



READING SNAPSHOTS



What are text characteristics?

Text characteristics describe qualitatively the complexity of a text (e.g., length of sentences, length of words, and complexity of letter-sound patterns).

What are reader characteristics?

Reader characteristics describe the ways in which readers interact with the text at each developmental reading stage (emergent, beginning, transitional, and independent) and corresponding DRA levels. *For more information on development reading stages refer to pages 19-21 in your training manual.*

What are the DRA Levels?

DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) is an assessment tool used by teachers to identify the student's reading level, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Tutors will find the student's DRA level recorded on the ONE TO ONE Student's Reading Profile. Once the DRA level is identified tutors can use this information to place the student in appropriate levelled books found in the ONE TO ONE levelled book collection.

What are READING SNAPSHOTS?

READING SNAPSHOTS take the guessing out of tutoring! SNAPSHOTS assist volunteer tutors in selecting the most compatible tutoring strategies for students at each DRA level.

Available for download at <http://www.one-to-one.ca>



EMERGENT READERS – DRA EQUIVALENT LEVELS A – 4

SNAPSHOT:

Emergent readers are learning that text and illustrations work together to tell a story. The repetitive nature and the clear matching of illustration and text enable students to make connections between what is spoken and what is written in the text.

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels A-4

- A single word, phrase or simple sentence on each page; repeated sentence patterns
- Large, easy to read font
- Simple story beginnings, middles, and endings
- Illustrations provide high support
- High frequency words anchor readers to the text
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Characteristics Emergent Readers at DRA Levels A-4

- Use left to right directionality to read one line of print
- Match spoken words with printed words with one-to-one matching
- Make predictions based on pictures and prior knowledge
- Use pictures to figure out unknown words
- Distinguish and use beginning sounds (esp. consonants) and some ending sounds
- Begin to use meaning to guess unknown words
- Read common high frequency words (e.g., at, am, to, like)
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Ways to Support Emergent Readers at DRA Levels A-4

Book Walk:

- A book walk is an opportunity to preview the story, identify key vocabulary words, and engage the student in pre-reading conversations.
- *Try one of the book walk strategies found on page 25 in your training manual.*

Fix-Up Strategies: Wait a few moments to see if the student tries to attempt to say the word.

- Ask the student, "Does the word make sense in the sentence?"
- Say to the student, "Look at the picture, see if that helps you figure out the word."
- Ask the student, "What letter does the word start and end with?"
- Tell the student the word if they still cannot get it.

Sight Words: Build familiarity with high frequency words (sight word lists available on the ONE TO ONE website).

- Use letter tiles or magnetic letters and have the student make the new sight words.
- Have the student locate the new word in a reading book from a previous session.
- Make a word bank of sight words for the student.

Retell: Have the student retell important events in the story (e.g., beginning, middle, end).

Lively Conversations:

- Encourage the student to share opinions about the story and pictures (b) Use details when discussing the text. (c) Talk about characters' emotions and feelings.

Fluency:

- Encourage the student to notice and reflect ending punctuation in their voice as they read.
- *Try one of the fluency strategies on page 28 in your training manual.*



BEGINNING READERS – DRA EQUIVALENT LEVELS 5-8

SNAPSHOT:

Beginning readers understand the basic concepts of print and are ready for more complex stories. Beginning readers are beginning to use clues from illustrations, clues from letters and words, and meaning clues when reading unfamiliar text.

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 5-8

- Increased amount of text per page; some repetition of phrases, words or sentences
- Moderate-high support from illustrations
- Readers will need to use sight words to help with unknown words, using parts of the familiar words as examples to help them unlock unfamiliar words.
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Characteristics Beginning Readers at DRA Levels 5-8

- Use words families (e.g., 'p' at, 'p' et) to help decode words
- Use basic sight words and use picture clues to understand the text
- Monitor for meaning by checking to make sure it makes sense
- Use fix-up strategies (e.g., picture cues, reread, read on) to confirm meaning
- Express opinions about characters and events
- Identify fiction verses nonfiction and use text features such as titles, headings, and table of contents to grow their understanding of nonfiction text
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Ways to Support Beginning Readers at DRA Levels 5-8

Book Walk:

- A book walk is an opportunity to preview the story, identify key vocabulary words, and engage the student in pre-reading conversation.
- *Try one of the book walk strategies found on page 25 in your training manual.*

Fix-Up Strategies: Wait a few moments to see if the student tries to attempt to say the word.

