

Teacher Copy: Assessment for Independent Reading Levels
Levels L-Z+ (Fiction/Narrative)

Level N

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt from *26 Fairmount Avenue* by Tomie dePaola, pp. 9-11

Level N 289 words

Independent Level:
Yes No

Accuracy Rate _____%

Book Introduction: Say this to the reader before he or she begins reading the student copy of the text: "The main character, Tomie, is telling the story of how his family built a new house many years ago, back in 1938. Please read aloud the first section. (*Point to the line on the student copy to show the child where the first section ends.*) After this part, you may read the rest silently. If you need to, you can reread the first part. When you are finished reading, I will ask you to retell the important things that happened in the story."

During and after the Running Record, you may make these observations and notes to inform instruction:

- Self-corrects;
- Pauses while reading to think;
- Uses more than one strategy to figure out unfamiliar words;
- Miscues make sense;
- Miscues fit the syntax or structure of the sentence;
- Miscues look similar to words in the text;
- Figures out the meaning of unfamiliar words—
if the child mispronounces a word during the running record, ask the child if they know the meaning of the word when they finish reading the excerpt.

Running Record: For the first 100 words of the passage, record each miscue above the relevant word as the student reads. You may decide to hear and record miscues for an additional 100 words to get a better portrait of the student's oral reading. See *Teacher Guidebook* for specific recording practices, and for guidance on analyzing the student's miscues towards future instruction. Use the Accuracy Rate calculator at the end of the text excerpt to determine if this student's accuracy demonstrates independence at this level. Use the Oral Reading Fluency Scale to determine if this student is reading fluently at this level.

When my mom and dad decided to build a house, friends told them that they were building "out in the sticks." That meant way out where not many people lived. There wasn't even a real street. Just a dirt road. But it wasn't that far from our apartment on Columbus Avenue.

It was really great watching the house being built. First a steam shovel dug a huge hole for the foundation. Next a cement truck came, and workers poured the cement down a chute that looked like a long sliding board. I pretended that the concrete gushing down was lava (**100 words**) coming out of a volcano (I had seen that in a movie with my mother).

***** (**Reader may read silently from this point on.**) *****

After the foundation was set and the cellar was finished, the builders came to start on the house itself. They covered the opening over the cellar

with wood, and that became the floor. Then they put up these things they called “studs,” which were pieces of wood called “two-by-fours” because they are two inches thick by four inches wide.

They had just finished this part of the house when the hurricane struck. It was a good thing the walls weren’t up yet, because the house **(200 words)** probably would have blown away. A new house a few streets away was knocked down by the wind. All that was left was the cellar and a mess of broken wood. They had to start all over again. It was sad, but I was glad it wasn’t our house.

All our relatives were excited about the house at 26 Fairmount Avenue. I guess a new house with a big yard and a view of West Peak with Castle Craig on top was exciting. I know I thought it was.

(289 words)

Scoring the Running Record for Accuracy and Oral Reading Fluency

Total miscues including self-corrected: _____

Self-corrections: _____

Miscues reader did not self-correct: _____

Accuracy Rate: Circle the number of miscues per 100 words the reader did not self-correct.

100 Words	100%	99%	98%	97%	96%
	0 miscues	1 miscue	2 miscues	3 miscues	4 miscues
95%	94%	93%	92%	91%	90%
5 miscues	6 miscues	7 miscues	8 miscues	9 miscues	10 miscues

- 96%-100% = independent reading level of accuracy
- 90%-95% = instructional reading level of accuracy

Oral Reading Fluency Scale – Circle the Level that Best Describes the Student’s Oral Reading *Note: Oral Reading Fluency is not taken into account until Level K for determining reading level, though it should of course be considered and taught into at earlier levels.

