

District Assessment of Reading Team (DART) – Fall Assessment FOR Learning Training for Marking

1. Markers read the selection.
2. Markers read the questions over.
3. In small groups, markers develop their vision of a powerful answer to each question, using the performance standards and the criteria sheet. Share these visions and come to a tentative agreement.
4. Present a sample paper to the group and discuss how you would score this paper. Each student sample is recorded on the grade appropriate Quick Scale of the Reading for Information Performance Standard. Highlight the descriptors on the Quick Scale that match the student response. Highlight ONLY those words that apply, whether or not they fall into the same range. For example, a student response might have a phrase highlighted “needs help to make inferences” in the NYM column and also have a phrase highlighted “locates relevant, specific details” in FME. The goal in scoring is to recognize what the student CAN do and what areas need growth. Do NOT worry about trying to find a number to describe the student’s performance.
5. Score the student samples, alone or in pairs, using the Quick Scales. Scoring in pairs helps us be more specific in describing what we are looking for.
6. Use the Performance Standard Planning Worksheet to synthesize the results. First model how this is done. Highlight descriptors (from the FME) column that most students can do. Choose one area on which to focus instruction. In the right-hand column, write down 2 or 3 specific strategies or processes that you will use to develop this skill in students.
7. Explain to the markers, the cyclical nature of this assessment/instruction cycle. In 6 weeks or so, teachers can re-assess to see if growth has occurred. If not, they plan different instructional sequences to try and develop this skill. If so, they return to the Planning Worksheet and choose a new area of focus, based on the results of the new assessment. The same Quick Scale can be used. Results are recorded each time an assessment is done, using a different coloured highlighter.
8. After the second assessment, many teachers choose to share the results with the students to help them set goals. The first assessment is generally for instructional purposes and teacher information.

9. Student performance will also improve if students analyze other student responses, noticing what is powerful and why. This can be done as a class. Only the positive is used as a focus. Being explicit is key. From this, students can also set goals and begin to practice toward specific targets.

10. There are several scored student samples included with each grade level. These are samples ONLY. In training, you might want to use several of these samples, then the Planning Worksheet. Pose the question, “If these were representative samples from your class, what would become your instructional focus?” Notice in the samples that there are few samples which Exceed Expectations. This is reasonable as the samples are being collected in September, and the Performance Standards are based on student work samples at March/April of the school year. Students have many months to acquire these skills and processes.