Leader's Guide

An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement Professional Learning Module

An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement

Each participant will need the book, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*. This module is designed to accompany the 2013 third edition of the book.

Introduction

This professional learning module is designed to supplement—*not replace*—a careful reading of Marie M. Clay's book, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, third edition published in 2013. Marie Clay, a New Zealand developmental psychologist, constructed the tasks in research studies that established their initial reliability and validity. The Observation Survey is a tool for planned systematic observation to capture evidence of early progress in literacy learning. All tasks are based on sensitive and systematic observations that require objective recording of exactly what a child does on each task.

The Observation Survey is particularly useful for observing young children up to 8 years of age. Because each child begins literacy learning with unique personal knowledge, teachers must assess literacy behaviors across several dimensions of learning. The tasks are like the ones a child is actually undertaking in the classroom and uncover what a child already knows and can do — and what he or she might need to learn next. Survey tasks yield rich information for screening, intervening, and monitoring a child's progress over time. The Observation Survey has received high ratings as a screening tool for response to intervertion (RTI).

Training should precede use of the Observation Survey in order to ensure standard administrations by teachers, pre-service teachers, administrators, and researchers. Collectively, the six tasks of the survey provide comprehensive information about what a child can do. Individual tasks typically assess only one aspect of literacy learning and should not be used in isolation. Running Records of Text Reading are an exception and can be used on a regular basis to monitor changes in the ways that children use information while reading.

About This Module

As the leader, you will guide participants through the components of this module. This Leader's Guide provides information needed to plan and conduct sessions. Participants may include

- classroom and specialist teachers involved in early literacy learning,
- Reading Recovery teachers (guided by Reading Recovery teacher leaders),
- pre-service teachers who want to be careful observers of how young children learn to read and write,
- researchers who want to explore early reading and writing using sound measurement tasks, and
- administrators who wish to monitor the progress of individual children or better understand results of the survey.

Each participant will need the book, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement,* preferably the 2013 third edition. (Page numbers and some content in the module differ from earlier versions of the book.) Each participant will also need a copy of the Participant Guide (PDF Files to Print) to engage in this professional learning activity.

The approximate running time for the **DVD only** (without discussion breaks) is 1 hour and 7 minutes. There are optional pauses for group interaction throughout the module. **You can, however, pause at any point during the main presentation for discussion.**

In order to plan the time for your session(s), use the chart below to estimate the total length of time to be allocated.

Frame #	DVD Content	Approximate Time
1–19	Introductory comments about the Observation Survey and a brief overview of each of the six survey tasks: — Concepts About Print — Letter Identification — Word Reading — Writing Vocabulary — Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words — Running Records of Text Reading (see note at the end of this guide)	10 minutes
20–21	Administration of the Observation Survey with Tina and Mironna	21 minutes
	Presentation stops; Optional break to discuss the administration with Mironna	Leader to determine
22–34	Brief description of Mironna's score sheets for each task	6 minutes
35	Presentation stops; Optional break to discuss score sheets for each task	Leader to determine
36–40	Brief description of Mironna's Observation Survey Summary Sheet	3 minutes
41	Presentation stops; Session break or discussion of Mironna's Observation Survey Summary Sheet	Leader to determine
42–43	Administration of the Observation Survey with Betsy and Candra	24 minutes
44–51	Final comments and summary	3.5 minutes
	After the DVD ends, you will need to allow time for the group to use Candra's score sheets for all tasks to complete an Observation Survey Summary Sheet. Blank pages for the summary are included in the Participant Guide. Encourage participants to write the summary before examining the one provided at the end of the guide.	Leader to determine

Materials Included

These materials are all accessed from the DVD menu.
- Main Presentation (Flash media)

- PDF Files to Print
    - *for the leader:*
        - — README
        - — Narrator's Script
        - — Leader's Guide
    - *for each participant:*
        - — Participant Guide
            - Introduction, overview of tasks
            - Mironna's score sheets for each task
            - Mironna's Observation Survey Summary Sheet
            - Candra's score sheets for each task
            - Blank Observation Survey Summary Sheet
            - Candra's Observation Survey Summary Sheet

Pre-Planning

- It is assumed that the leader is familiar with the Observation Survey. Reread the Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the 2013 Observation Survey book. The DVD videos will be helpful as you work with participants on Chapters 4 through 11.

- Print and read the README file, the Narrator's Script, and the Participant Guide (PDF Files to Print) before planning the professional learning session.

- Become familiar with this Leader's Guide and the accompanying materials in the package.

- Use the Narrator's Script as you preview the Flash presentation on the disk. You may want to make notations in the script at certain points you want to emphasize or pause for explanation beyond the narration.

- **Preview and practice the Flash media presentation. All the files you need are on one DVD which must be inserted and remain in your DVD drive during the presentation. You will not need to copy the files to your hard drive. Except for a few discussion points clearly indicated in the script, the presentation will automatically advance through the frames.**

    The frames used in Flash work the same way as the slides in PowerPoint. Frame numbers will appear at the lower left of the presentation screen. When you move your cursor to the bottom of the screen, a "floating toolbar" will appear. When you click the PAUSE button, the presentation will stop and the button will become a PLAY button that, when clicked again, will resume narration. BACK and NEXT buttons move through the frames. The MENU button returns you to the Main Menu, and the X button closes the presentation.

