

Reading and Spelling Assessment

For: **Stephen Conner Dawson** Grade: **8 (In September)**
Date of Test: **August 23 2017**

Introduction

These informal tests are conducted so we can observe students and tailor our tutoring toward their specific needs while leveraging their strengths. We also use these as baseline measurements for ongoing assessments of progress.

We use tests drawn from these sources:

- Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education® (CORE) tests for assessing reading, 2nd edition.
- Really Great Reading® decoding surveys.
- Analysis of a free-writing sample from the student, using the measures in the text “Writing Assessment and Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities”, by Nancy Mather, Barbara J. Wending and Rhia Roberts.

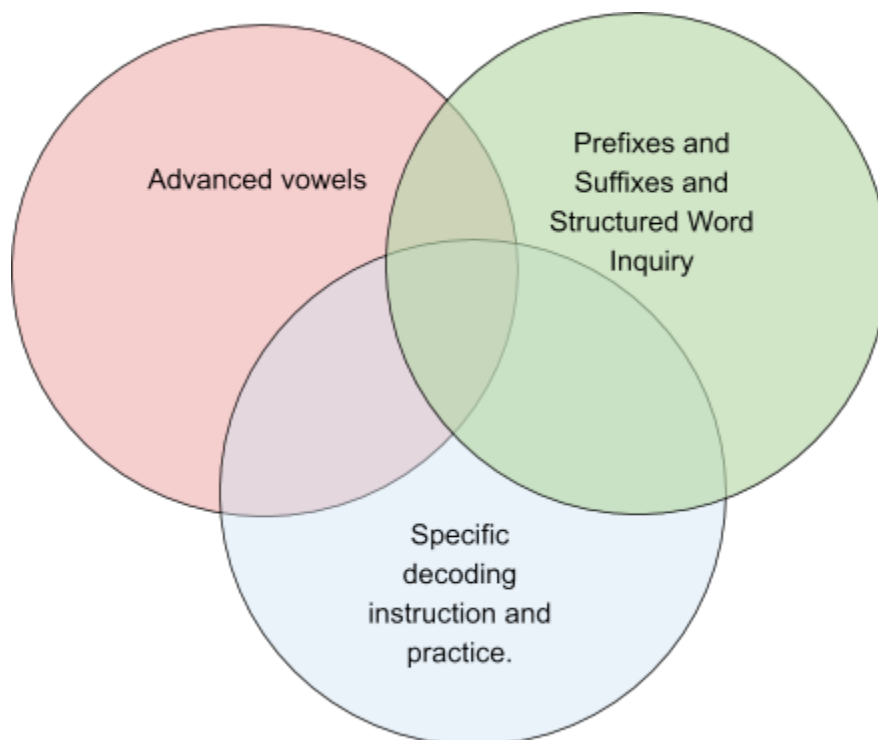
Our conclusions are listed below, with details of tests and results in the following section.

Summary

The assessment results suggest Stephen is performing about one grade below his academic level. Considering that Stephen is engaged, willing to work and desires to improve, I think we can bring that up over the next school year.

We have identified some fairly specific areas where instruction and practice could make a significant difference. There also have some tools and techniques for note taking and visually organizing that may play to Stephen's visual strengths for additional efficiency gains.

This diagram depicts the intersection of three targeted areas of instruction.



Advanced vowels and decoding are currently taught as part of other programs, but it would not be a good use of Stephen's time to teach these in their entirety.

Instead we will set a series of targets and an approximate timeline for achieving them, against which we can chart progress.

When Stephen came for the assessment, we also discussed our [Intermediate Writing Strategies program](#), which incorporates Structured Word Inquiry with Multisensory Grammar, and writing expository essays, but can also be extended to persuasive essays.

Work on advanced vowels will be incorporated as a preamble to each session, until these have been covered. A list has been included in Appendix B. Techniques for decoding multiple syllable words will be included with the Structured Word Inquiry work.

Other programs and tools

We will incorporate Great Leaps timed reading phrases and stories into the lessons. Stephen should continue these at home and will probably make rapid progress. It should take only 3-4 minutes per day, to practice the passages. *Little and often* is the key.

We already provided Stephen with a login for InferCabulary, which is a new program intended to teach students the nuances behind word meanings, through visual and written clues. We often assume that everyone understands words the same way that we ourselves do, but this is frequently not the case. Better understanding of nuance makes for better readers and writers.