- Ask the student, "Does the word make sense in the sentence?"
- Say to the student, "Look at the picture, see if that helps you figure out the word."
- Say, "Put in a word that you think makes sense."
- Say to the student, "Start the sentence from the beginning and try saying it again."
- Ask the student, "What letter does the word start and end with?"
- Tell the child to read the sentence from the beginning and skip the word.
- Tell the student the word if they still cannot get it.

Sight Words

- Build familiarity with high frequency words.

Lively Conversations:

- Encourage the student to share opinions about the story and pictures (b) Use details when discussing the text. (c) Talk about characters' emotions and feelings.
- Check out the ONE TO ONE website for more lively conversation suggestions.

Fluency:

- Encourage the student to notice and reflect ending punctuation in their voice as they read.
- *Try one of the fluency strategies found on page 28 in your training manual.*



BEGINNING READERS – DRA EQUIVALENT LEVELS 9-18

SNAPSHOT:

Beginning readers understand the basic concepts of print and are ready for more complex stories. Beginning readers are starting to use clues from illustrations, clues from letters and words, and meaning clues when reading unfamiliar text.

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 9-12

- More challenging stories and vocabulary
- Repetition of three or more phrases or sentence patterns throughout the book
- Increasing use of descriptive language
- Illustrations provide moderate support
- Technical vocabulary when dealing with concepts
- Wider use of tenses
- Language structure and patterns may be more varied and complex
- The content may often include a single character or story line throughout the book

Characteristics Beginning Readers at DRA Levels 9-12

- Systemic use of short and long vowels
- Rereading and self-correction behaviors common
- Read with fluency
- Use a repertoire of strategies to figure out words and phrases
- Cross-check different cues (meaning, word structure, grammar)
- Use known word parts to figure out unknown words

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 13-18

- Sentence patterns are longer, varied and more complex
- Greater use of literary or story language such as “Once upon a time”
- May include repeated pattern in cumulative form with more and more text added to each page
- Low picture support
- More unfamiliar and often complex vocabulary

Characteristics Beginning Readers at DRA Levels 13-18

- Reread and self-correct regularly
- Read with fluency
- Integrate a balance of sources of information
- Monitor for meaning by checking what has been read makes sense, sounds right and looks right
- Demonstrate fluent phrasing of longer passages
- Use a repertoire of phonics (letter/sound) strategies to problem solve through text



Ways to Support Beginning Readers at DRA Levels 9-18

Book Walk:

- Try one of the book walk strategies on page 25 in your training manual.
- Direct the student to set a purpose for reading. "I will be reading about _."
- Before starting to read, encourage the student to become a strategic reader by asking, "What can you do to help yourself when you find a word you don't know?"

Fix-Up Strategies:

- Wait a few moments to see if the student tries to attempt to say the word.
- Ask the student, "Does the word make sense in the sentence?"
- Say to the student, "Look at the picture, see if that helps you figure out the word."
- Say, "Put in a word that you think makes sense."
- Say to the student, "Start the sentence from the beginning and try saying it again."
- Ask the student, "What letter does the word start and end with?"
- Tell the child to read the sentence from the beginning and skip the word.
- Say, "Now that you skipped the word, what word do you think fits in the sentence?"
- Tell the student the word if they still cannot get it.

Sight Words:

- Build familiarity with high frequency words (sight word lists available on the ONE TO ONE website).

Fluency:

- Observe to make certain the student is using the print conventions - question mark, period, exclamation point and comma.
- Try one of the fix-up fluency strategies found on page 28 in your training manual.

Retell:

- Ask the student to retell what happened in the story or what the text was about.
- Have the student practice sequencing parts of the story in order to get the idea of beginning, middle, and end.
- Have the student summarize the big ideas in their reading.

Dialogue:

- Use prompts to dig deeper into comprehension with your students by using prompts such as: What do you think about...? Tell about... Say something about... What if...?

Monitoring Comprehension:

- Tell the student that you will be sharing a tutoring strategy called *Click and Clunk*. Explain to the student that during reading when the end of sentence (paragraph) is reached, to ask the question (using an inside thinking voice), "Am I reading with meaning?" If the student is reading with meaning, the student will say, "Click" and continue reading. If the student has difficulty with meaning, the student says, "Clunk" and the tutor will instruct the student to: Read the sentence (paragraph) again or read on to the next sentence.
- Check out the ONE TO ONE website for the comprehension wheels.



