

TENTH GRADE



NLM³ READING

Narrative Language Measures

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Benchmark Record Forms

Beginning of Year / Middle of Year / End of Year

School: _____ Name: _____
Teacher: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

Dani Kowalski paced the driveway outside her family's house, holding her phone above her head like a small, desperate torch. The scholarship application was due by midnight, and her essay, which she had spent weeks polishing, sat finished on her screen, waiting to upload. But the internet had been out for two days, and the one signal bar that flickered on her phone vanished every time she pressed submit.

Her throat tightened as the afternoon light faded, the shadows of the surrounding pines stretching long and dark across the property, and a quiet desperation settled over her like something physical. She had done everything right — the grades, the essay, the letters of recommendation — and now a dead signal was threatening to erase all of it.

She recalled what she had learned about cellular transmission: cell phones communicate by sending and receiving radio waves to nearby towers, and signal strength depends on both distance and physical obstacles. Dense vegetation, terrain, and structures can obstruct or attenuate these waves, while higher elevations improve reception because fewer obstructions interrupt the direct path between device and tower. She eyed the steep hill behind the house and started climbing.

Halfway up the slope, two bars appeared, and she jabbed the submit button — but the signal collapsed like a door slamming shut before the upload could complete. Discouragement moved through her, but she kept climbing because the tree canopy was blocking the signal's path, and she needed open sky. She broke through the tree line onto the bare ridgeline, where the air was cold and clear above her.

Three bars appeared on her screen, and she pressed submit and held herself completely still, watching the progress bar with the concentrated attention of someone who understood that any disturbance might cost her everything. It reached one hundred percent just as the last streak of daylight disappeared behind the far hills.

She sank onto a flat rock, legs trembling, and felt a slow, profound relief move through her as she looked out over the valley. The lights of distant houses blinked on, small and steady, each one a signal of its own.

Child Name/ID _____ Audio File _____ Examiner _____ Date _____

DECODING FLUENCY · ORAL READING

Place the passage in front of the student. **SAY: "Please read this out loud. Do your very best reading. I'll help you if you need it. When you're done, I might read some of the passage to you and then I will ask you to tell me the story."** Put a slash [/] through incorrect words (mispronunciations, substitutions, skipped words). If the student fails to read a word after 3 seconds, say the word and mark it incorrect. Self-corrections within 3 sec., repetitions, and insertions are not errors. If the student struggles significantly, you may finish reading after 1 minute, then administer the DDM after the retell and questions.

1	Dani Kowalski paced the driveway outside her family's house, holding her phone above her head like a	17
2	small, desperate torch. The scholarship application was due by midnight, and her essay, which she had spent	34
3	weeks polishing, sat finished on her screen, waiting to upload. But the internet had been out for two	52
4	days, and the one signal bar that flickered on her phone vanished every time she pressed submit.	69
5	Her throat tightened as the afternoon light faded, the shadows of the surrounding pines stretching long and	86
6	dark across the property, and a quiet desperation settled over her like something physical. She had done	103
7	everything right — the grades, the essay, the letters of recommendation — and now a dead signal was	119
8	threatening to erase all of it.	125
9	She recalled what she had learned about cellular transmission: cell phones communicate by sending and receiving	141
10	radio waves to nearby towers, and signal strength depends on both distance and physical obstacles. Dense	157
11	vegetation, terrain, and structures can obstruct or attenuate these waves, while higher elevations improve reception	172
12	because fewer obstructions interrupt the direct path between device and tower. She eyed the steep hill	188
13	behind the house and started climbing.	194
14	Halfway up the slope, two bars appeared, and she jabbed the submit button — but the signal	210
15	collapsed like a door slamming shut before the upload could complete. Discouragement moved through her, but	226
16	she kept climbing because the tree canopy was blocking the signal's path, and she needed open sky.	243
17	She broke through the tree line onto the bare ridgeline, where the air was cold and clear above her.	262
18	Three bars appeared on her screen, and she pressed submit and held herself completely still, watching the	279
19	progress bar with the concentrated attention of someone who understood that any disturbance might cost her	295
20	everything. It reached one hundred percent just as the last streak of daylight disappeared behind the far hills.	313
21	She sank onto a flat rock, legs trembling, and felt a slow, profound relief move through her	330
22	as she looked out over the valley. The lights of distant houses blinked on, small and steady,	347
23	each one a signal of its own.	354

CWPM

Words read in 1 min _____ - errors _____ = _____

ACCURACY

correct _____ ÷ total _____ = _____ %

PROSODY — *select one*

- ① Primarily word-by-word reading. No meaningful syntax.
- ② Primarily 2-word phrases. Awkward word groupings.
- ③ Primarily 3-to-4 word phrases. Mostly appropriate phrasing and syntax.
- ④ Meaningful phrases. Appropriate syntax. Expressive interpretation.

NLMD RETELL · NARRATIVE DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (NDC)

NDC SCORE: /26

After the student reads the entire passage, take the student's copy away and **SAY: "Thank you for reading and listening. Now you tell me that story."** Score the retell for story grammar. Acceptable prompts (up to 3x): "Are you finished?" "It's OK. Just do your best." "I can't help you, but you can just tell the parts you remember."

