

Instructions for Miscue Analysis: reading

Choose a text which will generate enough miscues for you to analyse (about 20?). The learner should be able to read the text fairly fluently, but not too easily. Make a copy of the text for yourself. It can be a good idea to record the student reading so that you don't have to keep up with them, but this is not essential. After they've finished reading, ask them a few comprehension questions and then identify one or two more complicated words they read correctly and get them to identify which strategies they used, e.g. 'how did you know this word was 'oranges'?'

Marking up the Miscues

Refusal to read a word

eventually

Omission of a word

very

Substitution of one word for another

neat

next

Repetition of a word/part of a word

begin

Insertion of a word

reading

give me back my book

Reversal of a sequence of words

give me my book back

Hesitation

Jim and Mary

Pretended ©

Self-correction

Jim pretended he

Evaluation of substitutions:

- V - Is it visually similar (i.e. is the reader showing some awareness of phonic cues e.g. 1 or more letters sounded correctly)
- S - Is it syntactically similar, i.e. is it grammatically acceptable within the sentence – an adjective, noun or verb for example. *This applies even to nonsense words.*
- M – Has the learner used meaning as a strategy? Does the miscue make sense at this point in the sentence (don't worry about further on at this point)

This analysis will give you the vocabulary for being able to talk about your learner's reading behaviour.

Please note:

1. If the learner substitutes a non-word, treat it as if it was a real word for the purpose of syntax e.g. does it sound/look like a verb or an adjective (e.g. 'Many people had dressed for the occasion' read as 'Many people had dressed for the oction')? If so mark it as syntactically correct. Errors for proper nouns, e.g. 'Mrs Wokoh' consistently read throughout the passage as 'Mrs Wake' are not very serious errors, especially in a fiction passage.
2. If the learner makes an error, then self-corrects, you need to mark this up twice. First, for the error, and then as a self-correction (which are always good of course)
3. Always mark up to the point of error only, but within a sentence, e.g. if the learner reads 'The dog barked at the man' instead of, 'The dog barked at the moving train', you would mark the miscue of 'man' for 'moving' as V,S and M correct, as up to that point it could be all three. We are hoping that the learner will then go on to self-correct when they realise their version cannot be right.
4. Once you've done your miscue, have a good look at the sorts of errors the learner is making, and ask yourself the questions we have posed in the box at the bottom of the chart.

An example of miscue analysis

On Sunday evening, October 31st 1938, fascinated listeners to a New York radio news broadcast heard that a huge meteor had been discovered in New Jersey. A radio journalist at the scene related subsequent events.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, this is terrific. The end of the thing is beginning to flake off. The top is beginning to rotate like a screw! The thing must be hollow”.

Increasingly terrified, the incredulous reporter described how a sinister, grey monster equipped with grotesque snaking tentacles emerged from the object. In a tremulous voice he said that a towering, humped shape was advancing towards him with tongues of flame shooting from it. Then there was a crash and the radio went ominously silent. Nationwide chaos and panic ensued. People assumed aliens from Mars had invaded the Earth. In reality, the entire episode had been an exceptionally realistic introduction to a fictitious radio drama. ✓

No.	Word	Error	Type of Miscue	Evaluation
1	a	the	Sub	Vx Syn ✓ M ✓
2	meteor	meter	Sub	V✓ Syn✓ M x
3	scene	screen	Sub	V✓ Syn ✓ M x
4	subsequent		Refusal	Vx Syn x M x
5	this is terrific	this is a terrific	Insertion	V x Syn ✓ M ✓
6	this is terrific	this is terrific	Self-correct	V ✓ Syn ✓ M ✓
7	increasingly terrified	terrified increasingly	Reversal	V x Syn x M x
8	incredulous		Refusal	V x Syn x M x
9	described how a	described a	Omission	V x Syn ✓ M ✓
10	sinister	summast	Substitute	V ✓ Syn x M x
11	tentacles emerged	tentacles had emerged	Insertion	V x Syn ✓ M ✓
12	tremulous	trembling	Sub	V ✓ Syn ✓ M ✓
13	said that a	said a	Omission	V X Syn ✓ M ✓
14	then there was	then where there was	Insertion	V✓ Syn ✓ M ✓ (but wasn't self-corrected afterwards, and should have been)
15	assumed aliens	assumed that aliens	Insertion	V x Syn ✓ M ✓
16	fictitious	fictious	Sub	V ✓ Syn ✓ M x

17	ficticious	fictitious	Self-correct	V ✓	Syn ✓	M ✓
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Miscue Analysis Evaluation Chart

No.	Word	Error	Type of Miscue	Evaluation		
1				V	Syn	M
2				V	Syn	M
3				V	Syn	M
4				V	Syn	M
5				V	Syn	M
6				V	Syn	M
7				V	Syn	M
8				V	Syn	M
9				V	Syn	M
10				V	Syn	M
11				V	Syn	M
12				V	Syn	M
13				V	Syn	M
14				V	Syn	M
15				V	Syn	M
16				V	Syn	M
17				V	Syn	M
18				V	Syn	M

Once you have filled in your chart, you need to consider the following:

1. After the learner has made an error, has s/he maintained the meaning of the text i.e. does s/he then self-correct when s/he reads on if the text no longer makes sense after the point of failure?
2. What is the reader's reading speed like – fast/slow/appropriate?
3. What strategies are they usually employing to read?
4. How successful are these strategies?
5. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?