

## **DRA2 MISCUES QUESTIONS**

**Q: If a child repeatedly gets a word wrong during oral reading, can you give it to them so their level won't be affected? Many people are concerned that missing one word can make the difference between the student being independent and instructional.**

A: If the student makes a miscue multiple times during oral reading, the teacher can give the student the word. It will still count as a miscue (TOLD) and the student may then correctly read the word for the rest of the story or may not. That is also an interesting part of the story. I think making the decision when to give the student the word depends on how significant the word is to the story also. At any rate, after two or three miscues of the same word, I'd give the student the word and count it as a miscue (TOLD).

**Q: Is it counted as a miscue when a student's native language (i.e. Asian) keeps the child from saying a suffix on the word ( ex: 'ed')? I have looked through the manual and the only time something like this is mentioned is on page 143 with the miscue marks.**

A: If it is a matter of pronunciation (that the child linguistically can't say that) then it is **not** considered a "reading" miscue. If you notice that children from the same language background have the same problem when they read, then it is probably a matter of pronunciation. When I am not sure, I sometimes (after the Record of Oral Reading) ask the child to write it. If they write it correctly, then I have them say it. They may still leave off the 'ed.' This means it probably is pronunciation. Now, you don't count it as an error for reading, however, in oral language development, you might have a lesson on pronunciation of endings exaggerating the 'ed' and helping them form the sound.

**Q: Can you tell me why there are "TOLDS" in the DRA2? (Teacher tells the child the word after a certain amount of time-- during the running record portion. Our teachers really struggle with that-- they are used to NOT giving "TOLDS.")**

A: Teachers are encouraged to "supply" a word to the student if it is clear that he cannot decode it. The TOLD is still counted as a miscue. Some reading experts say specifically that the teacher should wait 3 seconds before supplying the word. However, Joetta always advises that it is student specific and should be done with the teacher's judgment. If the student is working on the word (sounding it out) then the word would not be provided to the student quickly but rather only after he has demonstrated good effort. But, if the student is getting frustrated or has come to a halt, supply the word and move on. It is also interesting to observe if the student then correctly calls that word later on in the text. Especially now that there is a timed fluency segment to the assessment it is wise to use good professional judgment and then supply the word. Words can also be TOLD if the same word has been missed multiple times (ex: circus) and could impact the meaning of the text. So, for example, the first two times the student has a miscue on CIRCUS it is counted as a miscue (probably substitution) and the third time the teacher may provide (TOLD) the word for the student. If the student corrects from that point going forward that is all set. If he does not, that would continue to count as a miscue. The important clarification here is that either way (TOLD or not) this counts as a miscue for the student. Where professional judgment comes in to the equation is deciding which will provide richer information on which to base instruction and which will provide a more accurate

measure of the student's reading behaviors. It would not be a very accurate example of a student's reading behaviors if he only missed the word circus but missed it 7 times in one passage. That would reflect that he is about a 95% accuracy/oral reader (possibly) when he really only missed one word repeatedly. In this case, I'd supply the word and make more insightful observations about the student's reading after the word is provided.

**Q: As for sounding out the oral responses (t-r-ain)...**

A: if the teacher can understand the word as a complete word I would count it correct. If the word sounds very segmented, I would provide a new model for the student after the first segmented response and count that response incorrect. The reason for counting the particular response incorrect is that it would be similar to a TOLD and then the student would have the opportunity to either make the correction or demonstrate that he does not yet have the skills of blending phonemes. If he continues to segment to the point that his response does not sound like a spoken word I would count the responses as incorrect.

**Q: Can you prompt, especially when you feel they can give more?**

A: No. When a student is reading aloud during the assessment, it is not an instructional moment. The information gained from the student's oral reading is intended to be a snapshot of the student's skills at that point in time.

**Q. Question about why a "repeated substitution" is counted as an error every time. This point is made on page 143 of the TE for DRA2 K-3. The teacher said she felt this was creating an issue for her colleagues. She reported that to do this ran counter to the normal way of taking a running record. Would you be able to share with me the rationale for our guideline so I can reply to the teacher?"**

A: A repeated substitution is counted as an error each time. The teacher always has the option of a "told" after the student misses the word more than once. The TOLD still counts as the same miscue as a repeated substitution. On one of the earlier DRA training videos this is actually modeled by Joetta. What is learned from this (providing the TOLD or often known as word supply) is that some students still won't be able to carry the TOLD over to the next occurrence of the word. Further explanation is not appropriate since this is an assessment setting and not an instructional setting. The only exception to this is when we supply the proper name of a character.