Element	Score 2	Score 1	Score 0	Score
Character	Dani	a girl	she, her, or no name	(2)(1)(0)
Setting	pacing the driveway outside her family's house, trying to upload a scholarship application	outside her house / trying to submit something online	no location or activity	(2)(1)(0)
Problem (P)	scholarship application due by midnight; no internet for two days; phone signal keeps dropping	no internet / couldn't submit her application	no problem	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling	desperate / a quiet desperation settled over her	throat tightened as the afternoon light faded	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan (PL)	decided to climb the hill to get a better signal	needed a better signal	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt (A)	climbed halfway up the hill; got two bars and pressed submit	went up the hill / tried to send it	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (CP)	signal collapsed like a door slamming shut before the upload could complete	it didn't go through / signal dropped again	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling-2	discouraged	discouragement moved through her / kept moving despite it	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan-2 (PL2)	noticed the trees were blocking the signal; kept climbing above the tree line	climbed higher to get above the trees	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt-2 (A2)	broke through the tree line to the bare ridgeline; pressed submit with three bars	climbed to the top / sent the application	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (C)	progress bar reached one hundred percent just as daylight disappeared	the application went through	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Ending (E)	sank onto a flat rock, looked out over the valley at distant lights	sat down and looked at the view	no ending	(2)(1)(0)
End Feeling	relieved / felt a profound relief	sank onto the rock / looked out over the valley lights	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)

Score sentence complexity and vocabulary during retell and from audio recording.

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY (SC)	SC SCORE: /15	VOCABULARY COMPLEXITY (VC)	VC SCORE: /10
because / so that	(1)(1)(1)	flickered	(1)
when / while	(1)(1)(1)	jabbed	(1)
after / before	(1)(1)(1)	polishing	(1)
since / however / although	(1)(1)(1)	vanished	(1)
(N) that / which / who	(1)(1)(1)		(1)

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (EDC)

EDC SCORE: /3

SAY: "Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the story. Just do your best to answer what you remember." If the student asks for clarification, the question may be asked a second time but not reworded. Circle each point or detail mentioned.

Tell me everything you learned from the passage about how cell phone signals work and what affects their strength.	Radio waves / phones send and receive radio waves to towers	(1)
	Physical obstacles block signals / higher elevation gives a more direct path to the tower	(1)
	General concept (e.g., being closer to the tower or higher up makes the signal better)	(1)

THEME

SAY: "In one or two sentences, tell me the lesson or message of this passage."

- ☐ **Complete** states the lesson or message clearly and accurately.
☐ **Partial** hints at the message but stays vague or names a related idea rather than the central one.
☐ **Detail-only** retells events or names a character/action instead of stating a message.
☐ **Absent** no response, "I don't know," or off-topic.

NL M QUESTIONS

VOCABULARY & MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS (VMA)

VMA SCORE: /8

transmission

sending signals across from one place to another

1 SAY: "What does transmission mean?"

1 1/2 0

1: sending across · passing signals from one place to another · relay of information · 1/2: sending · signals · what a phone does · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in transmission that help you know what it means?" (trans-, miss/mit)

1 0

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in transmission are trans- and miss/mit. Now, what do you think transmission means?"

1/2 0

If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what transmission means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story explains how cell phones send radio waves to nearby towers for transmission. What does transmission mean?"

1/2 0

If vague ("signals"): "What else does transmission mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does transmission mean (a) sending something across from one place to another, (b) blocking things from moving, or (c) the gears in a car?"

1/2 0

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of transmit by adding a prefix or suffix."

1 0

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence."

1 0

obstruction

something in the way; a blockage

1 SAY: "What does obstruction mean?"

1 1/2 0

1: something blocking the way · a barrier · a blockage · 1/2: a wall · a rock in the road · a physical block · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in obstruction that help you know what it means?" (ob-, struct)

1 0

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in obstruction are ob- and struct. Now, what do you think obstruction means?"

1/2 0

If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what obstruction means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story says buildings can act as an obstruction that interrupts the signal path. What does obstruction mean?"

1/2 0

If vague ("bad"): "What else does obstruction mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does obstruction mean (a) something blocking the way, (b) a clear open path, or (c) a quiet noise?"

1/2 0

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of obstruct by adding a prefix or suffix."

1 0

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence."

1 0

INFERENCE REASONING & CRITICAL THINKING (IRCT)				IRCT SCORE: /6
Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
What role does the natural setting — the shadows of the pines, the fading daylight, the cold clear air above the tree line — play in the story beyond simply describing where Dani is?	The setting mirrors the tension between failure and success: lengthening shadows and darkening pines represent closing possibilities, while open air above the ridgeline represents openness and reach. Dani moves out of an enclosed, darkening space into an exposed, elevated one — the environment carries the emotional weight of that shift.	The dark makes it feel urgent / the ridgeline shows she made it	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)
Compare Dani's behavior at the halfway point (when she jabbed the submit button) with her behavior at the ridgeline (when she held herself completely still). What does the difference reveal?	At the halfway point she acted quickly and hopefully; at the ridgeline she was patient, still, and deliberate. Failure had taught her the upload itself was fragile — any disturbance could undo it. Her earlier failure changed not what she did but how she did it.	She was more careful the second time / she learned from the first attempt	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)
Why do you think the writer ends the passage with Dani noticing distant house lights as "signals of their own," rather than on the moment the upload reached one hundred percent?	Ending on the upload would make the story only about her scholarship. Ending on the distant lights broadens the meaning — placing her private struggle within a landscape of other lives, other efforts, other signals reaching out. Sending our signals into the world becomes a shared human experience, not just hers.	To make the ending feel bigger than just her story / to leave you thinking	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)

METACOGNITION (MC)

MC SCORE:

