



Running Records



Adapted from Marie Clay and Reading A-Z

What is a Running Record?

- Written documentation of a child's oral reading of text
- Identifies accuracy level (independent, instructional, or hard) to match reader to appropriate texts or guided reading groups
- Record of strategies, errors, corrections, phrasing, and fluency
- Helps teacher identify cueing systems the child is using or neglecting (Meaning, Structural, or Visual), and plan for appropriate instruction
- Helps document progress over time

When to do a running record:

- At the beginning of the school year for each child
- For Levels A – G: every 2-4 weeks
- For Levels H – K: every 4-6 weeks
- For Levels L – O: every 6-8 weeks
- Fluent readers: Once a quarter
- For identifying appropriate level or mid/end-of-year progress monitoring, running record text should not have been previously read.
- For weekly or monthly data, the running record text should be one that the child has read one time. Example: You introduced the book on Monday and assisted child with strategies. On Tuesday, you could conduct a running record to determine their use of strategies.
- For classroom purposes: One running record per week per group (Example: Each Tuesday, do a RR on one child in each group. Rotate children each Tuesday. This means you will have approximately 1 RR per child per month.)

What materials are needed:

- Books with identified reading levels such as: Rigby PM, Fountas & Pinnell LLI, or Reading A-Z
- Running Record recording form
- Calculator
- Timer (if you are also measuring fluency rate)

How to take a Running Record:

- Select a book close to the child’s perceived reading level. Some programs have word lists to administer first to help with estimating the level, especially at the beginning of the year when you have little information.
- Sit next to the child so you can see the text, and child’s eye and finger movements. Help them keep book flat on the table.
- Tell the child you want them to read the book to you. Tell them the title and show the cover and title page. Tell them a brief overview of the book: “This book is titled The Three Little Pigs. It is about 3 pigs who try to each build their own house, but a wolf causes them some problems.” Let them know you will be writing some things down as they read. It is sometimes helpful to block what you are doing.
- With your recording form, check above each word said correctly. If a word is read incorrectly, write what they said above the word on the form. **See the Running Record Symbols / Marking Conventions page for more details.**
- Other possible behaviors:

If the child is stuck and does not attempt:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teacher can say, “You try” if you think the child might know the word., OR➤ Teacher waits 3-4 seconds, then tells the child the word .
If the child starts to invent text on a patterned book:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reread one page to child to see if they can pick up on the pattern. What you reread counts as 1 error per word.
If there is too much inventing or obviously too hard:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Discontinue the running record and choose a lower level text

- Try to pay attention to child’s physical behavior as well (pointing, looking at pictures, eye movements, frustration, expression, one-to-one correspondence, directionality, pauses, fluency, phrasing, etc.). Make notes as needed.
- **Do not coach or remind child what to do when administering a running record. This is an assessment.**

Scoring a Running Record:

Count as Errors	Do not count as errors
▪ substitution	▪ self-correction
▪ omission	▪ repetition (word or phrase)
▪ insertion	▪ words pronounced incorrectly due to dialect, accent, or speech deficit
▪ unsuccessful appeal	▪ successful appeal
▪ sounding out followed by incorrect word	▪ sounding out followed by correct word
▪ told	▪ “You try” followed by correct word
▪ Proper nouns (first time only)	▪ Proper nouns (2 or more times)

Accuracy:

Subtract errors from total # of words. This is the CW (correct words).

Divide # of CW by # of TW (total words).

Express as a %tage.

Example:

of errors = 7

of total words = 90

of CW = 83

$83 \div 90 = 92\%$

83

90

% Accuracy	Level	Explanation
95 – 100%	Independent	Easy, Can read on their own with little help; Move child to higher text.
90 – 94%	Instructional	Comfortable, but still some need for <i>some</i> strategy work. This is where text level for guided reading should be focused.
89% and below	Hard	There are too many challenges for child to learn

Self-Corrections:

These are words the child at first reads incorrectly, but fixes them without teacher prompting. It can be immediately after the word, or sometimes after they finish the sentence and realize it wasn't correct.

The score is a ratio of SC to errors. For example 1:3 means the child corrects 1 out of every 3 errors. This is evidence of good monitoring. With ratios of 1:5 or higher, the child needs instruction on how to better monitor and fix their mistakes.

Formula: $\frac{\#E + \#SC}{\#SC} = \text{SC rate}$

Example:

# of errors = 7	$7 + 4$	11	$1:2.8$
# of SC = 4	4	4	

Analyzing the Running Record

Besides noting the accuracy and SC rate, it will be important to note the strategies / cueing systems the child is using or neglecting and adjust your instruction to address these needs.

1. **(M)** Meaning: Is the child thinking about what makes sense?
2. **(S)** Structure: Is the child paying attention to the structure / syntax / grammar of the text? Does it sound right?
3. **(V)** Visual: Is the child using the visual information of the letters and sounds? Does it look right?

In the columns provided on the running record sheet, tally next to each line the main strategy the child **is using** when making the error. Keep track at the bottom or end of the running record to determine which cueing system the child is using / overusing / neglecting.

Prompt for Strategies

Prompts are short teaching cues the teacher gives to the student to help them better monitor their own reading. The goal is cross checking and self-monitoring.