

**FINAL REPORT  
READING-WRITING CLINIC  
READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS DEPARTMENT  
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY, ROCHESTER, MICHIGAN 48309**

Client's Name: Micah Fialka-Feldman      Parents Name: Janice Fialka and Rich Feldman

Age: 24

Parents Address: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Birth date: [REDACTED]

Parents Phone: [REDACTED]

Current Grade: University

Clinic Teacher: Sarah Lucas

Micah Fialka-Feldman attended the Oakland University Reading Clinic twice a week from January 12 through February 18 2009. Professor Ron Cramer directed the clinic. The Reading and Language Arts Department of Oakland University operates the Reading Clinic. The Reading Department phone numbers are: 248-370-3054 and 248-370-3065.

## **DIAGNOSIS AND TEST RESULTS**

The tests described below were administered to determine strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and word recognition.

### **Word Recognition**

*Test Description:* We test word recognition skills using two testing procedures. First, word recognition is tested by presenting test words in isolation. Test words are arranged from easy to difficult and are presented under timed and un-timed conditions. Since the words are presented without context, the reader must rely on word recognition skills and on the ability to recognize known immediately at sight.

Second, word recognition is evaluated in context by having the student read passages aloud. The passages range in difficulty from easy to challenging. This test yields information about a variety of word recognition strengths and weaknesses.

From these two tests, it is possible to assess reading fluency, phonic knowledge, word structure knowledge, and word recognition in context.

### ***Performance on Word Recognition in Isolation:***

Micah can recognize a good portion of the 100 most frequent sight words such as *a, the, her, etc.* He also recognizes words from his word bank from his last clinic teacher as well as new words

that we've added. When Micah has previous knowledge of a subject, he can recognize vocabulary easily. His growing background knowledge and curiosity has a positive influence on his ability to comprehend text.

Micah struggles with sounding out words. He can say what the first letter sounds like, but struggles with the combination of sounds in the rest of the word. He also struggles with blends such as *th*. He has a strong knowledge of alphabet letters and sequencing, but needs practice writing both upper and lower case letters.

### ***Performance on Word Recognition in Context:***

When reading words in context, Micah pauses when he comes to a word he doesn't know and needs assistance to move ahead. Depending on the number of words he cannot recognize or sound out in the text, this can and most likely will cause a significant loss in meaning.

To his advantage, Micah can easily recognize when a sentence doesn't make sense, and will go back to correct his mistake or will ask for assistance. He is able to take words that are out of order and put them into a meaningful sentence. He shows strength in using context clues and illustrations to assist him with meaning and will often substitute or reorder words without significant loss of meaning when reading aloud. This shows great promise and is an essential skill of reading.

## **Comprehension**

*Test Description:* We use an Informal Reading Inventory to test comprehension. This test consists of a series of fiction and non-fiction passages ranging in difficulty from Primer through High School level. (Name) read passages orally and silently at each level beginning at an easy level and continuing until the passages were too difficult. After reading each passage, (name) answered factual, vocabulary, and inference questions about each selection. (Name's) performance on this test enabled us to estimate (his/her) general reading performance levels. *We regard the testing information as tentative until we have confirmed our testing through instruction.* We identify four reading levels with this test.

1. *The Independent Level:* The purpose of this analysis is to determine what level of reading material children can comprehend on their own without teacher assistance. Many children have an independent level, but some do not.

2. *The Instructional Level:* The purpose of this analysis is to determine what level of reading material children can read when provided with appropriate instructional assistance from a skilled teacher. It is crucial that reading instruction be provided at the correct instructional level.

3. *The Frustration Level:* The purpose of this analysis is to determine what level of reading material is too difficult for children to comprehend. If instruction is provided at the frustration level over a significant period of time, reading failure is inevitable and damage to reading motivation and reading skill will surely result.

