



# 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?

At this level, assessment of reading begins with observations of children's understanding and response to books, their knowledge of phonics and punctuation, and their enthusiasm and interest in reading. Reading assessment can take many forms and relies upon evidence from a range of sources gathered within and beyond the guided reading session. Your observations during the guided reading session can be recorded using the skills sheets on pp106–111. These skills sheets can be used as a record of achievement and may also contribute to structured periodic assessment systems such as APP (Assessing Pupil Progress), where pupils' ongoing work and progress towards National Curriculum levels for reading can be reviewed. All of this information can be used to inform future teaching and planning.

## 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** (103 to 105) 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.

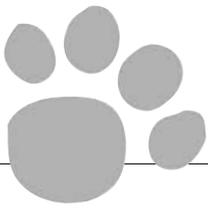
The **Ongoing Records** are linked to each *Collins Big Cat* book band, and provide generic band objectives. Teachers and assistants can check that children reading at any level are meeting band objectives while fulfilling the learning objectives specific to each book.

The **Reading Skills sheets** (pp106–111) provide a method of matching a child's attainment to a suitable book band, and can also be used to check that children are reading at the correct level. The sheets should not be used for ongoing assessment, but as a periodic check that a child has progressed in various key reading skills. The sheets can be used similarly to reading records, noting intervention or teaching action related to a child's difficulties in acquiring a specific reading skill. Each reading skill has been cross referenced with National Curriculum Assessment Focuses (AFs) for reading to support structured periodic assessment.

#### *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** (p112) 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** (p113).

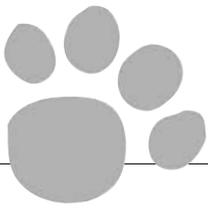


# Individual Fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Yellow/Band 3)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Follows print with eyes only. -		
Takes note of punctuation to clarify meaning when reading. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses familiar letter clusters to read unknown words. <b>AF1</b>		
Searches for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words. <b>AF3</b>		
Cross-checks all sources of information more quickly when reading: picture, print, sentence structure and meaning. <b>AF1</b>		
Predicts what the story will be about and what might happen next. <b>AF3</b>		
Can describe incidents or tell stories from their own experience, relating them to the events in the story. <b>AF6</b>		



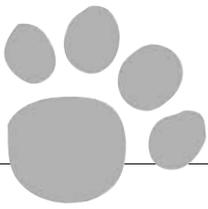
# Individual Non-fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Yellow/Band 3)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Follows print with eyes only. -		
Takes note of punctuation to clarify meaning when reading. <b>AF1</b>		
Searches for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words. <b>AF3</b>		
Cross-checks all sources of information more quickly when reading: picture, print, sentence structure and meaning. <b>AF1</b>		
Brings prior knowledge to the reading of non-fiction books. <b>AF7</b>		
Relates the theme or content of the book to other books. <b>AF7</b>		
Identifies features of non-fiction: captions, lists, labels, contents page, labelled diagrams, charts. <b>AF4</b>		
Reads and follows simple instructions. <b>AF1</b>		
Reads and uses captions and labels. <b>AF1</b>		
Can describe incidents from their own experience, relating them to the content of the non-fiction book. <b>AF6</b>		

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

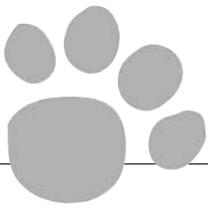


# Individual Fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Blue/Band 4)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Moves through text attending to meaning, print and sentence structure flexibly. <b>AF1</b>		
Self-corrects more rapidly on-the-run. <b>AF1</b>		
Re-reads to enhance phrasing and clarify precise meaning. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses knowledge of words and letter clusters to solve new words. <b>AF1</b>		
Predicts new words by attending to meaning. <b>AF3</b>		
Uses analogy with known words to solve new words. <b>AF1</b>		
Discusses content of the text, indicating precise understanding. <b>AF2</b>		
Uses a variety of voices for the characters when reading. <b>AF3</b>		
Can retell the story, sequencing events and using story language. <b>AF2</b>		



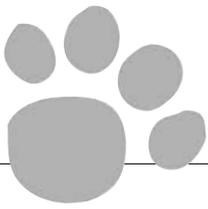
# Individual Non-fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Blue/Band 4)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Moves through text attending to meaning, print and sentence structure flexibly. <b>AF1</b>		
Self-corrects more rapidly on-the-run. <b>AF1</b>		
Re-reads to enhance phrasing and clarify precise meaning, showing an understanding of impersonal phrasing. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses the terms 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' accurately. <b>AF4</b>		
Realises that a non-fiction book does not need to be read from start to finish. <b>AF4</b>		
Uses a contents page and index to locate information. <b>AF4</b>		
Identifies features of non-fiction texts: captions, lists, labels, contents page, index, charts, labelled diagrams. <b>AF4</b>		
Reads and follows a non-chronological report. <b>AF1</b>		
Discusses content of the text, indicating precise understanding. <b>AF2</b>		

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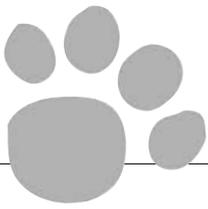


# Individual Fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Green/Band 5)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Pays attention to punctuation when reading. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses known words and letter clusters to solve new words. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses knowledge of sentence structure to predict unknown words. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses meaning to predict unknown words. <b>AF3</b>		
Tracks visually additional lines of print without difficulty. <b>AF1</b>		
Tackles a variety of texts effectively. -		
Discusses and interprets character. <b>AF2, 3</b>		
Discusses plot more fully. <b>AF4</b>		
Reads aloud with a variety of pace and emphasis. <b>AF1</b>		



# Individual Non-fiction Reading Skills Sheet (Green/Band 5)



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_

Skill (Assessment Focus)	Score*	Action
Pays attention to punctuation when reading. <b>AF1</b>		
Tackles unknown words, especially specialised vocabulary. <b>AF1</b>		
Uses knowledge of sentence structure to predict unknown words. <b>AF1</b>		
Tracks visually additional lines of print without difficulty. <b>AF1</b>		
Tackles a variety of texts effectively. -		
Brings prior knowledge to the reading of the non-fiction book. <b>AF7</b>		
Relates the theme or content of the book to other books. <b>AF7</b>		
Identifies features of non-fiction: maps, charts, contents page, index, labelled diagrams. <b>AF4</b>		
Interprets the same information presented in a variety of ways. <b>AF3, 4</b>		
Identifies the features of a recount text and uses them to retell the text. <b>AF4</b>		
Expresses views about how information is presented. <b>AF6</b>		
Reads aloud with variety of pace and emphasis. <b>AF1</b>		

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