kids who could not.

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Student Pages

Part 3: Level C

C-1

I worked for the Alaska Fire Service. During the summer they would set up camps all over Alaska. If there was a fire, they would be there to fight it.

I lived in the camps. I worked as a cook. I was so happy to be one of the cooks and to travel with them. I went to places in Alaska that I never would have visited. I wouldn't even have thought about going to those places.

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C-2

When I was about twelve years old I wanted to live in the mountains. My family took my sister and me to Montana. It was the most beautiful place I had ever seen. There were lots of wild animals there. The mountains looked nice covered with snow. You felt as if you could reach out and touch them.

I am now 28 years old. I am hoping to move out there. It has always been my dream.

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C-3

I am doing as much reading on my own as I can. It is opening up a whole new world for me. I enjoy being able to finish a book and knowing what happened in it.

I feel better about myself since I went back to school. I also don't feel that I am stupid, and I never was. It's nice to feel better about myself. I am a happier person for it. So don't give up! It's all worth it!

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C-4

When I go to a wedding, I always end up in the kitchen. It just happens that way. I cooked all the food for my sister Irma's wedding. I served about 400 people.

Once I was invited to a friend's wedding. We were sitting there at a table. A woman came up to me and she said, "It's crazy in there! Nothing is ready!" I asked my husband, "Do you mind?" He said, "I'm starving. Go help these people before we starve to death!"

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Student Pages

Part 3: Level D

D-1

When you read an ad, you should expect to find out more about a product. Has the brand been tested? How does the product compare to other brands? What does it cost? How long does it last?

Sometimes, instead of facts, ads contain a lot of general statements. If all of these general statements were taken out of the ad, you would find that the ad told you very little about the product.

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D-2

My second job was at the Career Center. I sewed a lot of umbrellas for the army to use. I also sewed a lot of other things for the army. I worked at the Career Center for one full year.

I got another job at the First Lutheran Church as a child care teacher. I liked this job very much. I really like children. They like me, too. I worked at this job for two years. I left this job because they did not need me anymore.

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D-3

I am a single parent. My daughter lives with me. Ashley is four years old now. She goes to preschool on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays all day. She likes it a lot. She goes to the YMCA on those three days.

I also have a nine-year-old son named Ross. He goes to Park School. He gets lots of care, love, and understanding. He is a wonderful person and we love him a lot. He is doing very well in school. I am thankful for my two wonderful children.

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D-4

Sometimes I get a little nervous when I need to write. I have to write accident reports at my job. Sometimes the dispatcher will read it and say, "This doesn't really explain what happened."

Once last week she told me to rewrite an accident report. I started to get nervous and sweaty. The letters started to blur together. I couldn't think for a minute. I had to relax, and start to think about what I knew how to spell. I had to refrain from trying to use big words and go back to what I know how to spell. It started to flow. I looked at it when I was done and I was proud.

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Student Pages

Part 3: Level E

E-1

As you think about retirement, you may feel panic. What will you do? How will you use your time? Retirement can give you the chance to fulfill your dreams. Maybe you want to travel. Maybe you want to help others.

Sometimes people stop working at the jobs they spent their lives doing. They try a different kind of work. They may need to work, either for the money or for the benefits. If you continue to work after you start to get Social Security benefits, you can lose these benefits.

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E-2

Your contacts, cover letter, and resume help you get an interview. An interview helps you get the job. You'll want to have good interviewing skills and prepare ahead of time.

In an interview, an employer wants to find out if you can do the job and if you'll fit in. You want to find out if you like the job and can do it. You also want to make a good impression.

It's a good idea to practice for an interview. You can do this by yourself or with someone else. Practice answering the questions you might be asked.

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E-3

I was born in Laos. I fled through the jungle with my husband and my three children to escape the Vietcong. We came to America through Thailand.

I now have eight children. My husband and I just bought a house. We are very busy trying to fix up the house. It is hard because we both work.

Cindy is my Literacy Volunteer tutor from the public library. Cindy and I laughed as we shared the story of my husband trying to put in a new bathtub. He worked very hard all weekend, but by Monday we had to call a plumber to fix the leak. Cindy said her husband once remodeled the kitchen and she had to wash dishes in the bathtub for a week!

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E-4

In childhood and beyond, reading opens doors. The earlier a child sees people reading, the better. Kids need to read in school. They have to read textbooks and papers. They have to read directions and questions on tests.

To do well in almost any subject, a child must use reading skills. Reading outside of school is important, too. Kids need to read all kinds of things, from notes and signs to movie listings.

By reading, kids learn new words. They learn new ways to express ideas and feelings. Make reading a part of your child's life at home. Like playing, treat reading as a fun thing to do. Make it a family activity. Before long, your child will love it.

