

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

Level N

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt from *Silver* by Gloria Whelan, pp. 49-51

Set 1, Level N 284 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:* "In this passage, a girl named Rachel is lost in a snow storm. She is near her home in a forest, trying to carry her sled-dog puppy named Silver. The story takes place in Alaska, where the winters are very cold, dark, and snowy. 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.*

I hoped I was running toward our house. The sun had begun to set and the darkness seemed to be coming to meet me. Mom and Dad and I had often walked here in summer, but now everything that was familiar was covered with snow. I wasn't sure where I was. Silver was growing heavy, but I held on to him and tried not to think what would happen to us if I got lost.

The wind started up, covering my tracks as soon as I made them, so there was no way I could tell if I was going (100 words) in a circle.

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

You heard stories about this happening to people who wandered into the Alaskan winter. They were never heard from again.

The wind stung my face and the snow crept into my boots and mittens. I had to wriggle my toes and fingers to keep them from growing numb.

Suddenly the ground beneath the snow felt spongy. It sucked at my boots and I smelled something dark and musty. I had wandered into the cedar swamp

that runs along our land. My dad had warned me to keep out of the swamp because of the deep water-filled holes. **(200 words)** Now every step I took scared me. Overhead I saw a large black shadow start up from one of the trees. It was a raven. It spread its dark wings over me and flew off. Even the raven didn't want to be there.

When I finally found my way out of the swamp, I was so tired I didn't think I could take another step. I was about ready to just sink down into the snow and give up when Silver began to whine.

(284 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> Why doesn't Rachel recognize her surroundings ?	"... If Tucson was covered with snow you couldn't see anything. Your car would be all white and blend in with all the whiteness." "Because she was in a snow storm."
2. <i>Literal:</i> Describe what you know about the swamp Rachel wandered into?	"...it's dark and wet; it's spongy under her feet"
3. <i>Inferential:</i> Why do you think Silver is whining?	" ...because she wants to go home and is cold; because Rachel stopped trying; because it is cold and wet"
4. <i>Inferential:</i> Using what you know from this passage, how do you think Rachel is feeling in this story?	"... Sad, because she wanted to go see here mom and dad. Scared because she wanted to go home, eat dinner, and go to bed." "Sad because she didn't get to save Silver."

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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