/6

Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
1. Why do you think Dani decided to climb the hill even though she couldn't know for certain whether higher elevation would restore enough signal to complete the upload?	Facing an urgent deadline with no other options, Dani chose to act on plausible reasoning rather than wait for certainty.	She thought it might work so she tried	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
2. The passage describes Dani's throat tightening, her legs trembling, and relief moving physically through her body. Why do you think the writer describes what her body felt rather than only what she thought?	Intense emotion registers in the body before or beyond our awareness. Dani's throat tightens when she can't accept failure; her legs tremble after prolonged effort; relief moves through her when success arrives.	Her body reacted to what she was feeling	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
3. Why do you think losing the signal felt especially devastating to Dani given that she had "done everything right" beforehand?	When we've put in significant effort and prepared carefully, losing to circumstance feels much more unjust than losing when we haven't tried.	She worked hard so it felt worse to lose	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)

NLM READING BENCHMARK – COMPOSITE SCORE

Reading Fluency (CWPM) = _____

Sentence Complexity (SC) = _____

Vocabulary Complexity (VC) = _____

Expository Discourse Complexity (EDC) = _____

Vocabulary & Morphological Awareness (VMA) = _____

Inferential Reasoning & Critical Thinking (IRCT) = _____

Metacognition (MC) = _____

COMPOSITE SCORE

(sum of raw scores above)

Cut point for academic concern:
High Risk: ≤ 77

Moderate Risk: 78-126

Low Risk: ≥ 127

.92 AUC / 94% Sensitivity / 82% Specificity

DDM – DECODING INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)

DI SCORE: /88

Administer only if oral reading fluency was a concern. Display the appropriate Decoding Inventory page from the benchmark stimulus book.

SAY: “Please read these words. They are not real words.” Point to the first word. Corrective prompt (1× max): “Remember, these are not real words.”

HOW TO SCORE. Any acceptable sound counts as correct; underline the entire word if blended correctly; circle the bolded targets blended correctly (read as one syllable). Target correct = 1 point; whole word correct = 1 point. **Words in Black Box** = benchmark words; Words outside box = extended set.

TARGET: Closed Syllables

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

min sal jom vun quim whav fap deg gib les pag rud tus baf shil het wan kex zick chom thuz vill cass noff

TARGET: Vowel-Consonant-E

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

naze gude mepe sule wonkide atane jime tebe goke fene vome rame sove

TARGET: Basic Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

hezes pafed senest bruful temness premiv foting unron repog miver dutless giply

TARGET: Vowel Teams

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

feep naig touv keat heag goupalk zay loak zoon soud wook poig shaw hieb roef zow bewk pauk

TARGET: Vowel-R-Controlled

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

klar ner foarp mour lare lirparg tor wir ploor rark zair kear zur theer glier searc lourt vour store

TARGET: Advanced Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

mubtion discla gobic mavible gopture gepous bimog trizom nonplut zikable misdut transbub uniuquin virupt

TARGET: Complex Vowels

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

vind nild zough keigh glaught kighdost vost grold figh pight wought pough klaugh

TARGET: Advanced Word Forms

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

wecent smink lomb glistle ohong grombacent brism grunk mank ghosl fute

Jordan stood at his locker and felt cold certainty settle over him like a weight: the poster board was still on the kitchen table at home. His science presentation began in twenty-five minutes, and without the visual display, his group's grade would fall an entire letter. Alarm moved through him with sudden, clarifying force — he had stayed up until midnight completing it and departed without it.

He pulled out his phone and called his mom, but the call went to voicemail twice in succession. His lab partner, watching him stare at the screen, informed him that if the poster wasn't coming to him, he was going to have to go retrieve it. "Then you're running," she said, "and I'll stall." Jordan decided she was right.

His house was approximately a mile away, which left him enough time if he didn't slow down. He pushed through the school doors and sprinted, his legs accelerating harder than he anticipated, the cold air cutting against his face like something unrelenting. He retrieved the poster, tucked it under his arm, and turned immediately back toward school. As he ran, he recalled from biology that when the brain perceives urgent stress, it triggers the release of adrenaline, which increases heart rate and redirects blood flow toward the limbs. Muscle response time improves and the body's energy reserves mobilize rapidly, enabling bursts of sustained physical effort that would otherwise be physiologically unsustainable.

Halfway back, his lungs were burning and his stride was shortening in a way that told him the margin was disappearing. He calculated nine minutes remaining and six blocks still ahead — a margin that felt simultaneously precarious and absolute, pressing against him like something immovable. Determined not to surrender to the arithmetic, he fixed his attention on the next block rather than the full distance, because the whole route felt impossible and the next block did not.

He walked through the classroom door with four minutes to spare, shirt damp, chest heaving. The presentation proved successful — his group fielded questions with a composure that surprised even Jordan himself. When it was over, he sat down and felt a slow wave of relief settle through him. He had remembered everything except the one thing he was supposed to bring — and somehow it had still worked out.

Child Name/ID _____ Audio File _____ Examiner _____ Date _____

DECODING FLUENCY · ORAL READING

Place the passage in front of the student. **SAY: "Please read this out loud. Do your very best reading. I'll help you if you need it. When you're done, I might read some of the passage to you and then I will ask you to tell me the story."**

Put a slash [/] through incorrect words (mispronunciations, substitutions, skipped words). If the student fails to read a word after 3 seconds, say the word and mark it incorrect. Self-corrections within 3 sec., repetitions, and insertions are not errors. If the student struggles significantly, you may finish reading after 1 minute, then administer the DDM after the retell and questions.