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Student Pages

Part 3: Level F

F-1

Many libraries use computers to store their list of books. Each library has instructions for this system. In most systems you can find a book by typing in the book's call number, author, title, or subject.

In the library computer system, you can find out how many books the library has by one author. You can find the location of the book in the library. You also can tell whether the book is in the library so that you can use it.

For example, you may want to find a book, but you can't remember the author's name. You don't know the call number. If your library has a computer system, you can look for the book by typing the title into the computer.

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F-2

What do you need to know to be a good citizen? You need to know how to vote, where to vote, and how to register to vote. You also need to be informed on the issues.

To vote you need to know what the issues are facing your community and state. Being literate and educated will help you understand the issues. It will also help you learn the history and background of the area you live in. Most of all, you need to know who your candidates are and what they stand for.

Being a good citizen also means getting involved in your community. For example, recycle! Whatever can be recycled should be. It cuts down on garbage. It is a good way to take care of your community.

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F-3

Helping your child with school may seem hard at times. Notes from teachers are sometimes hard to understand. Sometimes it's hard to know what to do. A lot of parents have these feelings. But it's important to know that you can help your child.

You can help by sending your child to school every day. You should also talk with the teacher. The teacher wants to hear from you.

Being involved makes a difference. The teacher is trained to help your child learn. That doesn't mean that teachers can do the job alone. Parents and teachers need to work together to help children.

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F-4

Most employers will ask you for references. They want to know how well you did in past jobs.

References are people who can tell others what kind of worker you are. These people could include your supervisor, a manager, or the owner of a company. The people you have worked for in your most recent job are most important.

You could also ask people who know you in private life. You might pick a neighbor, a teacher, or a co-worker. You should plan to have at least three references.

Try to choose people who have good things to say about you. Then call them and ask them if they are willing to give you a reference. If they agree, tell them what jobs you are applying for. Remind them of any of your success stories they could talk about.

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USING RESULTS

When you finish giving READ, be sure to reread your recording sheets and check the accuracy of your notations. Transfer the results from these sheets onto the summary sheet in your recording pad. This sheet will then be handy for you to review as you plan your lessons, following the lesson plan suggestions in TUTOR. You also will want to review the summary sheet with your student as you set short- and long-term goals for your work together.

PART 1 SIGHT WORDS

What the assessment tests. Asking your student to read the words on the sight word lists assesses his or her ability to recognize common words immediately, without applying phonics skills. This skill is thought to be necessary for fluent reading.⁶

What to teach. The four lists used in each form were taken from a list of 300 most common words in print. Therefore, they are among the words you will want to pay attention to in your teaching. This list appears in the appendix of TUTOR and is arranged in order of frequency of occurrence. Please note that the List 1 words are taken from the first seventy-five words of the sight word list in TUTOR. List 2 is

taken from words numbered 76–150, List 3 from words 151–225, and List 4 from the remaining words.

How to teach. Repeated encounters with words in print during reading is the best reinforcement for learning to recognize words as sight words. Identifying common words in the student's own language experience stories and locating them in newspapers or other print material provide further practice. Some students may need extra drill. Be sure to tie in such instruction to the student's actual reading. TUTOR contains other teaching ideas.

PART 2 WORD ANALYSIS SKILLS

What the assessment tests. Asking your student to complete the tasks in this section helps you to consider the strategies he or she knows for recognizing words. This portion of READ progresses in a sequence in which such skills are typically taught. TUTOR contains important advice for attending to these skills during a tutoring session.

What to teach. By checking Part 2 Word Analysis on the summary sheet, you can tell where to start instruction on decoding skills. You also may wish to look for patterns of

⁶ Chall, Jeanne (1995). *Stages of reading development*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

errors on the Sight Word and Reading Inventory portions of READ for confirmation (e.g., words similar in configuration, letter order confusion, etc.). You may assume the following general instructional sequence:

1. letter names and sounds
2. left to right progression
3. short vowel words of three, and then four, letters
(teach ending patterns, not the vowel separately)
4. sh, th, ch, wh, ph, qu
5. vowel patterns other than short vowels
6. suffixes
7. soft C and G; silent letters
8. multi-syllabic words

Although it often may be important to teach particular words that do not follow the above order (for example, you may elect to teach some suffixes before all the short vowel patterns are learned), having a sequence of some kind helps you to define goals that both you and your student can understand. More specific recommendations for teaching the particular word analysis skills assessed by READ follow.

Section A. This section requires the student to create rhymes by substituting initial consonants. A student who begins a word correctly but cannot complete it knows sounds associ-

ated with symbols but may have difficulty with rhyming or with blending the rhyme with the beginning consonant to form a word. Such students may benefit from instruction in rhyming, or if they can rhyme, in blending parts to form whole words.

Some students may be able to name a letter but will not know the sounds that are related to the letter. They will need instruction in these letter-sound relationships according to directions provided in TUTOR. Be sure to teach these letter sounds within the context of words the student actually needs to use.