4. *The Listening Capacity Level:* The purpose of this analysis is to determine at what level children can understand words and ideas read aloud to them by the testing examiner. *This testing procedure estimates children's potential reading capability as opposed to*

*their actual reading level.* Children whose reading potential is significantly higher than their actual reading level are likely to make progress when good instruction is provided over a sustained period of time.

### ***Interpretation of Overall Test Results:***

Micah has not been tested for comprehension because his emergent reading level would not produce significant results. Micah loves to read and learn. From observation I can see that he comprehends text when someone reads aloud to him and when text is within his capability and he has previous knowledge of the subject. His ability to use context clues to understand meaning is remarkable. He has no problem predicting text, enjoys retelling information and summarizing what has been read.

Micah should continue an instructional program that emphasizes word recognition. He will benefit from activities that stress letter sounds, word segmentation, syllables, rhyming, word sorts, and daily reading. Micah's instructional program should also include practicing upper and lower case letter writing, journaling, reading familiar text to increase fluency and sight words, refining comprehension skills through before, during, and after reading activities, and practicing applicable study skills.

## **INSTRUCTION**

### **Comprehension**

Comprehension involves constructing meaning from text through reasoning, prior knowledge, information in the text, and the context of a specific reading situation. Understanding what is read is the most important goal of reading instruction. Consequently, we emphasize comprehension. The following comprehension activities and strategies were practiced.

1. *Directed Reading Thinking Activity:* Students use prior knowledge to make predictions about passage content, check on the accuracy of their predictions, and confirm or fail to confirm their original ideas. The major emphasis in this activity is to emphasize thinking when reading. This is an excellent activity to help students set their own purposes for reading.

Micah has a strong understanding of comprehension strategies. While participating in a DRTA, Micah uses context clues and pictures to guide his understanding. When I paused to make a prediction in the text, he knew what was coming, as if he thought about it before I did. Micah only struggles when decoding new words distracts him from meaning. Since this is a comprehension activity, on occasion I would help him to read the passage so that meaning wouldn't be lost.

2. *Directed Listening Thinking Activity*: This procedure is similar to the Directed Reading Thinking Activity. The major difference is that this is a listening task rather than a reading task. Both activities stress thinking. Students use prior knowledge to make predictions about passage content read aloud to them, check on the accuracy of their predictions, and confirm or fail to confirm their original predictions. This is an excellent activity to help students set their own purposes for reading.

Micah's strength in comprehension allows him to gain meaningful understanding of text during a DLTA activity. When listening to *The Wall* by Eve Bunting, Micah created four questions he had while reading the text. This strengthened his connection to the text and to the author. When listening to *So You Want To Be President?* by Judith St. George and David Small, Micah was able to predict material and pull out key characteristics of past presidents.

3. *Anticipation Guides*: Before reading informational text, students predict content by reflecting on what they already know, answer true/false or agree/disagree questions, or categorize words and ideas from the text. During reading, students consider the accuracy of their predictions. After reading, students evaluate their performance and discuss what they have read.

Before reading informational text on Influenza, Micah completed an ABC Brainstorm during which he thought of words that started with each letter of the alphabet that he related to the Flu; for example, Aches, Bed, Cough... This activity helped Micah to relate to the topic so that when it came time to read it, he had a stronger knowledge of the material.

4. *KWL*: The letters KWL stand for: What do I Know; What do I Want to know; and What have I Learned. Students tell what they already know about a topic and what they want to know before reading. After reading, they discuss what they have learned as a result of having read.

Before we read *So You Want To Be President?*, Micah and I completed a KWL about Presidents. Micah came up with quite a bit of information when we completed the K. He concocted good questions for the W, and compiled a list of new facts for the L. We used these notes to create our final project on Presidents.

5. *Graphic Organizers, Webbing, and Mapping*: Students organize their ideas on a topic or reading task by drawing a graphic representation of their ideas. These strategies help students organize information in an image, picture, or schematic fashion.

During a group lesson, Micah and I used a concept of definition map to decide on the meaning of the word contagious. We pulled context clues from the book to help us figure out meaning and provided examples of contagious things once a definition was given. This strategy helped Micah to learn a new vocabulary word and understand it deeply.

