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Analyzing Student Data – Sarah

Based on the assessments provided, I will give my best recommendations for future goals and instructional strategies that will help Sarah, a fourth grader, meet specific Common Core State Standards for her grade level.

The first assessment I took a look at was Sarah's Narrative assessment from "Johnny Appleseed". This assessment is an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) that will measure whether Sarah falls under the independent, instructional, or frustration level. After the results are read, it will show her "accuracy of word recognition and success in answering comprehension questions posed orally by the teacher" (McKenna and Stahl, 2015, p.45). Further instructional strategies will then be used to focus on what she needs to succeed in reading future academic leveled text. On the left side of the IRI, it says that Sarah scored 8/12 when answering the concept questions which showed that she was unfamiliar with the text. Although she falls into the middle range for fourth grade, her comprehension answers were less than satisfactory. Sarah received a 5/8 as the number of answers correct for the comprehension part. Sarah would fall under the frustration level when it comes to answering comprehension questions about the text.

The second assessment I took a look at was Sarah's Expository IRI titled, "Early Railroads". Once again an IRI measures how well Sarah can read and answer questions about a specific text. When answering the concept questions at the beginning it is unclear whether Sarah is familiar or unfamiliar with the text since she scored a 6/12. She had a few miscues that

would negatively impact the meaning of the sentence. For example, Sarah misread the year 1830 to be “one thousand 3 hundred and 30”. Reading the year incorrectly changes the context of the sentence. Sarah received 6 miscues for both the total accuracy and acceptability, which puts her at the independent level. Sarah receives a 5/8 for the total number of questions answered correctly which puts her at the frustration level after reading this text.

Sarah was also given a spelling test using the words from the Elementary Spelling Inventory (ESI) assessment used on page 160 of McKenna and Stahl’s Assessment for Reading Instruction (2015). The ESI assesses which stage Sarah would fall under and whether earlier or more advanced stages of spelling should be focused on. She ended up spelling 18/25 words correctly. According to the Feature Guide and the Qualitative Checklist on page 161-162 of McKenna and Stahl (2015), I would rate Sarah in the middle to late Syllables and Affixes range. She was able to score a 5/5 in the middle column but only a 4/5 in the late column. Sarah missed the “ar” in “cellar” and also spelled it as “seller” using the “s” as the initial sound instead of a “c”.

Based on the evidence provided, I would like to work on the following two goals with Sarah. Sarah needs help in 1) implementing strategic reading strategies to comprehend reading text and 2) in oral language comprehension in order to connect background knowledge, vocabulary, and sentence structure to aid her in understanding of what was read. The Modified Cognitive Model used by McKenna and Stahl (2015) shows how automatic word recognition, text comprehension, and strategic reading can impact reading comprehension for students (p.8). McKenna and Stahl (2015) mentioned that “A child will have difficulties with comprehension if he or she had difficulty with any of these three components” (pg.8). By

looking at the model, the only way Sarah can achieve reading comprehension, is if she has strategic knowledge on how to read the text. In order to have strategic knowledge, she would need to have a specific purpose for reading a certain text, as well as, know that there are general purposes for reading a text in general. One general purpose to engage in reading at school might be to get a grade or participate in the reading activity. A specific purpose for reading an expository text would be to gain knowledge on a certain topic that is either familiar or unfamiliar where details would support the main idea(s).

The first goal I would like for Sarah to focus on is refining her comprehension strategies when reading informational text. Common Core State Standard (CCSS) RI.4.3 reads that students should be able to “Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts, in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why based on specific information in the text” (Reading Informational Text, November 24, 2015). When looking at her Expository QRI, Sarah had 6 miscues which gave her around 76 WPM and 74 CWPM. She falls into the middle range for the Oral Reading Rate when it comes to her grade level. She was only able to recall 2/57 ideas. After receiving 6 miscues, her total accuracy puts her at an independent level and her total acceptability would be at an independent level as well. I gave Sarah a 3/4 for the number of explicit questions correct and a 2/4 for the number of implicit answers correct. Sarah receives a 5/8 for the total number of questions answered correctly which puts her at the frustration level after reading this text.

The second goal for Sarah would be to focus on is fluency. According to the CCSS standard RF.4.4, students should be able to, “Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension” (Reading Foundational Skills, November 24, 2015). Once again using

her expository assessment, Sarah, misread the year 1830 as one thousand 8 hundred and 30. Had this been a passage about a math problem in a math class discussing the amount of something then 1830 would be exactly that, one thousand 8 hundred and 30. This passage however is an expository text she is using to gain information about the “Early Railroads” where years is the unit or timeframe used to discuss the main idea(s). Therefore, we are not talking about math in the amount of weight, we are talking about the history of railroads in its early years in an era or time frame. Again, when reading the total number of miles of railroad tracks at the time, Sarah read 3,000 miles as “3 hundred”. We want Sarah to be able to make sure she is using the right vocabulary that matches the context she is reading about.