Structured Word Inquiry uses freely available online tools and dictionaries which will be leveraged as we delve into the deeper structure and historical background of words, and their relationships to each other. For example, **confuse**, **diffuse**, **refuse** are clearly linked by the base, **fuse**, but they are also connected to other words associated with pouring out, such as *libation*, and *alchemy*.

Stephen may also be interested in *Inspiration 9*, a visual organization tool that can be used for brainstorming and organizing ideas as well as developing graphics and presentations. We own a copy for use in lessons, and it is relatively inexpensive to purchase for home use.

Tests and Results

CORE Phonological Segmentation Test (Not Timed & Oral)

Part A Sentences into Words:	No difficulty
Part B Words into Syllables:	No difficulty
Part C Words into Phonemes:	No difficulty
Phoneme Deletion:	No difficulty.

Apart from unfamiliarity with the test format, Stephen was able to segment words, syllables and phonemes successfully.

Really Great Reading Assessments (Not Timed)

Beginning Decoding Survey: **100% correct**

This survey assesses the student's knowledge of:

- Sight words
- Consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, both real and nonsense
- Digraphs in both real and nonsense words.
- Short vowels
- Sentences which include words generally termed sight-words, because of non-intuitive spellings.

Stephen had no difficulty with these.

Advanced Decoding Survey: **77% correct.**

This survey uses mostly nonsense words to assess the following:

- Digraphs and trigraphs, such as <ch> and <ph>
- Beginning blends, such as
, <str>
- R-controlled vowels

- Advanced vowel graphemes such as <ai>
- Multisyllable nonsense words.

These revealed some gaps in Stephen’s knowledge. For example “vawk” was pronounced /vūāk/. This also showed that Stephen relies on being able to quickly identify a word. He finds it harder to segment and decode longer words.

Advanced Decoding Plus Survey:

Raw scores:

Page 1: Advanced Vowels and Complex Phonics Features
27/30 (**Proficient**)

Page 2: Multi-Syllable Words and Complex Phonics Features
12/20 (**Low end of Emerging**)

This is the interpretation table from Really Great Reading:

	PERFECT	PROFICIENT	EMERGING	LOW
ADS Plus Page 1 Advanced Vowels and Complex Phonics Features	30	27 or greater	23–27	22 or below
ADS Plus Page 2 Multi-Syllable Words and Complex Phonics Features	20	17 or greater	13–16	12 or below

This indicates that Stephen will benefit from explicit instruction in advanced vowels, such as <ai>, <aw>, and <ey>, and in segmenting words into morphemes¹ for the purposes of reading, comprehension and spelling.

¹ A morpheme is the smallest part of any word that holds meaning. For example, protector has three morphemes; pro- (meaning for, towards), ‘tect’ (meaning cover) and -or, a suffix that indicates something or someone that is.

CORE Graded High-Frequency Word Survey (Not Timed)

This is a test of words that frequently occur in written text. It only runs up to Grade IV and Stephen read all of them correctly with no hesitation.

San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability (Not Timed)

This assessment consists of lists of ten words for each grade level, from pre-primer through 11. The student is asked to read each list in turn.

Stephen is independent up to the 5th grade list, instructional level (80%) at 6th and what the survey writers considered 'frustrational level' (70% or below) at 7th and beyond. This means he may not get the full meaning from 7th and 8th grade texts, but he does compensate for this by being aware of context and background.

The raw scores are in the table below.

Grade	Score	Grade	Score
1	100%	6	80%
2	100%	7	60%
3	100%	8	70%
4	100%	9	70%
5	100%	10	Not attempted

MASI-R Oral Reading Fluency Measures (Timed)

6th grade

WCPM (Words Correct Per Minute): 100

Accuracy rate: 100%

Accuracy was perfect, but Stephen's reading fluency (rate) is in the lower 10% of his peers, at the end of 7th grade.

That said, Stephen reads for meaning, with pauses while he analyzes what he has read and self corrects where necessary.

Oral reading is a skill worth cultivating. We recommend that tuition include working through the Great Leaps® phrases and stories, which we will provide. The phrases encourage *chunking*, where the brain recognizes repetitive phrases without needing to decode them. Studies indicate that this is more effective for increasing fluency than learning individual words.