6. *Comprehension Modelling*: The teacher models a specific reading skill, such as inference. The teacher models the use of reasoning, information in the text, and prior knowledge to demonstrate how a good reader comprehends text. Students are then

encouraged to use the teacher's example to improve their own reading comprehension performance.

In another group lesson, the teacher modelled what it means to infer something. After reading a short passage about a snowy drive on a bus, Micah inferred that the author was going to school and wished he or she was sledding instead of on the bus. Teaching these strategies outright helps students to pull understanding out of text even though it isn't right there in the passage.

**7. Reading Aloud:** The teacher reads aloud from a continuing story while students experience the pleasure of listening to stories, develop language skills and knowledge, and gain an understanding of expository text and/or story structure.

While reading *A Pocket for Corduroy*, Micah listened to Corduroy's adventure and enjoyed hearing about his little excursion at the laundromat. He quickly picks up on humor, sarcasm, and emotion in the stories we read in class.

**8. Independent Reading:** Students are encouraged to choose books to be read independently at home and in the clinic. The purpose is to encourage the habit of reading. Regular and continuous reading practice is the most important way of improving vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, word recognition, and the accumulation of general information. The sheer volume of reading has an enormous influence on the development of reading knowledge and skills.

While Micah receives assistance with his independent reading assignments, he gains knowledge, comprehension skills, and increased vocabulary from the books that he chooses to read. Micah enjoys reading for pleasure and strives to improve so that he can enjoy even more books.

## **Word Recognition**

Word recognition requires accurately pronouncing words in context and isolation. Word recognition has two parts: (1) words known immediately at sight, and (2) a system for decoding unfamiliar words using phonics, word structure, and linguistic context. A reader must develop skill in each of these areas. The following word recognition activities were practiced.

**1. Reading Familiar Text:** Students read previously practiced texts at their independent or instructional level. The purpose of reading and rereading familiar text is to promote reading fluency, comprehension, and word recognition.

As a general rule, every week Micah was assigned homework to reread a book that we had practiced in class from two to five times. He understood that reading a book several times will help him with recognizing and decoding words, as well as increase his fluency while reading. He

successfully decoded words in the books and began to recognize word families, such as those that had an -ug or -un sound.

**2. Word Study Activities:** Word study focuses on phonics, word structure, and the development of sight words. Students may also focus on basic understandings about print and printed materials such as letter recognition, features of words, print arrangement, orientation of print on the page and in books, and left to right directionality.

Micah received word study assignments each session. Often, Micah was given a set of five letters which he sounded out, mixed around, and found words to make with those letters. He was then sorting the words he made into word families. Afterwards, he was asked to create a sentence with one of the words he made. He has a good grip on letter sounds, but struggles with blends (like sh) and word endings (such as -ing).

Micah was happy to practice writing his S every night. He started out writing Zs, but I think something clicked when I told him Ss were like rounded fives. He now prints an S beautifully.

**3. Word banks.** Words learned from Language Experience stories and other reading sources are kept in a container, sometimes called a word bank. These known words are used to practice a wide variety of word recognition activities such as word games and word classification activities.

Micah truly shined with word banks. He loved to add new words to his bank, practice the words out loud, write sentences using a word from his bank, and create sentences using multiple word-bank words. We pulled words from stories that we read, thoughts that we had about a topic, and journal entries.

**4. Direct Instruction in Word Recognition:** Students learn phonics, word structure, contextual, and sight word skills. These skills are popularly known as phonics, but phonics includes an extended set of decoding skills necessary to pronounce words accurately.

Micah practiced decoding, sorting, and sounding out letters each night. After reviewing letter sounds for a week, we started sorting using letters that Micah would create two, three, four and five letter words with. Then Micah would sort the words he created into word families, such as -as, -ash, and -an. Then Micah used one or two words from that group to make a sentence. Each week, Micah received a new set of letters to complete this activity. He looked forward to writing the words he created and using them in a sentence.