1	Jordan stood at his locker and felt cold certainty settle over him like a weight: the poster	17
2	board was still on the kitchen table at home. His science presentation began in twenty-five minutes, and	34
3	without the visual display, his group's grade would fall an entire letter. Alarm moved through him with	51
4	sudden, clarifying force — he had stayed up until midnight completing it and departed without it.	66
5	He pulled out his phone and called his mom, but the call went to voicemail twice in succession.	84
6	His lab partner, watching him stare at the screen, informed him that if the poster wasn't coming	102
7	to him, he was going to have to go retrieve it. "Then you're running," she said, "and I'll stall."	120
8	Jordan decided she was right.	125
9	His house was approximately a mile away, which left him enough time if he didn't slow down. He	143
10	pushed through the school doors and sprinted, his legs accelerating harder than he anticipated, the cold air	160
11	cutting against his face like something unrelenting. He retrieved the poster, tucked it under his arm, and	177
12	turned immediately back toward school. As he ran, he recalled from biology that when the brain perceives	194
13	urgent stress, it triggers the release of adrenaline, which increases heart rate and redirects blood flow toward	211
14	the limbs. Muscle response time improves and the body's energy reserves mobilize rapidly, enabling bursts of	227
15	sustained physical effort that would otherwise be physiologically unsustainable.	236
16	Halfway back, his lungs were burning and his stride was shortening in a way that told him the	254
17	margin was disappearing. He calculated nine minutes remaining and six blocks still ahead — a margin that	270
18	felt simultaneously precarious and absolute, pressing against him like something immovable.	281
19	Determined not to surrender to the arithmetic, he fixed his attention on the next block rather than	298
20	the full distance, because the whole route felt impossible and the next block did not.	313
21	He walked through the classroom door with four minutes to spare, shirt damp, chest heaving. The presentation	330
22	proved successful — his group fielded questions with a composure that surprised even Jordan himself. When it	346
23	was over, he sat down and felt a slow wave of relief settle through him. He had remembered	364
24	everything except the one thing he was supposed to bring — and somehow it had still worked out.	381

CWPM

Words read in 1 min _____ – errors _____ = _____

ACCURACY

correct _____ ÷ total _____ = _____ %

PROSODY — select one

- ① Primarily word-by-word reading. No meaningful syntax.
- ② Primarily 2-word phrases. Awkward word groupings.
- ③ Primarily 3-to-4 word phrases. Mostly appropriate phrasing and syntax.
- ④ Meaningful phrases. Appropriate syntax. Expressive interpretation.

NLM RETELL · NARRATIVE DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (NDC)

NDC SCORE: /26

After the student reads the entire passage, take the student's copy away and **SAY: "Thank you for reading and listening. Now you tell me that story."** Score the retell for story grammar. Acceptable prompts (up to 3x): "Are you finished?" "It's OK. Just do your best." "I can't help you, but you can just tell the parts you remember."

Element	Score 2	Score 1	Score 0	Score
Character	Jordan	a boy	he, him, or no name	(2)(1)(0)
Setting	at school, realizing he left his science poster board at home	at school	no location or activity	(2)(1)(0)
Problem (P)	presentation starts in 25 minutes; poster board is at home a mile away	he forgot something important for class	no problem	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling	alarmed / felt cold certainty settle over him	alarm moved through him with sudden, clarifying force	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan (PL)	pulled out his phone to call his mom	tried to call for help	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt (A)	called his mom twice; got voicemail both times	tried to reach his mom / called home	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (CP)	no answer; couldn't get help from his mom	nobody could help him	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling-2	stressed / desperate	stared at the screen / his group was counting on him	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan-2 (PL2)	lab partner said he should run; Jordan decided she was right	decided to get it	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt-2 (A2)	sprinted home, grabbed the poster board, and ran back	ran home and back	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (C)	walked through the door with four minutes to spare	made it back in time	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Ending (E)	sat down after presentation; felt relief; reflected on how it had worked out	finished the presentation / everything worked out	no ending	(2)(1)(0)
End Feeling	relieved / satisfied	somehow it had still worked out	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)

Score sentence complexity and vocabulary during retell and from audio recording.

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY (SC)	SC SCORE: /15
because / so that	(1)(1)(1)
when / while	(1)(1)(1)
after / before	(1)(1)(1)
since / however / although	(1)(1)(1)
(N) that / which / who	(1)(1)(1)

VOCABULARY COMPLEXITY (VC)	VC SCORE: /10
urgent	(1)
perceives	(1)
accelerating	(1)
reserves	(1)
	(1)
mobilize	(1)
redirects	(1)
certainty	(1)
composure	(1)
	(1)

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (EDC)

EDC SCORE: /3

SAY: "Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the story. Just do your best to answer what you remember." If the student asks for clarification, the question may be asked a second time but not reworded. Circle each point or detail mentioned.

Tell me everything you learned from the passage about how adrenaline affects the body during stress.	Tier-3: adrenaline / released when the brain perceives urgent stress	(1)
	Redirects blood flow to limbs / improves muscle response and mobilizes energy reserves	(1)
	General concept (e.g., your body gets a burst of energy when you're stressed)	(1)

THEME

SAY: "In one or two sentences, tell me the lesson or message of this passage."

- ☐ **Complete** states the lesson or message clearly and accurately.
- ☐ **Partial** hints at the message but stays vague or names a related idea rather than the central one.
- ☐ **Detail-only** retells events or names a character/action instead of stating a message.
- ☐ **Absent** no response, "I don't know," or off-topic.