RAN/RAS

This test requires the student to identify and name a sequence of picture, color, number and letter symbols. The measurement time to identify 50 symbols gives a measure of rate of recall. Although errors and self-corrections are recorded, they are disregarded unless they are sufficiently numerous as to indicate another problem. Stephen was only assessed on the mixed letters, numbers and colors test. He made zero mistakes with no self corrections.

Results are moderated to a standard score where, for each sub-test, a score of 100 is the average for a child of Stephen's age. This allows a direct comparison between his abilities in each category. These standard scores have been reproduced in Table 1, below.

Category	Raw Score	Standard Score	Percentile Rank
Mixed letters, numbers and colors	33 seconds/50 symbols	93	32

Table 1: RAN/RAS Standard Scores

So Stephen is below average for his grade, but that is in keeping with his measured methodical style. This does not indicate a major difficulty.

CORE Vocabulary Screening (Not Timed)

6th grade: 25 correct and 5 errors

7th grade: 28 correct and 2 errors

8th grade: 26 correct and 4 errors

Stephen is at benchmark level for all three grades, and his command of vocabulary will put him in a good position for the upcoming 8th grade.

CORE Reading Maze Comprehension (Timed)

This is a measure of both comprehension and silent reading fluency. The student reads a passage in which some words are replaced with a choice of 3 possibilities. Selecting the correct word requires comprehension of the passage and particularly of syntax.

7th grade 14 correct and 0 errors

8th grade 16 correct and 0 errors

Again, because of his fluency rate, Stephen is performing at the low end of benchmark for his reading comprehension. Accessing textbooks and required reading books on *Learning Ally*® could help him keep up with the volume of work required at 8th grade.

Spelling (Encoding)

New Stanford Achievement Tests-Sentence Dictation

Raw score: 63 correct

Age Equivalent: 12 years and 8 month

Grade Level Equivalent: 7.0

This is pretty much in line with Stephen's reading fluency and comprehension results; about a grade below Stephen's actual grade, but well within the average range for a typical 8th grade class.

There were some basic spelling rule errors (failure to convert 'y' to 'i' when adding a suffix, misspelling of suffix -ful for example) and some listening or processing errors, that cost about half a grade.

Structured Word Inquiry training will improve both, since an understanding of word structure will help reduce processing load, and teaches both spelling rule discovery and verification.

Writing Assessments

1. Unaided Writing

Total Words Written (TWW): **81**

Total Letters Written (TLW): **349**

Words Spelled Correctly (WSC): **80**

Correct Writing Sequences (CWS) : **79**

Spelling accuracy is **99%**

Average letters per word: **4.3**

His overall accuracy considering spelling, punctuation and usage: **96%**

It is expected that word study through Structured Word Inquiry will also aid Stephen's knowledge of, and confidence using, more complex words.

2. Handwriting

A good quadrupod grip and steady pencil pressure make Stephen a competent writer. His handwriting is clear and easy to read. Learning cursive would probably allow him to increase his writing speed, but at the cost of considerable effort.

I will discuss some alternate styles of note taking that Stephen might like to adopt or adapt for his use.

3. Letter formation:

Stephen's letter formation is correct, though printing is slower than cursive would be.

3. Usage

Punctuation:

There were no errors in Stephen's written piece. Use of quotation marks and apostrophes for contractions and possessives were not present and not evaluated.

Capitalization:

There were no errors in Stephen's written piece.

Appendix A: Definitions

- Breve:** A diacritical mark used above vowels to indicate a short sound. For example /ă/ as in “căt”.
- Grapheme:** One or more letters representing a phoneme. Represented in angle braces. For example <tch>.
- Macron:** A diacritical mark used above vowels to indicate a long sound. For example /ā/ as in “sāve”.
- Morpheme:** A morpheme is the smallest part of any word that holds meaning. For example, protector has three morphemes; pro- (meaning for, towards), ‘tect’ (meaning cover) and -or, a suffix that indicates something or someone that is.
- Phoneme:** One of the approximately 44 sounds that are used to form all English words.
- Pronunciation:** Indicated by forward-slash marks //. For example, the word bait would be represented /bāĭ/.

Appendix B: Advanced Vowels

ow	eigh
ear	ue
aw	ough
ai	war
igh	ei
oi	augh
ew	oe
ou	wa
ur	qua
or	mn
ar	eu
au	gue
wor	que
ey	ui
ie	