Section B. This assessment asks the student to give the names of letters. Knowing letter-sound relationships is more important to reading than is knowing letter names, but it can be useful to know the names. Most students will know these, although some may show confusion on b-d or p-g and will need instruction to learn to distinguish between these graphically similar symbols.

You will note that letter names are tested in lower-case, and letter sounds in upper-case. If letter names are known for lower-case letters, you can probably assume that your student knows the upper-case forms. That is done to let you test one problem at a time. The student may know the sound that D represents in the upper-case form but in the lower-case form

gets b and d mixed up. By testing the sounds with upper-case letters, the lower-case confusion is eliminated. But if there is hesitation on b or d, you know the problem is one of letter identity and not of sound-symbol correspondence.

With letters that are easily confused (e.g., b-d, p-q, m-w) teach one letter until it is thoroughly learned. Then introduce the other letter in contrast. You may want to have the student write what is being learned as the word or sound is said aloud. As TUTOR explains, the use of various senses seems to aid some memories.

Section C. This section asks the student to read three-letter words whose letter order is often confused. If students confuse initial and final consonants here, they may need instruction in attending to left-to-right progression. This error pattern should be discussed with the student, and pointing with a finger or pencil should be encouraged.

Sections D through M. Each of these sections assesses the student's knowledge of how the written language code works in relationship to the oral code. An ability to read the words on these lists with ease suggests that the student is competent with these important aspects of decoding. The lists are sequenced in order of difficulty, beginning with three-letter words and progressing to four-letter sequences.

Section D. In this portion of the word analysis assessment, the words probably will not be known as sight words. Thus, a student will need to use other skills to read them. You will be able to check the student's ability to read consonants in lower-case form in initial and final positions, the student's ability to discriminate between b and d, the most frequently confused letters, and the student's ability to recognize several common spelling patterns (-am, -ut). A careful analysis of this section should yield a list of the consonant or vowel sounds that are not known well enough to figure out unknown words.

Section E. In all these words the last two letters represent a single sound. Following the directions to be found in TUTOR, teach the spelling patterns (-ill, -eck, -ess) within words that contain these letter sequences. Usually this is accomplished easily by students who know the consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) patterns from Section D.

Sections F & G. Sometimes a student will read CVC words quite easily and then guess wildly on the words with the blends found in Sections F and G. The tutor will need to focus the student's attention on the sequences of letters in the words and demonstrate the way the sound combinations are pronounced and blended together with the rest of the word.

Sections H & I. If the student does not know the word patterns connected to these two-letter consonant combinations, these combinations must be taught in the same way you would deal with simpler letter-sound relationships, as described in **TUTOR**.

Sections J, K, L, & M. These sections each represent a different word analysis skill: suffixes, soft c and g, silent letters, and multi-syllabic words. Three or more misread words in any one section indicate a need for help in the skill being tested.

How to teach. **TUTOR** explains direct instruction techniques that can be used to teach the preceding word analysis skills. Please note that such skills are best taught within a larger context that emphasizes reading and writing for meaning, as is described in the lesson plan recommendations in **TUTOR**. Without this, the study of such skills will seem rote, abstract, and thus, quite difficult, especially for those who have been previously frustrated by such instruction.

Yet if a student is to develop skills that will enable him or her to decode words independently, there must be an understanding of how the written system works. The letters that represent spoken words represent a sound system with some

regularity. It may appear more chaotic than it is because the system is not based on the occurrence of the letters alone, but on their relationship to the surrounding letters. Thus, the usual sound represented by "t" /t/ becomes something else when it occurs in the pattern "tion" or "tial".

The sound-symbol system of English is complex, and research has indicated that some of the rules stressed by teachers have more exceptions than confirmations.⁷ It is to be hoped that those who are responsible for reading instruction will not attempt to pass along many rules to their students, even if they have learned some themselves.

When a student cannot decode a word, ask him or her to name the letters. This frequently triggers the word. Notice the student's response when an unfamiliar word is attempted. That will provide a clue to the difficulties the student may be experiencing.

Be careful to take into account the age and interests of your student when instruction is needed in very basic skills. There may be great reluctance on the part of your student to admit such instruction is necessary. Demonstrating progress is helpful to maintaining motivation.

⁷Clymer, T. (1963). The utility of phonics generalizations. *The Reading Teacher*.

Word analysis techniques may be very helpful to some students and totally impossible for others. For those in the latter group, a gradual building up of a basic sight word vocabulary through meeting words frequently and meaningfully in language experience stories and other materials is far more fruitful. If after reasonable instruction the student has not made satisfactory progress with the methods described, concentrate instruction on that which seems most profitable. Such difficulties also may suggest that the student has some very special learning needs, and you may wish to consult with other agencies regarding the best available instructional support for your student.