TRANSITIONAL READERS – DRA EQUIVALENT DRA LEVELS 18-30

SNAPSHOT:

Transitional readers can recognise many words automatically and read familiar texts fluently. They use a variety of ways to work out unknown words such as slowing down, re-reading, reading on, and sounding out. At this stage, readers generally have strategies to figure out most words but continue to need help with understanding increasingly more difficult text.

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 18-23

- Longer, slightly more complex chapter books with more characters
- Variety in layout reflecting different genres
- Wide range of high frequency words
- Variation in placement of subject, verb, adjectives, and adverbs in sentences
- Sentences carrying over two to three lines
- Print and illustrations integrated in many texts

Characteristics Transitional Readers at DRA Levels 18-23

- Use letter sound relationships in sequence to solve more complex words
- Follow and remember a series of events in order to understand the ending
- Bring knowledge from personal experiences to the interpretation of text
- Connect words that mean the same or almost the same to help in understanding
- Read dialogue with phrasing and expression
- Summarize longer narrative texts with multiple episodes
- Begin to demonstrate the purposeful use of comprehension strategies (retelling, monitoring for meaning, making connections, making mental images, making/revising/confirming predictions, questioning)

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 24-30

- Episodic and cumulative chapters and wide range of genres
- Limited picture support and spacing
- Multiple story lines and characters
- More complex themes and characters
- Words with a wide variety of very complex spelling patterns
- Complex plots with numerous episodes and time passing
- Non-fiction illustrations may include photos, diagrams, captions, graphs, etc.,
- Variety in the layout of the print

Characteristics of Transitional Readers at DRA Levels 24-30

- Apply decoding and comprehension strategies: (a) Use multiple sources of information at unknown words (b) Use prediction frequently and confirms or rejects while reading (c) Monitor and self-correct on familiar text (d) Use larger word parts for problem solving words (e) Use context clues to read and understand challenging vocabulary.
- Use chapter titles to foreshadow content
- Summarize a longer narrative, either orally or in writing
- Bring knowledge from personal experiences to the interpretation of characters and events
- Understand the relationship between the setting and the plot of a story
- Differentiate between what is known and new information
- Infer the big ideas or message



Ways to Support Transitional Readers at DRA Levels 18-30

Before Reading

- Encourage the student to become a strategic reader by asking, “What do successful readers do before they start to read?”
- Guide the student to identify text structure/genre by asking, “What type of text is this?”
- Preview the text by looking at the cover, pictures and chapter titles: (a) What is this about? (b) What do you already know about this topic? (c) What do you want to know? (4) What do I think will happen?

During Reading:

- Tell the student that you will be sharing a tutoring strategy called *Click and Clunk*. Explain to the student that during reading when the end of sentence (paragraph) is reached, to ask the question (using an inside thinking voice), “*Am I reading with meaning?*” If the student is reading with meaning, the student will say, “Click” and continue reading. If the student has difficulty with comprehension, the student says, “Clunk” and the tutor will instruct the student to: Read the sentence (paragraph) again or read on to the next sentence.

Questions (don't have to be saved until the very end):

- Students who struggle with attention do better if asked questions *while* reading versus saving all of them until the very end. If a student seems a bit confused over a particular passage, stop right then and ask questions such as: “Did that make sense to you? What was the author saying right there? Can you put it in your own words?”
- *Check out the ONE TO ONE website for a list of comprehension questions.*

After Reading:

- Discuss characters, plot, setting and events (b) Discuss what was learned from informational texts. (c) Compare characters and events in the text with real life people and events – compare the text with other texts read.
- Practice sequencing story events. If it was a story, talk about the plot (problem and how solved. (b) Ask the student questions and have the student support their opinions or responses with passages from the text. (c) Ask the student to make connections between events of the story and their own lives or other stories.

Fluency:

- Observe to make certain the student is using the print conventions: question mark, period, exclamation point and comma.
- *Try one of the fluency strategies on page 28 in your training manual.*

Text Features:

- As the student encounters nonfiction texts, review how content is presented (text, graphs, pictures, tables, charts) and how to find relevant information.



INDEPENDENT READERS – DRA EQUIVALENT LEVELS 30-40

SNAPSHOT: Independent or fluent readers are confident in their understanding of text and how text works. They are maintaining meaning through longer and more complex stretches of text. Independent readers demonstrate both oral and silent reading fluency (the ability to easily read mechanically, expressively and with comprehension).

