

Running Records/Records of Oral Reading

The running record is one of the most important tools for assessing a student's reading. It consists of having a student read a short book or text (approximately 100 words) aloud. Any texts can be used for running records. As the student reads the text aloud, the teacher is recording what the reader said and did while reading. The running record allows the teacher to "get in the reader's head" to gain insight on cues and strategies a student uses when reading. The teacher can then use this information to assess the student's strengths and weaknesses and plan instruction to support the reader's needs.

Running records are used to guide the teacher in making decisions in the following areas:

- Monitoring a student's reading progress
- Analyzing a student's processing of text
- Grouping students for reading instruction
- Evaluating text difficulty for students

Running records can be recorded on a running record recording sheet or a sheet of paper. Standard procedures and conventions of recording are recommended to take care of almost all the unusual behaviors teachers might encounter. We use standard procedures and conventions to assure that the level of accuracy has been obtained according to common practice. If this is not true then calculations and comparisons do not have any meaning. Teachers need to be able to compare running records one with another. To make comparisons teachers need to have a common standard for taking records, for describing what they observe, for calculating the scores and interpreting the record.