PART 3 READING/LISTENING INVENTORY

What the assessment tests. In this part of the test, you will establish a general sense of the level of text that is most comfortable for your student to read. Remember that this is a rough estimate, and variability is to be expected due to the limited amount of reading the test requires and to students' varied background. Users of READ should regard the passages in the inventory as a series that escalates in reading difficulty and which can be used as a broad measure of progress. If a student is most comfortable in Level C passages, this is *not* the same as reading like a child in second grade.

What to teach. Review the passage-specific annotations to fill out the summary sheet. By doing this, you will know which level of materials present some challenge without being overwhelming. You will know whether fluency is a concern. You can determine patterns in word recognition and comprehension responses. You will also know whether to emphasize word recognition skills or comprehension skills to bring reading into balance. You will know at about which level you can read to your student to increase listening comprehension.

Finding suitable materials for adult beginning readers can be the greatest challenge the tutor must meet. Happily, more such materials are being produced every year. A tutor can discover the suitability of a particular material for a student's instructional level by asking that student to read a short sample. If more than 6% of words are misread, the material is too difficult.

If one is to profit from reading instruction, practice must be provided in materials that limit the percentage of errors. For this reason, reading teachers designate three levels of performance. The criteria for each of the three instructional levels is tied to the percentage of errors per attempts in word recognition and comprehension.⁸

⁸ Klare, George (1985). Readability. In P. D. Pearson (Ed.), *The handbook of reading research* (Vol. 1). New York: Longman.

An *independent level* is one in which there are very few errors in pronouncing the words and most of what is read is easily understood. This is the appropriate level for reading for pleasure in library materials or for assignments where a teacher does not preteach words and concepts.

To select appropriate material for tutoring, the teacher will want to find a student's *instructional level*. For materials at this level, some words or concepts may need to be introduced before reading if the student is to understand the passage.

A *frustration level* occurs when many words are not understood and comprehension is entirely unsatisfactory. Students should not be asked to read passages that are frustrating for them without considerable tutor support. The following chart suggests the percentages of accuracy needed for these levels:

	<i>Word Recognition</i>	<i>Comprehension</i>
Independent	98-99%	90%
Instructional	94-96%	70-75%
Frustration	less than 90%	less than 50%

The readability level of the passages corresponds roughly to that encompassed by materials in elementary school textbooks and is typical to leveled adult reading materials.

Level A represents emergent readers, Level B materials are at Grade 1, Level C is at Grade 2, Level D is at Grade 3, Level E is at Grade 4, and Level F is at Grade 5.

How to teach. As is described in TUTOR, many tutors who work with very beginning readers have found the language experience story to be a useful teaching tool. The student generates a story about a personal experience, describes a feeling, or shares an interest. The tutor records the information dictated, using manuscript writing or typing. The resulting story then becomes the instructional material—the student learns to read the words spoken. These can be collected into a book and read by others or reread by the student from time to time.

Fluency. Do not be distressed with the lack of fluency of the beginning reader. Praise the accuracy, not the fluidity, at this point. Reading materials that present few word recognition problems are the most important remedy for most difficulties with fluency. Struggling to pronounce the words of a too difficult text can interfere with comprehension, and the student can lose sight of the point of his or her efforts. Reading will proceed more smoothly when the amount of cueing needed to figure out words has been reduced through practice.

Practice initially should involve reading aloud, because it is most important to relate the words being met in print to their oral counterparts. You may want to ask students to engage in repeated reading, rehearsing segments of text so as to produce more fluent reading. You may also want to ask two students to read together. Many students profit from the use of a tape recorder. The student reads a paragraph aloud and listens to the tape to correct any errors. This gives immediate feedback on accuracy but also focuses attention on the subtleties of phrasing and intonation that are important for comprehension.

Comprehension. Be sure to spend time discussing the meaning of each passage read or listened to during a tutoring session. This is the point of reading, and such discussion reminds students of this when they otherwise may be struggling with word recognition. Such discussion also helps the student to know what to look for when he or she is reading independently. Discussion can include recall of details, organizing details for use in predicting, cause-and-effect relationships, and inference. Did the student get the message? Was it perceived vaguely or in enough detail to think about the topic productively?

Every experience a student has had, directly or indirectly, makes a contribution. Comprehension results from the interaction of the reader's knowledge with the ideas called forth from the author's words. The broader and more personal the reader's experience is, the greater the insight. Until the student reads with some ease, use listening as a basis for developing these skills.

Generally Speaking. Many instructional handbooks in the teaching of reading, including TUTOR, will give you guidance in teaching your student. There is no instructional method that succeeds with all students. Experiment to find the approaches that seem best for your student and his or her goals. For an adult especially, learning to read is hard work. Respect and celebrate the courage and tenacity that this effort requires.

LIST OF PASSAGE REFERENCES

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