



Ideas for assessment

The key to good assessment is to identify each child's strengths and weaknesses followed by immediate intervention and/or further teaching. The photocopiable assessment and planning sheets provided in the *Collins Big Cat Assessment and Support Guide* are designed to help with this.

What is reading assessment?

Assessment of a child's reading begins with observations of their response to and understanding about books and story, their knowledge of phonics and simple high frequency words and their enthusiasm and interest in reading. Assessment records in the Early Years Foundation Stage may clarify for Reception/P1 teachers whether or not a child is ready to work in a guided reading group. For example, can the child open a book without tearing it, understand that pictures tell a story, and concentrate for periods of about fifteen minutes?

Preparing for the reading session

Before working with a book in a guided reading session, it is important to identify which learning opportunities are offered by it, and what you will be looking for in children's reading and response to the book. *Collins Big Cat* books have learning objectives and ideas for guided reading provided at the back of every book in the *Ideas for guided reading* section. When using the books with a guided reading group, you can refer to this to help you assess, for example, children's use of phonic and picture clues, and their understanding of the author's meaning.

During the reading session

Although assessment should be continuous, only significant strengths and weaknesses need to be noted for each child, related to what is being taught. Many weaknesses can be corrected immediately by good intervention from teachers. For example, open questions and involving dialogue help children to think about their learning and their next steps for improvement. Remember that most small children need time to respond to open questions beginning *What if... ? How would you... ? Why do you think... ?* When necessary, reassure them by saying *Think about it: I'll come back to you in a moment.*

After the reading session

Used systematically and analytically, *Collins Big Cat* assessment stimulates reading progress by focusing planning on the significant weaknesses of individual children and/or groups. Identified weaknesses can be rectified **between** guided reading sessions by one-to-one intervention from teachers, teaching assistants, or by homework and parental help. Intervention is essential to the assessment process. It increases children's reading confidence, and accelerates learning in the time available for guided reading.



Remember that children may progress at different rates. Continuous assessment helps you to identify when attainment groups need to be re-formed, as will happen from time to time. For example, where some children in a starter reading group can recognise their own names and familiar words, others may need continuing picture book experiences.

Progression

As children progress between reading levels, observe how children cope with the increasing level of complexity in terms of both text and learning objectives. Additionally, you may need to evaluate and note the characteristics of individual children. Perhaps some children ask sensible questions about the text, while others rely too heavily on one reading strategy. Children are making good progress when able to read fluently and expressively, and respond to punctuation. Above all, they must show good understanding of the books they are reading, whether fiction or non-fiction, demonstrating this, for example, through their discussion and response. The Reading Response pages at the end of each *Collins Big Cat* book give you an immediate 'way in' to checking overall understanding, and to discussion.

Collins Big Cat assessment support

The Reading Response pages in every *Collins Big Cat* guided reading book offer an immediate assessment opportunity for teachers. Each one is designed to stimulate children's discussion and recapping of a text and this allows the teacher to check and assess children's comprehension of what they have just read.

During each guided reading session, a teacher using the photocopiable **Ongoing Record sheets** (pp135 to 137) can note each child's particular weaknesses and strengths, and then identify the necessary action needed to rectify weaknesses

to build on strengths. For example, an improving and confident reader might be offered a supported extension activity, such as internet research. A hesitant reader might require direct teaching of a reading skill, perhaps additional strategies for solving unfamiliar words. Children in either category might benefit from a move to a reading band more closely matched to their attainment level.

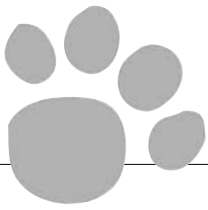
The **Ongoing Records** are linked to each *Collins Big Cat* book band, and provide generic band objectives. Teachers and assistants can check that children reading at any level are meeting band objectives while fulfilling the learning objectives specific to each book.

The **Reading Skills sheets** (pp138–140) provide a method of matching a child's attainment to a suitable book band, and can also be used to check children are reading at the correct level. The sheets can be used as a periodic check that a child has progressed in the various key reading skills which children develop in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The sheets can be used similarly to reading records, noting intervention or teaching action related to a child's strengths and difficulties in acquiring a specific reading skill. Each statement has been cross referenced with the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Assessment Scales for Communication, Language and Literacy.

Collins Big Cat's **Resources and Records**

Manager CD-ROM provides a convenient, efficient and paper-free way to keep records for each child or group's progress and reading history. These can be used to inform the choice of intervention and help with selecting appropriate books to support individual children or groups.

In addition, **Half-Term Assessment Sheets** (p141) allow the teacher to summarise a child's progress over a longer period as well as monitor the progress of each group as a whole. These can be used in conjunction with **Half-Term Planning Notes** (p142).



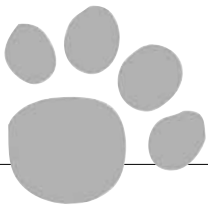
Individual Reading Skills Sheet (Lilac/Band 0)



Name _____ Group _____

Skill (EYFS assessment scale)	Score*	Action
Sits and looks at a book for a time Reading 1 (R1)		
Finds the cover and turns the pages correctly R4		
Knows book terms <i>book, cover, title, page, word, beginning, end</i> R4		
Relates book to own experience R1		
Understands story structure – beginning, middle and end R5		
Predicts events in book, including ending R5, 7		
Retells book in own words R7		

***Score key**
 1 = struggling
 2 = progressing
 3 = skill secured



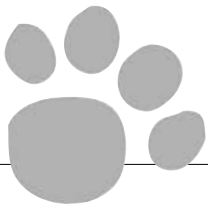
Individual Reading Skills Sheet (Pink/Band 1)



Name _____ Group _____

Skill (EYFS assessment scale)	Score*	Action
Locates title, opens book and turns pages in order R4		
Understands left page is read before right R4		
Understands that we read print left to right R4		
Matches spoken to written word (one-to-one matching) R2		
Reads some high frequency words R3		
Locates familiar words and uses them to check reading R6		
Predicts storyline and some vocabulary R5, 7		
Uses picture cues to predict words R5		
Uses meaning of text along with language patterns R5		
Uses initial and final letter cues to predict words Linking sounds and letters 5 (LSL5)		
Understands elements of stories, character, sequence of events R5		
Understands how information can be found in non-fiction texts R8		
Retells narrative in sequence, drawing on language patterns R7		

***Score key**
 1 = struggling
 2 = progressing
 3 = skill secured



Individual Reading Skills Sheet (Red/Band 2)



Name _____ Group _____

Skill (EYFS assessment scale)	Score*	Action
Is secure in one-to-one matching R2		
Uses known words to check reading R6		
Reads more rhythmically, using phrases LSL9		
Reads high frequency words R6		
Repeats words, phrases or sentences to check own reading R6		
Predicts new words from meaning R5		
Predicts new words from language pattern and print R5		
Reads words by blending letters LSL6		
Identifies capital letters and full stops Writing 8 (W8)		
Uses some storybook language when retelling story R7		
Describes main story settings, events and principal characters R5		
Reads with some expression R9		
Finds information in non-fiction text in response to where, who, how and why R8		