

## Dear North Carolina Principals and LEA Leaders,

Wireless Generation would like to thank you for your continuing support for the Governor's Initiative. Your teachers have asked in-depth and exceptional questions during our recent mCLASS:Reading 3D Data Analysis sessions. We have included four of the most pertinent Q & A reflections below for you to reference in your PLC conversations.

### First: Written Comprehension

Written comprehension is to be completed after the student has read the entire story. After the teacher has completed listening to the short passage for the TRC reading record (approximately 150 words), the student is to take the book and the corresponding Written Comprehension Questions to a quiet spot to complete reading the story. They are to complete reading the story and answering the questions by themselves.

- 1.) Teachers want to know: Can we explain a literary term, such as main idea or character traits, in the questioning that the child does not understand?
  - a. If the child is below expectations or at the frustration level, there is no reason to complete the written comprehension, because you have the information that is needed to inform instruction. If the literary term is grade appropriate, there is no need to provide the support. For a child in fourth grade who should understand certain literary terms, it would not be appropriate to provide an explanation of the vocabulary in the questions.
  - b. Explain the literary term when the child is not expected to know a certain term such as "character traits", when a 1<sup>st</sup> semester -1<sup>st</sup> grade student is reading at 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. Provide support when the child is above expectations (and you're looking for information beyond what the test is allowing) --because you need the higher level information to make instructional decisions.

### Second: Scripting for younger students who read well

- 2.) Teachers want to know if they can script the answers for older than Kindergarten students.
  - a) Students who have trouble writing should dictate their responses to the written comprehension questions. ("Trouble" would include: phrases rather than complete sentences, brevity, poor elaboration of details, grammar and/or penmanship.) Do not read the question to the student. If they can read the passage, they should be able to read the question. Write down exactly what the student says, and prompt the student for more information. Allowing students to dictate their responses gives them the opportunity to show their thinking without being constrained by fine motor complications. Accommodations should be noted for understanding of the data.

- b) However, the student's age and expectations should be kept in mind when making this decision. While this may be appropriate for high-performing students (K and 1<sup>st</sup> semester 1<sup>st</sup> grade students generally) who don't yet have the motor skills to write. It is desirable to find appropriately challenging text to keep these high performers engaged.
- c) It is a different situation to do this for a child who has a grade-level expectation to be able to understand a piece of text well enough to write about it. If the child is able to circumvent the writing portion, then that student is not held to the same standard and the cutpoint goals will not be valid. In addition, the EOY performance will not match the semester's progress monitoring scores. Invalid information for instruction does not help any student or teacher.
- d) Some may argue that comprehension of text and writing are two completely different skills. However, a student who understands text easily frees up the cognitive resources necessary for writing. Being able to write about a piece of text demonstrates a level of understanding, even if the child struggles with penmanship.

### Third: Written Comprehension –a part of Benchmark and not Progress Monitoring

- 3.) Teachers say: The written comprehension portion of the TRC sometimes stops our students at a certain levels on Benchmark, but this does not happen on Progress Monitoring, when written comprehension is not administered. Do you have any suggestions about how to handle this?
  - a) We don't Progress Monitor using written comprehension, therefore when we Progress Monitor on our "between Benchmark" schedule, our student's reading levels are higher than they were at the last Benchmark due to the strength of the Written Comprehension assessment. We accept this information to use as a quick reference to guide our instructional focus on writing, outside of the error pattern analysis information that we just gathered.
  - b) We should look at growth from Benchmark to Benchmark, using the Progress Monitoring in-between for instructional purposes. We should be instructing our students using the Written Comprehension terms prior the next Benchmark so the students show growth.
  - c) Formative assessment is most powerful when the results are used to inform instruction. In this example, writing is identified as an area of instruction for this student. The teacher should write in the NOTE section for TRC and check Response Pattern Observations on the mobile device to document the details of Written Comprehension for instruction.

#### Fourth: Below grade level Progress Monitoring and Fidelity Reports

- 4.) If teachers follow Best Practices in identifying and instructing students where skill gaps occur, they should also Progress Monitor those skill areas (to understand the effect of the instruction). This is what we call Progress Monitoring students below the grade level “critical skill”. Will the PM Fidelity Reports show the teacher to be deficit in completing their work? Will they be identified as “tardy” and/or the charts show their students as having not been progress monitored at all?
- a) All Progress Monitoring is included in the fidelity reports. We do not filter off-grade for PM.
  - b) Off-skill progress monitoring is definitely included in the PM fidelity reporting. The Reporting and Analysis Suite does not filter any off-grade or non-critical skills. We determine fidelity, based on all the PM data given to us by the DIBELS application.
  - c) Lastly, as we work together to document student performance in a standardized format, we must be aware of the availability to document unique individual responses by using the Notes and Response Pattern Observations Areas of our mCLASS:Reading 3D assessment. With this assessment tool we can guide explicit, targeted instruction based on and adjusted by the student responses that we gather.

Your time and support are essential to the success of your students. Our excitement grows concerning the impact on student learning that our joint Data Analysis can provide, especially when teamed with that targeted Intervention in the classroom.

With professional focus and anticipation of future conversations,

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Consultant and trainer

Representing the Wireless Generation Staff in service to the students of North Carolina