NLM QUESTIONS

VOCABULARY & MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS (VMA)

VMA SCORE: /8

perceives takes in through the senses; grasps or understands

1 SAY: "What does *perceives* mean?" 1 ½ 0

1: takes in through the senses · notices · grasps or understands ·
½: sees · thinks about · feels · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in *perceives* that help you know what it means?" (per-, ceive) 1 0

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in *perceives* are per- and ceive. Now, what do you think *perceives* means?" ½ 0

↳ If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what *perceives* means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story explains that when the brain *perceives* urgent stress, it triggers the release of adrenaline. What does *perceives* mean?" ½ 0

↳ If vague ("gets"): "What else does *perceives* mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does *perceives* mean (a) takes in through the senses or understands, (b) completely ignores or blocks out, or (c) walks past?" ½ 0

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of *perceive* by adding a prefix or suffix." 1 0

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence." 1 0

unsustainable cannot be kept going; impossible to maintain

1 SAY: "What does *unsustainable* mean?" 1 ½ 0

1: can't be kept going · impossible to maintain over time · won't last
½: bad for the environment · unhealthy long-term · draining · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in *unsustainable* that help you know what it means?" (un-, sustain, -able) 1 0

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in *unsustainable* are un-, sustain, and -able. Now, what do you think *unsustainable* means?" ½ 0

↳ If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what *unsustainable* means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story says Jordan's burst of intense effort would otherwise be physiologically *unsustainable* indefinitely. What does *unsustainable* mean?" ½ 0

↳ If vague ("bad"): "What else does *unsustainable* mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does *unsustainable* mean (a) impossible to keep going, (b) easy to maintain for a long time, or (c) very colorful?" ½ 0

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of *sustain* by adding a prefix or suffix." 1 0

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence." 1 0

INFERENCEAL REASONING & CRITICAL THINKING (IRCT)

IRCT SCORE: /6

Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
Why do you think Jordan decided to sprint home even though he wasn't sure he had enough time? What does this decision suggest about how he weighed the certain cost of trying against the certain cost of not trying?	Jordan believed the group would fail without the poster and that he was personally responsible for the error — physical effort, even risky, was preferable to the certainty of failure. He chose action because passivity would guarantee the outcome he didn't want. Some people would rather fail while trying than fail while doing nothing.	He didn't want the group to fail / he wanted to try even if it might not work	Unrelated / no response	2 1 0
The writer describes the cold air as "cutting against his face like something unrelenting." What does this comparison suggest about how Jordan experienced the sprint?	The word "unrelenting" makes the cold feel like an active opponent rather than passive weather — as if the air were pursuing him or resisting his effort. Comparing it to something aggressive rather than passive shows that Jordan experienced the run as combat: the environment itself was pushing back on him, matching the intensity of his effort with equal force.	The cold made the run harder / it felt like something was fighting him	Unrelated / no response	2 1 0
At the end, Jordan reflects that he had "remembered everything except the one thing he was supposed to bring." What does his choice of words suggest about how he understood the experience afterward?	The phrasing carries quiet self-directed irony rather than pride. Jordan recognizes that his elaborate preparation was undone by one small oversight. He isn't celebrating the sprint; the thoroughness of his other preparation makes the single missing item feel more embarrassing, not less. The ending shows rueful selfawareness rather than triumph.	He sees the irony of forgetting one small thing / he knows it almost failed because of a small mistake	Unrelated / no response	

METACOGNITION (MC)

MC SCORE:

/6

Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
1. Why do you think Jordan focused on "the next block" rather than the full distance when he was running back?	Breaking a large challenge into smaller pieces makes it psychologically manageable. Jordan knew that thinking about the full distance would feel overwhelming and slow him down, so he focused on what was immediately in front of him.	Thinking about the whole run would have been too much	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
2. Why do you think Jordan was able to keep sprinting even when his lungs were burning and his stride was shortening?	The body sends distress signals before it actually fails — burning lungs and shortening stride were warnings, not endpoints. Jordan's determination pushed past those warnings because the goal mattered enough.	He wanted it badly enough to push through	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
3. Why do you think it was Jordan's lab partner — not Jordan himself — who first recognized that he needed to run home for the poster?	Jordan was fixated on the plan that wasn't working — his mind was stuck on the failed calls to his mom. His lab partner, watching from outside, could see the shape of the whole situation and recognize that the plan needed to change.	She saw what he couldn't see	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)

NLM READING BENCHMARK – COMPOSITE SCORE

Reading Fluency (CWPM) = _____

Sentence Complexity (SC) = _____

Vocabulary Complexity (VC) = _____

Expository Discourse Complexity (EDC) = _____

Vocabulary & Morphological Awareness (VMA) = _____

Inferential Reasoning & Critical Thinking (IRCT) = _____

Metacognition (MC) = _____

COMPOSITE SCORE

(sum of raw scores above)

Cut point for academic concern:
High Risk: ≤ 77
Moderate Risk: 78-126

Low Risk: ≥ 127

.92 AUC / 94% Sensitivity / 82% Specificity

DDM – DECODING INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)

DI SCORE: /88

Administer only if oral reading fluency was a concern. Display the appropriate Decoding Inventory page from the benchmark stimulus book.

SAY: “Please read these words. They are not real words.” Point to the first word. Corrective prompt (1× max): “Remember, these are not real words.”

HOW TO SCORE. Any acceptable sound counts as correct; underline the entire word if blended correctly; circle the bolded targets blended correctly (read as one syllable). Target correct = 1 point; whole word correct = 1 point. **Words in Black Box** = benchmark words; Words outside box = extended set.

