



HIP THREE-MINUTE READING CHECK

Teacher Directions

The HIP 3-Minute Reading Check is a quick and easy assessment tool to be used when you need a fast way to match a reader with appropriate reading material or a starting point for a more comprehensive oral reading record.

It is administered individually and orally, but should only take between two and five minutes per student. The student is asked to read each passage aloud while the teacher records the number of miscues (errors) s/he makes. A miscue might involve omitting a word, adding a word or substituting a word. The grade level of the passage at which the student makes more than five miscues is an indicator of that student's *frustration* reading level. His/her *instructional* reading level (the optimal level for teaching) is about one grade level lower and his/her *independent* reading level (for independent reading) is about two grade levels lower.

The 3-Minute Reading Check is a rough indicator of the grade level at which a student is reading. It is no substitute for a more comprehensive oral reading record or informal reading inventory. Students considered for intervention should be tested more thoroughly for specific instructional needs.

Tell the student: “These sentences are all about cars and trucks. Please read each sentence out loud.”

1. Our new truck is on the street. (Gr. 1.5)
2. My dad’s old car gave him a lot of trouble. (Gr. 2.5)
3. When dad went to get a new car, he visited many dealers. (Gr. 3.5)
4. At last, my dad had to choose between a fully equipped truck and an enormous SUV. (Gr. 4.5)
5. While the choice may seem quite simple, my father thought long and hard before he made his decision. (Gr. 5.5)
6. Certainly the SUV offered many advantages, but the final comparison made his ultimate decision remarkably easy. (Gr. 7+)

This **warm-up activity** will give you some sense where to begin and end the passage reading that follows. The **approximate** grade-level of each sentence is given, but this is only a rough indicator. **Listen** for decoding strategies on difficult words. Does the student **sound out**, ask for help, **guess** or **give up**? What about fluency? Is the reading smooth or choppy and word-by-word?



The passages that follow are all excerpts from Paul Kropp books.

The sentences on the previous page can provide an indicator of where to start with these passages; however, you might decide to have students read right from the start in order to build confidence for the more difficult passages.

Teachers may choose to simply count the miscues or they may choose to record them, in order to analyze the type of errors the student is making.

If a student can read a passage with reasonable fluency and fewer than three or four or miscues in the passage, s/he is likely to be comfortable with books at that level.

The **independent reading level** is the appropriate level for independent reading practice.

When a student makes 3-5 five miscues, or seems to lose the meaning of the passage, then that passage is at the “**instructional**” level. This is the level that stretches him/her a bit as a reader and can be handled with some assistance.

Tell the student: “Now I’d like you to read some longer passages from different books.”

1. Sara loved the summer. She loved the warm summer air. She loved the chance to skip rope with her friends. She loved waking up and **not** going to school.

RL: Early Grade 2

adapted from *What a Story!*

2. In the dark tunnel, both boys looked at each other. Scott was shaking from the cold, or from fear, or both. Cody was shaking too, and breathing hard.

“You know what I think?” Cody said at last.

“What?”

“I think we get better out of here, like fast.”

RL: Late Grade 2

adapted from *Buried Treasure*

3. In front of us was a white shape, the shape of a man - but not a living man. We could almost see through the shape, which was like a tower of dust or a plume of smoke. But the shape was neither dust nor smoke. It had a head, arms, legs and a body. It was real, but not something from this world.

RL: Early Grade 3

adapted from *Ghost House*



4. A flash of lightning seemed to hit right in front of us. “That was a little too close for comfort,” the pilot said as the thunder boomed. There was a lot of white noise in our headsets. Each time there was a flash of lightning, it got a little worse.

Then there was another bright flash followed quickly by a very loud clap of thunder. It was so close that I was surprised that the plane wasn’t hit. The pilot swore again, and his jaw got very tight. Things were bad – and then they got worse.

RL: Late Grade 3

from *Our Plane is Down*

5. The elevator doors opened to the underground garage. The big greaser still had my arm twisted behind me. Maybe I could pull free, but what then? If I ran for it, the gang would just chase me down, or the thug would shoot me.

“Over there,” the Candyman said, pointing to the far wall.

The greaser pushed me forward before I was ready to move. I stumbled and started to fall, but he held my arm tight.

RL: Early Grade 4

from *Student Narc*

6. “This is a stupid way to die,” Connor said to Sam. But there was nothing Sam could do to stop Connor’s grumbling. Nor could he help much with the fear that lay beneath his words.

Connor wasn’t used to the harsh land or the freezing cold of the Arctic winds. He was used to roaring out on his snowmobile, taking what he wanted, then racing back to the warmth of his house. Now the three of them had no snowmobile and the dog sled was gone. What little warmth they had wouldn’t last long in the coming storm.

RL: Late Grade 4

adapted from *Caught in the Blizzard*

7. “You guys are ...” I looked at all of them, and then shouted more swear words than I ever knew were in me.

I don’t know how long my swearing would have continued, but Nick came over and stopped it with a sucker punch right to my gut. The pain shot through me, sizzling and white. I lost my grip of the bag as his punch hit me, making it easy for Geoff to take the garbage bag from my arms. When Nick landed his second punch, to my face, I fell to the floor.

RL: Mid Grade 5

from *The Countess and Me*



8. The old lady set the burlap sack down on the ground and untied the drawstring. The cloth fell down and revealed the most amazing thing - a transparent skull. It was almost the size of a person's head, shaped like a real skull, but perfectly clear. It had carved indentations for eyes and an opening where a nose would have been. But the scariest part was the teeth, which were smiling in a really gruesome way.

I don't know how long I just stared at the skull, watching the light bounce around inside it. I was amazed that something could be so beautiful and so horrible all at once.

RL: Mid Grade 6

from *The Countess and Me*