**5. Word Recognition Strategies:** When readers come across an unknown word they need strategies for determining pronunciation. Children are taught to apply word recognition skills in sequence: (a) contextual analysis – what makes sense; (b) phonetic analysis – what sounds are known, (c) structural analysis – what word parts are known. When meaning, phonics, and word structure do not work for a reader, children are taught to seek help from a more knowledgeable source – teacher, parent, or better reader.

Word decoding is the greatest challenge that Micah will face during his reading instruction. He has motivation, focus, and determination to read. He has superb comprehension skills and can use context to unveil meaning. Micah's ability to read independently will rely on his gains in word recognition. His strength in this area is clearly contextual analysis, but he struggles with both phonetic and structural analysis. He sometimes begins to get off topic because he is using previous knowledge and context clues to predict what the text says. While this is absolutely a strength, Micah sometimes needs to be reminded to slow down, back up, and retry a word or two. He often practiced putting sounds together to form a word, but needs a lot of encouragement and some assistance in this area.

## Writing

The writing process involves planning, drafting, revising, and post writing. Reading and writing are closely related, hence, writing tends to improve reading and reading tends to improve writing. Writing refines phonetic and spelling proficiency and influences comprehension. The following writing activities were practiced.

1. *Writing Process*: Students practice writing moving through the stages of writing including planning, drafting, revising, and post writing. After writing, students share their work with an audience. Sharing may include oral presentations, artwork, bulletin boards, young authors conferences, publishing, and other ways of presenting writing. We encourage children to talk about their writing with an audience that usually includes teachers, parents, and peers. Conference may focus on planning, drafting, revising, or publishing writing.

With his final project in mind, Micah created lists of information about Presidents, took notes from weekly reading we did together, and expressed ideas about what qualities a President should have and what he would do as President. These pre-writing activities and notes helped Micah to draft his final project, two poems about Presidents.

2. *Writing Poetry*: Students write poetry using a variety of poetic forms such as Haiku, Sonnets, Cinquains, Free Verse, Acrostic, Sijo, and Diamante.

Using the notes from readings, lists of Presidential qualities, and his awe inspiring creativity and passion about government, Micah wrote two poems, an acrostic and a diamante in preparation for his presentation. In addition to the notes, he used words from his word bank to help paint a picture of a President and a leader. We studied the rules of writing these types of poems, and Micah came up with words and expressions to best describe his topic.

5. *Dictated Language Experience Story*: Students describe accounts of their experiences centered on self-selected topics such as sports, school, vacations, and other topics of interest. The teacher records the stories, and students read and reread them with teacher assistance as needed. Words learned as a result of reading experience

stories are put on cards to create a bank of known words. These words are then used to extend word recognition skills.

Micah described both of his trips to Washington D.C. to me for his journal entries. While Micah has a rich vocabulary and an even richer life experiences, he struggles with writing legibly, so his journal entries were dictated. After he watched me write the words, Micah would read them aloud to me. He would read them fairly well, but sometimes would just retell the experience and get words out of order. When this occurred, I asked Micah to slow down and read the words, not just remember them. Sometimes, we added new words to his word-bank from these experiences. Then Micah studied and used them in context by creating sentences each night for homework with the assistance of a friend.

6. *Journal Writing*: Students record ideas in journals. Journal writing may be about any topic selected by the student or encouraged by the teacher. Students often write stories or describe personal experiences. In response journals, the teacher responds to the student's writing and the students respond back to the teacher.

As I stated above, we used a DLES to complete Micah's journal entries. After journaling about his experiences with his trips to D.C., his court case, and dream vacations, Micah and I would speak to each other about his emotions, what he saw, and other specific details surrounding the topic. He really lit up when the other teachers and I would ask him about his experiences.

