

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

Level M

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt: **Third-Grade Detectives #2, The Puzzle of the Pretty Pink Handkerchief**
by George E. Stanley, pp. 16-19

Set 2, Level M 315 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: "Todd's teacher, Mr. Merlin, and his third grade class like to solve mysteries. Todd is having a snack with his friend Noelle in his tree house when they come across someone's handkerchief. A handkerchief is like a tissue that is made of cloth and can be used again and again. Say the word: "handkerchief." 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 or summarize 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, record the reader's miscues (or errors) above the words as he or she reads. Later, you may or may not code them, using miscue analysis (MSV). Stop when the child has made five miscues and go back to the previous level.

"We're hungry, Grandma," Todd said. "Did you bake me some cookies last night?"

"Don't I always?" his grandmother said.

Todd grinned.

Noelle called her mother to tell her where she was.

Todd's grandmother poured two glasses of milk and put the cookie platter in the center of the table.

"Can we eat in your tree house?" Noelle whispered.

"That's a great idea," Todd said. "I haven't been up there since last summer."

His grandmother put their milk in plastic cups.

She put their cookies in a plastic bag.

Then Todd and Noelle headed out the back door to the tree (100 words) house.

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

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Todd held the milk and cookies with one hand.

He used his other hand to climb up the rope ladder.

Noelle was right behind him.

When they were both inside the tree house, Todd said, "Where'd that come from?" He picked up a pink handkerchief.

"You probably left it here last summer," Noelle said.

"I don't use pink handkerchiefs, Noelle," Todd said. "Somebody else has been up here."

He held up the pink handkerchief to the light.

"Well, it's obviously been here for ages," Noelle said. "It's filthy."

"It looks like it has earwax on it," Todd said.

Noelle (**200 words**) looked closely. "Hey! Maybe that'll tell us whose handkerchief it is."

"That's no clue. All earwax looks the same," Todd said. He pointed to a corner of the pink handkerchief. "Here's the clue. 'JPJ.' That's someone's initials."

"Who's JPJ?" Noelle asked.

"That's the mystery we have to solve," Todd said.

Todd and Noelle finished their milk and cookies.

Then Noelle went home.

Todd went to his room.

He put the pink handkerchief inside a plastic bag and laid it on top of his dresser.

He'd take it to school tomorrow.

He'd show it to Mr. Merlin.

The Third-Grade Detectives now (**300 words**) had a new mystery to solve.

Who left the pink handkerchief in Todd's tree house? (315 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> Where do Todd and Noelle have their snack? | "... in the tree house; in Todd's tree house" |
| 2. <i>Literal:</i> What do Noelle and Todd want to find out? | "...who left the pink handkerchief in the tree house; where the handkerchief came from" |
| 3. <i>Inferential:</i> The letters JPJ are on the pink handkerchief that Todd and Noelle found. How do you think these can help Todd and Noelle? | "...If there were no initials on it it wouldn't help but because they are there they can use JPJ to figure out the name; they can look for someone named JPJ; they can look for other things with those letters" |
| 4. <i>Inferential:</i> Do you think Todd and Noelle are good detectives? What do they do in the story to make you think this? | "...they hold it up to the light; they notice little things, like the earwax; they notice the initials and know it could be a clue" |

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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