

# ORAL LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

## Set 1

### TYPE

1	<i>The puppy's tail is curly.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>Mummy is making a cake.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<i>The teacher told them a story.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>There are the children.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<i>She's eating her lunch slowly.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub total

## Set 2

### TYPE

1	<i>That red bike over there used to be my uncle's.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>The girl in the car is waving her hand.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<i>Over the weekend Jade brought us some biscuits.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>Here are the machines that dig the big holes.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<i>The bird built a nest up in the tree.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub total

## Set 3

### TYPE

1	<i>Be ready to come inside when the bell rings.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>The car and the truck were carrying some large boxes.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<i>The brave fireman showed our class the big red truck.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>There are the men who clean the playground at our school.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<i>My friend likes to sleep at my house in the Christmas holidays.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sub total

**TOTAL SCORE**

## Oral Language Assessment

### About This Assessment

The Oral Language Assessment provides a quick and easy way to determine what structures of oral English students understand and control. This assessment is appropriate for all students in grades K-3. The series of sentences in this assessment reflect *some* of the structures of adult English language that are common to school and classroom settings. The sentences increase in complexity within each set; sentences in Sets 2 and 3 use the identical five language structures as in Set 1, but with increasingly complicated phrases and clauses. This assessment measures a student's *receptive* language. As students repeat sentences of increasing structural complexity, the teacher notes any substitutions, omissions, transpositions, or expansions of words and phrases that occur when the sentences become too difficult. These observations become the basis for intensive oral-language development. They also help teachers tailor the instructional language used when working directly with these students.

The language structures in this assessment are vital for students to understand if they are to understand classroom instructions, discussions, and stories. In general, students whose first language is English should be able to repeat all 15 sentences correctly in every detail by the age of six.

### How to Administer

1. Be certain that you have the student's full attention throughout this assessment. If the student loses focus, reestablish focus before continuing.
2. Read each sentence to the student using the phrasing indicated by the italics. Speak clearly, with natural tone and pace.
3. Familiarize the student with the testing procedure. Tell the student, *I am going to read some sentences and I would like you to say them after me. Let's begin.*
  - *Sally is walking to her house.* OK, try this one.
  - *Where are you going?* OK. Say these ....
4. Begin at Set 1. Administer the sentences in order from 1 to 5. Record the student's repetition of the sentences directly on the scoring sheet, much as one would record a reading record. Continue to Set 2 and Set 3 in the same way.

## **Scoring and Analyzing**

Score one point for each sentence repeated correctly *in every detail*.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Stage of language development in relation to reading</b>
0-4	Pre-emergent readers - indicates limited oral English  Oral language development should be at the centre of work done with these students; need extended conversation with fluent language users; benefit from hearing simple stories read aloud in small group settings; need encouragement to draw on background knowledge to predict what will happen, follow a simple story line and check their predictions with what actually happens
5-7	Early emergent readers– are developing a stronger command of the structures of oral English  Need opportunities to work with simple texts – will be relying mainly on memory and illustrations; need activities that help them articulate their thoughts, have them written down, and then reading their own constructions.
8-12	Emergent readers–  need continued work in oral language development – need to read and reread familiar texts; are starting to match the written word with the spoken word; developing concepts about print and letter-sound relationships.
13-15	Beginning readers –  Still require explicit oral language development; provide opportunities for prolonged discussions in small-group settings; the development of text comprehension is dependent on their growing listening comprehension; engage in reading stories to these students in small groups to encourage discussion about the text

## **Implications for Instruction**

Students with delays in oral English have difficulty because they have to learn so many new things about language at once. When students enter school with language delays as defined by assessment tools such as the Oral Language Assessment, a two-pronged approach is required.

### **1. One-to-One Conversations**

Make sure these students have daily opportunities to engage with adults in two-way conversation. If these students do not have these opportunities, the likelihood of progressing sufficiently to support reading development is greatly diminished. These opportunities are vital to the development of language and learning. This non-threatening environment encourages the risk-taking and trial-and-error that are often impossible in whole-class situations.

### **2. Small-Group Language Instruction**

Include regular opportunities for small-group instruction in story reading, shared reading and oral language activities.