**Glossary of Terms**

**These terms may be helpful in understanding some of the technical language of assessment**.

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| Alternative forms: | More than one version of the assessment and can be used to compare a student’s performance over time |
| Assessment: | The process of collecting information for the purposes of (1) specifying and verifying problems and (2) making important educational decisions about students |
| Commercially Published: | Assessment materials that are copyrighted, widely reproduced by a publisher, and sold through catalogs and book orders. |
| Criterion-referenced | Current performance referenced to some criterion, such as grade cutoff (e.g., score of 50 required for a pass); mastery (e.g., score of 80 required for mastery); minimum competency (score of 620 required for certification). |
| Diagnostic | Assessment results that provide an analysis of student strengths and areas of reading improvement that are used in developing intervention strategies. |
| Evaluation: | The process of analyzing quantitative or qualitative descriptions of student performance & deriving value judgments according to the desirability of the results. |
| Grade-equivalent score | An estimate of the grade level corresponding to a given student’s raw score – a highly dubious norm whose and its use is officially discouraged by the International Reading Association |
| Group administered: | An assessment that can be provided to more than one child at a time. |
| Individually administered: | An assessment that is provided to one child at a time. |
| Informal measure: | An assessment in which the procedures for administering and scoring the measure are provided in general terms. Individuals who administer informal assessments do not generally follow scripted procedures. |
| Oral responding: | An assessment that requires students to respond to test items (e.g. naming letters, reading connected text, or answering comprehension questions) out loud. |
| Percentile rank | Percentage of children the same age whose scores a given child’s equals or exceeds. (This is an approximate definition, not the one used in computation.) Percentile ranks cannot be averaged. |
| Production type responses: | An assessment that requires students to respond to test items (e.g. reading aloud or writing spelling words) for general evaluation, rather than to point to or select the correct answer. |
| Progress monitoring: | Repeated assessment of a skill area or areas, over time, to evaluation individual progress. Assessment results are sensitive to small changes in student performance, quick and easy to administer, and include alternative forms for repeated measurement. |
| Quartile | One quarter of the norming group, permitting a given child’s score to be grossly categorized as falling in one of four sections. |
| Research-based: | Findings and results reported on the assessments and derived from carefully controlled, methodologically sound, and representative sample of the population. Variations or limits in generalizability are reported. Findings have been replicated. |
| Running record: | Analysis over time of student oral reading errors. |
| Scale score: | A statistically converted score, usually computed to combine the results of different tests or to weight items differently. |
| Screening: | Assessment results that are used primarily to determine an initial level of student strengths and areas for improvement. Often used to determine whether further assessment is needed or it the assessment is appropriate for the student. |
| Sensitive to growth over time: | Dynamic assessment that can capture small changes in student performance is considered sensitive to growth. Alternative forms of the same task administered frequently are likely to show growth over time. |
| Skill grouping: | Assessment results that can be used to identify students with similar strengths and areas for improvement for placement into homogenous instructional groups. |
| Standardized instructions: | Scripted procedures for administering and scoring or the assessment are repeated verbatim for each student who takes the test. The conditions and directions are consistent across administrations. |
| Stanine: | One of nine statistically comparable divisions of the population tested, with the fifth positioned in the middle of the normal curve and accounting for 20% of those tested. (Short for “standard nine.” |
| Timed: | Students have a specified number of seconds or minutes to completed and assessment task. Examiners use a stop watch or clock to verify the time students take to complete the assessment task. |