

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

Level Y

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt from *One Bird* by Kyoko Mori, pp. 1-3

Set 1, Level Y 788 words

Independent Level:
Yes No

Accuracy Rate _____%

Book Introduction: Say this to the reader before beginning he or she begins the student copy of the text: "In this story, Megumi's mother has planted flowers such as pansies, chrysanthemums, and impatiens. Megumi thinks about these flowers while her mother packs a suitcase. 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 talk about the big or 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, 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.

"Tell me the truth," I insist while my mother keeps shoving sweaters into her suitcase.

Though she is kneeling on the floor just a few feet away, she won't look up at me. Frowning, she pretends to examine the sleeve of her gray cashmere pullover, as if she had found a hole or a stain that demanded her attention. I sigh loudly and start pacing in front of her.

On the windowsill behind her, the late-afternoon sun is hitting the four plastic containers in which she had planted her spring seeds two weeks ago. The rectangular containers are large but (100 words) shallow, holding just a finger of dirt around each seed.

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

Half the plants have sprouted, their heads bent down with the cracked seeds stuck on top like tiny helmets: pansies, spring chrysanthemums, impatiens. The lavenders and the petunias are taking their time, their slow-germinating seeds hidden in the soil. My mother has covered the containers with clear plastic and placed them on heating pads, with a spray bottle ready for their daily misting. As long as I can remember, she has coaxed seeds to grow in the middle of winter and

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has had the seedlings ready for her garden in **(200 words)** early March. But not this year, or ever again. I know she is not coming back.

In late November, when Mother first mentioned spending the winter with her father in their old home in a small village north of Kyoto, I knew right away that something was wrong. The more she kept explaining her reasons, the more I knew that she wasn't telling the truth. "Grandfather Kurihara has a difficult time managing alone," she said. "I want to help him get through the winter. I'll write to Grandmother Shimizu in Tokyo. She won't mind staying with you and your father **(300 words)** until I come back."

Please see "Student Copy" for the remainder of the text.

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 Question:</i> Why did Megumi's mother plant seeds each winter?	"...to get ready for her seedlings to grow; to prepare her garden in advance"
2. <i>Inferential Question:</i> Why is Megumi suspicious about her mother's trip?	"...she says it's to see Megumi's grandfather, but the grandfather is strong and healthy; she would have gone to see the grandfather sooner if it was really to help him get over his wife dying; "
3. <i>Inferential Question:</i> Why does Megumi say, "I wish this afternoon would go no further?"	"...she wants to stay with her mom; she doesn't want her mom to go away; she doesn't really want to know what's going on with her mom even if she says she does"
4. <i>Inferential Question:</i> What do you think this story teaches the reader about telling the truth to loved ones? What parts of the story show this?	"...it's hard to tell the truth – her mom can't tell the truth and she has to promise to do it; It's important to tell the truth – it's hurting her that her mom is lying to her"

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) Why did Megumi's mother plant seeds each winter?

2) Why is Megumi suspicious about her mother's trip?

3) Why does Megumi say, "I wish this afternoon would go no further?"

4) What do you think this story teaches the reader about telling the truth to loved ones? What parts of the story show this?

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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.

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

1) Why did Megumi's mother plant seeds each winter?

2) Why is Megumi suspicious about her mother's trip?

3) Why does Megumi say, "I wish this afternoon would go no further?"

4) What do you think this story teaches the reader about telling the truth to loved ones? What parts of the story show this?
