

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

Level V

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt from *Yolonda's Genius* by Carol Fenner, pp. 5-6

Level V 311 words

Independent Level:
Yes No

Accuracy Rate _____%

Book Introduction: Say this to the reader before he or she begins the student copy of the text: "After some troubling events, Yolonda's family, which includes her mother and brother Andrew, is considering moving to a new town. 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 what you have just read."

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.

Andrew and Yolonda watched from the breakfast table. They waited, each in their own way, for their momma to utter her usual moan: "We've got to get out of this town." But this time, she didn't say a word. She just stared down through the snow at that planet of hers.

Yolonda's pulse of worry returned, rose, and beat against her temples.

She knew that night, when her mother got out her handsome leather briefcase and started going over her résumé, that she was going to find another job—away from Chicago.

Her mother's idea of a great place to **(100 words)** live included fresh air, peace and quiet, and trees.

**** (Reader may continue silently from this point on) ****

She was always talking about growing flowers and owning a barbecue grill that they wouldn't have to chain to the house. Yolonda fretted. Her mother's tastes

were definitely limited.

“I don’t ever want to move to a place where they can’t do double Dutch,” she said to the back of her mother’s head.

Her momma didn’t even turn around. “Better to be a big fish in a little pond,” she said, “than a little fish in the ocean.”

“I’m already a big fish in these waters,” said Yolonda. Yolonda was big—huge. **(201 words)** Tall and heavy and strong. Double Dutch wasn’t one of her powers, nor was making friends, but she often stood around watching, hoping the jumpers would need a rope turner. “I’m already a big fish,” she repeated.

Her momma laughed. “You got that right, baby,” she said.

Yolonda sighed. She wondered unhappily how much time she had to cram in the precious morsels of Chicago living. She suddenly loved her street, her school, the kids who were not her friends. She loved the great public library and the Art Institute of Chicago. How long, she wondered, before her mother **(300 words)** found a law firm in another place that needed a paralegal? **(311 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> Describe the kind of place where Yolonda’s mother would like to live using details from the passage.	Any one of two of the following: “... a safe neighborhood; a place with fresh air; a place with peace and quiet; a place with trees; a place that is safe so they don’t have to chain their things up outside; a place where she can grow flowers”
2. <i>Inferential:</i> What do you think the author is trying to show at the start of the passage when she writes that Yolonda’s momma just stares, saying nothing?	“...Yolonda’s mom is deep in thought about moving to a new place; Yolonda’s mom didn’t want to answer Yolonda because Yolonda already knew the answer; Yolonda’s mom was staring and not saying anything because she was trying to make a decision”
3. <i>Inferential:</i> Yolonda’s mother says, “Better to be a big fish in a little pond than a little fish in the ocean.” What do you think she means when she says this?	“... in a small town Yolonda will get attention and get noticed, but in a big city there are so many people that no one will even notice her; Yolonda will have a better chance to stand out in a small town than in a big city; a small town is a better place to live than a big city”
4. <i>Inferential:</i> Why do you think that toward the end of the passage Yolonda suddenly loves the place where she lives?	“... because she is tired of moving from one place to another; she is thinking of all the good things in her town that she will miss—the library, the Art Institute of Chicago, her street, and her school; she is realizing that you never know how much you like something until you do not have it anymore”

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) Describe the kind of place where Yolonda's mother would like to live using details from the passage.

2) What do you think the author is trying to show at the start of the passage when she writes that Yolonda's momma just stares, saying nothing?

3) Yolonda's mother says, "Better to be a big fish in a little pond than a little fish in the ocean." What do you think she means when she says this?

4) Why do you think that toward the end of the passage Yolonda suddenly loves the place where she lives?

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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.

*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 at earlier levels.

Name:	Date:
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Please answer these questions in your own words. You may use extra paper if you need it.

Question #1: Describe the kind of place where Yolonda's mother would like to live using details from the passage.

Question #2: What do you think the author is trying to show at the start of the passage when she writes that Yolonda's momma just stares, saying nothing?

Question #3: Yolonda's mother says, "Better to be a big fish in a little pond than a little fish in the ocean." What do you think she means when she says this?

Question #4: Why do you think that toward the end of the passage Yolonda suddenly loves the place where she lives?