TARGET: Closed Syllables

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

min sal jom vun quim whav fap deg gib les pag rud tus baf shil het wan kex zick chom thuz vill cass noff

TARGET: Vowel-Consonant-E

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

naze gude mepe sule wonkide atane jime tebe goke fene vome rame sove

TARGET: Basic Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

hezes pafed senest bruful temness premiv foting unron repog miver dutless giply

TARGET: Vowel Teams

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

feep naig touv keat heag goupalk zay loak zoon soud wook poig shaw hieb roef zow bewk pauk

TARGET: Vowel-R-Controlled

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

klar ner foarp mour lare lirparg tor wir ploor rark zair kear zur theer glier searc lourt vour store

TARGET: Advanced Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

mubtion discla gobic mavible gopture gepous bimog trizom nonplut zikable misdut transbub uniuquin virupt

TARGET: Complex Vowels

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

vind nild zough keigh glaught kighdost vost grold figh pight wought pough klaugh

TARGET: Advanced Word Forms

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

wecent smink lomb glistle ohong grombacent brism grunk mank ghosl fute

Marco knelt on the cold concrete floor of the family garage, his hands resting on the hood of his grandfather's truck. Dawn was still an hour away, and the air carried the pervasive smell of motor oil and weathered timber. He needed the engine running before six o'clock for his first shift at the warehouse, and the urgency of that deadline pressed against him like a hand at his back.

Determined not to surrender, he turned the key, and the truck responded with a hollow, reverberant click — a sound suggesting electrical failure rather than mechanical. Marco lifted the hood and examined the engine with methodical attention, tracing each connection until he identified the battery terminals as the most probable cause. He spent several minutes cleaning them carefully before trying again, but the truck only groaned and shuddered like something refusing to wake, with a reluctance that told him the problem ran considerably deeper.

Discouragement intensified into dread as the sky outside began to lighten perceptibly. He recalled what his grandfather had spent years teaching him: that a combustion engine depends on a precise sequence of events occurring in unison. The battery delivers an electrical current to the starter motor, which rotates the crankshaft. As the crankshaft turns, it draws a compressed mixture of fuel and air into the cylinders. Spark plugs then ignite that mixture, producing the controlled combustion that sustains the engine. If the terminals were functioning, the spark plugs were the logical next cause.

Marco retrieved each plug with deliberate precision and scrubbed them with a wire brush from the workbench, then reinstalled them and turned the key. The engine caught with a deep, rattling cough that gradually steadied into a low, resonant rumble. It sounded as familiar and grounding as a voice he had been afraid he would never hear again.

His mother appeared at the passenger window, her expression holding quiet recognition, and said softly, "He would be proud." Marco nodded, his throat too tight for words, and eased the truck into reverse. The first pale light was breaking over the ridge as he pulled out into the morning — the engine rumbling steadily beneath him, a sound that felt less like a machine and more like a life shifting into gear.

Child Name/ID _____ Audio File _____ Examiner _____ Date _____

DECODING FLUENCY · ORAL READING

Place the passage in front of the student. **SAY: "Please read this out loud. Do your very best reading. I'll help you if you need it. When you're done, I might read some of the passage to you and then I will ask you to tell me the story."**

Put a slash [/] through incorrect words (mispronunciations, substitutions, skipped words). If the student fails to read a word after 3 seconds, say the word and mark it incorrect. Self-corrections within 3 sec., repetitions, and insertions are not errors. If the student struggles significantly, you may finish reading after 1 minute, then administer the DDM after the retell and questions.

1	Marco knelt on the cold concrete floor of the family garage, his hands resting on the hood	17
2	of his grandfather's truck. Dawn was still an hour away, and the air carried the pervasive smell	34
3	of motor oil and weathered timber. He needed the engine running before six o'clock for his first shift	52
4	at the warehouse, and the urgency of that deadline pressed against him like a hand at his back.	70
5	Determined not to surrender, he turned the key, and the truck responded with a hollow, reverberant click	87
6	— a sound suggesting electrical failure rather than mechanical. Marco lifted the hood and examined the engine	103
7	with methodical attention, tracing each connection until he identified the battery terminals as the most probable	119
8	cause. He spent several minutes cleaning them carefully before trying again, but the truck only groaned and	136
9	shuddered like something refusing to wake, with a reluctance that told him the problem ran considerably deeper.	153
10	Discouragement intensified into dread as the sky outside began to lighten perceptibly. He recalled what his	169
11	grandfather had spent years teaching him: that a combustion engine depends on a precise sequence of events	186
12	occurring in unison. The battery delivers an electrical current to the starter motor, which rotates the	202
13	crankshaft. As the crankshaft turns, it draws a compressed mixture of fuel and air into the cylinders.	219
14	Spark plugs then ignite that mixture, producing the controlled combustion that sustains the engine. If the	235
15	terminals were functioning, the spark plugs were the logical next cause.	246
16	Marco retrieved each plug with deliberate precision and scrubbed them with a wire brush from the workbench,	263
17	then reinstalled them and turned the key. The engine caught with a deep, rattling cough that gradually	280
18	steadied into a low, resonant rumble. It sounded as familiar and grounding as a voice he had	297
19	been afraid he would never hear again.	304
20	His mother appeared at the passenger window, her expression holding quiet recognition, and said softly, "He would	321
21	be proud." Marco nodded, his throat too tight for words, and eased the truck into reverse. The	338
22	first pale light was breaking over the ridge as he pulled out into the morning — the	354
23	engine rumbling steadily beneath him, a sound that felt less like a machine and more like a	371
24	life shifting into gear.	375

CWPM

Words read in 1 min _____ – errors _____ = _____

ACCURACY

correct _____ ÷ total _____ = _____ %

PROSODY — select one

- ① Primarily word-by-word reading. No meaningful syntax.
- ② Primarily 2-word phrases. Awkward word groupings.
- ③ Primarily 3-to-4 word phrases. Mostly appropriate phrasing and syntax.
- ④ Meaningful phrases. Appropriate syntax. Expressive interpretation.

