

HRA2 Points to Ponder: Reflections and Application	
Chapter 1 Points to Ponder	Chapter 1 Reflections and Application
<p>1. As a reading specialist, Ms. Swafford will have paid attention to the relationship between reading and assessment. It is her job to help other educators, particularly teachers, select assessments to meet various goals. After reading Chapter 1, how would you describe your primary role as an educator or an educator-to-be? Are you or will you be a general elementary teacher like Ms. Crockett, a special educator like Mr. Haywood, a secondary teacher like Dr. Charles, an adult educator like Ms. Sanchez, a reading specialist like Ms. Swafford, a school psychologist like Mr. Oakley, or an administrator like Ms. McCall? Your role will determine, in part, goals for assessment, either for instructional planning, progress monitoring, ensuring accountability, or determining eligibility for special services. In turn, the goals you set will guide your selection of particular instruments. Perhaps you could take a few minutes and describe your role as it relates to helping students learn to read or improve their reading skills. Then, as you read Chapters 4 through 7, revisit your goals and think about the relation between your role/goals and the instruments we describe, and specifically how they can be applied. Finally, consider how you use or might use some of them to help your students master reading skills.</p>	<p>As authors we made educated guesses based on our experiences as to which assessment goals will be appropriate for various educators. We share this information along the way. Certainly there is no one “correct answer” to this task. Our goal is to help you think about how your specific context demands familiarity with particular goals/assessments.</p>
<p>2. Consider the critical areas of reading, (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, orthography, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension). All educators will value assessment and instructional expertise in all these areas, but your particular role may require that you target your time to helping your students master some areas over others. Which areas are most critical for your students to learn? For example, if your students are very young you may spend more of your time teaching students to master basic skills, like Ms. Crockett; on the other hand, if you are a secondary teacher like Dr. Charles,</p>	<p>Like 1. above your response to this question will be unique to your context and interests. Quite likely, you will be more or less interested in the content based on the fit between your areas and the assessment techniques and instruments most relevant for assessing those areas.</p>

<p>you may consider comprehension a more critical skill for your students to master. Of course, if you are or intend to be a reading specialist like Ms. Swafford, you will want to master the instructional and assessment content for all areas of reading. Take one minute and write down the areas you consider <i>most</i> relevant for your students. Our guess is that you will be more interested in the assessments within that area as they are described in Chapters 4 through 7.</p>	
<p>3. Consider the increased interest in selecting instructional strategies and related assessments that are empirically based. Can you remember some of the sources we mentioned that will guide your selection of such strategies/assessments? Remember, not all strategies or assessments will be mentioned in these sources. In some cases as a teacher or someone who helps support teachers it may be necessary for you to try a strategy not yet evaluated formally. Perhaps you could take a minute to write down two or three ideas you learned from Chapter 1 that could help you evaluate such a strategy.</p>	<p>Evaluating the effectiveness of implementing a particular intervention will be important, and the strategies for doing so are not always intuitive. One important strategy for classroom teachers might be to use an <i>N-of-1</i> methodology. This process will typically require collection of baseline data, then comparing these data to intervention data. In some cases, teachers and/or administrators will design and implement a study to evaluate the degree to which two groups differ based on comparing two types of interventions, typically determined by a “mean-difference” analysis. Finally, there are various other strategies (e.g., qualitative methodologies, including reflective practice models)</p>
Chapter 2 Points to Ponder	Chapter 2 Reflection and Application
<p>1. Consider your experience with a struggling reader you know. Then, think back to the models of reading. Take a minute to list three model-based influences that help you understand how reading develops, and more specifically, might have contributed to the reading difficulties experienced by the struggling reader you have in mind.</p>	<p>You may reflect on any one of the models and again there is no one right answer. Developmental models can help educators consider where a student is in skill development and where to focus instruction if a student gets off track. The simple view of reading and Adams’ model help educators think about different reading skills and the information processing model helps us think about the various cognitive processes necessary for reading. The transactional model and the inclusive model help educators consider environmental and contextual factors that may contribute to reading success for students.</p>
2. Take a look at the Inclusive Model of	The trend is for reading curriculum and

