

Text Levels, Some Thoughts...

The EPRA, Spring, Common Text, is an assessment to get a snapshot of students as independent, thoughtful, strategic readers. You may be looking at the level of the end of the year text for your students and wondering about the choice. Yes, the levels are likely to be lower than those you established in your district, based on your guided reading groups. This is as it should be. In the Early Primary Reading Assessment, the tasks that the students complete (reading independently in a common text, the thinking paper and the interview) provide less teacher support, ask for more complex thinking and require more independent control than many other assessments. Students are required to demonstrate both comprehension and analysis. This is very sophisticated work.

We expect students to read within a range of levels, depending on their interest, their purpose for reading, the amount of teacher support, and the expectation of what is required in their reading - fluency, answering closed questions, retelling, generating response... Their independent level of reading will vary depending on whether the text is fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and depending on their background knowledge with both the text style and the content.

Rather than look at a number or a letter and make a decision on whether or not this is an appropriate choice for a reader at the end of the school year, look at the text itself. Consider what demands are being made on the reader. Can they read the print, the text features, the labels, the pictures? Can they integrate this new information with what they already know? Can they make meaning from a text that has been chosen for them rather than one they self-selected? If your students could read this text and make meaning of it, mostly independently, at the end of your school year, would you be celebrating their success? Considered in this light, I think you will concur with the text choices. Many many teachers worked together on this field-testing. We have found these choices to be appropriate for most students across our province, and to match provincial expectations. We have found that these choices give us information about our students that is helpful in both guiding our instruction and contributing to the discussion of whether our teaching is having the effect we want - success for an increasing number of students.

Faye

Remember ALWAYS

Reading Level is only one small piece of information and only one fraction of the Prescribed Learning Outcomes (just-right text) in the IRP.

1 PLO is about fluency.

15 PLO's are about comprehension, prediction, thinking, connections, inferring, visualizing, questions and understanding before, during and after reading.

Thanks to Lori Robinson for this correlation reminder!