    You can also separately navigate each video. At the bottom of the video viewer window is a standard Flash media toolbar with a pause/play button at the left, a progress slider — the triangle — and an audio mute button at the right. If you want to move ahead or back in the video, be sure to first click the pause button, and then click-and-drag the triangle progress slider to the left or right before resuming play. This will help ensure video quality. Also be aware that there may be a buffering delay, especially in the administration videos, when you move ahead or back.

Planning the Session(s)

- When planning the session, be flexible in order to meet the specific needs of your participants. For example, use of the Participant Guide may vary for different groups. Leaders may add discussion breaks and time for exploring information in the Observation Survey book. This module provides an **overview** of the Observation Survey; leaders need to share the module in ways that best serve their participants. Reading Recovery teacher leaders will use the module to supplement standard assessment-training procedures.

- After reviewing the DVD using the Narrator's Script, decide on the time needed to schedule the session(s). Possibilities for breaks are suggested in the Narrator's Script.

- Ensure that the appropriate equipment and printed materials from the DVD are available for the session:
    — Computer with DVD drive, LCD projector and audio cable, display screen for viewing (NOTE: An external DVD drive can be connected to your computer if there is no internal DVD drive.)
    — Printed copies of the Participant Guide for each participant

- Remind participants to bring the Observation Survey book to the session.

- Ask participants to read the Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in the Observation Survey book prior to the session if possible.

- Have the Participant Guide ready to give to participants at the appropriate time during the presentation.

Conducting the Session(s)

- Have the Participant Guide ready to give to participants. You may want to introduce the participants to the contents of the guide before beginning the session and ask them to set it aside until you direct them to use it. At designated places in the Narrator's Script, you will ask participants to use specific parts of the guide.

- Start the presentation. Use the Narrator's Script to guide you. Except for a few opportunities to stop the presentation for group discussion, the presentation will advance automatically. Use your discretion as to how much time will be needed for discussion.

- Following the DVD presentation, each participant will need to use the blank Observation Survey Summary Sheet (included in the Participant Guide) to complete a summary for Candra.

- SPECIAL NOTE: On the video, Candra's reading of the first two pages of *Zoo Animals* is missing. Use the running record sheet for analysis of the complete record.

Follow-Up Possibilities

You may want to assign some practice activities from the list below for the participants to extend their learning. Additional sessions may be scheduled for group discussion of selected activities.

- Administer the Observation Survey to several children. Using the score sheets for each task, discuss responses, scores, and comments with a colleague.

- Read pages 126–128 to better understand the use of stanines. Consult page 155 for Canadian stanines and page 160 for U.S. stanines.

- Work with colleagues to write an Observation Survey Summary Sheet for a child whose stanine scores are generally 3 or lower. Use score sheets for all tasks and Chapter 10 in the Observation Survey book to guide your work.

- Write a shorter summary for a child with stanine scores in the 4–6 range, using the score sheets and questions on page 138–139. Discuss possibilities for each question with a colleague.

- Read pages 141–144 in *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*. Discuss the value of observing reading behaviors and writing behaviors.

- Read pages 145–148 and discuss how the Observation Survey supports early identification of children at risk in literacy learning. Discuss Reading Recovery as a model intervention for these children.

- Schedule some time to discuss the Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3 to better understand systematic observation, the reading process, the writing process, early identification, and early intervention.

Points to Keep in Mind

- The module is not a stand-alone product. Participants must use the detailed rationales and procedures in the Observation Survey book as they administer, score, and interpret the survey.

- Both administrations on the DVD have minor variations in the language of administration. Every effort should be made to follow the exact language of the procedures for each task.

- Participants may have questions about scoring decisions on some tasks. These questions lead to good discussions and to careful study of scoring procedures in the book.

- Individual tasks typically assess only one aspect of literacy learning and should not be used in isolation. Running Records of Text Reading are an exception, and can be used on a regular basis to monitor changes in the ways that children use information while reading.

- The emphasis is on what a child already knows and can do — and what he or she might need to learn next.

Resources

Clay, M. M. (2000). *Running records for classroom teachers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Concepts About Print testing booklets

Clay, M. M. (1985) *Sand*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (1985). *Stones*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (2000). *Follow me, moon*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clay, M. M. (2000). *No shoes*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Key Preparation Points

• Each participant will need the book, *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, preferably the 2013 third edition, to engage in this professional learning activity.

• Become very familiar with the module before using it. Practice well in advance and make notes on the Narrator's Script as you move through the presentation.

• Follow the README document instructions carefully.

• If you choose to skip through frames at any point, do so slowly to avoid crashing your system.

• Because equipment and software vary widely, check with information technology personnel for assistance in providing the best performance.
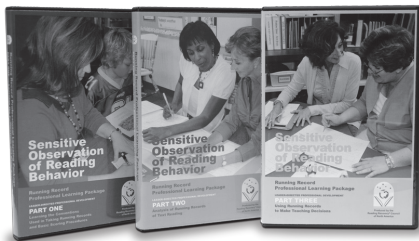
Important Note

Detailed procedures for taking Running Records of Text Reading are beyond the scope of this module. A three-part professional learning package is available from the Reading Recovery Council of North America to accompany Marie Clay's book, *Running Records for Classroom Teachers*, and the 2005 edition of *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*. The learning package may also be used with the 2013 edition of the Observation Survey book, although page references may not match. The package focuses on procedures for taking and scoring running records, analyzing the records, and using running records to make teaching decisions. A minimum of three training sessions are recommended before beginning to use running records for assessment purposes.

All RRCNA products are available at www.readingrecovery.org/onlinestore