Use this checklist to assess what stage of reading development a student has achieved based upon the skills they presently possess. This assessment can assist you in identifying what they should work on in order to advance to the next stage.

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| **Name:** | | **Skill Check Date:** |
| **STAGE 1 – Visual Cue Word Recognition**  This critical stage is the pre-reading stage, where children play with oral language, learn about the world around them and develop skills that they will later apply to learning to read. | | |
|  | Pretends to read books | |
|  | Labels objects in books | |
|  | Comments on characters in books | |
|  | Listens to stories | |
|  | Recognizes print in the environment (for example, company logos) | |
|  | Knows that it is the print that is read in stories, and not the pictures | |
|  | Understands and follows oral directions | |
|  | Is sensitive to some sequences of events in stories | |
|  | May begin to attend to rhyming words | |
|  | May identify a few letters, especially those from their own name | |
|  | May begin to attend to beginning sounds of words | |
| **STAGE 2 – Phonetic Cue Word Recognition**  Children learn to generate rhyming words and sentences with alliteration, are able to separate the beginning sound of a small word from the rest of the word, and begin to use letter and sound relationships to recognize words. | | |
|  | Knows the parts of a book and their functions | |
|  | Begins to track print when listening to text being read | |
|  | Recognizes and can name all uppercase and lowercase letters | |
|  | Understands the relationship between the sounds in a spoken word and the sequence of letters in the word when it is written down | |
|  | Learns most one-to-one letter sound correspondences | |
|  | Recognizes some words by sight, especially very common ones (a, the, I, my, you, is, are) | |
|  | Notices when simple sentences fail to make sense | |
|  | Makes predictions based on illustrations | |
|  | Can hear a word and separate it into the distinct sounds (mat = /m/-/a/-/t/) | |
|  | Given spoken words like “dan, dan, den” can identify the first two as being the same and the third as different | |
|  | Given spoken sets like “dak, pat, sen” can identify the first two as sharing the same middle sound | |
|  | Can merge spoken word parts into whole words (cow – boy = cowboy) | |
|  | Given a spoken word, can produce a rhyming word | |
| **STAGE 3 – Controlled Word Recognition**  During the Controlled Word Recognition stage, children acquire accurate word-recognition skills, meaning they are able to make use of all the letter information in a word. | | |
|  | Reads aloud with accuracy and comprehension any text that is appropriately designed for their level | |
|  | Uses letter-sound correspondence knowledge to sound out unknown words when reading text | |
|  | Recognizes common sight words (have, said, where, two) | |
|  | Monitors own reading and self-corrects when an incorrectly identified word does not fit with the surrounding the words | |
|  | Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level | |
|  | Discusses similarities in characters and events across grade appropriate stories | |
|  | Reads and understands simple written instructions | |
|  | Predicts and justifies what will happen next in stories | |
|  | Discusses prior knowledge of topics in expository texts designed to inform or instruct the reader | |
|  | Describes new information gained from texts in own words | |
| **STAGE 4 – Automatic Word Recognition**  As an Automatic Word reader, children can recognize words not only accurately but also with relatively little effort. This stage is all about the reader gaining control of reading processes. | | |
|  | Reads aloud with fluency any text that is appropriately designed for grade level | |
|  | Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction text that is appropriately designed for grade level | |
|  | Uses letter-sounds correspondence knowledge and structural analysis to decode unknown words | |
|  | Reads longer selections and beginning chapter books independently | |
|  | Can point to or clearly identify specific words or wordings that are causing comprehension difficulties | |
|  | Summarizes major points from text | |
|  | Distinguishes cause and effect, fact and opinion, main idea and supporting details | |
|  | Asks how, why, and what-if questions in interpreting nonfiction texts | |
|  | Uses prior knowledge and contextual cues to aid comprehension rather than word recognition | |
|  | Begins to learn from independent reading | |
|  | Listening comprehension is still stronger than reading comprehension | |
|  | Recognizes most words that are in their spoken vocabularies | |

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| **STAGE 5 – Strategic Reading**  In the Strategic Reading stage word recognition skills are automatic and children routinely use reading comprehension strategies, including a number of basic “fix up” strategies when they fail to understand something they read. | |
|  | Automatic word recognition and fluent reading |
|  | Reads aloud with fluency any text that is appropriately designed for grade level |
|  | Regularly uses strategies to aid comprehension |
|  | Selects the appropriate strategy to fit the need |
|  | Responds to increased demands of text |
|  | Reading comprehension is generally better than listening comprehension |
|  | Reads a wide variety of texts |
|  | Understands more than one point of view |
|  | Deals with more than one set of facts and theories, though integration may still be at a beginning level |
| **STAGE 6 – Proficient Adult Reading**  The defining feature of the Proficient Adult Reading stage involves highly developed comprehension abilities, which depend on highly skilled word recognition. At this stage readers are insightful, analytical and reflective. | |
|  | Highly skilled word-recognition abilities |
|  | Highly developed comprehension abilities |
|  | Can make higher-order connections within and across texts |
|  | Integrates knowledge from a wide variety of sources |
|  | Selects text to match need |
|  | Constructs new ideas and knowledge from reading |
|  | Difficult text can be grappled with successfully |
|  | Handles increasingly complex vocabulary |
|  | High level comprehension is often domain or subject specific |
| **Overall Comments:** | |
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