NLM RETELL · NARRATIVE DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (NDC)

NDC SCORE: /26

After the student reads the entire passage, take the student's copy away and **SAY: "Thank you for reading and listening. Now you tell me that story."** Score the retell for story grammar. Acceptable prompts (up to 3x): "Are you finished?" "It's OK. Just do your best." "I can't help you, but you can just tell the parts you remember."

Element	Score 2	Score 1	Score 0	Score
Character	Marco	a boy / a teenager	he, him, or no name	(2)(1)(0)
Setting	in the family garage before dawn, trying to fix his grandfather's truck	in a garage / fixing a truck	no location or activity	(2)(1)(0)
Problem (P)	truck wouldn't start; he needed it running by 6 a.m. for his first warehouse shift	the truck was broken / he needed to get to work	no problem	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling	determined / anxious / urgent	urgency of the deadline pressed against him	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan (PL)	decided the problem was the battery; tested connections and cleaned terminals	thought it was the battery	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt (A)	spent several minutes cleaning the battery terminals; tried the key again	cleaned the battery / worked on the engine	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (CP)	truck groaned but still refused to start	it still didn't work	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Feeling-2	discouraged / dread	discouragement intensified as the sky began to lighten	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)
Plan-2 (PL2)	remembered how a combustion engine works; realized spark plugs were next	thought about the engine / tried the spark plugs	no plan or internal thought	(2)(1)(0)
Attempt-2 (A2)	retrieved each spark plug, scrubbed with a wire brush, reinstalled them	cleaned the spark plugs / tried again	no attempt	(2)(1)(0)
Consequence (C)	engine caught and steadied into a familiar rumble	the truck started	no consequence	(2)(1)(0)
Ending (E)	eased the truck into reverse; pulled out as first light broke over the ridge	drove away / left the garage	no ending	(2)(1)(0)
End Feeling	throat too tight for words / nodded without speaking	relieved / proud	no feeling or behavior	(2)(1)(0)

Score sentence complexity and vocabulary during retell and from audio recording.

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY (SC)	SC SCORE: /15
because / so that	(1)(1)(1)
when / while	(1)(1)(1)
after / before	(1)(1)(1)
since / however / although	(1)(1)(1)
(N) that / which / who	(1)(1)(1)

VOCABULARY COMPLEXITY (VC)	VC SCORE: /10
deliberate	(1) hollow (1)
combustion	(1) groaned (1)
discouragement	(1) shuddered (1)
resonant	(1) methodical (1)
	(1)

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE COMPLEXITY (EDC)

EDC SCORE: /3

SAY: "Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the story. Just do your best to answer what you remember." If the student asks for clarification, the question may be asked a second time but not reworded. Circle each point or detail mentioned.

Tell me everything you learned from the passage about how a combustion engine starts.	Tier-3: crankshaft / starter motor rotates it to draw in fuel-air mixture	(1)
	Tier-3: spark plugs / ignite the compressed fuel-air mixture	(1)
	General concept (e.g., the battery starts a chain of events that runs the engine)	(1)

THEME

SAY: "In one or two sentences, tell me the lesson or message of this passage."

- ☐ **Complete** states the lesson or message clearly and accurately.
- ☐ **Partial** hints at the message but stays vague or names a related idea rather than the central one.
- ☐ **Detail-only** retells events or names a character/action instead of stating a message.
- ☐ **Absent** no response, "I don't know," or off-topic.

NLN QUESTIONS

VOCABULARY & MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS (VMA)

VMA SCORE: /8

spreading through everything

1 SAY: "What does *pervasive* mean?" (1) (½) (0)

1: spread everywhere · running through everything · widespread throughout · ½: strong · everywhere in one place · common in the air · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in *pervasive* that help you know what it means?" (*per-*, *vas*) (1) (0)

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in *pervasive* are *per-* and *vas*. Now, what do you think *pervasive* means?" (½) (0)

↳ If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what *pervasive* means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story describes the *pervasive* smell of motor oil and weathered timber. What does *pervasive* mean?" (½) (0)

↳ If vague ("strong"): "What else does *pervasive* mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does *pervasive* mean (a) spreading through everything, (b) stuck in one small spot, or (c) very tall?" (½) (0)

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of *pervade* by adding a prefix or suffix." (1) (0)

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence." (1) (0)

intensified

became stronger; made more intense

1 SAY: "What does *intensified* mean?" (1) (½) (0)

1: became stronger · grew more intense · increased in force · ½: got louder · sped up · got hotter · 0: incorrect

2a SAY: "What are the parts in *intensified* that help you know what it means?" (*in-*, *tens*, *-ify*) (1) (0)

2b If 2a is 0, teach and re-ask: "The parts in *intensified* are *in-*, *tens*, and *-ify*. Now, what do you think *intensified* means?" (½) (0)

↳ If the student names only the root or base, ask: "Can you explain what *intensified* means?" Score the follow-up.