## Study Skills

Study skills involve knowledge and skills useful for reading, writing, and speaking. Skilled readers must develop strategies for the efficient and effective use of information. Study skills teach students to adjust reading rate to purpose, prepare oral or written reports, prepare for tests, complete homework assignments, conduct research, interpret graphs and illustrative materials, understand text structure, and use a variety of resources for collecting and organizing information. The following activities were practiced.

1. *Flexible Reading*: Students are taught to adjust rate of reading to purpose. Three techniques are used: skimming, studying, and surveying. Efficient readers skim to locate information rapidly, study read to reflect upon and reread challenging passages, and survey a book or chapter to get an overall sense of how the material is organized and what information it may contain.

During a group lesson, Micah read a short biography on Barack Obama. Micah was then asked to find examples of hardships and of successes within the text. Micah used a highlighter to scan through the text and highlighted areas that he found examples in. He was demonstrating reading with purpose. Micah then shared some of the hardships and successes that he found with the group.



**2. Collecting and Organizing Information:** Students are shown how to collect and organize information in order to prepare for tests, write research papers, or present information orally.

Micah collected facts about Presidents throughout the clinic sessions so that he would have information to create his final presentation with. After reading sections in *So You Want to be President* by Judith St. George and David Small, I helped Micah to write down things that he found important, interesting, shocking, or funny. On a few occasions, Micah would complete comprehension activities, such as a KWL and a 321 summary (in which he wrote three things he learned, two interesting facts, and one question he still had) that helped him store information about Presidents. Micah is already in the good habit of always bringing his notes and materials to class.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report contains recommendations for parents and school personnel. These recommendations may overlap in certain areas. This report is intended for parents. Nevertheless, it may be useful to share this report with school personnel, but this is a decision for parents to make. The Reading Clinic does not send its reports directly to school personnel.

Micah needs continued support and encouragement from you and peers in order to improve and advance his reading and writing knowledge. Micah will benefit from the following suggestions.

### **Recommendations to parents and peers:**

1. *Continue to provide Micah with opportunities to visit libraries and bookstores:* Help him select books that he can read independently or with little assistance as well as high interest books that he'll require help with. Micah can freely pick out books that interest him and recognizes when a book is beyond his capabilities.

2. *Daily Reading:* Micah will benefit from reading independently every day. He needs to continue practicing decoding unfamiliar words and gaining knowledge and understanding from what he has read. In addition, Micah should be read to daily on a variety of topics that interest him.

3. *Writing:* Micah will benefit from daily writing. In particular, he can journal, write notes to friends, take notes in class, and copy words or sentences on topics of interest. Micah should be encouraged to continue writing poetry. Publication should be considered.

4. *Conversations:* It is evident that Micah has a wealth of knowledge to share with the world around him. Continue to encourage Micah to pursue endeavours that he is passionate about and encourage Micah to continue speaking out about his college program and fight to gain residency at OU.

5. *Tutoring:* After the clinic sessions are over, keep finding teachers to work with Micah. He should have year-round exposure to reading instruction to get him reading at his maximum potential.

### **Recommendations for school personnel**

1. *Comprehension:* Micah has talent in comprehension. However, he can improve his ability to infer information from text. Comprehension strategies should include activities to increase vocabulary and activate prior knowledge as well as summarization. Many of the beneficial comprehension strategies are available for at [www.readingquest.org](http://www.readingquest.org)

2. *Word recognition:* Micah needs intense repetitious instruction in word recognition. While Micah is making progress toward independent reading, a serious approach to word recognition through direct instruction, word banks, word sorts, phonics, and other activities is highly recommended.

3. *Writing:* Micah should write and practice his handwriting for twenty to thirty minutes a day. Thoughtful planning, drafting, revising, and post-writing steps can be incorporated into Micah's writing instruction.

4. *Study skills.* Micah will benefit from increased practice with dictionaries, reading for a purpose, and note taking.

5. *Positive Reinforcement.* Micah finds motivation within the support of his strong network of friends and family. He does best with encouragement. Continue to develop Micah's confidence as a reader.