When it comes to the narrative passage, “Johnny Appleseed”, Sarah also showed fluency issues when it came to reading a few of those sentences as well. Sarah had 11 miscues that were recorded. After using the equation provided on the Sarah’s IRI, her correct words per minute would be 71 WPM ($308 \times 60 = 18,480 / 259 \text{ seconds} = 71$). Her CWPM would be around 69 CWPM since $17,820 / 259 \text{ seconds} = 68.8$ or 69 CWPM. According to the Ranges for Oral Reading Rate Sarah would fall into the beginning middle range for fourth grade. Sarah scored a $3/4$ for explicit questions and a $2/4$ for implicit questions which give her a $5/8$ for the total questions answered correctly. Sarah would fall under the frustration level when it comes to answering comprehension questions about the text. Sarah would also add words that was not there. For example, Sarah misread the following sentence by putting her own words into it. The original sentence read, “So in 797, John decided to go west”. When reading the sentence, Sarah said, “So in 1797, John decided to go [to the] west [side]. Sarah even mentions this version of the sentence when retelling the story and answering one of the comprehension questions at

the end of the passage. By focusing on Sarah's fluency, we can make sure that she is reading the passages accurately and efficiently.

One comprehension strategy for Sarah that would increase her knowledge in using reading strategies successfully is "Main Idea Mania", an expository graphic organizer suggested by the Florida Center for Reading Research (November 24, 2015). This graphic organizer requires the student to write down the main topic or event, which in Sarah's IRI would be "Early Railroads". Students will then write down three sets of details that each talk about a specific topic in the passage. Lastly, students will write down the 3 main ideas from those three groups of details to conclude what the text is about. Sarah would then see what the main ideas of the passage were, the details that support those topics, and be able to answer questions about the text. This activity could be used as an independent activity or a partner activity during English Language Arts (ELA) instruction. I would suggest that the teacher models how to use the graphic organizer first and then allow partners to complete one together before making this an independent activity.

Another strategic comprehension strategy for Sarah would be to teach her multiple processes used to comprehend text. In Gambrell and Morrow's "Best Practices in Literacy Instruction" (2015) it was said by Reutzel, Smith, and Fawson that "Moreover, a direct comparison of an approach that involves teaching a single strategy at a time versus multiple comprehension processes within a short time has hinted that teaching multiple processes may better support students' informational text comprehension development" (p. 252). Figure 11.1 on page 252 in "Best Practices in Literacy Instruction" (2015) list a few strategies such as setting purpose for reading where readers think about what they want to accomplish by reading the

text and how they want to accomplish that goal (Gambrell and Morrow). The figure also suggests monitoring and fixing up comprehension in order to take action whenever there is a problem understanding the text by asking yourself does the text make sense, is the text being understood, and how could the text be understood better (Gambrell and Morrow, 2015, p. 252). One last strategy from Table 11.1 is to summarize the text by thinking about what was read and begin able to recall on main ideas and supporting details from specific sentences, paragraphs, and/or sentences (Gambrell and Morrow, 2015, p. 252).

An instructional strategy that would increase Sarah's fluency would be repeated reading (McKenna and Stahl, 2015, pg. 171-172). Repeated reading is when the teacher has the student read a 100 word excerpt from a passage and marking down all miscues. The teacher would then discuss the miscues with the student and have the student then read the passage again recording the updated assessment of any miscues. The student will continue to read the passage until zero to one miscues are achieved. By doing this, Sarah would improve her fluency skills more and more by constantly reading a passage until fluency is achieved. "Therefore, whatever attention they spend on one task (word recognition) is attention that is unavailable for another task (comprehension) (Gambrell and Morrow, 2015, p. 270).

One last strategy to increase Sarah's fluency when reading grade level text would be to engage in shared reading. "Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher" (Reading Rockets November 24, 2015). Through shared reading students get to get grade level text with a teacher and classmates that could sometimes pose as challenge and would be hard to read on their own. The teacher and students together could monitor reading

and making sure words are read fluently with accuracy and efficiency. It is my hope that Sarah would be able to benefit from this type of reading strategy to read with others as she checks her own accuracy when reading text.

References

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