## **DRA2 WRITING QUESTIONS**

### **Q: What do you say to people when they question assessing reading with writing?**

A: First, I assure them that most students by the time they are in second/third grade know how to do an oral retelling which generally represents a literal understanding of what they read. If students are unable to give an effective oral retelling than that needs to become their focus for instruction; but if they can, then they need to learn how to compose written responses to relay as well as extend their understanding. Second, I agree with them that students will tell more orally but that writing requires writers to stop and think about what is most important to include since they won't have the time or space to write all they know. Third, writing takes writers back into the text to reflect on, confirm, or alter what they understood and want to communicate.

### **Q: Can the teacher help by writing responses? 2nd grader not able to respond to the written responses (overwhelmed).**

A: Writing is an important part of reading comprehension. At Level 24, the teacher asks the Reading Engagement questions and records the child's responses. At Levels 28 – 38, the students may either dictate responses or complete the Student Reading Survey and self assessment independently.

### **Q: What to do when a child spends excessive time on the written portion?**

A: The child should not be allowed more than an hour. Most student complete the reading and written portion in about 45 minutes. Students needing hours for completion do not have control over the written comprehension and that is an indicator for instruction. Reassess at a lower level.

### **Q: How much help for students? Oral or written, which one?**

A: Use the blank retelling pages in the teacher guide on pages 130-137 to model and practice the retelling or written portions prior to assessment. Students may do very well on level 28 or 30 with an oral retelling and score at the intervention level in writing because they do not have an understanding of the structure expected. The DRA2 is a more sophisticated assessment, based on research, to help students and teachers gain the control needed for understanding a text. If your student scores at an independent level for text level 24 and at the instructional level with text level 28, then the organization of information, details, and written response may be your teaching points. Students must gain control over organizing and communicating in writing to be successful as learners. This IS A READING assessment, the reading/writing connection work together.

### **Q: How do you reconcile this: a first grader (middle of the year) can read a 34 but cannot write well enough to be "independent" at a 34? Can it be scribed?**

A: Joetta recommends first of all, that you do not assess a student beyond one grade level, so for a middle of the year 1st grade student, that would indicate no higher than a Level 20-24. If they can read up at levels 20-24, I would recommend teaching to respond in writing at those levels. Reading and Writing as skills need to be moving along one in relationship to the other, so

as the teacher begins to work orally on the higher order strategies that appear in levels 28 and above, teachers need to begin to teach the writing response BEFORE they get to that type of assessment. It is unfair to assess students on something that has not been taught. A teacher can begin by modeling the writing response to reading using the generic blackline masters in the TE. Students learn best when teaching is in the “easy” range of learning. So it would be best to begin teaching these skills with a text that is not out of their response range. For example, if you want them to learn how to make inferences, do it on texts they can understand and apply that skill. If you do it on a level 34, you are making it harder to learn. If you do it at level 20-24 the story/information range is within the student’s world. You can begin by teaching them to orally respond to these skills and then model the writing response.

## **QUESTIONS REGARDING STUDENTS READING ABOVE GRADE LEVEL**

**Q: Do not assess beyond one year. Example: first grade does not go beyond Level 28, second grade does not go beyond 38. Why?**

A: Just reading above grade level is not the only factor any more. Joetta’s research and the research of top professionals indicates that depth of understanding, reading multiple genres, a variety of authors, a variety of nonfiction and writing with control is the reading goal. A first grader who word calls from level 28 and has advanced fluency is probably not in control of inference, reflection or meta-cognitive strategies. Teachers should carefully assess these students to see that there is good control in all the areas of comprehension. A student who is gifted and able to perform 2-3 years beyond grade level should be taught to select the most appropriate text that challenges their learning opportunities. Extend reading into nonfiction, science, social studies and deeper level of thinking. Parents who want to push their child through “levels” do not help them establish deeper comprehension. It is the enjoyment of reading and higher order thinking skills that encourage students to select appropriate texts. Once a student has proven control of basic reading strategies then the support from complex texts will be the next step.

**Q: In DRA2, what is the rationale (research) for saying “do not test more than 1 grade level above”.**

A: The reason that teachers are asked to assess only one grade level above the student's present grade level is that text level is less significant for this group of students. These students should be encouraged to read for a variety of purposes across genres and authors, and to be more thoughtful in their oral and written responses. Some districts have asked teachers to assess two grades levels above the student's present grade level, if that student's scores fell within the advanced range on his/her current grade-level and one grade level above.

## QUESTIONS REGARDING STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

**Q: A teacher asked me how to make accommodations or modifications for dyslexic students when using the DRA2. Her concern was the timed fluency part. Do you have any suggestions or guidance on this one?**

A: The modification that I recommend is the same that I personally recommend for all SPED students...go ahead and time the student using the DRA2 protocol so that you get the actual DRA2 score prior to modification (which helps to make instructional decisions), then use teacher judgment to modify the protocol accordingly to get the accommodated DRA2 level and retest at that level. The teacher should use her best judgment to adapt her expectations according to the IEP of the student in order to arrive at an appropriately modified independent level. My take on it is that modifying for dyslexia may differ according to different students. One student may be able to handle a slower rate of reading with comprehension while another may become frustrated by the same rate. If comprehension is there, then fluency will become a specific area of focus. If it is not then I'd tend to follow the comprehension level for determining the independent reading level. In the LD world we have many hyperlexic students that still can't comprehend so, I'd track to comprehension success rather than fluency success. If the issue really is dyslexia, per se, that would likely impact the oral reading/decoding portion of this assessment.