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 30-34

- Complex and varied sentence structure
- New vocabulary in fiction texts largely unexplained
- Complex plots with numerous episodes and time passing
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through the behaviour of characters
- Use of words in italics, bold or all capitals to indicate emphasis or level of importance
- Descriptive and figurative language that is important to understanding the story plot
- Black and white illustrations
- Full range of punctuation
- No or minimal picture support

Characteristics Independent Readers at DRA Levels 30-34

- Begin to notice new and interesting words, and add them to their speaking or writing vocabulary
- Process a wide range of dialogue
- Respond to plot tension or suspense by reading on to seek resolution
- Read dialogue with phrasing and expression that reflect understanding of characters and events
- Make connections between texts and other texts that have been read or heard
- Demonstrate changing perspective as events in a story unfold
- See changes in characters across time and articulate possible reasons for development
- Demonstrate understanding of characters, using evidence to support statements

Text Characteristics at DRA Levels 35-40

- Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues
- Characters revealed by what they say, think, and do and what others say or think about them
- Descriptive language provides details important to understanding the plot
- Settings distant in time and space from students' experiences
- Some words with connotative meaning that are essential to understanding the text
- Full range of readers' tools (table of contents, headings, call-outs, index, etc.)

Characteristics of Independent Readers at DRA Levels 35-40

- Develop deeper understanding of words that have been encountered before but are not familiar
- Form implicit questions and search for answers while reading
- Summarize a text at intervals during the reading of a longer text
- Demonstrate phrased, fluent oral reading
- Justify predictions using evidence
- Infer cause and effect in influencing characters' feelings or underlying motives
- Specify the nature of connections (topic, content, type of story, writer)
- Adjust reading to process texts with difficult and complex layout



Ways to Support Independent Readers at DRA Levels 30-40

Before Reading

- Encourage the student to become a strategic reader by asking, "What do successful readers do before they start to read?"
- Guide the student to identify text structure/genre by asking, "What type of text is this? Is it a story, is it to give information, or is it a poem?"
- Preview the text by looking at the cover, pictures and chapter titles: (a) What is this about? (b) What do you already know about this topic? (c) What do you want to know? (d) What do I think will happen?

During Reading:

- Before starting to read, encourage the student to become a strategic reader by asking "What can you do to help yourself when you find a word you don't know?"
- Tell the student that you will be sharing a tutoring strategy called *Click and Clunk*. Explain to the student that during reading when the end of sentence (paragraph) is reached, to ask the question (using an inside thinking voice), "*Am I reading with meaning?*" If the student is reading with meaning, the student will say, "Click" and continue reading. If the student has difficulty with comprehension, the student says, "Clunk" and the tutor will instruct the student to: Read the sentence (paragraph) again or read on to the next sentence.

Fix-Up Strategies

- Wait a few moments to see if the student tries to attempt to say the word.
- Ask the student, "Does the word make sense in the sentence?"
- Say to the student, "Look at the picture, see if that helps you figure out the word."
- Say, "Put in a word that you think makes sense."
- Say to the student, "Start the sentence from the beginning and try saying it again."
- Ask the student, "What letter does the word start and end with?"
- Tell the child to read the sentence from the beginning and skip the word.
- Say, "Now that you skipped the word, what word do you think fits in the sentence?"
- Tell the student the word if they still cannot get it.

Questions (don't have to be saved until the very end):

- Students who struggle with attention do better if asked questions *while* reading versus saving all of them until the very end. If a student seems a bit confused over a particular passage, stop right then and ask questions such as: "Did that make sense to you? What was the author saying right there? Can you put it in your own words?"
- *Check out the ONE TO ONE website for a list of comprehension questions.*

After Reading:

- Discuss characters, plot, setting and events (b) Discuss what was learned from informational texts. (c) Compare characters and events in the text with real life people and events. (d) Compare the text with other texts read.
- Practice sequencing story events. If it was a story, talk about the type of story plot (step-by-step is a plot where the characters solve the problem or reach the goal. (b) Ask the student questions and then the student to support their opinions or responses with passages from the text.
- Fluency:
- Modelling: Read to the student to model appropriate phrasing, expression and pacing.
- Guided Oral Reading: This strategy benefits the student in developing accuracy and word recognition skills, two of the components of fluency. In this activity, an adult works one-on-one with a student.
- Repetitive Oral Reading: Repetitive oral reading is a strategy for improving the student's fluency as well as vocabulary. Like guided oral reading, repetitive reading the student reads the selection aloud with the tutor providing guiding feedback focusing on different elements of fluency each time the text is read.
- Choral Reading: For this activity the paired readers sit close together with a single copy of the text. Tutor and student read the text aloud with the tutor reading it at a slightly faster rate than the student.

