SAS Reading Records

Your digital solution to running records of reading.
About SAS Curriculum Pathways

Available to educators at no cost, SAS® Curriculum Pathways® provides interactive, standards-based tools, resources, and apps in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish for grades K-12 and beyond. SAS focuses on topics where doing, seeing, and listening provide information and encourage insights in ways conventional methods cannot. Built in accordance with how students learn, SAS provides engaging content that can be differentiated to meet varied needs. SAS provides learner-centered activities with measurable outcomes and targets higher-order thinking skills. Materials are linked to state and common core standards. Educators can use these resources in a variety of technology settings (www.sascurriculumpathways.com).

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Introduction

Running records of students’ reading serve as a valuable source of data for early reading instruction and reading diagnosis. However, conducting and collecting running records for an entire class can be very time-consuming, rendering them almost impractical in today’s busy classroom. Until now. Available now on iPads, Chromebooks, and the Web, SAS Reading Records is an anytime, anywhere solution that not only captures the same valuable data, it also includes several added enhancements to the old paper-and-pencil method all without compromising valuable class time.

With Reading Recs, a nickname in tribute to the dinosaur theme—educators have the option to assign, grade, and analyze audio recordings of each student reading instead of sitting down one-on-one. With the student interface, young readers can complete assignments, view their results, and monitor their progress from anywhere. Other features integrated with flexibility and diversity in mind—such as making this tool available as both a web, mobile, and Chromebook app—makes Reading Recs the perfect reading instruction companion in any technology integration setting.

Motivation: Running Records of Reading

Informal inventories and formative assessments of reading are wonderful tools for optimizing learning by identifying and adapting instruction to the specific needs of students. As opposed to summative assessments that are administered at the end of a unit, semester, or school year, formative assessments provide increasingly granular feedback about students’ level of understanding. In other words, instructors can more readily identify trouble areas before an end-of-grade test making this data is extremely useful for lesson planning and ensuring all students are progressing adequately.

Running records are frequently used in early elementary education and viewed as a particularly informative data point when teaching children how to read. In fact, a study of effective first-grade literacy instruction found that the most effective teachers report using running records in their day-to-day reading instruction, and research studies consistently justify running records’ efficacy. When taking a running record, a teacher sits down with a student one-on-one, and as the student reads aloud, the teacher evaluates performance by noting the student’s fluency; mistakes, like omitting words; strategies used to correct errors; and comprehension.

Benefits of Running Records

Reading is a multifaceted process comprised of vocabulary knowledge, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension strategies. In order to truly help a young or struggling reader, a one-size-fits-all approach is often inadequate. Instead, it is important to identify specific trouble areas and tailor instruction on a student-by-student basis. For example, although two students could be reading on the same level, one student might need to work on acquiring vocabulary knowledge while another might benefit from comprehension strategy instruction. The breadth of data yielded by running records and other tools such as comprehension assessments can provide insight into a student’s reading progress and areas in need of targeted instruction.

Running records are also a great resource for completing benchmark assessments and approximating students’ reading levels. Given a leveled text, accuracy percentages during oral reading in conjunction with factors such as overall fluency and comprehension provide a detailed sketch of a student’s ability to handle texts at that particular level. Consequently, instructors can make informed decisions about the student’s independent and instructional reading levels. Moreover, this data can be used to help instructors form reading groups for guided reading.

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Challenges of Running Records

However, running records can be time-consuming, chaotic, and cumbersome. First, running records are administered on an individual basis requiring the instructor to sit down one-on-one with each student in the class for approximately 10-15 minutes. When discussing the current methods for running records with a local elementary teacher, she told us, “I think running records are a great tool. I just do not have enough time to do them as often as I would like!” Without a full-time instructional aide, finding the time to complete running records can be very difficult.

Also, the validity of running records relies on the teacher’s ability to capture all reading behaviors that occur while the student is reading aloud. In other words, while the student reads, the teacher must frantically jot down every error or blunder as well as note other behaviors such as why a mistake occurred and any strategies the student engaged in to correct an error. Asking the student to slow down or pause so the teacher can catch up on her notes would confound the purpose and validity of the session.

Lastly, as running records are intended to capture details from an authentic reading experience, it is recommended that they be administered in a relaxing atmosphere with no interruptions. Unfortunately, due to the constraints of the classroom, it can be difficult to find a quiet, distraction-free area to complete a running record. Furthermore, reading one-on-one with an adult can be quite intimidating for struggling and/or beginning readers.

SAS Reading Records: A Blend of Quality & Practicality

By combining guidance from in-service reading specialists with research-based best-practices, we designed Reading Recs with both quality and practicality in mind. With this tool, educators can gather, evaluate, and analyze data about students’ reading development without sacrificing precious class time. By recording students as they read, Reading Records maintains the integrity of the data produced by running records.