Fluent	Level 4	Reads primarily in larger, meaningful phrase groups. Although some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from text may be present, these do not appear to detract from the overall structure of the text. Preservation of the author’s syntax is consistent. Most of the text is read with expressive interpretation. Pace is consistently conversational.
	Level 3	Reads primarily in three or four-word phrase groups. Some small groupings may be present. However, the majority of phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the syntax of the author. Some expressive interpretation is present; this may be inconsistent across the reading of the text. The pace is mixed: there is some faster and some slower reading.
Non fluent	Level 2	Reads primarily in two-word phrases with some three or four-word groupings. Some word-by-word reading may be present. Word groupings may seem awkward and unrelated to larger context of sentence or passage. Beginning a little expressive interpretation, frequently first seen when reading dialogue. The pace is somewhat slow.
	Level 1	Reads primarily word-by-word. Occasional two-word or three-word phrases may occur—but these are infrequent and/or they do not preserve meaningful syntax. No expressive interpretation. The pace is noticeably very slow.

Adapted from: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2002 Oral Reading Study and Zutell and Rasinski’s Multidimensional Fluency Scales (Zutell, J., & Rasinski, T. V. (1991). Training teachers to attend to their students’ oral reading fluency. *Theory Into Practice*, 30, 211–217. Please refer to the *Benchmarks for Student Progress* for details regarding Oral Reading Rate.

Retell:

Say, “Please retell this story.” Be sure to retell the important parts, and to tell them in order.” Write notes regarding the student’s retelling on the back of this page.

If the student has trouble getting started or says very little, you may use non-leading prompting. Examples of non-leading prompting include: What happened next? Can you say more? Did anything else happen? Make a note that you needed to prompt the student, as you will want to teach this student how to self-initiate more elaborated retells.

Use the Sample Student Responses to determine if the child’s retelling and responses to the comprehension questions are acceptable. See scoring guidance for specifics regarding how to account for the retell and the responses to questions in determining a student’s independent reading level.

Comprehension: Questions: If the student’s retell did not include answers to the following questions, please ask any/all of the questions that were not addressed. There are many acceptable responses to each question, some of which are listed below. The reader’s response is acceptable as long as it demonstrates an accurate understanding of the text. As the reader answers each question, be sure to record the response carefully.

Question	Sample Acceptable Responses
1. <i>Literal:</i> Tomie talks about the builders putting up “studs” when building his new house. In this case, what does the word “studs” mean?	“... pieces of wood called ‘two-by-fours’ because they are two inches thick by four inches wide; pieces of wood”
2. <i>Literal:</i> Describe the new neighborhood where Tomie’s house is being built.	“... ‘out in the sticks’ ; a place where not many people live; has dirt roads; a neighborhood near their apartment on Columbus Avenue; closer to West Peak”
3. <i>Inferential:</i> How do you think Tomie’s new home will be different from where he lived before?	“ ... he lived in an apartment and now he will live in a house; it will be bigger and have a yard; it will be quiet with a big place to play; there will not be as many people so he may feel lonely; he will be able to see Castle Craig from his new house”
4. <i>Inferential:</i> How do you think Tomie feels when he learns that his new town was hit by a hurricane?	“... happy his home wasn’t destroyed; sad other homes were destroyed; relieved his house wasn’t built yet and therefore wasn’t damaged”

Notes on retelling (this may be a transcription or comments on students' ability to retell in order and prioritize the key story elements):

Student's replies to comprehension questions (if necessary because not addressed in retell):

1)

2)

3)

4)

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Final Score

Yes No Was the reader's accuracy rate at least 96%?

Yes No Did the student read with fluency? (a score of 3 or 4 on the Oral Reading Fluency Scale)*

Yes No Did the reader demonstrate literal and inferential comprehension through one of the following combinations of retell and responses:

- A clear, accurate retell that incorporates answers to three out of four comprehension questions. (This may be with or without non-leading prompting. See directions for retell for more about non-leading prompting).
- A mostly accurate retell PLUS acceptable responses to three out of four of the comprehension questions (answered or included in the retell). The retell need not be well-crafted or completely comprehensive, but if it indicates mostly inaccurate comprehension, try the next level down.

Is this the student's independent reading level?

- If you did NOT answer "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, try an easier text. Keep moving to easier texts until you find the level at which you are able to answer "yes" to all questions in the **Final Score** box.
- If you answered "yes" to all questions in this **Final Score** box, the student is reading independently at this level. However, it is possible that the student may also read independently at a higher level. Keep moving to higher passages until you can no longer answer "yes" to all questions. The highest level for which you can answer "yes" for all questions is the student's independent reading level.

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