**Q: What if a student has difficulty writing/recording his/her responses to the comprehension prompts beginning at Level 28?**

A: The student's IEP should be the primary guide for making this decision. If the IEP indicates that the student can have a scribe or other assistive device for recording written responses the same accommodations should be provided when administering DRA2. These would be the same accommodations routinely implemented in the classroom during instructional situations.

**Q: How should a student with autism and minimal language be assessed using the DRA2?**

A: Students with autism vary widely in their need for accommodations. Generally, the IEP will provide guidance for the administration of DRA2 also. Students with autism who have limited expressive language may be asked to storyboard if doing an oral retelling (up through Level 24). Storyboarding could include the student's illustrating the events from the text or arranging pictured events in order. We encourage the minimum amount of support for students in order to determine their level of comprehension. When administering the Record of Oral Reading with a student who has autism and limited oral language, he/she may need to be provided with the option to read the text silently. This decision will largely depend on the student's degree of impairment, the IEP, and the teacher's professional judgment. In the end, it is a measure of comprehension that will best indicate if a student is making meaning from the text read.

**Q: How should a Record of Oral Reading be scored for a student with a speech impairment?**

A: Teachers providing instructional support to students with speech impairments will be familiar with the specific impairments of the each student. When reading orally, a student should not have counted as a miscue any mispronounced word that is the result of the speech

impairment (substitutions, omissions, distortions). The teacher should score based on the student's intended word excusing the speech impairment.

**Q: How should a student be scored in Oral Reading Fluency if he is a word-by-word reader due to a speech/language disorder and yet comprehends well?**

A: In this situation the teacher's professional judgment would be the guide. If a student has a speech/language impairment that is causing the halting reading behavior, the teacher should make a professional decision about what the student's typical and best oral reading is. Again, it is more important that the student demonstrates that he/she can comprehend the text. When reporting the student's scores to parents or others it is important to note the actual score and the waived criteria. The information collected should still provide instructional guidance while still acknowledging the disability. Consultation with the speech/language pathologist or communication aide would also be appropriate.

**Q: How much extended time can a student with a disability have when completing the written responses?**

A: The written portion to the DRA2 is not a "timed" component. However, most teachers usually determine when a student is no longer producing meaningful responses. This would be the same for a student with a disability. Ample time should be provided for the student to record his/her responses.

**Q: What type of accommodations can be made for a student with a very short attention span and is highly distractible during the assessment session?**

A: In general, the same behavioral modifications that are listed in the IEP and those that are routinely employed for classroom success should be used during the assessment session. In most cases, assessing the student at a time during the day when the student is best able to focus would be a good place to begin. It may also be helpful to assess the student in an area of the classroom with limited distraction or if necessary, ask for support to supervise your class and assess the student in another area with fewer distractions.

**Q: How do I manage a student with a disability who has behavior issues and becomes very easily frustrated when being assessed?**

A: It is always important to remember that this is part of the student's disability. The student's IEP should offer some suggestions for working with the student to minimize resistance and/or frustration.

The following suggestions may help:

- Explain the assessment in a positive manner;
- Explain the different steps in the assessment and provide positive feedback after the successful completion of each step;
- Employ special incentives that are meaningful to the student after the various assessment intervals;
- Set a goal (with a reward) for the student before you begin the assessment;
- Provide verbal praise for the student throughout the assessment to prevent melt-downs;
- When completing the Record of Oral Reading provide unknown words

(TOLDS) more quickly than with typical students to minimize frustration;

- Share the results with the student in a positive and encouraging way.

**Q: How can I administer DRA2 to a student who is visually impaired?**

A: Once again, the same accommodations in the IEP will apply to the assessment situation. In most cases, the special education teacher who supports the student will have access to a means for “enlarging” the student work if he/she is a low-vision student. If the student is blind, the special education teacher should also be able to have the DRA2 assessment text transcribed to Braille so that the student is able to read the Record of Oral Reading and remaining text. The same would be true on other student materials such as the Student Survey and the comprehension questions beginning at Level 28. Depending on the student’s background and educational experience, the oral reading portion of the assessment may be best scored in observational terms and the focus be placed on the comprehension section. Some students have not had extensive experiences reading text orally and may not be accustomed to the typical conventions of punctuation, expression and fluency. It may also be necessary for the students to record their responses using Braille. The special education teacher will be able to assist with the transcription using the same procedures as delineated in the IEP and used in routine classroom assignments.

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