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## ASSESSMENT OF READING DIFFICULTIES

The purpose of assessment is to enable you to find out what to teach the child. After a child with reading difficulties have been identified, initial assessment is carried out in order to find out what skills need to be included in his instructional programme.

1. In the first stage, we measure the child's ability to recognise up to 100 high frequency words.
2. Each resource teacher has a set of 100 word cards based on the high frequency words.
3. The child is asked to read the first set 25 of flash cards from the 100 word cards as they are shown to him one at a time.
4. The first 25 words are the most common of the 100 words; each word read correctly within 5 seconds of presentation is ticked on the child's individual record sheet of the 100 high frequency words.
5. If the child is unable to read up to 10 of these words, he is considered a non-reader.
6. If child can read 10 or more of the first 25 words, the remaining 75 words are tested and entered on the child's record sheet.

The main purpose of the basic sight word assessment is to enable us identify the non-readers very quickly without using the more lengthy and expensive materials. The record sheet of 100 high frequency words will be of use later to keep track of the child's progress in learning these words.

## **Practice**

In testing a child's ability to recognize 100 high frequency words, no cues are given to the child. The flashcards of word lists are prepared. The card is flashed to the child and child is expected to call the word within 5 seconds of presentation. If the child gets it right put it in the right side. If child gets the word wrongly put on the left side. You may tell the child the word.

## **How You Can Meet Individual Needs In The Classroom**

Teachers should try to meet or cope with the children in the class who are poor readers. Teachers should freely admit that they could have struggling pupils in the class and show concern about them. Teachers should learn to teach *children* instead of teach a class, i.e. teachers should adjust lessons to meet individual needs in the class.

### **1. Reading Level Assessment Book**

You can make your reading level assessment book as follows:

Cut passages from old English textbooks and gum them onto the pages of the exercise book. You could cut and gum books for all classes, that is, classes 1-6 for pupils to use in class.

You should try as much as possible to remove pictures from the passages. This is necessary because many children memorize entire pages from their books. As soon as they see the picture, they are able to recite the passages.

Call the children one by one to read the passages for you, starting from the easiest. Listen to the child read. If child can read most of the words in the story, let him tell you about the story. If he appears to understand the story, you then move to the next passage on the next class level. If you reach a passage that the child misses at least one out of every ten words when trying to read it, that passage level is probably too difficult for the child. Confirm this by asking a child to tell you the story in his own words. If he misses main points in the story,

then you confirm the passage to be on the child's frustration level. To teach the beginning group, you can use only the language experience method. When doing this, use *News on the Board* every morning for the rest of the class members to copy and let them add more news items of their own. If they finish early, let them draw a picture about their news items, or read storybook from the class bookshelf.

When you want to have your lesson with the class 3 pupils, for example, the beginning readers can copy the news on the board and draw pictures about it. This is useful since they are just learning how to read.

## **1. Finding out more about the child's comprehension**

### **(a) Find out about the child's oral reading and the errors the child makes in order to determine child's word recognition score on the text read.**

- There is need to calculate a child's reading rate and fluency. That is to say, how many words a child is able to read at a given time. Is the child fluent when reading? There is need to know how many words a child can read in one minute. This information will enable you as a teacher to know if a child's reading rate is too slow or okay, and whether the child is fluent when he reads or not.
- Find out if the child is able to express himself or not. Find out if a child is able to answer questions by expressing himself after reading a passage. This is only possible if the child's oral language is sufficient and whether he comprehends after reading orally or not.
- Find out if the child observes punctuation. Observation of punctuation is very important when reading orally. If punctuation is not observed then it's difficult for the child to comprehend or make meaning out of what he has read.