Reading and consider how it may relate to other models. As you probably guessed, most of the elements of the models of reading describe within-the-student influences. Take a few minutes and write a couple of ideas of how you might create an optimal reading instructional strategy for students who have a particular within-the-student strength and a within-the-student weakness. Keep in mind that experts often suggest instructional strategies for struggling readers that match their strengths (e.g., visual memory, processing speed) to the characteristics of the instructional strategies and minimize their weaknesses.	programs to be <i>balanced</i> , with emphasis on word study, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Emphasis should be determined by student needs, in turn determined by assessment.
Chapter 3 Points to Ponder	Chapter 3 Reflection and Application
1. Go back to the teacher assessment section and take a look at those items. Now, take a minute or so and add three sentence stems that you consider important for motivating students but were not included.	There are many sentence-stem options that would be appropriate to add, and you will probably think of several that are most relevant for your particular context. For example, you might consider adding a stem like, “The person I most like to read to me is _____,” or “My favorite reading computer game is _____,” or My favorite place to read is _____.”
2. Think back to your childhood. Can you remember two or three events, influences, or books that were important in motivating you to read? For example, did your parents read to you and if so, how do you think this practice influenced the way you think about reading? Did your parents model reading in other ways that made an impression on you? Did your friends read and were you able to discuss characters from books with these friends?	One motivating feature of the childhood of both authors was discovering a series of books that were of particular interest (e.g., the <i>Black Stallion</i> series, <i>Nancy Drew</i> series, and the <i>Borrowers</i> series). Our guess is that you will have little trouble thinking back to an example from your childhood.
3. Some experts differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Typically, extrinsic motivation involves using artificial rewards/reinforcers to motivate students to read. Some educators do not recommend the use of rewards/reinforcers to motivate children to read. What is your perspective on this practice, and why?	As educators (and parents), we have learned to appreciate use of extrinsic rewards/reinforcers in certain situations, particularly for beginning or struggling readers. Extrinsic reinforcement (e.g., grades, a score on an exam) may be needed to motivate older readers to read nonpreferred, assigned material.
4. Struggling readers may develop a poor reading self-concept. Can you provide two	One strategy that we have adopted (and recommend to others) is to ensure that readers

recommendations to help ensure that this does not happen?	have books assigned to them that they want to read and that are not too difficult, i.e., are not at a <i>reading frustration level</i> . Of course, you will be able to suggest others. Further, it is important to model an <i>incremental view</i> of reading ability.
Chapter 4 Points to Ponder	Chapter 4 Reflection and Application
1. Portfolio assessment is considered important by many teachers. Describe two items/permanent products that you think might be important to include to: (a) help students assess progress over time; and (b) to motivate them.	One strategy that we consider important is to require (within a portfolio assessment) students to write a personal story describing an important event/experience in their lives. Because reading and writing are inextricably linked, writing assignments contribute to better reading and vice-versa.
2. Error analysis is critical in some cases to help struggling readers. It is a time consuming practice. Can you think of a couple of strategies to make error analysis more efficient? And in what situations would one or the other be appropriate?	Listening to children read orally is one of the most common and useful ways to conduct error analysis, allowing teachers to note fluency, inflection, and rate. Running records provide a technique for recording various types of miscues.
3. Both running records and teacher-constructed CBM rely on authentic reading material used in classrooms. How are they alike and different? What types of information does each yield?	Running records can be similar to teacher-constructed CBM materials in that both may reflect content assigned to students (from any content area, such as history); both can yield information regarding comprehension of the content.
Chapter 5 Points to Ponder	Chapter 5 Reflection and Application
1. In the early section of Chapter 5 we made the point that all tests contain some error. Can you remember how to determine the amount of error contained within a particular test you have selected? In your own words describe why it is important to know the proportion of error reflected in the test score you obtain. In your own words describe the relationship between error and reliability. Even if a test is highly reliable, the results may not be credible if the test is not administered carefully. Why is this true and why should you care?	Error is determined by a simple mathematical formula ($1 - \text{Reliability}$). If a test has significant error we can have little confidence in the score. That is, it won't yield the same score consistently. The more reliable a test is the less error it has, as is obvious from the simple formula above. To the extent an examiner fails to follow good administration procedures, error is introduced. Too much error makes the scores useless, and the test administration is a waste of time, money, and effort.
2. In order for a test to be useful it must possess strong reliability. Validity is also important. In your own words, can you define validity? What is the relationship between test reliability and validity? Why should you care?	If consistency is the best adjective to define reliability, accuracy is the best descriptor of validity. If a test measures well what the test authors say it measures, it has good validity. A test cannot be valid if it is not reliable, i.e., reliability is a necessary but not sufficient condition for validity.

