

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

Level Z

Reader's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Excerpt from *Congo* by Michael Crichton, pp. 9-14

Level Z 1,822 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 Congo is an equatorial country in central Africa known for its dense and lush forests. At the start of the passage, Karen Ross, a 24 year old ERTS Congo Project Supervisor, is reviewing images of Congo on a computer. Please read aloud the first section. (*Point to the line on the student copy to show the student 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.

TEN THOUSAND MILES AWAY, IN THE COLD, WINDOWLESS main data room of Earth Resources Technology Services, Inc., of Houston, Karen Ross sat hunched over a mug of coffee in front of a computer terminal, reviewing the latest Landsat images from Africa. Ross was the ERTS Congo Project Supervisor, and as she manipulated the satellite images in artificial contrast colors, blue and purple and green, she glanced at her watch impatiently. She was waiting for the next field transmission from Africa.

It was now 10:15 P.M. Houston time, but there was no indication of time or place in the room. **(101 Words)**

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

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> Karen is unusual for her age. According to the text, in what ways does she seem different or special?	“...only 24 years old and the youngest person working at a computer programming business; a ‘young genius’ who is very good at math; had access to information that was on the third floor of ERTS, which most people at the company could not access; “logical to a fault”; not very social and is called “Ross Glacier”
2. <i>Literal Question:</i> When the author says “... her youth still held her back”, what does he mean?	“...At the beginning she is forced to work at a computer, but she really wants to be out in the field in the Congo; Travis would not let her because she was ‘too young’”
3. <i>Inferential Question:</i> In the video images at the end of the text, Karen saw that the camp was destroyed and people had died. What do you think happened at the Congo camp? What makes you think that?	“...because of the destroyed tents and equipment, black smoke, and dead bodies, the camp was probably attacked and deserted; maybe the survivor was the person who attacked and destroyed the camp since that is the only person left; the figure that Karen saw was not really a human, but actually a monster or animal who destroyed the camp and killed everyone”
4. <i>Inferential Question:</i> What qualities does Karen have that might be well-matched to solving the crisis that develops at the camp?	“...Karen is able to locate and discover why things happen and decide what to do next and she discovers the man but also considers that he might be the source of the problem; smart- she put all the information into the Congo database so she probably knows a lot about the site, which could be helpful to solving this crisis; brave- she wanted to work in the field instead of at a computer even though it could be dangerous and she could help solve the crisis by working in the field; hard-working because she went to college when she was only 13 years old and thus she could persevere in the crisis; Karen is “logical to a fault” so she could help in the crisis by using her logical way of thinking to help solve problems”

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) Karen is unusual for her age. According to the text, in what ways does she seem different or special?

2) When the author says "... her youth still held her back", what does he mean?

3) In the video images at the end of the text, Karen saw that the camp was destroyed and people had died. What do you think happened at the Congo camp? What makes you think that?

4) What qualities does Karen have that might be well-matched to solving the crisis that develops at the camp?

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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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In writing, retell the important parts of what you just read.

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

Question 1: Karen is unusual for her age. According to the text, in what ways does she seem different or special?

Question 2: When the author says "... her youth still held her back", what does he mean?

Question 3: In the video images at the end of the text, Karen saw that the camp was destroyed and people had died. What do you think happened at the Congo camp? What makes you think that?

Question 4: What qualities does Karen have that might be well-matched to solving the crisis that develops at the camp?