2c If 2b is 0, SAY: "The story says Marco's discouragement *intensified* into dread as the sky darkened. What does *intensified* mean?" (½) (0)

↳ If vague ("stronger"): "What else does *intensified* mean?"

2d If 2c is 0, SAY: "Does *intensified* mean (a) became stronger or more forceful, (b) grew weaker or faded, or (c) was painted a color?" (½) (0)

3a SAY: "Make a new word out of *intense* by adding a prefix or suffix." (1) (0)

3b If a new word given, SAY: "Use _____ in a sentence." (1) (0)

INFERENTIAL REASONING & CRITICAL THINKING (IRCT)

IRCT SCORE: /6

Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
Marco initially believed the failed click meant an electrical problem, but this diagnosis turned out to be wrong. What does his initial misreading suggest about how symptoms and causes relate in real-world problem-solving?	Symptoms often point to plausible but incorrect causes. Marco's diagnosis was reasonable — the sound genuinely suggested electrical failure — but the truck's actual problem was elsewhere. Real problem-solving requires being willing to abandon a defensible first theory when the evidence keeps not matching, rather than escalating attempts on the same wrong track.	He was wrong at first / surface clues can mislead you	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)
The passage ends by comparing the engine's rumble to "a life shifting into gear." What does this comparison suggest about what the truck has come to represent for Marco?	The truck is no longer just a machine — it has become a symbol of Marco's own life beginning to move. The moment of the engine catching mirrors Marco stepping into adult responsibility: his first job, his grandfather's absence, his mother's recognition all converge on it. The comparison transforms a mechanical success into a coming-of-age moment.	The truck represents his life moving forward / it means more than just a truck	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)
The mother says only "He would be proud" — a brief line at a specific moment. What does the timing and simplicity of these words suggest about their weight?	The mother's brevity carries force because more words would diminish the moment. She doesn't explain, elaborate, or celebrate — she names what Marco already knows but couldn't say himself. Her line is a witness: it confirms that his private effort belongs to something larger, and that his grandfather's presence lives in what Marco just did.	She said it quietly because it meant a lot / she recognized what he had done	Unrelated / no response	(2)(1)(0)

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METACOGNITION (MC)

MC SCORE:

/6

Question	Proficient (2)	Emergent (1)	Not Yet Proficient (0)	Score
1. Why do you think Marco tried the simplest possibility first (the battery) rather than starting with a full mental model of how the engine works?	Reaching for the easiest possibility requires less cognitive effort than working through a whole system. Marco knew the whole engine sequence from the beginning, but only drew on it after the fast attempt failed.	We try easy things first	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
2. Why do you think the mother's brief words — "He would be proud" — mattered so much to Marco, even though he had already fixed the truck by that point?	Fixing the truck alone would have been enough practically, but the mother's words transformed a private success into a shared one. When someone we trust names what we've done and connects it to something meaningful, the achievement changes.	Being recognized makes it feel real	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)
3. Marco used his grandfather's knowledge to solve the problem even though his grandfather wasn't there to guide him. Why do you think knowledge from someone who taught us can stay with us so completely that we can access it long after they're gone?	Deep teaching doesn't stay as an external memory; over time, it becomes internalized as our own way of thinking. Marco isn't remembering his grandfather word-for-word — he's using patterns of thought his grandfather instilled through years of practice.	What a teacher taught you stays with you	Unrelated / no response.	(2)(1)(0)

NLM READING BENCHMARK – COMPOSITE SCORE

Reading Fluency (CWPM) = _____
 Sentence Complexity (SC) = _____
 Vocabulary Complexity (VC) = _____
 Expository Discourse Complexity (EDC) = _____
 Vocabulary & Morphological Awareness (VMA) = _____
 Inferential Reasoning & Critical Thinking (IRCT) = _____
 Metacognition (MC) = _____
COMPOSITE SCORE
 (sum of raw scores above)

Cut point for academic concern:

High Risk: ≤ 77

Moderate Risk: 78-126

Low Risk: ≥ 127

.92 AUC / 94% Sensitivity / 82% Specificity

DDM – DECODING INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)

DI SCORE: /88

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HOW TO SCORE. Any acceptable sound counts as correct; underline the entire word if blended correctly; circle the bolded targets blended correctly (read as one syllable). Target correct = 1 point; whole word correct = 1 point. **Words in Black Box** = benchmark words; Words outside box = extended set.

TARGET: Closed Syllables

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

min sal jom vun quim whav fap deg gib les pag rud tus baf shil het wan kex zick chom thuz vill cass noff

TARGET: Vowel-Consonant-E

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

naze gude mepe sule wonkide atane jime tebe goke fene vome rame sove

TARGET: Basic Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

hezes pafed senest bruful temness premiv foting unron repog miver dutless giply

TARGET: Vowel Teams

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

feep naig touv keat heag goupalk zay loak zoon soud wook poig shaw hieb roef zow bewk pauk

TARGET: Vowel-R-Controlled

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

klar ner foarp mour lare lirparg tor wir ploor rark zair kear zur theer glier searc lourt vour store

TARGET: Advanced Affixes

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 6

mubtion discla gobic mavible gopture gepous bimog trizom nonplut zikable misdut transbub uniuquin virupt

TARGET: Complex Vowels

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

vind nild zough keigh glaught kighdost vost grold figh pight wought pough klaugh

TARGET: Advanced Word Forms

WHOLE WORDS
BLENDED CORRECTLY = 6

CORRECT
TARGETS = 7

wecent smink lomb glistle ohong grombacent brism grunk mank ghosl fute