3. In the summary of this chapter we suggested that you create a <i>literacy pie</i> for a particular student. Can you describe a couple of advantages associated with completing this task? In formulating a response, did you think about the relation between the assessments described in Chapter 5 and instruction?	One advantage of creating a literacy pie for a particular student is the information gained from the activity. Once a teacher has information about a student's (reading) needs, instructional strategies can be developed to address those needs. Knowing students' needs helps identify assessments most appropriate to operationalize those needs, then address them.
Chapter 6 Points to Ponder	Chapter 6 Reflection and Application
1. In Chapter 6 we present information on a variety of scores that can be obtained from standardized, individualized assessment including age and grade equivalents, percentiles, and standard scores. Which type of score do you think will be most useful to you in understanding a student's reading performance and why? Which will you most likely use to communicate with parents and why?	Educators quickly learn that some scores are more appropriate for certain purposes than are other scores. Other educators are likely to understand standard scores, but parents are more likely to understand grade or age-equivalent scores. Standard scores are more sophisticated and psychometrically sound, but the grade or age equivalent scores are more intuitive.
2. As indicated in Chapter 6, the same reading skill can be measured in different ways across tests. What are the implications of this?	Importantly, educators should understand that reading elements are assessed differently by various assessment instruments. For example, comprehension may be assessed by requiring students to retell a story, by answering multiple-choice items, or completing a maze. Particular assessment strategies should be matched as closely as possible to the instructor's goals for reading instruction to reduce assessment error.
3. It is important for educators to administer individualized formal tests under standard conditions. Why is that important, i.e., what are the implications associated with nonstandard test administration?	Nonstandard assessment leads to test error. The extent to which a test contains error, and consequently is not reliable, is the extent to which the scores are uninterpretable.
Chapter 7 Points to Ponder	Chapter 7 Reflection and Application

1. As you probably know there is significant controversy regarding the use of high-stakes group tests, typically those administered at or near the end of each academic year. From your perspective list one pro and one con for the use of data provided by these tests. If you had the power to determine whether or not these tests would continue to be used, what would you recommend? If you recommended that these tests be discontinued, what would you recommend in their place, if anything? That is, what is your perspective on the need for accountability data of the kind provided by these tests?	Although high stakes tests are currently the brunt of much criticism, our perspective is that they produce scores that can be useful under certain conditions, and if educators remember that the scores they produce should be used in conjunction with other information. Scores should NOT be used as the only source of information to hire/fire professionals, to determine whether a child should be placed in Special Education, teacher raises, and so on. Standardized test scores should be supplemented with other information. To date, they have been abused and over interpreted—hence the criticisms.
2. Critics of large scale end-of-year tests express concern that teachers will spend too much time teaching to the test, i.e., teaching content tied to the test objectives, to the exclusion of other important instructional goals. Do you agree or disagree with these critics? How would you defend your perspective? In other words, what evidence do you have to support your view?	From our perspective, to the extent that test goals reflect credible content, teaching to the test is reasonable. On the other hand, if the test does not reflect instructional goals, i.e., there is a mismatch, and then teaching to the test is a significant problem. Refer back to guidelines by Pop ham cited in Chapter 7.
Chapter 8 Points to Ponder	Chapter 8 Reflection and Application
1. Consider the SBPS model we describe in this chapter. Where does assessment fit into the model, i.e., at which step? Does the model have applicability in your setting (or in the setting in which you aspire to work)? That is, does it help you think about how you might address the problem(s) of a struggling reader? Why or why not?	Step 2 of the SBPS model requires that data be collected to define the variables in the model, variables that define specific reading skills. Good assessment is necessary in order to determine the extent to which a problem exists, and then to establish the extent to which the problem has been addressed satisfactorily.
Point 2: In this chapter our goal was to help you think about pulling it together, i.e., pulling information from various assessments to focus on the needs of struggling readers. In pursuit of that goal, we suggested that you take another look at the Inclusive Model and the Instructional Pie along the way. Of these two sources which appears to have the most utility for this purpose from your perspective? Why? Can you describe briefly two ideas that occur to you that might be helpful (inspired by the source you consider most useful). Can you think of other sources from the Chapter that might be useful in pulling it together?	The Inclusive Model of Reading is comprehensive, representing graphically all the elements that combine to produce successful reading. The Inclusive Model is helpful when considering reasons a child might struggle with reading, i.e., environmental or within the child learning factors. Once we have generated hypotheses to explain the struggling, we can devise, implement, and monitor success of strategies or interventions. The Model cues to think about the importance of the affective influences on reading that lead to motivation.

Point 3: When considering how you might address the problems of a struggling reader, can you describe briefly two ideas/interventions you can bring to the problem solution that we did not mention in this Chapter?	There are many instructional strategies not specifically addressed in Chapter 8. You may want to refer to the Instructional Tips on the Companion Website for ideas.
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