Product Overview

Upon logging in with a free account to SAS Curriculum Pathways, Reading Records automatically identifies the user as either a teacher or student. From here, users are presented with their personalized interface.

For teachers, Reading Recs provides:

- A host of classroom management tools to compare and contrast students’ reading development—we don’t want any students getting lost in the cracks.
- The ability to create and assign passages from anywhere at any time—no more one-on-one sessions during class.
- An easy-to-use markup interface (Figure 2) for grading students’ performance at your own pace—no more worrying about missing mistakes and quick judgments about cueing systems.
- Various comprehension assessments to choose from including multiple-choice quizzes, retell prompts, and open ended questions.
- A flexible environment designed to accommodate both your preferences and the needs of students.
- A library of levelled, illustrated content including fiction, non-fiction, and even poetry—or easily add your own.
- Simple, expedited class set-up and management for Clever® users.

Figure 2: SAS Reading Records grading interface.

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5 Personal interview, anonymous
The student edition of Reading Recs includes:

- A friendly, simple interface designed to accommodate the interaction style of young readers—no distracting animations and big buttons for small fingers.

- A priority for student interest and reader's choice—let the student choose the reading based on personal interests to optimize comprehension.

- The option to read aloud without intimidation—don't let fear get in the way of performance.

**Student-Centered Running Records**

While Reading Records promises to be a tool that reduces the amount of class time devoted to administering running records of reading, we understand on-demand instructional guidance and important in-the-moment data can be lost when allowing students to record themselves reading on their own. However, we feel using Reading Records for face-to-face assessments also provides valuable features that enhance paper-and-pencil methods.

As a student reads aloud during a running record, teachers take on a reactive role—student makes an error, teacher quickly scribbles down the note. Consequently, the teacher's attention shifts to marking-up the text as the student becomes immediately aware and error was made. For test-anxious students or shy readers, awareness of an error can quickly derail the entire session.

Fortunately, the recording feature of Reading Records allows for a more student-centered experience. The teacher's only responsibility becomes simply supportive. Following the session, the teacher can listen to the recording, and mark-up the passage at her own pace ensuring every reading behavior is captured in order to devise the most appropriate plan for future instruction.

**Keep Your Voice**

Finally, Reading Recs was specifically designed with teacher autonomy in mind. The best person to conduct a running record is a student’s teacher who is familiar with not only the student’s reading skills but also his or her daily life. In short, we believe educational data should be used to inform pedagogical decisions, not make them.

After several conversations with educators, it is clear there is a growing level of frustration as many states are increasing the number of standardized tests and relying more heavily on the data than the opinion of teachers when it comes to evaluating students’ academic performance and overall progress. While some degree of standardized assessment provides diagnostic benefit, they do not know when a student is not feeling well, nor do they know when a student is having trouble at home—both of which could affect students’ performance on a given day. One 2nd grade teacher told us, “We are required to use this software for tracking students’ reading skills, but it can be so frustrating. Sometimes I do not agree with the results and there is no override. It’s like my opinion doesn’t matter.” With Reading Recs, teachers get the best of both worlds—ample data for monitoring students’ reading progress while maintaining teacher discretion and instructional autonomy.

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Conclusion

The purpose of Reading Recs is to provide educators with all the tools and data you need to make informed conclusions about your students’ reading development and identify specific areas for instruction. Available on the Web and for your iPad or Chromebook, Reading Recs makes completing a running record more manageable by replacing the once timely one-on-one process with an anytime, anywhere solution.

For More Information

For additional information including how to get started with SAS Reading Records, classroom integration strategies, and the latest updates, see our blog series: [http://blogs.sas.com/content/sascp/tag/8007/](http://blogs.sas.com/content/sascp/tag/8007/)

To access SAS Reading Records:

On the web: [www.sascurriculumpathways/portal/Launch?id=8007](http://www.sascurriculumpathways/portal/Launch?id=8007)


In the Chrome Web Store: [https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/sas-reading-records-eephllhlmeidhppmjojhfmpfhfbhii](https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/sas-reading-records-eephllhlmeidhppmjojhfmpfhfbhii)

Sign up for a no-cost SAS Curriculum Pathways account: [https://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/#/signup](https://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/#/signup)

Learn more about the mobile apps available from SAS Curriculum Pathways: [www.sascurriculumpathways.com/mobile](http://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/mobile)

Learn more about the resources in SAS Curriculum Pathways: [https://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/#/about](https://www.sascurriculumpathways.com/portal/#/about)